

freight: 6 dinars; I paid here 3 dinars, and the remaining 3 dinars will be paid in Almeria after safe arrival. Please take notice of this. Best regards to you and your partner Abu 'l-Wahsh ("Father of the wild animal").⁴

God alone is sufficient for me.

(Address, on the otherwise blank verso:)

(To) my master and lord Abu 'l-Afrāh, 'Arūs b. Joseph, . . .

(From) his grateful Hilāl b. Joseph, . . .

(As usual, the blank space is filled with lists in 'Arūs' hand, but this time obviously referring to a collection for a public appeal.)

50 SPANISH SHIP SEIZED BY THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT

Ca. 1100

Here again two letters refer to the same shipment, but there is no need to translate both, for they were sent more or less simultaneously because of the urgency of the matter. Some details contained in the letter not translated here (Bodl. MS Heb. c 50, f. 19, referred to below with "Bodl.") are used in the comments.

The Egyptian government ordered the Spanish ship to be emptied in order to use it for naval operations in case of necessity, most likely in the war with the Crusaders, who had just arrived on the scene. As was assumed above (no. 48, n. 3), that ship probably was larger and stronger than the other Muslim boats anchoring at that time in Alexandria.

University Library, Cambridge, Taylor-Schechter
Collection, TS 13 J 27, f. 9.

(Upside down:) Written in the night after the holiday.¹
(Six short lines of the usual opening phrases.)

⁴ Identical, of course, with "Lion" of no. 48.

¹ Meaning Pentecost (Shavuoth), in May when the ships set sail.

I have just received your note in which you inform me that you have bought a bahār of lac and packed purple. But I must tell you that I cannot take anything from you with me. For when I took leave from you, I was planning to travel to Spain, but when I arrived here, I found that the Andalusian ship was completely emptied on written order from the Sultan.² Therefore I boarded a ship going to al-Mahdiyya. If you intend to send your goods to al-Mahdiyya, please send me a message and instruct me before we sail, since I do not think it would be proper on my part to carry your things with me unless you tell me so expressly in your letter. And be not late in writing, for the al-Mahdiyya boats are ready to sail; they have no further business here.³ Otherwise, your goods might get stuck in Alexandria. Do not send your letter with anyone who you are not sure will deliver it. The best thing is you send it with a mukārī (donkey driver) to the store of Hilāl b. Binyām.⁴

(Short greetings and a note on the recipient's cousin, not completely legible in both letters.)

(Address in Ar. characters:)

This letter should be brought to the Colonnade⁵ to the store of 'Arūs.⁶ Deliver and be rewarded.

(In Heb. characters, upside down:)

To the illustrious elder 'Arūs, son of R. Joseph, . . .
From his "son" Zikrī, son of R. Hananel.

51 THE FRUSTRATED JOURNEY OF A BUSINESS FRIEND

The letter is written in the beautiful and regular hand of a trained scribe. Unlike other letters, where the address is put on the

² Bodl.: *al-marḳab al-andalusī qad ta'attal bi-ḳitāb min 'ind al-sultān wa-furriḡh jamī' mā fihā.*

³ Bodl.: *al-marāḳīb al-mahdawīyya qad rājū*, an expression I have not seen before specifically in this sense.

⁴ A drugstore. See no. 48, n. 14, above.

⁵ Ar. *al-ṣaffayn*. See *Med. Soc.*, 1, 194.

⁶ Clearly a landmark known to the muleteers.