

From the Black Death to the End of the Expulsions



1. Massacre of Jews, "poisoners of wells," as seen by Engelhart of Haselbach. *The Egar Chronicle*,

Around the year 1300, both France and England expelled their Jewish populations. Between the middle of the fourteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries, southern and central Europe evicted the Jews residing there.

The Black Death plague was followed by successive expulsions, burnings at the stake, and collective imprisonments – the largest wave of persecutions since the massacres of the Crusades. But the same towns

which had driven out their Jews were soon forced to reinstate them in the course of reconstruction, although often under humiliating conditions which greatly reduced their status. Between 1450 and 1520, however, about ninety German cities expelled the Jews yet again. It appears that periods of renewed growth, during which the Jews were rendered economically marginal, were as bad for them as times of recession, during which they were perceived as scapegoats.

Marking the end of the era of expulsions in 1520 is basically correct, but is also to some extent arbitrary. The process of eliminating the Jewish presence in German lands was carried out piecemeal because of the fragmentation of the Empire. In fact, over the next fifty years the territorial princes in the German Empire, consolidating their rule over the cities, continued the policy of expulsion. It was only towards the end of the sixteenth century that changes in attitudes reversed this trend, permitting the resettlement of Jews in western Europe.

Whether a Jewish presence should be eliminated or tolerated was a question closely linked to perceptions of usury. In places which welcomed Jews, such as the towns of central and northern Italy during the second half of the fourteenth century, they were invited by communes or governments to fulfill the role of moneylenders, providing short-term loans to a poverty-stricken population. Charging interest was prohibited to Christians and reserved for Jews because it was defined by Christian ethics as an exaction, something permissible only to an enemy whose possessions and even person could be rightfully attacked.

This was an ambivalent justification for tolerating Jews: on the one hand it corresponded to market demands, on the other – it exposed the Jews to popular hostility. The established orders of society therefore considered it their responsibility to "protect" them. Yet even the great German humanist Johann Reuchlin, for example, despite opposing the confiscation of Hebrew books and regarding the Jews as "co-citizens" on the basis of Roman law, did not operate in any way to stop their persecution. He shared contemporary prejudices and supported the basic alternatives offered to the Jews: either to improve (i.e., convert to Christianity) or be expelled. And jurists who endorsed the charging of interest by Jews were forced to present it as a necessary evil. A frequently used analogy was that, in the same manner that it was expedient to authorize and to control the activities of prostitutes in order to defend the institution of marriage and prevent homosexuality, it was necessary to agree to Jewish moneylending under an official license in order to prevent the corruption of Christians. But the growing aspirations for social reform and a world free of vice led to an increased demand to extirpate the sin of usury altogether. Thus, moralistic religious fervor and the desire to remove the Jews from society sometimes overcame all considerations of economic expediency.

The Black Death in Europe

Temporary return of Jews to France

The Simon of Trent affair

Expulsion from Spain

1348

1361

1475

1492



2. Glandolfo d'Asti, *Martyrdom of Simon of Trent*. Oil, late 15th century.

1348–1520



Expulsion from Provence

1500–1501

1348–1349: The Black Death. Massacres in Provence and in Catalonia cause more deaths than the plague. In September 1348 the Jews of Chillon on Lake Geneva are arrested and “confess” to causing the plague by poisoning the wells in an attempt to destroy Christianity. Massacres in 1349 throughout northern Europe. The patricians of Strasbourg attempt to defend the Jews, but the establishment of a regime led by craftsmen is immediately followed by the burning of Jews on February 14, 1349. In Nordhausen (Thuringia) the Jews prepare for martyrdom and, led by their rabbi, throw themselves into the flames.

1348, February: The Cortes of Alcalá adopts a law introduced by Alfonso XI of Castile prohibiting moneylending by Jews and encouraging them to acquire real estate. The law will be revoked in 1351.

July 4, September 26: Bulls of Pope Clement VI denounce the accusations which ascribe the plague to a Jewish plot.

1349: Clement VI prohibits Flagellant

processions which reach alarming proportions during the plague.

1354, December: An appeal by Jewish leaders in Catalonia and Valencia to the King of Aragon and to the Pope to help improve relations between Jews and Christians.

1361: King Charles V orders the recall of the Jews to France for a limited period.

1366–1369: Massacres of Jews in Castile during a civil war.

1370: An accusation of theft and desecration of the Host in Brussels; local Jews are burned at the stake. A cult of the miraculous Host will develop in the town in the 15th century in relation to this affair.

1378: *Il Pecorone*, a collection of stories by the Florentine writer Giovanni Fiorentino; the principal source for Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*.

1382: The reign of Charles VI begins with anti-Jewish outbreaks in Paris and Rome.

1385: An agreement between Emperor Wenceslaus and 38 German towns: a moratorium on most debts owed to Jewish

The Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn controversy

1507

moneylenders; city councils are to benefit from the money owed to the Jews.

1394, September 17: Final expulsion of the Jews from France.

1418: Pope Martin V revokes the anti-Jewish bull of Pope Benedict XIII; he also condemns the Franciscan campaign in Italy against the “usurious” Jews.

1421: The crusade against the Hussites. An anonymous Hebrew chronicle from the second half of the 15th century presents the King of Bohemia, Wenceslaus IV, as a disciple of Rabbi Avigdor Kara, and Huss himself as a Judaizer, yet complains of the iconoclasm and attacks on priests perpetrated by the Hussites.

1437: Cosimo de’ Medici invites Jewish moneylenders to settle in Florence; they will be expelled with the fall of the Medici in 1494.

1475: The Jews of Trent are accused of the ritual murder of a Christian infant named Simon; the libelous affair leads to the expulsion of Jews from the town.

Expulsion from Regensburg

1519

1475–1495: Anti-Jewish outbreaks in many towns in Provence. After its annexation to the kingdom of France in 1481, Jews are expelled from Arles (1493) and Tarascon (1496).

1500–1501: Edicts of expulsion of the Jews from Provence.

1507: The apostate Pfefferkorn demands the confiscation of the Talmud; Reuchlin takes on the defense of Hebrew writings. The polemic becomes the occasion for an open confrontation between the humanists and the “obscurantists.”

1509–1516: When Venetian territories are invaded by the armies of the League of Cambrai, Jews from the mainland are admitted into the town. In 1516 the government of Venice encloses the Jews in a walled quarter (*getto* or *ghetto*) situated near a foundry.

1519, February 21: Expulsion of the Jews from Regensburg. After 1550 the only remaining important Jewish communities in German lands are Frankfort and Worms.

Marranos, Conversos, New Christians

The year 1391 was a major turning point in Jewish history, for it inaugurated the era of the *anusim* ("forced converts"). In the summer of that year a wave of riots swept over Spain, from Andalusia in the south, to Catalonia and Majorca in the north-east. This was the Iberian version of urban and peasant revolts which plagued all of Europe in the late fourteenth century. However, in Spain this social unrest also marked the end of the *convivencia* – the relatively-peaceful cohabitation of three civilizations. During the riots, Jewish quarters were attacked, hundreds of Jews massacred, synagogues destroyed, and many thousands were forced to convert. The agitation which activated the riots of 1391 remained endemic, breaking out again



1. Torture chamber of the Inquisition. Engraving from the Atlas van Stolk, Rotterdam, 1783.

in 1412–1418 when the infamous friar Vicente Ferrer incited people to finish off what they had begun twenty years earlier.

The anti-pope Benedict XIII, hoping to impress all Christendom by accomplishing the conversion of Spanish Jewry, organized, in cooperation with the King of Aragon, a spectacular Christian-Jewish "disputation" in Tortosa, which from the outset was a missionary attack upon the Jews, carried out under threats and intimidation. Throughout the two years of this disputation, preachers everywhere incited the population to force Jews to convert. While theologians promised converts immediate acceptance to the fold as faithful Catholics, the Crown wished to secure the integration of the New Christians and to align their social status with that

of "Old" Christians. The combination of intimidation with the promise of integration was indeed difficult to resist. Members of the Jewish intellectual elite, inclined to a certain philosophical indifference towards the external manifestations of religion, could thus justify their acceptance of baptism. Some apostates, with the zeal of neophytes, became ardent and sometimes vicious propagandists for Christianity. Others, on the other hand, tried to maintain an outward adherence to Christianity, while secretly clinging to their old faith. Thus, by the mid-fifteenth century, New Christians outnumbered those who continued to profess Judaism despite persecution and temptation.

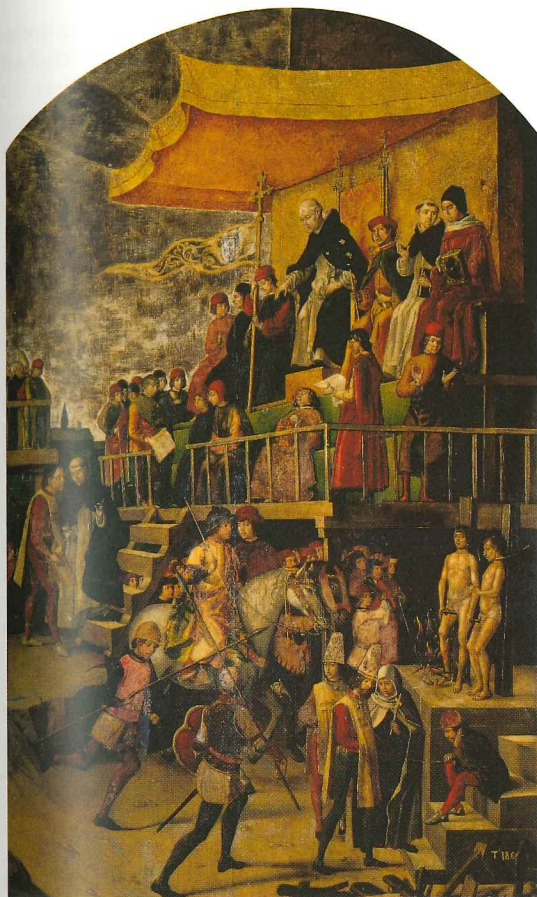
Many Conversos benefited from this "proto-emancipation," swiftly rising in the ecclesiastical or political hierarchies. Mobilization of their cultural legacy and pent-up energies, the tenacity typical of men long subjected to conditional acceptance, and the swiftness by which they moved to the centers of power and prestige, all rendered the Conversos more conspicuous. Individual success and promotion therefore created a situation which undermined the intended result of collective effacement. Furthermore, the religious fervor of over-zealous converts produced a reaction of revulsion in the "Old" Christians who found such emotional manifestations unnatural and unnecessary. On the other hand, the "Judaizers" – Christians who secretly adhered to their former religion, named Marranos (a term of abuse probably derived from the Spanish word for "swine") – obviously aroused suspicion and hostility.

Before long, Spanish Christians generalized their envy and suspicion: all New Christians, they believed, enjoyed riches and high-ranking social positions; was this not adequate proof of their collective treachery? Such feelings motivated the rebels against the royal authority who seized power in Toledo in 1449 and introduced the first statute of "purity of blood," and the same resentments led to the attacks on Conversos in Castilian towns in 1471. Clearly, the "problem" of New Christians was becoming acute and creating disorder. Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic Monarchs, in the midst of the process of unifying Spain and centralizing its government, felt compelled to resolve it. Yet the 1478 decision to establish a new Inquisition was not necessarily inevitable. Prominent members of the open-minded cultured elites advised against it, believing that the residual attachment of some Conversos to their former religion was bound to disappear in time, with their complete integration. The Inquisition, however, was established nonetheless.

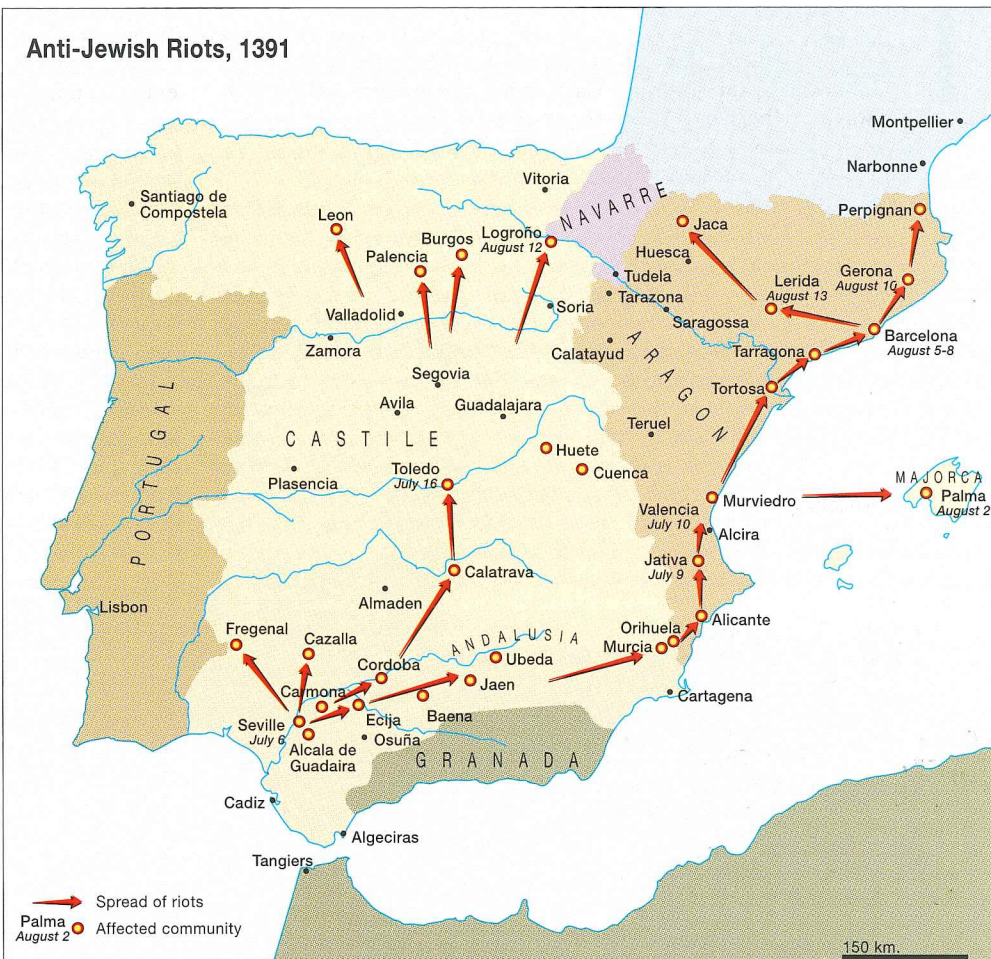
When the Spanish Inquisition began operating in 1481, the phenomenon it was determined to abolish was by no means an imaginary one. The inquisitors were sincerely concerned with saving the souls of "sinners" by separating Judaizers from true Christians; but as they tended to see duplicity and plots everywhere, none of the New Christians were safe from suspicion and persecution.

Outbreaks against Jews	Disputation of Tortosa	"Purity of Blood" statute in Toledo	Marriage of the Catholic Monarchs	The Inquisition
1391	1413–1414	1449	1469	1478
<p>1391: Anti-Jewish violence throughout the Iberian peninsula, except for Portugal and Navarre.</p> <p>1391 (or 1390). July 21: Conversion of Solomon Halevi, one of the leaders of Spanish Jewry, who assumes the name Pablo de Santa Maria; he later becomes Bishop of Burgos and Chancellor to the King of Castile. Joshua Lorki writes to Pablo de Santa Maria rejecting the latter's interpretation of the messianic role of Jesus; Lorki himself, however, converted in 1412, and became one of the leading Christian protagonists in the disputation of Tortosa.</p> <p>1412: The laws of Valladolid directed against the Jews; the laws, formulated by Vicente Ferrer, were intended to hasten the conversion of the Jews.</p> <p>1413. February 7: Opening of the disputation of Tortosa initiated by the anti-pope Benedict XIII; the first sessions revolved around the nature of the Messiah.</p> <p>Early 1414: A wave of conversions.</p> <p>April-May: During the second part of the</p>	<p>disputation of Tortosa, discussion of the "errors and blasphemies" in the Talmud.</p> <p>1415. May: Decree of Benedict XIII ordering the expurgation of the Talmud.</p> <p>1434: Alonso de Cartagena, Pablo de Santa Maria's son who succeeded his father as Bishop of Burgos, makes a speech at the Council of Basle praising the virtues of the Castilian nation, which has forsaken riches in order to fight "divine wars."</p> <p>1449. January 27: A revolt against taxation in Toledo develops into attacks on rich Converso merchants. The rebel leaders take over the town.</p> <p>June 5: The council of Toledo adopts a statute proclaiming that Conversos and their issue are not to hold any public office in the city; this is the first act of "racial" discrimination against New Christians.</p> <p>September 24: Pope Nicholas V's bull denouncing the Toledan statute: "all Catholics constitute one body in Christ."</p> <p>End of October: Fernan Diaz writes a memorandum explaining that the Toledan</p>	<p>statute was impossible to implement since "mixed" marriages between members of the aristocracy and families of Conversos were so frequent that any attempt to discriminate against men of Jewish descent would affect the entire upper class.</p> <p>1450: Pedro de la Cavailleria, of Jewish descent, writes an anti-Jewish polemic entitled <i>The Zeal of Christ against the Jews, Saracens and Infidels</i>; in his effort to prove Christian dogmas, the author makes use of material from the Kabbalah.</p> <p>1451. November: In response to a demand made by King John II, Pope Nicholas V approves in principle the establishment of an Inquisition tribunal in Castile.</p> <p>1460: Juan Arias Davila, son of converso Diego Arias, who was Henry IV's treasurer, becomes bishop of Segovia.</p> <p>1460–1467: A Papal Inquisition in Valencia conducts numerous trials against Conversos suspected of Judaizing.</p> <p>1465: A solemn and secret ceremony of admitting a Converso back to Judaism</p>	<p>(accompanied by circumcision), conducted by Abraham Bilago, one of the most original thinkers in Aragon.</p> <p>June 5: Henry IV of Castile is deposed and replaced by his half-brother Alfonso; the adversaries of the deposed king include the demand to reinforce the Inquisition.</p> <p>1467: Renewed riots in Toledo; renewal of the statute of 1449.</p> <p>1473. March: Attacks on Conversos in Cordoba and other towns in Andalusia; an edict in Cordoba prohibits New Christians from serving in public office.</p> <p>1478. November 1: A bull of Pope Sixtus IV invests Ferdinand and Isabella with extraordinary powers to appoint inquisitors in every part of Castile. In 1482 the same pope will condemn the excessive harshness of the Spanish Inquisition.</p> <p>1480. September 24: The Catholic Kings appoint Dominicans Juan de San Martin and Miguel de Morillo as inquisitors.</p> <p>October: Establishment of the Inquisition tribunal in Seville.</p>	

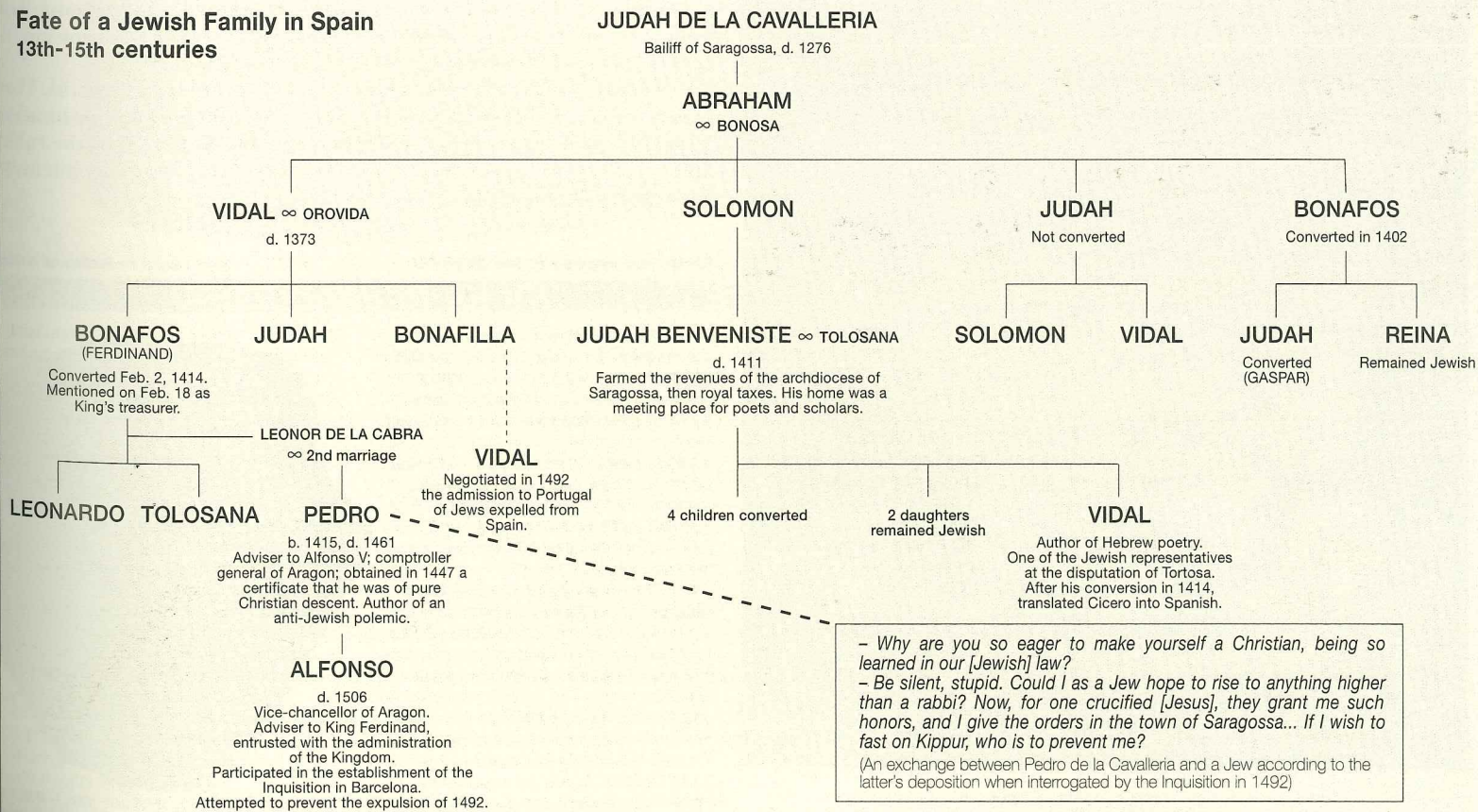
1391-1481



2. Pedro de Berruguete (1450-1503), Auto-da-Fé.



Fate of a Jewish Family in Spain 13th-15th centuries



The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain

Early in 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella completed the *Reconquista* of Spain by defeating Granada, the last Muslim principality in the Iberian peninsula. At the end of that year Columbus informed the Spanish monarchs that he had discovered “the Indies.” In between these two momentous events, the Catholic Kings signed the decree of expulsion of the Jews. The decision to banish the Jews was the culmination of a policy of repression adopted in Spain since the 1470s, a policy most clearly expressed by the establishment of a new Inquisition between 1478 and 1480, charged with the task of preventing “Judai-



1. Passover Haggadah: the Hebrews fleeing from slavery pursued by the Egyptians. Catalonia, second half of 14th century.

zation” among Christians. But was the expulsion decree a predictable and inevitable consequence of such a policy?

The Spanish inquisitors were indeed advocates of a “radical” solution: so long as there was a large and active Jewish community on Spanish soil, they said, all the Inquisition’s attempts to deter and punish Judaizing Christians would be of no avail. The Jews were presumed responsible for the obduracy of the Marranos, who continued to practice Judaism clandestinely; the Jews were the ones who enticed New Christians back to their old faith. The Catholic Kings, on the other hand, were at first not inclined to bow to the inquisitors’ directives. For quite some time they attempted to pursue the traditional policy of protecting both New

Christians and Jews. Not only a respect for precedent and a fear of disorder dictated this policy, but above all – material interest: the Jewish elites were, after all, indispensable to the economy of Spain.

Nevertheless, the Inquisition, genuinely convinced of the justness of its cause and obsessed with its own fears, was determined to attain its ends. In 1490–1491 it fabricated evidence of a Marrano-Jewish conspiracy, an allegation which made it possible to posit the expulsion of the Jews as a legitimate act of self-defense. No doubt, it was only the religious elation following the fall of Granada that persuaded the Spanish kings to agree to this extreme measure. Written by the Inquisition, signed by the sovereigns in March, and proclaimed a month later, the edict of expulsion ordered the Jews to leave Spain by the end of July. The great exodus proved such a terrible spectacle that even Spanish and Italian chroniclers who harbored no particular sympathy for the Jews, could not refrain from expressing horror and shock.

Most of the Jews found refuge in neighboring Portugal. Four years later the King of Portugal, under pressure by the Catholic Kings, proclaimed his own edict of expulsion. As the departures began, however, he reconsidered. His young and over-extended empire could not afford to lose a population which was so beneficial to the economy. He therefore decided to keep the Jews in the country by turning them into legal Christians. In 1497 all Jewish children were abducted and forcibly baptized; then the adults were assembled, ceremoniously baptized and declared equal citizens of the realm. In 1499 he withheld from these New Christians the right to emigrate. These blunt, uncompromising measures, however, did not lead to genuine integration: these converts continued to be regarded as Jews. Provoked by the plague and new taxes, riots in Lisbon in 1506 were accompanied by a massacre of New Christians. The Portuguese Crown was then forced to take this useful but victimized group under its protection, thus establishing with the *Conversos* the same kind of relationship that had existed between rulers and Jews in the Middle Ages.

In sixteenth-century Spain, “liberal” circles advocated an open policy towards the *Conversos*, believing that the superficial vestiges of their Jewish identity would eventually disappear. When the Jewish community was finally eradicated, the Inquisition was convinced that the New Christians had been completely integrated. Thus, by the 1520s or 1530s, the problem of “Judaizing” in Spain was practically resolved.

Nonetheless, the New Christians remained an integral part of Jewish history. Some *Conversos* found solace in the private sphere of literary creation; others sought refuge in ardent Christian piety. All these characteristics still set them apart from the “Old” Christian society and exposed them to various forms of discrimination. In some respects, the Jewish experience in early-modern Spain anticipated the dilemmas of emancipation which modern western Jewry was to face centuries later.

First auto-da-fé in Seville

February 6, 1481

1460: In a work entitled *Fortress of the Faith*, Alfonso de Spina becomes the spokesman for “radical antisemitism”; he proposes the establishment of a new Inquisition, denounces the “atrocious crimes” of the Jews, and cites the example of expulsions from other lands as precedents for the legitimacy and expediency of expelling the Jews and extirpating the “Jewish heresy.”

1481: In an open letter to Cardinal Mendoza, royal secretary Hernando del Pulgar criticizes the actions of the Inquisition in Seville and proposes an alternative policy of “Christian education.” In response, a defender of the Inquisition argues that the need to extirpate heresy justifies the occasional “stains” and persecution of innocents.

February 6: First auto-da-fé in Seville.

1483. January 1: Expulsion of the Jews of Andalusia.

October: Torquemada, Inquisitor General of Castile, is appointed Inquisitor General of Aragon; the entire Spanish Inquisition is henceforth under a single authority.

Torquemada is General Inquisitor

October 1483

1484: First “instructions” for the Inquisition operations are issued by Torquemada.

1485. September 15: In Saragossa the inquisitor Pedro de Arbués is assassinated in the cathedral (he will be canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867).

1486. May: The general chapter of the Hieronymite Order investigates Judaizing practices in its monasteries, and decides to prohibit the admission of New Christians. The General of the Order, who objected to the decision, is replaced. The Catholic Kings obtain a revocation of the rule, but in 1495 Pope Alexander VI ratifies a statute which prohibits the admission of all New Christians down to the fourth generation.

1488: The book *Alboraque* is written by an author close to Torquemada. The term “alboraque” signifies New Christians, portrayed neither as Christians nor Jews; they resemble the monstrosity of Borak, Muhammad’s beast, which was neither horse nor mule. The *Conversos* have no place within a Christian society; being

Fall of Granada

January 2, 1492



2. Alonso de Mena, the Catholic Kings. Royal Chapel, Granada, c.1630–1632.

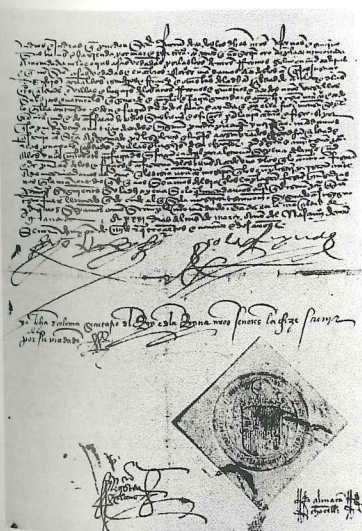
1492

Spain, January-August 1492



Decree of Expulsion

March 31, 1492

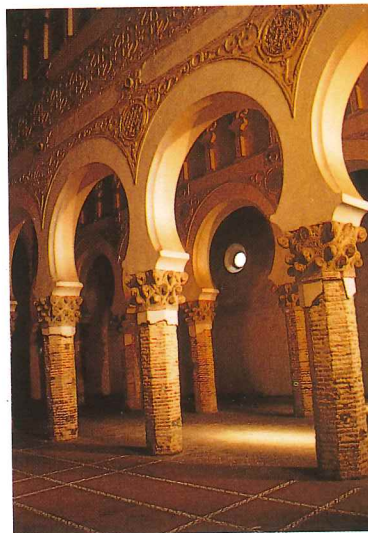


Departure of Christopher Columbus

August 3, 1492

heretics, disloyal, and lazy, they can neither pray, fight, nor work.
1490. December 17: In Avila a trial takes place concerning the "child of La Guardia": Jews and *Conversos* are accused of crucifying a child and performing acts of sorcery designed to bring about the destruction of Christianity.
1492. January 2: The Catholic Kings enter Granada.
March 20: A plan for the expulsion of the Jews is presented to the Kings by Torquemada.
March 31: The Catholic Kings sign the edict of expulsion.
April 29: Publication of the edict.
August: Last departures of Jews.
August 3: Christopher Columbus sets sail from Palos.
1493. January 12: Last date set for the departure of the Jews from Sicily.

3. Edict of expulsion, bearing seal and signature of the Catholic Kings. Granada, March 31, 1492.



Decree of Expulsion from Portugal

December 5, 1496

1496. December 5: Edict of expulsion of the Jews from Portugal.
1497. April-October: Expulsion from Portugal "commuted" to forced conversion.
1504-1508, 1516-1522: Two periods of crisis in Spain - one following the death of Isabella, and the other between the death of Ferdinand and the crushing of the *Comuneros'* revolt, when strong objections are raised against the Inquisition.
1506. April: Attacks on New Christians in Lisbon.
1507. March 1: A law establishing "civil equality" between Old and New Christians in Portugal.
June: Diego Deza, a General Inquisitor known for the atrocities committed under his auspices, is dismissed and replaced by Ximenes de Cisneros.
1510. November: Partial expulsion of the Jews from the Kingdom of Naples.

4. The Church of Santa Maria la Blanca, formerly a synagogue. Toledo, 13th century.

The Marrano Diaspora



1. Ex-libris used by Manasseh ben Israel between 1635 and 1650.

Portugal, pressured by Spain to rid itself of its Jewish population but reluctant to lose economic benefits, chose in 1497 to solve the problem by mass conversion rather than by expulsion. But, by creating a large class of New Christians, the Portuguese authorities now had to contend with the emergence of Crypto-Judaism, a problem for which they were ill-equipped. The model of the Spanish Inquisition offered a “solution.”

The establishment of the Portuguese Inquisition between 1536 and 1539 accelerated the exodus of New Christians from the Iberian peninsula, a tide which frequent prohibitions on emigration could not stem. Some of the emigrants went to join the prosperous communities in the Ottoman Empire where they could openly return to Judaism. Many others, however, preferred to remain in western Europe either for economic and social reasons, or simply in order to stay in familiar surroundings. The Conversos who settled in Catholic countries outside the control of Spain and Portugal were not completely free from molestation, and depended on the good will of rulers for protection. In France they had to maintain some semblance of Catholicism for more than two centuries, but their Jewishness was an open secret. Thus, there was now a diaspora of men and women for whom Judaism, although retained as an identifying frame of reference, was reduced to a private ceremonial practice. In Protestant places too, many Marranos continued this double life long after these areas had broken ties with Rome. It was only at the very end of the sixteenth century that Jewish communities of former Marranos, unambiguously returned to their Jewish identity, were constituted in certain European Mediterranean and Atlantic port cities.

There was no Marrano presence in Amsterdam until the 1590s and, although they openly practiced Judaism almost from the moment of their arrival, they had to wait until 1615 for Jewish settlement to be officially authorized. Thanks to the Marranos, Amsterdam became one of the greatest Jewish centers in the seventeenth century and a haven for persecuted Jews from other places. The most remarkable feature of this community was the ease and swiftness with which erstwhile Marranos shed their Christian identity and returned to full intellectual, religious and communal Jewish life. On the other hand, the Marrano experience composed of dissimulation, double life and split personality, grafted upon the “philosophical” tendency of Spanish Jewry, produced a wide variety of dissidence, libertarianism, and individualistic free thinkers. The Amsterdam community was therefore split by tensions between the orthodox rabbis on the one hand, and an influential group of intellectuals of critical inclinations on the other hand.

The ferment aroused by Shabbetai Zevi in the mid-seventeenth century can be explained in part by Marrano history. Shabbatean messianism could be seen as a form of penitential catharsis, a way to appease the guilt which was still plaguing those who had been forced to lead a double life. Shabbetai Zevi’s apostasy, explained by his followers as an outward submission to evil in order to carry on his mission of redemption from within, could be interpreted to endow the Marranos’ humiliating past experience with a glorified mystical significance. Both these trends, the philosophical and the mystical, were the routes by which many Jews of Marrano origin distanced themselves from orthodox Judaism.

The Portuguese Inquisition

1536

Religious liberty in Venice

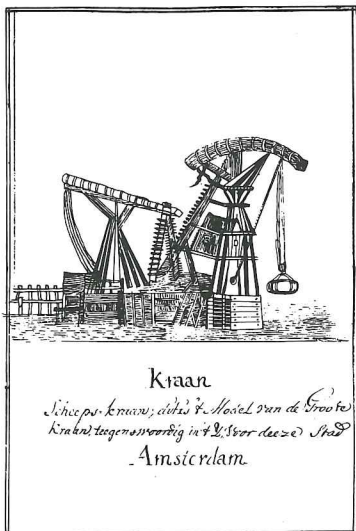
1589

Beginning of the Amsterdam community

1595–1600

Rembrandt, *The Synagogue*

1648



1525–1528: David Reuveni’s stay in Portugal; presenting himself as an ambassador from the kingdom of the Lost Tribes, Reuveni was regarded by New Christians in Portugal as a harbinger of the Messiah.

1536. May: Pope Paul III institutes the Portuguese Inquisition.

1547. July: The Church of Toledo adopts a “purity of blood” statute.

1550. August: Letters patent of Henri II allowing Portuguese New Christians to settle in France.

1589: Venice accords full liberty of religious practice to former Marranos from Spain and Portugal.

1595–1600: Beginning of a Jewish presence in Amsterdam.

1615: Hugo Grotius presents his report concerning the admission of Jews to the

2. David Franco Mendes’ multilingual marine dictionary (French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish). Amsterdam, 1780.

Estates of Holland.

1621: With the renewal of the war against the United Provinces, Spain prohibits all traffic with Dutch nationals; about a quarter of Amsterdam Jews (between 300 to 500 persons) whose livelihood depended on the import of goods from the Portuguese colonial empire, leave Amsterdam and settle in Hamburg.

1627: After the bankruptcy which ruined many Genoese bankers, Count-Duke Olivares, Philip IV’s all-powerful minister, recalls “New Christian” Portuguese financiers. His fall in 1643 also leads to their downfall.

1639: Founding of a unified Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam.

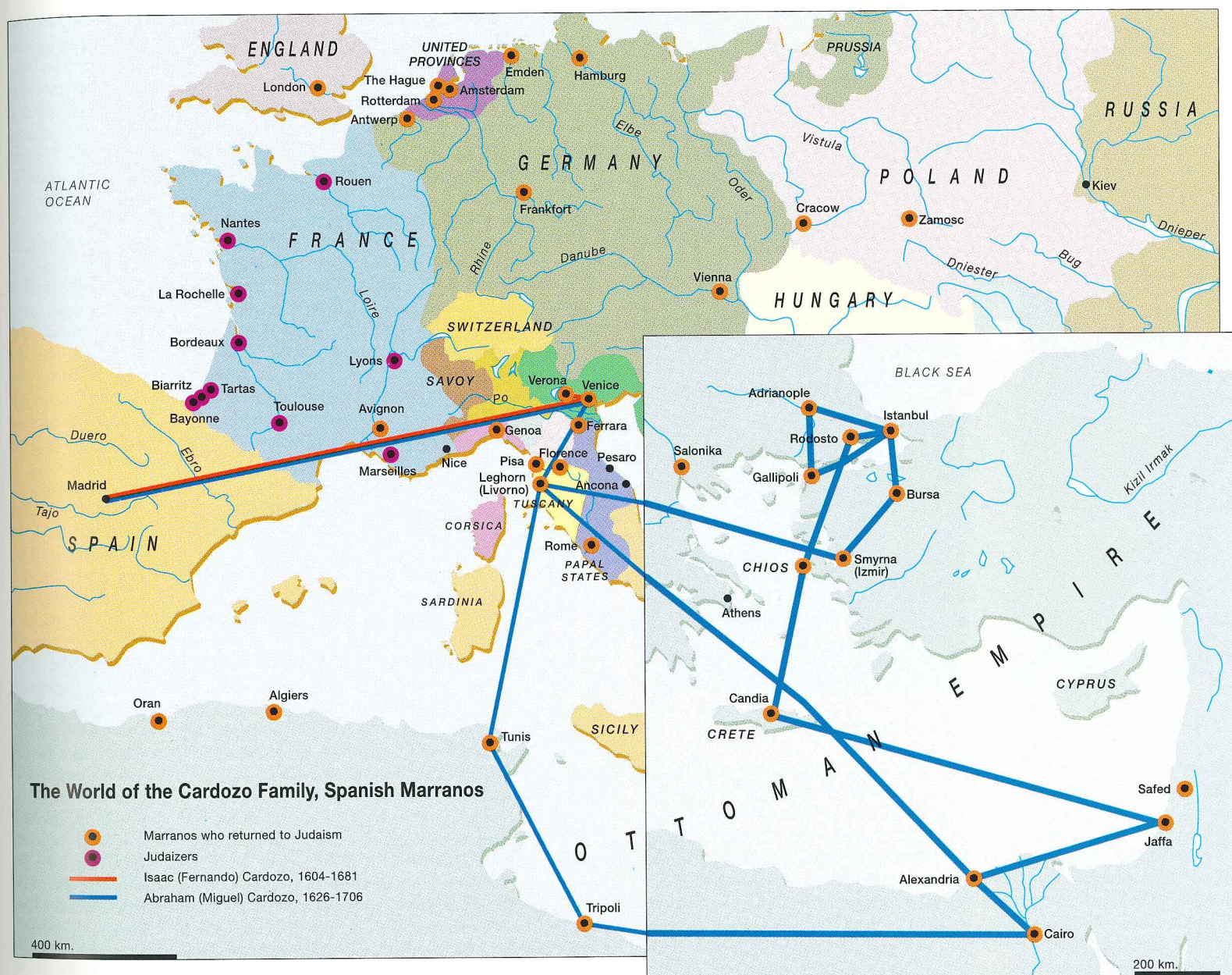
1640. April: Suicide of Uriel da Costa, a Portuguese Marrano who had returned to Judaism, but to a heterodox faith which led to his excommunication by the rabbis of the Amsterdam community.

1648: Fleeing the Spanish Inquisition, brothers Fernando and Miguel Cardozo,



3. Marriage contract (Kettubah), Rome, 1627.

16th-18th Centuries



Spinoza's excommunication

1656

physicians of Marrano-Portuguese origin, arrive in Venice. Returning to Judaism, they each take a different route: the first brother, now named Isaac, becomes an adherent of rationalist Judaism, hostile to the Kabbalah and to Shabbateanism; the second, Abraham, becomes an apostle of the false messiah from Izmir.

1650: Manasseh ben Israel, *Hope of Israel*.

1656. July 27: Excommunication of Baruch Spinoza.

1684: A theological "amicable discussion" between Orbio de Castro and Philippe van Limborch, one of the leading representatives of liberal Arminian Calvinism in Amsterdam. In 1687 he publishes a written version of the discussion, with an appendix containing Uriel da Costa's *Autobiography*; in reference to Da Costa's case, he denounces the right to excommunicate accorded to the Jewish community as permission to maintain "a state within a state."

1687: Posthumous publication of Uriel da Costa's *Exemplar Humanae Vitae*.

Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*

1670

1703: David Nieto, rabbi of the Sephardi community of London, is accused of Spinozism.

1707: Moses Khaghiz, emissary of the Jewish communities in the Holy Land, visits Amsterdam. Some of his interlocutors reject the notion of the special merit attached to residing in the Land of Israel, and see no point in a "return" except for "the poor Jews of Poland, Germany, and Turkey."

1723: Letters patent accorded to the Portuguese of Bordeaux, for the first time addressed explicitly as Jews.

1762: In his *Apology for the Jewish Nation*, Isaac de Pinto, an economist and philosopher of Portuguese-Marrano origin, attacks Voltaire's anti-Jewish remarks, calling him to admit that he "owes an apology to the Jews, to truth, and to his century."

4. The Portuguese synagogue (left) and the Ashkenazi synagogue (right) in Amsterdam, as they were in Spinoza's lifetime.

Isaac de Pinto's controversy with Voltaire

1762

