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## Foreword

*Moreshet Sepharad: The Sephardi Legacy* sets out to summarize the monumental legacy of a Jewish community that resided within the historical boundaries of Spain for some fifteen hundred years. After the Expulsion, the Jews of Spain, spread out across many lands, created a dispersion within an already existing Jewish Diaspora. Under the influence of these new conditions, Sephardi Jewry developed novel historical and cultural values which in turn influenced surrounding society.

This volume contains not only a historical description. Many chapters evaluate the contribution of Sephardi Jewry to the renaissance of Hebrew language and poetry, biblical exegesis, Jewish philosophy, Kabbalah, liturgy, medicine and science. Attention has also been devoted to the material remains left behind by Sephardi Jewry in addition to its composition in Romance, the spoken language. These, as well as many other issues in Jewish communal life, have been analyzed and evaluated both in the context of Spain prior to the Expulsion and in the various settings where the exiles settled and formed new social patterns. Wherever they went, the refugees from Spain carried with them their beliefs and hopes for a Messianic Redemption.

The thirty-eight chapters which make up *Moreshet Sepharad* provide guidelines which the student or interested reader may utilize to gain a deeper understanding of the essence of Sephardi Jewry on the basis of its glorious past and heritage.

Modern research on Sephardi Jewry began over a century ago. Since then, rich historical sources have come to light in archives both in Spain and in other countries. Only some of these have been published, studied and evaluated. A landmark in this research is the monumental study undertaken by Prof. Yitzhak Baer in the 1920s and 1930s. The publication of special periodicals, for example *Sefarad* by the Instituto Arias Montano in Madrid, has opened up new areas in the study of Sephardi Jewry. In an attempt to provide a general evaluation, a survey of the Sephardi Heritage edited by Dr. Richard D. Barnett, O.B.E., of London, was published some thirty years ago.

The initiative for the publication of *Moreshet Sepharad* originated with the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and its Executive Vice-President, Dr. Jerry Hochbaum, in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Expulsion from Spain. In this manner, it was intended to evaluate the impressive achievements and lofty values bequeathed to us by Spanish Jewry. The studies in these two volumes cover a wide range of topics, and vary in method and style so as to suit the

requirements of the subject under discussion. A by-product of this diversity has been the identification of areas which merit further study.

A special problem of terminology and nomenclature faced the editorial staff. Terms, names and sources originating from several different languages and cultures are employed throughout the book and many of these have variant renderings in English. To maintain consistency and reduce confusion, the spelling and transliteration of names, terms and sources as well as the form of Hebrew citations conform whenever possible to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica Guide for Editors and Contributors* and the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* itself. Notes and format follow the system detailed in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

The editor and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture wish to express their deepest gratitude to the contributors to the Sephardi Heritage Project. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Yael Guiladi for her noteworthy translation of the chapters which were submitted in Hebrew and French. The contributions by Profs. R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, M. Idel, C. Hurwitz, D. Bunis and J.I. Israel were written in English. Special praise and thanks are due to Mr. Jonathan Kaplan for diligently stylizing and standardizing the text, preparing the bibliographical apparatus and copyediting the entire work. Mrs. Yael Kaplan expertly typeset and prepared the layout of the book. Our appreciation is extended to Mr. Shlomo Ketko for proofreading the final draft. Thanks are conveyed to Mr. Dan Benovici, Director of the Magnes Press of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem and his assistant Mr. Ram Goldberg.

Last but not least, our thanks are extended to the Memorial Foundation and its Executive Vice-President Dr. Jerry Hochbaum for his encouragement during the years it took to carry out the task of publishing *Moreshet Sepharad* and his readiness to meet all the requests that such an undertaking necessitated.