

12. A Family and Business Letter from Tunisia

T.-S. 16.179

(For reasons explained on p. , Tunisia is represented in the Geniza more than any other Mediterranean country, except Palestine and Egypt. The following letter, send^t by a member of a very prominent family to his younger brother in Old Cairo, is a typical example.

The sack of al-Qairawān, the main city of Tunisia, by the Bedouin hords of the Hilāl and Sulaim in 1057 is referred to in this letter in various places. But some years must have passed since that event. For the writer mentions that he had been in Egypt ^{subsequently} ~~after that time~~, while his journey to that country must have been made at least a year before the writing of this letter, as he states that he did not know his brother's wife.)

A. Preamble and Congratulations.

In Your Name!

I am writing - may God prolong the life of my brother in flesh and spirit, the beloved of my soul, and preserve him always in safety and prosperity and keep him happy to the end - from al-Mahdiyya, on the 12 of Shevāṭ^{a)} - may God let you partake of its^{b)} blessing. I am safe and well, Thanks God.

Your letter, containing the great news and joyful tidings about the blessed, blissful, and auspicious new-born, has arrived and there was much joy, feasting^l and congratulations here because of it. But I wept very much during all this, since God has separated us for lifetime and has not