

### B3. Exiles and Pirates, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries

From the 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, piracy was endemic along the ‘Barbary Coast,’ stretches of the southern Mediterranean and North Africa’s northern Atlantic Coast, named ‘Barbary’ by Europeans because of the Berber inhabitants of the area. In these areas – partly Ottoman-controlled, others Moroccan – Muslim pirates carried out raids against European shipping and coastal areas. They captured both material goods and human beings. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of European Christians were captured and enslaved.

Moriscos often played a role in this piracy, considering it an opportunity to avenge their losses and get back financial security by plundering Spanish (and sometimes other European) shipping and coastal cities. The pirates took captives and seized goods. (Ironically, the European governments were horrified when white Europeans were captured and enslaved – though they were not at all bothered by the much more brutal European capture and enslavement of black Africans.)

Two spectacular examples of the connection between the Muslim expulsion from Spain and Moroccan piracy come to mind. In 1492 Sayyida al-Hura, a Muslim woman, was driven out of Spain along with her family; in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, she became queen of Morocco. To get her revenge on Spain, she reached out to the (in)famous Ottoman admiral, Barbarossa, helping unite the ‘Barbary Coast’ pirates in the Western Mediterranean. She was called “the pirate queen” for her organization of the anti-European pirate coalition that made raids against European shipping and assets. A century later, between 1609 and 1614, another group of Moriscos were expelled from Spain. Some of them set up pirate operations from the Moroccan Atlantic-coast cities of Salé and Rabat. These pirates focused specifically on attacks against Spain. From about 1624 until 1668, Salé formed an independent, pirate-ruled republic before being once again incorporated into Morocco.

**Assignment:** Imagine you are living in Salé in 1628. Write 2 diary entries, each at least one double-spaced page long. Choose names for your characters that are authentic. Also, include at least 5 facts or factual details drawn from the history/ geography of the area. (Be sure to look up additional information in addition to the information found in this reading.) Underline the pieces of information you include in each of your diary entries.

-- In one diary entry, you are a pirate whose family was forced out of Spain in 1614 when you were a child. (Look up the expulsion of Muslims from Spain.) What are your goals as a pirate? How do you feel toward your captives? What is your city like, and why are you proud to be part of it?

--In another diary entry, you are a Spanish captive who is brought to Salé to work as a servant in the home of a family who had been driven out of Spain in 15 years earlier. How do you feel about your new life? What would you miss the most about your previous one? What do you have in common with the family in whose home you work, and in what ways are they different from you?