

~~The Community - Interconfessional Relations~~

A Deathbed Declaration Revealing Close Relations Between Muslims
and Jewish Religious Scholars

Old Cairo, March 24, 1182

Oxford, Bodl. Ms. Hebr. f 56 (Catal. 2821), f. 45a

(Small - but not too small - loans, like those mentioned in the first and main part of this declaration, were given only to close friends. It is, therefore, highly revealing to find here among the debtors of the dying man such a famous Jewish religious scholar like Maimonides, together with a similarly famous Muslim divine, Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk. Most probably the testator had to take out these loans, because his capital was tied up in business enterprises. Had they been given to him as a commenda or on another commercial basis, the fact would have been indicated, as it was with regard to the poll tax (see below).)

A. On Wednesday, the eighteenth of Nisan 1493, we called on the elder Abu 'l-Faraj, the honored notable, the wise and the prudent, son of our h(onored), g(reat and) h(oly) Ma(ster) a(nd) T(eacher) Moses, the elder, known as Ibn al-Kallām^a) - m(ay he rest in) E(den), and found him ill, but with a clear mind. He said to us: "Please take notice of the following:

B. I owe to our glorious lord, our Master and Teacher Moses^b) - m(ay his Rock) p(reserve him) - two and a half Egyptian dinars, as well as another sum; he is to be trusted whatever amount he may claim;
~~for it,~~

Furthermore, to al-Sheikh al-Muwaffaq^o) - m.p. - four and one-sixth Egyptian dinars, for the poll tax, which he paid for me, as well as the price of a quantity of wheat, and he is to be trusted completely whatever amount he may claim for it up to ten dinars;^{d)}

To the illustrious Qadi, Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk^o) - one dinar and twelve dirhams;

To the illustrious Faqīh^{f)} Ibn Šūla - four dinars;

To Abu 'l-Khair of Haifa - five dirhams.

C. I hereby give to my wife, called...,^{g)} the daughter of my maternal uncle, the elder Abū Sa^od - m(ay he rest in) E(den), the complete third of the house which I own in Fustat, Egypt, in the Mamšūsa^{h)} and make her the legal proprietor thereof, on condition that she does not marry again after my death. In the event that she marries again after my death, she will receive only ten Egyptians dinars due to her on account of the "last instalment" stipulated as my responsibility in her marriage contract."

He departed to his eternal domicile as a result of this illness.ⁱ⁾

The words "after my death" are written above the line.

We wrote and signed what we witnessed, to serve against him as an instrument for securing right and as a proof.

Samuel ha-Levi b. R. Saadya^{k)}

Elazar b. R. Michael

Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk/f 56, f. 45a

-4-

and cosigned many documents with him, e.g. one, dated 1176,
as second (after Maimonides) among ten signatories (cf. Mose
ben Maimon Responsa, ed. A. Freimann, Jerusalem, 1934, p. 94).