

The Will of a Silk-weaver

(Old Cairo, December 7, 1188)

Oxf. Bodl. Ms. Hebr. a2 (Catal. 2805), f. 9

A. On Wednesday, the fifteenth of Kislêv, in the year one thousand five hundred of the era of the documents, the following occurred here in Fustat, which is situated on the Nile river, under the jurisdiction of our lord, our Gaon Sâr Shâlêm ha-Levi - may his name endure forever:

We were asked to visit Sheikh Abu 'l-Faql, the silk-weaver, the son of Abu 'l-Barakât, who is known by the name Ben al-Maqdisi (the son of the Jerusalemite). We found him ill, confined to his bed, but his mind was sound, and he knew what he said and what was said to him. We asked him what time it was and about the identity of the persons present, to all of which he answered in clear language and with a sound mind.

B. Then he said to us: "May it be known to you that the whole half of my^a entire house in the Fujîb quarter^b) of Fustat, which is known as my home, is the property of my son Abu 'l-Barakât, and is not mine, as I have sold it to him.^c) The other half^f I hereby bequeath to Bayân and Bahâ, my sons, in two equal shares, on condition that if - God forbid - my son Bahâ should die without child, the share remaining in his property, he not having disposed of it, shall revert to his brother Bayân to the exclusion of his other