

between two levels: that of official regulations, and that of informal participation in Amsterdam society, zooming in on Sephardim as a foreign migrant group in early modern Amsterdam and considering whether the Dutch Republic regarded them as (full) citizens. Additionally, the paper will briefly look at the apparent dissonance between the official regulations or laws for Jews, and the laxity on the side of the authorities to make sure these laws were abided. As the magistrates of the city of Amsterdam frequently remained silent in voicing privileges or restrictions for Jews, the paper explores the possible reasons for this curious reluctance. Surprisingly, members of the Sephardic communities in Amsterdam were at the same time able to enter into a debate with high Dutch officials, and were granted many of their wishes, such as the right to a synagogue in several Dutch cities. As notary deeds from the Municipal archive in Amsterdam show intensive contact between Jews and non-Jews, as well as relative tolerance towards Jews from the Amsterdam authorities, there was more going on under the surface of the law. Some of the preliminary findings of this research will be included to illustrate this point and present a fuller picture of Jewish integration into early modern Amsterdam society. The main sources studied for this research are part of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, the Ets Haim library and the City Archive of Amsterdam (all based in Amsterdam).

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*The Ascamoto of the Kahal Kados Sahar Asamaim (London, 1663-1785): the evolution of a Sephardic community in the light of its regulations*

The forty-two Ascamoto prepared by the Parnasim David Abrabanel Dormido and Eliau de Lima and the Gabay Moseh Baruh Louzada in 1663 formed the first regulations of the newborn Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews of London. Originally based on the bye-laws of the Amsterdam and Venice congregations, the Ascamoto of the K. K. Sahar Asamaim were subject to continuing reformulations and additions. Therefore, they tended to depart from their initial models and acquire particular features, which mirrored the specific characteristics of the Jewish community of London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as the challenges posed by its evolution and interaction with the surrounding context. “A noble monument of Jewish piety happily combined with political and social wisdom”, in Lionel Barnett's words (*El Libro de los Acuerdos, Oxford, 1931*), the Ascamoto regulated not only the organisational structure and financial sustainability of the congregation, but also the ritual, the relation with other Jewish communities, the potential conflicts between its members, the welfare, the censorship, and other issues related with the daily life of the community. This paper will analyze the first Ascamoto of the London's Sephardic congregation and its following addenda and revisions until the publication of a new code in 1785: Ascamoto, para o Governo da Congrega de Saar-Ahamaim de Londres (London, 5545). These bye-laws will be confronted with the entries of the Mahamad minute books, where the reasons for such alterations and additions can be found. Based on these sources, we will try to trace the portrait of a changing community from its first times to the consolidation after the Sephardic influx from Portugal in the 1720s and 1730s and its exponential demographic growing.