

K-3 151

Certificate for Cheese Sold by a Karaite from Jerusalem

(In Hebrew)

T.-S. 10 J 6, f. 14

(This undated certificate is signed by three persons, two of whom are known from documents dated 1110.¹ Although we now know from a Geniza paper² that the economic life, even of the Jews in Palestine, attained a certain degree of normalcy in a comparatively short time after the conquest of the country by the Crusaders in 1099, it is more likely that our certificate antedates that event. About Karaites and Rabbanites, see p.

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In Your name, O You Merciful.

This is to inform our masters in the land of Egypt that Japheth b. Meshullam, who is a member of the Karaite sect in Samartaq^{a)} has arrived, having bought thirty rajas^{b)} of cheese, manufactured by Rabbanites. This cheese is good and fit for Rabbanites. We have given this permission, after having made the symbolic purchase from him according to their custom, which is by handshake, and after having sworn him on the holy Tora. Their number is three hundred thirty-nine feras^{c)} of cheese.

(Three signatures)

Notes

- a) A quarter in Jerusalem, inhabited by Karaites (cf. p.).
- b) The Palestinian pound weighed about five times as much as the Egyptian or modern American (see p.). Thus, one of these "forms" of cheese weighed about one half of a contemporary pound.

Comments

1. Ṣenab b. Joseph b. Ṣenab signed T.-S. 28.4, Joseph b. Ṣedāqā (b. Joseph) signed Oxford, Bodl. Ms. d 61 (Catal. 2859), 3b, both dated 1110.
2. Cf. S. D. Goitein, New Sources on Palestine in Crusaders Times, Erets-Israel IV, (Jerusalem 1956), pp. 150-151 (T.-S. 16.250).
3. Tipōān, the Greek word τυπός (cf. p.).