

Sur les chemins d'Onagre

Histoire et archéologie orientales

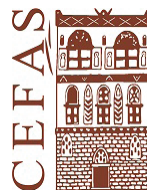
Hommage à Monik Kervran

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India in the 'India Book': 12th century northern Malabar through Geniza documents

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Résumé

Paru en 2008, l'« India Book » de S. D. Goitein et M. A. Friedman, est en train de bouleverser l'histoire de l'océan Indien médiéval ou, du moins, le potentiel des études sur cette question. Cet article représente un premier essai d'intégration des nouvelles données apportées par les documents de la Geniza à l'histoire des ports de la côte du Malabar où opéraient les marchands juifs, connus sous le nom d'« India traders ». Le début du XII^e siècle représente une période de grands changements politiques aussi bien qu'économiques et l'intégration de ces nouveaux documents permet d'éclairer une époque somme toute mal connue et mal représentée dans les sources autochtones.

It is not quite a decade since the first three parts of S. D. Goitein's 'India Book' were published as *India Traders of the Middle Ages: Documents from the Cairo Geniza* ('India Book') (Goitein and Friedman 2008), the culmination of over twenty-five years of work by Mordechai A. Friedman to complete the first phase of the project begun by his teacher. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the publication of these documents for the study of the western Indian Ocean. They span the mid-11th to late 13th centuries AD and as such represent the oldest surviving premodern documentary assemblage from the area, and one of only three identified so far (Guo 2004; Jāzim 2003–2005; Kaplony 2014). Hebrew editions of these three parts (Goitein and Friedman 2009, 2010a, 2010b) and now Part Four (Goitein and Friedman 2013; Friedman 2013) mean that essential transcriptions of the Judaeo-Arabic texts are also now available, although those who do not read modern Hebrew will have to wait until the volumes pertaining to Ḥalfon and Judah Ha-Levi (Part Four, A and B) are translated into English to appreciate the introductory essays and careful commentary. In the meantime, Parts One to Three are already so rich that they will keep scholars busy for decades to come.

There were, of course, tasters of their richness before this, in the many and various articles Goitein himself published (listed in Goitein and Friedman 2008), in the Indian material included in his *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders* (1973), and in the work of other scholars such as Ranabir Chakravarti (2002, 2007), Roxani Margariti's study of *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade* (2007) and, less conventionally, in Amitav Ghosh's ever challenging *In an Antique Land* (1993). But it is the sheer volume and variety of documents now published that present such an exciting challenge. The exceptional range of documents preserved — letters, memoranda, accounts, lists of luggage or stored items, draft legal rulings, medical prescriptions, poems and even calligraphy exercises — certainly opens the way to the writing of new and

different histories. These documents encourage us to study the Indian Ocean as a lived place rather than as an area of 'pure', disembodied commercial exchange. These newly published Geniza documents have the potential to revolutionise the study of the medieval Indian Ocean, the problem really is to know where to start.

Margariti's *Aden* demonstrated the invaluable insights Geniza documents bring to the history and topography of the port of Aden. Other recent work has used Geniza documents alongside contemporary sources to explore topics as diverse as the journeys of Indian words into Arabic (Lambourn 2014), the complementarity of textual and numismatic data for the monetary landscape of the early medieval Indian Ocean (Margariti 2014a) and that of textual and material data for the study of shipwrecks (Margariti 2015), or again early Jewish legal responses to new types of imported Chinese porcelain (Lambourn and Ackerman-Lieberman 2016). As Roxani Margariti's work on Indian Ocean monetization (2014a) and Ranabir Chakravarti's examination of trade commodities (2015) has demonstrated, these documents also have much to contribute to mainstream economic and social histories of South Asia and when I first reviewed *India Traders of the Middle Ages* in 2009 I concluded that one of the tasks ahead was simply to put India back into the 'India Book'. I pursue this task here, taking this opportunity to situate the surviving correspondence of one India trader active in the ports of northern Malabar during the 1130s and 1140s AD more deeply into its economic and socio-political context. This volume in honour of Monik Kervran seems the perfect place to do so, a fitting complement to her work on South Asia and its interactions with the Middle East, and it gives me great pleasure to contribute this for a colleague who has never been anything but supportive and challenging, in the best possible sense of the term.

Abraham and his fellow traders referred to the southwestern coast of India in the plural, as *Malībārāt*,

literally 'the Malabars' (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 55), a plural form of the term *Malibār* or *Mulaybār* widely used in the medieval Arabophone world to refer to the south western coast of India. This is the designation I retain here as it accurately conveys, as I will explore, both the political complexity of this coast in the early 12th century and its geographical diversity.

Although the expansion of Jewish trade into India during the long 12th century still awaits the kind of rigorous study now available for the 11th century Mediterranean (Goldberg 2012), Roxani Margariti's book on the trade of Aden (2007) and the introductory essays to *India Traders* provide a very effective picture of the Yemeni 'end' of this trade leaving me to focus here on coastal South Asia. Goitein structured his 'India Book' around prominent 'personalities', as represented in the documentary Geniza. Abraham Ben Yijū, a north African Jew who sojourned in northern Malibārāt for a total of twelve years in the 1130s and 1140s, is one such 'character' and Part Three of *India Traders of the Middle Ages*, comprising 58 documents, is devoted to this particular individual (although relevant documents are also to be found in Part Two). Abraham's extended sojourn makes the documents associated with him particularly valuable as sources of the social and economic history of northern Malibārāt. As befits the messyness of social and business relations, this corpus includes correspondence from his closest business partners: Maḍmūn ibn Ḥasan, the son of Japheth b. Bundār, Representative of Merchants and head of the Jewish community in Aden, and also a prominent merchant, shipowner and armourer in his own right, as well as with Maḍmūn's three cousins, Khalaf b. Isaac, Joseph b. Abraham and Maḥrūz b. Jacob. All four were heavily involved with trade in the ports of northern Malibārāt, making regular visits from Aden, and we know that Maḍmūn had an agent (*wakīl*) and a storeroom (*makhzan*) in Mangalore (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 351). Nevertheless, only Abraham sojourned in Malibārāt long term, for two periods totalling 12 years between 1132 and his final return to the Middle East in 1149. The surviving letters, memoranda and annual accounts of these India traders are rich with allusions to the commerce and, with less focus, the politics of Malibārāt during the 1130s and 1140s, a period for which local, Indian, sources are few and often opaque. Thus, rather than fitting neatly into a secure historical context Abraham's Indian correspondence contributes substantially new information for the economic and political history of northern Malibārāt at this period.

From Malibār to Malibārāt: post-Cera polities in the 1130s and 1140s AD

In a documentary corpus where dates are rare, Abraham's arrival in India is recorded surprisingly clearly. 526 *hijrī*, equivalent to November 1131 to

November 1132, was his last year trading out of Aden and before the year was even out, at the very latest by 29 *Tishrei* 4893 AM or 17 October 1132, he was at the port of Mangalore and manumitting a converted Indian slave girl, the woman widely held to have later become his wife and the mother of his three children (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 632-634, 2010b: 162-166). The legal requirements of the surviving deed of manumission yields important data about the India Abraham disembarked into. As befits a legal document, the deed gives a clear record of where exactly it was drawn up, in 'the city of Manjarūr which is in the land of India in Tuluva of Malibārāt, the royal city [D...S...] on the shores of the Great Sea' (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 55, 2010b: 165).¹ Mangalore's location within its wider geographical and political contexts illustrates the specificity with which India traders understood the places they traded (**Figure 1**).

Abraham's use of the term Tuluva, spelled here as *Tuluvāi* is unique among Geniza documents and Arabic sources and very clearly a Hebrew rendering of the proper noun Tuluva, designating the Tulu country, a culturally and linguistically distinct sub-region of the coastal belt which now corresponds to the Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka and the Kasaragod taluk of Kerala. The inhabitants of Tuluva were, and still are, known as Tulus and speak Tulu, a distinct relative of the Kannada language. Later in the same document, he specifies his slave's origin as 'of Tuluva'. The term is used here in a manner similar to the use of the category *jins*, literally 'species' or 'genus' of a slave, in Arabic language records of slave sales to denote geographic origin, parentage, or socio-linguistic or cultural group (Perry 2014: 38). Tulu regional identity remains strong today and this document suggests that it was also sufficiently important in the mid-12th century to be evident to a recently arrived Ifriqiyan merchant. This label is best understood as a geographical designation rather than a purely ethnic or linguistic one, even in the medieval period the area was subject to migration from Malayalam speaking areas to the south and Kannada speaking areas to the north.

Abraham's two Indian sojourns coincide with the long reign of Kavi Alupendra (r. c. 1110–1160) of the Alupa 'dynasty', however, in practice the Alupa polity was a patchwork of feudatory chiefs (*mahamandaleśvaras*) whose histories are barely recorded and the political geography of Tuluva was highly unstable (Saletore 1936; Bhatt 1975; Ramesh 1970). Scholars of South India now

¹ As this is a legal document, the text is in Hebrew, full transcription and commentary of the document in the Hebrew edition only. This part of the document is badly worn and all but illegible, however, it seems to represent a long word of approximately eight or ten letters. The Hebrew transcription reads an initial letter *dalet*, perhaps three or four illegible letters, a *samek* and a further three or four missing letters (Goitein and Friedman 2010b: 165, Line 4).



Figure 1. Map of India in the 12th century

concur that across the area centralized sovereignty and administration was rare with considerable authority devolved to a variety of autonomous assemblies and structures (Veluthat 1993; Davis 2005). In this respect then, the absence in Geniza sources of references to Alupa sovereignty or administration confirms the reality of this in the daily dealings of sojourning merchants. The one allusion to more centralized structures of authority — Mangalore is apparently described as 'the royal city' — is perplexing given that Mangalore had not been Tuluva's capital city since the

8th century and is generally held to have returned to this status only in 1204 (Ramesh 1970: 117). Given the multi-centred nature of authority in medieval South India, Ramesh's idea of 'capital city' likely needs to be replaced by the recognition that the capital, such as it was, was wherever the ruler was.

In fact, Jewish trade in northern Malibārāt at this period needs to be understood in a far larger, and even more fragmented, context. Abraham arrived in India in 1132 barely a decade after the fragmentation of the single

largest coastal polity in Malibārāt, the kingdom of the Ceras that had been established in the 9th century AD. The last Cera sovereign was Rama Kulāśekhara who, according to different narratives, either disappeared or converted to Islam and left for Arabia, leaving his kingdom to disintegrate into a mosaic of eighteen or more smaller polities (Narayanan 2013: 129-30, 132). While Mangalore had not been part of the Cera polity, Abraham and his business partners did do business with a number of these port polities. Maḍmūn's letter of accounts for the year 526 *hijrī* discusses cargoes sent to Abraham at both Mangalore and the port of Fandrayna some 170 kilometres to its south (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 332). The Arabic Fandarayna is believed to correspond to Pantalayini Kollam, near modern Koyilandi, and may formerly have been part of Purakilanadu, one of the chiefdoms within the Cera kingdom (Veluthat 1993: 117; Narayanan 2013: 129-30, 132). Although in the 'India Book' documents Fandarayna is described without reference to any larger political units, Maḍmūn's letter of accounts is among the first Middle Eastern references to this port's existence, two decades earlier at least than its appearance in al-Īdrīsī's *Kitāb nuzhat al-mushtāq*, begun in Sicily in 548/1154 (Nef 2010).² Describing it alongside Jurbattan and the island of Mulay, for al-Īdrīsī Fandarayna was one of only three locations where pepper could be sourced, its people were possessed of abundant goods, busy markets, imported goods and profits (*li-ahlihā amwāl yāsira wa-aswāq 'āmira wa-matājir wa-makāsib*);³ the city was located on a wide inlet (*khawr*), possibly a reference to the mouth of the Korapuzha river, and merchant ships from Sind and Hind anchored there. To the north of the city and belonging to it was a large mountain with many trees, villages and settlements where cardamom was grown (al-Īdrīsī 1954: 53, 64-65), a clear reference to a projection of the western Ghats located some 15 kilometres to the north east. The 'India Book' documents now clarify that Pantalayini Kollam or Fandarayna was not only a centre of South Asian inter-regional trade in the mid-12th century but already a transoceanic trade hub in the 1130s: letters record shipments of cardamom, pepper and 'smooth' iron from here directly to Aden and in one instance refer to a ship owned by Fandarayna's port administrator, its *patanaswami*, which travelled this route (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 599, 642). At least by the early 14th century Fandarayna had an established Jewish settlement since a Mamluk Syrian geography describes the port as having a mainly Jewish, Indian, and Muslim population (al-Dimashqī 1874: 234).

Two other ports of northern Malabar prominent in the 'India Book' documents were also emerging out of the

breakup of the Cera polity. One, approximately forty kilometres north of Fandarayna, was Jurbattan, the Arabic Jurfattan, and which corresponds to the site of modern Kannur (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 624). As Kolattunadu the area had been a prominent chiefdom within the earlier Cera polity, ruled by the Musika chiefs, and would appear to have retained its identity after the collapse of the Cera state (Veluthat 1993). Once again the 'India Book' documents predate the earliest geographical references by several decades. Al-Īdrīsī describes it as a populous city situated on a small inlet, a country with a lot of rice and grains (*hubūb*) and many pepper trees in its mountains (al-Īdrīsī 1954: 65). Jurfattan's transoceanic connections are illustrated by the fact that one of the ships belonging to the Zurayid ruler of Aden was named the Jurbattani after this port, an indication that this was a regular destination (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 623). Perhaps one of the most fascinating details about Jurfattan given in al-Īdrīsī is the fact that he considered it to be the nearest mainland to Sri Lanka (*Sarandīb*) and located barely half a *majran* apart (*wa-baynahimā aqall min niṣf majran*) (al-Īdrīsī 1954: 75). Clearly if *Sarandīb* is understood here to refer to the main island of Sri Lanka itself, al-Īdrīsī's information makes no sense whatsoever, and we might posit that he confused Jurfattan with one of the many Tamil ports located across the Palk Strait. Another interpretation, however, given that pepper was a distinctively Malabari product, is that he was in fact conflating in the term *sarandīb* all South Asia's offshore islands, notably the Maldives and Laccadive islands which were themselves frequently conflated under the single term *al-Dībajāt*. Al-Īdrīsī never travelled beyond the Mediterranean region and was clearly gathering information for these new entries from returning merchants and some degree of confusion or misinformation was probably inevitable.⁴ Al-Īdrīsī's use of the term *majran* (pl. *majārin*), literally 'channel' or 'watercourse', although usually used in the sense of the stage of a journey undertaken by water, does in fact describe the relationship of the Indian mainland to the Laccadives some 200 kilometres off shore. The more northern Laccadives are located directly on the sea route between northern Malibārāt and the Yemen and had a long history of settlement from, and direct political control by, polities in northern Malibārāt. Around 1500 the Laccadives were part of the territory of the Kolathiri Rajas based at Kannur, later passing to their successors the Ali Rajas, and one may wonder therefore whether al-Īdrīsī's report offers evidence for a much earlier territorial relationship between the two areas. Ships departing Mangalore for Aden in the 12th century certainly called at the Laccadives as witnessed by a letter from Maḍmūn instructing Sūs Sītī,

² Al-Īdrīsī is believed to have died in 571/1175-76 (Nef 2010: 65).

³ I am grateful to Eric Vallet for revising my translation of the Arabic here.

⁴ For a rapid survey of the variety of new sources, including human informants, al-Īdrīsī turned to (though India traders are not mentioned), see Bresc 2010.

Kinābtī and Ishāq the Bānyān in Mangalore, to dispatch a ship for Aden which should also call at *al-Dyyb* to take on coir and coconuts (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 315–17 and n. 24). While Friedman translates *al-Dyyb* as the Maldives, the northernmost Laccadives lie south west of Mangalore, making a stop there far more logical given the ship's point of departure.

A fourth location was Dahbattan/Darmattan, believed to correspond to Dharmapattanam, modern Dharmadam near Tellicherry, and located just 15 kilometres to the south of Jurfattan (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 598, 639). It is likely here that Abraham established his metal workshop since one document records that Joseph b. Abraham sailed from there to Aden with worked metal items, while a set of accounts refers to Dahbattan as the place where a certain Yūsuf LNBY who was involved in this business resided or worked (*ibid.*: 598, 639). At least in the 14th century Dahbattan/Darmattan appears to have been a dependency of Jurfattan although its status in the 12th century is not known (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1969, vol. 4: 83).

As al-Idrisī's geography testifies, Fandarayna and Jurfattan were widely known as sites of international trade in the 12th century. Mangalore, by contrast, emerges from the geographical sources as nascent rather than an established port of international trade. Al-Idrisī's *Kitāb nuzhat al-mushtāq* bypasses all the Alupa ports, Mangalore included, jumping directly from Tāna near modern-day Mumbai to Fandarayna (Pantalayini Kollam) and Jurfattan south of Mangalore (al-Idrisī 1954: 64). Similarly, the itinerary of the India trader 'Allān b. Ḥassūn who sailed from Sindābūr (Goa) to Kollam some time in the second decade of the 12th century includes only Fāknūr (Barkur) and another unspecified port to its north as stops in what would have been Alupa territories (Goitein 1987: 455, 459, n. 46). Only the 12th century Armenian *Description of Cities, Indian and Persian*, a short merchant guide covering Afghanistan to China, appears to bear some trace of Mangalore; listed as Panklur, it is accurately situated by its anonymous author between Pank'ur (Fāknūr) and P'andrianē (Fandarayna).⁵ 'India Book' documents aside, other evidence for Middle Eastern settlement and trade at Mangalore begins only in the late 13th century. The earliest allusion to a mosque at Mangalore is in a customs document from Aden dating to the early 1290s (Jāzim 2003–2005, vol. 1: 516); and Mangalore features among the same documents, this time alongside Fāknūr, as a destination for Adeni horse exports (*ibid.*: 265; Vallet 2010: 570–71). Mangalore makes its first appearance in Middle Eastern geographies a

decade later, albeit under rather misspelled forms,⁶ in the geographical portion of Rashīd al-Dīn's c. 1301 *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* as a 'new' stop on the coast between Fāknūr and Hīlī (Rashīd al-Dīn 1965: 12, 64), and later in al-Dimashqī's c. 1325 *Nukhbat al-dahr* where it is described as a great centre of the pepper trade (al-Dimashqī 1874: 234). Although it is clear from the Geniza sources that Mangalore was an important as a hub for Jewish trade with the Yemen in the 1130s, and Abraham's early Indian correspondence gives us the names of many other merchants and ship owners who regularly made the Aden to Mangalore crossing, we are left with the distinct impression that these traders were at the forefront of new markets along the northern Malabar coast. Benjamin of Tudela's (d. 1173) sketch of Jewish communities in India significantly mentions only al-Gingaleh — now usually identified as Shingli or modern Kodungallur in central Malibārāt, formerly the Cera capital of Muyirikkodu — as having a significant Jewish population of around one thousand (Benjamin of Tudela 1907: 67). Ranabir Chakravarti's work on the Konkan ports in the 11th century has demonstrated how rapidly certain stretches of coast might develop and internationalise and the same may be true of the ports of Tuluva and northern Malibārāt more generally during the 13th century (Chakravarti 1998).

It is perhaps not surprising then that we find in Abraham's correspondence only passing references to business conducted at any other Alupa port, namely Barkur, situated some 80 kilometres to the north of Mangalore, and which is believed to have become the capital at an unspecified period during Kavi Alupendra's reign (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 337, 477). This apparently weak Jewish presence in the central and northern Alupa territories may simply be a quirk of the sources, perhaps other, non-Jewish trade networks dominated trade here. However, the pattern in the Middle Eastern geographical literature is distinct and it is not impossible that it reflects the comparative marginality of Tuluva in international, transoceanic trade at this period. Since Jewish merchants from the Mediterranean followed rather than led in the India trade, it is possible that they deliberately targeted, or perhaps were forced to operate in, some of the newer markets along the northern Malabar coast and Mangalore appears to have been one of these.

It is also worth noting that Tuluva was subject to repeated military attacks by the Hoysala polity on the Deccan plateau which may have temporarily pushed trade north to Sindābūr (the area of modern Goa) and south into the former Cera domains. Literary and

⁵ I am grateful to Peter Cowe for indicating this reference and sharing his revised translation of the Armenian text (personal communication 19 July 2013).

⁶ See page 12 (fol 2063 recto, only partially pointed and vowelled as Manḥarūr) of the 1314–15 Arabic manuscript copy formerly in the possession of the Royal Asiatic Society as A. 27 (now Khalili Collections London) and 64 (fol. 335 recto, written unvowelled and unpunctuated as Manḥarūs) of the 1317 Persian copy in the Topkapı Sarayı 940 H. 1654.

epigraphic data suggest that the Alupas came under attack from the Hoysalas sometime before 1107, around 1115 and again in 1117 (Ramesh 1970: 108, 110, 114). Territorial skirmishes were a constant of Indian kingship — your kingdom was the territory you controlled — but some of these campaigns may have had serious social and economic consequences. One is reminded notably of a report by the Ifriqiyan trader 'Allān b. Hassūn that on his journey out of Sindābūr (Goa), they came across a port to the north of Fāknūr (Barkur) that was experiencing 'riots (*fitna*) and bloodshed' and had been emptied of its inhabitants (Goitein 1987: 455, 459, n. 46). His letter is undated and may not describe these specific campaigns, nevertheless, it is a reminder that people and ports shifted rapidly in response to political threats. The 'India Book' documents suggest that, at least for Jewish India traders, Mangalore was a significant port on the Tulu coast, even if it was still far from gaining wide recognition as such in the Middle East.

The wide ranging activities of the Jewish India traders along the coast of northern Malibārāt make perfect sense in the context of the recent fracture of the Cera polity and local geography. The South West monsoon leaves Malibārāt's coastal plain and western Ghats lushly forested and cut by long, powerful rivers running east to west. Historically major cities have been located either directly at the ocean mouths of these rivers or further upstream at the intersection of land routes to the Ghats giving access to the larger polities of the Deccan plateau. Mangalore itself sits at the confluence of the Netravati and Gurupura rivers whose large tidal mouths have created a complex geography of sandbanks, lagoons and backwaters, at the same time offering good access to the interior by river boat and access to the Deccan plateau via Charamady Ghat. Other ports show similar patterns. By spreading their activities across three different polities — the Alupas at Mangalore, Fandarayna in Purakilanadu, and Musika governed Jurfatan and Dahbattan — Abraham and his business colleagues effectively guaranteed themselves access to three distinct trade networks with distinct markets, and supply chains. Nevertheless, we should be careful not to equate this multi-centred and diffuse authority with a lack of administration. Earlier in the 12th century 'Allān b. Hassūn had written of his concerns that his goods would be confiscated in Aden because the ship he was on had sailed from a port in northern Malibārāt without the requisite paperwork (*riqā*)⁷ (Goitein 1987: 460) and his letter goes on to describe the procedures for sailing from Kollam. Benjamin of Tudela's account of Kollam, collated later in the same century, includes an unusually specific description of disembarkation procedures for arriving merchants

and comments about the (good) management of lost property (Benjamin of Tudela 1907: 64). Together these brief references point to a world of trade as heavily regulated as that of contemporary Aden if barely present in the Indic sources.

Commodities and long distance trade networks

Abraham's last year of accounts for his business in Aden (November 1131 to November 1132) already points to the commodities that would form the backbone of his business in India: agricultural or forest products from Malibārāt such as cardamom and pepper, exchanged for Middle Eastern copper and brass. Only Deccani iron is missing from this account. The pre-Colonial economic history of Malibārāt is still poorly understood and particularly so before the 14th century when epigraphs are comparatively scarce. The Geniza material thus opens important new perspectives on the region's medieval economy.

The botanic wealth of Tuluva and the northern coast of Malibārāt is evident in the 'India Book' correspondence (Chakravarti 2015) and throughout his two sojourns Abraham principally exported pepper, cardamom, and red and white areca (also called betel) nuts, less often cubeb and ginger. The wooden planks (*lawh*), *fātiyas* and *qaṣ'a* bowls occasionally sent back to the Yemen as personal items remind us of the importance of the region's forests in furnishing hardwoods and fuel, even if wood was apparently not one of the bulk commodities handled by Abraham or his peers (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 347, 326). Pepper, cardamom and areca were originally forest products, brought to coastal ports through a series of intermediaries that sourced them from tribal foragers in the middle and higher levels of the Ghats (Morrison 2002). The period at which formal cultivation of these products began is still hotly debated and remains overly reliant on textual rather than archaeobotanical evidence (Kieniewicz 1986; Morrison 2002; Prange 2011), nevertheless, references to formal cultivation in 'gardens', if not large scale plantations, appear from the 13th century onwards (Prange 2011: 215). In this case the Geniza documents are of little help, giving no information about the forager or cultivator communities themselves, however, al-Īdrīsī's mention of cardamom cultivation in villages and settlements in the foothills above Fandarayna (Pantalayini Kollam) brings an important new detail to this discussion.

There is no indication that Abraham and his peers ever traded in paddy (the technical term for rice grains), which in later centuries became one of the most important agricultural exports of Tuluva and was already widely grown elsewhere along the west coast as at Jurfattan. A large corpus of later inscriptions suggest that the lowlying and thus saline coastal soils of Tuluva

⁷ Goitein translated this as 'charts', although it is clear from the context that this was a more formal piece of documentation.

were only developed for agricultural production, and then particularly rice growing, after the area came under the control of the Vijayanagara empire (Naik 2007: 71). Rice was by this period an important export commodity to the Arabian Peninsula, a fact that now justified the heavy investment required to make this land cultivable. This trade becomes especially apparent from the 16th century when Portuguese sources describe paddy as the main crop of this coast and offer new types of data (Subrahmanyam 1984). Another commodity that might also be seen as typical of the trade between the two areas, this time the reverse trade in imported Middle Eastern horses, also appears to have been a substantially later development, finding textual and iconographic support in Hoysala and Yemeni sources largely from the early to mid-13th century onwards (Lambourn 2016).

Abraham's trading and the economy of coastal Malibārāt cannot be understood in isolation from the much longer commodity chains that ran between South Asia and the Middle East. Although the Geniza documents do not allow us to track any single consignment along the entirety of its route between South India and the Mediterranean, it is abundantly clear that Malibārāt's agricultural and forest products were sold in Aden both for local distribution and consumption but also overwhelmingly for reexport to Egypt and other markets across the Mediterranean. It is hard to locate and trace the precise Malabari production centres of these botanical commodities but clearer routes emerge for the other most important export commodity from Tuluva and the kingdom of Pantalayini Kollam recorded in the 'India Book' documents: iron and steel, a high carbon iron prized for its resistance to rust and durability. Almost every shipment sent by Abraham and his colleagues included some sort of iron or steel, and the letters list 'smooth', 'refurbished', 'regular' or 'standard', 'shiny', and 'Kufi', sometimes described simply as 'eggs' (*bayḍ*) after the distinctive domed shape of the ingots. Paul Craddock identifies these as follows: *amlāṣ* or 'smooth' (forged crucible steel), *muḥdath*, literally 'made new' i.e. 'refurbished' (scrap iron), *rasmī* 'regular' or 'standard' (fresh wrought iron), *raqṣ* 'shiny' (forged crucible steel, suitable for mirrors etc.), and 'eggs' (*bayḍ*) or *Kūfī* (crucible steel ingots) (Craddock 2013: 20). The source of this iron and steel was likely up in the Ghats where rich iron ore deposits had been worked since the Indian Iron Age, and where the technology of high carbon steel was expertly practiced (Srinivasan *et al.* 2009). The origin of this iron and steel up in the Western Ghats, as well as the role of local Indian traders in its westwards supply, is confirmed by one of Maḍmūn's letters to Abraham in which he explained that only seventeen of the twenty-one *bahārs* of refurbished iron expected in Aden had arrived because when the *nākhudā* Abū 'Abdallāh had gone to collect it for Abraham from the Bānyān trader

he had been told that 'the rest of the iron was in the highlands', literally *fi aljabal* 'in the mountain', 'and had not yet arrived' (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 323; *id.* 2010a: 158). This Indian iron and steel was exported to Aden but certainly travelled far beyond this since Indian steel was used at this period in European sword making (Williams 2007; al-Kindī 2006). The pattern of this trade was far from new and far from new to the Jewish community since there is evidence that in the 4th century the Babylonian Jewish community was involved in selling 'Indian iron' (*parzelah hindu'ah*), in fact crucible steel, to the Sasanians (Levene and Rothenberg 2001). The fact that iron and steel were leaving Malibārāt from both Mangalore and Fandarayna suggests that Jewish traders were sourcing it from multiple smelting centres on the Deccan plateau.

The export of Indian botanicals and iron to the Middle East was counterbalanced by the importation of a range of metals and commodities such as the mysterious *drky* and, less frequently, sugar and raisins. The range of metals is by far the most complex and it is with metals that I begin. These included non-ferrous metals such as silver, tin, and copper, or copper alloys such as brass (an alloy of copper and zinc). Abraham's correspondence is filled with details of consignments of *ṣufr* and *nuḥās* bound for the ports of northern Malibārāt, exported both as ingots and in the form of cullet or scrap metal. As Friedman notes *ṣufr* and *nuḥās* are used almost interchangeably in the Geniza documents to refer to copper and brass (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 555, n. 11), however, analysis by a specialist team led by Paul Craddock of the British Museum suggested that brass was in fact the dominant copper alloy worked in the medieval Middle East due to the difficulty of obtaining tin there, 90% of surviving copper alloy metalwork from the Islamic world is technically brass (Craddock *et al.* 1998: 73). The cullet reaching South India is thus likely to have been brass while copper ingots may refer to pure, unalloyed copper (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 555, n. 111). Paradoxically, northern India is copper rich and we know that Indian coppers were mined in the medieval period at Ambaji and Singhana-Khetri in the Aravalli range in modern Rajasthan (Willies 1992), the pattern seen here therefore appears to be specific to Malibārāt and to reflect the greater ease of transoceanic connections across the western Indian Ocean over coastal or land exchanges with the north of the subcontinent. The Arabian Peninsula was not itself poor in metals and recent research suggests an active copper mining industry in 12th century Oman (Peli 2006), however the majority of the copper (*ṣufr*) and brass (*nuḥās*) reaching South India appear to have originated in the Mediterranean. The papers of a famous court case, that of Joseph Lebdi, refer in detail to his trade in metals between Egypt and South Asia during the late 11th century, and specifically the trade with what he terms 'the region of pepper'

(Goitein and Friedman 2008: 189, 191). Lebdi's testimony is especially helpful in clarifying that western India did not need to import Middle Eastern copper whereas Malibārāt did. His account of his dealings along the route to Aden indicates that he split his cargo there, entrusting to Japheth b. Bundār the copper destined for the South Indian market, which preferred BTRW (*rūy* or *bitrūy*) copper, often called cast copper, and himself taking that part of the cargo that was destined for sale in western India (*ibid.*: 204, n. 1, and 201, n. 19). All this copper most probably originated in the Western Mediterranean transiting via the Nile ports, 'Aydhāb and Aden, as the most abundant sources of copper were in fact in al-Andalus, and to a lesser degree, in Sicily. Geniza documents such as a statement of assets and liabilities drawn up in Fuṣṭāṭ in 1072 point to an extensive Egyptian trade in copper and other metals coming from the Mediterranean via Maghrebi Jewish traders, and a letter of the 1140s specifically mentions ingots of Andalusi copper that a merchant at Alexandria was hoping to sell in Fuṣṭāṭ (Golb 1958: 41-44). Another 'India Book' document refers to a shipment of copper expected to arrive in Aden from 'Aydhāb but does not specify where it was destined for although we might posit a location somewhere in South India (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 370). This trade continued in Aden into the early 13th century and Ibn al-Mujāwir recounts how one ruler forcibly purchased copper from the Kārim, the annual group of traders arriving from Egypt, and then sold it at a huge profit to merchants trading with India (Ibn al-Mujāwir 2008: 163). By the Colonial period Kanarese coppersmiths continued to rely on copper imported by sea but through newly configured routes and in this case the copper sheet arrived via Bombay and other places (Stuart 1895, vol. 2: 148).

Copper's essential partner in South India was tin, necessary for producing bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, and since South Asia was poor in tin, this metal made a no less complex journey to Malibārāt. Confusingly, tin was known in the Eastern Islamic world as *raṣāṣ* or *raṣāṣ qal'ī*, 'lead' or 'Qal'ī lead', although it is clear from the contexts that what is described is actually tin, and *raṣāṣ* features relatively frequently as an import to Malibārāt from Aden. Friedman suggests that, given its route, this *raṣāṣ* may have originated in the tin mines of the Cabra district in Spain, however, tin was also a famous Malaysian export product and we should not discount a Southeast Asian origin. If this was indeed Southeast Asian tin, its circuitous route to India might be explained by Aden's greater prominence as an entrepôt in the western Indian Ocean compared to the smaller ports of northern Malibārāt (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 325-326, 558, n. 27). Present too is silver, circulating both as coin and as manufactured vessels, and gold coins that would have served in the monetized economy of the coast as well as operating as bullion (*ibid.*: 334, 355; Margariti 2014a).

Some of these metals went directly to Abraham's own metal workshop at Dharmattan and eventually returned to the Yemen as finished objects. The 'India Book' correspondence preserves numerous orders for tablewares and lamps from Aden, often with details of the cullet and bullion sent out for (re)manufacture, for example a famous long order for an ewer, two table jugs and a lamp sent to Abraham from Joseph b. Abraham from c. 1137-40 (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 558-560). We also find numerous references to the safe delivery of the objects ordered and also to finished metal items awaiting collection in Mangalore, for example an early letter from Maḍmūn asking Abraham to ensure that al-Fawfalī recovered a shallow dish and large copper kettle for cooking dates (*ibid.*: 350). At the same time, it is impossible not to suggest that some of this metal also entered local and regional supply chains. Evidence of medieval metalwork production mainly survives in the form of religious statuary and the Bejai Museum in Mangalore has substantial holdings of brass and bronze sculptures and vessels sourced from local temples and collections, some which are likely of medieval date. However, these collections appear to be largely unresearched and unpublished (for an exception see Bhatt 1975) leaving little idea of when, where and how imported Middle Eastern metals contributed to local production. India's rich forests provided essential fuel for the energy intensive processes of metalworking.

The 'India Book' documents provide only a snapshot of one segment of a much larger trade while privileging the western, Yemeni and Egyptian ends of that circulation. The key south Indian players here are almost invisible but they were certainly not, or not only, the comparatively small coastal polities of the Alupas or the successors of the Ceras. Up on the Deccan plateau beyond the 'highlands' was a large well irrigated plain with access to India's eastern seaboard and which had been home to large agriculture focused polities since the first millennium. In the 12th century the Deccani polity in most direct contact with the hinterland and coast of Tuluva was the Hoysala kingdom. While a large agricultural base provided the foundation of Hoysala power, the location of their capital some distance from these agricultural centres, at Dvarasamudra (near modern Halebid), on the very western edge of the Deccan plateau, is a reminder of the equally critical importance to the Hoysala economy of trade with India's western seaboard through the Ghats. At western ports such as Mangalore and along the trade routes through the Ghats, maritime imports joined local Tulu agricultural products en route to the Hoysala capital. The same Bānyān traders who supplied iron and steel 'from the mountains' to Middle Eastern traders on the coast may have operated a reverse trade in copper, brass cullet and tin to the Deccan plateau. It has been observed that dancers depicted on contemporary Hoysala temples, on the Deccan plateau above Tuluva,

are sometimes shown gazing into small mirrors that are likely to have been high-tin bronze mirrors. Although the Geniza documents provide no direct clues to these longer distance connections, the Jewish trade in iron and steel from the western Ghats is a reminder of the existence and vitality of the Mangalore-Dwarsamudram route at this period and the other invisible commodities that travelled along it. A later inscription dated to the equivalent of AD 1209 perfectly captures this route and the mix of maritime and coastal commodities that accumulated along it, recording that a customs officer from the Ghats had donated income from taxes on elephants, horses, rubies, areca nut, pepper, turmeric, cardamom and salt to found a rest house at Doddagaddavalli, some ten miles from the Hoysala capital (*Epigraphia Carnatica* 1902, vol. 7, Hn.35). The eventual transfer of the Alupa capital in the early 13th century from Barkur south to Mangalore highlights the increasing importance of this axis.

Present with considerably less frequency were food commodities such as sugar and raisins. Sugar and raisins are discussed by Maḍmūn in one letter as being of possible interest to Mangalore's traders, to be sent with gold and other goods (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 317). They also appear as traded commodities in a small number of documents (*ibid.*: 332, 347). Although sugarcane cultivation originated in India and spread to the Middle East, these shipments suggest a market for Middle Eastern sugar in Malibārāt. This preference may reflect different refining technologies in the Middle East, although this remains highly speculative. On the basis of a reference by Marco Polo to new refining techniques involving ashes having been brought to Yuan China from Babylon (Fustat) B. Laufer (1919: 376) suggested that Egypt had earlier developed new sugar refining techniques which later spread East. Although sugarcane cultivation and sugar refining technology also spread to the Yemen and Oman and from there to East Africa, Egypt was by far the biggest regional producer and it is most likely in Egypt that Abraham's *sukkar* originated. As Tsugitaka Sato has recently indicated several sources point to the extension in the late 11th century of sugarcane cultivation and sugar production from Lower Egypt to Upper Egypt and places such as Asyūṭ and Qūṣ (Sato 2015: 25-26; also Ouerfelli 2008). Both were Nile ports within equally easy reach of the Red Sea ports and the Indian Ocean routes they opened into. The Aden customs documents from the end of the 13th century certainly list sugar as an import from Egypt (Jāzim 2003-2005, vol. 1: 432, and vol. 2: 105). Commodity histories of Middle Eastern sugar, such as they are (Sato 2015: 65-66), have overwhelmingly focused on exports to the wider Mediterranean out of Alexandria, these 'India Book' references therefore provide important early evidence for the wider export of Egyptian sugar even to Malibārāt in the early 12th century. Delhi Sultanate

sources from the 13th century indicate that Egyptian sugar was also exported to northern India at this period. Raisins, by contrast, are likely to have been products of the southern Arabian Peninsula, although an Egyptian export is not impossible. As discussed by Eric Vallet, the regions around Ta'if and Sanaa were agriculturally rich, including in vines, and supplied both Aden and Mecca. A 12th and a 13th century source both note that the Yemeni tribe of the Sarū supplied Mecca with raisins, almonds and other foodstuffs, while the late 13th century customs documents from Aden record that a variety of raisins were supplied to the port along with fresh grapes from the region around Sanaa and similar patterns likely operated here (Vallet 2010: 369).

Indian business friends

Neither Abraham nor any other Middle Easterner would have been able to operate in South Indian trade without the approval and likely the partnership of the trade associations, oftentimes referred to as 'guilds' that controlled and regulated trade across South Asia, from the local level though to the transregional (Abraham 1998; Karashima 2009). The names of known Malabari trade associations such as the *nakhara*, the *manigramam* and the *anjuvannam* have not been identified in the 'India Book' documents thus far, however, it is almost unthinkable that trade associations did not operate in northern Malibārāt at this period. A brief reference to shipments travelling in the ship of the Fatan Swami of Fandarayna — a *pattanaswāmi* was a port administrator — resonates with epigraphs relating to the Ayyavole-500 trade association from elsewhere in Karnataka (Dikshit 1964: 156-59) although the title need not be exclusively associated with this group. The only slight reference to anything that might be a form of merchant assembly comes from an important letter addressed by Maḍmūn to 'all the Bānyāns of Mangalore (*li-jamī' bānīyānīyūn manjalūr*)' (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 349, 2010a: 183), the use of a double plural of the singular *bānīyā*, from the Sanskrit *vaniya* for 'merchant', transforms the plural *bānīyān* into *bānīyānīyūn*, as far as I am aware the only recorded example of this.

Trade in Malibārāt would have been unthinkable without trade associations and onomastics provide our strongest clues to these presences. In the 'India Book' documents Malibārāt's merchant community is overwhelmingly glimpsed through individual names, albeit names 'by necessity collapsed into categories that are meaningful but do not attempt to tell the full story', as Roxani Margariti insightfully observed (Margariti 2014b: 45). In an early letter to Abraham, Maḍmūn instructed him to make sure he delivered letters to Banik Sītī and Budah son of SLSLYTY at Mangalore (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 349-350), while in another letter he sent Abraham instructions for the

Mangalorean traders Sūs Sītī, Kinābtī and Ishāq the Bānyān which he was to deliver verbally (*ibid.*: 315). These casual transliterations of Indian names into Judaeo-Arabic make them very difficult, sometimes impossible, to decipher but some are clearly Arabicizations of well-known South Asian terms for merchants, merchant groups or administrative positions. As Amitav Ghosh first realised, Sītī renders the contemporary mercantile group Setti, Chetti or Shetty (*ibid.*: 315, n. 19), giving something like 'Trader Setti' for 'Banik Sītī.' In the second group, it has been suggested, following Amitav Ghosh, that Sūs may correspond to the personal name Sesu, giving 'Sesu the Setti' (*ibid.*: 315, n. 19).

The challenging nature of the interpretation of some of these names is demonstrated by al-Fidyār, one of the Indian ship owners mentioned most frequently in these letters (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 576, 581, 605, 619). Friedman cites Saul Shaked's suggestion of a Persian derivation from *pidyār* 'helper to [his] father' (*ibid.*: 147), whereas I postulated that this might be a transliteration of the caste name Pidyār (Padihār), originally one of the four Rajput clans and later a caste name in western India (Malik 2005: 103). However, Ophira Gamliel has recently suggested that the term be read as an Arabicization of Malayalam *patiyār* — *pati* meaning 'local chieftain', the suffix *ār* being a Dravidian 'honorific morpheme'.⁸ Other Persian names and nicknames occur in the 'India Book' documents, for example the infamous *kārdār* or Director who failed to deliver the cardamom he has promised (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 62-63), while the presence of a western Indian shipowner in Malibarat is entirely possible given that India traders did extensive business in western India and sometimes sailed directly between the two areas (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 473-79). Nevertheless, given the prominent role of local chieftains in the history of Malibārāt, Gamliel's identification of al-Fidyār as 'the honourable local chief' is by far the most plausible.

Most fascinating of all perhaps is the appearance of individuals with Hebraicized (or indeed Islamized) names: at Mangalore, an individual referred to as Ishāq (Isaac) the Bānyān (*ibid.*: 315, n. 20), at Dahbattan, a certain Yūsuf LNBY (*ibid.*: 598). The first typifies the problems these names raise since Ishāq is an Arabic name in its own right and also corresponds to the Hebrew Isaac, the Patriarch Abraham's son, Abraham Ben Yijū was occasionally addressed by Jewish business colleagues as Abū Ishāq Abraham. Was Ishāq the Bānyān a convert to Judaism or Islam, or was Ishāq simply an Arabic 'nickname' which facilitated his interactions with Middle Eastern traders? The same question poses itself of Yū-

suf LNBY associated with Abraham's metal workshop.

The 'religious economy' of the western Indian Ocean was active well before the 19th century heyday explored by Nile Green. From the mid-11th century Yemen was a crucial stepping stone for the Isma'ili *da'wa* or missions that fanned out across South Asia; in 548 AH (AD 1153-54), the Buddhist ruler of the Maldives had adopted Islam and the Maliki school of law.⁹ This was a period at which multiple processes of conversion were in play and as Goitein and Friedman suggest, Abraham's Tulu wife Ashu was a slave convert to Judaism (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 56-57). If not simple 'nicknames' then, it is possible that both Ishāq and Yūsuf were local converts or the offspring of such conversions. The slave ancestry of the 'Black' Jews of Cochin and their status within Judaism was certainly at the forefront of exchanges with Jewish religious authorities in Cairo in the early 16th century when the two Jewish communities were reconnected (Katz 2000: 61).

Another major question that requires further study is the exact status of Abraham's wife Ashu and the wider social and commercial networks this relationship may, or may not, have forged. Geniza scholars have tended to follow the legalistic trail laid by Abraham himself which centres around the legitimacy of this female slave's marriage and the status of her children (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 55-57). The draft deed of manumission has already been cited and a legal opinion on such a union also survives in Abraham's hand, both are generally seen as part of his efforts to legitimate his two surviving children within the Jewish community when he returned from India (*ibid.*). However, scattered references in Abraham's accounts to *Nāyr ṣihrī*, 'my brother-in-law Nair' (*ibid.*: 639, n. 17) and to a brother-in-law (*ṣihr*) Abu 'Alī who contributed to the illumination of a synagogue back in Egypt (*ibid.*: 774), have led to speculation that Abraham's marriage forged significant local kinship networks in Malibārāt in ways that slave marriages are not usually understood to do. It is unclear whether these references describe a single individual, known by different appellations, or two different 'brothers-in-law'; Friedman was also quick to point to the vagueness of the term since *ṣihr* can also mean father-in-law and son-in-law (*ibid.*: 639, n. 17). However, what has captivated scholars of South Asia is the fact that the term *Nāyr* is very evidently a Judaeo-Arabic rendering of the famous matrilineal Keralan caste name Nair, and may suggest that Ashu came from that community. Another passing reference to a certain Nair, the brother of the *kārdār*, who had supplied Abraham with betel nuts (*ibid.*: 660, n. 17) certainly points to the role of this community in Abraham's export business even if he cannot be definitively

⁸ I am grateful to Ophira Gamliel for sharing her draft paper 'Who Was the Fadyār? Conflating Textual Evidence in Judeo-Arabic and Old Malayalam', to be published shortly in the journal *Ginzei Qedem* (*Genizah Research Annual*).

⁹ The date is recorded in the 18th century Maldivian *Ta'rikh*, see EF, 'Maldives' and confirmed by two surviving mosque grants from later in the century.

identified with the two previously mentioned brothers-in-law. The identification of this term also has huge implications for our understanding of trade networks as Nairs are considered to have been significant holders of land used for pepper cultivation (Kieniewicz 1986: 13). This link would also bring substantial new insights into processes of West Asian settlement and local conversion in Malibārāt but it will require careful and historically precise investigation, a task that has yet to be undertaken.

The Indian onomastics of the 'India Book' clearly require further dedicated study. The name LNBY has not been interpreted yet, the reading of SLSLYTY is similarly uncertain although we know that his son Budah owned a ship which delivered a cargo of pepper to Aden on at least one occasion (Goitein and Friedman 2008: 353). The name of yet another Indian shipowner, NBRDWY or NBYRWY, similarly awaits interpretation (*ibid.* : 578, 581). Finally, while Friedman corrected Goitein's original reading of Kinbāti to Kinābtī (*ibid.* : 315), the first reading may in fact be accurate, perhaps a reference to the then active port of Cambay in Gujarat. What is clear is that the India traders were deeply embedded in the local society of Malibārāt and the local society of traders. As Roxani Margariti found in her attempt to disentangle the religious affiliations of the India traders' Indian business associates or interlocutors, the writers of the 'India Book' documents were overwhelmingly disinterested in religious identities and South Asian onomastics are, at least as reflected here, singularly unhelpful in determining these (Margariti 2014b). They are, by contrast, rich in other types of information and their effective exploitation awaits the collaboration of specialists in Indic languages and medieval history.

More speculative is the question of the extent to which Middle Eastern merchants in South Asia, sojourning Jews included, integrated local trade associations or indeed had their own specific associations. The *anjuvannam* or *hanjamana* associations can be traced around the Indian coasts from the mid-9th century and have been repeatedly associated with Middle Eastern traders and their interests (Abraham 1998; Subbarayalu 2012). A unique South Asian document of c. 1000 AD fills in the otherwise patchy history of Jewish presences along the Indian seaboard and records that in this year the headship of the *anjuvannam* merchant association of the port of Kodungallur, more often known in Arabic as Shinkli and Benjamin of Tudela's al-Gingaleh, in central Malibārāt was granted in perpetuity to Issuppu Irappan, perhaps a transliteration of the Judaeo-Arabic name Yūsuf al-Rubbān, Joseph the Captain, or perhaps Yūsuf Rabbān, and his descendants (Narayanan 1972 and 2003). We do not know whether this family's control of trade continued into the 12th century but a Jewish community certainly continued at the port and the document is still in Jewish hands. This example

offers an important reminder that Mediterranean Jews such as Abraham Ben Yijū entered an already diverse and complex landscape of trade with a discreet but well established Jewish presence.

Conclusions

Finding India in the 'India Book' is an exercise in confronting very different sources, and very different gaps, but underlying these are also very different scholarly traditions and agendas. Looking for India in the 'India Book' ultimately raises more new questions than it answers old ones, but that can only be a good thing. This contribution has not explicitly discussed the material culture of medieval Mangalore and the other ports because they have not been systematically explored archaeologically and what knowledge or artefacts there are have not been accessibly published.¹⁰ In an enterprise that is by its very nature collaborative and dialogic, a dialogue between scholars of the Geniza and Islamic Mediterranean and their counterparts in India, future research must encourage cross-disciplinary collaborations too. The 'India Book' is full of hints of future archaeological finds: of commercial containers and their forest product contents, of metal cullet and ingots and finished metal items too, not forgetting the ships that carried these cargoes. Excavations at Pattanam in central Kerala have demonstrated the wealth of material, and particularly organic remains, that can survive both Malabar's monsoon climate and modern intensive agriculture, while palaeoenvironmental data sets increasingly demonstrate the feasibility of understanding even larger scale environmental changes, notably in the forest exploitation and occupation that was so critical to the activity of these ports (Asouti and Fuller 2008). The history of northern Malibārāt in the 12th century is currently an overwhelmingly textual enterprise — there is no excuse for it to remain so and I hope that archaeologists reading this will take up the challenge.

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¹⁰ Although Karnataka State is very active archaeologically, work in Tulunadu has focused overwhelmingly on Prehistoric sites, the so-called Megalithic or Iron Age. Mangalore itself has never been formally excavated archaeologically and the surrounding coasts are probably even less well known archaeologically for the medieval period than those of southern Yemen. The M. H. Krishna Institute of Indology led by Dr. Narasimhaiah, has conducted excavations at Barkur to the north and excavated principally Vijayanagara period structures but to my knowledge these have not yet been published, a short news item is available online at <http://barkuronline.com/barkuronline/News/News36.html>. In Kerala, the most active archaeology is currently focused on the site of Pattanam near Kodungallur, possibly the site of Roman Muziris, where evidence for Indo-Roman trade is plentiful. For field reports and further bibliography, see www.keralahistory.ac.in.

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