

PART ONE

THE ARAB GEOGRAPHERS

(c. A.D. 850-1350)

I. THE TEXTS

In the case of texts referring to the more fabulous places, I have found it convenient to place the texts with the commentary, so that they will be found in Section III, under the name concerned.

Passages not following directly from the previous passage, are divided from it by an asterisk.

AKHBĀR AL-ŞĪN WA'L-HIND (c. A.D. 850)

One of these isles [in the Sea of Harkand] is called رامي Rāmnī. This island is divided among many kings, and its extent, so they say, is eight or nine hundred parasangs. Mines of gold are found there, and there are also plantations called فنصور fanṣūr where camphor of the best quality is found. These isles have others dependent on them, one of which is called النيان al-Niyān (*i.e.* Nias). These islands are full of gold and the inhabitants live on the fruit of coconuts. They always use them in the preparation of their food, and they rub their bodies with the oil. When one of them wishes to marry, he cannot find a woman until he can carry off for her the head of one of their enemies. If he kills two enemies, he can marry two wives [etc.]

The isle of Rāmnī produces numerous elephants as well as brazil-wood and bamboos. The people are cannibals. The island is washed by two seas, that of هرکند Harkand and that of سلاهط Salāhiṭ.

After that come the islands called لنجبالوس Langabālūs, and in them are many people. The men are naked, but the women cover their private parts with the leaves of trees. When a ship passes in the vicinity, the men come near to it in canoes, both large and small and exchange iron for ambergris and coconuts. They have no need of clothing materials since in that climate it is neither hot nor cold.

From there are two islands, separated by a sea called اندامان Andāmān. The inhabitants of these islands eat men alive. Their colour is black, their hair curly and their face and eyes are quite hideous. They have long feet; and the penis of any one of them is about a cubit long. They are naked. They have no canoes, but eat all people who come within reach. Sometimes ships are caught at sea, and cannot continue their voyage because of the wind. When their supply of water has been exhausted, they approach these people to ask for water. Sometimes they fall foul of the inhabitants but often

they escape. Beyond this island are found mountains which are not on the route, and they say that among them are mines of silver. But they are not inhabited and it is not within the power of every ship to reach them, for in order to get there one must be guided by the peak called *الخشنامي* Khushnāmī. Once when a ship passed in the neighbourhood, they saw this mountain and aimed for it. They went ashore in a boat to cut wood and lit a fire there.

Then silver appeared to flow from the earth and they knew that this was a mine. They then carried away as much silver as they could, but when they returned to the ship the sea became rough and they had to jettison all the silver that they had brought. People try to return to the mountain; but they can never recognise it.

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When ships have passed this sea [of Harkand] they arrive at a place called Langabālūs. [The inhabitants of this place] do not speak Arabic or any other language spoken by the merchants. The men do not wear clothes; they are white and are rarely hairy. Travellers say that they never see their women, for the men come out to meet ships in their canoes made from a single log of wood and bring coconuts, sugar-cane, bananas and toddy, which is of a white colour. When it comes from the coconut palm, it is sweet like honey; but if it is left for an hour it becomes alcoholic and if it remains for a few days, it turns into vinegar. The inhabitants exchange these things for iron. Sometimes they obtain a little ambergris which they barter for things made of iron. Their exchanges are carried out with signs, from hand to hand, since they understand no language. These men are very clever swimmers, and sometimes rob merchants of their iron without giving them anything in exchange.

Then the ships set sail for a place called Kalāh-bār, the word *bār* meaning both kingdom and coast. It is a kingdom belonging to *الرايع* Zabāj and lies on the right of the land of India.¹ A king groups them all under his authority, and they are dressed in *fūtas*.² Both the nobles and the ordinary people are clothed only in one *fūta*. They [the sailors] take on fresh water there from wells and they prefer the water of wells to that of springs and rain. The distance between Kūlam [-Malay], which is near Harkand, and Kalāh-bār is a month.

Then the ships travel to a place called *تيومة* Tiyūma, which has

¹ The text appears in a clearer form in the same passage in Ibn al-Faqīh. Both texts are taken from the same original source. Here the *Akhbār* actually states that "it is the kingdom of Zabāj".

² *فوتة* this is the Arab term for a loose loincloth resembling the Indian *lungi*. It is obviously used here and elsewhere in these texts for the Malay *sarong*.

fresh water for anyone who desires it, and the distance to it is ten days.

Then the ships set sail for a place called *كدرنج* Kadrang and arrive there after ten days. There one also finds fresh water. Such are the islands of India, wherever you find springs you will find fresh water in them. At Kadrang is a high mountain where slaves and robbers sometimes hide.

The ships next reach a place called *صنف* Šanf situated at a distance of ten days; there they find also fresh water, and from this place is exported a kind of aloeswood called *صنفي* Šanfī. This place is a kingdom. The inhabitants are brown and each one of them wears two *fūtas*. When the ships have taken fresh water they set sail for a place named Šundur Fūlāt, which is an island in the sea, ten days distance away. Here also fresh water is found. Then they set sail as far as a sea called Šankhai, as far as the "Gates of China". [Ibn al-Faqīh quotes most of this passage].

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They say that in an island called *مالحن* Malḥan, between Sirandīb and Kalāh,³ in the land of India, in the eastern part of the sea, there is a black and naked people. When they find a stranger from another country, they suspend him head downwards, cut him in pieces and eat him raw. The number of these [black people] is very considerable. They all live on the same island and have no king. Their food is fish, bananas, coconuts and sugarcane.

They live in a kind of wood and in the middle of reeds. [Copied by the *Mukhtaṣar al-ʿajāʾib*].

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They say that near Zābaj is a mountain called the Mountain of Fire, which it is not possible to approach. Smoke escapes from it by day and a flame by night, and from its foot comes forth a spring of cold fresh water and a spring of hot fresh water. [Quoted by Ibn al-Faqīh].

IBN KHURDĀDHBĪH (c. A.D. 850)

The king of Zābaj is called *Pungawa*, and the king of the islands of the eastern sea is called the Maharāja.

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Beyond Sirandīb [Ceylon] is the isle of *رامي* Rām[n]ī, where the rhinoceros can be seen. This animal is not as big as an elephant,

³ The text has *كلا* whereas it usually has *بار*.

but more so than a buffalo. It is herbivorous and ruminates like cows and sheep. Buffaloes without tails are also found here. This island produces bamboo and brazilwood, the roots of which are antidotes for deadly poisons ... In the forests are naked men whose language is a sort of unintelligible whistle, and they turn away from the society of other men. Their height is only four spans, and the genitals of both sexes are small. On their heads they have reddish down and they climb trees with their hands without the help of their feet.

In this sea are also found a race of white people who swim out to the boats even when the ships are going full speed before the wind. They barter ambergris for iron which they carry in their mouths. One other island is inhabited by a black people, with curly hair. They are cannibals and cut up their victims alive. [probably [Malhan]. There is also a mountain from the clay of which silver can be extracted by means of fire.

Among the mountains of Zābaj are enormous serpents which devour men and buffaloes; and some of them even devour elephants. This country produces tall camphor trees, there are some which extend the shade of their leaves over a hundred persons. In order to obtain the camphor, they make near the top of the trunk an incision through which the water of the camphor escapes in a quantity large enough to fill several jars. When this has been collected, they make another incision below in the middle of the tree and here pieces of camphor flow out. The camphor is the sap (gum) of this tree, but it is also found in the wood itself. After this operation the tree becomes useless and dries up.

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If one wishes to go to China one leaves بَلِين Bullin and leaving Sirandīb on the right goes to النكبالبوس Alankabālūs, which is situated at the distance of ten to fifteen days from Sirandīb. The inhabitants of this island are naked and live on bananas, fresh fish and coconuts. Iron is a precious metal to them. They are visited by foreign merchants. From Alankabālūs to the island of كِلَه Kilah (*i.e.* Kalāh) is six days. This island belongs to the kingdom of *Jābat al-Hindī*. It contains famous mines of *القلعى al-Qal'i* tin and plantations of bamboo. To the left and at two days from [the island of Kilah] is the island of بالبوس Bālūs, inhabited by cannibals. It produces excellent camphor, bananas, coconuts, sugar cane and rice.

From there to the islands of جَابَة Jāba, سَلَاهِط Salāhiṭ, and هَرَنْج Harang, two parasangs. [The island of Jāba] is large. The king wears

ornaments (a chlamys) of gold, and a tiara of gold.⁴ He worships Buddha.

The products of the island are coconuts, bananas and sugar cane. The products of Salāhiṭ are sandalwood, Indian nard and cloves.⁵ There is in Jāba a small mountain with fire on its summit stretching for the distance of a hundred cubits but having only the height of a lance. One sees its flames at night but only smoke during the day. From these islands after fifteen days one reaches the Spice islands [?]. The distance between Jāba and مَائِط Mā'iṭ is small.

The kings and peoples of India abstain from drinking wine but consider adultery as legal with the exception of the King of قَمَار Qmār who forbids both adultery and the use of wine.

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The king of Zābaj is called the Maharāja: in his country there is an island called بَر طَائِل Barṭāyil [q.v.]. In another island there are monkeys with the tail of an ass. The Maharāja receives every day the revenue of two hundred *mann* of gold. He melts down this money into the form of a brick and throws it into the water saying, 'There is my treasure'. Part of this money to the amount of fifty *mann* comes to him from cockfights. One of the legs of the winning cock belongs by right to the king and the owner buys it back by gold.

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On leaving Mā'iṭ one finds, to the left, the island of Tiyūma, which produces aloeswood of the sort called *Hindī*, and camphor. From there one goes in five days to Qmār. [The *Mukhtaṣar al-'ajā'ib* quotes this but says that Tiyūma is on the coast]. This latter country produces *Qmāri* aloeswood and rice.

From Qmār to Ṣanf is three days following the coast. The aloeswood of Ṣanf, known under the name of *Ṣanfī*, is superior to that of Qmār, for it sinks in water; for it is heavy and excellent. One finds, in Ṣanf, cattle and buffaloes. From Ṣanf to Lūqīn which is the first step of China, is a hundred parasangs either by land or sea.

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YA'QŪBĪ (d. 897)

The king of Qmār has a large kingdom and receives the homage of other kings.

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⁴ حلية الذهب وقلصوة الذهب Hilyā is jewellery worn by women and *qalanṣuwa* is the cap worn under the turban. The words tiara (tiare) and chlamys (chlamyde) are those of De Goeje. S. M. Yusuf in his article on Rānaj (p. 98, note 2) states that Idrīsī and the *Akḥbār al-Sin* have the word حلة which can be translated "robe".

⁵ السبل والقرفل Sanbal is Indian spikenard (*Nardostyhis jatamansi*) and *qurunful* is the usual word for cloves.

The fourth sea [of the Indian Ocean] is called Kalāh-bār, and it has little water. It has large serpents. Often the wind blows so strongly that the ships are broken. It contains islands where camphor trees are found.

The fifth sea is called Salāhiṭ. It is a large sea with many marvellous things. The sixth sea is called Kadrang (كدرنج for كزرنج). Here it rains often.

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[from Nuwairī]. And after the ambergris of Zanj, comes the ambergris of Salāhiṭ. This is bluish, greasy with much resin. This is used for making *ghāliya* perfume. After the ambergris of Salāhiṭ comes that of Qāqulla, which is a clear grey, has an excellent perfume and a fine appearance. It is light and fairly dry. It is not like that of Salāhiṭ, which is used for making the perfume *ghāliya*, nor is it used for purification except in cases of necessity, but it is used for cosmetic powder and as "mud-packs". This ambergris is brought from the sea of Qāqulla to Aden.⁶

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After the aloeswood of Qāqulla comes that of Ṣanf. This comes from a country called Ṣanf, which is near China. Between this land and China is a mountain which cannot be climbed. This is the best aloeswood and that which lasts the longest in clothes. There are people who put this above the product of Qāqulla. They say that of Ṣanf is the best and has the strongest and most durable perfume. There are some who also put it before the product of Qmār.

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IBN AL-FAQĪH (A.D. 903)

[This author quotes both Ibn Khurdādhbih and the *Akhbār al-Šin*, in addition he adds:— On the subject of Rāmni:] The people are vigorous and they hunt the elephant ... Some of its kings possess exquisite scents such as sandal and mace, but no one is allowed them except the king in question.

[On Zābaj:] In Zābaj there are parrots, white, red and yellow which can be taught to speak Arabic, Persian, Greek and Hindi; and there are also green and speckled peacocks; white falcons with a red crest; and large white monkeys with the tail of an ox. There are also found beings with human form which speak an incomprehensible language; they eat and drink [like men]. There are cats of various

⁶ *Ghāliya* is a perfume of musk and ambergris included in Ibn al-Baitār's *Traité des simples*, t. 3, p. 6. "Mud-packs" are مكسّات. "enduits de chaux" (Ferrand): the root means "to spread limewash over something".

sorts, some winged like bats, their wings stretching from the ears to the tail. Living muskrats are imported from Sind to Zābaj. The musk of the animal has a smell more exquisite than any other form of musk. The female of the animal produces the musk. When it walks into a house, the odour penetrates the house [etc.].

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Next comes the land of Zābaj, of which the main king is called Maharāja, which means the "King of kings". There is no one beyond him for he is in the last of the islands. He is a very rich king and there exists in his kingdom a rosery, but when one takes the roses out of the garden they burst into flame.

[On Zābaj and Fanšūr:] Cloves, sandalwood, camphor and nutmegs come from Zābaj, a country in the extreme south in the neighbourhood of China, from a country called Fanšūr.

[On the Maharāja:] The sea of Ṣankhai is large, and there is found a king called the Maharāja, who has a large empire. In the islands which belong to him are found wonders and all sort of odoriferous plants. In his country they cultivate gold as a plant. It is said that the daily crop is two hundred *mann* of gold.

[On Salāhiṭ:] Ambergris is found in the island of Salāhiṭ, and brazilwood from the south coast of Salāhiṭ.

[On toddy in Langabālūs; that the toddy if left for one day only becomes intoxicating, but after several days becomes acid. He also says:] Between this place (Kalāh-bār) and Harkand there are inhabited islands called لنج Langa. [Bamboo is mentioned as a product of Langabālūs.]

[On Qmār he adds:] Qmār belongs to India and the Indians believe that their books are originally from Qmār. The extent of this kingdom is four months; all the inhabitants worship idols. The king of Qmār has four thousand concubines.

[On Kalāh he adds bamboo as a product of the island].

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IBN RUSTA (c. A.D. 900)

The land of Zābaj is at the far extremity of the Eastern Sea. Those who wish to go to Zābaj, go east as far as Kalāh, and hence come to the land of Zābaj. In passing by Zābaj in order to reach Zanj (East Africa) one must pass through the regions of darkness, where the sun only appears for six hours in the day.

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Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq tells that all the kings of India regard adultery as legal, except the King of Qmār. "I have

been to the city and I have lived there for two years, and I have never seen a king more strongly against loose living and more severe in the matter of drink than him, for he punishes both with death."

A Muslim said, "I was in the country of Qmār and they told me that the king was hard and very severe, but he did not treat the Arabs badly. When one of them enters his country, in reward for the gift (sent by the merchant to the king), the king gives him a hundred times its value. I have never seen among the kings [whose countries] I have visited one more generous than the King of Qmār. In India they say that the books of India originate from Qmār. One of the crimes for which the king gives punishment is drinking. If any of his generals or his soldiers are caught drinking wine, the king heats a hundred rings of iron in the fire, then he makes the drinker hold them in his hand until he dies. This is a very severe king and there is not a more severe king nor a harder punisher than he. Among the punishments he inflicts is the amputation of both hands, both feet, the nose, the lips and the ears. He does not listen to appeal like other kings of India. The land of Qmār is the original place for worship and there are a hundred thousand worshippers. The King of Qmār has eighty judges. If one of his own sons is brought before him, he is judged equally and treated as an ordinary citizen. He has eighty male attendants, very handsome and well made. [He also says that Qmār is part of India].

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Then comes the island of Salāhiṭ, and the ambergris which the sea throws up on to this island is better than any other. Cubebe is also one of the spices of this island.

After that comes an island called Harang. It is called this after the name of its governor. This is not its own name. This Harang is the chief of the army of the Maharāja. He [the Maharāja or the governor?] also possesses another island called طواران Ṭawārān from which camphor comes. Camphor did not appear in this island until the year A.H. 220 [A.D. 835].

The people of the country of the Maharāja practise ordeal by fire. In a well known land of India, called Faṣṣūr, when a man accuses another before the sultan [etc. with a description of the proceedings for ordeal by fire].

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ABŪ ZAID (A.D. 916)

We begin by mentioning the town of Zābaj, which is situated opposite to China; but between them there is the distance of a month

by sea; although it is less if the wind is favourable. The king [of Zābaj] bears the title مهراج 'Maharāja'. They say that his capital is nine hundred parasangs in area. This prince reigns over a large number of islands which extend over a distance of a thousand parasangs or even more. Among his possessions are the island called سرينزة Sribuza of which they say the area is four hundred parasangs and the island called الرامي Rāmī [i.e. Rāmni] which is eight hundred parasangs in area. One finds in this last island brazilwood, camphor and other plants. Also counted among his possessions is the island of Kalāh which is situated midway between the lands of China and the country of the Arabs. The area of Kalāh is eighty parasangs. Kalāh is the centre of commerce for aloeswood, camphor, sandalwood, ivory, tin, ebony, baqamwood,⁷ spices of all kinds and a host of objects too numerous to count. It is thither that the trading expeditions which start from Oman nowadays go, and from here trading expeditions start for the country of the Arabs. The authority of the Maharāja is exercised over these various islands and the island in which he resides is extremely fertile, and patches of habitation succeed each other without interruption. A very trustworthy man affirms that when the cocks crow at daybreak, as in our country, they call out to each other throughout the whole extent of a hundred parasangs or more, showing the uninterrupted and regular succession of villages. In effect there are no uninhabited places in this country and no ruins. He who comes into the country when he is on a journey if he is mounted he may go wherever he pleases; if he is tired or if his mount has difficulty in carrying on, then he may stop wherever he wishes.

One of the most singular things that we have been told about the island of Zābaj, is that which concerns one of its former kings. This king was called the Maharāja. His palace faced onto a *thalaj* which emanates from the sea; one means by *thalaj* an estuary resembling those which the Tigris forms when it passes by Baghdad and Basra, an estuary which the salt water of the sea invades at high tide and which is fresh at low tide. This water formed a small lagoon adjoining the palace of the king. Every morning the steward is brought before the king and offers him an ingot of gold in the form of a brick. Each brick weighs a certain number of *mann*, the amount of which is not known to me. Next, in the presence of the king, the steward throws this brick into the lagoon. At high tide, the water covers this brick

⁷ The Arabic root means "to dye red", and is probably derived from this name. This is a dye wood of the genus *Caesalpinia*, formerly brought from the Indies, but in more recent times from Brazil. *Hobson-Jobson* under "Brazilwood" says, "It is the Baḳkam of the Arabs".

and all the other bricks which are piled there, so that they cannot be seen, and when the water goes down, the bricks appear and shine in the sun. When the king gives an audience he sits in a room which overlooks the lake with his face turned towards the water. This custom must never be interrupted; every day a golden brick is thrown into this lake and as long as the king lives, the bricks are not touched. At his death, however, his successor extracts the bricks without leaving any. They are counted and melted down, and the gold is distributed to the princes of the royal family, both men and women, to their children, their officers and their eunuchs, in proportion to their rank and the prerogatives attached to their various functions. Any which remains is given to the poor and the sick. They take care to make a record of the golden bricks and their total weight. It is written down that so and so, the king, had reigned so many years, and they had thrown so many bricks into the royal lake, and weighing so much; and that after his death these bricks had been divided up amongst the court and the royal family. It was a great honour for the king who had reigned the greatest number of years and had amassed the greatest number of golden bricks.

One of the tales told about them in former times mentions a king of قمار Qmār, the country which produced القمارى *qmārī* aloeswood. This country is not an island but is situated on the coast which faces the land of the Arabs. No other kingdom has a population as numerous as Qmār. Everybody goes on foot there. They forbid loose living and various kinds of wine, and nothing of this sort is ever seen in their country or their empire. Qmār is in the direction of the kingdom of the Maharāja and the island of Zābaj and between the two kingdoms is ten days sea journey in latitude, but a little more, increasing to twenty days if the wind is variable. It was said that once the kingdom fell into the hands of a young and hasty prince. He was one day sitting in his palace, which commanded a freshwater river like the Tigris in Iraq. Between the palace and the sea it was a day's journey. The chief minister was before the king and had been questioned on the empire of the Maharāja, his power, the number of his subjects and the islands which obeyed him. Suddenly the king addressed the Minister, "I have developed a craving which I wish to satisfy". The Minister who was sincerely attached to his master and who knew his recklessness, said to him, "And what is this craving, O king?" The prince replied, "I wish to see before me, resting on a plate, the head of the king of Zābaj". The Minister guessing that it was jealousy which made the king speak thus, replied, "It is not pleasing that the king should nourish such thoughts. No hate should be shown between us and this people, either in actions

or words. It would only turn out ill for us. However he comes from a far isle and only has distant reports of us and has never shown a desire to injure our country. No one must be informed of what the king has said neither should the king repeat a single word."

This language irritated the king, and he did not take any notice of this good advice and he repeated his desire before the officers and all the principal persons of the court. This statement passed from mouth to mouth and spread so much that it came to the ears of the Maharāja. The latter was a man of strong character and active mind and endowed with experience; for he had reached middle age. He sent for his Minister and told him what he had heard, then added, "It is not right that we should ignore what has been reported about this fool, these senseless desires of his due to his youth and presumption, which are being circulated at the moment; for this is one of the things that a king should not do, for they lower and debase him". He commanded him to say nothing about what had passed between them, but, at the same time he gave orders for the preparation of a thousand ships of medium size together with their machines of war and for the furnishing of each with arms and as many warriors as each would hold.

The king made it appear that he was about to make a journey around some of the many isles which made up his kingdom. He wrote to the governors of these isles, to announce to them his idea of visiting and staying in their islands; all this was noised abroad and each governor set about preparing a suitable reception for [the Maharāja]. But when all the preparations were ready and everything set in order, the king embarked on his ships and went with his soldiers towards the kingdom of Qmār. The king and his warriors made use of the tooth-pick, each man cleaning his teeth several times a day, each carried his tooth-pick with him, and was never separated from it or at best confided it to his personal servant.

The king of Qmār had no knowledge of the danger which menaced him until the fleet entered the river which led to his capital, and the warriors disembarked.

The Maharāja then seized the king unawares, captured him and imprisoned him in his palace, the officers of the king of Qmār had all fled. The Maharāja then proclaimed a cessation of hostilities, and seated himself on the throne of Qmār. He then brought forth the king of Qmār whom he had taken prisoner, as well as his Minister. Then he said to the king, "Why did you form a desire which you were unable to carry out, and which if you had realised would not have given you any advantage nor would have justified the success?" But the king did not answer. The Maharāja then went

on, "If, besides wishing to see my head on a plate before you, you had wished to ravage my land, and to make yourself master of it, or to lay it waste, then I would have treated yours in the same manner; but as you only desire one thing in particular, I will apply the same treatment to you, then I will return to my country without having touched anything that belongs to you, great or small. That will serve as a lesson to those who come after you, that each one should only desire what his own forces and means enable him to hold, then he will think himself happy to be safe". Then he cut off the head of the king. Next the Maharāja approached the Minister and said to him, "You have conducted yourself as a worthy Minister, be rewarded for your manner of acting, I know that you have given good counsel to your master had he only agreed to it. Look now for a man who is capable of occupying the throne after this fool and put him in his place".

The Maharāja re-embarked again at the same time for his own country without having touched anything that belonged to the king of Qmār. When he had returned, he sat on his throne with his face towards the lake and placed before him the plate on which was the head of the king of Qmār. Then he gathered together the elders of the land, and told them what had happened, together with the motives which had made him make the expedition. Then the people of Zābaj offered up prayers for him, wished for him all sort of good fortune. Then the Maharāja washed the head and embalmed it, then put it in a vase and sent it to the prince who was on the throne of Qmār at that time. With the head was a letter which read, "The only reason which caused me to treat your predecessor as I did, was the way he treated us unjustly and the necessity of teaching a lesson to others like him. Therefore we applied to him the treatment he would have given to us. We therefore think we ought to return to you his head, seeing that we have no use for it, nor do we attach any honour to the victory which we gained over him". When the news of this spread abroad amongst the kings of India and China, the Maharāja appeared greater in their eyes, and beginning from this time the kings of Qmār turned their face towards Zābaj every morning and prostrated and worshipped the Maharāja out of respect.

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MAS'ŪDĪ (d. 956). *Murūj al-Dhahab*

We have placed in our *Annals* the story of the wars and the events which occurred between the descendants of Cain and Lūd, at the same time as the struggle between the descendants of Seth and a branch of the family of Cain from which came the Indians who

worshipped (?) Adam. These occupied in India the land of Qmār from which we get the name Qmāri aloeswood.

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India is bordered by Zābaj which is the empire of the Maharāja, King of the Isles. Zābaj, which separates China from India, is understood to be part of the latter country.

Here is an interesting story on the history and the customs of the former kings of India and the kings of Qmār ... this country is not an island but is situated on the sea coast, and is covered with mountains. Few of the lands of India have a greater population and its people are distinguished for the purity of their breath, for like the Muslims they use the toothpick [Section on adultery and drink]. Most of them go on foot because their country contains far more valleys than plains and plateaux. It is on the route to the land of the Maharāja, king of the islands like Zābaj, Kalāh, Sirandīb, etc. [Gives the passage from Abū Zaid about the Maharāja's attack on Qmār].

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Crocodiles abound in the bay of Zābaj, in the lands of the Maharāja.

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Around the countries of Kalāh and Sribuza are mines of gold and silver.

*

The ships from Basra, Sirāf, Oman, India, the islands of Zābaj and Šanf come to the mouth of the river of Khānfū in China with their merchandise and their cargo [before A.H. 264].

*

Then he [the trader] went by sea to the land of كَلَّه Killah (i.e. Kalāh) which is approximately half way to China. Today this town is the terminus for Muslim ships from Sirāf and Oman, where they meet the ships which come down from China, but it was not so once ... This trader then embarked at the city of Killah on a Chinese ship in order to go to the port of Khānfū.

*

At a distance of about a thousand parasangs [from Sirandīb] are still more islands called Rāmīn (i.e. Rāmni) well populated and governed by kings. [Later he says that Rāmni belongs to the Maharāja]. They are full of gold mines, and nearby is the land of Fanšūr, whence is derived the fanšūri camphor, which is only found there

in large quantities in the years that have many storms and earthquakes. [Ibn al-Baiṭār quotes this from Ibn Wāfid from Mas'ūdī].

*

The fourth sea, as we have said, is that of Kalāh-bār, that is the sea of Kalāh. Like all seas which have little water, it is dangerous and difficult to navigate. One meets there many islands and *ṣarā'ir*, in the singular *ṣurr*.⁸ A *ṣurr* is what seafaring people term that which joins two sleeves of water [*lit.* is between two canals or gulfs] when their route passes through it.

... in the sea of Kadrang there are many peoples; there are those who are called *الفتنجب* Fanjab (Panhang), who have wavy hair and strange figures. They sail out in their small boats, waiting for any ships which pass by; and they shoot a strange type of poisoned arrow.

Between this people and the land of Kalāh are mines of tin and mountains of silver. There are also mines of gold and lead, which can only be exploited with great difficulty.

*

One finds there [in the sea of Sanf] the empire of the Maharāja, King of the Isles, who commands an empire without limit and has innumerable troops. The most rapid ship is not able to travel in two years to all the islands in his dominion. The lands of this prince produce all sorts of spices and aromatics and no sovereign in the world draws so much profit from his land. They export camphor, aloeswood, cloves, sandalwood, mace, nutmeg, cardamom, cubeb, and also many other products which we will not mention. These islands touch a sea which is beyond the sea of China, the limits and the extent of which are unknown. In their most inaccessible parts are found mountains where numerous tribes dwell, with white faces and with ears shaped like shields covered with leather and with their hair cut in steps like the hair on a goatskin. From these mountains comes a continual fire of which the flames, red by day and blackish by night, rise up to the clouds. These eruptions are accompanied by claps of terrible thunder, and often by a strange and frightful voice announcing the death of the king or even that of a chief [etc.] Not far from them is found an island where one continually hears the noise of drums. [etc. see Bartāyil].

In the empire of the Maharāja is the island of Sribuza which is situated about four hundred parasangs from the continent and

⁸ *حصر* pl. *حصر*. The root means "to draw up together" like the neck of a purse, but it is most likely that this is a navigational term not connected with a classical root. S. Q. Fatimi (*JSEH*, lii, pp. 100-1, n. 27) gives an VIII form from the *Lisān al-'Arab* used of ditches when they are very narrow.

entirely cultivated. This prince possesses the islands of Zābaj and Rāmni, as well as the others we have mentioned.

*

We have already spoken of the Maharāja ... and other princes of India, such as the king of Panjab, and others from the kings of the mountains which face the islands of Zābaj.

They tell of a third species of monkey found in the numerous creeks around the shores of Zābaj and the empire of the Maharāja, the King of the Isles ... The sailors of Sirāf and Oman continually make the voyage to Kalāh and Zābaj and know very well this species of monkey and understand all the methods used to fish for crocodiles on the bed of the sea.

The volcano of Zābaj is in the sea of China.

*

MAS'ŪDĪ. *Kitāb al-tanbih*

... the great volcano is in the kingdom of the Maharāja, the King of the islands of Zābaj and other isles in the sea of China amongst which are Kalāh and Sribuza. They call their kings by the title of Maharāja. This empire has an enormous population and innumerable troops ... [he carries on as in the former work].

*

ABŪ DULAF (c. 940)

[After leaving Sandābil in China] I desired to go to *كله* Kalah (i.e. Kalāh). This is the beginning of India and the last place where one can obtain boats, for it is not possible for them to pass it without shipwreck. When I arrived at Kalah, I found it very great, with great walls, numerous gardens and abundant springs. I found there a tin mine, such as does not exist in any other part of the world except in its *قلعة* *Qal'a* (fortress). In this fortress they forge the *Qal'i* swords, which are the original Indian swords. The people of this fortress put themselves in a state of defence against their king when they wish to make him do what they wish. They have customs identical with those of China, and they do not practise the custom of cutting the throats [of animals before eating them].

In the entire world there does not exist a tin mine as this one in Kalah.

Between the city and the city of China are three hundred parasangs and around it are a succession of cities, towns and villages.

The people have a form of justice, prison and fines. They live on wheat, dates, vegetables, which are sold by weight, and flat cakes of bread, sold by quantity. They have no baths, but wash themselves in running water. Their *dirham* (silver coin) weighs two thirds of an ordinary *dirham*, which is called a *fāhri*.⁹ They have smaller coins (*fulūs*) which they use for normal trade. They dress as the Chinese, in a single piece of cloth called "Chinese *firand*",¹⁰ which is very dear. The king is a vassal of the king of China, and makes the *khuṭba*¹¹ in the name of the latter. The *qibla*¹² of the king of Kalah is orientated towards him, and the house of prayer of the king of Kalah is dedicated to the king of China.

And I went from there to the Land of Pepper, and saw there one of its plants, which is an old tree from under which water flows continuously. When the wind blows, its fruits fall, and shrivel up. They are only gathered from above the water. A portion of them is given to the king. It is a communal tree with no particular owner and its fruits do not cease, winter or summer. They grow in bunches and whenever the sun shines on them, some of the leaves are spread over the bunches so that they are not burnt. When the sun ceases to shine the leaves are no longer spread over the bunches.

Then I left this for the land of الكافور Camphor which is a high mountain, where towns are found overlooking the sea, including Qamrūn from which is derived a soft aloeswood, called *Mandal al-Qamrūnī*. Here there is a city called قماريان Qmariyān from which comes Qmāri aloeswood. On another side of this mountain towards the north is a city called الصيمور Ṣaimūr, whose people are renowned for their beauty. This is because the population is descended from the Chinese and the Turks. From this place is obtained Ṣaimūrī aloeswood, which does not grow there but is only imported. They have a place of worship at the head of a great pass, which has a curtain, and there are idols of turquoise and precious stones.¹³ They have minor kings and their clothes are like those of the people of China. They have synagogues, churches, mosques and houses of fire and they do not slaughter animals nor do they eat what has died.

I continued my voyage to a town called جاجلي Jājullā, which is

⁹ Ferrand: *Relations*, p. 222, n. 1 gives the Arabic as فهرى, but the Beirut ed. of Yāqūt has القاهري which would stand for القاهري in the text.

¹⁰ The text has القوند. Ibn Khurdādhbih mentions this under the name القوند which seems to be a kind of silk imported from China. Here it must be the Malay *sarong*.

¹¹ The sermon given in the mosque on Friday. The name of the ruler to whom allegiance was made was always mentioned in the prayers and this was the traditional form of offering allegiance in the Muslim world.

¹² The direction of Mecca, towards which the praying Muslims turned.

¹³ بجاذيق another sort of jewel, see Ferrand: *Relations*, p. 223, n. 2.

on top of a mountain of which half juts out to sea and half is on dry land. There they have a king like the one of Kalah. They eat wheat and eggs, but they do not eat fish, nor do they slaughter animals. They have a large house of prayer. They were the only ones to oppose Alexander when he came to the land of India. They bring cinnamon here and then export it to the rest of the world. The cinnamon tree belongs to everyone communally and has no particular owner. The inhabitants dress as do the people of Kalah, except that they wear a Yemeni robe (*hibara*) on feast days. They venerate from among the constellations the heart of the Lion (α Leonis). They possess an observatory and have a complete knowledge of the stars, and study their properties assiduously. From there I travelled to Qashmīr. [Most of this has been copied by Qazwīnī in slightly different terms, and by Bakuwī and Ibn Iyās].

*

IBN SERAPION (c. 950)

Camphor is exported from Sofāla, from the land of Kalāh, from Zābaj, from Harang, but the best comes from Harang, which is Little China ... The best quality camphor is رباحى *riyāhī*; which is a natural product. Its colour is a speckled red; but after sublimation in the same land, it becomes white. It is called *riyāhī* because the first person to discover it was a king called Riyāh. The name of the place from whence it comes is Faṣṣūr, that is why it is sometimes called *faṣṣūrī*. [Ibn al-Baiṭār quotes this from Iṣḥāq Ibn 'Imrān (al-Qairawānī) d. 907 who is earlier than Ibn Serapion].

*

IBN AL-NADĪM (A.D. 988) *Fihrist*

Abū Dulaf has told me that there is in India, in Qmār, a temple, the walls of which are of gold and the ceiling is of beams of Indian aloeswood; each beam is fifty or more cubits in length. The Buddhas in the places where they offer sacrifice and where they pray, are encrusted with magnificent pearls and enormous corundums.

A man whom I trust said that the Indians have another temple in the town of Ṣanf besides the preceding [in Qmār]. This temple is very old and all the Buddhas which are found in it hold conversation with the faithful and reply to all the demands which they make.

Abū Dulaf said "At the time when I was in India the king who ruled in Ṣanf was called Lājīn."

The Monk of Najrān told me that at that time the king was a king called the King of Lūqīn who had invaded Ṣanf, ravaged it and enslaved all the inhabitants.

*

SINDBĀD (*First voyage*)

[Sindbād talks of the horses of King Majrān (Maharāja) then mentions Indians at his court, visits the island of Kāsīl (see Bartāyil). When he leaves, he] sent aboard a great supply of those perfumes which you can smell even at this moment, aloeswood, camphor, incense and sandal, in which that fair isle abounded.

*

SINDBĀD (*Third voyage*)

The island of Salāhiṭ where sandalwood is found in abundance.

*

SINDBĀD (*Fourth voyage*)

From there [the island of نāqūs Nāqūs] we went in six days to that of Kalāh; then we entered the kingdom of Kalāh. It is a great empire bordering on India, in which there are mines of tin, plantations of bamboo and excellent camphor. The king is a powerful ruler, and also governs the island of Nāqūs, in which there is a town also called Nāqūs, which is two days in extent.¹⁴

*

SINDBĀD (*Fifth voyage*)

We passed on to an island which contained cinnamon and pepper. Everyone said that they had seen that each bunch of pepper fruit had a large leaf arranged over it, which shaded it and protected it from the rain and when the rain ceased, the leaf was removed and dropped down beside the bunch. I took with me from this island a

¹⁴ For Nāqūs see under Langabālūs. This is the version given by Ferrand: *Relations*, p. 568. Burton's translation has the sentences in a different order. Cheikho's Arabic ed. omits the whole section. The next passage has been translated from the Beirut ed., 1957, v. 4, p. 224. It appears in Burton.

great deal of pepper and cinnamon in exchange for coconuts. We then passed on to the island of al-'Asarāt (difficulties) which is where one finds Qmāri aloeswood. Beyond this a distance of five days is another island which contains Ṣanfī aloeswood which is more expensive than Qmāri. The people of this island are more repulsive in their customs and religion than the people of the Qmāri aloeswood island, for they love adultery and wine and do not know about the proper methods of praying.

*

'AJĀ'IB AL-HIND (c. 1000)

[Muḥammad ibn Bābīshād] told me that Mardawaih ibn Zarabakht one of the sailors on the China route and that of the Land of Gold said that, navigating one day in the neighbourhood of the island of Zābaj, he passed between two points sticking up from the sea, which appeared to be the summits of two submarine mountains. When he had passed by them they disappeared into the sea and he thought them the two pincers of a crayfish. [Note the same story about Lāmūrī].

*

[Some travellers] reaching the sea of Malāyu, were approaching the area of China, and had already seen the top of a mountain [when a storm arose].

*

An old sailor told me that the inhabitants of a large village of Ṣanf were forced to emigrate because of a serpent who was in their neighbourhood who devoured their cattle and the people themselves. As a last resort against this pest, they abandoned the town, and no one has ever returned there.

*

I questioned Muḥammad ibn Bābīshād about monkeys, and he told me that on the coast of Ṣanfīn, in the valley of Lāmūrī and in that of Qāqulla live monkeys with an extraordinary height, going about in troupes of which the chief is the tallest of the troupe. Occasionally they leave the woods and come on to the roads and paths and strike travellers, not allowing them to pass until they leave a piece of meat or other food.

*

Muḥammad ibn Bābīshād states that a sailor of a boat which belonged to him told the following tale. [He fled in a small boat from

his ship which was beached in a small bay two or three *parasangs* from Qāqulla]. "A difficult voyage of twenty or more *zām*,¹⁵ during which I nearly perished, took me to the shore of one of the islands of ارمانان Armanān. I stayed there some time to recuperate, taking rest and making provision of fresh water, fruit and bananas. I saw no one except the fishermen in canoes which they brought down among the trees. Re-embarking, I sailed without direction, not knowing where I was going for seventy *zām*, and came across an island called بدفاركاله Badfārkalah, where I stopped. From there I was able to reach Kalāh.

*

The captain Shahriyārī one of the captains on the China route told me, "I went from Sirāf to China. Somewhere between Şanf and the Chinese coast, close by the island of Şundur Fūlāt, a cape situated at the beginning of the Sea of Şankhai, which is the Sea of China, the wind fell suddenly and we were becalmed ...

*

Among the marvels of the sea is a bird which one finds in the neighbourhood of Mā'īṭ, an island near Şanf and Sribuza. This island produces gold, cotton and honey.

*

The inhabitants [of Sribuza] pretend to have a talisman against crocodiles.

*

At Sribuza the Governor demanded [from a Jewish merchant] a levy of twenty thousand dinars as right of passage, before he would allow him to continue his voyage to China.

*

At Sribuza, said Muḥammad ibn Bābishād, I have seen a woman who had a beast with a human figure, except that it had a face that was black like the Zanj, and that its feet and hands were longer than a man's. This animal had a long tail and hair like that of a monkey. It was seated on the knees of the woman and holding on to her tightly. I asked her, "What is that?" and she replied, "An inhabitant of the woods and the thickets". It gave out unintelligible cries. Although it was closely related to the monkeys, it had the face and the conformation of a human being.

*

Muḥammad ibn Bābishād also said that in the isle of Lāmūrī there

¹⁵ For *zām* see note 25, p. 18.

are *zarāfa* of an indescribable height. It was said that some shipwrecked sailors forced to go from the neighbourhood of Fanşūr to Lāmūrī, refrained from marching at night for fear of these *zarāfa*; for they do not appear by day ... There are also in these islands extremely large ants, particularly in the island of Lāmūrī where they are enormous.

He also told me that he heard a sailor say that at لولو بيلنك Lūlū-bilank, which is a bay in the sea, there were a people who ate human beings. These cannibals had tails, and lived between the land of Fanşūr and the land of Lāmūrī. [Fanşūr is often mentioned as the place to which an expedition is bound.]

*

Muḥammad ibn Bābishād said that in the island of Nias which is an island in the External Ocean at one hundred parasangs from Fanşūr there are cannibals. They make a collection of skulls for the glory of those who assemble them. They buy ingots of copper at a very high price and use them instead of gold, for this is as durable among them as gold is among us. But gold has no value among them and they treat it no better than we do copper. Beyond the island of Nias are three islands called Barāwa, the inhabitants of which are also cannibals. They keep skulls and use them as articles of exchange.¹⁶

All the people who inhabit Fanşūr, Lāmūrī, Kalāh, Qāqulla, Şanfīn and other neighbouring places are cannibals, but only eat their enemies out of vengeance and not because they need to. They cut the flesh into strips, then dry it and prepare it in various ways. Then they serve it up to eat with wine.

He also told me that the inhabitants of the islands of Langabālūs, a group of many islands which extend for the distance of eighty parasangs, come out to meet ships and barter from hand to hand. If one gives them a thing without first taking anything from them, they will escape and you will not see them again. When a ship is shipwrecked off their coasts, and a man or a woman is thrown up on the shore, if the shipwrecked man has saved something, then that which he holds in his hand they will not take, for they will not take a thing that anyone who comes among them holds in his hand. They will take the stranger into their houses, sit him down and give him to eat anything that he wishes and they will not eat themselves until he has had his fill. They continue to treat him so until the arrival of another ship. Then they will take him on board a ship, and will

¹⁶ Skulls were actually collected for the marriage price in central Nias. See Loeb: *Sumatra*, p. 145.

receive in exchange a gratuity which the captain of the ship cannot refuse to give if he wishes to keep the stranger. Sometimes an ingenious man falls among them who is able to be of use to them in weaving ropes out of coconut fibre. They give him in exchange for this, ambergris which he keeps until he can find a ship. In this way, his stay can be of considerable profit to him.

At Andamān al-Kabīr is a golden temple, which contains a tomb, an object of worship for the inhabitants. Their great respect for this tomb, has made them build this temple over it. The inhabitants of these two islands come here on pilgrimage, and they say that it is the tomb of Sulaimān ibn Dā'ūd. They add that this ruler had asked God to place his tomb in a place where men of that time were unable to go, and God granted him this favour and chose this island as the place to put it. In fact no one to this day has landed on Andamān, certainly no one of us has ever returned. But a companion who had made a journey to the Land of Gold (?) told me that he had seen in Şanfin a man who said that he had landed in Andamān, with the crew of a ship. All of them had been eaten but he alone had escaped. And it was from him that this story comes.

*

Yūnus ibn Mahrān al-Sirāfi, the merchant, who had been to Zābaj said to me, "In the city where the Maharāja, the king of Zābaj resides, I have seen innumerable streets of merchants. In that of the moneychangers alone I have counted up to eight hundred merchants, without taking into account those who live in other streets". He mentioned many other things about this island of Zābaj, its cultivated fields, the multitudes of its towns and villages, which pass all description.

*

A man named Abu Ṭāhir of Baghdad states that he had made a voyage to Zābaj and had visited one of its cities called Marāqāwand, where there was much ambergris. But whoever leaves the city with a cargo of this in his ship soon finds himself back there. The natives do their best to sell it to foreigners, and those who do not know the peculiarity of this ambergris, can buy much for practically nothing. This Abu Ṭāhir carried away a certain quantity in his ship, without the knowledge of his master, but the wind turned against them and they were brought back to the city.

*

It was once the custom among the kings of Zābaj and the Land of Gold that no one was allowed to sit before them, either native,

foreigner or Muslim, without having his legs crossed in a position known as *bērsila*.¹⁷ Anyone who sat with his legs stretched out or in any other manner was fined heavily, according to his means. Now there arrived an important sailor called Jahwad Kūtāh and had an audience with a king called Sri Nātā Kalah (?) ... [etc.]

*

There was an Indian magician who used to make the crocodiles of the bay of Sribuza harmless for as long as he wished. When the king realised that this extended to all the crocodiles in the bay, he asked the magician to render them harmless and then gave an order to a slave and the slave cut off the head of the magician. Since then the crocodiles in the bay have been completely harmless.

*

I have already spoken of Sribuza which is situated at the extremity of the island of Lāmuri, at a hundred and twenty *zām* from Kalāh. God alone knows the truth. The bay of Sribuza penetrates, it is said, fifty parasangs into the island. It is a river much larger than the Tigris at Basra, and its waters are fresh like those of the Tigris. There is no other bay so long in all the island, and the flood tide appears every twelve hours. There are found crocodiles but those who live in that part do not come to any harm, for they are enchanted as we have said. But outside it is impossible to build because of these animals. Some houses are built on the land, but most float on the water, kept up by pieces of wood tied together in the form of a raft and last forever. They do this for fear of fire, for their houses, constructed of wood, are very inflammable, and when one catches fire all are burnt down. Placed on the water, the houses are well protected, and if fire is detected each owner cuts the cables, floats away and then ties up elsewhere far from the conflagration. Whenever they do not like a particular quarter they can always move. The houses in the bay are arranged in streets, and the water between the houses is very deep. It is fresh water which arrives from the high country, enters the estuary and flows on to the sea, as does that of the Tigris.

*

A sailor friend of his (Sa'id al-Faqīr) was equipping a ship for Kalāh, and as he was departing, he came to him and said to him, "Would you please give me a commission?" So Sa'id bought a green jar worth half a dirham and a *dāniq* of coarse salt which he

¹⁷ This manner of sitting, of which the text gives the correct Malay term, was the accepted way of showing respect to the ruler in South-East Asian kingdoms.

put into the jar, and stopped it up, and said to him, "Here is some merchandise". "And what shall I bring you?" asked the merchant. "Bring me a blessing, as men say".

The ship departed, arrived at Kalāh, sold its cargo, but the captain forgot about the jar. Then when the boat had reloaded and was about to depart, the captain saw in the market of Kalāh a man holding a fish on the end of a string crying. "Who wishes to buy a *baraka*"? This word reminded him of the jar of Sa'id. So he called the man and asked him about it. And the owner of the fish said, "This is a species of fish which fishermen call *baraka*". So he said to himself, "It must be this fish that the man wanted". So he bought it giving him the price of two *uqiya* of salt. Then he made the man sit down and sent one of his friends to the ship to fetch the jar and its contents. Then he gave the man the right weight of salt and ordered the fish to be sent back to the house where he was staying, and prepared the fish for salting in the rest of the salt. They extracted from the inside an oyster, which they opened and found a large pearl. The man said, "This must be the present which God has sent to Sa'id". Then he salted the fish with the rest of the salt, and took out the pearl and sailed safely from Kalāh to Aden. The man then took the pearl to Sa'id.

*

Escaping from this danger, I travelled for forty one days from Kalāh to Shiḥr Lubān on the Arab coast. [Later he mentions that the same voyage took forty eight days. The *'Ajā'ib* also mentions Qmār once].

*

MUKHTAṢAR AL-'AJĀ'IB (c. 1000)

One goes by this sea [Harkand] to the land of the Maharāja. Often the clouds obscure this region for days and nights, and the rain falls continuously and neither the fishes nor the beasts are seen.

*

In the same region [Sea of Ṣanf] is the country of Wāq [sic] where lives the king of the isles, called the Maharāja. [Quotes Mas'ūdī].

*

[On Rāmnī, it quotes earlier sources but mixes the stories up with those of the people of Langabālūs.]

*

[Quotes Ibn Khurdādhbih and Abū Zaid on Kalāh, but adds] The island of Kalāh is a large island inhabited by Indians, where

there are mines of tin and plantations of bamboo. To the right and two days journey is the island of Bālūs. The inhabitants are cannibals. There one finds bananas of a large species, camphor, coconuts, sugar cane and rice.

*

The island of Jāba contains the town of Salāhiṭ. It has a king, who lives in great opulence, clothed in golden robes, with a crown of gold on his head, enriched with precious stones. This island produces Indian nuts (coconuts), bananas, sugar, sandal, Indian nard and cloves. [He then adds the piece about the volcano].

*

[Quotes Ibn Khurdādhbih on Tiyūma, but says it is on the coast.]

*

The Isles of Zābaj. This is a large archipelago, very populous, rich in crops and various products. They say that when the inhabitants of China are ruined by invasions or civil wars, they come to pillage one of the islands of Zābaj, and thus was the fate of all the isles of the archipelago and all their towns.

*

The isles of Zābaj are very numerous, one of them, known as Sribuza, has the circumference of four hundred parasangs. It produces commodities and perfumes.

The Isle of the Maharāja. This is the name of the king of the isle. It is a large island and very fertile and prosperous. [Quotes Abū Zaid about the cocks.]

*

The Isle of طاوران Ṭawarān (i.e. Ṭawārān). Ṭawarān is a king with four thousand wives. No one can be king who has not this number. People there glory in a large number of children. There are trees there which give people extraordinary strength for procreation.

*

IBN YŪNUS¹⁸ (d. 1009)

[ميد Māidh. In eastern Asia, Khwārizmī places a large island called Māidh or كول Kūl, of which the centre is 107° long. and

¹⁸ Ferrand: *Relations*, p. 594. These places also occur in Khwārizmī (fl. 830) and in Mzik's volume of Suhrāb's *'Ajā'ib al-aqālim al-sab'a*. Leipzig, 1930, p. vi. Suhrāb lived in the first half of the tenth century.

12° lat. It is watered by a river and contains three villages, of which one is at 107°. He puts it in the sea to the south and to the south east of Sirandīb. Mss. also have كرك for the second name. Ibn Sa'īd has مند and كنك].

*

BĪRŪNĪ (973–1048) *India*

The eastern isles in this [Indian] Ocean, which are nearer to China than to India are the islands of Zābaj, called by the Hindus, Suvarna dīb [Suvarṇadvīpa], i.e. the Gold islands ... because you can obtain much gold as a deposit if you wash only a little of the earth of that country.

*

The colour of the people of Qmār is whitish. They are of short stature, and of a build like that of the Turks. They practise the religion of the Hindus and have the custom of piercing their ears.

*

[He talks of the island of لنگ Langa and mixes it up with Langa-bālūs whose inhabitants he says are cannibals. He also mentions the islands of al-Ramm near those of Dībajāt,¹⁹ and in the *Āthār al-bāqiya* states that the Isle of Rāmīn belongs to Ceylon].

*

BĪRŪNĪ. *Kitāb al-Taḥīm*

The equator begins in the sea to the south of China, passes through the island of Zābaj, known as the land of Gold; between the islands of Kalāh and Sribuza; and to the south of the island of Ceylon [etc.].

*

IBN AL-BAIṬĀR (d. 1248) *Quoting* IBN SĪNĀ (d. 1037)

Ambergris. The best is that which contains white and black and which comes from Salahīṭ.

*

MARWAZĪ (c. 1120)

After it (the East coast of India) follows the country of Zābaj, whose great king is called the Maharāja, which means the "King of

¹⁹ ديبجات *Dibajāt* stands for the Maldives and presumably includes the Laccadives. This is the classical form and consists of Dīb (i.e. Sansk. *dvīpa*) plus the Persian plural suffix and therefore means literally "islands". Dimashqī introduced the form الدياب *al-dīyāb* and therefore means literally "islands". Dimashqī introduced the form الدياب *al-dīyāb* or ديبى. The Navigators talk of the جزر الديب but for the Maldives only.

kings". This country consists of islands. We know of no king more charitable than he, more powerful in his equipment and army, or having more revenue. [Details of cock-fighting and the money received therefrom]. He has numerous islands one of which is called Bartāyil ... The Maharāja's people swear by the fire [description of ordeal by fire].

*

In the Indian sea there is an island called Lankabālūs which is said to measure seven hundred parasangs in diameter. The language of its inhabitants is incomprehensible. In their sea ambergris is found, but they do not profit by it. They follow the ships, and by means of signs and gestures buy iron, but they do not demand anything else.

*

KHARAQĪ (d. 1138)

Amongst the islands of the sea of India is ... Sribuza where they export camphor. [From Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-taḥīm*. He also mentions the island of Kalāh where they export tin].

*

IDRĪSĪ (d. 1165)

The Zanj [East Africans] have no ships of their own in which to travel, so they board the boats of the land of Oman and others destined for the islands of Zābaj, which is part of India, then these foreigners sell their goods and buy the products of the country. The inhabitants of the islands of Zābaj go to Zanzibar in various kinds of ship, and profit by selling their goods since they understand each other's language.

Opposite the coasts of Zanj are the islands of Zābaj, which are numerous and extensive, their inhabitants are very swarthy, and everything which grows there, sorghum, sugar cane and camphor trees has a black colour.

Among the islands of Zābaj is that of Sribuza, the circumference of which so they say, is 1200 miles. There can be found pearl fisheries, and all sorts of aromatics and perfumes which draw merchants to it.

Among the isles of Zābaj, included in the present section, is that of الأنجبة *al-Anjaba* of which the principal town is called in the language of Zanzibar, al-Unqūja ...²⁰

*

²⁰ النجوة for النجوة. Ungūja is the native (Swahili) name for the island of Zanzibar.

It was said that when the state of affairs in China was troubled by rebellions, and tyranny and confusion became excessive in India, the inhabitants of China carried their trade to Zābaj and to the islands which belonged to it; and entered into relations with the inhabitants because of their honesty, their extreme friendliness, their courtesy and the flexibility of their commerce. It is for these things that the island [of Zābaj] is so populous and so frequented by foreigners. Near to this island is another not so large, dominated by a high mountain [volcano story].

Near the island of Zābaj, there is an island called Karimata (q.v.), the inhabitants of which are black. They are called Narhīn and they wear shawls (*uzur*) and loincloths (*fuwaṭ* = sarongs). They are a people daring and brave and always go armed. Sometimes they embark in boats and attack trading ships whose wares they plunder. They do not allow anyone among them except their own countrymen and they fear no enemy.

*

The inhabitants of the islands of Zābaj and other surrounding islands go there [to Sofala] for iron and export it to all the lands of India and to its various islands [etc.].

*

[He states that the extent of Rām[n]ī is seven hundred parasangs. The territory of Rām[n]ī is fertile, the climate temperate, and the water excellent. He also adds pieces from the description of the people of Langabālūs].

To the south of the island of Rām[n]ī, is another very populous one called al-Bīnamān (= al-Niyān i.e. Nias), where there is a large town. There they eat coconuts, and it is a food which they put to a number of uses. The people are very brave and courageous, [etc. The story about collecting skulls is then narrated]. In the island there are many elephants, *baqam* wood, bamboos and sugar-cane.

Close to Niyān is the island of Bālūs the distance between the two being two days. Its inhabitants are black, naked and cannibals; so that when a stranger falls into their hands, they hang him up by his feet, cut him in pieces and eat him, [etc.]. They have no king. They live mainly on fish, bananas, coconuts and sugar cane. They choose for places of habitation, thickets and marshes. The most common plant there is the rattan. They are naked, both men and women, without covering at all. [etc.].

From Niyān to Sirandīb is three days sea-journey (*majrā*).

*

The merchants of Qumr and of the country of the Maharāja come here [to Jabasta, in East Africa], are well received and trade.²¹

*

Among the people of Bālūs, there is a mountain, the soil of which is mixed with silver, which can be extracted with fire. From there to the island of Langabālūs is two days, and it is five [days] from this last to the island of Kalāh, [elsewhere he says that it is six days from Langabālūs to Kalāh] which is very large and where there lives a king by the name of Jābat al-Hindī. There is a tin mine rich in tin. The metal is very pure and bright, but merchants adulterate it after its extraction from the mine and take it away all over the world. The dress of the inhabitants is a single *fūṭa*; and is the same for men and women. The island produces rattan and excellent camphor. [Then follows a description of the extraction of camphor].

After this island are those of Jāba, Salāhiṭ and Harang. Each one is separated from its neighbours by about two parasangs. They all have the same king. This prince is called Jāba, he wears a chlamys and a tiara of gold, enriched with pearls and precious stones. The money is stamped with his portrait. He shows much respect to Buddha. This word *budd* signifies temple in the Indian language. That of the king is very beautiful and is covered externally with marble. Inside and all around Buddha, can be seen idols made of white marble, the head of each adorned with golden crowns. The prayers in these temples are accompanied by songs, which take place with much pomp and order. Young and beautiful girls execute dances and other pleasing games, before the people who pray or are in the temple. [More about the girls] There exists in the island of Harang a great abyss, of which no one has been able to reach the bottom. This is a remarkable wonder.

After the island of Jāba and near to it is that of Mā'it; it is a dependency of the King of Jāba, and produces coconuts, bananas, sugar-cane and rice.

*

To the left of the island of Mā'it is Tiyyūma, and between this and Mā'it is one day's journey. [Iḍrīsī then quotes Ibn Khurdādhbih, mixing up information about Tiyyūma and Qmār].

*

The island of Ṣanf is next to the island of Qmār along the coast, there being only three miles in between. One finds in Ṣanf aloeswood

²¹ Iḍrīsī has *قمر* (i.e. Madagascar) here, but the connexion with the Maharāja could indicate that Qmār was intended by the original source.

superior to that of Qmār for when plunged into water it sinks for it is heavy and excellent. There are in this island, cattle and buffaloes without tails, coconuts, bananas, sugar-cane and rice. The inhabitants do not slit the throats of quadrupeds, nor any other type of animal such as reptiles etc. They can eat the flesh of animals who die naturally but to most of them it is repugnant, so they do not. Whoever kills a cow is punished by death or at the least has his hand cut off. When a cow is no longer of use they place it in a house and allow it to stay there until it dies a natural death. There is a king in this island called Ranīd and the people are brown in colour.²² The dress of each of the inhabitants consists of two *fūtas*, one is worn and the other is used as a covering. There is found fresh water. From the island of Şanf to Şundur Fülāt is ten days. From that of Şanf to the town of Lūqīn,²³ three days (*marḥala*), this is the first step of China. From the town of Şanf, which is at the end of the coast, to the island of Shāmal is four days. This last is situated in the Sea of Şanf and is very flourishing and populous. It produces wheat, rice, bananas in large numbers and sugar, etc. [Note on 'Ashūrā and Malāi.] [Some of this is repeated almost word for word a little later].

*

[Idrīsī also has the island of شبرمة Shabrama or Shabarma (*vide* *Tiyūma*), which is mentioned in connexion with Mūja and Māid. It is two days from Mūja, four from Māid and four from Ayām (or Anām). It has edible birds and coconuts and superior camphor. The king is called Qamrūn. There is much rain and wind, and it is surrounded by many small inhabited islands, some inhabited by Panhang people, etc.].

*

From Lūqīn, on the shores of Hindustan, to Qāqulla is seven days (*cyām*). Qāqulla is on the bank of a river which flows into the Indian *Bihank*.²⁴ In the city of Qāqulla there is much silk and its inhabitants rear silkworms; therefore, they give the name *Qaquilli* to a kind of cloth and a variety of silk. From the city of Qāqulla to Qashmīr is ten days (*marḥala*).

*

²² Jaubert has for this; "un roi qui se nomme Ranīd, et sa famille, Samar". The new ed. of Idrīsī vocalises the name Zanbad.

²³ لوقين for لوقين. Lung-pien, in the delta of the Song-kla near Hanoi. Şundur Fülāt appears as صندى فولات in the new ed. of Idrīsī.

²⁴ For further mention of this place see note 57, p. 89.

YĀQŪT. *Mu'jam al-Buldān*

The last part of India is Ma'bar [Coromandel]. Then one comes to China the first part of which is Jāwa. From here one enters into a difficult sea, where disasters are common, and then arrives in China proper.

*

Abu'l-Raiḥān [al-Birūnī] says that the equator begins in the east, to the south of the sea of China and India, then it passes by several islands which are in this sea, until it reaches the limits of Zanj, on the mainland. Then it crosses the island of Kalāh, which is a port equidistant from China and Oman; then it crosses the island of Sribuza in the Green Sea, on the eastern side and then goes south of Sirandīb and the islands of Dībajāt.

*

Zābaj is an island situated on the borders of the land of India, beyond the sea of Harkand, and on the borders of China. It is said that it is the land of Zanj; the inhabitants look like other men but their customs are like those of savage beasts. *Nisnās* are found there and they have wings like bats. Strange things are told of them which men have collected in their books. There are also found the muskrat and the civet which resembles a cat. Those who have travelled in these regions have told me that the musk of civet is the sweat of an animal, which when it becomes hot, sweats musk. They then scrape it from the animal with a knife.

*

Şanf is a place of India or China which gives its name to Şanfī aloeswood, which one burns as perfume. This is the worst type of aloeswood and there is little difference between it and ordinary wood. [Quoted by Qazwīnī].

[Merchants do not reach China]. They only reach the border which is a land known under the name of Jāwa, which is situated on the sea-coast and which resembles the land of India. They export aloeswood, camphor, nard, cloves, mace, medicinal plants from China and Chinese vases. [Quoted by Qazwīnī].

*

Kalāh is a land at the extremity of India whence is exported aloeswood. Abu'l-'Abbās al-Şufrī, the poet to Saif al-Dawlah, said:

She gives out a perfume as pungent as musk
rolled in the fingers, or as *Kalāhi* aloes.

It is also a port in the Indian Ocean midway between Oman and China, and situated on the equator.

*

YĀQŪT. *Marāṣid al-Iṭṭilā'*

Kalāh is a town on the edge of India and exports aloeswood. Al-Qal'a is a lead mine. There is one in Kalāh, which is the first country in India, on the edge of China.

*

YĀQŪT. *al-Mushtarik*

Al-Qal'a is a country at the beginning of India, on the edge of China, where one gets al-Qal'i lead [i.e., tin] and al-Qal'i swords. [He quotes from Abū Dulaf].

*

QAZWĪNĪ (d. 1283)

[Quotes many of the earlier authors. After Ibn al-Faḥīh's list of birds he adds quoting Zakariyā ibn Yaḥyā b. Khāqān.] ... there is a species of bird called الحواري *al-ḥawārī* larger than that of the Sudan, smaller than the ring-necked pigeon, with a yellow beak, black wings, a white underneath and red legs which speaks almost as well as a parrot. There are also creatures with human form, who speak an incomprehensible language and eat like men; they can be found white, black or green and some have wings with which they fly. [Full story follows of the inflammable roses, and the story of the camphor tree. Wāqwāq is an island of Zābaj while Barṭāyil is an island neighbouring the islands of Zābaj].

*

The island of Nias. On this island, a naked race with a white skin of astonishing beauty can be seen. They hide in the summits of mountains for fear that one should discover the cause of their marvellous beauty. They are cannibals.

Beyond this place are two long, broad islands, on which live a black race, who are giants. They are very tall with large stomachs, and their feet are nearly a cubit long. They have black, curly hair, and long, beardless faces. They are also cannibals.

*

The island of اطوران *Aṭawrān* (i.e. Ṭawārān). In this island are found rhinoceros, a species of monkey as large as an ass and the camphor tree.

*

Salāhiṭ. From here comes nard, sandal and camphor. They say that there is a fish which leaves the sea and climbs trees and sucks the juice of the fruit. It then falls down as if it were drunk and the people come and take it.

The authors of the *Tuhfat al-gharā'ib* said, "One of the wonders of this isle is a spring from which the water gushes, and nearby is a hole through which it falls. Whenever a few drops of the water fall on to the edge of this hole, they solidify as stones. Drops of water during the day become white stones and any that fall in the night become black ones.

*

The mountain of al-Jādūr is in the land of Qāqulla of al-Zābaj. There one finds a species of white falcon with red plumes on its head, and white monkeys resembling rams with beards, and another species of monkey with a white stomach and a black back.

*

Here [Faṣṣūr] there is a species of fish which when it leaves the water, turns into a hard stone.

*

IBN SA'ĪD (d. 1274)

South of the Island of Monkeys and among the islands of Kilwa are the islands of Karimata, which are about 330 miles around. The inhabitants are negro pirates. To the east on the same parallel is the Island of the Volcano ... These islands are near Kilwa and also near the islands of Zābaj. These latter are very famous according to travellers.

The largest of these islands is Sribuza, of which the length is from north to south 400 miles and the width both at the north and at the south is 160 miles. It has easy entrances to the sea, and its town, Sribuza, is situated in the middle of the island where a gulf penetrates into it. It is on a river and its longitude is 88°30' and its latitude 3°40'. In this island are other towns the names of which we do not know. [He later lists among the fast and navigable rivers of the world, the two rivers of Sribuza.]

After the isles of Zābaj is the isle of Unqūja. For most of the time its king possesses a great number of troops and materials of war, with which he dominates the islands of Zābaj. To the south east of Sribuza are found an infinite number of islands which are part of the archipelago of Zābaj. Most of them are inhabited by blacks.

*

The islands of Langabālūs are three in number. The inhabitants are black, ugly and naked, and attack travellers. There are cannibals amongst them. They touch the equator. The width of the sea between them and the island of Silān is about two days.

The first of the islands of India which comes into view is the island of Nakwāra (*vide* Langabālūs) which is one of the most celebrated islands of travellers. Its length is about one hundred miles and its width fifty miles. Between it and the continent is found the country of Barqalā, about half a day by sea away. Between it and the beginning of this section (the 9th section of the 1st climate) there is a degree. To the south of this island is the island of Andamān. Between the two there are about two days of sea and they are of the same size. Elephant are found everywhere and ivory can be obtained. In the east of these two islands, and reaching to the west and entering on the second climate are the two towns of Larman [= Pegu] on a gulf of the sea.

To the southeast are the islands of the Maharāja. They are numerous and are mentioned in books. There is found excellent gold. Their ruler is among the richest kings of India and he possesses the most elephants. The largest of the islands of this archipelago is that which contains the city of the Maharāja, and it is 200 miles long and 100 miles wide. The city is situated on its western shore and is 151° longitude and 12°30' latitude. To the east of the city is an estuary which comes from a mountain to the north. It is stated that the palace of the king is situated on a vast canal of which the bottom is lined with silver. Both ends are shut so that nothing which is in there can get out. [Story of the golden bricks follows, with a variation. When the king dies, one of the bricks is put back]. The single brick is put in on one side and the annual bricks are put in on the other. When one wishes to know how many kings have reigned, one counts the single bricks. One knows the length of the reign of the present monarch by means of an indicator. This is never moved for it is in a place exposed to the rays of the rising sun and in the morning this shines in the midst of the water. There are found corindons, emeralds and pearls, whose possession he disputes with other kings and of which he is proud. This place is his treasure house ...

To the south of the islands of the Maharāja is the island of Jāwa, great and famous and where ships go for the numerous Indian drugs which are found there, and because the inhabitants are wellknown for their treatment of strangers. Its western extremity is at the longitude of 144° and in this corner among the towns, is that which is so famous among travellers, Lāmuri. The latitude of this place is 5°. [Abu'l-Fiḍā quotes this but makes the lat. 9° and the long. 126°

(*Atwāl*) and 127° (*Qānūn*). Abu'l-Faḍl 'Āllāmī, 130°]. In the south of the island in the southwest corner, is the town of Faṣṣūr, which gives its name to the camphor called *Faṣṣūri*. It is found on the same meridian as Lāmuri, and its latitude is 1°30'. The Mountains of Camphor extend from this town as far as the end of the island, from west to east. In the middle of the island on the Mountains of Camphor is the capital, the town of Jāwa. Here resides the king of this isle and of the islands which surround and are attached to it. *Jāwi* aloeswood gets its name from this town. This is black, heavy and falls into water like a stone. It is said that aloeswood is the root of a tree. The longitude of this town is 149°20', and the latitude, 3°.

In the south east corner is found the town of Kalāh, well known to travellers and renowned for its *الكلاهي Kalāhi* tin. The latitude of this town is 154°12'.

On the north east shore is the town of Malāyur, which is well known. It is a place of anchorage. Its longitude is a little more than that of Kalāh and its latitude is the same as Lāmuri. Each one of the towns of which we have spoken is on an estuary. The length of the island is about 800 miles. From the right to the left extend two capes, between which the sea is only two miles wide. The sea there is not deep. They call this place Bintan. There are found small islands out of which come black pirates armed with poisoned arrows and in ships of war. They rob men but do not take them away. But there are some who have been made prisoners by them ... When travellers leave Bintan, they look forward to arriving safe and sound. When one is almost at Bintan, one comes to the islands of Qāmrūn (Karimon). The king lives in the largest of these, and it is situated to the east of Jāwa. The name of the town Qāmrūn is also the hereditary title of the king. We have given his genealogy when speaking of Qumr. This island is 158° longitude and 6° latitude. There are numerous small islands to the west. The length of the largest is about 400 miles and its width about 100 miles. To the west there are small islands which are part of Jāwa in which one finds Indian drugs and *Qal'i* tin. Among these islands is the island of the volcano, which is like that which was mentioned earlier. Also among these islands is that of al-Mahūk the interior of which no one has reached. After the southern islands of Qāmrūn are found the Mountains of Camphor, which are impossible to count. They stretch out into the sea where the ships go to reach China. They belong to Qāmrūn but they have been conquered by the Chinese or actually that part of them which is near to their coasts. [This is followed by a description of Camphor].

To the south of *Ṣundur Fūlāt* is the island of *Ṣanf* which is celebrated in books and which gives its name to the best aloeswood. They say that it is like the wax with which one seals letters. It is white and the kings of China do not leave any for anyone else. The length of this island from east to west is about a hundred miles, its width is less. The town of *Ṣanf* is 162° longitude and some minutes and 6° latitude. To the west of this island is the island of *Qmār*, from which is named the *Qmāri* aloeswood. This is inferior to the aloeswood of *Ṣanf* but superior to all the others. The width of the sea between the two is less than a day's navigation. This is just a little longer and a little wider than *Ṣanf*. The town of *Qmār* is 166° longitude and 2° latitude. [Abu'l-Fidā quotes].

*

East of *Fawfal* are the mountains of *Qāqulla*. They contain districts and towns, among which is that of *Qāqulla*, 150° longitude and 21°50' latitude. There is a river which runs down from a mountain in the north, passes to the east, and flows into the great river of *Ṭarāghā*. To the east of the land of *Qāqulla* is the great range of mountains which extends from the line of the fourth climate to the Indian Ocean. This chain divides [Qāqulla] from the people of *الحنبة* *Ḥanaba*, of which the capital is *Ḥanaba*, which is to the east of the great river *Ṭarāghā* [Then come twelve ranges and twelve rivers to China]. [Quoted also by Ibn Iyās].

*

WAṢṢĀF (c. 1300)

Among the conquests made in his [Kublai Khan] time is that of the Island of *مول جاوة* *Mūl-Chāva*, in the year 691 (A.D. 1292). [The governor *Sri Rama*, wished to make submission, but *Kublai Khan* put the son of the governor in power for the payment of tribute and taxes in pearls and gold. Products were pearls, aloeswood and cloves, and parrots crying out in Arabic, etc.]²⁵

*

SHĪRĀZĪ (d. 1311)

The island of *Zāwa* whose name means the land of Gold.

*

RASHĪD AL-DĪN (d. 1318)

The island of *Lāmūrī* is very large and is beyond *Ceylon*. It has its own king. Beyond it is found the land of *Sūmūtra*. And beyond that

²⁵ Ibn al-Faqīh mentions similar parrots in *Zābaj*.

is *Darband Niās* which is a dependency of *Jāwa*. In the mountains of *Jāwa* there are many odoriferous trees. There are in these islands many towns the principal being, *Arū*, *Barlak*, *Dalmyan*, *Jāwa* and *Barkudoz*. The mountains of *Jāwa* are very high, and are the home of a race who tattoo themselves black.

Opposite *Lāmūrī* is the island of *Nākavāram* which produces red ambergris. The men and women are naked, but the latter cover their private parts with the leaves of coconut trees. They are subject to the Emperor of China.

From there one arrives at a continent called *Ṣanf* which is also subject to the Emperor of China. The natives there are red and white.

*

DIMASHQĪ (d. 1327)

The kingdom of the *Maharāja* is situated on a sea of the same name.²⁶ The river of *Khumdān* comes out into the Sea of *Maharāja*, which is part of the Sea of China. [Later] The Sea of *Ṣankhai* ... contains the kingdom of the *Maharāja*. The Sea of *Zābaj* is situated next to that of *Lārwi*, with the Isles of *Zābaj* and is called after the coconut which grows there.

*

[Besides giving most absurd directions and mixing *Ṣanf* with *Sofala* and the Berbers and saying that the ruler of *Sribuza* is called the King of *Ṣanf*, he gives the following passage]. The island of *Ṣanf* has a length of 1,600 miles and is little less in width. There one finds the best species of aloeswood and various spices. Cassia, coconut, and cinnamon grow there also. The fruit of the cassia resembles that of the palm, but the tree does not last as long as the latter. [Mentions the extraction of the oil].

*

The island of *Salāhiṭ* has a circumference of 300 miles and is covered with mountains and forests. It produces coconut trees in abundance. [He then gives a description of monkeys or apes].

*

The island of *Ṣankhai* belongs to the kingdom of the *Maharāja* which contains a large number of islands close together, both large and small.

*

²⁶ Mehren ed. p. 19 has *وبحر المهرج وجزائره*.

The island of the Maharāja is very large, its length being twelve days [march] and its width, five. At its extremity is situated a large volcano, which throws cinders like stones, with the noise of thunder and lightning. Because of the fire near it, there is neither habitation nor road for the distance of a parasang. This volcano is the largest in the world, there is nothing like it. The place which it occupies is called the Isle of the Volcano, and compared with the rest of the island, it is like the foot compared to the limb. When persons land on this island before a storm, little black people appear, five spans or less in height. They have the appearance of negroes, and climb about there doing evil to no one. When sailors look at them they are convinced that they will perish or will suffer shipwreck; but if God wishes to save them or give them help in this peril, he will show to them a white, luminous bird on the masthead, whose arrival they greet with communal joy. When the danger has passed the bird flies away, and no one knows what has happened to it.

*

The island of Qmār has the circumference of a month, it contains many towns, peopled by the worshippers of India and China, and by sages. A king called Qamrūn lives there. There are found a greater number of Buddhas and idols than at anywhere else. [Mentions the different types of Buddha]. There one finds a gold-mine, ebony and peacocks; elephants are imported there and rhinoceroses seen.

*

[On Langabālūs he adds]. There is found a mine of iron resembling the colour of silver and the camphor tree [method of extraction then given].

*

[On Kalāh he has a sea, an island and a town, which is the largest of the four towns on the island of the same name. He also says that the length of the island is 800 miles, the width 300, and that it contains the towns of Faṣūr, Jāwa, Malāyur, Lāwrī, and Kalā. This is all copied from Ibn Sa'īd, where it refers to the island of Jāwa].

There are elephants, introduced from the continent, which are trained and dressed for the kings of the country [followed by a long description of elephants].

*

The islands of Karimata have a circumference of three hundred miles and contain three large towns. There is found sugar which

comes from a very large tree called *al-'ushar*. The flowers of this tree produce a species of shining silk which is used for spinning and weaving.

*

To the north of Šīniya (Ptolemy's Thina) is the country of Šanf with the principal town of the same name, on the edge of the sea. It is inhabited by Muslims, Christians and pagans. The Muslim religion came there in the time of 'Uthmān, and the Alids expelled by the Umayyads and by Ḥajjāj, took refuge there, having crossed the Sea of Pitch and settled on the island to which they have given their name, the island of Šubḥ and the Island of the Fortress. Among the towns of Šanf are Khalbā, Thūbā, Karwā, Saḥūtā, Samaṭār and Khalifāt, these regions produce a quantity of perfumes and aromatics.

*

Amongst the towns which are on the coast of the sea of the Maharāja towards the north we will mention four; Kalāh, Lāwrī, Maharāja, and Balhūr. Gujerat is bathed by the Seas of Ma'bar [Coromandel] and Maharāja.

*

ABU'L-FIDĀ (d. 1331)

[On Sribuza he copies Ibn Sa'īd quoting him by name but makes the longitude 108°30'.]

*

After the *Qānūn* and *al-Aṭwāl*,²⁷ the island of Kalāh is 130° longitude and 8° latitude. It is to the south of the first climate, in the sea of India. It is the port of all the regions between Oman and China. Tin is exported from there, which bears its name. Muhallabī in his *'Azīzī*²⁸ says, The Isle of Kalāh is in the sea of India. There is a prosperous town inhabited by Muslims, Indians and Persians. Mines of tin can be found there, plantations of bamboo and camphor trees. Twenty days' journey (*majrā*) separates it from the isles of the Maharāja.

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²⁷ *Qānūn al-Mas'ūdi* written by Bīrūnī; and *Kitāb al-aṭwāl wa'l-'urūd* by al-Fāris; written in the tenth century.

²⁸ Another name for the *Kitāb al-masālik wa'l-mamālik* of Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Muhallabī written in c. A.D. 980.

The island of the Maharāja or Sribuza, after the *Qānūn* is longitude 140°, and latitude, 1°.

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Muhallabī said that the island of Sribuza was one of the dependencies of China. It was prosperous and populated, and when a ship leaves it to go to China, it finds in front of it mountains extending into the sea for the distance of six days. Between these mountains are passages, all of which end up in China.

*

IBN AL-WARDĪ (d. 1457)

This author takes one or two passages on Qmār and inserts them into his section on القمر *Qumr*. On Salāhitha he mentions the climbing fish and then adds the following fish, كرماهي *karmāhi*,²⁹ البابة *bāba* which is a hundred cubits long and twenty wide, العمدلة *'amada*.]

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IBN BAṬṬŪṬA (d. 1377)

We reached the city of Sunurkāwān where we found a junk on the point of sailing for the land of Jāwa, which is a journey of forty days from there, so we embarked on it.

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Twenty-five days after leaving these people [Barahnakār] we reached the island of Jāwa from which the incense called *Jāwi* takes its name. [Then follows a long description of the capital of Sumatra and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's stay as a guest of the king].

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We sailed along the coast of his [Sultan of Samuṭra] territories for twenty one nights and arrived at Mul-Jāwa, an infidel land, two months' journey in length and containing aromatic spices, and the excellent aloes called Qāqullī and Qmārī (Qāqulla and Qmāra are part of his territory). In the territories of the Sultan of Samuṭra there is only incense, camphor and a little cloves and Indian aloes, whereas the largest quantity of these is found in Mul-Jāwa. [Then comes a section on incense, camphor, aloeswood and cloves].

On reaching the port of Qāqulla we found there a number of junks ready for making piratical raids, and also for dealing with any junks that might attempt to resist their exactions, for they impose a tribute on each junk [calling at that place]. We went ashore to

²⁹ كرماهي for the Persian کاوماهی "a cow-fish" (Ferrand).

Qāqulla, which is a fine town with a wall of hewn stone, broad enough for three elephants to walk abreast on it. The first thing I saw outside the town was elephants bearing loads of Indian aloes, which they burn in their houses and which fetches the same price as firewood with us or even less. That is when they are selling amongst themselves; to the merchants on the other hand they sell a load of it for a roll of cotton cloth, which is dearer in their land than silk. Elephants are very numerous there; they ride on them and use them to carry loads. Every person has his elephants picketed at his door and every shopkeeper his elephant picketed near him, for riding on to his house and for carrying loads. The same is the case with all the people of China and Cathay.

The Sultan of Mul-Jāwa is an infidel, I saw him outside his palace sitting beside a pavilion on the bare ground. [Mentions officers and troops; no horses, only elephants. A story about a man with a knife and then the journey is continued by sea].

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BAKUWĪ (d. 1400)

Kalāh is a town of India ... it is situated on the continent under the equator. [Bakuwī has other material on Kalāh given above but under the heading of Kalba].

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ABU'L-FADL 'ĀLLĀMĪ (d. 1602)

This author gives the longitude of Zābaj as 104°00' and its latitude as 15°00'. The Isle of the Maharāja is 150°00' and 1°00', he also gives the longitude of Kalāh as 140° and the latitude as 8°.]

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