

His total credit: (9) 927 dinars.

(10) He owes for the rest of the freight⁹ of the pepper 30 *fil*[*īs*. Due him for pepper]¹⁰ (11) from Kūlam priced at 28½ [...]

⁹ The freight had been paid at dispatch, but not in full.

¹⁰ I restored 'pepper', since approximately the same price as that mentioned for this commodity in line 1 is obtained here. {For *fil*, see III, 18, sec. A, line 11 and 637, n. 7.}

{III, 28a *Account of a Merchant in India Written by Abraham Ben Yijū*

Yemen, ca. 1140–43

TS 8 J 7, f. 23

For a description of the paper, see above III, 2.

The document contains a final draft or a copy of an import-export account of a merchant in India, written by his business associate in Aden (or elsewhere in Yemen), the text of which was undoubtedly incorporated in a letter. The writer can be identified as Ben Yijū both by his handwriting (at its best) and by the very fact that the account is written on the blank space of the verso of III, 2, a memorandum sent from Aden to Ben Yijū in India. Prof. Goitein inadvertently failed to copy the two texts on TS 8 J 7, f. 23v (four lines continuing III, 2 and III, 28a), and subsequently he did not include the present document in the India Book.

The nature of the text is exceptionally clear from the commodities mentioned in it. Here Ben Yijū serves as the agent in Aden (or elsewhere in Yemen) of a Jewish merchant who was residing in India. Ben Yijū obviously took with him the paper, on which he later wrote this account, when he traveled back from India to Aden; compare III, 25.

The text is intact, and with the exception of a few words can be deciphered with certainty in its entirety. The first and main item in the account is a large shipment of pepper, 60 *bahārs* of small measure. Of these Ben Yijū sold 36 *bahārs* at 24 dinars each and stored 24 *bahārs*, per instructions of his associate, so that they could later be shipped elsewhere (the destination is not indicated, and here the text is discontinued). It stands to reason that this is the same pepper, 24 *bahārs* of small measure, sold by Ben Yijū at 25 Malikī (Adenese) dinars each, for an associate in India according to III, 28. Accordingly, we can assume that III, 28a precedes III, 28, probably by one year. During this period, Ben Yijū was instructed by his business associate to sell the remaining 24 *bahārs* in Aden, and they brought a slightly higher price than the first quantity of 36 bales.

Like Ben Yijū, his correspondent engaged in India in both the import-export business and the manufacture of bronze vessels. While it is possible that he continued the work in Ben Yijū's bronze factory in the latter's absence, a separate factory could be intended as well. The account contains new data, not found in other India Book texts, such as the export of Qal'ī 'lead' from India to Aden and the name of an otherwise unknown *nākhudā*, and also corroborates and complements data attested in other manuscripts.

The account can be summarized as follows:

Credits (Sales)		Debits (Expenses; commodities sent)	
Pepper, 36 small <i>bahārs</i>	864 ¹	Pepper, customs on 60 <i>bahārs</i>	425
Fee for weigher and broker	-4	Basket of [...]	6 ¹ / ₂
	860		
Qal'ī 'lead' (tin)	7	Registration fee	5
Copper (<i>ṣufr</i>), 50 pounds	23	Discount	-6 ¹ / ₂
			430
		(Scrap) copper, 20 pieces, 3 <i>bahārs</i>	300
		Exit tolls and packing	4
		40 Egyptian <i>mithqāls</i>	96
		Old, good dinars	60
Total	890	Total	890

The date of the account can be calculated by the following data. It was written on the verso of III, 2, a letter from ca. 1134–37. Abū Zikrī Ibn al-Shamī, with whom Ben Yijū sent goods and cash from Yemen to India (here, lines 13–14, 18), apparently drowned on a later journey on that same route, in 1146, when traveling on a ship, on which goods and letters were being shipped to Ben Yijū (III, 15, lines 22–24). Accordingly, III, 28a, was written when Ben Yijū was in Yemen ca. 1140–44 (see page 648), rather than during his stay of 1149–52. Since he was still in Yemen when he wrote III, 28, a year later, III, 28a, must have been written (ca.) 1140–43.

Translation

[A. Credits: sale of commodities sent from India]

(1) With the assistance of God, the Exalted, I have sold for you ('him'), from the pepper that had arrived, namely sixty (2) *bahārs* of small measure,²

¹ [All prices are given in (Maliki) dinars.

² A *bahār* of small measure contained 250 pounds, of large measure 300; see 322, n. 4.

thirty-six *bahārs*, at twenty-four dinars per *bahār*. (3) Proceeds: eight hundred and sixty-four dinars. Expenditures for (4) the weigher and broker:³ four dinars. Balance: eight hundred and sixty dinars. Total (5) weight of the Qal'ī 'lead':⁴ twenty-nine pounds, the price seven dinars. Proceeds to your credit from (6) the fifty pounds of copper,⁵ which were brought by the *nākhudā* Najīb al-Kharazī:⁶ (7) twenty-three dinars. Sum total: eight hundred and ninety dinars.

[B. Debits: customs and other fees; commodities sent to India]

Your debit: The customs for (8) the [sixt]y *bahārs* of pepper—four hundred and tw[enty-f]ive dinars.⁷ The price of a basket (?) of (9) [...], six and a half dinars; the fee for the manifest—five dinars.⁸ Total: four hundred, thirty-six (10) and a half dinars. My (your servant's) discount⁹—six and a half dinars. Balance of customs—four (11) hundred and thirty.

There were forwarded to your excellency exclusively,¹⁰ in the large ship, together with (12) 'Double Wages (?)'¹¹ Abu 'l-Faraj [[a bag of Egyptian gold]] a bag of scrap¹² copper, numbering 20 (13) pieces, the weight a *bahār* and a half. In the small ship¹³ together with the *nākhudā* Abū (14) Zikrī Ibn al-Shāmī,¹⁴ pieces of copper, 20 pieces, the weight a *bahār* and

³ On the brokerage payment (*dilāla*), see Smith, *Studies*, chap. 10, 134.

⁴ For this term for tin and the importance of our document for the identification of the toponym Qal'a, see 558, n. 27.

⁵ Arabic *ṣufr* (also lines 12, 14). For the meaning of this term, see 555, n. 11.

⁶ The *nākhudā* Najīb is apparently not mentioned elsewhere in the India Book papers. His family name Kharazī means 'bead maker,' a common occupation; see Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 1:416, n. 2. Credit is given here for bronze vessels manufactured in India.

⁷ The *'ashūr* (*'ushūr*), was slightly more than seven dinars for a small *bahār* of pepper. Cf. 344, n. 45.

⁸ For the *satmī*, see 325, n. 20. The fee noted there was approximately 0.25%. If we calculate the value of 60 *bahārs* of pepper at 24 dinars per *bahār*, its total value would be 1,440 dinars, and here the fee for registering it in the manifest approximately 0.347%.

⁹ Arabic *musāmaha*; see 331, n. 10. Here Ben Yijū received a discount, in which the expenses were rounded off to the lower tens.

¹⁰ Arabic *al-khāṣṣa*. See 285, n. 9.

¹¹ The word, which appears here and in line 16, seems to be a nickname of Abu 'l-Faraj, but the reading *'l-kr'yyn* is not certain (especially the letters *kr*), and its vocalization (*al-kirā'ayn*) and translation are doubtful.

¹² Arabic *fajar*; see III, 2, lines 4 (and 565, n. 6), 17.

¹³ As usual, a small ship escorted a larger one; see 341, n. 26.

¹⁴ See on him page 150.

a half. The total: (15) two units,¹⁵ the weight three *bahārs*, the price three hundred dinars. Exit tolls from the (16) Furḍa and wrapping in skins and packing, four dinars.¹⁶ Also forwarded to you with Abu 'l-Faraj 'Double Wages (?),' (17) in the large ship, a purse, in which are forty Egyptian *mithqāls*. The price: (18) ninety-six dinars.¹⁷ In the ship together with Abū Zikrī Ibn al-Shamī—may God decree his safe arrival!—(19) is a purse, in which are sixty dinars, old, good dinars. The total of your debit: (20) eight hundred and ninety dinars. There remains to your excellency's credit in 'the house,'¹⁸ pepper—(21) twenty-four *bahārs* of small measure, because your excellency mentioned sending this (22) aforementioned amount [...]¹⁹

¹⁵ Arabic *qit'a* is used both for the separate pieces and for each of the two shipments.

¹⁶ Cf., e.g., II, 16, lines 45–46; II, 48, lines 1–2.

¹⁷ This gives an exchange rate between the Egyptian dinar (*mithqāl*) and the Adenese Maliki dinar of 1:2.4. See 172, n. 27.

¹⁸ The warehouse and bourse of Aden. See 343, n. 41.

¹⁹ The writer finishes here in the middle of the line. The recipient had obviously left instructions not to sell in Aden the 24 *bahārs* of pepper but to ship them to the West. As already mentioned above, it is likely that this pepper was sold by Ben Yijū in the following year, as reported in III, 28, lines 1–2.}

III, E. *Correspondence after Leaving India and while Returning 'Home'*

III, 29 *Letter from Abraham Ben Yijū to his Brothers and Sisters after His Safe Return from India*

Aden, 11 September, 1149

TS 10J 10, f. 15

Ed. Braslavsky, "Jewish Trade," 135–39. English translation in Goitein, "Two Historical Letters," 51–55; id., *Letters*, 201–6, upon which together with some material in Goitein's other papers the following is based. A translation is also printed in Simonsohn, *Jews in Sicily*, 1:397–400.

The top of the document was detached, but obviously only little has been lost, for the address on the verso is preserved completely. As addresses normally were written near the upper edge of the page, only a few cms. can be lacking. {It is likely that an address in Arabic letters was written in the missing portion of the verso.} Of the length, 20.5 cm have been preserved. The right margin is damaged, but the words written on it can be restored almost completely. The paper is of the same dark-brown variety used in Yemen as in III, 33 and III, 38. The script shows Ben Yijū the scribe (cf. the introduction to III, 17) almost at his best.

Since Braslavsky had at his disposal only one item from Yijū's hand, while we have today over seventy {written by him or relating to his activity}, it is natural that many of his readings, translations and interpretations need qualification. Here no reference is made to most of these.

The letter is marked by the strong attachment of the writer to his brothers and sisters and their families. While out in India during at least eighteen {or: as much as seventeen} years, Ben Yijū had not kept up regular correspondence with them. Our letter shows that he was poorly informed about their children and he needed to supply details about his own children (see line 18); cf. III, 41, lines 20–25 and III, 30, line 7, where his nephew expressly states that the family had been out of touch with him for many years.

The particularly strong upsurge of family attachment felt here had its source in the dire fate that had befallen Ben Yijū's homeland, details of which must have reached Aden when he arrived there from India. The Normans, under King Roger II, had ravaged and occupied al-Mahdiyya and Sfax in 1148. Ben Yijū's relatives, if alive at all, were now captives, or, at best, refugees. Indeed, we find them in Sicily, and not in their native country—as he expected in this letter—and in a completely destitute state (see below sec. C and III, 43). From III, 30 we learn that this letter actually reached Messina in Sicily. Now, Ben Yijū's long years