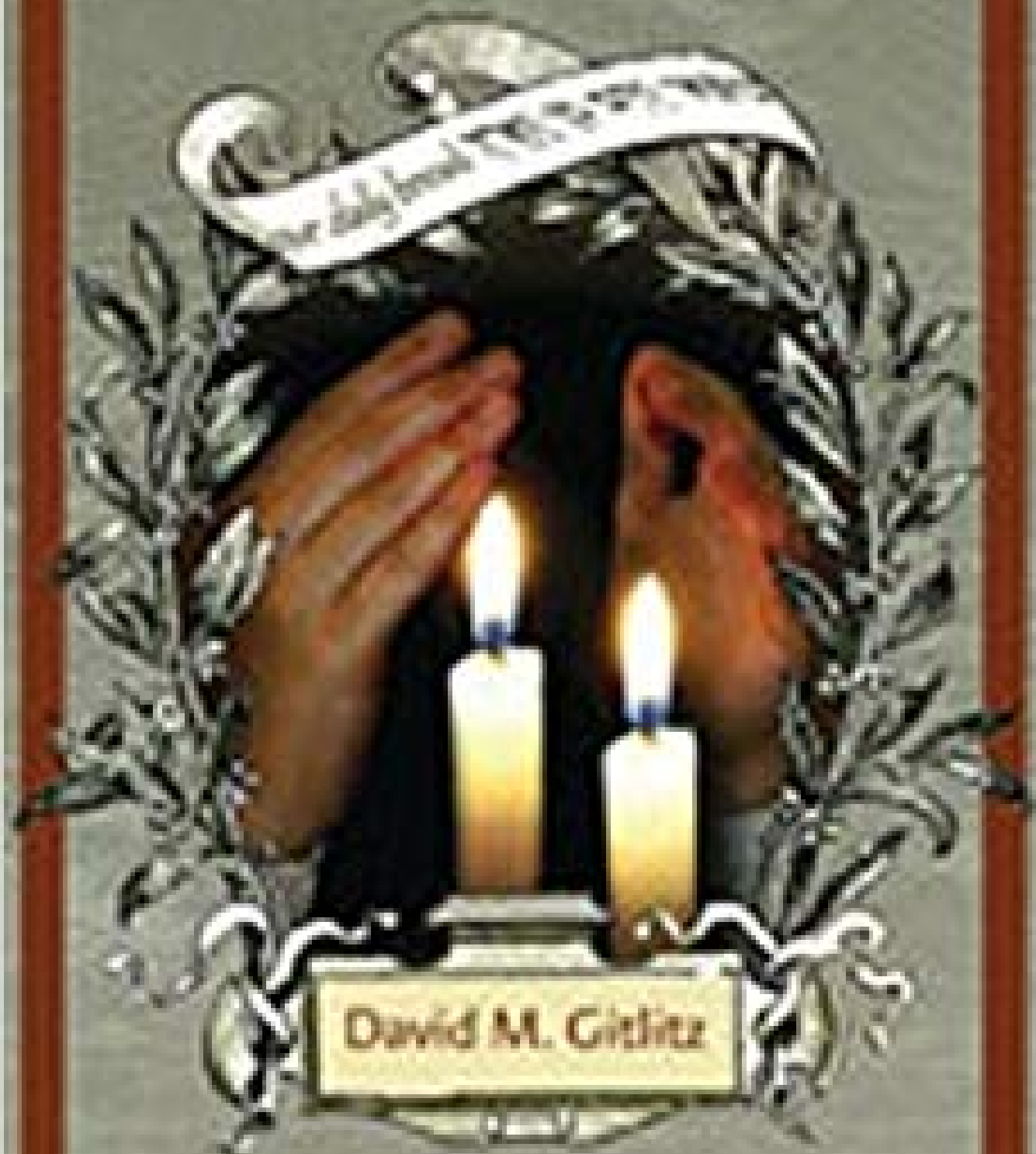


The Lost Minyan



David M. Gitlitz

The Lost Minyan



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Between 1391 and 1492 a considerable amount of Spain's Jewish community, once the largest in European countries, changed into Catholicism either voluntarily or through physical or psychological coercion.

Although some converts publicly attended mass and privately observed the Sabbath, others had been motivated to abandon their Jewish recent completely but found it tough to close the door on their heritage. Wanting to navigate the mandates of the Church and their very own idiosyncratic edition of Jewish customs, they question on which rules to peg their hopes of eternal salvation; after 1480 to Judaize incurred mortal risk. Before the Inquisition, conversos continued to behave as if they had been still Jews with relatively little risk; Its goals were to induce people to recant their heretical beliefs and behaviors and solely abide by orthodox Christian practices also to encourage individuals to do so by making the punishment of sinners a community, exemplary event. As the details and conversations of the lives are fictional, they pull from historical truth as documented in eyewitness accounts, contemporary chronicles, and the dossiers of Inquisition trials in the archives of Spain and Mexico. Struggling to hide their secrets from neighbors, servants, children, and actually spouses, they try to resolve the tension between their need for and fear of community. In 1478 the Papacy approved Spain's demand to determine an Inquisition. and they wonder how exactly to safely pass their Crypto-Jewish identity on to the next era. The Lost Minyan, an intricately woven tapestry of historical fiction, profiles ten Crypto-Jewish families coping with the trauma of living between worlds, neither wholly Catholic nor wholly Jewish.



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This book combines careful research & extremely readable stories in one Gitlitz has done what is often difficult: produced an extremely readable and engaging publication of short stories based on copious historical analysis. Fictional victims and inquisitors encounter historic statistics, in Spain and in Mexico in afterwards decades. His tales of Jews who changed into Christianity because of the persecutions of the Spanish inquisition are fictional, but they are bottom on actual inquisition information, diaries, and journals

written at that time. Gitlitz does an admirable job to getting in the heads of both the Jewish Christians and their tormentors, and makes 16th century Spain come alive with believable heroes who each possess their own creative responses to the pressures they face.

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