

A House on the Jazīra

This note was copied from a document written in Arabic. Since the clerks were used not to provide diacritical points, Arabic t and y were identical; in ^{line 6} ~~lower case~~, the copyist wrote the senseless twmyd for ywmyd (yawma'idhin). As often, the sale of the house was made both before a Muslim and ^a Jewish court, and the Jewish court clerk copied here a part of the Muslim record in order to use it for the document to be written by him.

The seller of the house was a woman, probably a widow, to whose son an adjacent property belonged. As today (or perhaps, we should say yesterday), the Jazīra, or island in the Nile river at Cairo, was the domicile of high society. The house described here bordered on one which had once belonged to Ya'qūb Ibn Killis, the great Fatimid vizier (d. 991), and some other high standing persons.

As in "the Fortress of the Chandelis," the Byzantine nucleus of Fustat, the soil of the Jazīra was government property. Therefore the site was not included in the sale, and a ground tax had to be paid for it to the government.

Another Jewish house on the Jazīra, worth at least 660 dinars, is the object of a judge's note in Ms. Bodl. Heb. e 98, f. 63, dated 1136.

TS 8 J 34, f. 4

The borders of the al-Jazīra house.

It is situated on the island of Fustat, Egypt, between the two arms of the Nile and the two bridges, namely on the eastern side of the island. It looks on the large thoroughfare which abords into the bridge and the little market etc., and is surrounded by four borders.