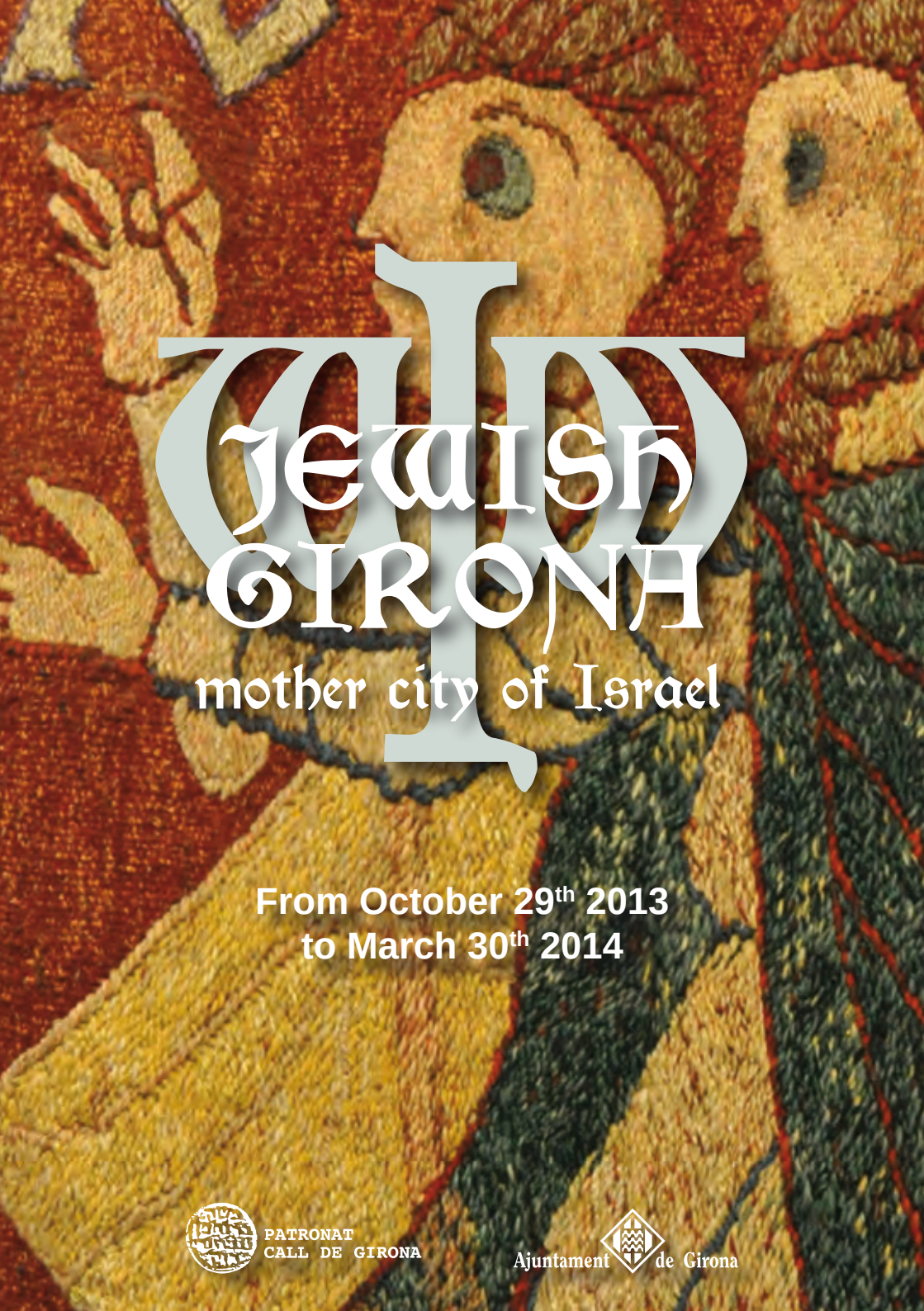


From October 29th 2013
to March 30th 2014

PATRONAT
CALL DE GIRONA

Ajuntament de Girona



LA GIRONA MEDIEVAL

Del 29 d'octubre de 2013 al 30 de març de 2014

LA GIRONA MEDIEVAL
La clau del regne

Museu d'Història de Girona
Sala d'exposicions
Placeta de l'Institut Vell, 1 - 17004 Girona

LA GIRONA JUEVA,
ciutat mare d'Israel

Museu d'Història dels Jueus
Sala d'exposicions
Carrer de la Força, 8 - 17004 Girona

EL MONESTIR DE SANT DANIEL
a l'època medieval

Monestir de Sant Daniel
Claustre
Carrer de les Monges, 2 - 17007 Girona

The display of the temporary exhibition "Medieval Girona" is distributed over three different locations: the History Museum of Girona, which features "Medieval Girona. The key to the kingdom"; the Museum of Jewish History, featuring "Jewish Girona, mother city of Israel", and the cloister of the Sant Daniel Monastery, which shows the exhibition "The Monastery of Sant Daniel in the Medieval times".
More information about the exhibition and the activities related to it can be found on this website:

www.girona.cat/medieval

JEWISH GIRONA
mother city of Israel

From October 29th 2013 to March 30th 2014

Two different communities shared the space of medieval Girona. Relations between them were close, and in many cases productive and rewarding. Christian Girona has arrived to us and our time, whereas there are few material traces left of Jewish Girona. Very lively between the 10th and 15th century, it then had its own space within the structure of the city, dazzled the world with its culture and finally fell into oblivion, condemned first by intolerance, and later by ignorance. But thanks to its legacy, Girona nowadays is an example of the wealth brought about by diversity.

«A wise man should not long for what he has lost,
but hold on to what has been left to him»
Jafudà Bonsenyor, 13th century



Tapestry of the *Iudei*
Wool
Torroella de Montgrí, 2005
Donation from the Escola-Taller Embolic to the Museum of Jewish History
Reproduction of a detail on the lower fringe of the Tapestry of Creation at the Cathedral of Girona

SEVEN-HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY

Perhaps there have already existed Jewish people in Girona in the days of its foundation in the 1st century. The assaults which the Christian cities endured during the first centuries of the Medieval caused the urban population, including the Jews, to shift to rural areas, looking for refuge. A revival in the 9th century however attracted once again families in search of the prosperity offered by the urban environment. This must have been the origin of the twenty-five Jewish families arriving in Girona in 898, when the count Delà took them away from the allodium of *Judaicas*, a hamlet near Besalú, in order to settle them down close to the cathedral, in *his city* of Girona. These Jews and Jewesses, called Doucerella, Rahel, David or Mossé, did not yet form a well organised community, but they already participated actively in the urban economy of their surroundings.

THE FORM OF THE JEWISH QUARTER

Towards the end of the 9th century, the Jews lived in houses next to those of the Christians. The synagogue was situated just beside the cathedral and the palace of the bishop. During the second half of the 12th century however, the will and the need of the Jewish community to live together, as well as the decision of the Christian authorities, led to the creation of a Jewish quarter, the *call*, which developed on both sides of Força Street, then called "Main Street of the *Call"*. During the second half of the 13th century, the synagogue was situated in the central part of this main street, next to the city wall. The serious incidents in 1391 and the strong pressure following these, marked a before and an after for the community, with the creation of a closed and reduced *call* on the easterly side of Força Street. There the new synagogue was built, which was used until the expulsion in 1492.

During the latest archaeological digs (2012-2013) in the inner courtyard of the Museum of Jewish History, structures of a 13th century house, which has been destroyed towards the end of the 14th century, have been found. This large piece of pottery had been built in an interior wall of the house. Everything points to its being placed there on purpose, since the stone wall has been erected around it: this is one of the mysteries of the *call* yet to be resolved.



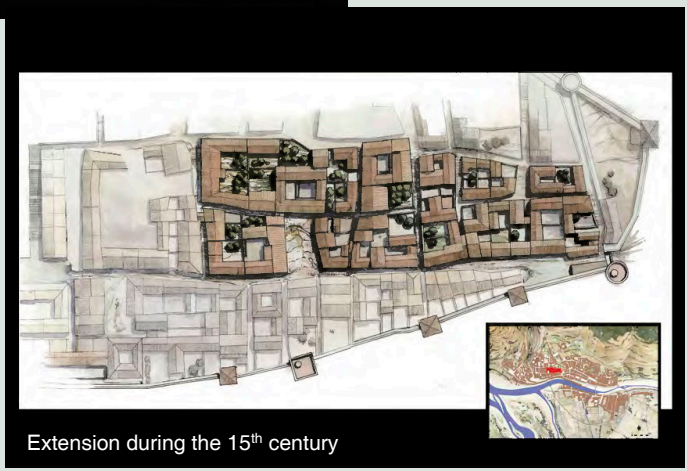
Model of the Jewish quarter in the 14th century
Wood
Museum of Jewish History, 1991

Pitcher
Glazed black pottery. 12th-13th century

EVOLUTION OF THE JEWISH QUARTER OF GIRONA



Extension during the 13th and 14th century



Extension during the 15th century

MENORAH

When did the first Jews arrive in Girona? We cannot know exactly. Repression by the Roman troops in the 1st century AC forced them to leave their land and provoked a Diaspora which dispelled them all over the Mediterranean.

We only know that they took with them their religion –Judaism–, and their most ancient symbol: a candelabrum (or oil lamp) with seven arms, symbol of the seven days of the creation. This candelabrum is called *menorah* in Hebrew language, which is the holy language of Judaism.

Religion, language and symbol have been handed down from generation to generation.

ECONOMY, INDUSTRY AND TRADE

Some Jews from Girona occupied important posts in public administration in Catalonia. In the 12th century, Jucef Ravaia and his father, Astruc Ravaia were bailiffs of the town. Jucef was also general treasurer of the kingdom, and Astruc general bailiff of Catalonia.

But the vast majority made their livelihood with craftwork and small businesses, which were not always prosperous. Their occupations were varied: there were tailors, such as Dayot; veil weavers, such as Bonet Asdrai; booksellers, such as master Mayr; haberdashers such as Galena; dressmakers such as Boneta; wet nurses such as Maria; or servants such as Bela, among others. An important part of the Jewish population lent money with an interest, thus contributing to the economic development of the city.

Thimble
Bronze. 13th-14th century
Found in the lower courtyard of the Bonastruc ça Porta Centre, 2011

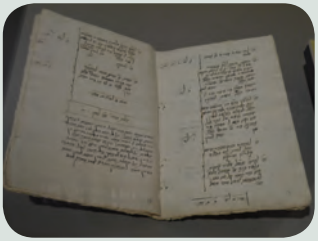
Earrings
Silver. 11th-15th centuries
Found in Girona, 2000

Pins
Bronze. 13th-14th century
Found in the lower courtyard of the Bonastruc ça Porta Centre, 2011



Dice
Bone. Second half of the 13th/ beginnings of the 14th century
Found at the courtyard of the Association of Architects of Girona, 2002

Coins
Copper or silver. 12th-14th centuries
Found in the courtyard of the Association of Architects of Girona, 2002



Account book of Jucef Zabarra, administrator of the assets of the *aljama* of Girona
Paper. Girona, 1432
Historical Archives of Girona

Names and professions of the Jewish population of Girona

Names	Professions
Aaron Jacob	mattress-maker
Astruc Abraham	tailor
Astruc Abraham Desportal	physician
Bela	servant
Bonet Asdrai	haberdasher
Boneta	seamstress
Bonjuhà Cresques	silver-smith
David Jucef	book-seller
Galena	haberdasher
Goig	silk veil weaver
Isaac Mercadell	builder
Isaac Saulis	shoe-maker
Mestre Mayr	coral craftsman
Mira	wet nurse
Nassanell Cerç	cloth merchant
Petita	cattle trader

GOVERNMENT AND POWER OF THE *ALJAMA*

The aljama was the governing organ which regulated the internal life of the community. This institution is documented as a public entity in the city of Girona from 1257 on. Initially, the government was in the hands of the oligarchy, and the posts were hereditary. From the 14th century on, a system of semi-public election of the leaders, called *secretaries*, was established. These leaders were chosen among the most powerful families, which often provoked internal conflicts. According to the law, the Jews belonged to the King. Therefore their taxes went directly into the royal coffer, and in exchange the kings bestowed privileges upon them, which ensured, at least on a legal level, protection of the community and the forms and structures of Jewish life.

The Ravaias of Girona and the Town Charter of Palamós

Astruc Ravaia acts as representative of the King in this document which acknowledges Palamós as a town. Astruc was a royal official at the service of Peter the Grand, and between 1276 and 1286 he was bailiff of Girona, and general bailiff of Catalonia between 1276 and 1283. The Ravaia family has been the most powerful family in the history of Jewish Girona. Their members occupied high ranks in the royal and local administration during the last quarter of the 13th century. They occupied very important posts in both the Jewish community and the general administration of the kingdom.



Town Charter of the town of Palamós

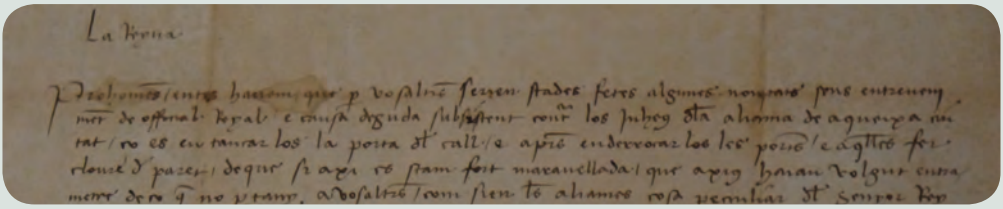
Parchment. December 3rd 1279

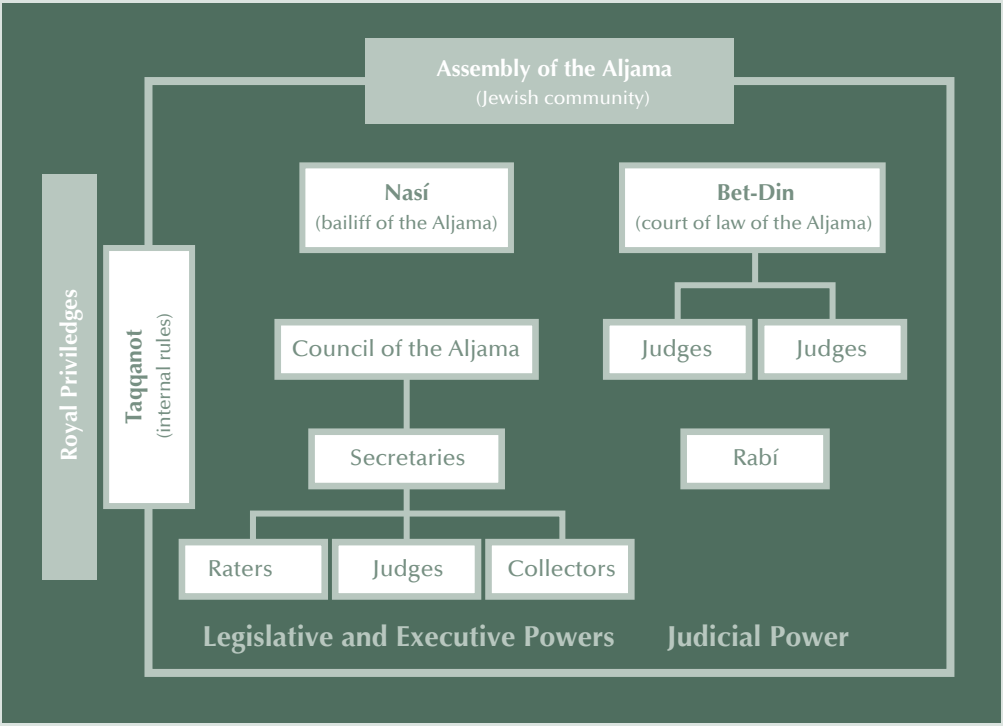
Be it known to all the world that I, Astruc Ravaia, bailiff of the distinguished lord Don Pedro, king of Aragon by the grace of God, on behalf of the very same lord and king and his kind, (…) I give and grant perpetually all and each and every one of you, men and women presents and future inhabitants of the royal port of Palamós…

Royal Letter of Queen Mary on the government of the *aljama* of Girona

Parchment. Perpignan, September 11th 1449

Queen Mary, wife and deputy of King Alfons IV, to the juries of the city of Girona. They are ordered not to interfere in the matters of the Jews, since it is the royal officials who deal with the aljamas, and to inform [her] of those matters which they deem are not of their incumbency in order to establish a royal ordinance.





NAMES OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE ALJAMA OF GIRONA

From mid-14th century till 1492

1343
Astruc Bedoç
Bellshom Escapat
Bonjuha Cresques
Lobell Escapat

1344
Astruc Deuslocrega
Isaach Abraham
Isaach Escapat
Salomó Isaach
Saltell Gracià

1352
Astruc Lobell Gracià
Astruc Deuslocrega
Salomó Isaach
Saltell Gracià
Bonjuhà Cresques
(assistant)

1354
Astruc Bedoç
Bellshom Escapat
Bellshom Falcó
Bonjuha Cresques
Duran Abraham
Lobell Escapat

1358
Benet Bellshom
Isaach Cresques
Salomó Astruch

1362
Bellshom Falcó
Jucef Bellshom de Blanes
Vidal Caravida

1373
Abraham Isaach
Astruch Bonanasch
Jucef Bellshom de Blanes

1377
Astruc Cresques
Bellshom Isaach
Mossé Falcó

1380
Benet Bellshom
Bondia Falcó
Bonet Saltell

1384
Bellshom Benet
Bellshom Isaach
Caravida Saporta

Entre 1386 i 1391
(taking turns in the government)
These were times of internal crisis within the government of the aljama
Bellshom Benet
Isaach Bonjuha
Astruc Benet
Astruc Cresques
Bonet Saltell
Bonjuha Vidal
Ferrer Bonanasch
Abraham Ravaya
Astruc Lobell Gracià
Benet Bellshom
Bonastruc Desmaestre
Falcó Mossé
Rovén Nacim
Salomó Saporta
Vidal Lobell

1394
Bonastruc Desmestre
Falcó Mossé
Vidal Lobell

1408
Abraham Mossé Desportal
Astruc Benet
Bonastruc Desmestre
Bonastruc Jucef
Vidal Bonet

1492
Lleó Aninay
Salamó Esdrà
Salamó Samuel
Leví Isaach

ART AND CULTURE

In Girona, wise Jews studied the Holy Scriptures and wrote their comments, composed poems and produced sublime literature. In the houses of the *call*, the scientists calculated the eclipses and the movements of the stars, and they excelled at the art of medicine. The Jews of Girona built a column of wisdom so important that Girona received the sobriquet of *Mother City of Israel*. Their intellectual legacy is one of the most interesting and powerful of the whole medieval age. Among all great wise men, Moshe ben Nahman, -also known as Bonastruc ça Porta-, stands out. The so-called *Mestre de Girona*, a talmudist, kabbalist, poet, physician and rabbi, was born in Girona in 1194, and died in the Holy Land around 1270. From there he left a written testimony of the longing he felt for Girona and for his *holy community of the sons of Israel*.

A library in the *call*

Some families had private libraries in their homes in the Jewish quarter. Many of the books that these contained were used to practice medicine, one of the most common professions of the Jews and some Jewesses of the Middle Ages. The inventory of the books belonging to the physician Nathan Mossé Desportal, dictated to the notary by his widow Goig in 1410, enables us to know some of the most interesting titles of these libraries. Some of the books had religious contents, others were scientific, and many were about medicine.



«librum ebrayce scriptum vocatum vibria»
A page of the *Lisbon Bible*, illuminated Hebrew manuscript. Catalonia, 15th century.

«les taules de mestra Bonet»
A page from the *Taules Astronòmiques* by David Bonet Bonjorn (Girona-Perpignan, 1365). Copy of the 15th century, National Library of Catalonia, Ms. 39

«plagon de paper de cabala»
A fragment of a Hebrew manuscript with kabbalistic contents. Girona, 13th-14th century, Municipal Archive of Girona

«alguns quaterns medicina»
A fragment of a Hebrew manuscript with medical and pharmacopeia terminology. Girona, 13th-14th century, Municipal Archives of Girona

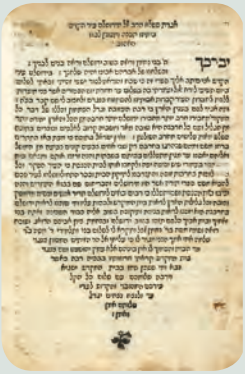
«librum medicinae de mestra Bernard de Gordon»
A page of the Hebrew manuscript *Soshan ha-Refuah* [*Lilium medicinae*] by Bernard of Gordon, a physician from Montpellier (ca. 1260-1318). The treatise had been translated into Hebrew language in the 14th century. Escalona, 1466, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Ms . 22

«Livrum Vincenna»
A page from the illuminated manuscript *Cannon Medicinae* by Avicenna, translated from Arabic to Hebrew. Italy, 15th century, University Library of Bologna, Ms. 2197

«rotulum pergameneo cum gornimento»
A fragment of an Scroll of Esther. 18th century, Museum of Jewish History
Some Hebrew books of liturgical or religious contents were written on scrolls and kept that way in the libraries of the call.

Interactive:
Facsimile of the *Sarajevo Haggadah*, an illuminated Hebrew manuscript
Catalonia, 14th century. Nahmanides Institute of Studies, E.E.Schalit Library, 1997

The inventory made by Goig also mentions a **“vivria ebrea”** and a **“librum vocatum toraz azam”**, works which can be seen, in more modern editions, in the display cases.



Sefer Torat ha-Adam [Book of the Law of Man]
Bound leather and printed paper
Moshe ben Nahman (Nahmanides), ca. 1194-ca. 1270
Venice : Printer Giovanni di Gara, 1595
Nahmanides Institute of Studies, E.E.Schalit Library 2000

Tanakh or Hebrew Bible
Bound parchment and paper
Frankfurt : 1695
Museum of Jewish History, 2003



SOCIETY

The population of the *call* was not physically different from the rest, but they were with regards to culinary, social and ritual customs. One of the main precepts of Judaism is procreation, and the only legitimate way to comply with it was through matrimony. This remained legally defined by the *ketubah*, the matrimonial contract, which guaranteed the rights of the wife and defined the obligations of the husband. There existed a strong cultural and class-related endogamy among the Jewish families, so that the great lineages of Girona preserved their power throughout the centuries thanks to arranged marriages which united names and fortune. The most relevant surnames of Jewish Girona were: Aninai, Astruc, Benet, de Blanes, des Portal, Caravida, Desmestre, Falcó, Lobell, Nacim, Ravaia, Rovén, Sabarra, or Saltell.





Fragments of domestic tableware
Pottery with decorations in green and manganesum, and blue Valencian pottery
13th-15th centuries
Found in different places of the Jewish quarter between 1986 and 2005

CONTROVERSY AND EXILE

Until the 13th century the relations between Christian and Jewish society were those of a certain co-existence, which was shattered whenever a specific act of religious or social violence became known. In the 14th century, the changes in both the material (crisis, war, famine and plagues) and the spiritual (a new conception of Judaism, attacks of the Talmud, new dogmas) context provoked violent assaults and a strong anti-Judaism. In 1391, within a few months the great part of the Catalan communities were erased by violence, they were doomed, demographically and culturally destroyed. When King Fernando ordered their expulsion in 1492, there were only few Jewish families left in Girona. Some of them took the road to exile, towards Perpignan, from where they looked for new routes across the sea. Most of them however converted to Christianity and stayed in Girona, their city and the city of their ancestors.

Presentation, to the members of the jury, of the royal charter containing the order of expulsion of the Jews from their kingdoms

Municipal Archives of Girona, Manual of agreements, v. 92 (1492), page 47 r- v.

«(...) havemos provehido que los Judíos de nuestros reynos y señoríos salgan y sean expellidos d·ellos segund veys por el edicto que por esta causa havemos promulgado, (...)»
«Por la dicha causa inconveniente alguno no se siga. Data en la nuestra ciutad De Granada a XXXI de março año de M CCCC LXXXX II.
por yo el rey»

"… we have ordered that the Jews of our kingdoms and dominions should leave and be expelled from them, as you may see in the edict which we have promulgated for that purpose, (…)"
"For this matter there should be no inconvenient. Dated in our city of Granada, on 31st of March in the year 1492.
by me, the king"




Memory
Longing
Oblivion
Generation


Subsis
Traditio
Co
Hope


stence
on
existence


Transmission
Journey
Survival
Roots

JEWISH GIRONA

mother city of Israel

Organisation:

PATRONAT CALL DE GIRONA

Ajuntament de Girona

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Design and production:	Mostra Comunicació s.l.

Thanks to: Escola Taller Embolic

AJUNTAMENT DE PALAMÓS

Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Cultura i Mitjans de Comunicació
Arxiu Històric de Girona

Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya

With the collaboration of:

Diputació de Girona

Generalitat de Catalunya

CAMINOS DE SEFARAD
RED DE JUDERIAS DE ESPAÑA

Design: Cristina Taberner . Cover picture: Mostra Comunicació . Legal Deposit: Gl.1639-2013