

must tell you that the first Chinese city that I reached after crossing the sea was ZAITÚN.¹ Although *Zaitun* signifies *olives* in Arabic, there are no olives here any more than elsewhere in India and China; only that is the name of the place. It is a great city, superb indeed, and in it they make damasks of velvet as well as those of satin, which are called from the name of the city *Zaituníah*;² they are superior to the stuffs of Khansá and Khánbálík. The harbour of Zaitun is one of the greatest in the world,—I am wrong: it is *the* greatest! I have seen there about one hundred first-class junks together; as for small ones they were past counting. The harbour is formed by a great estuary which runs inland from the sea until it joins the Great River.

In this, as in every other city of China, every inhabitant has a garden, a field, and his house in the middle of it, exactly as we have it in the city of Segelmessa. It is for

¹ Were there doubt as to the identity of Zayton, Abulfeda's notice would settle it. For he tells us expressly that Zayton is otherwise called *Shanju* (Chin-cheu, the name by which Thsiuan-cheu was known to the early Portuguese traders, and by which it still appears in many maps).

² The words translated after Defrémery as *velvet* and *satin* are *kimkhwá* and *atalas*. There may be some doubt whether the former word should be rendered *velvet*, as it is the original of the European *cammocca* and the Indian *kinkhwáb*, of which the former seems to have been a damasked silk, and the latter is a silk damasked in gold (see p. 295 *supra*). The word *Atalas* seems to correspond closely to the Italian *raso*, as it signifies both a *close-shaven face* and a *satin texture*. It has been domesticated in Germany as the word for satin (*Atlass*), and is used also in old English travels. I have a strong suspicion that the term *Zaituníah* in the text is the origin of our word *satin*. The possible derivation from *seta* is obvious. But among the textures of the 15th century named in the book of G. Uzzano (*supra* p. 281) we find repeated mention of *Zetani*, *Zettani vellutati*, *Zettani broccati tra oro*, etc., which looks very like the transition from *Zaituni* to *satin*, whilst the ordinary word for silk is by the same author always spelt *seta*. The analogous derivation of so many other names of textures from the places whence they were imported may be quoted in support of this, e.g., *Muslin* (Mosul), *Damask* (Damascus), *Cambric* (Cambray), *Arras Diaper* (d'Yprès), *Calico* (Calicut); whilst we know that Genoese merchants traded at Zayton (*supra* p. 224). I see that *F. Johnson's Dict.* distinguishes in Persian between "*Kamkhá*, Damask silk of one colour", and "*Kimkhá*, Damask silk of different colours".