of the persecutions of the years 1568-1573 befell the Jews of San'a [1], cf. maq. 39, p. 418. So he must have been in Egypt in 1562 or 1563. As we have seen, he arrived there by ship from Jaffa and landed in 'Kaftor', which Biblical name could designate anything Egyptian [2], but must mean here either Damiette or Rosette—preferably the former [3],—because the author proceeded from there by ship on the Nile (called 'Pishon'), and there were obviously no other water ways used for the traffic between the Mediterranean and Cairo than the two arms of the Nile ending at either of these towns [4]. The voyage from the sea to Cairo on a sailing ship took the enormous time of eight days [5], maq. 7, p. 96; this may be explained, however, by the fact recorded in the 'Book of Instruction' that the Nile was infested by pirates and robbers, on account of whom the ship used to set anchor before darkness and did not continue its course until full daylight, maq. 12, p. 121. He arrived

---

[1] The date 1568/1569 is given in the introduction, while 1573 is mentioned in maq. 12, p. 156 (in the poem there) as the time of the end of their sufferings. No doubt, these persecutions were connected with the reconquest of the Yemen by Sinan, governor of Egypt, in 1569 and the following years, cf. *Précis de l'Histoire d'Égypte*, 3, 1, p. 25-26. In maq. 2, p. 24, the author complains that the Edomim, by which obviously the very mixed Turkish army is meant, camped in their tents without intervening on behalf of the persecuted. About the other sources concerning these persecutions, cf. the present writer's article in *Kiryath Sepher*, vol. 14, p. 263.

[2] Cf. e. g. the opening of the 47 maqama of al-Harizi, the rhyme 'Kaftor-Hattor' of which is found in az-Zahiri's seventh and twelfth maqama, pp. 96 and 151.

[3] Zakharia was coming from Jaffa. Moreover, Damiette is identified with 'Kaftor' by the traveller Binyamin of Tudela, which no doubt, reflects a local tradition.

[4] Cf. the maps in Prince Omar Toussoun's, *La Géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque arabe*, t. I, 2e partie, pl. II and III.

[5] The author's memory may have failed him. It was during the bitter times of the persecution (1568-1573) when it first occurred to him to compose his 'Book of Instruction' and he worked on it for many years, cf. the dates mentioned above note 1. The latest date found in the book, as far as I can see, is 1580, maq. 26, p. 311 and maq. 41, p. 433. Anyhow it cannot have been concluded much later, for the Sassoon MS. of it (Ohel David, p. 1021-1033), which is not an autograph, was written as early as 1585.