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13. A SICILIAN IN THE SERVICE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT, WHO HAD A WIFE IN DAMASCUS, SYRIA, IS RESTRAINED BY THE JEWISH COURT OF FUSTAT FROM MARRYING A WIFE IN EGYPT, <sup>AS</sup> REQUIRED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

(Dec., 1139, and April-May, 1140)

A court record illustrating the mobility of <sup>M</sup>mediter-  
ranean people.

"The Sicilian" is not a family name here; since it comes before the words "son of", <sup>it</sup> designates the person concerned as a native of that island. Sicily, at the time of the writing of this document was not <sup>longer</sup> any more Muslim, but was entirely under Christian domination. Why this man emigrated to Damascus, married there, and then left his wife in order to take up government service in Cairo, we do not yet know. It was obviously not expected that she would follow him there. Unless expressly agreed upon before the marriage, a wife was usually reluctant to move far away from her family, the natural protector against a potential enemy, her husband.

Most marriage contracts found in the <sup>G</sup>geniza <sup>Z</sup>stipulate that the future husband is not permitted to marry a second wife. The Jewish courts of Egypt regarded this condition as binding, even if it was not expressly stipulated, provided the first wife did not renounce this right - which happened only in very