



## Instructor's Manual

# What do we call studying the interpretations of history? Learning about historiography.

(April 2019)

### Learning Objectives:

1. To understand about interpretations of history
2. To learn the word historiography
3. To understand some of the factors that influence interpretations of history

**Ages:** 11 – 14

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Subjects:** History, Citizenship / Civics

### 1. What does the class know? (5 minutes) - Slide 3

Ask the class what they know about the history of the Iberian peninsula from around 800 – 1500 CE.

Collect that information on the board. Do not 'correct' it.

If this information has not been taught or does not come up, ask the class if they knew that most of that area was ruled by Muslims, and that Muslims, Jews and Christians lived alongside each other during that period with little animosity.

If this information has not been taught or does not come up, ask if they have heard of the Spanish Inquisition.

### 2. Watch the video of Dr. Rebecca Masterton (22 mins) on [The Expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain](#) - Slide 4

Before watching explain the following.

Rebecca talks about her visit to Granada in what is now Spain. This trip made her question many of things she thought about the history of that area, in particular the period known as the Reconquest of Spain and the fall of Granada in 1492 to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.

Rebecca became a Muslim when she was an adult, and her reflections on what she was taught and what she found out, makes her question the negative impact of what she was taught on her and now the young people of today.

**3. Discuss any / the new information from Rebecca Masterton's talk (5 - 7 minutes) – Slide 5**

List the new information.

**4. Discuss why they think some of this information was missing from what Rebecca / they had been taught. Discuss why they feel there is a difference of interpretation of the events. (10 minutes) Slide 7 - 8**

You can broach the issue of bias, the bias of those writing up events at the time (were they military victors or allied to military victors), cultural or racialised bias (is there an "affinity" for "Christians" "Europeans" as opposed to "Muslims" "Jews" "Moors")?

Explain the process and the use of the word historiography.

**Class Activity 1 (all ages / levels): Ask them to consider whether they have changed their interpretation of the events being discussed? (10 mins)**

Possible questions:

- (i) Is the fall of Granada and related events more accurately the 'conquest' not a 'reconquest', as argued by those who state the Christian monarchy never ruled before 1492 in those areas?
- (ii) How do the different interpretations Rebecca discussed and / or the class discussed make a difference about how we think about Muslims and Jews in the history of Europe?
- (iii) Why are these differences in interpretation important for society today?

**Class Activity 2 (higher ages / levels): Get them to consider what they have learned in the context of other genocides (10 mins) – Slide 9**

- 1992 - 1995 Bosnia
- 1910 - 1970 Stolen Generations in Australia
- Current - Rohingyas in Myanmar

Resources for your preparation can be found on the [GMD resources page](#), as well as in the bibliography below.

**Class activity 3 (higher ages / levels): Learn about the word 'Epistemicide' – Slide 10**

This term has been popularised by the sociologist and legal scholar [Boaventura de Sousa Santos](#). Discuss what this term means. How can the destruction of knowledge e.g. the burning of libraries in Cordoba, Granada (during the conquests of the 15<sup>th</sup> century) and Sarajevo in 1992 be considered a form of genocide (i.e. epistemicide)?

## Bibliography

- Brook, Daniel. "Environmental genocide: Native Americans and Toxic Waste." *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* vol. 57 no. 1 1998, 105-113.
- Davidson, Lawrence. *Cultural Genocide*. Rutgers University Press, 2012.
- De Sousa Santos, Boaventura. "Epistemologies of the South and the future." [http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/media/Epistemologies%20of%20the%20south%20and%20the%20future\\_Poscolonialitalia\\_2016.pdf](http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/media/Epistemologies%20of%20the%20south%20and%20the%20future_Poscolonialitalia_2016.pdf)
- Kirkup, Kristy. "'Monstrous' Allegation of Forced Sterilization of Indigenous Women Must be Examined: NDP." *Global News*. 19, Nov. 2018. <https://globalnews.ca/news/4677945/allegations-forced-sterilization-indigenous-women-ndp/>. Accessed 18 Dec. 2018.
- Prevent Genocide International, <http://www.preventgenocide.org/genocide/officialtext-printerfriendly.htm>
- Taylor, Adam. "Did Canada Commit a 'Cultural Genocide'?" *The Washington Post*. 5 June 2015. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/06/05/did-canada-commit-a-cultural-genocide/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.33e208907b47](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/06/05/did-canada-commit-a-cultural-genocide/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.33e208907b47). Accessed 18, Dec. 2018.