

# History of the spanish inquisition



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Throughout the history of the universe, and especially in the middle ages, mankind hampered the development of their own progress, not giving people freedom and covering with the religion and moral human principles. Until now, we are faced with this situation, discussing the challenges of new inventions in science and non-traditional views in society.

In history, there are so many examples of this braking, and all of them are characterized by their essence, decision, prerequisites, and results. One of these examples, which are distinguished by their brutality, foolishness, and uselessness that occurred in those ages is the time of the dual events of the European Inquisition and its most brutal example of the Spanish Inquisition that is considered to be the most deadly and bloody Inquisitions in history. According to Lemieux, “ The Spanish Inquisition is commonly associated with torture, cruelty and oppression; and it is often seen as a forerunner of the secret police of modern dictatorships” (44).

Thus, this paper introduces the development of the Spanish Inquisition and its main postulates. It presents the concept of the Inquisition, the start of the Spanish Inquisition, and its functioning.

The Inquisition or the Holy Tribunal was an establishment of the Roman Catholic Church, which had the main aims to conduct a manhunt, judge and punish the heretics. The term of the Inquisition exists for a long time, but it had no special meaning until the XIII century, and the church has not used it for the value of that branch of its work, which was intended to prosecute the heretics. The development of persecution is in close dependence on certain

general provisions of the Christian faith, which is influenced by the aspirations of the medieval papacy.

A person can find salvation only in the faith. Hence, duties of Christians and especially church ministers are to direct non-believers to the path of salvation. If a persuasion or preaching is inefficient, if the unbelievers persist in refusing to accept the teachings of the church, then they create a temptation for others and endanger their salvation. That is why it was necessary to remove them from the community of believers, first by excommunication, and then through imprisonment or burning at the stake. Speaking about tortures, Kamen stated that " Like all judicial tribunals, the Inquisition used it; but most of the excruciating types of torture to be seen in engravings exist only in the artists' imagination" (38).

There are three successive periods of development in the history of the Inquisition: 1) the prosecution of the heretics to the XIII century, 2) the Dominican Inquisition in 1229, and 3) the Spanish Inquisition since 1480. In the first period, a trial over the heretics included a part of various functions of episcopal authority, and the persecution had a temporary and occasional character. In the second period, the inquisitorial tribunals, ruling by the special jurisdiction of the Dominican monks, were created within the countries. In the third period, an inquisitional system was closely linked with a centralized monarchy in Spain. In the beginning, it served as an instrument of struggle against the Moors and Jews, and then together with the Jesuit Order, it served as a fighting force of the Catholic reaction of the XVI century against Protestantism.

The Spanish Inquisition, which arose in the XIII century as an echo of contemporary events in South France, was reborn with a new force in the end of the XV century. Furthermore, it received a new organization, and gained a huge political significance. Spain presented the most favorable conditions for the development of the Inquisition. The centuries-long struggle with the Moors facilitated the development of religious fanaticism within the community, which was successfully used by Dominicans.

There were a lot of non-Christians, namely the Jews and Moors in the areas conquered from the Moors by Christian kings of the Iberian Peninsula. The Moors and Jews who have assimilated their education were the most educated, productive and prosperous elements of the population.

Their wealth inspired people with envy and presented a temptation for that government. Moreover, Kamen admitted that “ Confiscation of property was the standard punishment prescribed by canon law for heresy” (512). Already in the late of the XIV century, the mass of the Jews and Moors were forced to take the power of Christianity, but many and after that, continued secretly to practice a religion of their fathers.

The systematic persecution by the Inquisition begins with a connection of Castile and Aragon into a single monarchy, with Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand Catholic, who reorganized the inquisitorial system. The main motive of that reorganization was not only religious fanaticism, but also a desire to take advantage of the Inquisition in order to consolidate the national unity of Spain, and to increase government revenue by seizures of convicted persons' properties.

The soul of a new Inquisition in Spain was a confessor of Isabella, the Dominican Torquemada. In 1478, the bull was obtained from Sixtus IV, which allowed " Catholic kings" to establish a new Inquisition, and in 1480 its first tribunal was established in Seville. The bull has opened its activities early next year, and by the end of this year, the number of killed heretics totally consisted of 298 innocent people.

The result of those cruel events was general panic and a huge number of complaints against a tribunal addressed to the Pope, mainly from the bishops. In response to these complaints, in 1483, Pope Sixtus IV ordered the inquisitors to follow the same rigor with respect to the heretics. A few months later, he appointed Torquemada the Inquisitor General of Castile and Aragon, who completed the transformation of the Spanish Inquisition.

In 1484, Torquemada appointed a general congress of all members of the Spanish inquisitorial tribunals in Seville. That congress established a code, regulating the inquisitional process. Since then, the case of Spain's purification from the heretics and non-Christians quickly moved forward, especially after 1492, when Torquemada ousted all Jews from Spain. The results of destructive activities of the Spanish Inquisition controlled by Torquemada, in the period from 1481 until 1498, were expressed in the following figures: about 8800 people were burned at the stake; 90, 000 people lost their properties and were subject to the ecclesiastical penalties.

Torquemada's successors, Diego-Desa and especially Jimenez, an archbishop of Toledo and a confessor of Isabella finished a religious unification in Spain. A few years later, after the conquest of Granada, the Moors were persecuted

for their faith. In 1502, they were instructed either to be baptized or to leave Spain.

The expulsion of the Jews and Moors (more than 3 million people), who were very educated, hard-working and wealthy, has caused incalculable losses to Spanish agriculture, industry and commerce. For 70 years, the figure of the Spanish population has fallen from 10 to 6 million. Jimenez has destroyed the last remains of episcopal opposition. Lane-Poole emphasized that “ A corrupt aristocracy divided the land among themselves; the great estates were tilled by a wretched and hopeless race of serfs; the citizen classes were ruined” (8).

The Inquisition was introduced in all colonies and areas depended on Spain. In all port cities, its offices served as quarantine against the entry of heresy, which disastrously affected Spanish trade. The Spanish Inquisition spread to the Netherlands and Portugal, and served as a model for Italian and French inquisitors.

A common result of the Inquisition's activity includes the following numbers: hundreds of thousands of innocent people were burned at the stake, millions of maimed and outcast people languished in the prisons, and many of them lost their properties and good names. The members of people's heretical movements, leaders of the uprising, heroes of the patriotic struggle, philosophers and natural scientists, humanists and educators, opponents of the papacy and the feudal order were among those victims.

To sum up the above-mentioned information, it is possible to draw a conclusion that the Spanish Inquisition left a bloody sign in the history of

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civilization. The massive popular movements of the XIII century were directed against the Inquisition's bigotry. The strengthening of the royal powers in several countries in Europe contributed to the restriction of the Inquisition's activities. It became an object of scathing criticism of thinkers of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. All in all, the Inquisition was abolished in the Protestant countries in the 16th century (in Spain in 1834).