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# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

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# **Laws for Jews in Russian Empire**

Laws concerning Jews from 1649 to 1873  
were published in S.Petersburg in 1874.

That publication is the source of this  
presentation.

ПОЛНЫЙ ХРОНОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ  
СБОРНИКЪ  
ЗАКОНОВЪ И ПОЛОЖЕНІЙ,

КАСАЮЩИХСЯ ЕВРЕЕВЪ,

ОТЪ УЛОЖЕНІЯ ЦАРЯ АЛЕКСѢЯ МИХАЙЛОВИЧА  
ДО НАСТОЯЩАГО ВРЕМЕНИ,

ОТЪ 1649 — 1873 г.

Извлеченіе изъ Полныхъ Собраній Законовъ Россійской Имперіи.

СОСТАВИЛЪ И ИЗДАЛЪ  
В. О. Леванда.

С.-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ.

ТИПОГРАФІЯ К. В. ТРУБНИКОВА, ЛИТЕЙНАЯ, Д. № 42.

1874.

Full chronological  
Collection  
of laws and regulations  
concerning Jews

from regulations of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich  
to current time

from 1649 – 1873

Excerpts from Full Collection of Laws of Russian Empire

Compiled and Published by V.O. Levanda

S. Petersburg

1874

# Laws and regulations concerning Jews

The book has **1185 pages**, and it includes **1,073 Laws**, some laws are short and simple, others have a large collections of many laws.

At the end of the book there is an **Alphabetical Index**. You can find laws for Cantonists, Recruitment, Revision Lists, Freedom of Religion for Jews, Synagogues, Karaite Jews, Orphans, Schools, Surnames, and many more. There are also references to **towns** and **gubernias**.

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

## #1) January 29, 1649

If busurman (*foreigner, from other religion*) converted a Russian person into busurman believe by force or deceit, and circumcised him, this busurman should be executed, burned without any mercy.

# **Laws for Jews in Russian Empire**

## **#91) 1818 – First Law about Bessarabia Jews**

### **About rights and privileges of residents of Bessarabia**

All residents of Bessarabia were divided into 9 estate/classes: Clergy; Nobility; Boyarinash (from Moldova Principality), later became Private nobility; Mazyl; Ruptash; Merchants and Petty Bourgeois (tradesmen, Middle Class); Tsarane or agricultural settlers; Gypsies owned by crown or landowner; **Jews.**

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

## #91) 1818 – First Law about Bessarabia Jews (continue)

In addition, **Jews were divided into estates Merchants, Middle Class and Farmers.** *Jewish Merchants and non-Jewish Merchants were in different Merchant societies. Same was for Middle Class, and Farmers.*

**All privileges for Jews given by Moldovan gospodar (Prince) should be kept in entirety.**

**All estates, except Gypsies and Jews, could freely enter civil or military (government) service, and receive ranks and other privileges.**

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

Several type of categorizations of these laws:

- Laws applied to **all Jews in Russian Empire**
- Laws applied to Jews in a **Gubernia, or in Uezd, or town, village**
- Laws applied only to a particular **person or a group of people**



# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

Laws applied to all Jews in Russian Empire

**#250) April 10, 1832. Establishing a new estate – Honorary Citizen**

*Jews, in gubernias, where they legally lived, could be granted **Honorary Citizen**, but only for extraordinary merits in the sciences, arts, trade and manufactory industry.*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

**#293, October 12, 1834. about Jews in the Military service**

- 1) A Jew in the Military, even in the capitals (S.Petersburg, Moscow), were permitted to have with them a wife and children, but they should not wear Jewish cloths, only common German dress.*
- 2) Jews in the Military could marry a Jewish girl but promising their boys into cantonists (military school for children).*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

**#554, January 4.**

## **Regulations about Jewish holidays for Jews in the Military**

In addition to Shabbat, which is every week, Jews would have 7 holidays: Yom-Kippur, Rosh-Hashana, Peysakh, Sukkot, Shevuot, Shmini-Atseret, Simkhat-Tora.

*After that there are 17 regulations of when and how Jews could go to pray in a synagogue or if no synagogue, to a dedicated a space for that and a person from the Jews who would serve as a Rabbi.*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

## Laws applied to Jews in a Gubernia, or Uezd, or town, village

**#760, March 13, 1856.** Granting Jewish farmers of the colony Valia-lui-Vlad in the Bessarabia region a fifty-year benefit/privilege from recruitment.

*Two other agricultural colonies Brichevo and Markuleshty received 50-year privilege in 1844. They had more than 80 people in the colony, and this law was to increase the privileges from 25 years to 50 years for one colony – Valia-lui-Vlad.*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

**Laws applied to Jews in a Gubernia, or Uezd, or town, village**

**#262, January, 1833. About rights of Jews to live in Kamenets-Podolskiy.**

*In 1594, Jews were forbidden to live in Kamenets-Podolskiy, yet in the of law of 1797, Jews were permitted to live in Kamenets-Podolskiy and buy property there, but they could build new houses and open businesses only in areas allowed by town administration.*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

Laws applied only to a particular **person or a group of people**

**#229, December 20, 1830. Jews who wanted to move from towns Sevastopol and Nikolaev to Bessarabia, could be granted privileges by special order**

*There was a letter to the government from 3<sup>rd</sup> Gild Merchant Ayzik Ryvkin, registered in Nikolaev, who wanted to move from town of Nikolaev to Bessarabia with keeping all privileges. His request was approved.*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

Laws applied only to a particular **person or a group of people**

**#335, October 1836. About Jews who received an academic degree in Medicine.**

*Iosif Bertenzon wrote a letter to Internal Ministry with a request to be assigned to the medical service. The request was approved.*

*The law permitted Jews for such services, but only in Western gubernias (Pale of Settlement).*

# Laws for Jews in Russian Empire

I believe that it is important to know the laws of the land where our ancestors used to live. It will enrich our understanding of our ancestors lives and reasons why and how they made their life choices or moved from one place to another.

We should be aware that the laws were written and signed by the central government. These laws were applied by the local administration in many towns and villages. Local administration could apply those laws differently depending on their opinions of how to treat Jews.



# **Laws for Jews in Russian Empire**

**Q & A**

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