

## THE CATHOLIC MONARCHS

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Iberian Peninsula was divided into five large territories: the **Crown** of Castile, the Crown of Aragon, the Kingdom of Navarre, the Kingdom of Portugal and the Islamic Kingdom of Granada.

In 1469, Ferdinand, son of the king of Aragon, married Isabella, sister of the king of Castile. The **Catholic Monarchs** is the collective title used in history for Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand II of Aragon. Their marriage united both crowns under the same family. The Catholic Monarchs governed their territories together, but each kingdom had its own laws and institutions. It was the beginnings of modern Spain.

The Catholic Monarchs **restored the royal authority** in Spain. They first created the **Holy Brotherhood**, a judicial police force for Spain. They also reorganised justice and created the **Royal Council**, the highest judicial body. Besides they created a permanent and professional army.

The Kings wanted to **finish with the Christian Reconquest** of the Iberian Peninsula and to conquer the Muslim kingdom of Granada. After 10 years of many battles, the Granada War ended in 1492 when the Emir Boabdil surrendered the keys of the Alhambra Palace in Granada to the Castilian soldiers. Then they **annexed** the Kingdom of Navarre. Also they conquered Melilla and Oran in North Africa, the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean and they authorized the expedition of Christopher Columbus. Besides they organised strategic **marriages alliances** for each of their five children.

The Catholic Monarchs wanted **religious unification** for their kingdoms. So they founded the **Tribunal of the Inquisition** to prosecute heretics. The tribunal was known for its severe sentences and punishments. Ferdinand and Isabella ordered the expulsion from Spain or **forced conversion** to Catholicism of all Muslims and **Jews**. Hundreds of those who had converted (*conversos* and *moriscos*) were accused of secretly practising their original religion and arrested, imprisoned, interrogated under torture by the Inquisition.

### **Activities:**

1. What was the Holy Brotherhood?
2. What was the function of the Tribunal of the Inquisition?
3. Who were the conversors?
4. What territories did the Catholic Monarchs annexe?
5. What was the marriage alliance?

### **Oral questions about the Catholic Monarchs with a presentation**

## SOLUTIONS ABOUT THE CATHOLIC MONARCHS

### 1. What was the Holy Brotherhood?

Holy Brotherhood is a judicial police force for Spain created by the Catholic Monarchs.

### 2. What was the function of the Tribunal of the Inquisition?

The Tribunal of the Inquisition had to prosecute heretics, arrested, imprisoned, interrogated under torture. The tribunal was known for its severe sentences and punishments.

### 3. Who were the conversors?

The conversors were the Jews who had converted to Catholicism.

### 4. What territories did the Catholic Monarchs annexe?

The Catholic Monarchs annexed the Kingdom of Granada and the Kingdom of Navarre. Also they conquered Melilla and Oran in North Africa and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean

### 5. What was the marriage alliance?

The marriage alliance was a strategic way to marry their children with kings of other countries to have good political relations.

### Oral questions about the Catholic Monarchs with a presentation



#### Explain the symbols of the Catholic Monarchs coat of arms:

The eagle is a symbol of an Empire

The castles and lions are symbols of the Crown of Castile

Four red pallets on a gold background is the symbol of the Crown of Aragon

The grenade is the symbol of the Kingdom of Granada

The arrows are the symbol of the King Ferdinand because in Spanish is "flechas" with the initial F as Fernando

And the yoke is the symbol of Isabella because his name in Spanish was written with Y as Yugo or Yoke.