stages for the human race towards the Kingdom of the Messiah, for which Israel was prepared through a long school of suffering (seventh maqama). Zakharia had not much luck with his stay in Egypt, for there reached him the news of trouble coming upon his correligionists in the Yemen; he hesitated whether to stay on, but finally decided to go home (maq. 39, p. 417), not without having concluded profitable dealings on his voyage [1] (maq. 45, p. 466, maq. 8, p. 104). He embarked again on a Nile boat which took him in about twenty days up to 'Kush', obviously Kus in Upper Egypt, from where in three days [2] he reached a Red Sea port, maq. 2, p. 10-11. Whether his bitter words about the haughty and ignorant inhabitants (both Jews and Arabs) of the Land of Merathaim ('double bitterness') beyond the rivers of Misraim—maq. 38, p. 408—refer to Egypt is not sure, but most probable, because in another reference to an Egyptian town (with the Biblical name Tahpankhes, maq. 16, p. 180) the author says that their women were beautiful, their men learned, but 'bare of intelligence', and altogether not according to his taste, for they were too conceited to wish to learn anything from others. However, as a whole it may be said that Egyptian Jewry of the xvith century appeared to the Yemenite traveller-poet as a numerous [3], flourishing and highly esteemed community.

Note : Originally it was intended to give the passages from the 'Book of Instruction' referred to in this article in the Hebrew original. But as the author hopes to be able, as soon as circumstances permit, to edit the whole work, he prefers to refrain from printing the extracts here.

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[1] Zakharia was, as most Yemenite scholars, a silversmith and pursued this occupation even while having his feet enchained in prison, maq. 15, p. 174. But during his travels he was engaged in business, cf. maq. 4, 5 and 29.

[2] The distance is about 150 km., which would require 4-5 days of smooth travelling.

[3] Maq. 7, p. 96.