

Spanish Inquisition:

To what extent was the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition a political decision?

An Extended Essay in History

13 October 2023

Word Count: 3881 words



<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Spanish-Inquisition>

Table of Contents:

<i>Significance</i>	3
<i>Historiography</i>	5
<i>Religious Causes</i>	8
<i>The Monarch's own stance</i>	10
<i>Pressure from Old Christians</i>	12
<i>Strengthening Monarchical Power</i>	13
<i>Conclusion</i>	15
<i>Bibliography</i>	17

Significance

On February 6, 1481, a somber scene unfolded in Seville. Six individuals, all prominent conversos, faced a grim fate. They stood accused of "Judaizing," reverting to their former faith and conspiring against the crown.¹ Leading the charge against these individuals was Alonso de Hojeda, a Dominican friar who had fervently championed the idea of bringing the Inquisition to Spain. Hojeda believed the converso problem was escalating, with many allegedly returning to Judaism. Given that conversos had gained influence in finance, professions, government, and even the Church, the threat was deemed serious. Hojeda's efforts culminated in the establishment of the Inquisition, with him delivering the sermon in the cathedral on that fateful February day. The condemned were then led beyond the city walls to the "quemadero" on the Campo de Tablada. There, they were bound to stakes, surrounded by wood and straw, and the pyres were set alight. However, Hojeda's satisfaction in this moment was short-lived, as he succumbed to the very plague that he had initiated not long after.²

This was the first appearance of the Spanish Inquisition, initiated by Queen Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon. As whispers of heresy grew louder, the devout monarchs were bothered by the perceived threat to their faith,³ thus they appealed to the pope for the creation of the Inquisition.

Historians often accepted the Inquisition's claim that it was initiated to investigate Judaism. But apart from a handful of scattered cases, there was no clear evidence of Judaizing. New Christian

¹ Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: An Historical Revision*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014. Page 53.

² Murphy, Cullen. *God's Jury: The Inquisition and the Making of the Modern World*. Boston, 2012. Page 57.

³ Roth, Norman. *Conversos, Inquisition and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. Madison, 1995. Page 227.

writers in the mid-century had firmly denied such accusations;⁴ and Zealots such as Espina could point only to unsubstantiated rumors and allegations.⁵ The Alborayco book from those years asserted that there were hardly any heretics among conversos in northern Spain, unlike the south.⁶ As shown by these cases, it would be narrow to view the Inquisition as merely an ecclesiastical institution. Moreover, the most distinguishing feature of the Spanish Inquisition was that it no longer rested in the hands of the Pope but in the Catholic monarchs.⁷ Therefore, the focus of this paper will be: To what extent was the Spanish Inquisition's foundation a political decision?

This topic deserves investigation because the Inquisition held significant power across vast territories and played a constructive role in the formation of a unified Spanish Kingdom. The Spanish Inquisition serves as a compelling case of an institution that employed religious justifications while operating with other underlying objectives. On a broader scale, examining the rationale behind its creation sheds light on how political institutions, both in historical and contemporary contexts, may be influenced by the will of different stakeholders and deviate from its original purpose.

⁴ Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*. 4 vols. New York, 1906–7. Volume I, Page 154.

⁵ Kamen, p.52.

⁶ Netanyahu, Benzion. *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain*. New York, 1995. Page 853.

⁷ Gonzalo Martínez Díez. *Bulario de la Inquisición española, hasta la muerte de Fernando el Católico*. Madrid, 1997.

Historiography

Historiography reveals a range of perspectives and interpretations on the Catholic monarchs' motives for initiating the Spanish Inquisition.

Before the 19th century, Protestant scholars saw the Inquisition as a quintessential symbol of Catholic intolerance and abuse of ecclesiastical power. English Protestant John Foxe, in his *Book of Martyrs* of 1554, wrote of the inquisitors as “crafty” individuals using religion as a cover “for their own gain.”⁸ Another pseudonymous work, *Sanctae Inquisitionis Hispanicae Artes* (A Discovery and Plaine Declaration of sundry Subtill Practices of the Holy Inquisition of Spain) describes the cruel procedures of the Inquisition in graphic detail.⁹ However, these early accounts were highly controversial and often overlooked the motives behind the Inquisition's establishment. Foxe, for example, was often criticized for “willful falsification of evidence.”¹⁰ While these accounts provide some insight, their reliability is debatable. Therefore, this investigation places greater weight on academic sources after the nineteenth century, marked by a more scientific and evidence-based approach.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the bureaucratic details of the Inquisition were finally revealed from the inside. Juan Antonio Llorente, a former royalist secretary of the Inquisition who later aligned with Joseph's afrancesado regime, wrote *Historia Crítica de la Inquisición Española* (Critical History of the Spanish Inquisition). Llorente argued that conversos reverted to their old

⁸ Maltby, William S. *The Black Legend in England. The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558–1660*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1971. Page 35.

⁹ Lesley K. Twomey, *Faith and Fanaticism in Early Modern Spain*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1997. Page 75-76.

¹⁰ *Encyclopedia Britannica* 11th edition. Vol. 10. 1910. 770–771.

faith because the quality of preaching was poor.¹¹ This observation suggests that actual conversion was not a priority for the monarchs, so the Inquisition may have had purposes beyond eliminating heretics. However, his claims were found to be greatly exaggerated, likely driven by motives to justify the French abolition of the Inquisition and criticize its restoration under Ferdinand VII.¹²

During this period, most Spanish historians were members of the secular clergy or religious orders and approached the Inquisition from a defensive standpoint. They perceived the Inquisition as a political institution established to preserve religious purity, thus it has intermingled religious and political considerations. José Amador de los Ríos believed it served political ends for the Catholic State,¹³ Orti y Lara saw it as a tool for safeguarding Spain's national identity,¹⁴ and Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo viewed it as a fundamental instrument of the Catholic state.¹⁵

The transfer of Inquisition archives to Madrid in the early twentieth century enabled access to extensive institutional archives previously limited to a selected few. This led to a new round of inquiry into the reasons for its establishment. The most influential historian of this time was Henry Charles Lea. His *History of the Inquisition in Spain* rejected the idea that it was a political invention,

¹¹ Llorente, Juan Antonio. *Historia crítica de la Inquisición española*. 4 vols. Madrid: Ediciones Hiperón, 1980 [first published 1817]. Volume I, Page 8.

¹² Hauben, Paul. "A Critical History of the Inquisition of Spain. From the Period of its Establishment by Ferdinand V to the Reign of Ferdinand VII". *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1 May 1968.

¹³ José Amador de los Ríos, *Estudios históricos, políticos y literarios sobre los judíos de España*, Madrid, 1848.

¹⁴ Orti y Lara, Juan Manuel. "La Inquisición." 1877.

¹⁵ Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino. *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*. 8 vols. Buenos Aires, 1945 (first edn. 1880). Page 894.

arguing there was already the Santa Hermandad to restore order.¹⁶ In the context of the polarization between Protestants and Catholics during the second half of the 19th century, some of Lea's contemporaries thought Lea's work had anti-Catholic biases.¹⁷ Native historians of the mid-twentieth century predominantly examined the Inquisition as a suppressor of heresies. Then came Henry Kamen's pioneering work *The Spanish Inquisition (1965)* which challenged its role as a political tool for centralization due to the diverse nature of the institution and its limited impact on civil liberties.¹⁸ The book was very influential, provoking subsequent studies in the 1970s to try to quantify the Inquisition's activities from 1480 to 1834 by archival records. Kamen published two more books in 1985 and 2006 that incorporated new findings, still arguing for the same stance.

Jewish historians picked up where Lea left off, important advances include Yitzhak Baer's *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*,¹⁹ Cecil Roth's *History of the Marranos*, and, after World War II, the work of Haim Beinart,²⁰ who published trial transcripts of cases involving conversos for the first time. Then came *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain* by Benzion Netanyahu. It challenges the view that most conversos practiced Judaism secretly and were persecuted for their crypto-Judaism. Instead, according to Netanyahu, the persecution was fundamentally racial and was a matter of envy of their success in Spanish society, therefore the decision might be partly due to social pressure.²¹ This view has been challenged multiple times.

¹⁶ Lea, I, p.58.

¹⁷ Van Hove, Brian (12 November 1996). "A New Industry: The Inquisition". Catholic.net. Archived from the original on 5 April 2007. Retrieved 18 April 2007.

¹⁸ Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition*. White Lion, 1965.

¹⁹ Baer, Yitzhak. *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*. 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1966.

²⁰ Beinart, Haim, ed. *Records of the Trials of the Spanish Inquisition in Ciudad Real*. 3 vols. Jerusalem, 1974. *Conversos on Trial: The Inquisition in Ciudad Real*. Jerusalem, 1981.

²¹ Netanyahu, 1995, p.4.

Most historians either align with religious causes or with merely cultural ones, with no significant racial element.

Religious Causes

To assess the extent to which the establishment of the Inquisition was a political decision, we must first examine the significance of religion. Undoubtedly, the nominal justification for the Inquisition was the eradication of Judaism.²² In a letter to the pope in 1483, Ferdinand wrote: “In recent times, when neither we nor our predecessors took any measures, there was a great increase in heresy and in the risk of its spread, and many who seemed to be Christians were found to be living not simply as Christians but even as godless persons”²³

However, to determine if this was solely a religious decision, we must investigate whether conversos were secretly practicing Judaism, as any deviation from this would suggest unwarranted accusations and motives beyond religion. Henry Charles Lea presents compelling reasons for the possibility of secret Judaizing among conversos, citing the coercive nature of their conversion and the lack of proper Christian instruction they received, leaving deep-seated Jewish traditions intact. This manifested in the open continuation of Jewish practices among some conversos, as evidenced by incidents like the one in Rosellon in 1456, where they defied Christian practices during Lent, even subjecting an inquisitor and bishop to injuries and expenses in their resistance.²⁴

However, it's important to note that Rosellon, historically part of Catalonia, had unique characteristics due to its geographic isolation, resulting in a different attitude among conversos.

²² Cowans, Jon, editor. *Early Modern Spain: A Documentary History*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, Page 10.

²³ Azcona, Tarsicio de. *Isabel la Católica. Vida y reinado*. Madrid, 2002. Page 268.

²⁴ Ripoll Bullar. *Ord. FF. Prædic. III*, 347.

Casey remarks that “being brought up in isolated farmsteads set among woodland and scrub... produces a fierceness of temperament” in the Catalonians.²⁵ Therefore, this case may not be representative of the situation elsewhere on the Iberian Peninsula. Factors like urban or rural settings, the proportion of Jews and Moriscos, geographic features, and historical ethnic relationships also affect the number of heretics, presenting a complicated image of the attitude of conversos.

In fact, the Inquisition was solely established to combat heresy because the Christian sources that supported this view could be distorted by clashes of economic or political interest.²⁶ Jewish sources suggest that conversos were perceived as non-Jews both religiously and ethnically,²⁷ and they could join the Jewish community not as repentant Jews but as non-Jews aspiring to become Jews. While some crown officials believed they detected remnants of Jewish customs in conversos' households and traces of Jewish culture in their language and familial connections, these accusations lacked clear definitions of what constituted Judaizing and were often made without solid evidence. For instance, skepticism about an afterlife was among all civilians. Although affirmations such as "there is only birth and death, nothing more" or "you'll not see me do badly in this life nor will you see me suffer in the next" were common,²⁸ they became particularly suspicious when said by conversos. This suggests that the notion of a "converso danger" may have been concocted for reasons unrelated to religion.

²⁵ Casey, 172.

²⁶ Baer, II, 95–134; P. Wolff, “The 1391 Pogrom in Spain: Social Crisis or Not?” P&P 50 (1971); A. Mackay, “Popular Movements and Pogroms in 15th-Century Castile,” P&P 55 (1972).

²⁷ Netanyahu, 1973, 10–11.

²⁸ John Edwards, “Religious Faith and Doubt in Late Medieval Spain,” Aug. 1988, 13.

The Monarch's own stance

Kamen argues that Isabella and Ferdinand were resolute about the Inquisition despite enduring financial losses, showing they were driven by pure religiosity. Ferdinand's determination could be illustrated through such a case: When hearing about the edict of expulsion, a delegation of Jews, led by Isaac Abravanel, pleaded to the king for three times.²⁹ However, at the third meeting, the king still refused.³⁰ Queen Isabella's commitment to this cause was also unwavering. Chronicler Hernando de Pulgar aptly captured her dedication: "Since the absence of these people depopulated a large part of the country, the queen was informed that commerce was declining; but setting little importance on the decline in her revenue, and prizing highly the cleansing of her lands, she said that the essential thing was to purify the country of that sin of heresy, for she understood it to be in God's service and her own. And the representations which were made to her about this matter did not alter her decision."³¹

One flaw is that these records only reveal the stated purpose of the monarchs but may not reflect their actual motives. When Kamen described the meeting between the king and the Jewish representatives, he neglected certain details that suggested the king's hesitation. However, in the chronicles, it could be reasonably concluded that the Jewish representatives were encouraged by the reaction of Ferdinand when they offered 300,000 ducats.³² If the king was truly pious, he would not have given the Jewish representatives three chances to negotiate. The argument that

²⁹ *City of God*, XIV, 13.

³⁰ Netanyahu, Benzion, *Don Isaac Abravanel, Statesman and Philosopher*, Philadelphia, 1968, 54-56.

³¹ Pulgar, Hernando del. *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos. Colección de Crónicas Españolas*. Madrid, 1943. Volume V, Page 337.

³² Graetz, H. "La police de l'Inquisition d'Espagne à ses débuts," *BRAH* 23, 1893. Volume VIII, Page 344-345.

the expulsion of the Jews overlooked financial losses also has limitations. The crown could be looking to resolve its immediate budget deficit instead of thinking about the long-term benefits the Jews can bring. Jewish taxes in the years prior to the expulsion did not constitute an especially large income. In the year 1472, for instance, the taxes of the Jews of the whole of Castile amounted to 450,000 maravedis.³³ In comparison, some 7,000,000 maravedis were collected after the expulsion by the government from the money and sale of houses and valuables left behind by the Jews in Burgos alone.³⁴

However, the presence of Jews and conversos in influential positions at the royal court and the protection of Jewish communities suggests the Spanish monarchs' lack of personal anti-Semitism. As early as 1468 Ferdinand had a Catalan Jew from Tárrega, David Abenasaya, as his physician, and both he and Isabella continued to have Jewish doctors and financiers as their closest collaborators.³⁵ Notably, Hernando de Talavera, a converso, held significant sway in domestic politics and was even appointed as archbishop of the newly reconquered Granada.³⁶

The monarchs' ambiguous stance on heresy and their interventions to safeguard Jews from local persecution hint at a complex interplay between political and religious factors in the Inquisition's creation.³⁷

³³ Marx, Alexander, *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore*, New York, 1944; "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain," in *Jewish Quarterly Revue*, 1908, loc. Cit. 250.

³⁴ Baer, II, 336.

³⁵ Carlos Alvarez García, "Los judíos y la hacienda real bajo el reinado de los Reyes Católicos," in *Tres culturas*, Page 88.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.41.

Pressure from Old Christians

During 1477-1478, the relationship between conversos and Old Christians deteriorated. According to Netanyahu, rising political tension and pressure from the Old Christians may have been what forced the monarchs to establish the Inquisition. Unrest was happening in the major cities: In Cordova, the return of conversos after the riot of 1473 increased disorder.³⁸ For example, the monarchs noticed an increase in crime rate and the suppressed desire of Old Christians to release their discontent on conversos.³⁹ In Seville, the Dominicans also argued for anti-converso causes, leading to escalating tension. The main propeller was Alonso de Hojeda, head of the convent of San Pablo in Seville. Both contemporary sources and modern historians of the Inquisition present him as the main influence that moved the sovereigns to adopt—after much reluctance—the inquisitional solution.⁴⁰ In Toledo, there was ongoing conspiracies—Archbishop Carrillo hoped to move a large number of Toledans to join his pro-Portuguese plot against the Kings. Pulgar wrote that the Toledans “find great interest in the estates of the merchants and rich citizens” (which clearly referred to the conversos in this context).⁴¹ The monarchs were worried by these trends and considered the Inquisition necessary, because on a large scale, riots only came from the anti-converso side.⁴²

However, the monarchs did not always support the Old Christians. Kamen shows that the monarchs repeatedly interfered in municipal matters to protect Jews. In both Aragon and Castile,

³⁸ Palencia, *op. cit.*, IV, 269.

³⁹ V. Balaguer, *Los Reyes Católicos*, I, 1892, 381–382.

⁴⁰ Bernáldez, *Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, 1962, 95–96, 99: el que mas procuró en Sevilla esta Inquisición; F. X. García Rodrigo, *Historia Verdadera de la Inquisición*, 1877, 66–71.

⁴¹ Pulgar, *Volume I*, Page 342.

⁴² Netanyahu, 1995, 933.

they followed the tradition of taking direct responsibility for the Jewish population, treating them like other Christian and Muslim communities under royal control. In 1477, Isabella declared: “All the Jews in my realms are mine and under my care and protection, and it is my duty to defend and assist them while ensuring justice.”⁴³ In 1475, for example, the city of Bilbao was ordered by the crown to revoke commercial restrictions it had placed on Jews in the town of Medina de Pomar; in 1480 the town of Olmedo was ordered to construct “a gate in the wall of the judería to give Jews access to the town square.”⁴⁴

Nevertheless, the monarchs' decision to embrace the inquisitional solution can still be attributed primarily to the rising anti-converso sentiment. The request for authorization from the Pope occurred simultaneously with these increasingly radical events. Since the Pope granted the bull on November 1, 1478, the decision was likely made in June or July of that year, when the situation was most intense in Toledo.

Strengthening Monarchical Power

Perez claimed the main reason the Catholic Monarchs established the Inquisition was to strengthen royal influence to guarantee stability.⁴⁵ Ferdinand proactively took steps to assert royal control.⁴⁶ In Aragon, this reformed Inquisition essentially continued the old tribunal practices but with a significant shift – the monarchs, instead of the Church of Rome, controlled

⁴³ Suárez Fernández, Luis, ed. *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judíos*.

Valladolid, 1964. Page 16.

⁴⁴ Suárez Fernández, p.15.

⁴⁵ Perez, Joseph. *La Brève Histoire de L'Inquisition en Espagne*. Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2002.

⁴⁶ González, Óscar (2009). *El Rey Y El Papa: Política Y Diplomacia En Los Albores Del Renacimiento (Castilla En El Siglo XV)*. Sílex.

appointments and salaries.⁴⁷ The Holy Office was in every way an instrument of royal policy and remained politically subject to the crown. “Although you and the others enjoy the title of inquisitor,” Ferdinand reminded his inquisitors of Aragon firmly in 1486, “it is I and the queen who have appointed you, and without our support, you can do very little.”⁴⁸

Moreover, if the Inquisition was established for political reasons, the prosecution of heretics would be secondary compared to eliminating political enemies. Thus, there was a disproportionately high representation of the nobility and high clergy among those investigated by the Inquisition and the many administrative and civil crimes the Inquisition oversaw.⁴⁹ Bernáldez argued that the Inquisition targeted the richest and most powerful conversos of Seville: “A few days after this they burnt three of the richest leaders of the city, namely Diego de Susán, who was said to be worth 10 million maravedis and was a chief rabbi, and who apparently died as a Christian; Manuel Sauli; and Bartolomé de Torralva. They also arrested Pedro Fernández Benadeba, who was one of the ringleaders and had in his house weapons to arm a hundred men, and Juan Fernández Abolafia, who had often been chief magistrate and was a great lawyer...”⁵⁰

However, removing political enemies and centralization of power is likely to be a result in operation, not the motive that Isabella and Ferdinand had in mind. Lea contested that the Santa Hermandad (Holy Brotherhood), already in place, served a similar purpose more effectively due to its active, autonomous noble-led associations, contrasting with the Inquisition's reliance on varying local cooperation.⁵¹ In addition, it must be acknowledged that the Inquisition was still an

⁴⁷ Lea, I, p.231.

⁴⁸ Crónica de Don Alfonso XI, cap. lxxx. Barrantes, op. cit. Lib. I, cap. xxvi, lxxx.

⁴⁹ Canessa De Sanguinetti, Marta. *El Bien Nacer: Limpieza De Oficios Y Limpieza De Sangre : Raíces Ibéricas De Un Mal Latinoamericano*. Taurus, Ediciones Santillana, 2000.

⁵⁰ Bernáldez, p.99.

⁵¹ Lea, I, p.58.

ecclesiastical institution. Any authority and jurisdiction exercised by the inquisitors came indirectly from Rome, or else the tribunal would have ceased to exist. Bulls of appointment, canonical regulations, and spheres of jurisdiction—all had to have the prior approval of Rome.”⁵² The inquisitor general could be nominated by the crown, but ultimately the Pope has the right of approval.⁵³

Nevertheless, in reality, the Church of Rome was too far away to be an effective supervisor. It also becomes hard to revoke promises to the monarchs once it has been made. When the pope saw his error in granting independence to a tribunal of this sort, he stated his protest in a brief of 29 January 1482. Further conflict ensued with the bull issued by Sixtus IV on 18 April that year, denouncing abuses in the procedure of the Inquisition. Ferdinand held firm to his policy despite opposition in Rome and Aragon.⁵⁴ This case reveals that the monarchs placed an emphasis on their own control of the Inquisition despite nominally being delegates of papal power.

Conclusion

In summary, the establishment of the Inquisition appears to have been primarily a political decision, with the Catholic Monarchs tightly controlling its operations, diverging from the medieval inquisitions overseen by the Pope. Religion was the stated purpose, but recent Jewish evidence shows that many conversos have indeed adopted Christianity, so the accusations likely result from Old Christians defaming them due to clash of interests. The monarchs were indeed fervent Christians, but personally, they did not antagonize the conversos. Instead, they considered the Inquisition of conversos and expulsion of Jews as the most effective way to resolve conflicts. Not only because Old Christians constituted the majority of the population, but also because the radical expressions of discontent generally came from Old Christians. Political considerations, notably

⁵² Kamen, p.358.

⁵³ R. López Vela, in *Historia*, II, 105.

⁵⁴ Kamen, p.160.

alleviating the anti-converso sentiments in major urban areas and increasing crown control, were evident in the decision.

Ultimately, the Inquisition was a decision to ensure stability by going along with popular opinion instead of the monarch's personal motives. The Inquisition became a justified outlet for the long-lasting discontent of Old Christians to the Jews.

Bibliography

- Amador de los Ríos, José. Estudios históricos, políticos y literarios sobre los judíos de España, Madrid, 1848.
- Azcona, Tarsicio de. Isabel la Católica. Vida y reinado. Madrid, 2002.
- Baer, Yitzhak. A History of the Jews in Christian Spain. 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1966.
- Beinart, Haim, ed. Records of the Trials of the Spanish Inquisition in Ciudad Real. 3 vols. Jerusalem, 1974.
- Beinart, Haim. Conversos on Trial: The Inquisition in Ciudad Real. Jerusalem, 1981.
- Bennassar, Bartolomé, ed. L'Inquisition espagnole XVe-XIXe siècle. Paris, 1979.
- Bennassar, Bartolomé. "Conversion ou reniement? Modalités d'une adhésion ambiguë des chrétiens à l'islam (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)." *Annales. É.S.C.*, 43e année, no. 6, 1988.
- Bernaldez, Andrés. Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos. Ed. M. Gómez-Moreno and J. M. de Carriazo. Madrid, 1962.
- Bethencourt, Francisco. The Inquisition: A Global History, 1478–1834. Cambridge, 2009.
- Carrete Parrondo, Carlos. "Nostalgia for the Past among Castilian Judeoconversos." *Mediterranean Historical Review* 6, 2 (Dec. 1991).
- Ed. J. Pérez Villanueva and B. Escandell Bonet. Historia de la Inquisición en España y América. 2 vols. Madrid, 1984, 1993.
- García-Cárcel, R. Herejía y sociedad en el siglo XVI. La Inquisición en Valencia 1530–1609. Barcelona, 1980.
- García-Cárcel, R. Orígenes de la Inquisición española. El tribunal de Valencia, 1478–1530. Barcelona, 1976.

-
- Graetz, H. "La police de l'Inquisition d'Espagne à ses débuts," BRAH 23, 1893.
- Hauben, Paul. "A Critical History of the Inquisition of Spain. From the Period of its Establishment by Ferdinand V to the Reign of Ferdinand VII". *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1 May 1968.
- Henningsen, Gustav, and John Tedeschi, eds. *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Sources and Methods*. De Kalb, Ill., 1985.
- Henningsen, Gustav. *The Witches Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition*. Reno, 1980.
- Homza, Lu Ann. *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478–1614: An Anthology of Sources*. Indianapolis, 2006.
- Huerga, Alvaro. *El proceso de la Inquisición de Sevilla contra el maestro Domingo de Valtanás*. Jaén, 1958.
- Huerga, Alvaro. *Historia de los alumbrados (1570–1640)*. 5 vols. Madrid, 1978–94.
- Inquisición y conversos*. III Curso de cultura hispano-judía y sefardí. Toledo, 1994.
- Kagan, R. L., and Abigail Dyer. *Inquisitorial Inquiries: Brief Lives of Secret Jews and Other Heretics*. Baltimore, 2004.
- Kallendorf, Hilaire, ed. *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*. Leiden, 2010.
- Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition*. White Lion, 1965.
- Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: An Historical Revision*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014.
- Lea, Henry Charles. *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*. 4 vols. New York, 1906–7.
- Lesley K. Twomey, *Faith and Fanaticism in Early Modern Spain*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1997.

-
- Llorente, Juan Antonio. *Historia crítica de la Inquisición española*. 4 vols. Madrid: Ediciones Hiperón, 1980 [first published 1817].
- Mackay, Angus. "Popular Movements and Pogroms in 15th-Century Castile," 1972.
- Maltby, William S. *The Black Legend in England. The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558–1660*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1971.
- Marx, Alexander, *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore*, New York, 1944; "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain," in *Jewish Quarterly Revue*, 1908.
- Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino. *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*. 8 vols. Buenos Aires, 1945 (first edn. 1880).
- Murphy, Cullen. *God's Jury: The Inquisition and the Making of the Modern World*. Boston, 2012.
- Netanyahu, Benzion. *Don Isaac Abravanel, Statesman and Philosopher*. Philadelphia, 1968.
- Netanyahu, Benzion. *The Marranos of Spain*. Kraus, 1973.
- Netanyahu, Benzion. *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain*. New York, 1995.
- Neuman, A. A. *The Jews in Spain: Their Social, Political and Cultural Life during the Middle Ages*. 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1944.
- Orti y Lara, Juan Manuel. "La Inquisición." 1877.
- Perez, Joseph. *La Brève Histoire de L'Inquisition en Espagne*. Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2002.
- Peters, Edward. *Inquisition*. Berkeley, 1988.
- Pulgar, Hernando del. *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*. Vols. V–VI, *Colección de Crónicas Españolas*. Madrid, 1943.
- Rawlings, Helen. *The Spanish Inquisition*. Oxford, 2006.
- Roth, Norman. *Conversos, Inquisition and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. Madison, 1995.
- Suárez Fernández, Luis, ed. *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judíos*. Valladolid, 1964.

P. Wolff, "The 1391 Pogrom in Spain: Social Crisis or Not?", 1971.