

The Inquisition: Prelude to the Holocaust

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Abstract

This paper draws a historical and moral connection between two of the darkest chapters in Jewish history: the Spanish Inquisition and the Holocaust. Although separated by over four centuries, both were fueled by *sinat chinam* — baseless hatred — and led to systematic, state-sanctioned campaigns to erase Jewish identity and existence. The Inquisition used religious ideology to justify persecution, forced conversions, torture, and executions. Centuries later, Nazi Germany refined that hatred with racial pseudoscience, propaganda, and industrialized genocide.

These events did not emerge from isolated moments in time; they were expressions of a deep-rooted, recurring hatred. Today, as antisemitism rises once again — from social media to city streets, from universities to synagogues — we must ask: are we witnessing history's darkest hands reaching across time to shake once more?

This paper does not seek to name this growing threat with a new label. Instead, it leaves the question to us all:

History called it an Inquisition. Then a Holocaust. What shall we call it now?

