

RECORDED BY HENRIETTA YURCHENCO



ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4208

# Ballads, Wedding Songs, and Piyyutim of the **Sephardic Jews** of Tetuan and Tangier, Morocco



TETUAN, VIEW OF THE CITY PHOTO BY YURCHENCO

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



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**Ballads, Wedding Songs, and Piyyutim  
of the Sephardic Jews  
of Tetuan and Tangier, Morocco**

**SIDE I**

- BAND 1—So Says the Bride—  
Alicia Benassayag  
BAND 2—In the House of My Father  
BAND 3—Although I Gave Him My Hand  
BAND 4—I Bathed at the River's Edge—  
Flora Benamol  
BAND 5—One Kid—Alicia Benassayag  
BAND 6—I Arose On A Monday—  
Flora Benamol  
BAND 7—Moses Left Egypt  
BAND 8—The King Has A Daughter  
BAND 9—Our Lord, Elohenu—  
Alicia Benassayag

**SIDE II**

- BAND 1—La Gallarda—Flora Benamol  
BAND 2—I Am A Human Being—  
Singer Unknown  
BAND 3—Briana—Ester Kadosh Israel  
BAND 4—City of Joy  
BAND 4—The Overseer  
BAND 6—God Is Alive  
BAND 7—From the Mouth of God  
BAND 8—My Wintry Days  
BAND 9—Your Love Is Sweet—  
Sólomon Siboní

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., 10023 N.Y., U.S.A.

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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## SPAIN

For Iberian Jews 1492 was a tragic year. The Catholic Monarchs having finally defeated the Moors at Granada, turned on the Jews and expelled them en masse from the country which had been their home for a millenium.

Jews had lived in Spain since the 4th century. With the Moorish invasion in 711 their numbers and influence increased. In Andalusian Spain they were advisors to the ruling classes and leaders in science, philosophy and the arts. Indeed, it was a "Golden Age" for Spanish Jewry.

At times they enjoyed excellent relations with the Christian kingdoms of Northern Spain, especially under the tolerant regimes of Alfonso VI, and the learned Alfonso El Sabio (Alfonso the Wise). But their lives were constantly plagued by anti-Jewish laws, persecution, and wholesale killings by mobs instigated by ignorant clerics. The great massacre of 1391 was a crucial event in the history of Spanish Jewry. Hundreds left rather than accept Christianity. A scant hundred years later, of an estimated quarter of a million Jews, 50,000 were baptized into the Church and stayed on. The others left their homes, took to the roads with only the possessions they could carry, and walked to the south. For five years many lived in Portugal, but forced to flee again, they found refuge in established Jewish communities of the Turkish Empire.

During the Muslim occupation of Spain, Jews retained contact with their co-religionists in the Islamic world. Poets, philosophers and religious men spread their ideas and works everywhere they went, retaining remarkable unity among Jews dispersed since the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

## AFTER THE EXPULSION - TETUAN, MOROCCO

Destroyed by Spain and rebuilt before 1492 by an Andalusian chieftan as a refuge for Spanish Jews and Muslims, Tetuan became one of the most important Jewish communities in North Africa. For several centuries the city absorbed Portuguese Marranos (converts to Christianity) and others from Morocco, who developed it into

a major maritime trading port.

It was also a great center of Jewish learning. Here the Spanish-Jewish heritage was allowed to flourish. As in no other place, the purity of Castilian language and customs were preserved. The Jews sang the old 16th century ballads in Medieval Spanish and for daily use spoke an updated idiom. They sang the ritual songs so evocative of the Spanish past, and the piyyutim, the religious poetry written in Hebrew by the great Medieval Jewish writers.

I arrived in Tetuan just when Spanish Morocco, formally held since 1860, was returned to the Moroccans. The political changeover created anxiety and unrest among rich and poor Jews. Daily the Moroccans threatened to burn down the Mellah (the Jewish ghetto) and the shops in the International zone. My arrival hardly elicited joy. "A fine time for you to come! Who wants to sing Now?" they said sadly.

Nevertheless they invited me to their homes, and the women accepted me into their circle. Often I sat in the courtyard of the many-storied tenements where Jews lived helping them make sweets from the petals of jasmine flowers. We exchanged recipes and stories, but mainly they spoke of their desire to go to Israel.

The singers were all women in their thirties. Ester Kadosh, the ample, dark-skinned intense ballad singer who sold churros in the marketplace (sugared strips of fried dough) often interrupted her singing with comments on the events in the ballads, as if they happened just yesterday. Alicia

Benassayag sang the wedding songs, the Spanish ballads and those about Biblical prophets and Jewish heroines. Seated at the table of her dark, top-floor apartment she sang as she comforted her ailing child. The gentlest was Flora Benamol, a plump, moonfaced little woman who sang with such tenderness that tears came to my eyes.

Although I never recorded her, I shall ever remember the wealthy 80 year old woman who recited the ballads of El Cid, the hero of the Reconquest acclaimed in Spanish balladry. "I used to sing them all," she said proudly, "but no more-now that I have no teeth."

## ROMANCES - BALLADS (Side I Band 6-9, Side II Band 1-3)

To the Jews of Tetuan, the romances, passed on by word of mouth over centuries, were a glorious inheritance from Spain, the substance that bound them to a distinguished past. The language, the ancient stories and the music constantly reminded them of the exalted position their ancestors enjoyed for centuries. The ballads (15th-17th century) were the popular songs of the time sung by rich and poor, tradesman and aristocrat. Even the Spanish Conquistadores sang them in the Americas. The Sephardic Jews kept them alive performing them in family circles everywhere they went after the Expulsion long after they were forgotten in continental Spain itself.

The romances are part of a European tradition in theme and form. Like the British, the Danish, etc. they deal with historical events, the lives of heroes, and the supernatural world where animals, birds, humans and spirits interact, and magical events occur. The ballad personages act boldly, inevitably, and often violently. While they have a common heritage, each national balladry is stamped with its own sign. Spanish ballads readily reveal their oriental roots in the exotic imagery and sensual melody.

The meaning of the ballads on this recording, is not always clear. I have given a literal translation and added, in a few cases, a summary

of another version in the hopes that it may be of some use.

## RITUAL SONGS (Side I Band 1-4)

The first four songs on Side I are a sampling of a large repertory of ritual wedding songs. The texts are about love, the joy and sadness of the bride, praise of physical beauty of bride and groom, the ritual bath (Mikvah), the dowry, and even the disappointments of marriage. They are sung during various processions to the synagogue, when the bride is delivered to the groom's house, during the rituals celebrating the intention to marry, the day of decision, and the signing of the marriage contract, and finally when the couple is locked into their bedroom for the consummation of the marriage. They are sung as solos by women. No instrumental accompaniment is used by Tetuan Jews.



SIDE 1 BAND 1

DICE LA NUESTRA NOVIA  
SUNG BY: Alicia Benassayag

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llama la cabeza,  
---No se llama cabeza,  
sino campo despaciosos.  
Pase la novia y goce al novio.

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llama el cabello.  
---No se llama cabello,  
sino seda de labrar  
Ay mi seda de labrar,  
ay mi campo despaciosos,  
pase la novia y goce al novio

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llama la frente.  
---No se llama frente,  
sino espada reluciente.  
Ay mi espada reluciente  
ay mi seda de labrar  
ay mi campo despaciosos.  
Pase la novia y goce al novio.

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llaman las cejas.  
---No se llaman cejas,  
sino cinta del telar.  
Ay mi cinta del telar  
(continue as above)

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llaman los ojos.  
---No se llaman los ojos  
sino ricos miradores.  
Ay mis ricos miradores  
(continue as above)

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llama la nariz.  
---No se llama nariz,  
sino dátil datilar.  
Ay mi dátil datilar  
(continue as above)

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llama la cara.  
---No se llama cara,  
sino rosa en el rosál,  
Ay mi rosa en el rosál,  
(Continue as above)

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llaman los labios.  
---No se llaman labios,  
sino filos de coral.  
Ay mi filos de coral  
(Continue as above)

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llaman los pechos.  
---No se llaman pechos,  
sino limon limonar.

Dice la nuestra novia  
como se llaman las patas.  
---No se llaman patas,  
sino cañas de Succa.

\*Succa(Hebrew)The shelter  
symbolizing the Harvest  
Festival of Succoth.

SAYS THE BRIDE-TO-BE

Says the bride-to-be  
What name do you give the head?  
It's not called the head  
but a peaceful meadow.  
Let the bride pass by and the groom enjoy.

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the hair?  
It is not called the hair  
but silk for embroidery  
Oh my silk for embroidery  
My peaceful meadow  
Let the bride pass by and the groom enjoy.

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the forehead?  
It is not called forehead  
but a shining sword  
Oh my shining sword  
Oh my silk for embroidery  
Oh my peaceful meadow  
Let the pride pass by and the groom enjoy.

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give to the eyebrows?  
They are not eyebrows  
but ribbon of the loom  
Oh my ribbon of the loom  
(Continue as above)

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the eyes?  
They are not eyes  
but fine maradors  
Oh my fine miradors  
(continue as above)

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give to the nose?  
It is not a nose  
but dates from the date tree  
Oh my dates from the date tree  
(continue as above)

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the face?  
It is not called face  
but rose from the rose bush  
Oh rose from the rose bush  
(Continue as above)

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the lips?  
They are not lips  
But rows of coral  
Oh my rows of coral  
(Continue as above)

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give the breasts?  
They are not breasts  
but lemons from the lemon tree

Says the bride-to-be:  
What name do you give for legs?  
They are not legs  
But canes from the Succa.\*

SIDE I BAND 2 - EN CA DE MI PADRE

Sung by Flora Benamol

Cuando yo en ca de mi padre,  
peinaba rubios cabellos:  
y ahora en ca de mi novio,  
ya no me resmiro en ellos;  
me resmiro en su haldiguera  
y en los sus dulces dinero

REFRAIN

Ay qué bueno que es lo bueno  
y lo mejor es el Dios del cielo.  
Ay qué bueno que es la esperanza;  
y el que espera bien alcanza  
y se le cumplan la sus demandas.

Demandar quiero yo a mi padre  
por un peine de oro a Sevilla,  
pa' peinarne los mis cabellos  
y en haldas de mi camisa.

Deseyi yo tener marido,  
deseyi yo tener marido,  
y me lo dio Dios cabal y cumplido  
y honores al Dios y siempre honores  
hagan.

Si gozasteis en la verdura,  
si gozasteis en la verdura,  
llevasteis la hermosura  
honores al Dios y siempre honores  
hagan.

Ay subiezme yo a un alto pino,  
ay subiezme yo a un alto pino,  
llevanteis a un novio rico  
y honores al Dios y siempre honores  
hagan.

SIDE I BAND 3

AUNQUE LE DI LA MANO  
SUNG BY: Flora Benamol

Aunque le dí la mano  
la mano le dí  
aunque le dí la mano  
y no me arrepentí.

Aunque le dí la mano  
al caballero  
anillito de oro  
puso en mi dedo.

Aunque le dí la mano  
y al hijo de algo  
anillo de oro  
puso en mi mano.

Un amore que yo tenía  
manzanitas de oro les vendía  
cuatro, cinco en una espiga  
la mejorcita de ellas para mi amiga.

Un amor que yo amaba  
manzanitas de oro él me daba  
Cuatro, cinco en una rama  
la mejorcita de ellas para mi amada.

Quién te vido y te ha de ver  
en buen estrado te ha de poner  
Mirame mi amor y enamórame....

IN THE HOUSE OF MY FATHER

When in the house of my father  
I combed my blond hair  
And now in the house of my bridegroom  
I don't look at it  
I look at his purse  
And at the sweet money there.

REFRAIN

How good is goodness!  
The best is God in heaven.  
Oh how good it is to hope!  
He who waits, well attains  
And succeeds in his endeavors.

I want to ask my father  
For a golden comb from Seville  
To comb my hair  
Into the lap of my chemise.

I longed for a husband  
I longed for a husband  
And God gave me one, perfect and com-  
plete  
And praise God, and praise Him always!  
If you enjoyed your youth  
If you enjoyed your youth  
You led a life of beauty  
Praise God, and praise Him always!

Oh I would climb a tall pine tree  
Oh I would climb a tall pine tree  
And take away a rich suitor  
And praise God, and praise Him always.

ALTHOUGH I GAVE HIM MY HAND

Although I gave him my hand  
My hand I gave him  
Although I gave him my hand  
I did not regret it.

Although I gave him my hand  
The gentleman placed  
A golden ring  
On my finger.

Although I gave him my hand  
The son of someone placed  
A golden ring  
In my hand

A lover I once had  
Sold little golden apples  
Four, five on one stem  
The best of them for my friend.

A lover I once adored  
Gave me a little golden apple  
Four, five, on one branch  
The best of them for my beloved

He who saw you, and will see you  
Will put you in a good position  
Look at me, my love, and woo me



## SIDE I BAND 4

FUÉrame A BANAR A ORILLAS DEL RIO  
SUNG BY: Flora Benamol

Fuérame a banar y a orillas del río  
Fuérame a banar y a orillas del río  
allí encontrí, madre, a mi lindo amigo  
él me dió un abrazo y yo le dí cinco  
y yo le dí cinco

Fuérame a banar a orillas del claro  
fuérame a banar a orillas del claro  
allí encontrí, madre, a mi lindo amado  
él me dió un abrazo y yo le dí cuatro  
y yo le dí cuatro

Por dios la nuestra novia cuerpo lucido  
Por dios la nuestra novia cuerpo lucido  
que vos poneis en escondido.  
Si vos poneis albayalde de oro molido  
de oro molido

No me puso mi madre cosa ninguna  
No me puso mi madre cosa ninguna  
la cara de esta novia como la luna  
que la onza de la gracia y a cómo la vende  
y a como la vende

No lo vendo por onza ni por cuartero  
Ni lo vendo por onza ni por cuartero  
se la vendo a mi amante de mi corazón  
que la onza de la gracia y a todo mi bien  
y a todo mi bien

Por dios la nuestra novia, besieme  
Por dios la nuestra novia, besieme  
con vuestra boca dulce llena de amore  
que la onza de la gracia, y a cómo la vende  
y a cómo la vende

Por dios la nuestra novia cuerpo garrido  
Por dios de nuestra novia cuerpo garrido  
que vos poneis en escondido  
si vos poneis albayalde  
que también vos parecía vuestro marido  
y a vuestro marido

\*An old coin

## SIDE I BAND 5

EL CABRITO  
SUNG BY: Alicia Benassayag de Bendayam

- 1 Un cabrito y un cabrito  
que me compró mi padre  
por dos ochitos
- 2 Un cabrito y un cabrito  
que me compró mi padre  
por dos ochitos  
y vino el gato y comió el cabrito.  
que me compró mi padre  
por dos ochitos
- 3 Un cabrito y un cabrito  
que me compró mi padre  
por dos ochitos  
y vino el perro  
y mordió el gato que  
comió el cabrito  
que me compró mi padre por dos  
por dos ochitos.

## I WENT TO BATHE AT THE RIVER'S EDGE

I went to bathe at the river's edge  
I went to bathe at the river's edge  
There I found, mother, my handsome friend  
He gave me one embrace, and I gave him  
five and I gave him five

I went to bathe at the clearing's edge  
I went to bathe at the clearing's edge  
There I found, mother my handsome lover  
He gave me one embrace, I gave him four  
I gave him four

Heavens, the splendid body of the bride!  
Heavens, the splendid body of the bride!  
That you are hiding  
With gold dust makeup  
With gold dust makeup

My mother never put anything on me  
My mother never put anything on me  
The face of the bride is like the moon  
An ounce of charm, how do you sell it?  
how do you sell it?

I don't sell it by the ounce, or \*cuartero  
I don't sell it by the ounce, or cuartero  
I sell it to the lover of my heart  
An ounce of charm and all my possessions  
all my possessions.

Heavens, my bride, kiss me!  
Heavens, my bride, kiss me!  
With your sweet mouth full of love  
An ounce of charm, how do you sell it?  
how do you sell it?

Heavens, the graceful body of the bride!  
Heavens, the graceful body of the bride!  
That you are hiding  
With gold dust makeup  
And it appears so to your bridegroom, too  
to your bridegroom, too

## ONE KID +

- 1 One kid and one kid  
That my father bought me  
for two ochitos
- 2 One kid and one kid  
That my father bought me  
for two ochitos  
And the cat came and ate the kid  
That my father bought me  
for two ochitos
- 3 One kid and one kid  
That my father bought me  
for two ochitos  
And the dog came  
And bit the cat that  
ate the kid  
That my father bought me  
for two ochitos

4 y vino el palo y pegó al perro  
porque mordió al gato...

5 y vino el fuego y quemó al palo  
porque pegó al perro...

6 y vino el agua que apagó el fuego  
que quemó al palo...

7 y vino el buey y bebió el agua  
que apagó el fuego

8 y vino el sojet y degolló al buey  
que bebió el agua...

9 y vino el malaj amabet que  
mató el sojet  
que degolló al buey

10 y vino el Santo Bendito El  
y mató al malaj amabet  
que mató el sojet...

\*A Passover song sung at the sedar.  
Sung throughout the Jewish world  
in different languages and  
melodies.

\*Ritual butcher  
\*\*Angel of Death

## SIDE I BAND 6

YÒ ME LEVANTARA UN LUNES  
SUNG BY: Flora Benamol

Yo me levantara un lunes  
un lunes antes de albor  
cogiera bashia en mano  
y a la mar me fuera yo, (mira así)

REFRAIN  
Y al son de la liebre  
yo me iré a dormir

Me encontré con un mancebo  
que de mi guiso burlar  
le he cogido del pescuezo  
y a la mar le echara a ahogar, (...)

## REFRAIN

Y despues que lo había echado  
tomé y me sente a llorar  
duele mi corazón duele  
duele de verlo ahogar, (...)

Cogí mi trenza de pelo  
y con ella me fui a salvar  
le he cogido de la mano  
y a mi casa lo lleve, (...)

Le puse cama de rosa  
cabecera de ahazar  
cobertor con que se tapa  
ay! de hojas de un limonar, (...)

Le lavo y lavo su cara  
con hojas de un limonar  
le peinara yo su pelo  
con un peine de cristal, (...)

Le he cogido de la mano  
y a mi cama lo subi  
media noche ya es pasada  
y la cara no vuelve a mi, (...)

4 And the stick came and hit the dog  
Because the stick hit the dog...

5 And the fire came and burned the stick  
Because the stick hit the dog...

6 And the water came that put out the  
Because the fire burned the stick...

7 And the ox came and drank the water  
That put out the fire...

8 And the sojet\* came and beheaded the ox  
That drank the water...

9 And the malaj amabet\*\* came  
And killed the sojet  
That beheaded the ox...

10 And came El Santo Bendito El  
That killed the malaj amabet  
That killed the sojet.

## I AROSE ON A MONDAY

I arose on a Monday  
On a Monday before dawn  
I took my water-jug  
And I went down to the Sea, (like that)

Refrain  
And to the tune of the hare  
I shall fall asleep

I met a young man  
Who tried to molest me  
I grabbed him by the throat  
And I threw him into the sea to drown, (...)

## Refrain

And after I had thrown him in  
Then I sat down and I cried  
Pain, my heart pains me  
Pains me to see him drown, (...)

I took hold of my braids  
And went to save him  
I held him by the hand  
And took him to my house, (...)

I laid him on a bed of roses  
As a cover to protect him  
At his head a pillow of lemon blossoms  
Oh the leaves of a lemon tree, (...)

I bathe, and bathe his face again  
With leaves of a lemon tree  
I combed his hair  
With a comb of crystal, (...)

I took him by the hand  
And lifted him to my bed  
Half the night went by  
And his face does not turn to me, (...)



YO ME LEVANTARA UN LUNES  
(Cont'd.../)

Que te han dicho a ti Adelino?  
quién te ha hablado mal de mi  
si sera por mi marido  
muy lejos esta de aquí, mira así.

Se te da por mis hermanos  
muy lejos viven de aquí  
si lo lejos se hace cerca  
para el que quiera venir,(...)

Si lo lejos se hace cerca  
para el que quiera venir  
y lo cerca se hace lejos  
para el que se quiera ir, mira así.

SIDE I BAND 7

MOSE SALIO DE MISRAÏN  
SUNG BY: Alicia Benassayag

Mosé salió de Misraïm  
huyendo del rey Parhó  
y se fue derecho a Midiañ  
y se encontró con Yitro

Le dió a Cipora su hija  
porque era temiente a Dios.  
Mosé paseando el ganado  
que su suegra le entregó,

Mosé paseando el ganado  
al monte Hpreb llegó;  
viera arder una zarza,  
el zarza no se quemó.

Mosé se cubrió sus ojos  
temiendo ver a Dios,  
oyó una voz que decia:  
--Mosé, Mosé, mi siervo;  
descalza los tus zapatos  
que en lugar santo estas tú

Te irás al rey Parhó  
que te entregue las llaves  
de mi pueblo el hebreo,

Yi si no te las entregare  
castigarle quiero yo  
con diez plagas que le mande  
para sepa quién soy yo.

Chorus

Hodu la Adonay, quitob  
qui le holam hasdó  
Alabado sea Dios que es bueno  
que para la Eternidad su misericordia

Alabado sea tu nombre  
porque siempre bien nos dió  
y en los cielos y en la tierra  
tu merced nunca faltó.

SIDE I BAND 8

UNA HIJA TIENE EL REY  
SUNG BY: Alicia Benassayag

Una hija tiene el rey  
una hija regalada  
su padre, por más valor,  
y un castillo la fraguara.

I AROSE ON A MONDAY  
(Cont'd.../)

--What have they told you, Adelino?  
Who has spoken badly of me?  
If it is about my husband  
He is very far from here.

If it is about my brothers  
They live far from here  
The far becomes near  
For whoever wants to come .

The far becomes near  
For whoever wants to come.  
The near becomes far  
For whoever wants to go.

MOSES LEFT EGYPT

Moses left Egypt  
Escaping from the Pharoah  
He went straight to Midian  
And met with Jethro

He gave his daughter, Cipora  
Because he feared God.  
Moses tended the cattle  
That his mother-in-law gave him.

Moses tended the cattle  
Arrived at Mount Horeb  
Saw the burning bush  
The bush that did not burn

Moses covered his eyes  
Afraid to see God  
He heard a voice that said:  
Moses, Moses, my servant  
Take off your shoes  
For you are on holy ground.

Go to the Pharoah  
And tell him to give you the keys  
Of my people, the Hebrews.

If he doesn't give them to you  
I will punish him  
With ten plagues  
So he understands who I am

Refrain

Praised be God  
Who is Goodness  
And mercy  
For all Eternity

Praised be they name  
For you have always been bountiful  
And in the heavens and on the earth  
Your mercy has never faltered

THE KING HAS A DAUGHTER

The king has a daughter  
A very spoiled daughter  
Her father, to make her more desirable  
Built her a castle.

Por ventanas a la mar  
por donde el aire la entrara  
por una le entraba el sol  
por otras el aire de la mañana

Por la más chiquita de ellas  
entra un gavián y sale  
con sus alas abiertas  
y no le hace ningún male

Bordando esta un camisón  
para el hijo de la reina  
bordandole esta con oro  
labrandole esta con seda

Y entre puntada y puntada,  
un aljofar y una perla  
"Por que no cantas mi bienó  
"Porque no cantas, la bellaó"

Porque no cantas, mi bienó  
Porque no cantas, la bellaó"  
"Ni canto, ni cantaré,  
que mi amor está en la guerra."

Yo una carta escribere  
de mi puño y de mi letra  
Que me traigan a mi amor  
Sano y vivo y sin cadenas.

Y si no me le trajeren  
yo armaré una grande guerra  
de navíos por el mar  
de gente armada por tierra

Si no hubiere velas pronto  
mis ricas trenzas pusiera  
Si no hubiere remos pronto  
mis lindos brazos pusiera

Si no viene capitán  
yo me pondría a la bandera  
para que diga la gente:  
"Viva, viva esa doncella,  
Que por salvar a su amor  
se echo ella a la tormenta.

\*an imperfect pearl  
This ballad is also called  
PORQUE NO CANTAIS LA BELLA

SIDE I BAND 9

NUESTRO SEÑOR ELOHENU  
SUNG BY: Alicia Benassayag

Nuestro Señor Elohenu  
llamó a Mosé Rabbenu  
para darnos Tore tenu  
que empieze con Anoji

Chorus

Ana Adonay ochiana  
nuestros pecados selahna  
Eliyahu mebaserna  
con el que dijo Anoji

\*God

\*\*Torah. The first five books  
of the Old Testament given  
to Moses on Mount Sinai  
\*\*\*The first commandment

Through windows that view the sea  
The air flowed in.  
Through one the sun entered  
Through others, the morning air.

Through the smallest one  
A sparrow hawk enters and leaves  
With his wings outspread  
He does no one harm

She embroiders a night dress  
For the queen's son  
Embroidering it with gold  
Ornamenting it with silk.

And between one stitch and another  
An aljohar\* and a pearl.  
"Why don't you sing, my treasure  
Why don't you sing, my beauty?"

"Why don't you sing, my treasure  
Why don't you sing, my beauty?"  
"I don't sing, nor will I sing  
For my love is in the war."

I will write a letter  
With my own hand and might  
That they bring back my lover  
Healthy, alive and unchained.

And if they do not bring him back  
I will start a great war  
With ships on the sea  
And armed people on land.

If no sailing ships are available  
I will use my sumptuous braids  
If no oars are available  
I will use my beautiful arms

If no captain is available  
I will place myself at the helm  
So that people will say  
Long live, long live that maiden  
To save her love  
She hurled herself into the storm.

OUR LORD ELOHENU

Our Lord Elohenu\*  
Called Rabbi Moses  
To give us the Torah\*\*  
That begins with Anoji\*\*\*I

Refrain

Please Lord, save us  
Forgive us our sins  
Elija prophesizes  
with him who said Anoji I



NUESTRO SEÑOR ELOHENU  
(Cont'd.../)

Mose subio a los samayim  
sin ajila y sin mayim  
trujo las luhot senallim  
que empieza con Anoji

Chorus

Nos dió sus haseref adiberot  
con sus dinin y sus sodot  
allí estaban los nesamot  
cuando Dios dijo Anoji.

Chorus

Nuestra Leyes estimada  
de las humot apartada  
de Israel es amada  
y del que dijo Anoji

Chorus

En Arsinay hizo lumbrar  
con truenos y vos de sofár  
a Israel hizo temblar  
cuando Dios dijo Anoji.

Chorus

Hicimos un grande yerro  
mas duro era que el hierro  
sirbemos al mal becerro  
contra El que dijo Anoji

\*\*\*\*ram's horn

SIDE II BAND 1

LA GALLARDA

SUNG BY: Flora Benamol

Estabase la Gallarda  
en su ventana florida  
peinando rubios cabellos  
que paracen seda fina.

Por ahí paso un caballero  
de Santa María arriba  
--Suba, suba, caballero;  
suba, suba, por su vida.

El caballero subió  
y a la sala se tenía  
y asomose a una ventana  
por tener aire que hacía.

Y encontró a cien cabezas  
colgadas de las olivas:  
--¿De quién son esas cabezas,  
Gallarda, traidora mía?

Son de Chon el bravo  
que andaba por las olivas  
--Gallarda, pone la mesa  
y caballero bien la guía

Puso manteles de hilo  
cubiertos de plata fina  
--Cene, cene, caballero  
cene, cene, por su vida.

OUR LORD ELOHENU  
(Cont'd.../)

Moses climbed to the sky  
Without food and without water  
He brought the two tablets  
That begins with Anoji I.

Refrain

He gave us the Ten Commandments  
With its laws and its secrets  
The souls were there  
When God said Anoji I.

Refrain

Our Law is beloved  
Far from the walls (of the temple)  
And Israel is loved.  
By him who said Anoji I.

Refrain

On Mount Sinai he made a great fire  
With thunder and sound of the sofar\*\*\*\*  
He made Israel tremble  
When God said Anoji I.

Refrain

We made a great mistake  
A terrible mistake  
We worshipped the evil calf  
Which was against him who said Anoji I.

LA GALLARDA

There was La Gallarda  
At her window, blooming with flowers  
Combing her blonde hair  
That looked like fine silk:

A gentleman walked by  
From above Santa Maria  
--Come up, gentleman  
Come up, if you please

The gentleman went up.  
When he was in the room  
He leaned out of a window  
To feel air outside.

He found a hundred heads  
Hanging from the olive trees  
--Whose heads are those  
Gallarda, my treacherous one?

They belong to Chon, el bravo  
Who walked through the olive trees  
--Gallarda, sets the table  
The gentleman directed her well

She laid out the linen tablecloths  
Service of fine silver  
--Eat, eat your supper, gentleman  
Eat your supper, if you please

--Vengo y cenado de casa  
por ser el último día  
Gallarda pone la cama  
caballero bien la guía

Puso colchones de lana  
sábanas de holanda fina  
y en mitad de los colchones  
y un puñal de oro metía.

Y a eso de la media noche  
Gallarda se removía  
--Qué buscas tú allí, Gallarda  
Gallarda, traidora mía?

--Busco yo un puñal de oro  
para quitarte la vida.  
Y ese puñal que tu buscas  
Ya en mis manos lo tenía.

Se lo metió por la espalda  
y el corazón la partía  
y eso de la media noche  
que Gallarda moriría.

Portero, abre la puerta  
y abre, abre por tu vida  
--Yo no puedo abrir a nadie  
mientras no amanezca el día.

Que si Gallarda lo sabe  
la vida me quitaría.  
--No le temas tu a Gallarda  
ni a toda su Gallardía.

--No le temas tu a Gallarda  
ni a toda su Gallardía  
que Gallarda ya esta muerta  
y en su sala esta tendida.

Que Gallarda ya esta muerta  
y en su sala esta tendida.  
--Si es verdad lo que Ud. dice  
el reino ganó de Castilla.

Si es verdad lo que Ud. dice  
el reino ganó de Castilla  
que de cien que habian entrado  
y Ud. que salió con vida.

SIDE II BAND 2

PERSONA SOY YO, EL BUEN SIDI  
SUNG BY: Singer Unknown

Persona soy yo, el buen sidi  
como ti fui yo nacida  
siete años me pagarón  
en haldas de una mi tía

Que me quedé siete años  
en una oscura montaña  
y hoy se acaban los siete años  
en esta mañana en el día

\*In another version entitled  
LA INFANTINA (THE LITTLE PRINCESS)  
a knight having lost his way in  
a lonely forest finds a young  
princess on top of a tall oak  
tree with golden roots and silver  
branches. The light from her

--I have already eaten at home  
It being the last day  
Gallarda made the bed  
The gentleman directed her well

She put out woolen mattresses  
Sheets of Dutch linen  
And in the middle of the mattresses  
She inserted a golden dagger

In the middle of the night  
Gallarda stirred  
--What are you looking for, Gallarda  
Gallarda, my treacherous one?

I am looking for a golden dagger  
To take your life away  
--That dagger that you look for  
I have in my own hand

He thrust it into her back  
And split her heart in two  
It was the middle of the night  
When Gallarda died.

Porter, open the door  
Open, open, if you please  
--I cannot open it to anyone  
Until the dawn comes up.

If Gallarda knew  
She would take my life away.  
--Do not be afraid of Gallarda  
And all her Gallarda ways.

--Do not be afraid of Gallarda  
And all her Gallarda ways  
For Gallarda is dead now  
And laid out in the parlor

For Gallarda is dead now  
And laid out in the parlor  
--Yes, if it is what you say  
Then you deserve to rule Castile.

--Yes, if it is true what you say  
Then you deserve to rule Castile.  
Of the hundred who entered here  
You alone are alive.

I AM A HUMAN BEING, GOOD SIR \*

I am a human being, good Sidi  
Like you I was born  
Seven years I have paid  
Cared for by one of my aunts.

I stayed seven years  
On a dark mountain  
And today the seven years end  
In the morning of this day

eyes illuminates the forest.  
Today or tomorrow her time is up.  
The rest is like the version  
given here except that her  
disappearance is explained: A  
king and seven dukes - her father  
and seven brothers - carry her off.



PERSONA SOY YO EL BUEN SIDI  
(Cont'd.../)

Por tu vida, el caballero  
llevame en tu compañía  
o llévame por mujer,  
o llévame por amiga,  
o llévame por esclava  
a servirte toda mi vida.

Madre vieja tengo en casa  
su consejo tomaría  
el consejo que le daba  
que la tome por amiga.  
Cuando volvió el caballero  
no encontró ni robe ni a la nina

Hombre que tal prenda pierde  
que castigo merecía  
que le aten pies y manos  
y le arrastren por la vía.

SIDE II BAND 3

BRILLANA  
SUNG BY: Ester Kadosh Israel

Una hija tiene el rey  
que se llamaba Brillana,  
se fue a pasear un día  
a los campos de Granada

Se fue a pasear un día  
a los campos de Granada  
donde están rosas y flores  
clavelinas y albahacas

En medio de aquella huerta  
está una fuente de agua clara  
siete chorros corren de ella  
todos los siete de plata

Siete chorros corren de ella  
todos los siete de plata  
tres eran de agua dulce  
cuatro eran de agua salada

Como eso viera Brillana  
de pronto se remangara  
a bañar su lindo cuerpo,  
su lindo cuerpo bañara

Una sierpe temerosa  
delante se la pondría  
Uy! valgame Dios del cielo  
que era esto que yo vía

I AM A HUMAN BEING GOOD SIR  
(Cont'd.../)

I beg you, sir  
Take me with you  
Take me as your wife  
Or take me as your friend  
Or take me as your slave  
To serve you all my life

My old mother lives at home  
I will take her advice  
The advice she gave him was  
Take her as his friend  
When the gentleman returned  
He found neither the oak tree nor  
the girl

A man who loses such a jewel  
What punishment does he deserve?  
Let his feet and hands be tied  
And be dragged down the road.

BRIANA\*

The king has a daughter  
Whose name was Briana  
One day she was walking  
In the fields of Granada

One day she was walking  
In the fields of Granada  
Where roses and flowers grow  
Carnations and sweet basil.

In the middle of that orchard  
There is a fountain of clear water  
From it spurt seven jets of water  
All seven of silver

From it spurt seven jets of water  
All seven of silver  
Sweet water from three  
Salt water from four.

When Briana saw this  
Quickly she tucked up her skirts  
To bathe her lovely body  
Her lovely body to bathe.

A snake, frightened  
Appeared in front of her  
Oh! God in heaven save me!  
What was that I saw?

\*In another version, entitled  
LA CALUMNIA DE LA REINA (THE QUEEN'S  
SLANDER) Briana, the count's wife,  
is walking through the gardens of  
Granada. She disrobes and bathes  
in a magic fountain. A horrible  
snake appears and Briana cries out  
in terror. The King hears her and  
declares his love for her. The  
following day the queen accuses  
Briana, before the entire court,  
of being the king's mistress.

The count returns home intending to kill  
Briana. She calls her daughter and  
orders her to go before the king with  
Briana's head on a platter, begging  
him to accept this "honest trout." The  
King kills the count and the Queen, and  
marries Briana.

¡Uy! Valgame Dios del cielo  
qué era esto que yo vía,  
si se me alargan las años  
o se me acorta mi vida

Oídola había el buen reye  
que estaba por una ventana  
ni se te alargan los años  
ni se te acorta tu vida

Siete años habían siete  
que estoy por esta ventana  
sólo por una palabra  
Brillana de tí escuchara

Sólo por una palabra,  
Brillana de tí escuchara,  
Será reina de siete imperios  
será reina y estimada

Oídala había la reina  
que está por una ventana  
otro día en la mañana  
a los condes convidara

Otro día en la mañana  
a los condes convidara  
al alzar de los manteles  
Spoken (al terminar la comida)  
de las mujeres hablaran.

Al alzar de los manteles  
de las mujeres hablaran  
todos tenéis buenas mujeres  
sino Brillana que es mala  
(---Ahí dañaste al rey) Spoken

Como se oyera el buen reye  
de pronto se lavantara  
se fuera para su casa  
a contarle lo que pasa

Brillanita, Brillanita,  
Brillanita de mi vida  
saca esa toca de la arca  
tócatele bien tocada  
(---um eso bonito) Spoken

Saca esa toca de la arca  
tócatela bien tocada  
con veinticinco alfileres  
y cuenta al rey lo que pasa

El buen rey como la ha visto  
de pronto ya lo sabía.  
ya lo sabo yo el buen conde  
que tu vienes a matarme

Ya lo sé yo el buen conde  
que tu vienes a matarme.  
Con Brillanita, tu hija,  
que tu me dejes hablare

Sacó espada de su cinta  
Y a toda gente matara  
Matara a condes y a duques  
Y a todos los de su casa.

Matará a condes y a duques  
y a todos, los de su casa  
y otro día en la mañana  
con Brillanita se casare.

Oh! God in heaven save me!  
What was that I saw?  
Will it lengthen my years  
Or shorten my life.

The good king heard her  
As he stood by the window  
--It will not lengthen your years  
Or shorten your life.

For seven years, seven  
I have been at this window  
(Hoping) for a single word  
From you, Briana

(Hoping) for a single word  
From you Briana  
You will be the queen of seven empires  
You will be the queen, and well-beloved

The queen heard it  
As she stood at the window  
The next day in the morning  
She invited the counts.

The next day in the morning  
She invited the counts.  
When the tablecloths were removed  
(spoken: when dinner was over)  
They talked about the women.

When the tablecloths were removed  
They talked about the women.  
---All of you have good women  
Only Briana is bad.  
(spoken: Here you hurt the king.)

When the king heard this  
He rose immediately  
And went to his house  
To tell her what was going on.

Brianita, Brianita  
Brianita, my love  
Take that headdress from the chest  
Fasten it on securely  
(spoken: that pretty one.)

Take that headdress from the chest  
Fasten it on securely  
With twenty-five hatpins  
And tell the king what is going on

As soon as the good king saw her  
He knew what was going on.  
---I now know, my good count  
that you come to kill me.

---I now know, my good count  
that you come to kill me.  
---With Brianita, your daughter  
Let me talk with her.

He pulled a dagger out of his belt  
And killed all the people  
Killed counts and dukes  
And everyone in his household

Killed counts and dukes  
And everyone in his household  
And the next day in the morning  
He married Brianita.



PIYYUTIM (Side II Band 4-9)

Religious poems, called Piyyutim in Hebrew, are set to music and sung in the synagogue during services. Inserted within the standard prayers, they offer a lively contrast to the stable elements in Jewish liturgy. From the Destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. to the 19th century, Jewish poets in the Orient and Europe enriched the traditional services by the addition of these literary creations.

For centuries Israel was the center of Jewish poetry. In the 10th century the creative spark passed from the Orient, where an inflexible religious tradition resisted innovation, to Spain. For several generations particularly in Muslim Spain, poetry - secular and religious - reached peaks of perfection never known before. Such writers as Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses and Abraham ibn Ezra, and Judah Ha Levi, the greatest of them all, flourished in an atmosphere of literary and cultural excellence. Many wrote secular verse as well as some, like Ha Levi, frequented Jewish literary courts of Andalusia, influenced by the sensuality and orientalism of Arabic love poetry and music of that time. This poetry became the model for subsequent generations of poets in North Africa, Provence, Yemen and Babylonia.

The Jewish poets made important contributions to Jewish literature. It had been the custom to use talmudic and mishrashic material (commentaries on the Hebrew Scriptures written before 400-1200 C.E.) as source material. The Spanish Jews, however, preferred to follow the language and style of the Bible itself thus composing a more popular, more personal, more lucid poetry. They were published in private editions in various Jewish communities, and this practice still prevails.\*

Solomon Siboni, the singer on this recording, was the excellent cantor of Abraham Laredo's synagogue in Tangier in 1956. He sang for Friday night and Saturday morning services as well as for the principal Holy Days of the Jewish calendar, including the Kinot for the day of mourning Tish a be Ab. He was trained by a master hazzan of Fez, Morocco and knew about 600 poems and their tunes and the Jewish prayers. Explaining how a melody was adapted for one of his songs, Siboni said, "The tune for this piyyut is a fast Spanish dance, (and he illustrated) now I will slow it down, and it will sound right. And it did.

\*More than 35,000 piyyutim have been listed in Israel Davidson's "Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry" but thousands remained unpublished.

SIDE II BAND 4 - CITY OF JOY  
(Unidentified author, not in Davidson)

And someone with a full heart wanders  
Around the City of Joy which is no more.  
Please light up, City of the Temple  
My beautiful City  
I am as dark as a raven  
My beautiful City was destroyed  
My eyes are filled with tears, and I weep  
For the crippled and heroes who fought there  
Why should I not lament and weep?  
For the City of Glory is no more.  
In this Holy Place there is glory  
God built it as a source of life  
for generations to come.  
And I am the daughter of Judah.

Note: Sr. Siboni's singing is indistinct in this piyyut. Therefore the transcription is incomplete, as is the English translation.

SIDE II BAND 5 - THE OVERSEER

By Simon ben Lavi (Davidson: Mem 2531, Vol. 3, p.186)

God is the Overseer whose presence is known  
Who watches each and every one.  
Messiah and Savior  
Bring good tidings to a suffering people.  
You planted vines of grapes  
You picked them before they ripened  
You dug a fence around them  
You broke right through the fence.  
Even the grapes of Nazareth  
Were gathered unripe into baskets  
You gathered the grain  
Whether green or in full ripeness.

SIDE II BAND 6 - GOD IS ALIVE

(Author Unidentified. Not in Davidson)

The living God, how awesome You are!  
The people You have chosen  
Will praise You with their lips  
I shall speak of your commandments  
Your laws will crown our heads  
with strength and majesty  
As it is written in Your Torah  
By Moses, your servant.

Your hands will be a reminder  
Between Your eyes another reminder \*  
Of the ways of God and his Commandments  
Listen please, and your heart will receive  
His laws and teachings

He (God) will shower you with blessings  
Reward you for your deeds  
that You will utter with your mouth that  
Great is the name of Your Kingdom!

\*twillen

SIDE II BAND 7 - FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD\*  
Anonymous (Davidson: Aleph 2982, Vol.1 pg.140)

Israel will be blessed by the Word of God  
There is no one mighty as God,  
There is no one blessed as the son of Amram\*  
There is nothing as great as the Torah  
And no one seeks God like Israel  
There is no one as splendid as God.  
And no one desires Him as Israel.

\*Moses

The following lines in Spanish are sung  
intermittently with the Hebrew:

De boca de Dios (2)	From the mouth of God
será bendita Israel	Israel will be blessed

No hay más fuerte que Adonay	No one is more powerful than Adonay
No hay más bendito que el hijo	No one is more blessed than the son
de Amram*	of Moses
No hay más grande que la ley	Nothing is greater than the Law
De boca de Dios (2)	From the mouth of God
Será bendita Israel	Israel will be blessed.*

\*An alphabet acrostic sung during  
the traditional procession within  
the synagogue on the holy days of  
Shemini Atzeret and Simhat Torah.

SIDE II-BAND 8 - MY WINTRY DAYS

By Israel Najera\* (16th century)  
Davidson: Yod 2917, Vol.2 pg.392

In my wintry days You loved me  
Now in my misery You desert me.  
Please comfort me  
You tortured me many days, My Beloved  
You lived in your lofty abode, as  
you desired.  
You chose this people from among the nations.  
Before I called, You answered me.  
Now You send me away.  
REFRAIN: In my wintry days You tortured me

My enemy ruled over me  
I became a symbol of misfortune to all nations  
From the pit of my despair, You lifted me up  
Poor and stumbling  
I thank You for lifting me up.

REFRAIN

I was surrounded by so much misery  
While you journeyed with us  
Have pity on me, Rock (Gód)  
The place of sheltering power.  
Why did you make me a target?

REFRAIN

(My hope) is that my days be lengthened  
And You will not neglect me.  
Your words consoled me  
Comforted me well.

Note: These are literal translations which  
because of Jewish mystical thought may have  
hidden meanings.

\*lived in Safed, the holy city of Israel



SIDE II BAND 9 - YOUR LOVE IS SWEET  
By Israel Najera (16th century)  
Davidson: Yod 3372, Vol. 2, pg. 413

Your love is sweet, You Delicate One  
Dramatic as a regiment of banners  
Your lips are a honeycomb of fine fragrance  
Your nose is myrrh and aloes  
Your height tall as a cypress  
Your breast a cluster of grapes.  
To whom shall I compare You, gazelle  
To roes or hinds?  
To You Elijah brings good tidings  
And the hearts of children back to their fathers.

Side II Band 4 קריית משוש חרב

וכל נוח לב סבו, קריית משוש חרב,  
אוי נא אורי יקרב, וחמדת לי והיא  
והנני יונה שחורה כעורב, יפה ערתי אשר חרב.  
ראשי מים לבכות ולשמור, למקדש מוש קב וגבור.  
ומה לי לספור לבי, עיר הוד דרכים תוך עדי בור.  
כשתי וערב, ונרוך ולו מברר.  
עת היא בפיו נאמר, לכל מוקיר דבר  
מנוה קודש הוד ושם למחיה לדורות קבועה.  
ובת יהודה אני כי ינסו שיר.

סימן שמעון בן לביא (עמוד 330)

Side II Band 5 משגיח ומופיע

משגיח ומופיע, צופה כלל ופרט.  
משיח ומושיע, בשר לעם מורט.  
שרג גפן נטעה, חומס חמס בסרו.  
גדר סביב עזקה, פורץ פרץ גדרו.  
משגיח ומופיע, צופה כלל ופרט.  
נס ענף נזירו, בוטר וסלסלות.  
קטף ומלילות, עולל וגם פרט.  
משיח ומושיע, בשר לעם מורט.

Side II Band 6 אלהים חי

אלהים חי אתה, שפתי ישבחונך.  
תוך קהל עם זו קנית, אשיח בפקודיך.  
עוז ותפארת עטרת, לראשינו מצוותיך.  
ככתוב בתורתך, על ידי משה עבדך.  
והיה לאות על ידך, ולזכרון בין עיניך.  
דרכי האל ומצוותיו, שמעו נא ותחי נפשכם.  
אל חוקותיו ותורותיו, ולעבדו בכל לבבכם.  
יריק עליכם ברכותיו, ויש שבר לפעולתכם.  
עליו חאמרו בפיכם, יתגדל שם מלכותך.

Side II Band 7 מפי אל

מפי אל יתברך ישראל  
אין אדיר כה, אין ברוך כבן עמרם.  
אין גדולה כתורה, ואין דורשה כישראל.  
אין הדור כה, ואין ותיק כבן עמרם.  
אין זכאי כתורה, ואין חומדה כישראל.

סימן ישראל (עמוד 310)

Side II Band 8 ימי חרפי

ימי חרפי אהבתני, עתה בבור נשחתי,  
אנא חיש ושחתי, דודי כימות עניתני.  
שכנת בזבול אית, תוך קהל עם זו קנית.  
טרם קראתי ענית, עתה ריקם שלחתיני.  
ימי חרפי... עניתני.  
ררה בי אויבי המשל, לכל עם הייתי משל.  
מבור דלה דל ונחשל, אורך אל כי דליתני.  
ימי חרפי... עניתני.  
אפפו עלי רוב רעות, מאז נסעת מסעות.  
חמול צור מעוז ישועות, למה למפגע שחתיני.  
ימי חרפי... עניתני.  
לך אוחיל אם ארכו ימים, כי לא תזנה לעולמים.  
הן לי דברת נחומים, אמצא חן כי נחמתני.  
ימי חרפי... עניתני.

סימן ישראל (עמוד 222)

Side II Band 9 יפו דודין

יפו דודין נעימה, איומה כנדגלות.  
שפתותיך צוף וריח, אפך מור ואהלות.  
רום קומתך לברוש דמה, שדיך כאשכולות.  
אל מי אדמך צביה, לצבאות או לאילות.  
לך מבשר טוב אליה, ישיב לב בנים על אבות.

כל השירים הם מספר שירי ידירות  
(אוסף כל שירי ספרד)



Tetuan  
Flora Benamol, singer of wedding songs

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Tetuan  
Ester Kadosh, singer of ballads

Photo: Yurchenco