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## **The Inquisition: The Jews Who Left**

1.30pm, Sunday, June 23, 2017

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the Inquisition, many Jews were killed, many were forcibly converted and many left following the events of 1391 and 1492.

This program will focus on those who left.

We will see where they went, the organizations they created in new places, how they maintained connections with their brethren around the world, and the significance of those newly formed Sephardic communities.

We'll explore the movers and shakers in those communities, and consider the spread of Sephardim around the world, and into Central and Eastern Europe, the New World (including the Caribbean, North/South America).

Resources for investigating these communities and individuals will be discussed.

### **1391**

The 1391 destruction of Jewish communities across Spain gave Jews two choices: Convert or die. In Barcelona, 300-400 were murdered; Valencia, 230; Mallorca, 300; and in Lleida/Lerida, 80. Even rabbis converted under pressure. Some left for North Africa; others went north into France and neighboring countries.

The massacre encouraged many to go to North Africa, mostly Algeria and Tunisia, with a minority to Morocco.

### **REASONS FOR 1492 EXPULSION**

Fray Alonso de Espina was the first Old Christian who attributed secret Jewish practices of the conversos to inherited genetics.

Reasons: The Jews would pervert the New Christians and the Catholic royalty needed money to fight wars.

Espina wrote that Jews were a cancer that needed to be extinguished. The decision was to expel the Jews but take their wealth, under the pretext of a religious conversion. Don Isaac Abravanel, Isabel's financier, leaves for Italy – does not convert. Abraham Senior, court Rabbi, does convert, and becomes Fernando Perez Coronel.

### **NUMBERS OF JEWS** (different writers, different numbers)

Crown of Castille: 75,000-80,000 or 100,000-110,000 Jews in a general population of 4 million.

Crown of Aragon: 10,000-12,000 in a general population of 800,000.

Tudela, Pamplona and elsewhere in Navarra: 200-250 families

Abravanel: 300,000

Abraham Zacuto: 150,000-200,000

Munzer: 100,000 families

Inquisition aimed at restrictions on conversos, that Jews continued to judaize the New Christians.

Before 1492, there were two partial expulsions:

1483: Sevilla, Cordoba and Jaen

1486L Zaragoza, Albarracin and Teruel

Inquisition begins on 14 November 1492, in Avila, two weeks after the fall of Granada.

The program will not go into the actual tortures carried out. There were many, each more horrible than the last, with some resources describing a dozen or more in graphic detail.

Again, it is not really important if the number of converted was 150,000 or 800,000. What is important is that the faithful were cut off from their ancestors' faith, culture, language and traditions; and with the loss of their names and their identity.

Those who left Spain formed communities around the world. They established the New World.

In 1484, a famous Italian Rabbi, Bertinoro, visited Egypt and wrote that some 50 anusim families were living there, all repented of their former apostasy.

Catalan-speaking Jews of Crown of Aragon left the Peninsula and Balearic Islands after 1391. A century later, they were hit by the avalanche of 1492 refugees.

### **1492**

They went north across the Pyrenees into Southern France. From Cadiz to North Africa. Others to London and Bristol. To the Low Countries (Brussels, Antwerp) and in the Netherlands to Amsterdam, Emden, Haarlem, The Hague, Rotterdam, Ostend. To Hamburg and Altona, Frankfurt, Vienna, Cracow, Warsaw.

Groups from Cataluña, Valencia, Mallorca and Aragon went to Sicily, Sardinia and Napoli, and maintained commercial ties to Genoa, Parma, Pisa, Ferrara, Venice, Florence and Rome.

From Castille, some went to Portugal (limited time) and took refuge in Galicia.

From Andalucia to North Africa and to Tangier and Tetuan. Larache, Xauen, Casablanca, Fez, Meknes, Marrakesh, Algeria (Tlemecen and Oran) and Tunisia, to Morocco (Azamor and Safi). In 1391, a minority went to Morocco; in 1492, it was the majority. Some 30,000 went to North Africa.

To the Ottoman Empire, establishing communities in Edirne, Izmir, Salonica, Castoria, Bursa, Galipoli, Tokat, Patras, Lepanto, Larisa, Valona, Monastir/Bitola, Skopje, Janina, Sirls, Corfu, Chios and elsewhere.

### **COMMUNITIES IN 1391 AND 1492**

Communities covered will include

Sicily  
Italy  
Amsterdam  
Hamburg  
Vienna  
Ottoman Empire  
North Africa  
North America  
Central America  
South America  
Caribbean  
Romania  
Russian Empire  
Middle East  
India

The long arm of the Inquisition as it reached into some communities will also be covered.

**Remember that the last person  
burned at the stake  
by the Inquisition  
was in 1821  
in Mexico City.**

The trauma of the events of 1391, 1492 and subsequent events is still alive in the descendants of those whose ancestors were caught up in historical events.