

Illness mentioned suddenly
Polltax see Polltax YESHO p. subject den

The Community - Interoconfessional 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

6B.1.6
Interfaith relations,
texts

(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).) *The*

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) M(aster) 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 Reek) p(reserve him) - two and a half Egyptian dinars, as well as another sum; he is to be trusted whatever amount he may claim;

Furthermore, to al-Sheikh al-Muwaffaq^{g)} - 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^{g)} - one dinar and twelve dirhams;

To the illustrious Faqih^{f)} Ibn ḡūla - 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'īd - m(ay he rest in) E(den), the complete third of the house which I own in Fustat, Egypt, in the Mangūḡa^{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 Egyptian 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)}

Elasar b. R. Michael

Notes

- a) Literally: "a man treating wounds," designating a particular type of surgeon, perhaps an army surgeon.
- b) This is Maimonides, as the honorific titles, the date and the place indicate.
- c) The famous Jewish doctor and author of medical writings, Ibn Junai^o, who was Saladin's court physician (cf. p.).
- d) The inconsistency of the scribe, who expresses the idea "he is to be trusted" once in Arabic and then in Hebrew, is perhaps to be explained by the assumption that he wrote down what the dying man actually said. It is noteworthy that Maimonides is given unlimited confidence, while for the sum due to his famous colleague a maximum is fixed.
- e) This Cairene Qadi (1155-1211) was a most prominent figure in Arabic letters (see of late J. Rikabi, La poésie profane sous les Ayyoubides, Paris, 1949, pp. 69-86).
- f) About this Muslim dignitary, see p. .
- g) Here, a lacuna was left in the document. Obviously, the testator had not mentioned the name (cf. Note d).
- h) A street in the Tujib quarter (see p.).
- i) About the legal significance of this phrase, see p. .
- k) He also copied this document, like a number of others found in the Geniza. He was a prominent member of Maimonides' court of Justice,

and co-signed 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).