



# **Portuguese Jewish children of the Islands of Santo Tomé and Príncipe 2012-10-07**

**Around 2,000 Jewish children were separated and torn violently from their parents and families by the Portuguese authorities with the purpose to colonize the new African continent.**

The word Inquisition is applied today to highlight acts of persecution, racism or discrimination, especially in the political field. Undoubtedly the real Inquisition was an extraordinary and unique event in the entire History of Humanity as is proved by this historical case referred below:

It is our duty to remember the serious events that stained an entire civilization of a complete period leaving footprints, as seldom, in future generations and the destiny of millions of people.

One of the events almost unknown that took place during this dark period of humanity was the fate of around 2,000 Jewish children separated and torn violently from their parents and families by the Portuguese authorities with the purpose to colonize the new African continent.

Historians describe Portuguese Jewish families, probably expelled or escaping from Spain due to the Inquisition decree, obliged to hand over their children aged between 4 and 14 to these Portuguese authorities, causing more than one tragedy, when mothers refused to part with their only child in some of the cases.

One of the stories tells how a mother jumped into the sea to avoid her separation from her child

In 1493 these 2,000 Jewish children were forced to move to Santo Tomé to inhabit the island and be educated as Christians. This island, as many others, was totally desert. Slaves and criminals were also sent to the same island.

Samuel Usque, a marrano author who lived during that period narrates the events and some of his stories describe the dramatic way these children were violently abducted in spite of begging the King for mercy and how they arrived in the island:

"When these innocent children arrived in Santo Tomé jungle, which eventually was their tomb; they were stranded on the coast with no compassion whatsoever. Most of them were devoured by the huge lizards of the island and those who survived and escaped from the reptiles, died of hunger and abandonment".