



# The Inquisition and Witch Hunts

History of the Church Part 2

Maranatha Chapel

Randy Broberg

2010

**The Inquisition originated during the 11th and 12th centuries, when the Roman Catholic Church began to believe that heretics were a threat.**

**If a heretic did not recant he was "turned over to the secular authority" and put to death.**

- Waldensians
- Albigensians (Cathars)
- Wycliffe's Lollards
- Heresies in Germany

**In 1233, the inquisitors went to Germany and burned eighty men, women and even small children accused of being Lucifer worshippers.**

## **Early Sporadic Inquisitions**



**"POPE FORMOSUS AND STEPHEN VII" BY J.P. LAURENS**

# The Blood Libel

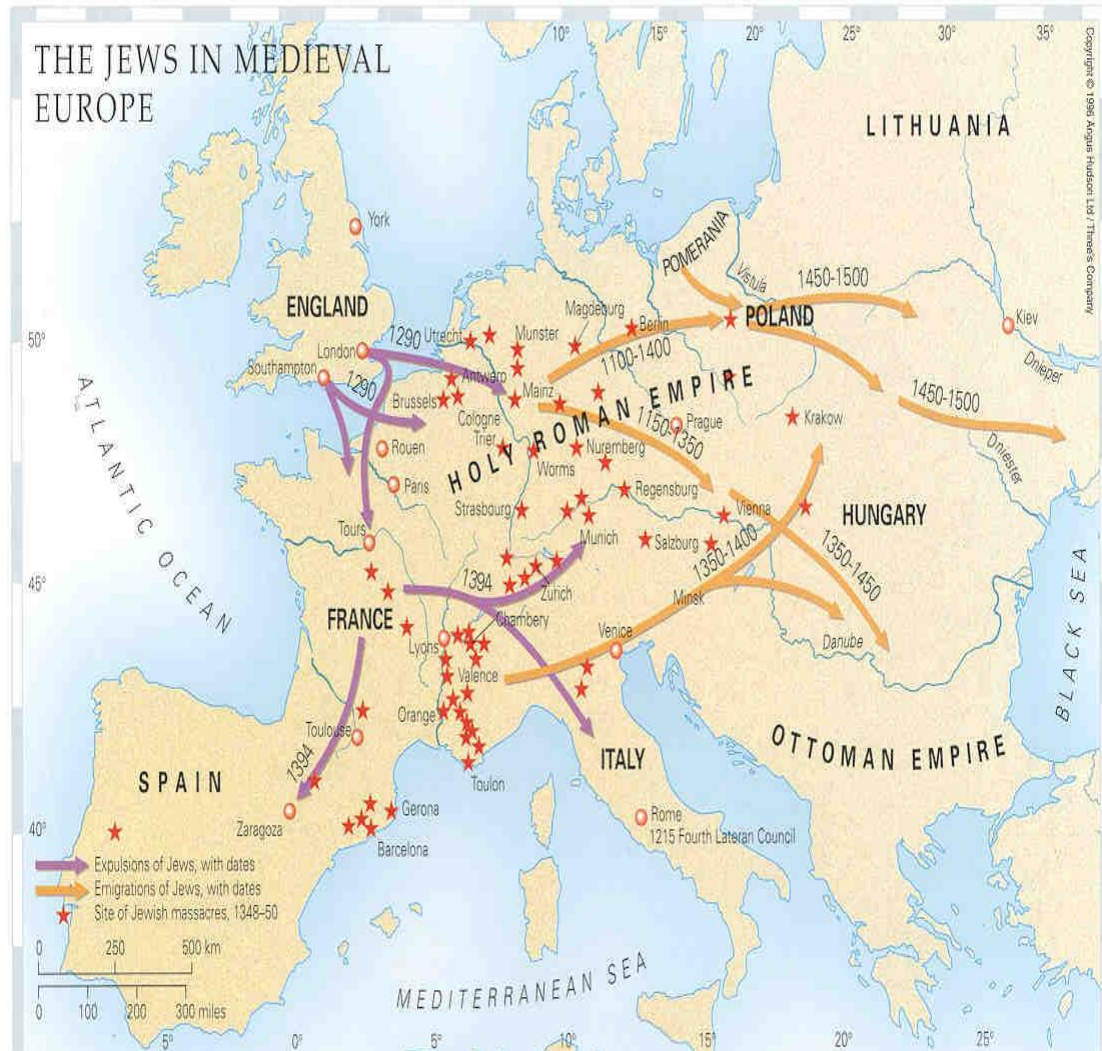
- Jews accused of Well Poisoning
- One generation after the First Crusade, the Blood Libel emerges in Europe.
- the Grimm Brothers incorporate it into the story of the *Judenstein* (Jewry Stone)



Alleged Jewish Well Poisoning

- **1215: Pope Innocent III decrees that Jews must wear yellow badges wherever they live**
- **Jews all over Europe forced to live in closed urban “Ghettos”**
- **1306 Philip IV expels the Jews from France.**
- **1348 Jews blamed for Black Death and systematically persecuted.**
- **1349 A new period of persecution of Jews sweeps Germany.**
- **1391 Spanish Jews are forced to convert to Catholicism for the sake of "social and sectarian uniformity.”**
- **1400 Jews banished from Britain by Edward “Longshanks”**

# Persecutions of Jews Throughout Era

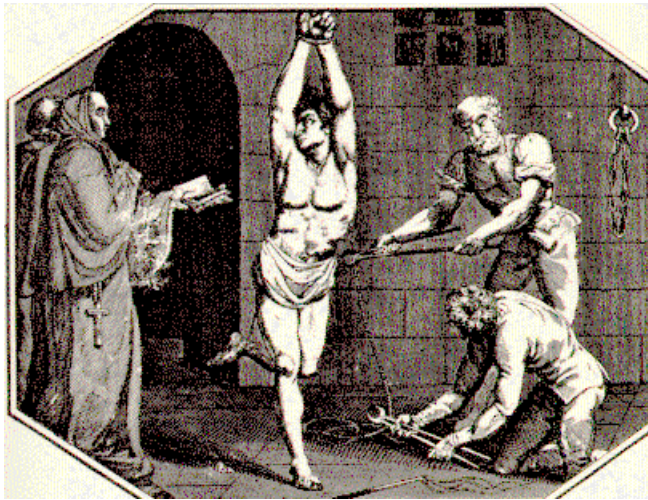


# **Papal Authority and Direction for the Inquisition**

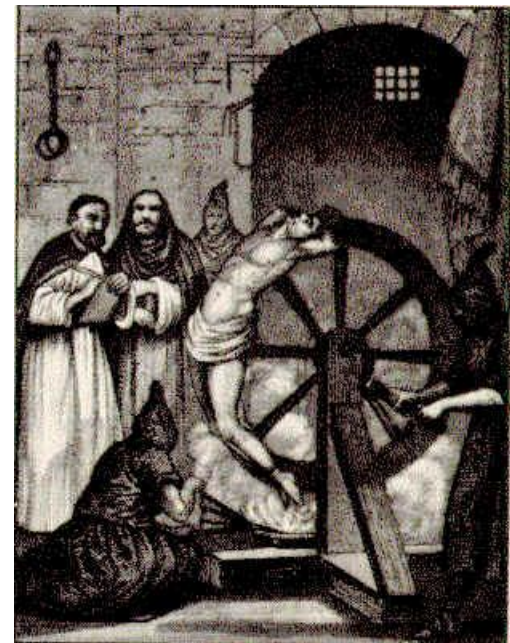
- **1163, Pope Alexander III created the professional, full-time inquisitor.**
- **His successor, Pope Lucius III approved burning heretics as execution method.**
- **1199, Pope Innocent III declares any heresy “treason against God” punishable by death.**
- **1209 Pope Innocent III grants indulgences to those who participate in “Crusades” against Cathars and Waldensians.**
- **Pope Gregory IX instituted a papal inquisition in 1233. He distinguished between the different kinds of heresies, and assigned penance when a heretic recanted.**
- **1252, Pope Innocent IV issues papal bull approving use of torture: “bodily torture has ever been found the most salutary and efficient means of leading to spiritual repentance.” Those who persisted in denying guilt were to receive “no compassion from the servants of God” and were to “perish among the damned.” Witnesses, as well as accused, could be tortured.**

# Pope officially approve Use of Torture 1255 AD

- The inquisition employed not only torture, but secret proceedings and special punishments. They were allowed to judge motives and not just facts.



Branding and amputation of digits



The Pulley or *strappado*

# Torture



Water Torture

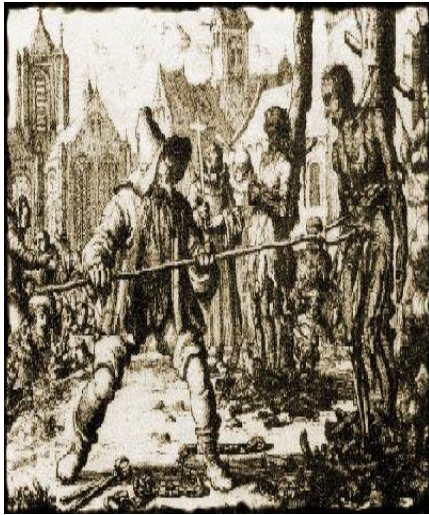


The Judas Chair

Disembowelment



Impalement



Slow Burning



The Saw



The wheel



The Cage

Head Crusher

- **Up to a third of Europeans lost their life; in England the death rate was probably half. In some localities two-thirds died.**
- **25 million died within five years**
- **continued outbreaks into 16th century**
- **Enhanced popular belief in predestination as Plague strikes rich and poor, young and old indiscriminately.**

# The Black Plague

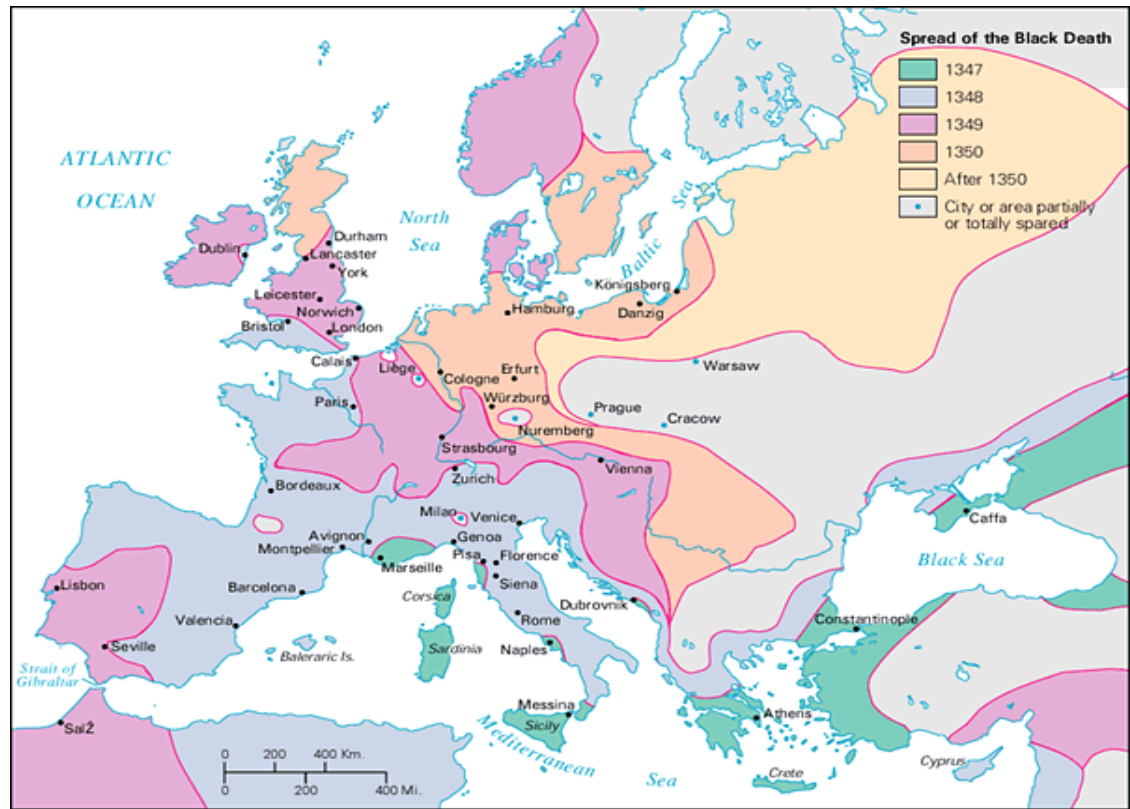
1347 ~ 1550's



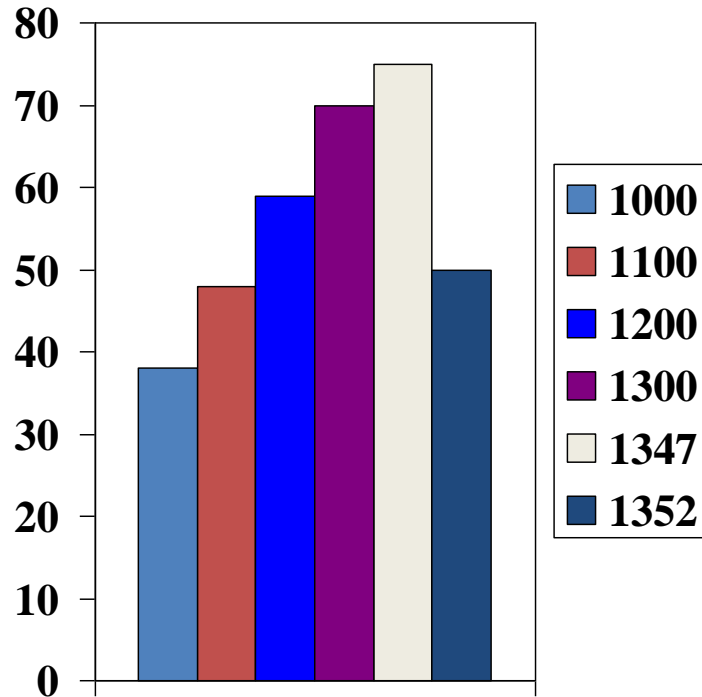
“Ring a ring of roses, A pocket full of posies,  
Ashes, Ashes, We all fall down”



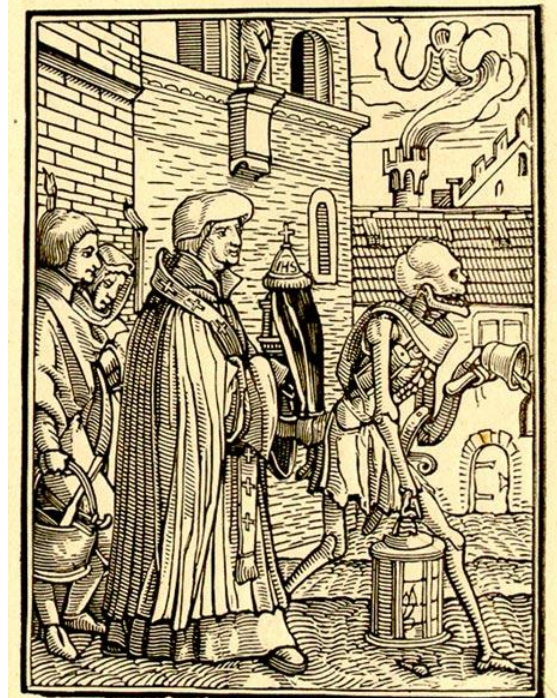
# Plague Spreads Accompanied by Famine



- 1315 --1375
- **Bad weather and crop failure result in famine across northwestern Europe. Unsanitary conditions and malnutrition increase the death rate. Even after the revival of agricultural conditions, weather disasters reappear.**
- **A mixture of war, famine and plague in the Late Middle Ages reduces the population by half**



Population of Europe  
in millions



# Obsession with Death and Dying

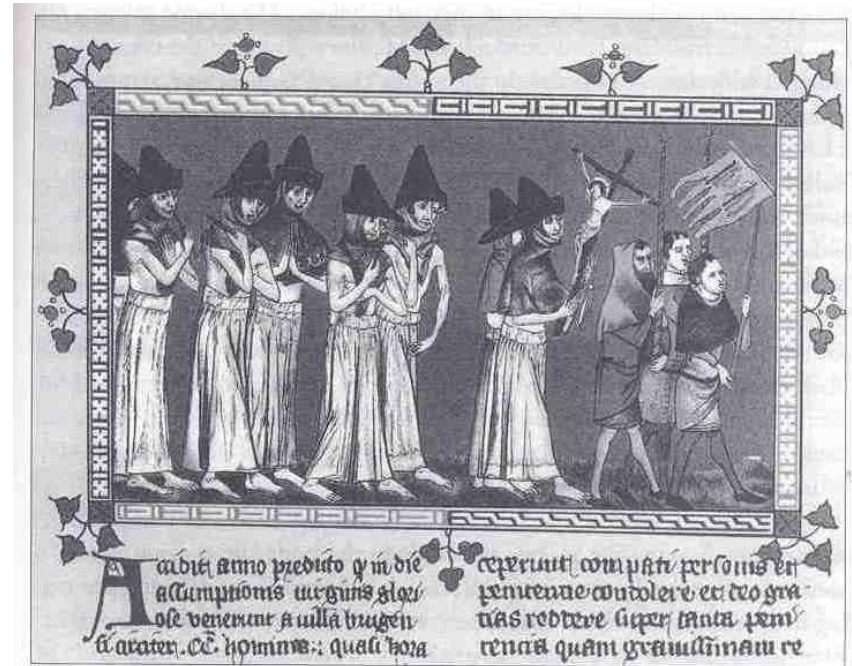
- Representations of death became a prominent theme in European art throughout the plague years.
- Apocalyptic images featuring the allegoric figure of Death attempted to explain the importance of the Black Death for European society.
- The indiscriminate nature of the plague enhanced widespread acceptance of fatalism.
- Those left alive felt like they were chosen, the elect, the remnant.

• **This woodcut from the mid-14th century depicts one of the most popular themes of these images, the triumph of death.**

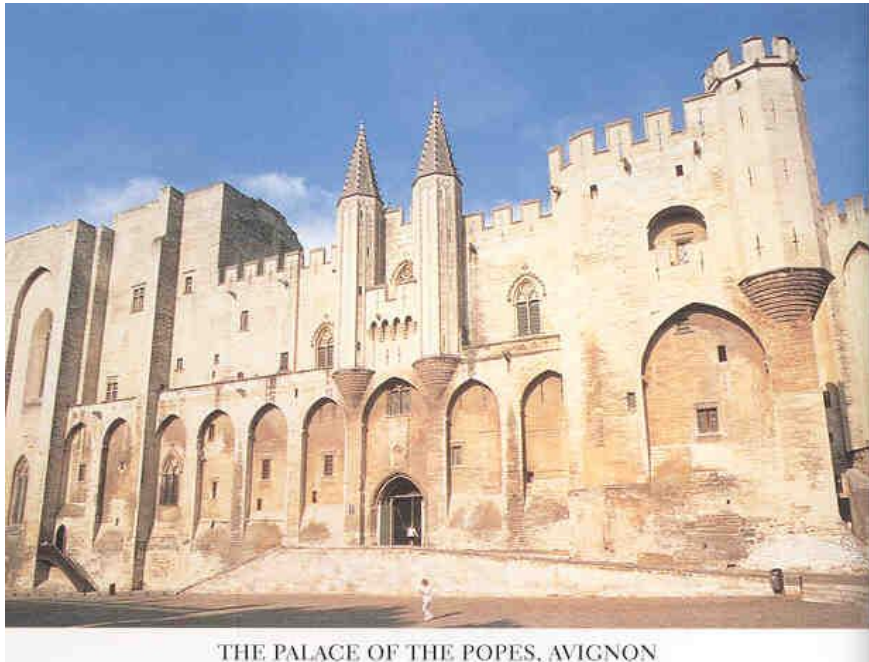


- Many saw the plague as divine punishment and sought pardon in self flagellation.
- The flagellants toured towns and villages, flogging themselves with metal tipped leather scourges, praying and sobbing. They said that Christ's blood mingled with their own, and that they were an army of saints whose suffering would absolve others.
- 1348-- 2,000 flagellants entered Avignon where the Pope resided, wailing, tearing their hair and scourging themselves.
- Processions spread all over Europe. A band of flagellants might have 50 to 500 members who wore uniforms and would parade around a town, scourging themselves.

## Self Flagellation Movement (1348-9)



# 1349 Pope Condemns Self Flagellation



THE PALACE OF THE POPES, AVIGNON

- **1349 Pope Clement VI issued a bull condemning flagellants calling them “masters of error” who “set their hands to...shedding the blood of Jews whom Christian pity accepts and sustains. The pope stressed that Jews were as much victims of the plague as Christians and were not to be blamed for it.**
- **One flagellant leader was Konrad Schmid, who asserted that they were in the “Last Days” and that the “Millennial Kingdom” was coming the next year.**

# Mystic: Joan of Arc, 1412 - 1431

- a peasant girl in France, seeks out the French leader and relates her divinely-inspired mission to drive the English out of France. She takes control of the French troops and liberates most of central France.
- Like many medieval mystics, she reported regular visions of divine revelation.
- Her “voices” told her to go to the king and assist him in driving out the English.
- She brought inspiration and a sense of national identity and self-confidence.
- With Joan’s aid, the king was crowned in the cathedral at Reims, the traditional site of French coronations.



# Burning of Joan of Arc as a Witch, 1431

- Joan was captured during an attack on Paris and eventually fell into English hands.
- Because of her “unnatural dress” and her claim to divine guidance, she was condemned and burned as a heretic in 1432.
- Joan almost instantly became a symbol of French resistance.
- The pope reversed the condemnation in 1456



# Johannes Gutenberg (1394-1468)

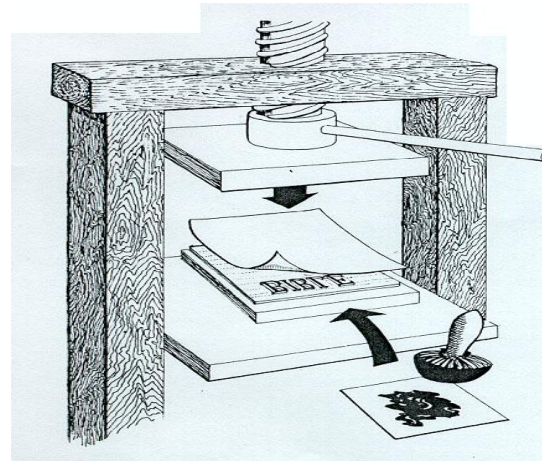
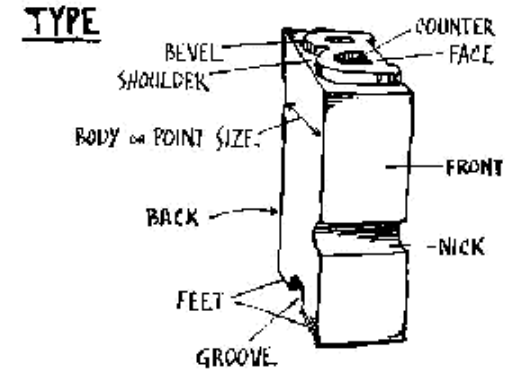
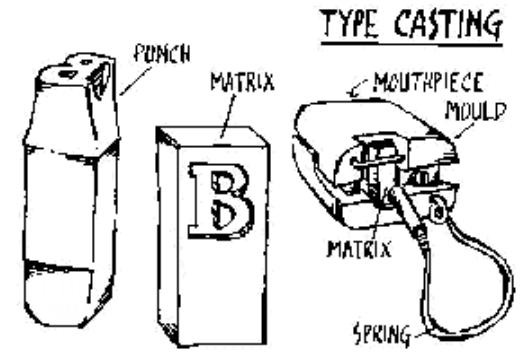
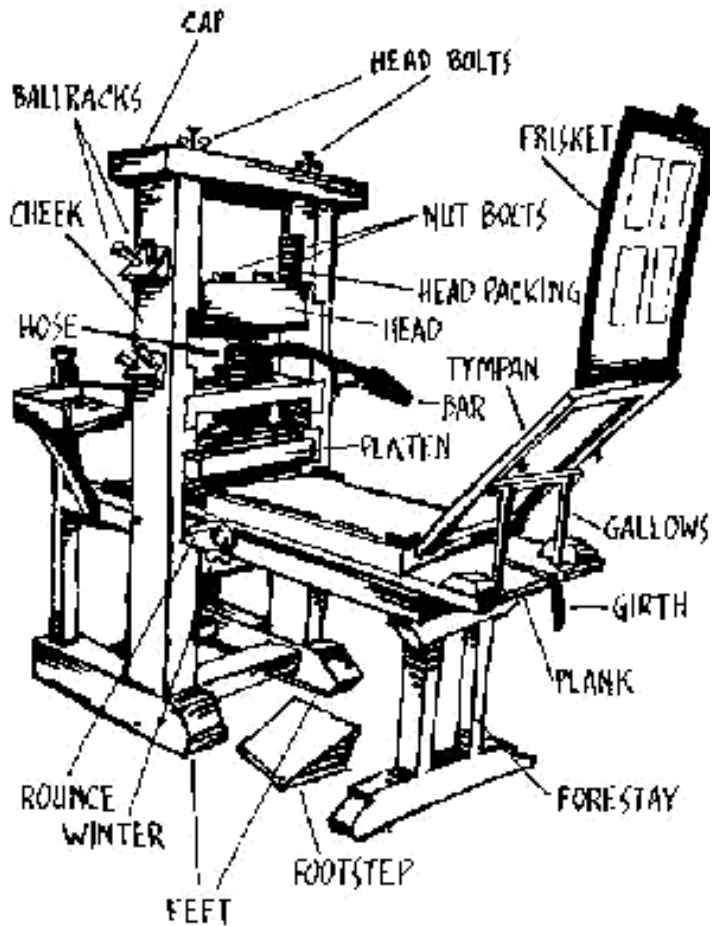


- **1453 -- Johann Gutenberg develops his printing press and prints the first Bible.**
- **movable type printing press had Important new capabilities: exact copies, mass production, speed**
- **Most influential invention of the millennium**



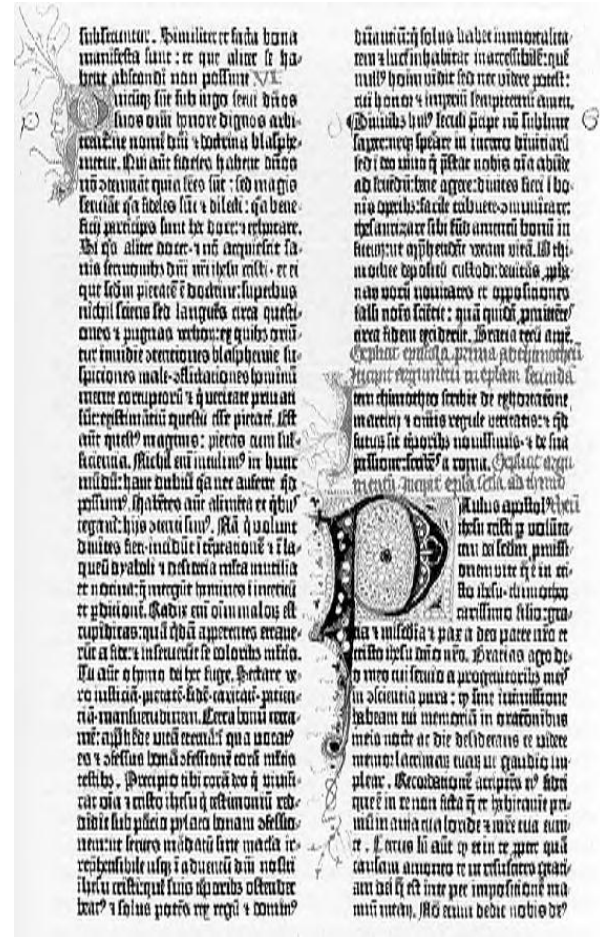
# Guttenberg Press, 1450-55

## WOODEN COMMON PRESS

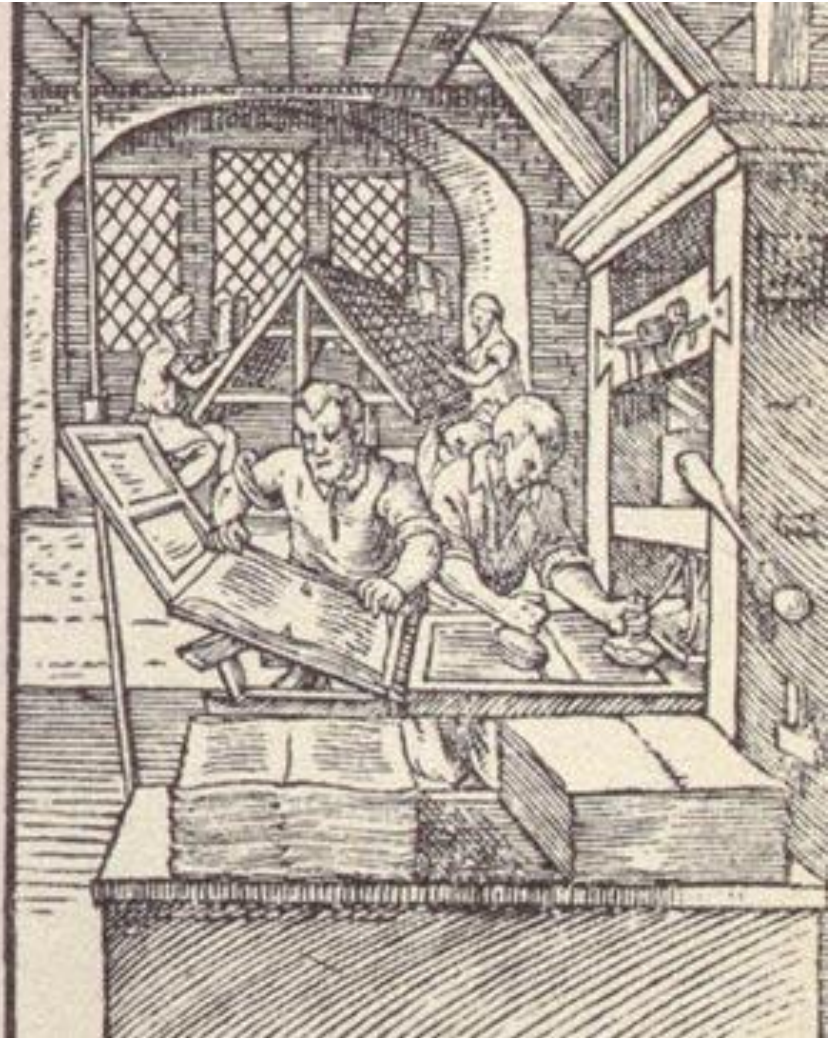
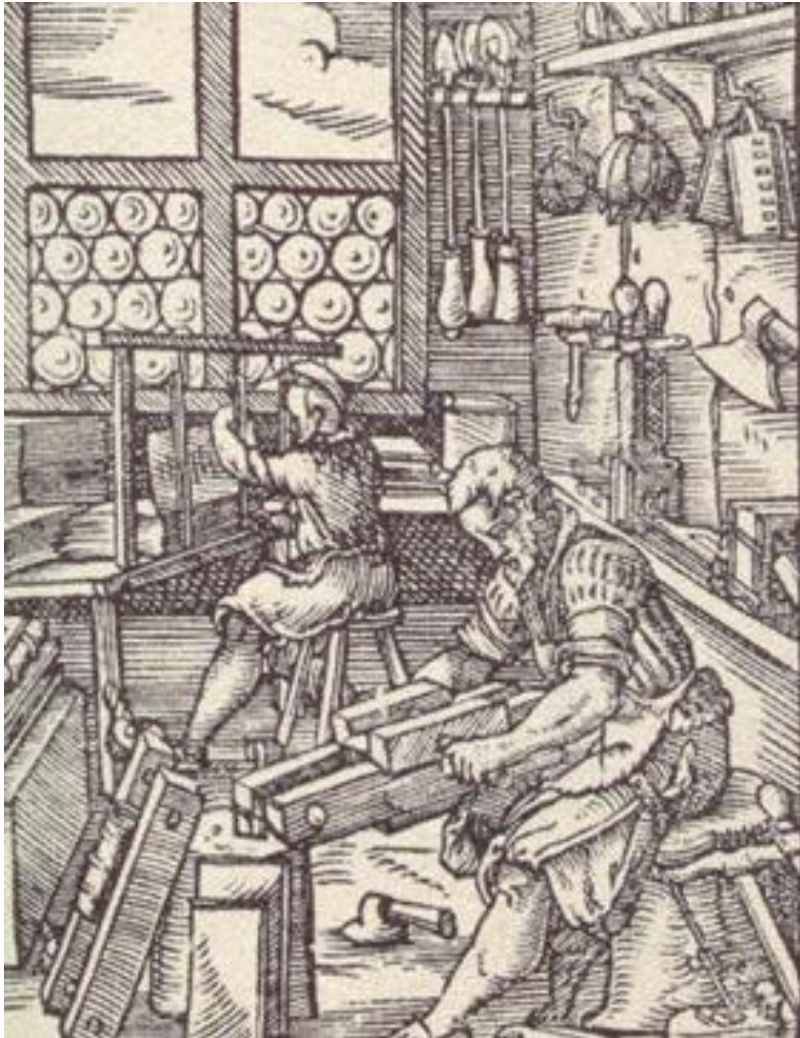


# The Gutenberg Bible, 1455

- The three-volume Latin text arguably represents the greatest single innovation in the history of communication technology, as well as a style of printing that existed almost unaltered until the twentieth century.



# Insatiable Appetite for Books



- **Within fifty years of its invention, it is estimated that 200 presses were running throughout Europe.**
- **Ideas spread more quickly than ever before.**
- **Standardization of national languages**
- **inexpensive books, which would eventually precipitate a revolutionary expansion of the printed word, enabling greater and greater numbers of people access to the world of ideas.**
- **Before this time, it was quite expensive to obtain books, and the common people usually had little to no literacy.**
- **the Bible was no longer monopolized by the Latin-understanding clergy.**

# Impact of Printing Press

## The Latin Vulgate: The Need for New Translations

Matthew 4:17 and Penance

*do penance* (outward practice)

*repent* (inward psychological state)

Luke 1:28 and Mary

*grata plena* (full of grace, or favored one)

Ephesians 5:31–32 and Marriage

*sacramentum* (sacrament)

*mysterion* (mystery)

# Spanish Inquisition Begins 1479



**Tómas de Torquemada  
Grand Inquisitor**

1420-1498



- **Pope Sixtus IV authorized Spanish King to hold inquisitorial investigations and appointed Tómas de Torquemada as Grand Inquisitor**
- **Advocated use of torture**
- **Jews are given 3 months to become Christians or leave the country.**
- **At least 2,000 Jews were burnt**
- **323,362 people burnt during Spanish Inquisition**
- **Officially ended in 1834**

# Inquisition Procedures

- **Upon investigation, property was immediately seized by the crown**
- **No right to counsel**
- **Accused does NOT know names of accusers or witnesses**
- **Assumed guilty unless proven otherwise** Process of inquisition called *auto de fé*
- **Use of torture to interrogate**
- **Those convicted of acts against the Church were burnt by the state**
- **All victims were burnt**
  - **Recant and kiss the cross, garroted**
  - **Recant only, burnt quickly**
  - **Refusal, burnt slowly with green wood**



# Pope Paul III Establishes the Roman Inquisition

- **We have appointed ...Inquisitors General with jurisdiction throughout Christendom including Italy and the Roman Curia.**
- **They are to investigate by way of inquisition all and single who wander from the way of the Lord and the Catholic faith, as well as those suspected of heresy, together with their followers and abettors, public or private, direct or indirect.**
- **The guilty and the suspects are to be imprisoned and proceeded against up to the final sentence. Those adjudged guilty are to be punished in accord with canonical penalties. After the infliction of death goods may be put up for sale.**
- **The aid of the civil arm may be invoked to implement whatever measures the above named deem needful. Any who impede will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.**

# Pope Initiates Witch-Hunts, 1484

- **Papal Bull to eliminate witchcraft in 1484**
- **Some 110,000 people, about 80 percent of them women, were prosecuted as witches conspiring with the Devil**
- **The trials took place in secular and religious courts in many parts of Europe, from Spain to Sweden and from Austria to Scotland.**
- **The key charge of having made pacts with the Devil and having worshipped him in large night-time rites and orgies to which the witches flew through the air first emerged in France and Switzerland in the 1420s and 1430s**
- **In medieval Europe some believed that union with a demon (incubus) resulted in the birth of witches, demons, and deformed human offspring.**

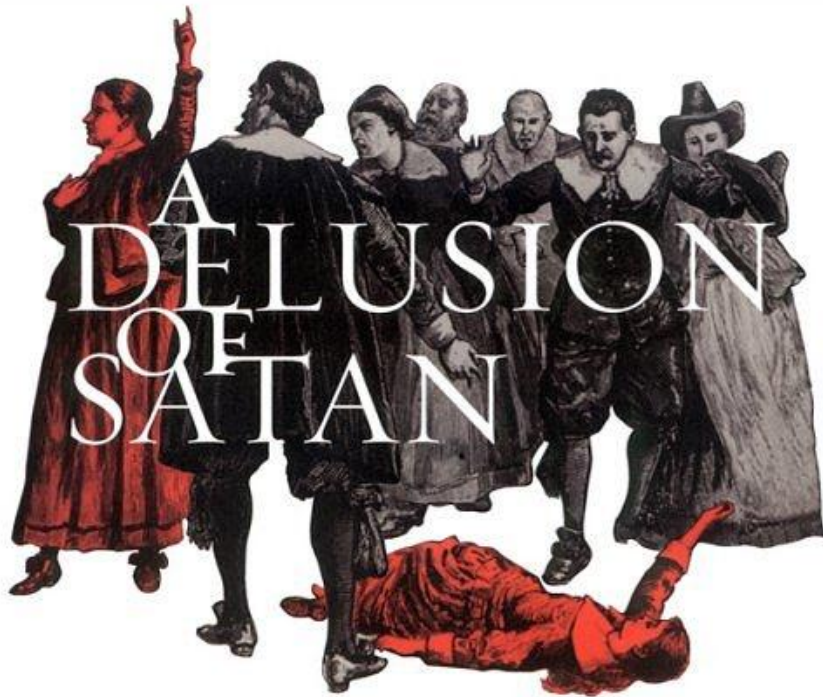




"An entertaining and suspenseful drama . . . a cautionary tale for our times."—*Boston Globe*

*The full story  
of the  
Salem witch trials*

o o o



WITH A NEW PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

FRANCES HILL  
author of *The Salem Witch Trials Reader*

INTRODUCTION BY KAREN ARMSTRONG

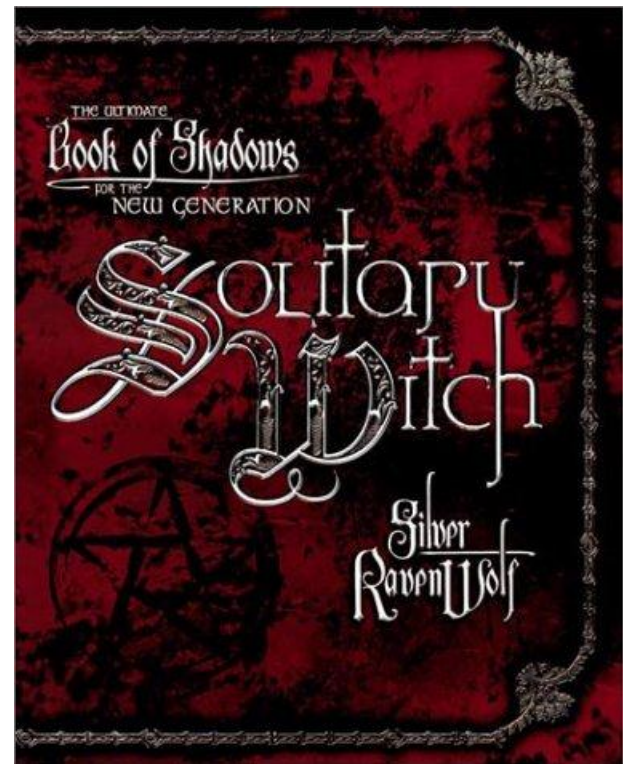
DA CAPO PRESS

# Do We Believe in Witches?

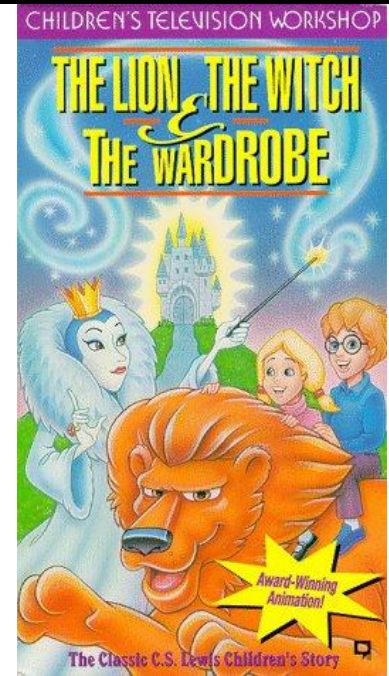
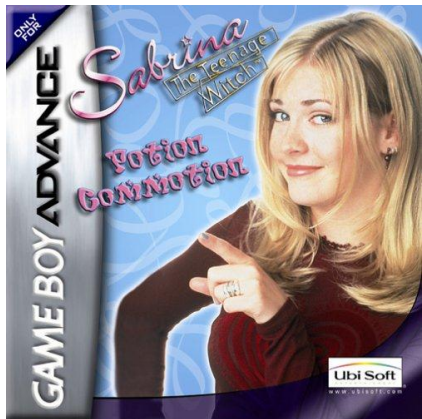
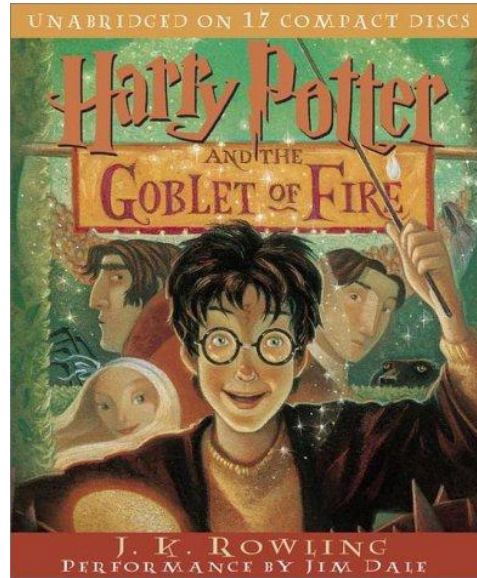
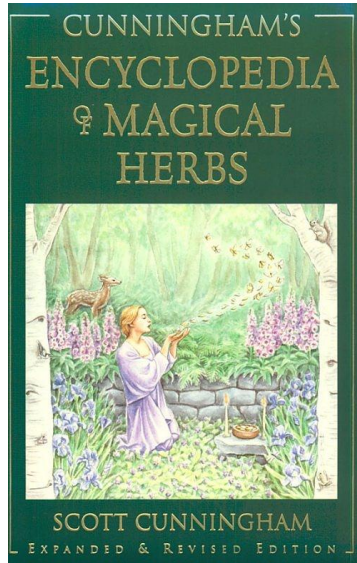
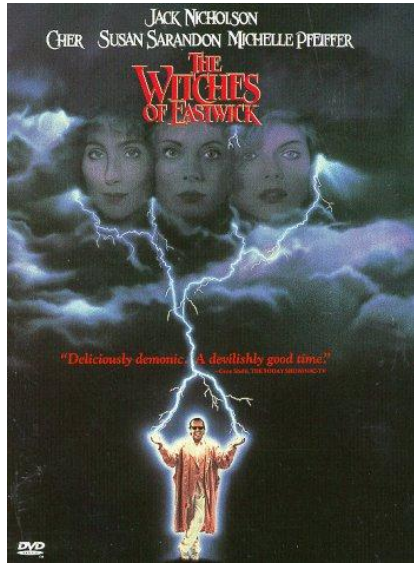
- Modern Culture Dismisses The Church's Persecution of Witches as being mere superstition.
- Since Witches Don't Exist, it goes without saying that Christians were crazy, malicious or both.
- Yet Modern Culture is full of witches. A search of "witch" at Amazon.com yields 2,256 different products!
- But what if witches do exist?

# Some Verses to Consider

- **Exodus 22:18 : Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.**
- **Deuteronomy 18:10, 14: "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer... For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so."**



# Should We Tolerate Witchcraft or Abhor it?



# *The Malleus Maleficarum, 1486*

- **Manual on Witches and Witchcraft.**
- **Its authors were two Dominican inquisitors**
- **The *Malleus* took the form of a scholastic disputation in which a series of questions were asked and answered**
- **Those who questioned the reality of witchcraft were deemed to be heretics**
- **The *Malleus* educated people authoritatively to believe in a witches conspiracy with the Devil**
- **The invention of printing and the spread of literacy facilitated the spread of witch-hunt manuals and beliefs among the educated classes**
- **The *Malleus Maleficarum* was first published in 1486, and reprinted 14 times before 1520**



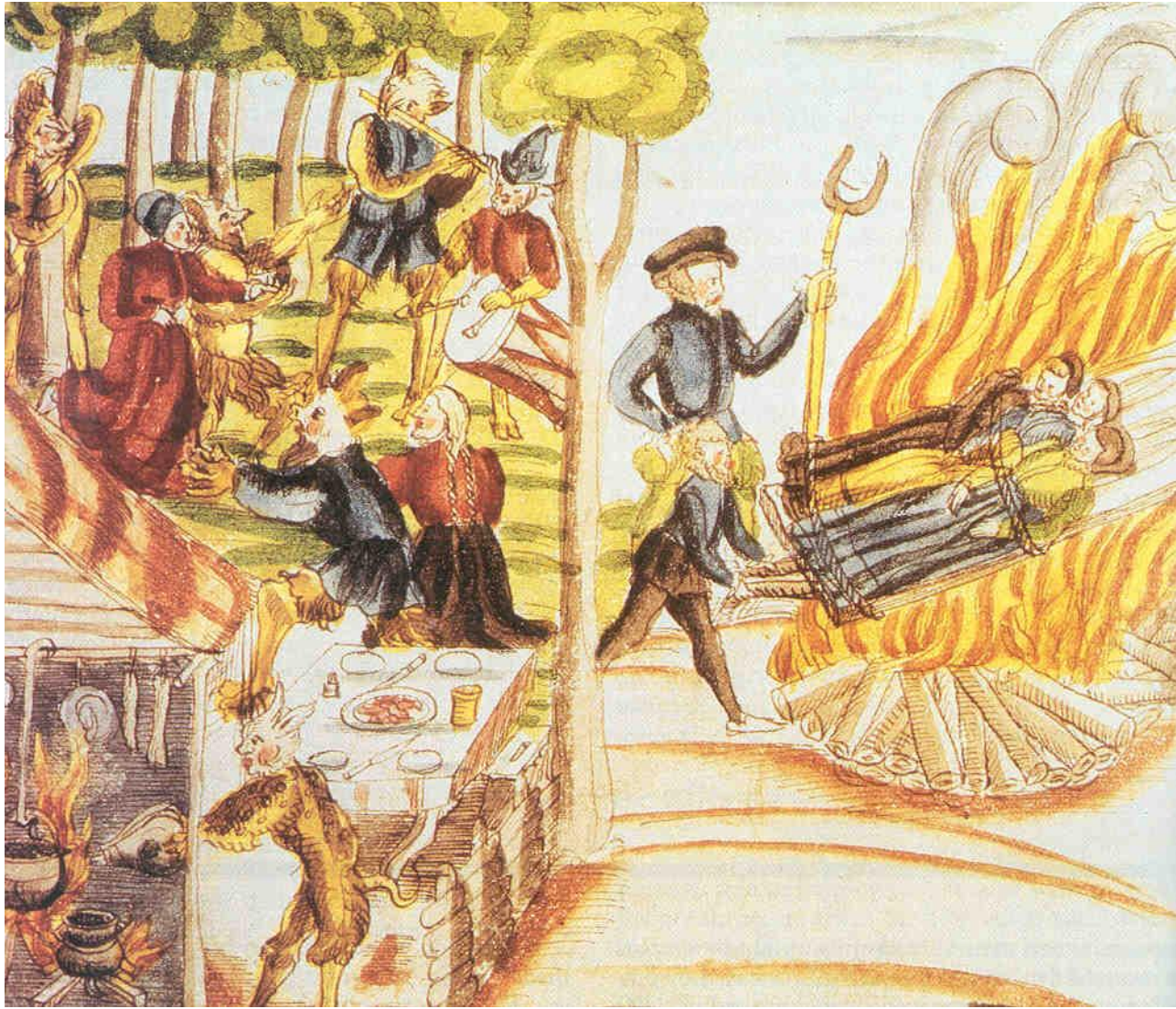
*“Double bubble, toil and trouble. Fire burn and cauldron bubble”*  
Shakespeare

# Who the “Witches” Were

- **“Those burned are mostly male witches of the sort described. There must be half the city implicated: for already professors, law-students, pastors, canons, vicars, and monks have here been arrested and burned. ...Children of three or four years have devils for their paramours. Students and boys of noble birth, of nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen years have here been burned. “**

– *Undated letter from the pastor, Duren, of the village of Alfter near Bonn to Count Werner of Salm describing the witch tribunals in Bonn.*





# Contemporary Description of Witch Hunts

- **All the divine judgments which God has threatened in Holy Writ are now ascribed to witches. No longer do God or nature do aught, but witches everything. Hence it comes that all at once everybody is clamoring that the magistrates proceed against the witches... [....Then when [an accused woman] . . . is tortured that ... she may simply declare herself guilty;. . . .Without any scruples, therefore, after this confession she is executed. Yet she would have been executed, nevertheless, even though she had not confessed; for, when once a beginning has been made with the torture, the die is already cast – she cannot escape, she must die. If, now, any under stress of pain has once falsely declared herself guilty, her wretched plight beggars description. For not only is there no door for escape, but she is also compelled to accuse others, of whom she knows no ill. . . . These in their turn are forced to accuse others, and these still others, and so its goes on: who can help seeing that it must go on without end?**
  - *Jesuit priest, Friedrich Spee, who acted as confessor to those sentenced to death in Würzburg.*

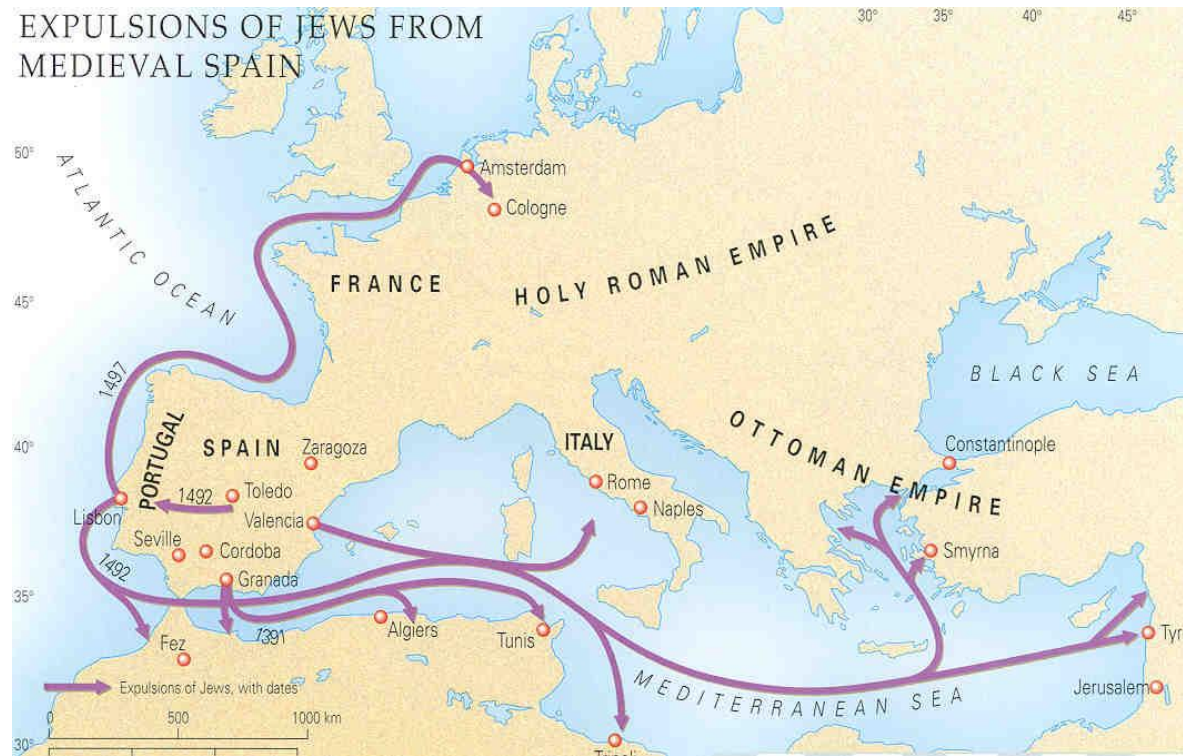
# *Directions for the Torture of a Witch*

- **First the jailers prepare the implements of torture, then they strip the prisoner.. lest some means of witchcraft may have been sewed into the clothing... And when the implements of torture have been prepared, the judge, ...tries to persuade the prisoner to confess the truth freely; but, if he will not confess, he bids attendants make the prisoner fast to the strappado or some other implement of torture. ...Then, ...the prisoner is loosed again and is taken aside and once more persuaded to confess, being led to believe that he will in that case not be put to death. ...But if, neither by threats nor by promises such as these, the witch can be induced to speak the truth, then the jailers must ...torture the prisoner according to the accepted methods, with more or less severity as the delinquent's crime may demand. ...And, while this is being done, the notary must write down everything in his record of the trial – how the prisoner is tortured, on what points he is questioned, and how he answers. ...The judge shall see to it, moreover, that throughout the interval guards are constantly with the prisoner, so that she may not be left alone; because she will be visited by the Devil and tempted to suicide.**
- *Malleus Maleficarum*





# Expulsions of Jews, 1478-1492



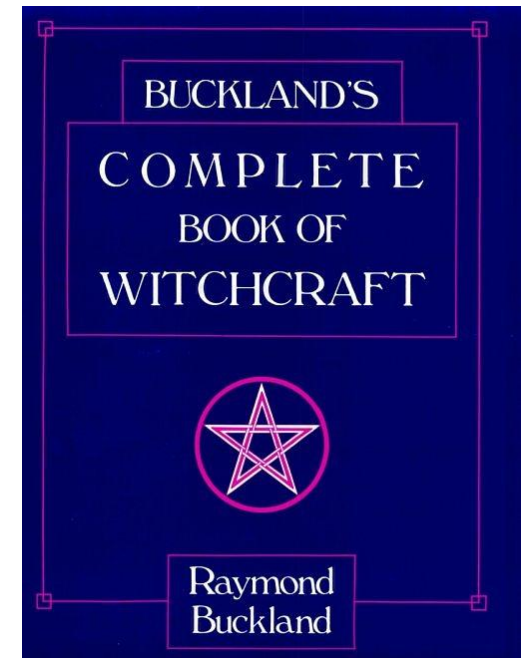
- **1478 Spanish Inquisition established by Ferdinand and Isabella with the consent of Pope Sixtus IV. The main goal was to punish and persecute all of the "converted" Jews who still managed to practice their old faith in secret.**
- **1492 Jews expelled from Spain.**
- **1497 Jews expelled from Portugal.**
- **1506 Approximately 3,000 converted Jews are slaughtered in a Lisbon riot.**

# Durer's Apocalypse Engravings



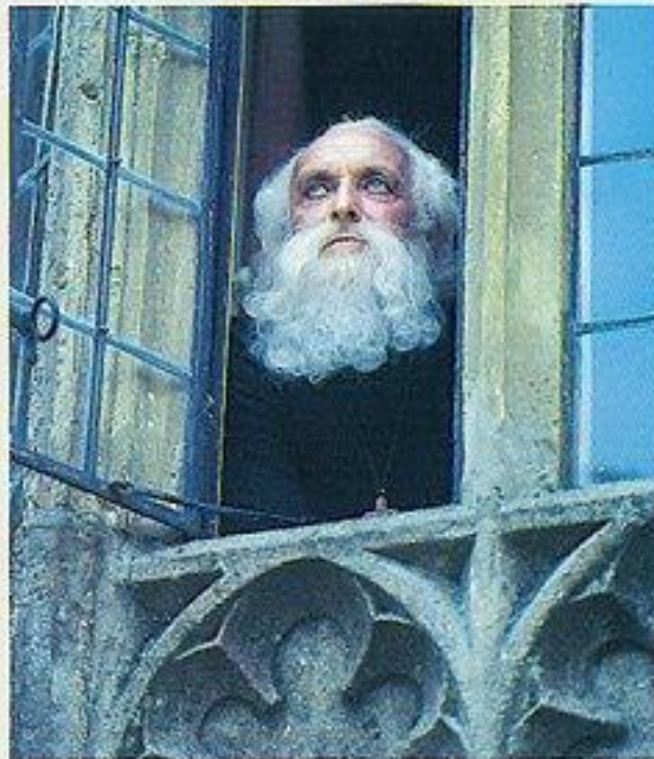
# Questions to Consider

- **Do you believe in witches?**
- **If not, how do you explain the Bible passages? How do you account for all the occult items?**
- **If yes, do you believe that God's law should be our law?**
- **If no, why not?**
- **If yes, shouldn't we be burning witches today?**
- **Our culture seems soaked with witchcraft references. What should our approach as Christians be to this sort of stuff? Is it harmless or a threat?**
- **Should we shelter our children from witch references in our culture?**
- **Should we celebrate Halloween? If yes, what kind of costumes are acceptable and which are not?**
- **Do your kids play with Harry Potter toys?**



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