

U I
PUBLIC APPEAL AGAINST THE LETTING TO A MOSLEM OF A HOUSE

BELONGING TO THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE

IRAQIANS AND ADJACENT TO

THE LADIES' ENTRANCE.

Women's

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T S 13 f 30, f. 6

In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate.

Oh ye Jews! How can you face God?! You allow the Rayyis to let Ibn al-Masmūdī live in the recently bought house behind the synagogue of the Iraqians, which is adjoining the secret doorway through which the wives of the Jews and their daughters ascend (to the women's gallery). May God burn the house of the man who lets him live there and does not avert this predicament!

Oh ye Jews! You are inflicting disgrace upon your womenfolk by Ibn al-Masmūdī. How can you face God?! If you want to let him live there, or if this is the wish of the Rayyis, shut the secret doorway up, so that no one can get through it! God will summon the man who does such a thing to the public.

Where is your self-respect?! Your sense of honor has obviously gone altogether. And Peace!

Ironically, this appeal against the letting of a house belonging

to the Jewish Community, to a Muslim is written in Arabic letters. With Rayyis, hardly the Rayyis al-Yahud, the "Head of the Jews", the Nagid, is meant but another person, e.g. a physician who was called by that epithet and was in charge of the ^Community ^{al}property. Most probably he had let the house to a Muslim, because the latter was prepared to pay a higher rent than any Jew, cf. MS VI A2. It would be only human to imagine that our appeal was written by a person who had offered a lower rent, which was refused.

This appeal would be read out in the synagogue, for which purpose the complainant would "hold up" the prayer at the time when the Torah scroll would be taken out of the Holy Ark, see MS V D2.

The language ^{of the document} which contains outright curses is unusually offensive and is hardly mitigated by the concluding "salutation of peace". The appeal, perhaps, was written in Arabic characters because its originator did not find a Jewish scribe who would have been prepared to copy it.