

sugar and raisins. Please be sure to collect this, my lord, (10) and may you think well of your servant!⁴⁵ I shall be glad {alt. tr.: please honor me} to do any errand for you. (11) May you be granted complete well-being and the mercy of (12) [God, and His blessings]! *And peace.*

(13) I sent you with Sheikh Abū Sa'īd a *rubā'yya* of soap.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The same phrase in II, 16v, line 33 {written by Maḍmūn; it has not been found elsewhere in the India Book papers.

⁴⁶ This line is a postscript.} Good soap was precious because it was used for washing clothes, which could easily lose their color if exposed to inferior cleaning agents. Soap was an important article of export from Tunisia to Egypt; it is likely that the soap sent here and in II, 23, line 48; III, 2, margin, line 2, III, 3, line 17; III, 9, line 25, to a Tunisian merchant living in India {Ben Yijū} was made in his native country. {Soap is mentioned by Ben Yijū also in III, 24, line 21; III, 27a, line 12}. The washing of the human body was done with *ushmān* soda ash. See below, 425.

II, 21–24 *Letter from Maḍmūn b. Ḥasan to Abraham Ben Yijū:*
Four Fragments of Three Copies

Aden, {ca.} 1135

II, 21. TS NS J 241

II, 22. TS NS J 240

II, 23. TS 20.137

II, 24. TS NS J 1

No. II, 23, lines 9–22, was published by Goitein, "Kish," with the text transcribed in Arabic characters and translated in English.

The four fragments are connected with one another in the following way:

II, 21, written by Maḍmūn's clerk (see the introduction to II, 13–15), contains 15½ lines on recto and 10 on verso. The section II, 21, lines 5–16, is identical with II, 22, lines 1–15, which is in the hand of Maḍmūn. No. II, 21v, lines 1–10, the end of the letter, overlaps with II, 24v, lines 12–23, a postscript by Maḍmūn, added to the clean copy II, 24, written by the clerk.¹

II, 23, written by Maḍmūn (50 lines, but missing at the beginning and end), is continued almost immediately in the preserved part of the scribe's copy II, 24, for the sum of 685 dinars owed by Ben Yijū in II, 23, line 37, is matched by the sums of 653 +32 dinars owed to him in II, 24, lines 5–6.

Altogether, parts of three copies of the letter have been identified, as follows:

(a1) II, 22. This is a small section of the original written by Maḍmūn that belongs to the opening part of the letter. Although a tiny and much tattered fragment, it is not without value, for the lines 12–18 do not occur in any of the other copies.

Ben Yijū used the blank verso for making notes. Because of the poor state of the manuscript, I did not attempt to decipher them. {These are the same kind of orderly written accounts, only very poorly preserved, as those written on II, 23v, which are presented below as III, 18. One of those written here begins *Ḥisāb ibn khālātī labu bi-wazn 'adan khamsin (?) mithqāl* [..] *btubu minhā fī fāknūr*, "the account of the son of my maternal aunt: To his credit in Adenese weight fifty *mithqāls*, from which I [..] him in Fāknūr (place on the Malabar Coast north of Mangalore; see II, 55, line 36) [..]." The son of Ben Yijū's maternal aunt is also referred to in III, 18 [E], lines 3–4, 7, where we learn his name: Abu 'l-Khayr Ibn al-Minqār.}

(a2) II, 23. The main part of the original written by Maḍmūn. Its width is 12.2 cm., almost identical with the width of II, 20. Of its length, 47 cm., comprising 50 lines, have been preserved. There is a gap, perhaps a large

¹ {For sending multiple copies of letters or accounts, see page 9 (n. 23) and below, verso, line 1.

one, between (a1) and (a2), and a small one between (a2) and (b). The complete letter must have contained approximately 130 lines.

Fragment (a2) is well preserved. It was carefully cut out with scissors on both ends.² Ben Yijū used the blank verso for orderly written accounts; see III, 18.

(b) II, 24. The clean copy of the clerk. The word *and peace* at the beginning of line 32 concluded the letter, to which Maḍmūn added two postscripts (II, 24, line 32—verso, lines 10–22).

(c) II, 21. Another clean copy made by the clerk, on whose reverse side he included the postscripts of the master. The recto is the part nearest to the opening of the letter.

Maḍmūn's postscripts were added to the first copy made by the clerk because this was no doubt regarded as the final and, so to say, official version. All copies were carefully executed. I assume that Maḍmūn himself wrote a draft in his account book.

Despite the loss of the beginning and two gaps in the middle, this letter, II, 21–24, rich in variegated information, is one of the most important pieces of the entire collection. The manuscript TS NS J 1 occupies a place of honor in the history of Geniza research. Its discovery on October 7, 1955, described in Goitein, "Geniza Research," 145–46, led to the creation of the New Series of the Taylor-Schechter Collection in the Cambridge University Library. The New Series opened a new era of research in this field. {The date is based on sec. D of the letter.}

Translation

[A. Ben Yijū's expenditures for the preceding year: settlement with Makhlūf and other items; see sec. I]

[II, 21] (1) The settlement³ with Makhlūf, the son (of the man) 'with the gladdening eyes,' The Orphan,⁴ (2) with regard to what you owed him,

² The tops of letters at the beginning of line 1 are missing, even though there is a blank space above them. Accordingly, I think it may be the entire length of one sheet of paper, which was pasted to other sheets when the long letter was written. The tops of those letters were written on the overlap of the preceding sheet.

³ The preceding section, which is lost, began detailing the sums owed by Ben Yijū from the preceding year.

⁴ The full name of this strange and interesting man and great traveler was Makhlūf ('Replacement'—for a child that had died) b. Mūsā (Moses), son (of the man) with gladdening eyes (a nickname), The Orphan (*Yātīm*, family name), al-Nafūsī. Besides this letter (see sec. I), his affairs with Ben Yijū are treated in II, 25–26, and VI, 21. 'Glad-

cost, after much discord⁵ and troubles, (3) 300 dinars.⁶ Saydān⁷ carried for you 100 Egyptian *mithqāl*s, (4) worth 424 dinars.⁸ The price of one-and-a-half (5) *bahārs* of *drky*,⁹ together with the price of the basket¹⁰ and the exit toll¹¹ was 24½ (6) the price of a bowl¹² 96 dinars. Total owed by you (7) 880½ dinars. This is your detailed account (8) for last year.¹³

dening': *sārra*, *s'rh* complemented here from II, 25, line 12. {That spelling occurs there; II, 21, clearly reads *srh*; II, 58, margin, line 5, calls him Ibn 'Ayn *Shrh*. On Makhlūf, see Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:246 ff.}

⁵ Arabic *fitna*, which has a religious undertone. {For the different usages of this term, see Gardet, "Fitna"; Lewis, *Language*, 95–96 (96: 'any serious challenge').} Makhlūf had threatened to apply to a Muslim, that is, government court [cf. II, 25, lines 12–14], wherefore documents about the settlement were made out both by a Jewish court and a Muslim notary; see sec. I.

⁶ As the continuation proves, Malīkī (Adenese) dinars are intended here; lines 3–4 show that the exchange rate of the Egyptian *mithqāl*, or dinar, as against the Malīkī was at the time concerned, about 1:4, which was the official rate [see n. 8]. Thus, Makhlūf would have invested 75 Egyptian dinars in the partnership with Ben Yijū, an investment in an India business venture found also in II, 1, margin. But the matter might have been far more complicated.

⁷ Saydān (or Sīdān) b. Abu 'l-Faḥ, a passenger of the boat, who perished together with everything he carried for Ben Yijū; see II, 26, lines 14–16, and verso, lines 2–4, and in this letter, sec. J. The name Sīdūn (Sidoun) was common in North Africa, see Eisenbeth, *Juifs*, 174, and is mentioned in 1486; see Hacker, "Nagidate," 120. Sīdān might designate a slightly different pronunciation. {The name appears to be a dual form of *sayyid*. Sayyidān, lit. 'Two Lords' parallels the woman's name Sittān, 'Two Ladies,' concerning which see Friedman, *JMP*, 2:457. Cf. id., *Polygyny*, 195, n. 11, where Sittāna and Sittūna are compared.}

⁸ Written (in Hebrew letters serving as numerals) כחד, $d = 4/t = 400/k = 20$. I have never seen such a sequence, but the reading and correctness of the number is confirmed by II, 26, line 16 {there the order is hundreds, units, tens}. Maḍmūn had to pay 424 Malīkī dinars, because some of them were deficient in weight and value. {See n. 6. From the continuation in II, 23, lines 25–26, the exchange rate appears to have been 1:3.5. See 344, n. 43 and 172, n. 27.}

⁹ For this *drky*, see 331, n. 11.

¹⁰ {Arabic *qafās*, a basket made of palm leaves. Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 131–32: 'cage, a basket with a cover made of palm fronds, in which were kept dishes, plates, cups, and other tableware made of brass or earthenware, glass of various descriptions and food.' See Goitein, ib., 6:16 (index) for the different kinds of baskets mentioned in the Geniza papers. According to Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 408, *qafās* is a box, or a metal box. In the other documents in this book the *qafās* is used regularly for breakables.}

¹¹ Arabic *kharj*; see II, 16, line 45.

¹² Arabic *zabdiyya*. I do not believe that this form could be used instead of the plural *zabādī*; see II, 32, line 49. A bowl costing 96 Malīkī, or 24 Egyptian, dinars must have been incrustated with figures and inscriptions in silver or another costly metal. Ben Yijū had probably ordered it for a high-standing personage in India.

¹³ The debit of Ben Yijū, as far as preserved, amounts to (300 + 424 + 24½ + 96 =) 844½. Thus only (880½ – 844½ =) 36 Malīkī dinars are unaccounted for.

[B. Losses from the sinking of a boat on its way to Mangalore, India]

By God, the Almighty, last year (9) I sent on my own account,¹⁴ in the boat in which (10) Saydān traveled, (goods) the like of which I have never sent by sea. What (11) belonged to me would have taken care of all the packed wares kept back¹⁵ (12) in Mangalore, so that all the cargo (of the returning ship) would have been mine, (13) with no one else having a share in it. But He decreed upon one (Saydān) for whom I am sorry.¹⁶ Most (14) of the cargo of the (outgoing) ship's space¹⁷ was exclusively mine, and (15) [II, 22 (11)] there was in the ship an unlimited amount (16) [II, 22 (12)] of diversified goods. Never has a ship like this sailed [II, 22] (13) to India. But God ordered this, and there is (14) no escape from Him and from His judgment. He, who has the power to decree, (15) decrees.¹⁸ God, the Exalted, may recompense me and you (16) and everyone! God is my witness that (17) my anguish over the losses of o[thers is greater than that] (18) over my own. For it is hard¹⁹ [...]

¹⁴ Arabic *li-rūhī* {Pianta, *Dictionary*, 191: "by myself"}.

¹⁵ Arabic *ʿl-shdʿh al-mutawwaha*. The verb *tawwaha*, in the sense of 'to keep back,' and *tatawwaha*, to tarry, to stay put, not to sail, not to travel, is common in the India papers {cf. Dozy, *Supplément*, 1:155}. The noun *shadda* as the general term for anything packed, ready to be sent, is equally frequent. See, e.g., Ibn Mujāwir, *Al-Mustabṣir*, 139, line 14, and I, 1v, line 10 (textiles), II, 14, line 11 (mats). The plural is written *shdʿh*, that is *h* for *t* (*tāʾ marbūʿa* for *shaddāt*, *tāʾ ʿawwala*), a spelling not uncommon after a long *ā*. {This spelling does not seem to be listed in Blau, *Grammar*.} After the great losses suffered in 1132 (see II, 20, sec. E), Maḍmūn was unable to get all the wares ordered by him in Mangalore. In 1134 he hoped to reclaim all the old orders together with the new ones, Arabic *wal-ladhī* (11) *kān li-rūhī mā yuʿammar bihi ʿl-shaddāt al-mutawwaha*. See page 350, n. 84.

¹⁶ Arabic *sabbab li-man yaʿizz ʿalayya*. One regrets the death of a business friend before complaining about one's own losses. {See II, 48v, lines 10 ff., where the opposite order appears.}

¹⁷ I read *rabʿ*, area, space, not *rubʿ*, quarter.

¹⁸ {Arabic *al-amr li-ṣāhib al-amr*, could also be translated 'authority belongs to the Commander' or the like. For these terms, see Lewis, *Language*, 34.}

¹⁹ Arabic *yaṣʿub* {the vowel over *y* may be *u* rather than *a*; *yusʿaʿib*, 'it makes it difficult'}. Ben Yijū's losses, 880½ dinars (see the note to II, 21, line 8), were indeed colossal for a novice in the India trade {that figure includes the 300 dinars, which Ben Yijū owed from the settlement with Makhlūf, above, lines 1–3, which was not, of course due to the shipwreck}. Ben Yijū's long sojourn in that country (eighteen years, 1131/2–49) was certainly caused by his bad start with two shipwrecks. {Ben Yijū suffered losses from the sinking of Rāmish's two ships (III, 1, lines 8–11) and total loss from the sinking of Maḍmūn's ship (V, 6, lines 11–13, which seems to refer to a ship other than the one described here).}

[C. Bad conduct of Bama in Aden; arrival of a shipment of pepper]

[II, 23] (1) And after this he [Bama]²⁰ went and rented himself a place and said, (2) "Provide me with sufficient living expenses." So he took from me (3) eight dinars for living expenses during four months. Most of the (4) time he came to me under the influence of drink, not hearing (5) a word I said. I don't know what purpose you had, my lord, (6) in sending him.

Your (load of) pepper arrived, (7) that is the one in the ship of the *nākhudā* Abu ʿl-Ḥasan b. Abu (8) ʿl-Katāʿib. The weight: twenty-two *bahārs* and sixty pounds.

[D. The raid on Aden by the ships of the ruler of the island of Kīs (Qays)]²¹

(9) This year, at the beginning of seafaring time,²² the son of al-ʿAmīd, (10) the ruler of Kīs,²³ sent an expedition against Aden. He had demanded part of Aden,²⁴ which (11) was refused, whereupon he sent this expedition. His fleet consisted of two *burmas* {read: *nrmbs*},²⁵ (12) three *shaffāras*,²⁶

²⁰ Bama, Ben Yijū's Indian servant and agent (referred to below, II, 23, lines 42, 45 and II, 24, lines 4, 8), was evidently mentioned in the preceding gap in the manuscript.

²¹ The complicated story of this event as well as its date (1135) are discussed in II, 46. See also Goitein, "Kish," 247–57. {See also Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:67, 523.

²² Arabic *awwal al-waqt*; see 316, n. 23.

²³ The dot above the (Hebrew) letter *sh* is on its left side, indicating that it was to be pronounced *s*. In Streck, "Qays," the first of the various Persian forms of the name of that island is noted as *kīs*. See also Lassner, "Qays," 832. {Also see Whitehouse, "Kish."

²⁴ Arabic *quʿa min ʿAdan*; see the introduction to II, 46. *Quʿa* is vocalized with *u* (*ḍamma*) in the original and means a 'plot of land.' Note that *quʿa*, means 'a share in port revenues.' For this meaning and the use of the term in connection with Kīs (Qays), see Serjeant, *Portuguese*, 178.}

²⁵ The *burma*, lit., 'pot,' was a large, roundish ship. {The original clearly has *nrmtyr* (cf. Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:523, n. 97). The *nrmh* may be intended in the corrupt name of the type of ship that participated in the attack; cf. Ibn al-Mujāwir, *Al-Mustabṣir*, 124, line 6 (from Goitein's Hebrew version).}

²⁶ The *shaffāra*, a smaller boat escorting a bigger one, was capable of carrying a sizable cargo. {The *shaffāra* is also mentioned in III, 12, lines 11, 16, 23, 45; III, 22, lines 11, 13, 15, 20, 21; verso, line 3. Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:523, n. 97: "oar-propelled galleys, *shaffāra*, 'cutting the waves,' like a *shafra*, a large sharp knife." Goitein, *ib.*, 1:312 probably intended this, when he cited as the name of a ship "'butcher's knife' (cutting the waves wonderfully?)." Note that *shaffār* means 'plunderer'; see Dozy, *Supplément*, 1:770a. In the introduction to III, 22, Goitein commented that the *shaffāra* was "intended to protect the larger ship against pirates but also carried a certain amount of freight." Margariti, "Aden," 207–8, explains that this was done for risk-management. Smaller and larger ships are also mentioned in II, 55, lines 10–11 (where a smaller vessel called a *jalba* carried soldiers), III, 10,

and ten *jāshujjīyyas*,²⁷ altogether manned with (13) about 700 men. They anchored in the harbor (*makalla*) of Aden,²⁸ lying in wait for (14) (the incoming) ships, but did not enter the town. The people of the town were very much (15) afraid of them, but God did not give them victory and success. (16) Many of their men were killed, their ships were pierced (with spears), and they died of thirst (17) and hunger.

The first of the merchants' fleet²⁹ to arrive were the two vessels of the *nākhudā* (18) Rāmish. ³⁰ They (the enemy) attacked them, but God did not give them victory. As soon as the two ships (19) entered the port (*bandar*),³¹ they were boarded by a large number of regular troops,³² (20) whereupon they (the enemy) were driven from the port and began to disperse {alt. tr.: go in circles} on the open sea. (21) Thus, God did not give them victory. They made off in the most ignominious way, having suffered great losses (22) and humiliation {alt. tr.: having suffered many killed and great losses}.³³

[E. Poor market in Egypt caused a considerable decline in the price of pepper in Aden]

The news from Egypt was mediocre. (23) (As a result) goods sold poorly, and there was no demand for even a dirhem's worth of pepper (24) or (other) merchandise, except a week before sailing. (25) Had I asked the

lines 25, 28 (where we read that the smaller ship arrived safely in Aden but the larger one foundered); III, 23, lines 5 ff.; III, 28a, lines 13, 17. For small boats carried on larger ships to trade with small ports or small escorting boats that served as lifeboats and for the soldiers that accompanied merchant vessels, see Lewis, "Maritime Skills," 241, n. 1; Khalilieh, *Islamic Maritime Law*, 33–36, 46. Smith, *Studies*, chap. 4, 111, quotes the translation of a passage from Ibn al-Mujāwir, *Al-Mustabsir*, 143, line 5, on commodities for which customs were not collected in the port of Aden: "... Abyssinian traders (*saffārah*) arrived, bringing sheep and goats," etc. Perhaps read *shaffāra*.)

²⁷ The *jāshujjīyya*, derived from Persian *jāshū*, mariner, probably was a launch used in warfare, especially for landing operations. {Maḍmūn outfitted four *jāshujjīyyas*, which were sent to the Yemenite port of Zabīd for a battle there: V, 9, margin and top.}

²⁸ For the two harbors of Aden, see II, 46.

²⁹ Arabic *jihāz*.

³⁰ See page 145.

³¹ {For *bandar*, cf. Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 41.}

³² Arabic *al-diwān*, fighting men registered with the government; see II, 46, line 25. {The word *askar* is used there. Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 163, does not list this meaning for *diwān*, but note the passage from an apocalypse quoted there with the phrase *al-diwāyin wa-l-muqāṭila* 'the *diwāns* and the combatants'; the first word is not translated there. Cf. 444, n. 27.

³³ Cf. II, 46, line 28.

owners of the pepper for the 'tithe,'³⁴ they would have sold it (26) for less than 20.³⁵ So I was patient with them for the 'tithe' (27) up to the day of sailing, until people³⁶ came from all over (28) and the price of pepper was fixed at 23 dinars per *bahār*.³⁷

[F. Ben Yijū's credits]

The proceeds (29) of the pepper listed above³⁸ amounted to 510½ dinars (30) and two *qirāṭs* (1/12).

The sack³⁹ of cardamom, delivered by Yāqūt al-Tanjī⁴⁰ (31) at the sale in the 'house,'⁴¹ turned out to weigh one *bahār* and 222 (32) pounds, price (per *bahār*) 48 (dinars); total {alt. tr.: proceeds} 83½ dinars. The weight of the other (33) sack was two *bahārs* less seven pounds,⁴² at a price of 45 (dinars); (34) total {alt. tr.: proceeds} 89 dinars.

Also your credit: Yāqūt delivered, (35) in exchange for half an (Egyptian) *mithqāl*, which you {alt. tr.: he} still owed, two (Maliki) dinars

³⁴ Arabic *'ushūr*, also in the next line, see II, 16, line 11 and 322, n. 6.}

³⁵ For less than 20 dinars per *bahār*. {Instead of *bi-dūna*, 'for less than,' Margariti, "Aden," 185, n. 43, must have mistakenly read *bi-din.*, as she transcribes *bi-dinār*.}

³⁶ Arabic *al-nās*, used for traveling merchants; see 239, n. 4.}

³⁷ Maḍmūn was in charge of the customs house of Aden. About the fixing of the prices, see Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 1:218. {For the effect of the ships' sailing on the price of pepper, cf. 330, n. 8.}

³⁸ No. II, 23, line 8.

³⁹ {Arabic *jūniya*, also lines 32, 40. Goitein, *Letters*, 286, n. 46: "[Used] especially for the transport of corals. Known to me only from the Geniza." For *jūniya*, pl. *jawāni*, see also Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 79, where sources other than the Geniza are cited and where its use for grain, sugar and rice is noted. Here it is used for transporting cardamom. Its use for transporting corals is mentioned in VI, 26, line 6, VII, 22, 5; for iron in III, 18, account A, lines 8, 9, and for rice, in III, 24, lines 2–5.}

⁴⁰ From Tangier, Morocco, situated on the Strait of Gibraltar. As his name Yāqūt ('Sapphire') indicates, the man was a slave or a freedman.

⁴¹ {Arabic *al-dār*.} I.e., 'the House of Prosperity,' *al-dār al-sa'āda*, mentioned in VI, 27, lines 20–21 (a letter addressed to Maḍmūn), a warehouse and bourse in Aden, almost certainly identical with the *dār al-sa'āda*, which was situated opposite the Furḍa, the customs house, mentioned by Abū Makhrama in his description of the town. See Löfgren, *Aden*, 10–13, especially, 10–11. Our letters corroborate Abū Makhrama's surmise that 'The House of Prosperity' existed before Tughtekīn, the Ayyubid ruler of Yemen (1182 [1183]–97) renovated the building. As Abū Makhrama reports, originally, it was a creation of Muslim merchants from Egypt. {Also cf. II, 48, line 21; III, 28a, line 20.

⁴² For the weights of the two sacks, see below line 40.}

(36) less one-quarter.⁴³ Total of your assets: (37) 685 dinars, less one-sixth.⁴⁴

[G. Ben Yijū's debits]

(38) You owe: the 'tithe'⁴⁵ on the pepper, 155 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars and two *qūrāts* ($\frac{1}{12}$); (39) the cost of baskets of palm leaves and the porter, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars and two *qūrāts* ($\frac{1}{12}$); (40) for two sacks of cardamom, (whose) weight in the Furḍa was three *bahārs* and 109 {read: 110} pounds,⁴⁶ (41) the 'tithe' was 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars.

You owe (also): the living expenses (42) of your servant for four months, from Iyyar to the end of Ab: 8 (43) dinars;⁴⁷ the registration

⁴³ For half a *mithqāl*, Yaqūt received only 1.75 Adenese dinars (instead of 2, see 339, n. 6), certainly because that Egyptian coin was not of full weight. {Alternatively, this could have been the exchange rate. A literal translation of this passage would be 'And to his (i.e., your) credit, from Yaqūt's delivery, exchange for half an (Egyptian) *mithqāl*, remaining with him,' etc. 'With him' renders *'indabu*, which in accounting means 'he owes.' In the context of Ben Yijū's credits, 'you owe(d)' seems incongruous. I assume that the pronominal suffix in question here refers to Yaqūt. He may have been settling his own accounts with Ben Yijū with Maḥmūn's assistance.

⁴⁴ $510\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2}{24} + 83\frac{1}{2} + 89 + 1\frac{3}{4} = 684\frac{3}{4}$.

⁴⁵ Arabic *'ushūr*, also below, line 41; see II, 16, line 11, and 322, n. 6. The custom dues were levied in accordance with the weight, not the price of the pepper. Here (in the year 1135) 155 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars were paid for these dues for 22 *bahārs* and 60 pounds (see II, 23, line 8), that is, seven dinars per bale, but ca. 30% of the price of 510 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars—outright robbery. The tariff of seven dinars for one bale of pepper occurs also in II, 16, lines 7–8, 11 {and in III, 28a, lines 7–8}. However, according to Abū Makhrāma (Löfgren, *Aden*, 58–59) {or rather, Ibn al-Mujāwir, *Al-Mustabsir*, 140}, a new rate of eight dinars per *bahār* was introduced under the Zuray'id dynasty by a Jew named Khalaf al-Nihāwandī (from Nihāwand in Persia, south of Hamadhān). In IV, 1, lines 5–6, 18, a letter written about five years after ours, the dues were indeed eight dinars per *bahār*.

⁴⁶ In the 'House of Prosperity' the weight of the cardamom (1 *bahār*, 222 pounds, plus one *bahār*, 293 pounds) amounted to three *bahārs*, 215 pounds; see lines 30–33, above. Here, after arrival in Aden, in the customs house, the total was three *bahārs*, 109 {read: 110} pounds. The weight did not increase while the cardamom was carried from the customs house to the 'House of Prosperity' situated in front of it. Perhaps, at customs, some favors were granted to a dedicated business friend like Ben Yijū. {Cf. Margariti, "Aden," 187–88, who makes a similar suggestion. In II, 49v, line 7 (cf. IV, 1, line 6), we read of a 'reduction' or 'shortage' in weight at the sale (Arabic *'inda al-bay' naqṣ nd raṭl min wazn al-ful[ful]*, 'at the sale, a reduction/shortage of 54 pounds from the weight of the pep[per]'). The difference in weight between the customs house and the sale described in II, 23, can hardly be explained in terms of a special reduction given in the customs house, as the opposite could not have been the case in the second document. No. III, 28, lines 7–8, also seems to speak of a decrease when the commodity was weighed. As shown by Guo, *Commerce*, 46, such discrepancies in weight were frequently noted in the thirteenth century documents from the Red Sea port of Quṣayr.}

⁴⁷ In 1135, the Jewish month of Iyyar began on the 16th of April and the month of Ab ended on the 11th of August. Bama's ship, then, had arrived from India about the

fee⁴⁸ for the captain⁴⁹ Bakhtiyār, one dinar; the sum of (44) five *niṣāfīs*⁵⁰ (for) glass and five cups {alt. tr.: jars},⁵¹ firmly set {alt. tr.: of *muḥkam* glass} in baskets,⁵² a dinar; (45) given to Bama, a quarter-dinar for purchasing glass tumblers;⁵³ (46) four Berbera mats and {alt. tr.: for} one *niṣāfī*; a hide—one dinar; (47) an iron pan—two-thirds d.; a sieve one-third d.; (48) for a *niṣāfī*, twelve pounds of soap; two chickpea-patterned (dotted) (49) Egyptian *fūtas*, worth four dinars; a woolen fulled *fūta*, (50) 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars. The total of all these {add: retail} items [(51)... five *bahārs* of yellow copper... the tax for the yellow copper]⁵⁴ [II, 24] (1) 4 $\frac{1}{6}$ dinars. And also, in the ship of the *nākhudā* Abu 'l-Ḥasan,⁵⁵ (2) a piece of lead; the weight: two hundred and sixty pounds; the price: (3) 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ dinars; the

beginning of April and set sail on the way back in the middle of August. At the time of the writing of our letter, four Adenese dinars were worth one Egyptian *mithqāl*; see 339, n. 6 and 344, n. 43. Bama received the equivalent of half a *mithqāl* per month, about 20 silver pieces (dirhems), a sum often given to a wife, when the husband traveled away, or to a widow or divorcée; see Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 3:191, and passim. Thus Bama did not fare badly and had money enough for 'araqī (brandy made of dates).

⁴⁸ Arabic *satmī*; see II, 16, line 30.

⁴⁹ Arabic *rubbān*. Bakhtiyār's son, Aḥmad b. Bakhtiyār, was a shipowner, *nākhudā*; see II, 20, lines 1, 25, 28. He had risen economically and socially, unless *nākhudā* was used also loosely as a synonym for 'captain,' which does not seem likely. {See page 150, for the possibility that *nākhudā* means captain in that passage.}

⁵⁰ For *niṣāfī*, see 333, line 34. {There it is defined as half dinar, and it is not clear that that fits here.}

⁵¹ Glass tumblers for household use. Cups, Arabic *riṭāl*, for the more common *arṭāl*. {The manuscript reads *riṭāly*, which also appears in III, 24, line 18 (there 'four jars filled with [19] oil and sour juice'). While I have not seen this word in the dictionaries, it is evidently plural (*raṭālī* [= *raṭālīm*] or *raṭālā*) of *raṭliya*, a pint flask, for which see Dozy, *Supplément*, 1:535, *raṭliyat zajāj*. Cf. *arṭāl* in II, 44, line 19 (see 423, n. 34); III, 10, lines 42, 43.}

⁵² Baskets: Arabic *shutūt*; the plural of *shatt*, a small woven basket that holds a cup firmly. Such little baskets, with their cups, are still widely used in Yemen today and bear the same name with the same plural; see Goitein, *Jemenica*, 90, no. 604 {cf. Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 245}. 'Firmly set,' Arabic *muḥkam*. The same usage in identical circumstances is found in II, 26, line 9; III, 1v, line 10. The word is in the masculine because it is used adverbially. {In all three instances, *muḥkam* follows *bi-shatt* or *bi-shutūt*, 'in basket(s),' and accordingly was translated 'firmly set.' However, according to al-Qaddūmī, *Gifṣ*, 314–15, *muḥkam*, literally, 'compact' or 'tight,' is a type of glass, perhaps that known in art history as 'Hedwig glass.' If so, we would translate here: 'jars—in baskets—of *muḥkam* glass.'} The following household items recur in several accounts.

⁵³ {Arabic *aqdāḥ*. For the *qadah* (sg.), see Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 4:148, 394, n. 76; cf. 423, n. 33.}

⁵⁴ The restoration is based on a reconstruction of the account reflected in the letter.

⁵⁵ Abu 'l-Ḥasan b. Abu 'l-Katā'ib, whose ship had brought the pepper from India, II, 23, lines 7–8. A ship of Rāmishṭ that arrived in Aden returned from there to India without continuing to Red Sea ports such as Dahlak and 'Aydhāb; cf. II, 16, lines 3, 47.

export tax from the Furḍa, $\frac{1}{3}$ d.,⁵⁶ Bama (4) has one dinar for buying water and cabin⁵⁷ equipment.

Your total (5) debt: 653 dinars. Balance in your favor: (6) 32 dinars.⁵⁸ {Add: Your debit:}⁵⁹ Sent to you with Abu 'l-Khayr,⁶⁰ (7) 32 dinars.

[H. A shipment of gifts]

I have sent to you with Sheikh Abu (8) 'l-Khayr and Bama a gift from me to you: 10 (?) *rubā'yyas*⁶¹ of (9) sugar and raisins, as well as a *dast*⁶² of white paper. As for the paper, for two years now (10) it has been impossible to get any (in the market), and I have given you this from (the stock) (11) I keep for myself.⁶³ I have sent you a piece (made) of corals for your son Surūr⁶⁴ (12) and a quarter {add: *mikyāl*} of seeds.⁶⁵ Please be sure to take delivery of all this.

[I. Note about the settlement with Makhlūf]

(13) Together with my letter, a letter from Makhlūf 'The Orphan'⁶⁶ was dispatched to you, (14) which he had sent from 'Aydhāb. I have more

⁵⁶ In II, 16v, line 11 there was no mention of an exit toll on lead, although the shipment there was larger and costlier than the one here (28%, dinars there, 17% here). An exit toll on *dky* is found at the beginning of our letter, II, 21, line 5, and, according to our surmise, on copper, here, II, 24, line 1.

⁵⁷ Arabic *balj* or *bilj*, see 260, n. 8. {Margariti, "Aden," 74, notes that this is apparently the only place in the India Book papers where purchase of water before sailing on a ship was mentioned.}

⁵⁸ See in our letter II, 23, line 37, where Ben Yijū's assets amounted to 684% dinars. {The exact figure of the credit was 31%, which Maḍm'un rounded out in Ben Yijū's favor.}

⁵⁹ I.e., the balance of credit is transferred to the debit list, with the cash sent to Ben Yijū, to cancel the account.}

⁶⁰ See about him 314, n. 15 and the continuation here. {In that note, it is suggested that he might have been Abu 'l-Khayr, Ben Yijū's cousin.}

⁶¹ {For this measure, see 314, n. 14.}

⁶² A *dast* was a certain quantity that made up a set of a particular item; cf. 304, n. 9.

⁶³ Arabic *maḥfū'*, lit., 'kept on a high place,' see Dozy, *Supplément*, 1:540 a: *Conserver, garder, mettre en réserve* [cf. Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 185]. For the scarcity of paper, see II, 14, line 20; II, 16v, line 32.

⁶⁴ Corals served both as an ornament and as a protection of a child against the 'evil eye.' {I assume that Goitein added 'made' as a matter of style rather than substance.}

⁶⁵ Arabic *bizr baql*, probably seeds for nibbling, not seeds for planting herbs [see Piamenta, *Dictionary*, 36]. Not found elsewhere as sent as a gift. *Mikyāl* is a small measure for dry goods or liquids (Steingass-Johnson, *Dictionary*, 1302). {Cf. 465, n. 15.}

⁶⁶ See sec. A.

than twenty of his (15) letters, all of them worthless {alt. tr. utterly confused}—he is an old man in his dotage, and has become senile (16) in his old age {alt. tr.: utterly confused at the end of his life} and doesn't know what he is doing. As for the documents, (17) which I had made out in Muslim and Jewish (courts), wherein he releases (18) you from any claim, demand, responsibility or oath, they are in my (19) safekeeping and are certified by reliable witnesses.⁶⁷

[J. Receipt of betel nuts, teak wood and other Indian commodities sent by Ben Yijū in the preceding year; goods sent in exchange but lost in the shipwreck mentioned in sec. B]

(20) You mentioned the betel nuts, which you had sent to me with (21) Sheikh 'Abd al-Malik⁶⁸ last year, and the two boards (of teak wood),⁶⁹ I took delivery of (22) this and sent you last year in exchange, with Saydān, (23) sugar, raisins, and other {add: retail} items, but God ordained what He ordained.⁷⁰

As for the remaining (24) boards, Sheikh Joseph and Sheikh Khalaf⁷¹ took delivery (of them)—they were (25) owed them from the year (before).

[K. Minor affairs and greetings]

As for the *dky*,⁷² none has come this year (26) at all. And I was not able to get any indigo.⁷³

⁶⁷ {Arabic *al-shuhūd al-'ādila*. For the requirement of 'upright witnesses' in Islamic law (and their recognition by Jewish courts), see 528, n. 17.}

⁶⁸ Evidently a Muslim merchant not mentioned elsewhere in the India Book papers. Mukhayyir b. 'Abd al-Malik, perhaps his son, carries merchandise for a Jewish trader according to VII, 51v, line 8.}

⁶⁹ As the small number of teak wood boards shows, these were required for repairs of, or additions to, buildings. As far as we know, Jews did not trade in Indian timber. The shipbuilders in Egypt certainly had their own vessels for transporting building materials. {Among its other uses, Indian teak was used for shipbuilding. See al-Hijji, "Shipbuilding," 14. The boards, which Ben Yijū took with him from India, in III, 24, lines 33, 34, were intended for furnishings of sorts.}

⁷⁰ On the shipwreck alluded to, see sec. B.

⁷¹ {Joseph b. Abraham and Khalaf b. Isaac, Maḍmūn's cousins and Ben Yijū's business associates.}

⁷² See 331, n. 11.

⁷³ Arabic *mīl*. 'Indian Indigo' was exported from India to the West. I do not believe that here indigo grown in Egypt or Palestine is referred to. It seems rather that Ben Yijū had inquired about the price of Indian indigo in Aden. Since none was on the market

Concerning what you mentioned about (27) Musallam al-Ka'kī,⁷⁴ he has not sent you a thing this year, nor have I (28) seen a letter of his.

Please accept for yourself and your son the best of greetings from me, (29) and convey my best regards to the illustrious *nākhudā* 'Alī al-Fawfalī.⁷⁵ (30) *And peace!*

[L. Postscripts in Maḍmūn's hand: (1) Request to deliver letters, sent in four boats, to addressees in Ben Yijū's place of sojourn and in Mangalore]

Know, my lord, that in the ship of the *nākhudā* (31) Rāmishṭ and in the ship of his two sons and two brothers-in-law [alt. tr.: and in the ship of his son and (the ship) of his son-in-law],⁷⁶ and in the ship of (32) the *nākhudā*

at that time, Maḍmūn was unable to report prices. Arabic *nīl* stands also for woad, *isatis tinctoria* (see Maimonides-Meyerhof, 122–23, sec. 249), just as Hebrew *isatis* (derived from the Greek) designates both woad and indigo. But by the twelfth century woad had long been replaced by the superior dye indigo; see Weibel, *Textiles*, 9. Woad was a common dyeing plant grown in Palestine in Mishnaic times (M. Kil'ayim 2:5, M. Shevi'it 7:1). {For indigo in the Islamic world, see Dietrich, "Nil" and especially Balfour-Paul, *Indigo*; and for exporting indigo from India to the West, see Chakravarti, "Indigo." For the sale of 'Indian indigo' in Aden, see II, 66v, lines 9, 27. In VI, 4, David wrote his brother Moses Maimonides that the only Eastern commodity on sale in 'Aydhab was indigo; accordingly, he decided to continue his journey on to India (see Goitein, *Letters*, 210). In our letter, the words 'and I was not able to get any indigo' translate the Arabic *wal-nīl mā qadartu 'alayhi*. There is no word for 'get' in the original. But while *qadara*, lit. 'was able,' is used in many different contexts, the expression '*qadara 'alā* a commodity' appears repeatedly in the letters of this book in the sense 'was able to acquire X' (to ship to PN). Examples can be found in II, 14, line 20, II, 43, line 13, III, 5, line 3, III, 10, line 46, III, 15, line 40. This is implied by the context here as well, as the preceding and following sentences deal with goods to be sent to Yemen Yijū. Accordingly, it would appear that this source attests the export of indigo from Yemen to India, and the matter requires further investigation.)

⁷⁴ Musallam = Hebrew *Meshullam*, a messianic name; see Goitein, "Meeting in Jerusalem," 51 {Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:613, n. 95}. Musallam is described in V, 2v, line 7 (written Jan.–Feb. 1134), as a young, inexperienced India trader, and is greeted in a letter from Aden, V, 8, margin, while staying in Fustat-Cairo {cf. II, 52, line 3}. Ka'kī, maker of 'bagels,' a family name. See Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 1:254, 2:297. The translation 'bagels' or 'pretzels' is approximate, since we know neither the composition of the dough nor the form that the *ka'k* had in those days and places.

⁷⁵ For 'Alī b. Maṣṣūr al-Fawfalī ("The Betel Nut Trader") see verso, lines 3, 11, 13. Both 'Alī and *Maṣṣūr* ("Helped by God," 'Victor') were names common among Jews as among Muslims. Fawfalī did not only bear the title *nākhudā*, but was actually a shipowner; see II, 55, line 17. But the fact that Maḍmūn entrusted him with all his affairs in Mangalore, big and small {as noted on verso}, proves that he specialized in business rather than in shipping. {See further, page 143.}

⁷⁶ {Arabic *waladīh wa-ṣībrīh*. Goitein read both words with *y*, as duals: *waladayh wa-ṣībrayh*. (Maḍmūn's letters are made up here of small lines, one of which somewhat resembles *y*.) As four ships are mentioned in the continuation, Rāmishṭ's son and *ṣībr* obviously each owned his own ship. Besides brother-in-law, *ṣībr* also means father-in-

Abu 'l-Ḥasan b. Abu 'l-Katā'ib, four ships...⁷⁷ [Verso] (1) In each ship there is a bundle of letters for you and for Abraham (2) b. [[Yishū]] //Fayyūmī//,⁷⁸ for all the Bānyāns⁷⁹ of Mangalore, for the *nākhudā* (3) al-Fawfalī, and for 'Imrān and Sa'īd.⁸⁰ Please be sure to take delivery of (4) them all and take good care of them. Give the *nākhudā* (5) Bashīr⁸¹ his letter, and 'Imrān and Sa'īd their letters. (6) The letters for the people of Mangalore [[when Sheikh (7) Abraham b. Yishū arrives... him {read: soothe him with kind words}]]⁸² //take delivery of them and take good care// for me of the letters for the people in (8) Mangalore, since there

law and son-in-law, and in the present context, I prefer the latter. (According to Goitein, "R. Ḥananel," 376, in the Geniza, as in classical Arabic, writers differentiated between *ṣībr*, which refers to the sister's husband or the daughter's husband or the wife's brother or father, and *sif*, which refers to the wife's sister's husband.)

⁷⁷ It is not clear that anything is missing here. Apparently read with the continuation: "In the ships of Rāmishṭ, in the ship of his son, (in the ship of) his son-in-law and the ship of Abu 'l-Ḥasan, four ships, in each of which..." Multiple copies of letters were sent in several ships to ensure that despite the perils of sea travel at least one arrived safely. See page 9, n. 23.}

⁷⁸ See II, 20, line 29 {and III, 22v, lines 4–5, for this person} and III, 34, lines 24 and 32 {for another *Fayyūmī*}. *Al-Fayyūmī* (with the article {as the name appears several times in III, 35.}) would have denoted a man from the Fayyūm district in Egypt, but *Fayyūmī* is a given name chosen by the Jews of Yemen out of veneration for the great theologian and translator of the Bible into Arabic, Saadya al-Fayyūmī (882–942). The father of the Yemenite philosopher, Nethanel b. Fayyūmī, bore this name; see Talmage, "Nethanel" (where *al* is to be deleted). Likewise in Maimonides *Epistle to Yemen* (Halkin) (addressed to Jacob, Nethanel b. Fayyūmī's son), the correct reading, namely ben Fayyūmī, is in the manuscript quoted there on p. 1, n. 1. {Apparently the same individual is called *Fayyūmī* in III, 34 and *al-Fayyūmī* in III, 35; see Friedman, *Yemenite Messiah*, 41, n. 85. Maḍmūn wrote here Yishū then tried to correct the letters to spell Fayyūmī. The correction was not successful, so he crossed out the name and wrote the correct name above the line (Goitein did not copy the deleted word); see below, n. 82.}

⁷⁹ The Hindu merchants. {See 315, n. 20.}

⁸⁰ Since these persons are mentioned without any honorific epithet, such as sheikh, *nākhudā*, Abū (father of), Ibn (son of), they were probably of low standing, but acted as business agents.

⁸¹ 'Harbinger of good tidings.' This Muslim (or Christian?) *nākhudā* shipowner was in close contact with Ben Yijū and the Adenese Jewish merchants; see III, 22, lines 2, 6, 9. While the name Bishr or Bushr, 'Good Tidings,' was common among Jews, Bashīr was next to unknown. Abraham b. Fayyūmī, the *nākhudā* al-Fawfalī, 'Imrān, Sa'īd, and the *nākhudā* Bashīr lived in the same place as Ben Yijū; probably in Fandarayna.

⁸² The crossed-out words had been written in a letter addressed to one of the merchants of Mangalore ("When Abraham b. Yishū [= Ben Yijū] arrives make sure that..."), and Maḍmūn's pen erroneously put these words here. {Goitein did not read the last word in the deleted phrase. To the extent that the consonantal decipherment I suggest ('*knth*') is correct, probably read *akbnithbu*, imperative (with suffix) of the fourth form of *khntb*. Goshen, *Dictionary*, 635–36, defines the second form *khannath*, 'soften (his voice)'. Dozy, *Supplément*, 1:407, defines *khanith*, "doux, suave," and brings the expression *khanith al-kalām* ('having a sweet voice'). Also note the correction in line 2, where the deleted word was also not read by Goitein.}

are many matters {alt. tr.: I have many orders} in all of them (9) that have to be attended to {alt. tr.: so take good care of them}. Hand over to every one his letter (10) personally. By God! Take good care of all the letters {alt. tr.: Take this matter seriously!}⁸³ *And peace.*

[M. (2) Request to assist Abū 'Alī al-Fawfalī, Maḍmūn's representative, in all his errands, large and small]

(11) Especially in the letter to the *nākhudā* 'Alī al-Fawfalī (12) I have many orders, and likewise (in the letters to) the Bānyāns of (13) Mangalore.

I have empowered the *nākhudā* 'Alī al-Fawfalī (14) to sell the goods packed⁸⁴ and all the items {alt. tr.: their gear} (15) and to take possession of the shallow dish kept by Budah, (16) the son of Slslyty,⁸⁵ which had been left with him (17) by Abū Sa'īd,⁸⁶ and to take possession of the large copper kettle (18) for cooking dates⁸⁷ which (19) Bnk Syty⁸⁸ has,

⁸³ This manner of repeating urgent matters again and again was common in the correspondence of both the Mediterranean and the Indian region {though the present case is somewhat excessive}. See in this letter, lines 22–23. {In the preceding lines, the urgency of taking care of the letters is repeatedly expressed by *tahtifaz b-* or the like. In the last phrase by *Allāh Allāh b-*. Below, line 22, *wa-llāh allāh fi haḥḥ.*}

⁸⁴ See 340, n. 15. Since the goods held up in Mangalore could not be sent to Aden in the preceding year because the boat sailing there had sunk, Maḍmūn ordered them to be sold now where they were, perhaps because he had learned that the prices in Mangalore were good.

⁸⁵ An Indian (Sanskrit, Hindu or Dravidian) word (or words), whose pronunciation and meaning are problematic. For 'shallow dish,' *anjar*, see Dozy, *Supplément*, 2:642a (taken from a 19th-century dictionary; but see Fraenkel, *Freundwörter*, 68).

⁸⁶ This is Abū Sa'īd b. Maḥfūz Ibn Jamāhir. See 331, n. 13.

⁸⁷ For making date wine or brandy? Cf. 345, n. 47. {'Copper,' Arabic *ṣufr*. For the meaning of this term, see 555, n. 11. The transfer of such a kettle is noted in III, 20, lines 6–7, accounts written in India.}

⁸⁸ *Banik* (pronounced *vanik*) *śreṣṭhin*, 'Head of the merchants' guild' (Basham, *India*, 222). These vessels had been either ordered by Maḍmūn or sent to India for repair. {See Abraham, *Merchants Guilds*, ix, *vanikēsan*, 'a merchant,' viii, *setṭi*, 'merchant.' Two *Setṭis* are mentioned in Maḍmūn's letters to Ben Yijū, Sws *Setṭi*, II, 14v, line 1, and Bnk *Setṭi*, here II, 24v, line 19. Basham, *India*, 222: "There were many professional bankers and moneylenders [...], the *śreṣṭhins* (in Pāli, *setṭhi*). The *śreṣṭhin* was (...) usually a merchant as well." Chakravarti, "Merchants of Konkan," 209–10, discusses what appears to be a parallel to the term in the Geniza: "The term *śreṣṭhi* usually denotes a rich merchant, while *vanik* means a trader in general... But the combined epithet *śreṣṭhi-vanik*, figuring in the Bhādāna grant is rather unusual... may therefore point to a type of merchant who dealt in money matters... a money-merchant." Our letter's *Vanik-Setṭi* evidently did not restrict his dealings only to money.}

and to get the sandarac⁸⁹ (20) and all the {add: retail} items which are in the storeroom;⁹⁰ (21) he is empowered⁹¹ to take possession of everything which belongs to me there. (22) Please help him in this, and, by God, take care of (23) the letters—all of them! *And peace.*⁹²

⁸⁹ A resin from a tree with the same name, used in varnishes. Spelled here *sandarūs* for the more common *sandarūs* (as in VII, 36, line 17, where it is reported that none was to be had in Cairo).

⁹⁰ Maḍmūn kept a storeroom (or house) in the Indian port, as the prominent Cairene merchants had in Alexandria.

⁹¹ {Arabic *qad huwa wakīlī*, lit., 'he is already my representative.' For *qad* used in nominal clauses in Yemenite texts, see Blau, "Dialects," 90 (two examples there from Goitein's *India Book*); Blau, *Grammar*, 182. *Qad* is used here for emphasis.

⁹² Goitein intended to discuss here the accounts in secs. A, F and G.}