

From Joseph b. Mūsā, son of Barhūn, (*may he rest in Eden*). (The draft of the settlement, referred to in the introduction to nos. 23-26, above, is written in the space left blank between the end of the text and the address. The senior partner Khallūf b. Mūsā "Goldsmith," who is described here as Ḥamawī, that is, native of Ḥamāh in Syria, but still as resident in Palermo, Sicily, had made Moses Samarqandī [see no. 1, above] his attorney against Yeshū'ā. The matter came before the court of Mevōrākh b. Saadya, later Nagid, or head, of the Jews in the Fatimid empire, but was finally settled by "elders," who took the trouble to go through all the accounts and came up with a complicated settlement. Since the draft is in the hand of Yeshū'ā, we do not know, of course, whether this was the end of the story.)

26 WEAVING OF A *maqṭa'* CLOTH IN ALEXANDRIA FOR A BUSINESS FRIEND IN AL-MAHDIYYA

This note from a business letter sent by Mūsā b. Abi 'l-Ḥayy (see no. 25, sec. J) to Joseph Tāhertī, the writer of the preceding selection, no. 25, illustrates the personal services accompanying the overseas trade. R. Yeshū'ā, mentioned in the first line, is, of course, the recipient of no. 25, who had traveled to al-Mahdiyya as announced in that letter.

Alexandria was famous for its *maqṭa'*s, and here we learn that they were woven from cotton and linen, or linen alone.

Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Heb. c 28 (Cat. 2876), f. 34, l. 29, margin and top of page one.

From the threads belonging to R. Yeshū'ā I had two pieces of *maqṭa'* garments and one *baqyār* turban¹ woven. I took them from the weaver and handed them over to the blancher.² The rest of the (linen) thread is coarse, while the cotton is fine, so that it does not fit in with it. Therefore, if he wishes to have two *maqṭa'*s made

¹ Large-sized turban. A *baqyār*, 25 cubits long, was made in Alexandria for Nahray b. Nissīm (TS 13 J 15 f. 19, l. 3, *Nahray* 108).

² "Whitening" or "blanching" was different from bleaching.

all in linen,³ from the rest of the thread, let him inform me accordingly.

If he prefers, however, that I buy him some coarse linen to fit his thread, I shall have it made thus.

Together with the cotton he also had eight ounces of fine (linen) thread, which I did not notice when I gave them for whitening.⁴ Thus, if he wishes, I shall buy, in addition to it, five or so ounces, which will make roughly two *maqṭa'*s, the woof of which will be the cotton owned by him.

27 A DEDICATED PARTNER

From Tunisia to Egypt

This short letter of Nissīm b. Isaac Tāhertī, the cousin of Joseph (nos. 25 and 26, above) and brother of Barhūn (no. 30, below), is presented here partly as a contrast to no. 25 and partly as an illustration of the vicissitudes of prices and the total expenses for one single item. The recipient was the sender of no. 16, a prominent merchant, much of whose correspondence has been preserved.

University Library, Cambridge, Taylor-Schechter
Collection, TS 10 J 9, f. 3.

A. THE ARRIVAL OF A LATE BOAT

I am writing to you, my master and lord, . . . on the 25th of Elul (August-September)—may God bring this month to a good end for you, and accept these coming days from you and from me.¹ *May you be inscribed in the book of life, atonement and forgiveness, you, and I, and all Israel.*

My preceding letters have been sent to you in the boats, may God ordain their safe arrival. The boat of Ibn Mu'ajjir ("Lessor")² ar-

³ Lit., linen by linen, i.e., both warp and woof being linen.

⁴ This seems to imply that both the threads before weaving and the woven material were "whitened."

¹ That is, the prayers and the fast during the subsequent month of the High Holidays.

² A man who has apartments for lease. Such persons appear in the Geniza, but not the word in this form (could be read also *mu'jir*).