



The 1492 Spanish Expulsion and the Ottoman Rescue of Jewish Refugees

Izvor: <https://minbarlive.com/videos/1492-spain-expelled-every-jewish-person-no-christian-kingdom-would-take-them-in>

In 1492, Spain expelled all Jews under the Alhambra Decree, forcing families with over 1,000 years of roots to flee. While Christian Europe refused them shelter, Sultan Bayezid II of the Ottoman Empire sent his navy to rescue over 150,000 Jewish refugees, offering them citizenship and safe haven.

SAŽETAK

This account examines the 1492 Spanish expulsion of Jews and the starkly contrasting responses from Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella issued the Alhambra Decree in July 1492, ordering every Jewish person to convert to Christianity or leave Spain immediately, displacing families with centuries-long ties to the Iberian Peninsula. Desperate refugees seeking shelter found no welcome in Christian European kingdoms; the tragedy was compounded when some ships were robbed by their own captains during the exodus. In stark contrast, Sultan Bayezid II of Istanbul responded by mobilising the entire Ottoman navy under Admiral Kemal Reis not for conquest but for humanitarian rescue. The Sultan issued proclamations throughout his empire welcoming Jewish refugees, granting them citizenship and protection. Over 150,000 refugees were successfully evacuated to Ottoman territories, settling in cities such as Salonica, Istanbul, Izmir, and Edirne. Salonica's Jewish population grew so substantially it became known as the Jerusalem of the Balkans. The narrative highlights how Ottoman action stands in historical contrast to European rejection, yet remains understated in many historical accounts.

KLJUČNE PORUKE

The Alhambra Decree of July 1492 expelled all Jews from Spain, giving them only two choices: convert to Christianity or leave immediately.

Families with over 1,000 years of established presence in Spain were forced to abandon their homes, businesses, and synagogues.

No Christian kingdom in Europe offered refuge to the Jewish refugees; some refugee ships were additionally robbed by their own captains during the exodus.

Sultan Bayezid II of the Ottoman Empire immediately mobilised his entire navy under Admiral Kemal Reis to rescue the expelled Jewish refugees.

The Ottoman Sultan issued proclamations welcoming Jewish refugees and granting them citizenship and protection throughout his empire.

Over 150,000 Jewish refugees were evacuated to Ottoman lands, settling in major cities including Salonica, Istanbul, Izmir, and Edirne.

Salonica's Jewish population became so substantial it earned the designation 'the Jerusalem of the Balkans', while the Ottoman role in this rescue remains underrepresented in mainstream historical narratives.

ČLANAK

The Alhambra Decree and the Expulsion from Spain

In July 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain issued the Alhambra Decree, ordering every Jewish person out of Spain. Those who remained had only two choices: convert to Christianity or leave immediately. Families who had lived in Spain for over 1,000 years were forced to abandon their homes, businesses, and synagogues. The expulsion was absolute and devastating.

The Failure of Christian Europe

As Jewish refugees sought shelter, no Christian kingdom in Europe would take them in. The situation grew worse when some ships carrying refugees were robbed by their own captains, adding tragedy to an already desperate exodus. Across Christian Europe, there was no refuge and no welcome for the displaced Jewish population.

The Ottoman Response

When **Sultan Bayezid II** in Istanbul heard the news of the expulsion, he did not hesitate. He sent the entire Ottoman navy, commanded by Admiral Kemal Reis, not for war but for rescue. The Sultan issued proclamations throughout his empire welcoming every Jewish refugee, offering them citizenship and protection. Over 150,000 Jewish refugees were evacuated to Ottoman lands, with many settling in major cities including Salonica, Istanbul, Izmir, and Edirne. Salonica became so densely populated with Jewish life that it earned a new name: the Jerusalem of the Balkans. While Christian Europe was written into history as the villain of this story, the Ottoman Empire that saved these refugees is rarely mentioned in historical accounts.

#1492 Spanish Expulsion

#Alhambra Decree

#Ottoman Empire Jewish refugees

#Sultan Bayezid II

#Medieval Jewish history

#Salonica Jewish community

#Christian Europe response to refugees

