

M. GAÑY¹

Head of an agency representing the Nationala
insurance companies in Rosiori, Roumania

In article III (page 34) we published another of his
letters.

Rosiori, Feb. 26, 1904.

Dear Mr. Pulido:

Your beautiful letter of the 11th arrived promptly and it
is my pleasure to reply.

We are so happy that honorable men of position in our
Mother Country are taking an interest in the Spanish Jews.

Establishing affectionate relations between Spain and
her children in the East will take a lot of effort: I believe the
Spanish have forgotten their far-off brothers and that the
Hebrews have lost hope of ever seeing their Motherland.

¹ M. Gani (fl. 1890s–1910s): co-owner of the Gheorghiu & Gani insur-
ance agency in Rosiori, Romania; a former student of Rabbi Bejarano's.
Additional correspondence from this affluent entrepreneur appears in
Pulido's follow-up book.

As previously noted, Gani's Ladino is strikingly different from mod-
ern Spanish. There are archaisms, unusual transcriptions into the Latin
alphabet, and a strong influence of French and Italian. When unsure of a
word, he adds a French translation in parentheses: "coraçon (coeur),"
"aspero (j'attende)." In one case, he simply puts the French "introduire"
in quotation marks, followed by an explanation that mixes Italian and
Spanish elements: "non conosco la palabra" ("I do not know the word").

The movement you are undertaking with your articles in Spanish periodicals, which are read by Jews in the East, awakens in us a feeling that lay hidden at the bottom of our heart.

Yes, we speak Spanish and always call ourselves “Spanish Jews,” and our communities are separate from those of other Jews. We do not mix at all with the people known as German Jews.²

We retain a Spaniard’s fine, proud character and are proud of our origin.

What happened four centuries ago is forgotten, and if the Grandees of Spain see fit, Spain will become involved in schools in the East to “introduire” (I do not know the word) the Spanish language into the classrooms.

Clearly this will entail some sacrifice on Spain’s part, but many thousands of hearts will think of their dear Motherland with much more love and interest. The language we speak is surely mixed with many foreign words, and we cannot express ourselves as sweetly as we should like. Those of us who had some schooling in Spanish literature are far behind the times.

It was a great pleasure to read the periodicals I received, and their sweet articles inspired in me a feeling of recognition.

I sent the periodicals to my friends. Could you please subscribe me to “El Liberal”? I shall send you the cost of a six-month subscription.

² *The people known as German Jews:* Ashkenazic Jews. Jewish documents from Romania in this era usually refer to Ashkenazim as “Western-Rite Jews” and Sephardim as “Spanish-Rite” or “Eastern-Rite Jews.”



MR. M. GAÑY

HEAD OF A LARGE AGENCY IN ROSIORI, ROUMANIA

Rosiori, Feb. 26, 1904.

To Mr. Pulido.

I sent my teacher, Mr. Bejarano, an issue of *El Liberal*, which I think he will enjoy very much.

I await the promised dictionary and wonder if you could please also enclose two or three books of advice on the Spanish language. I shall reimburse you for all of these.

Thank you in advance. Also, please let me know if you can understand everything I write.

I get the impression my style is hard to understand, as not all the words are in modern Spanish.

Warm regards and a friendly handshake.

M. Gañy.