

## EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 14: Cultures of Record Keeping: Creation, Preservation, and Use in the Early Modern Period, Fordham University, New York, August 16-17, 2017

### Documents, Records and Early Modern Border Crossings

Debra Kaplan, Bar Ilan University

#### Introduction

In order to cross borders in early modern Europe, travelers were expected to carry proper documentation that both identified them and permitted them entry into the region to which they intended to travel. In the Electoral Palatinate, the Jews were issued a special type of safe conduct that was tied to a flat rate tax levied on the Jews of Worms. In response, Jewish communities developed both inter- and intracommunal systems to sell, buy, and keep track of these documents. This presentation examines the safe conducts and the records and systems that developed to regulate their use.

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Juspe Schammes, *Minhagim de k"k Warmaisa*, Jerusalem, 1992, vol. 2, no 288.

And *gabbaim* [collectors] are appointed for [the regulation] of the *tiur* [safe conduct], which we, the residents of our community, are compelled to purchase every year from the Spanish regime, and it is a great expense. And it [the safe conduct tax] is not placed solely on our community, but rather on the larger group [of Jews], such that without [having] that safe conduct, no one can leave or enter. Thus all those that need the safe conduct are required [to share in the payment], including those who live among us here, those who live in the surrounding regions, also those who [reside] far away, even those communities and settlements that are not subject [to the authority] of our community, such as Frankfurt [am Main], Mainz, Bingen, etcetera. All those that face danger because of the safe conduct, or those that have debts or own property in the region [of the Electoral Palatinate], and all that will travel through the region over the course of the year, who will benefit from the safe conduct, all these [groups] must pay their share of the safe conduct [tax]. And the collectors are commanded to keep watch over those that live nearby and those that live far away, and over those who are obligated in the expense associated with the safe conducts, that they pay the necessary sums willingly or under duress, as was agreed according to the specific case. And they will sell all of the safe conducts, if they are able, for the community's benefit. And every year two collectors are appointed to this position, and in the following year, two different collectors are appointed, because they [the collectors] are not appointed for more than a one-year term.

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ממנים גבאים על התייור, אשר אנחנו יושבי קהילתינו מוכרחים לפדות כל שנה מן הריגירונג של ספרדי, וההוצאה היא מרובה. ולא עלינו בני קהילתינו לבד יצא, רק על הכלל כולו יצא, עד שמבלעדי התיור ההוא אין יוצא ואין בה. בכך מחוייבי כל הצריכים לתיור, הן הדרים פה עמנו, הן שבסביבותינו במדינה, הן הרחוקים, אף אותן קהילות ויישובי שאינם תחת קהילתינו, כגון ורנקבורט, מענץ, בינג וכה"ג, כל שהמה בסכנות מחמת התיור, או שיש להם חובות ונכסי על המדינה, וכל הבאים בתוך השנה ליסע דרך המדינה, עד שהתיור להם לטובה, צריכין לתת אף המה חלקם בתיור. והגבאים מצווים על ככה שיפקיחו עיניהם על הקרובי ועל הרחוקי ועל המחוייבי בהוצאות התיור, שיוציאו את המעות ההמה מהם ברצון ובכפיי, כאשר יסכימו לפי תואר העניין. וימכרו התיירי כולם, אם אפשר להם, לתועלת הקהל. ובכל שנה עושין שני גבאים על ככה, ומשנה אחרת עושים שני אחרים, כי אינם ממנים יותר על שנה אחת.

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Source 2: Pinkas Kahal, Frankfurt am Main, *fol.* 122v.

It was agreed by the holy community [the communal leaders], may they be preserved by God, and at their head, the eminent rabbi, may he be preserved by God, together with the communal leadership: After having reached an agreement with the holy community of Worms regarding the safe conducts from the Electoral Palatinate, that two hundred *Gulden* will be given to them from our community every year, in exchange for forty safe conducts that they will provide to our community. And whatever additional [safe conducts] we will need, as per the needs of the residents of our community, each safe conduct can be acquired for the price of one ducat. It was agreed that those two hundred *Gulden* will be collected as follows: fifty *Gulden* will be paid by the *gabbaim* [the charity collectors] on a yearly basis, and the remaining sum, after the proceeds of the sale of the forty safe conducts, will be collected from every head of household, from everyone whose net worth is one thousand *Gulden* or more, and [it will] even [be collected] from orphans and widows, and even those who have less than one thousand *Gulden* [net worth], but do business, must pay the same sum. This is how it will be for as long as there is a need for these safe conducts.

Enacted Sunday, the third of Ab, 413 to the small counting [1653]

Juda son of R. Moses Oppenheim of blessed memory

Aaron son of Jacob Meir Binga of blessed memory

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Pinkas Kahal, Frankfurt am Main, *fol.* 122v.

הוסכם מפי חבורא קדישא יצ"ו ובראשם הגאון אב"ד יצ"ו בצירוף שאר קריאי העדה, מאחר דאש מן זיך האט מפשר גיוועזן מיט ק"ק וורמס וועגין תיורים פפליץ שינתן להם מקהלתינו מדי שנה בשנה מאתיים זהובים נגד ארבעים תיורים שיתנו לקהלתינו אונ' וואש מן ווייטר ברויכט כפי צורך יושבי קהלתינו, כל תיור בעד א' טקוטן צו שאפין, בכך הוסכם דש אותן מאתיים זהובים זאלין באופן זה אויף גיהובן ווערדין, דהיינו, נ' זהובים יתנו הגובאים בכל שנה ושנה, והמותרות וואש ניט אויז דיא ארבעים תיורים גליזט ווערט, זול מן ראשי בית גובה זיין, מכל מי שערכו מאלף זהובים ולמעלה ואפילו מיתומים ואלמנות ואפילו ממי שיש לו למטה מאלף זהובים אונ' האט משא ומתן, מוז ער אך כאותו סך געבין. כן יהיה וכן יקום כל זמן דש מן התיורים הנ"ל ברויכן ווירט.  
נעשה יום א', ג' מנחם תי"ו יו"ד גימ"ל לפ"ק.  
יודא בן לא"א מהר"ר משה ז"ל אופנהיים  
אהרן בר יעקב מאיר ז"ל בנגא