



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Mixing Politics and Religion: Exploring Patterns of Tolerance and Suppression in Spain and Bohemia  
**Name:** karen Billings

**Other Team Members:**

**Program:** Oklahoma Program  
**Trip Dates:** 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001  
**Location Visited:** Spain, Czech Republic

**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 01

**Project Summary:** The mixing of politics and religion in the early modern Habsburg domains of Spain and Bohemia led to two very different reigns as Philip II of Spain continued the policies of his grandparents—the Catholic Monarchs—and as Rudolf II broke with family tradition by moving the emperorship and the family seat from Vienna to Prague and formally guaranteeing religious freedom. In Spain and Bohemia I explored the layers of architecture, history and tradition, in short the contexts within which Philip II and his nephew Rudolf II supported such different policies with regard to religious diversity.

The great Al Andalus medieval cities of Córdoba, Sevilla, Segovia, Toledo and Granada are living reminders of Spain's Moorish past and a period of mutual thriving for the West's three great religions. . . and of the Christian kings who conquered and converted the Muslims and the Jews. Only four medieval synagogues remain out of hundreds and even the Great Mosque of Córdoba, La Mezquita, is pierced by a great Gothic cathedral in the center. Bohemia, on the other hand, still boasts five medieval synagogues in Prague alone and bears the signs of destruction in St. Vitus Cathedral wrecked by fifteenth century Protestant iconoclasts, documenting the religious diversity. The very historical contexts within which the two Habsburgs ruled explain a great deal about why the mixing of politics and religion had such different results in Bohemia than in Spain.

**Career Impact:** \* Uncovered Islamic/Arabic and Jewish contributions to the Western tradition

- \* Explored religious history and architecture in Spain and Bohemia
- \* Developed greater understanding of the complex role of religion within Habsburg politics
- \* Studied cultural contributions of the three great religions of the West
- \* Examined patterns of religious tolerance and suppression
- \* Researched for Western Civilization curriculum supplements on Spain and Bohemia in the Western Tradition

**Classroom/Community Impact:**\* A regionally more balanced introduction to European history that includes the Iberian peninsula and Central Europe

- \* Expanded awareness of patterns of tolerance and intolerance in the past and how they inform present attitudes
- \* Modeling of historical inquiry and life-long learning through travel
- \* Passionate engagement with subject matter

**Open Response:** \* A photographic essay of Bohemia: Prague, Karlštejn, and Kutná Hora

- \* Photographic essays of Mudejar, Iberian Baroque, and Barcelona Modern architecture
- \* Interdisciplinary curriculum exploring religious tolerance
- \* Development and implementation of curriculum researched in Spain and Bohemia
- \* Collaboration on interdisciplinary curriculum about Franco's Spain and the Spanish Civil War

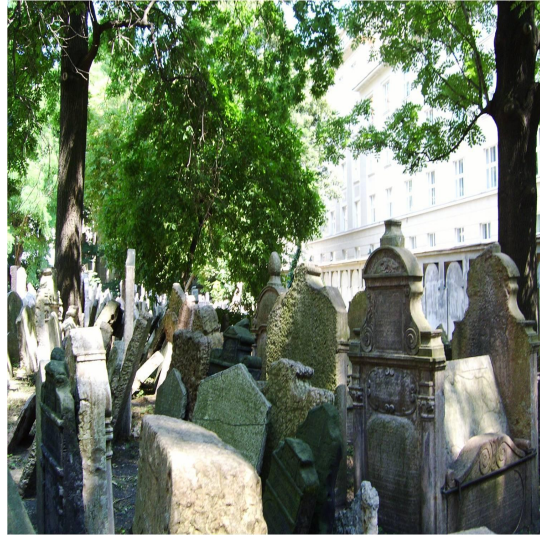
\* Paper to be presented at the Mid America Conference on History September 26th: "Monestir de Poblet and Furness Abbey: A comparative Frontier Study of Two 12th Century Cistercian Monasteries"

**Quote:** The very historical contexts within which the two Habsburgs ruled explain a great deal about why the mixing of politics and religion had such different results in Bohemia than in Spain.

Photos:



Segovia Castle



Prague's Old Jewish Cemetery



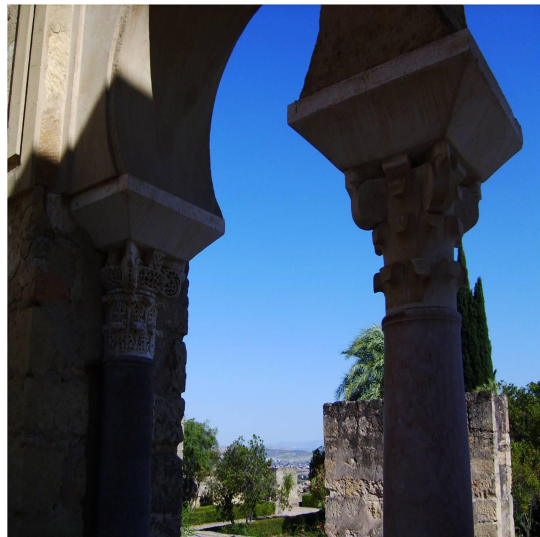
Mysterious Prague



Multilayered Spain



Santa Barbara Cathedral, Kutna Hora



Madinat al Zahra



Touring the Monastic Library of Strahov



La Mezquita