

Land of Edom

The History of the Jews of the kingdoms of the king Ferdinand and the Catholic



Scriptwriters

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Memory

Presentation

In 1391, during the months of July and August, almost the whole of the Catalan Jewish population was either killed or forced to baptism. In cities like Valencia, Mallorca, Barcelona, Girona and Lleida, thousands of peasants, angered against the nobility and full of religious prejudice, attacked the calls (Jewish neighbourhoods) and spread fear and death among the Jewish population. Some survivors could escape, especially by ship, to some Mediterranean cities. This is the story of those survivors, small communities that kept the faith of their ancestors in cities in the north of Africa and the Turkish Empire. Their lost was felt in our country for centuries. We had to wait for five hundred years to recover our Jewish communities. Nowadays there are still some people who claim that they descend from those who were forced to leave the country they had inhabited for centuries.

This is a story of pain and silence but also of strength and endurance. It is a story of yesterday and today. This is the story of the Catalan Jews.



Slaughter of Jews in Barcelona in 1391, engraving by Joan Segrelles

Commercial Goal

Land of Edom is a documentary that traces the history of the Catalan Jews, a story of more than a thousand years with periods of absence which have been decisive for the history of our country.

Land of Edom tells local facts that have a global nature. Our purpose is to tell a very local reality to any person who might be concerned on the persecution of minorities that, unfortunately, has characterized the history of mankind.

Land of Edom does not try to answer a lot of questions, it is focused on making questions. We do not believe that history is mere entertainment, we believe that it shows lessons, and this one affects all of us.

About the Project

Initially, the project was conceived only for the medieval period but in the course of our research work, I decided to extend it to our days due to the question of interesting information and the indications that we have found from the return of descendants of those Jews from the Catalan countries who had to flee. Now it has become a mini-documentary series of two chapters divided into:

- **FIRST PART:** Since the beginnings of Jews in Catalonia until their expulsion by the Catholic Kings in 1492.
- **SECOND PART:** Since the expulsion to our days.

In preparation with collaboration of Mr. Vicenç Villatoro (Director of the Center for Contemporary Culture and known scholar on the subject), Laura Miró, of the University of Palma, and Joan Villanove, scholar of the Jews from Ribesaltes, in northern Catalonia.

In 1492, after the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, they followed several routes of escape. In places where they took root, such as Rome, Alexandria and Thessalonica, contributed significantly in the development of Arts and Commerce.

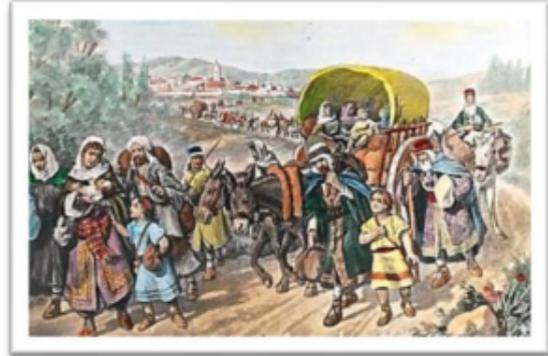
We've found indications of the return of the descendants of those Jews from the Catalan countries that had to flee. We deal with topics like the early days of the Industrial Revolution and the Silk Road, through the international brigades at the end of the Civil War, essentially of Polish and French origin, the escape routes of occupied France, where they fled from Spain to the United States, to the present, with the young people who at the moment work in the Catalan productive economy.

The documentary will be made in Catalan, Spanish, English, French, German and Hebrew. The preparation and filmed research will take place between November – December 2019. The filming will be held between March – April 2020. And the editing and post-production will take place in June 2020.

History

Land of Edom is a research documentary that traces the forgotten history of Jews of Catalan origin; a history of over a thousand years with decisive periods of absence.

It is structured in two blocks: the first part explains the period from their arrival in the Iberian Peninsula until their expulsion, by order of the Catholic Monarchs in 1492. The second part tells the period following the Decree of expulsion, with the escape and arrival at the places where they took root, and the most remarkable events to date.



Because the Pogroms of 1391 and the Decree of expulsion of the Catholic Monarchs in 1492, a long pilgrimage begins for many Jewish families who had to leave the villages where they had lived for many generations and considered their home. Likewise, if they did not want to be expelled they could convert to the Christian religion. Many left, especially of the wealthiest families, but they were also baptized and remained many.

This story tells of those who left, the cities and host countries, how they lived and what they contributed. They settled throughout the Mediterranean, Central Europe and North Africa: Rome, Thessalonica, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Vienna and Kraków are the main cities that welcomed them, among many others. But always preserving with nostalgia the memory of his lost homeland, of his language and of his customs.

It also speaks of the many who converted and did not leave. It talks about how they continued to live and how, a vast majority, continued to profess their faith secretly, faithful to the God of their ancestors. It also speaks of the brutal repression exerted by the terrifying machine of the Holy Inquisition against those who were discovered. There were but, those who in spite of everything, succeeded in leading this double life for centuries, such as the **xuetes** of Mallorca, which are a living example of the passive resistance of a community faithful to its moral and religious principles, which has lasted until our days.

And finally, we arrived at the reunion of the descendants of the Jewish people exiled with the current Catalan people, at the beginning of the 20th century with the return of some families mainly from Istanbul. From their relationship and mutual help to the devastating events of the Spanish Civil War and World War II, and the escape routes through the Pyrenees to the United States.

Land of Edom is a story of pain and forgetfulness, but at the time of stubbornness and perseverance. But it is also the story of a new coexistence and a reunion to this day.

Before 1492

Since the second century A.D. until the year 1492



In the western lands of the Mediterranean, what will later be Catalonia, there is a documented presence of Israeli communities since the second century. Documentary evidence is the trilingual inscriptions written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, found in Tarraco (Tarragona), imperial capital of the Roman province and in Dertosa (Tortosa), an important city on the banks of the Ebro. So are the inscriptions with Hebrew characters in an amphora discovered in Ibiza.

In the Catalan lands, for more than 1,000 years the Jews had been part of the social and cultural landscape. And they had been the vanguard of scientific and academic knowledge and artistic production. In the

Middle Ages, the Jews had lived very harmoniously with the population of Muslim and Christian religion. Because of their culture, knowledge and crafts, the Jews were very well regarded.

When the Catalan counts together with Abbot Oliba, in 1027, established the Peace and Truce of God in Toluges (present-day France), in the first parliamentary and legislative assembly of the Christian world, they were already called Jewish jurists to write the entire legal corpus. The list of Jews who in Catalonia have stood out in medicine, philosophy, poetry, laws, etc., is very long. Their capacity for finance and for commerce led them to be highly respected by the nobility and the kings, who also used them as bankers to finance their projects.



Typical clothing of the Jewish population in the Middle Ages

In times of crisis, such as during the burning of Jewish quarters in 1391, it was the intervention of King Joan I that stopped the looting and massacres carried out by a maddening people, duly manipulated by foreign Christian monks who sought to destabilize the monarchy. In Mallorca, the flight of many Jews affected the economy of the island but forced converts resumed businesses with new Christian names. At the end of the fifteenth century, converts have a monopoly on soap, silk and velvet, silverware (16 silversmiths) and clothing (112 workshops).

Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, in 1492, signed in Granada the decree of conversion or expulsion of all persons of Jewish religion who lived in their domains. And an end to a coexistence and, also, to a century of very hard persecutions initiated with the pogroms of the year 1391 that had led to mass murders and forced conversions.

In Catalonia, the year 1492, the Jews had been reduced to a small community of 8,000 people that contrasted with the 50,000 before the pogroms of 1391 (15% of the Principality population). The decree had little impact on Catalonia. Most of the Catalan Jews who had survived the pogroms, had already begun the path of exile or had converted to Christianity. The social and economic position was decisive. And unlike what had happened a century before, the richest converted and acceded to positions that until then, because of their condition, they had private. Some, even, would be integrated into the chancery of Fernando the Catholic.

Routes of exile: pogroms year 1391 and decree of expulsion year 1492.



After 1492

After the decree of expulsion of 1492 until today

After the expulsion of 1492, the Catalan Jewish conscience could have spread quickly, in Rome, Istanbul, Edirne, Safed, and especially in Thessalonica, the Catalan Jews maintained their independence until the twentieth century, when the claws Nazism exterminated numerous Jewish communities. At XVII century many epitaphs in Thessalonica and other cities show that Catalan, Bargillon, Arocas, Saporta, Caballero, Chacon, Barzilai, Toledano, had become surnames. The subsequent mass arrival of Jews from the Spanish Catalan was cornered. The case of the Knight family, original of Falset, is revealed, which changed his name to Thessalonica, by Caballero.

One of the foundations for the Jewish people for the maintenance of their religious and ethnic identity was education. The school, the family and the synagogue founded the education of the Jews. The role of the mother in the education of children (and more in that of girls) was essential.

After the raids, killings and expulsion, it took many centuries to go so that the Jews would return to Catalonia and settle there.



Catalan Jews in Thessalonica (Greece)

Already during the Spanish war from 1936 to 1939, young Jews from Kraków, some descendants of that exile, arrived in Barcelona and joined the International Brigades. They fought bravely and generously against Franco and Fascism. A few years later, during the Second World War, Catalan guides helped the fugitive Jews of Nazi barbarity cross the Pyrenees to embark towards America.

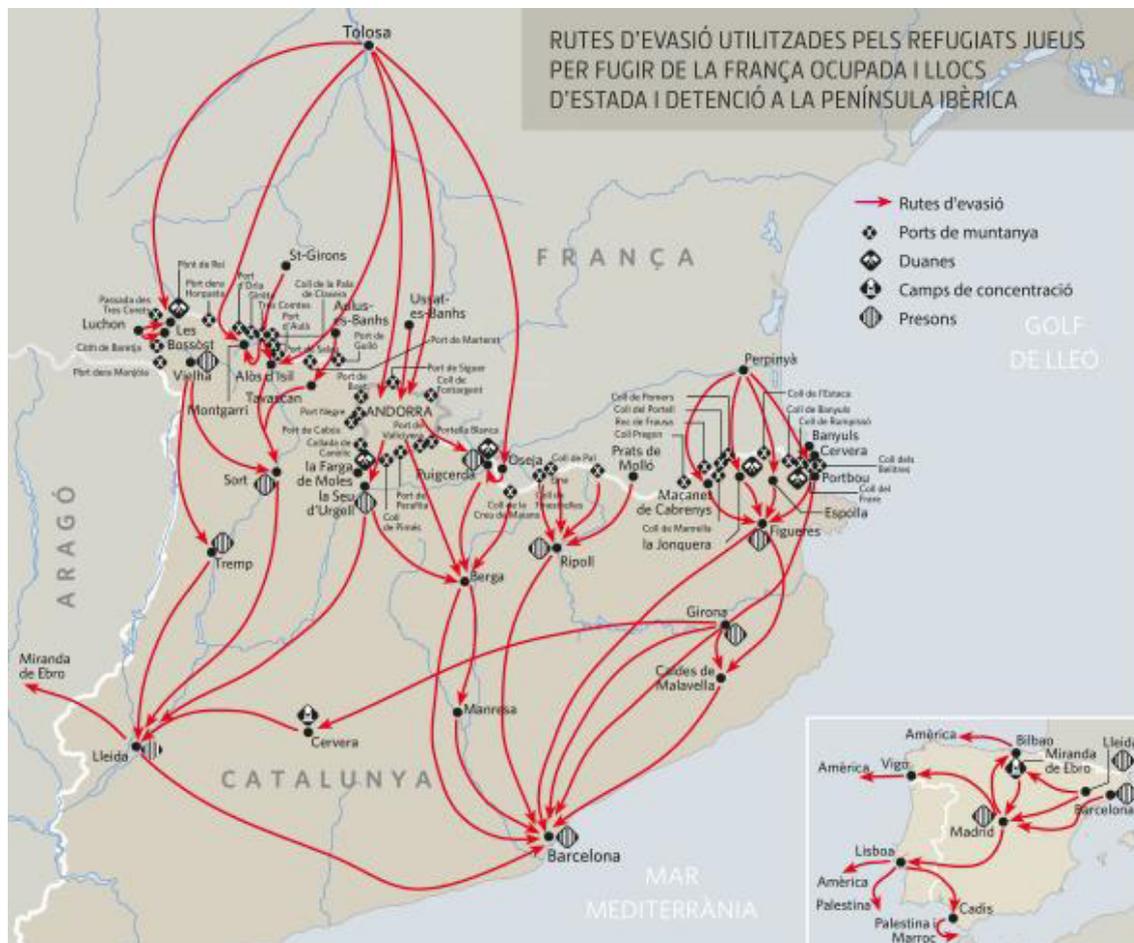
Today many Jews have settled in Catalonia where they are part of the productive fabric with renowned shops and companies; and their young people study in the Catalan universities.



Israeli Community of Barcelona, currently

Escape routes WWII

ESCAPE ROUTES THROUGH THE PYRENEES



During the Second World War (1939-1945) it is estimated that approximately 80,000 people crossed the Pyrenees to flee from the Nazi terror that already ruled in Germany in 1933. Most of these people were Jewish, but there were also soldiers and allied aviators, fighters of the resistance of various nationalities (French, German, Austrian, Polish, Czech, etc.) and refugees from invaded countries, among others. They sought refuge beyond the expansion of Nazism, through the Pyrenees. Most of them had as their final destination America or Palestine, as well

as England for combatants. But the place of passage of all of them was along the border with France, the Pyrenees. It is for this reason that in Catalonia evasion networks were created to make these refugees move from one side to the other on the border. We recover this episode that was lived in our house and that affected many Europeans: the passage of people who, fleeing National Socialism, crossed the Pyrenees – evasion networks – looking for refuge and, in parallel, Rescue network that these evaded were found in Catalonia.

This network extended from the border passes of the Pyrenees to the port of Barcelona, or it continued towards Madrid and even Lisbon. Thus, in the city, the effects of the conflict in the rest of Europe were experienced: Nazi and British spies, refugees looking for official papers to leave the country, Polish Jews, Germans, French or other countries of the east, allied aviators, supporters of Fürher and Duce who, in complicity with Franco's dictatorship, pursued these refugees. All of these are little known facts within the broad casuistry of World War II.



Pas del Portillon

The majority were guided by experienced passers (guides), as capable smugglers, republican and maquis soldiers, who knew the mountains of the Pyrenees as the palm of their hand. Many of the evasion routes passed through the city of Manresa, where they took the train to go to Barcelona, and take refuge in the consulates of the allies and the “safe houses” that were in the Catalan capital. The participation of the passers was vital to save lives on thousands of people. Many of these pins cost a lot of money and others not so much to do this job. Some even did so by idealistic vocation and did not charge five, because they believed that once the Nazis of Europe were defeated, the next to fall would be the Franco dictator and everything would be easier.

Crossing with the help of a pin was also at risk, since not everyone had the same moral and ethical principles, some of these pins were scammers, thieves, murderers and criminals who took advantage of the Jews to steal -they (because they used to go with jewels, gold and lots of money during the journey), even some would end up being confident of the Civil Guard and the Gestapo that watched Andorra's evasion routes. Many Jews were murdered by their strikers to avoid discovering this double-passive game. It was necessary, therefore, to monitor very well with whom you were going and above all to do nothing to raise suspicions to third parties. They were difficult years, where the people of the mountain were very vigilant. Confident everywhere, people who betrayed, people who denounced, money was a good incentive in a time of hard post-war where there was almost nothing anywhere for lunch. We will expose some first-hand testimonials.

Production team

DIRECTOR

Ignasi P. Ferré



Filmmaker: Director, producer, scriptwriter and professor, born in Valls, (Alt Camp). Ignasi P. Ferré was trained in cinematography in Berlin and the Cinecittà Sperimentale Center in Rome. This opened the doors to the Italian cinematographic industry and allowed him to work in the management teams of renowned directors such as Silvano Agosti, Marco Bellocchio, Tinto Brass and Michelangelo Antonioni.

Back in Catalonia, he settled in Barcelona and began working as a director assistant until his debut in the field of directing with the Morbus Films in 1983. Then came *Qui t'estima, Babel?* In 1987, with Mercedes Sampietro and Assumpta Serna, with which he won the Best Film Award at the Mostra de les Autonomies at the Eivissa Film Festival in 1989. The film was also selected for the Mostra de Cine Mediterrani de Valencia, was the representative for Spain at the Gijon Film Festival in 1989, and won a nomination for the best original soundtrack in the Ondas Awards.

In 1990 he directed the comedy *Un submarí a les estovalles* with Rosa Maria Sardà, Ariadna Gil and José Zazatornil "Saza". The film was selected for the Colonia Festival (Germany). In 1991 for the Funy Film Festival of Milan (Italy), for Aberystwyth in Wales (United Kingdom), 1991 and for the Festival du Cinema in Tetouan (Morocco), 1993. In 2007, Instituto Cervantes selected *Un submarí a les estovalles* to be exhibited in the "Cine del Cielo": "Sueño del Alandalus" – and was presented in Rabat and Tanger (Morocco) and Beirut (Lebanon).

Continuing in the field of comedy, the following film *Un plaer indescriptible*, 1992, which was the first Catalan film distributed by Buena Vista International (Walt Disney) and had the Best Comedy Award in the Salerno Film Festival (Italy) 1993. In 1994 he directed for Televisió de Catalunya S.A. *Quin curs el meu tercer*, a TV movie based on the homonymous novel by Oriol Vergés. In 2006, he directed the documentary *El Capitán Trueno*, the illusion to the myth, for the Víctor Mora Foundation. In 2007 he directed the Sitges Nagasaki Feature Film, which is the star of the world champion of swimming David Meca. In 2013, *Mossos d'Esquadra, cat 1640 – 2008*, history of the Catalan police and *Mossos d'Esquadra, cat – a European police* that are released in commercial halls in May 2014.

In addition to his successful career as a director, with fictional feature films, documentary filmmakers, reports and advertising, Ignasi P. Ferré has also been involved in the film industry as an Executive Producer with 10 independent short films, 6 feature films "11 Nuevos Directores Catalanes" from the Image Promotion Center, 9 documentaries and 3 short films for the Cinematographic Productions TA, S. Coop. Ltda. He has also been co-producer in the projects of Ixia Films, S.A. for three years, of the producer Tursen, S.A., of Aktino Films, S. L. and today of "NPA" Nuevos Proyectos Audiovisuales, S.L.

In December 2006, the distributor, Acràsia Corp., was created. S.L. with a group of film professionals. In January 2009, he created and organized the National Network of Cinema in

Catalonia, a network of exhibition halls for Films of Films and documentaries spread throughout the Catalan-speaking territory.

On May 13, 2010, he obtained the National Prize for Essay Francesc Ferrer i Gironès with the essay on history: Som Íbers i encara hi som.

In his teaching role he has been and is, professor of various public and private institutions.

SCRIPTWRITERS

David Cuscó i Escudero



Born in Andorra in 1973. Graduate in English Philology and Theory of Literature and Comparative Literature. He has written texts in Catalan (Level K) and for more than 16 years he has worked as a teacher of Catalan and English. As a translator, he has offered unpublished texts by George Steiner, Primo Levi, Clarice Lispector, Georges Perec, Edmond Jabès, Norman Manea, Roland Barthes, Raymond Carver, Maria Zambrano, John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Henri Meschonnic, Claude Lanzmann, Georges Didi-Huberman, Marcel Proust, Giorgio Pressburger, Charles Baudelaire, Robert Louis Stevenson, Clifford Geertz,

André Aciman and Albert Camús, among others. He directs the cultural magazine El funambul, the Editorial El Flaneur and is preparing a radio literary program that will be broadcast weekly on Ràdio Vilafranca. He collaborates with the cultural journals Núvol, Lemúria, Llengua Nacional i Raïces.

Laura Miró Bonnín



Born in Palma de Mallorca in 1992. He graduated in History from the University of the Balearic Islands in 2014 and finalized the Master's Degree in Teacher Training in 2016. His line of research has been based on the a question of the contemporary age, as is shown by his publications in Randa: 'The xueta question in the nineteenth century' and 'The condition xueta in the 20th century'. He has also worked on the didactic applicability of the Jewish and Xueta theme in Mallorca. He has participated as speaker at the Contemporary History Days of the UIB (2016) and at the Studies Days of Ramon Picó i Campamar (2016).

PRODUTOR

Ramon Vallès Martínez



Was born in Sant Feliu de Llobregat, on the July 19th, 1950. He has participated in the production teams of “El gran Serafi”, “Jamón, Jamón” (Bigas Luna) and “El joven Indiana Jones” (Antena 3). He has also produced short fictions such as “Sween” (with Juanjo Puigcorbé and Montse Bayo) or “Un assumepte personal” (directed by Francesc Garcia Donet). He has been TV and radio producer (ETV-Llobregat Televisió and Cadena Catalana). Promoter and programmer of concerts and projections from 1985 to 2007. Coproducer of a documentary about traditional Catalan flamenco (“Cartes de l’oncle Àngel”) and the documentary series

“Roms catalans. Música d’arrel gitana” for the local TV network..

COMPANIES AND COLLABORATING ASSOCIATIONS

Enderrock

It’s a magazine published monthly in Catalan, which since 1993 is specialized in the diffusion of pop-rock made in the Catalan language throughout the Catalan Countries.

Sàpiens

It is a magazine in Catalan language of historical dissemination and monthly periodicity, it is the most read in Catalan with 135,000 readers per month, according to the data published in the General Media Survey (EGM).

Acció Cultural del País Valencià

It is a civic association created in 1971 but legalized with the restoration of democracy in 1978. Its objective is the promotion of the language and culture of the Valencian Country, and of the civil consciousness that derives from it. It was founded by Joan Fuster, Manuel Sanchis Guarnier, Andreu Alfaro, Eliseu Climent and Joan Francesc Mira. Edit the magazine ‘El Temp’ and promote the ‘October Awards’.

Film locations

NATIONALS:

BARCELONA
TERRASSA
SABADELL
MANRESA
VIC
BERGA
GRANOLLERS
MATARÓ
PUIGCERDÀ
GIRONA
BESALÚ
OLOT
CASTELLÓ D'EMPÚRIES
SOLSONA
CERVERA
TÀRREGA
GUISSONA
TORÀ
VERDÚ
GUIMERÀ
BALAGUER
AGRAMUNT
LLEIDA
LA SEU D'URGELL
VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDÈS
ST PERE DE RIUDEBITLLES
LA LLACUNA
TARRAGONA
MONTBLANC
STA COLOMA DE QUERALT
TORTOSA
VALLS
FALSET

CATALAN COUNTRIES:

MALLORCA
VALÈNCIA
PERPINYÀ



INTERNATIONALS:

- ROMA
- FLORENCE
- NAPOLI
- PALERM
- VENICE
- MESSINA
- CRACOVIA
- VIENNA
- SALONICS
- ATHENS
- CRETE
- ISTANBUL
- ESMIRNA
- BEIRUT
- JERUSALEM
- ALEXANDRIA



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Teaser subtitled in English

<https://youtu.be/4rM0vph97S0>