

A Nation within a Nation: Tolerance within the Dutch Identity

When looking at a country like the Netherlands there is one characteristic that sets it apart from all other countries of Europe. The extent in which tolerance is displayed, or lack thereof, has shaped its history and people within ways that shows a unique identity. This oral presentation will take an in depth look at the kinds of tolerance being practiced within the Netherlands focusing on the Jewish population from the 17th century to World War II. The research that was conducted for this presentation is a method that incorporates at home study of the 17th Century Dutch Jews and the Sephardic Synagogue, as well as experiences gained from researching in the Netherlands. The experiences gained while studying the content abroad provided a new outlook on tolerance and provided a fuller picture of how it crossed into Dutch society.

This presentation outlines the key monuments and museums that show tolerance within the Netherlands. With the unique perspective of Dutch Jews, the Sephardic Synagogue will act as the anchor for this presentation, with the surrounding content solidifying to act of tolerance. The synagogue's architectural elements will be examined and compared architecture found in Protestant Churches. Secret Catholic Churches will also be used as an example of religious tolerance paralleling the Jews. The Jewish Quarter will be highlighted for 17th Century sites such as Rembrandt's House and the Jewish Historic Museum. Going forward in time the Resistance Museum, Anne Frank House, and WWII memorials will show a key change within Dutch tolerance. All these historic places as well as more modern monuments will be used to discuss how tolerance was explored within the Netherlands through both at home and on site research. Providing an overall idea of how the Netherlands is one of the most tolerant nations of Europe.

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