

was made by Wuḥsha approximately at the turn of the century.

For an idea of the purchase value of the money referred to, the reader should note that two dinars or gold pieces were regarded as a monthly income sufficient for modest middle-class people. The will is found in the Taylor-Schechter Collection (referred to as TS) of the University Library Cambridge, England, and bears the shelf mark TS Arabic 4, fol. 5. Written in Arabic, it contains seventy short lines. For the convenience of the reader we divide the document into nine articles, provided with superscriptions not found, of course, in the original.

### Page One

#### A. Willed to Relatives

- 1 *Main Points of the Will*    2 *of Wuḥsha, the Broker.*  
 3 *To my brother shall be given one hundred dinars*  
 4 *from the objects given to me as security,*  
 5 *as well as a pair of fiver rings<sup>12</sup> and a Dabīqī robe.<sup>13</sup>*  
 6 *To my sister—fifty dinars from the objects given as security,*  
 7 *as well as a mourning dress, a half-mantle,<sup>14</sup> and a head-*  
 8 *cover.<sup>15</sup>*  
 9 *To the daughter of my paternal uncle—five dinars, a cloak,<sup>16</sup>*  
 9 *a half-mantle, a pair of Sempervivum (Houseleek)<sup>17</sup> rings,*  
 a . . .

<sup>12</sup> Text: *ḥilaq mukhammas*. According to ms. TS 24. 16, line 8, such a pair of rings was worth eight dinars. Most probably, each ring consisted of five parts.

<sup>13</sup> A fine Egyptian linen.

<sup>14</sup> Text: *nisf ridā*, very common as part of a bride's outfit.

<sup>15</sup> Text: *khaṣiyy*, also extremely common in the Geniza, but not yet found elsewhere. Perhaps identical with *khaṣiyy*, cf. Wahrmond, Arab.-Deutsch, s. v.

<sup>16</sup> This textile—*malḥafa*—served both as blanket and as a piece of clothing.

<sup>17</sup> These rings most probably were called Sempervivum (Houseleek) because of their similarity to the rosettes of fleshy leaves formed by that common plant. Thus far, not found elsewhere.

- 10 *of silver, a woman's cap, the bed on which I lie, 11 but not the carpets.*  
 12 *To my sister Šibāḥ—ten dinars.*

#### B. Left for Charitable and Religious Purposes

- 13 *For the cemetery*<sup>18</sup>*—twenty five dinars.*  
 14 *For the synagogues in Old Cairo—twenty dinars.*  
 15 *For the synagogues of Dammūh and (New) Cairo five dinars,*  
 16 *(Added in smaller script) for the purchase of oil for study.*<sup>19</sup>

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- 1 *To the poor of Old Cairo twenty dinars shall be given.*  
 2 *To Joseph's wife five dinars shall be given.*<sup>22</sup>  
 3 *To each of her two brothers five dinars shall be given.*  
 4 *To an orphan girl in (New) Cairo, a relative of mine, two dinars shall be given.*

#### C. Form of Payment

5 *All this shall be paid from the debts 6 against which securities have been given and which are listed in three 7 documents written in Arabic letters, the securities, as well 8 as the debts. All the aforementioned 9 to whom I have willed something shall receive payment from the securities, 10 as mentioned before.*

#### D. Appointment of the Son Born out of Wedlock as Heir

*The remaining 11 securities shall be added to 12 the cash in gold which I possess, namely three hundred dinars 13 which are ready with me and sixty seven dinars 14 deposited with*

<sup>18</sup> Cemetery: *maghāra*, Hebrew *me'ārā*, literally: cave, as the cemetery is still called by the Yemenites. The testator is not paying here for her tomb. The expenses for the latter are included in section F. Here, she donates an exceptionally high sum for the upkeep of the cemetery.

<sup>19</sup> Dammūh was a particularly holy synagogue near Giza on the western bank of the Nile. The money given to the synagogues, as often, was earmarked for their illumination so that studies could be pursued in them during night time.

<sup>20</sup> This woman was perhaps the widow of another brother.

*Lady Ikhtiyar*,<sup>21</sup> 15 *in addition to all I possess in cash and kind, in rugs* 16 *and carpets. All this shall be kept for my son on conditions* 17 *I shall mention, and, if he remains alive and attains maturity,*

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1 *shall be handed over to him.*

#### E. Provisions in Case the Boy Dies before Reaching Maturity

*If, however, God forbid, death* 2 *overtakes him before, one half of all this shall be given to the synagogues* 3 *in Old Cairo and to the poor in equal halves.* 4 *The other half shall be divided between my heirs in equal shares,* 5 *to wit, my brother, my sisters, and the daughters (corrected, it seems, to: daughter) of my paternal uncle.* 6 *To his (namely, the boy's,) father, Ḥassūn of Ascalon,* 7 *not one penny shall be given, except that two promissory notes* 8 *concerning a debt of eighty dinars which he owes me, will be handed over to him* 9 *in case my son meets his predestined death, in addition to ten* 10 *dinars out of the estate of the boy. But the rest is* 11 *for the synagogues and the poor in equal shares,* 12 *namely one half, and the other half for my family, as I have explained* 13 *before.*

#### F. Expenses for the Funeral

14 *The following shall be expended on my funeral* 15 *and on my "shrouds": fifty dinars, to be taken from the cash available.* 16 *The following shall be bought for me:* 17 *A Dabīqī*<sup>22</sup> *garment for six d., a cloak for six d.,* 18 *a Ṭalī*<sup>23</sup> *cap for two d., a hood for six d.,* 19 *a Dabīqī kerchief for two d., a veil for two d.,*

<sup>21</sup> "Choice"—a strange name, but found also in other Geniza documents. Cf. the male name Mukhtār, the chosen one.

<sup>22</sup> See above Note 13.

<sup>23</sup> A linen finer than Dabīqī, and more lasting in wear, originally produced in the country between the Caucasus and the Black Sea, cf. R. B. Serjeant, "Islamic Textiles," *Ars Islamica* 10 (1943), p. 103. Common in the lists of trousseaus.

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1 *a Tustarī*<sup>24</sup> cover for six to seven dinars, 2 and a coffin. Furthermore, the payment for the pallbearers<sup>25</sup> and all other expenses for me 3 until I reach my grave and the tomb 4 will be built. The remainder of the fifty dinars shall be distributed 5 to the cantors who will walk behind my coffin, to each 6 according to his rank and excellence.

## G. Assets and Liabilities

7 *What is owed to me and what I owe to others has been specified by me in the documents* 8 *written in Arabic letters. Action shall be taken accordingly.*

## H. Education of Wuḥsha's Son

9 *The melammēd Rabbī Moses shall be taken to him and shall teach him* 10 *the Bible and the prayer book to the degree it is appropriate that he should know them.* 11 *The teacher shall be given a blanket and a sleeping carpet so that he can* 12 *stay with him. He shall receive from* 13 *the boy's estate every week five dirhams* 14 *according to the judgment of the orphans' court and the elders.*<sup>26</sup>

## I. Final Reference to Declarations Made previously

15 *All that is written in the Arabic documents* 16 *has been dictated and authorized by me. They were written by the elder* 17 *Abū Maṣṣūr, the son of Ayyūb (Job)*<sup>27</sup> *and someone else.* 18 *Action shall be taken in accordance with it.*

<sup>24</sup> A brocade called after a famous industrial center in south-west Persia.

<sup>25</sup> The cemetery was far away. Therefore, the bearers of the coffin were hired men.

<sup>26</sup> The court and the elders are empowered to change the teacher's emoluments from time to time, if the general conditions change. This *melammēd* is most probably identical with the one bearing the same name and appearing in the court record of 1098, cf. p. 227.

<sup>27</sup> This man was Jewish. He contributed to the charity referred to in Note 3.