

# The journey of the Franciscan Odoric De Bordenone and Ibn Battuta to China (8th century AH / 14th AD)

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## Abstract

The study of travels is considered as one of the most important historical studies, as it has attracted the interest of researchers and historians for its valuable, accurate and important information at the same time. Its information was characterized by its credibility and accuracy more than others, as its narrator is an eyewitness to the historical event. The Journey of the Franciscan Odoric De Bordenone (D. 731 AH / 1331 AD), and Ibn Battuta (D. 771 AH / 1369 AD) to China occupied an important place between the travels, as both of them described a number of Chinese cities accurately. Their information included most of economic, social and scientific aspects of life and also people's conditions, characteristics, standard of living, religion, rituals, clothing, etc., as well as the cities 'size, location, wealth, rivers, markets, and currencies. Both journeys complement each other and every one of them is similar to the other in several ways, which confirms their credibility in transmitting information, observations and details of their two travels.

## Keywords

Travel, merchants, city, fish, markets, mountains

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## Introduction

The study of travelers' journeys and their observations is considered as one of the most important historical studies, due to the important information it contains and accurate, truthful and realistic witnesses. Odoric De Pordenone's journey to China occupied a great importance among the travels, as he indicated through it accurate information about the most important cities he visited, most notably: Senstalay, Guangzhou, China Clan, Zeitun, Ahamnran, Khansa - and others. This journey sheds the light on a number of cultural, social, economic and religious aspects in these cities. He indicates the size and location of each of them, as well as their markets, the number of inhabitants, their characteristics, religion, rituals, standard of living, the prices of food commodities, the types of food and the most important animals. He describes also the missionary movement in these cities and the role of their priests. And he talked about the difficulties he faced, foremost among them was his lack of mastery of the Chinese language. Ibn Battuta described most of the cities visited by the traveler Odoric in great details. He described China in an interesting and enjoyable way, and referred to what is available inside as resources, plants, rivers and minerals. In addition to describing its birds and comparing them with what is in his country. He noted also the inhabitants of these cities, their standard of living, markets, currencies, industries, and their love for painting, and he talked about their hospitality to strangers and merchants and their generosity with them. Ibn Battuta referred to his meeting with a number of Muslim sheikhs, during his visit to Zeitoun city. He also visited the city of China Clan and he described its rivers and churches and he mentioned also Muslims and their mosques, and talked about Khansa and its six cities and explained in detail his visit to each of them.

### The Trip of The Franciscan Odoric De Pordenone to China, (D. 731 AD / 1331 AD)

One of the first cities that Odoric De Pordenone visited in China was Senstalay, a name closes to its common name Conscale. In Islamic sources, it came with the name Tazikan which is also known as as Canton (Al-Sayed, without date). And the city of Clan", which is one of the most famous cities in China, and it is called in Persian Chin Machin. Its major reed is the city of Taja crossed by the river of Taja. It contains the Muslim merchants and the king's house. It has four cities on the coast of the Northern Haraj Sea, which are all, Larwa, Maharaj, and Ballhor. This kingdom is connected to the gates of China, which are mountains and obstacles where it is too hard to walk in. and it has a crossing with a door and guards. The most famous types of Chinese boats and pottery are made from mountain soil in this city (Sheikh of Rabwah, 1865, Ibn Battuta, 2011). He noted that its size is three times larger than the city of Venice, and it is located on the bank of a great river and within a day's walk from the ocean, whose waters were penetrating a great distance into the land due to the tide, and the port cannot be compared to any other port as there are numbers of ships in it and the he maritime traffic is more active than its counterparts in all Italy (Al-Sayed, without date). Odoric described here the size of the city, its location, and its most important ports, which reflects its commercial activity. He said about the city that "It cannot be counted as well, because bread, wine, rice, meat, fish and everything necessary for life are found in abundance, and here we find all men, either craftsmen or merchants, therefore their standard of living is high, so that there is not one beggar among them" (Al-Sayed, without date). Odoric's observations give an impression of the high standard of living in the city, and the best proof of that is the absence of beggars there.

In his first impression of it, we find that he mentions that everything in this world that he saw is new and looks unique and amazing, as its visitor is filled with happiness when his eyes fall on what is in these countries overlooking the ocean (Al-Sayed, without date). The Muslim travelers confirms this impression about the society in Canton when they said, in terms of the high density of the population in general, that their numbers are countless, and that those countries are known by this phenomenon since ancient times, in addition to the work of the people of China in crafts and trade (Al-Sayed, without date). This, also, confirms the abundance of basic commodities and the existence of crafts and industries based on them, such as agriculture, industry, pastoralism and fishing (Al-Sayed, without date). Odoric's reference to the flourishing of agricultural and industrial activity confirms the economic diversity of its people and the rise of their standard of living which indicates that the city is self-sufficient.

He described the men in the city as being of medium stature, their color tends to be pale, and

they have very long black beards and look like cats. As for the women, they are characterized by their beauty, and many of them live in a life full of fun and celebrations (Al-Sayed, without date). What also astonished Odoric De Pordenone was that he met Christians in Senstalay, and he made some relationships with them, and with both Muslims and Buddhists, and also, with some military commanders working in the imperial army who provided him with the information he asked about. So according to them, this distribution of religious sects is the same in the rest of the southern region of China, he felt very painful when he learned that Buddhism is the predominant belief in the society of this region in general (Al-Sayed, without date). The religious diversity that Odrik witnessed in this city is an indicative of religious toleration and the absence of any discrimination among the population.

In fact, this is an assessment of the religious and social conditions in southern China. The Christians may be Nestorians whose religious doctrine spread from the 1st century AH / 7th AD, and some Turkish tribes were victorious, such as the Uyghurs, Jagtai, and Krayites, and the influence of the first tribe extended in central and southern China until Central Asia beyond the era of Genghis Khan, so it is believed that the Christians who were interviewed by Odoric were affiliated with one of these tribes (Al-Sayed, without date). It is worth noting that the city contained a great church that exercised a great social role with the support of the endowments (Al-Sayed, without date). As for the Muslims, they had a long history in the coastal regions of China (Al-Sayed, without date). And he mentioned his vision of huge birds while wandering in the Senstalay market, stating that there are geese larger than their counterparts in the whole world, but they are the best tasting, as one of them is twice the size of a goose in Venice and that the chickens and the rest of the birds are very beautiful, and the inhabitants of Senstalay are accustomed to Hatching and eating huge snakes, and they were considered it as one of their most delicious foods (Al-Sayed ,without date ).The city was distinguished by the large size of its markets, in addition to the big size of birds, as the Chinese chicken is bigger than the Moroccan goose, and the size of the rooster is equivalent to the size of an ostrich (Al-Sayed ,without date ). He pointed out that the ginger plant is very cheap and jam is made from it (Al-Sayed, without date). In addition to catching a kind of snakes for the purpose of food and it is considered as one of the largest meals out there (Al-Sayed, without date). This diversity in animal and agricultural wealth is an important factor in the high standard of living of the population and their self-sufficiency.

## **Odoric's Journey to Zeitoun City**

In the next stage of his missionary journey north-east, Oudric headed to a city that he called Zaycon (Al-Sayed ,without date ),and he called it also the city of zeitoun, which is closer to the Arabic pronunciation olive, as it was mentioned by Marcopolo before him About thirty years ago (D.725 AH / 1324 AD), and even Ibn Battuta called it with same name (Al-Sayed ,without date ) , and this name corresponds to the city of Tuan-Chau-Fu now , and what caught his eyes in this city is the expansion of its size, which is estimated to be twice the size of the Italian city Bologna, in addition to the multiplicity of religions among its people. He overestimated the size of the temples when he mentioned that one of them includes three thousand monks, and the total number of their idols is eleven thousand (Al-Sayed, without date). The multiplicity of religions in the city is an indication that the religious tolerance is dominating, as in other cities, and it indicated also the expansion of the size of the temples and the large number of monks which means the widespread of Buddhism religion.

The city of Zeitoun is one of the most important cities in China, and it is a famous city among merchants traveling to that country, located on the estuary of the sea and boats enter it from the China Sea through the aforementioned estuary. It is about one month far from the city of Galleq, and this city does not contain olives, but it is just a nickname. And there is a marina that is considered one of the greatest anchorages in the world, and it is a big estuary from the sea that enters the land until it mixes with the greatest river. It is made in this city the Chinese pottery and the clothes of Karkha and Atlas and they are preferred to the clothes made in the city of Khansa, and its people drink from the estuary and wells (Abu Al-Feda, 1840, Al-Qalqashandi, 1922). The city contains a duplicate image of everything in the world until a person finds everything he needs, and determined its location at the mouth of one of the great rivers where the movement of ships is active, and it has been found that this river is the great river Yang-Zi, which is mentioned in the name of Kiang sometimes. And it is very deep and navigable for large ships (Al-Sayed, without date). The monk Odoric spoke about Buddhism there and was keen to see for himself a ritual that

its adherents used to perform, which required serving hot foods in dishes close to idols, and as the seas ascended to it, the process of satisfying it would have taken place. As for the Christian religion, he referred to their two buildings located in the city by the missionary John Dumont Corjin in China, at the beginning of the year 693 AH /1293 AD (Al-Sayed, without date). He mentioned that, on his way by sea to Zeitoun city, a number of imperial soldiers boarded the ship and began to search for anything contrary to the rules (Al-Sayed, without date). This confirms the presence of employees working for the emperor who supervised the ships heading to the port of Zeitoun city. This position was known in China in the second half of the 4th century 10th AD as "Zaaba Sha", meaning the observer of maritime trade, and one of his most important duties is to inspect ship consignments and collect taxes (Al-Sayed, without date). This affirms the state's interest in everything that comes into the country and what goes out there, as well as collecting taxes in a correct manner without prejudice to the rights of merchants and customers. After Odoric arrived a small hotel in Zeitoun, and described the things surrounding the hotel, which are mosquitoes, poultry, pigs, and peasants with black hair tinged with blue and glistening, and he got acquainted with those who hosted him, describing them as having round faces and curved eyebrows, so he began his missionary work among them (Al-Sayed, without date). Mr. Odoric highlighted the Christianization movement in the city of Zeitoun, unveiled the construction of the cathedral, which had been taken as a bishopric, and stated that it was achieved thanks to an Armenian woman who spent a huge fortune on the establishment of the project as a gift to the Church.

He referred to the missionary responsible for the Christian mission before him in the city, Peregran, and referred to the most important contemporaries of him who undertook the process of evangelization in the city of Zeitoun and that they resided there permanently. Soon, he rose through the priesthood and became called Rr.Ventura de Sarezana (Al-Sayed ,without date ). This information leads to the belief that Odoric is one of the monks that the Franciscan presenter and Pope Clement V sent to China in order to support the efforts of John Dumont-Guven, and Zeiton city was the square that witnessed his aforementioned missionary activity, and it seems that he led the Franciscan work team there, this is an indication of the widespread of Christianity in this city.

Among the important achievements of Odoric inside Zeitoun city, was the construction of a monastery with a capacity of 22 monks including four rooms, describing it skite as the most splendor ever. Then he built a church attached to it (Al-Sayed, without date). This was confirmed by John de Marignolle who came to the city of Zeitoun in the middle of the 8th century AH /14th AD and pointed out the existence of three churches, which are magnificent and were well constructed. One of them was established in an area belonging to the Muslims, and its monastery included several buildings for monks, in addition to a number of stores in which merchants deposited their goods[1] (Al-Sayed ,without date ).These architectural achievements required other efforts of the missionary, which made one of the modern Franciscan monks interested in studying Odoric's character states that he was not just a drop of water lost in the midst of Chinese society, as he became as if he was in his homeland due to the transformation of this society into a Franciscan society, and Odoric became in itself an important link in the history of the Franciscan epic in China (Al-Sayed ,without date ). There is no doubt that his evaluation prevailed over him with intense sympathy for him due to the hardship he faced in those strange countries, and the important thing is that this modern monk gave an unrealistic impression about the community Zeiton city, which was mostly composed of non-Christian elements. It seems that Odoric succeeded in the development of a Christian community in Zeitoun city and he made of its church and religious buildings a Franciscan institution that deals with matters of advocacy and playing a social role among Christians in southern China (Al-Sayed, without date).

It should be noted that there are large Islamic societies in cities in China, foremost among which is the Zeitoun city which is evidenced by the fact that its ruler in the early 8th century AH / 14th AD was Muslim and named Baha al-Din Kunduzan . Despite the spread of Christianity in Zeitoun city, the Islamic religion found a wide place among them as well, and the best proof of this is that its ruler was a Muslim, and this matter also confirms the religious tolerance there. Audric referred to the difficulty he faced during the process of evangelization because of the language, as the Chinese language is very far from Latin, as it consists of 340 monosyllabic syllables, and each tone of voice has several linguistic connotations, and there are four phonemic signs using which the intended word is distinguished and the arrangement of the syllables in one word has its importance in (Al-Sayed ,without date ).He pointed out, saying:"The European who deals with the Chinese language for a period of twenty years has only reached the stage of stuttering in

pronouncing it, which does not enable him to reach the level of recognizing the meaning of words and ideas" (Al-Sayed ,without date ). and due to the old age of the preachers, they were not able to master this language, so it was necessary for them to deal in one of the two languages known to them, and it may be Persian and Arabic Odoric referred to the words of his predecessor, the missionary Peregrin, in this regard, as saying "If we were to express in their language, we would have achieved miracles in evangelization" (Al-Sayed ,without date ).This indicates that they met, so that Odoric benefited from his experience[1] (Al-Sayed ,without date ), despite the difficulties Odric faced in China, especially the Chinese language.

One of the obstacles that he faced was that the Al-Yasa Law prohibited the Mongols from fanaticizing any religion (Al-Sayed, without date). This matter, according to what I see, is not an obstacle because religious tolerance was already widespread in most cities of China and the best evidence for the spread of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam at the same time, so the law of Yasa was a helpful factor in deepening and consolidating religious tolerance among the population.

It is worth noting that Yassa, or Al-Yasaq, is a set of laws established by Genghis Khan, and he arranged provisions in it and set limits therein which he called the big Yassa, he wrote it down and ordered to be written on sheets of steel, and made it a law for his people, so they adhered to it during his life and after his death, one of the most important laws of yassa: that he who committed adultery must be killed and those who deliberately lie, or witchcraft, or spied on someone Or he entered between two while they quarreled and helped one of them to the other must be killed too, and whoever gave goods and lost in them must be killed, and whoever fed a captive or clothed him without their permission must be killed, and whoever found a fugitive slave, or a prisoner who escaped and did not return him to the concerned authority must be killed (Al-Qalqashandi, 1922, Ibn Kathir, ,1977, Al-Maqrizi, 1970).Odoric indicated that the sailors moved from one place to another to spread the da'wa in the city of Zaytoun from their religious buildings there, and he also indicated that the language used by the Muslims of the city of Zeitoun differs from the Chinese language and that he was aware of it and therefore perhaps it would be the predominant Persian language among the merchants , we find that he has put his hand on some of the problems facing the process of evangelization in the East, and perhaps he surrounded the papacy upon his return to avoid them, including ignorance of the language of the people and the old age of the missionaries (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

### **Odric's Journey to The City of Ahmenran**

Odoric went to the city of Ahmazan, and perhaps it is the same city mentioned in the Islamic sources as Hamdan, Khinkai or Khansa (Al-Sayed ,without date ). The country of the Smaller Hamdan, or "Khamadan the Younger": It is from the country of China, and it was mentioned that Alexander built it in the land of Shul in China, which he conquered and built two cities in it, one of Chol and the other of Khamadan, The owner of China ordered that his soldiers live in the city of Khamadan, which has many rivers, trees, birds and minerals, except for palm trees.Its largest city, Khamadan, is located on a lake in which it is called, and its people are between Muslims, Christians, and Jews.The infidels are more numerous and the Muslims are more powerful in it. Most of the clothes of its inhabitants are made of silk and brocade, and they are wide-sleeved. And it has three cities, called: Jojo, Jamma, and Khmeri, and there is the great river of Khamadan, part of which passes through the countries of India. It was mentioned that the country was divided into two parts because of its size and the large number of its people . And it is separated by a wide, long street. The king, his minister, the Chief Justice, the courtiers of the king and his followers lived in the right side and the east, that no one among the commoners mixes with them. And there are no markets in it. In the left side of ouest, settles the ressortissant and the merchants, and in this part there are the markets. The king, his deputes, and those who settle with him on the right side supply everything they need when they come to the left side and they don't return only on the second day. And I think that for this reason it was called the country of Greater Khamadan, and what was meant by the right side, and Khamadan the Younger, and possibly the left side ( Sheikh Al Rabwah,1865, Al-Serafi ,1961 , Al-Adrissi,1989). Al-Khanssa is one of the greatest cities in China, and it is considered as the arrival point of merchants traveling from our country, in the middle of which there is one market that extends from beginning to end, and its markets are paved with tiles, and it is built from five layers on top of each other, and all of them are built with wood and nails, and its people drank from wells, and most often Their food is meat, especially buffaloes, chicken geese.Rice, bananas, sugar cane and lemon are abundant in it. The prices are moderate. Sheep and wheat are brought to it in a few, and there are no horses except a very little number and in

the city center there are about four small mountains (Abu Al-Feda, 1840, Al-Qalqashandi, 1922) Researchers have confirmed that it is the ancient city of Quinsai, and in the fifteenth century AD its name changed to Han Chu - Han - Tcheou-fou, also pronounced Hang - Tcheou, which is the largest city in southern China (Al-Sayed ,without date ).It is located on the Yang-Tse River. Odric was dazzled by the beauty and magnitude of the city (Al-Sayed ,without date ), he said about it: "The best, noblest, and largest city in the whole world" (Al-Sayed ,without date ). Its people described it as the heavenly city (Al-Sayed ,without date ).He pointed out that it 'it is located on a low-lying plain, like Venice, interspersed with lakes and rivers.

He mentioned the name of one of these lakes, so he called Si-hou, and mentioned that it added a distinctive character to the city, appearing as if it were many small islands linked between them by twelve thousand stone bridges with guards, so Venice was similar in its splendor, but it has twice the beauty.

It is considered the largest city in the world, with a circumference of one hundred miles. Nevertheless, it does not contain any unpopulated part, but rather there are areas where the population density has reached its highest level (Al-Sayed ,without date ). He talked about the gates of the city and mentioned that it has twelve gates, and at a stretch of about eight miles from each gate, the inhabited localities spread like suburbs in the form of cities, one of which is greater than Venice or Padua in size. And the areas surrounding the main city contain a continuous network of good roads, so that the traveler may walk for six or seven days without feeling the distance he has traveled, given that he passes continuously through cities and homes (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

And he pointed out, saying: 'I did not dare to write about it [Ahamzan] in this way, except when I found in Venice many people who had visited this city before ' (Al-Sayed ,without date ). Thus Odoric touched, even in a non-exhaustive way, the truth that roads were blessed with the security of the Silk Road to and within China, according to what was known as the Mongolian peace period that he witnessed, as it spanned between the years 659-770 AH / 1260-1368 AD (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

Odoric referred to the tax system prevailing in the city, as ten or twelve families gathered in one place to defraud by imposing one tax payment, and the governor would receive an amount of money estimated at eighty-five tomans, As for when the sums to be collected from the Muslims are added, they amount to eighty-nine tomans, and the total tax returns amount to eight hundred and ninety thousand, in addition to what is collected from Christian families and even from merchants and cross-countrymen (Al-Sayed ,without date ). This indicates the authority's interest in the tax system, imposing it and collecting it accurately without prejudice to the rights of merchants and residents, and that the value of taxes imposed on Christians differs from taxes imposed on Christians. Then the missionary then touched upon talking about the abundance of food in this city like: rice, pork, and bread, as well as a type of wine known as Bigni, which is the drink of the nobles and it is made from fermentation of rice (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

Thus, Odoric's accounts about this city included important economic information that included taxes and some food products, as well as the most prominent Muslims as a segment that can be distinguished among the people of the city (Al-Sayed ,without date ).He referred to his meeting with the missionary work team there, which consisted of three monks who belonged to the Monastery of the Immature Brothers in Sunstalai (Canton) and they had achieved some success in their vocation, and the proof of this is that the man who acquired their faith was described by Odoric as being a high-ranking among His people, who hosted him for a period of time in Hamzan, and noted that he had the love and respect of this man for him, and he usually called him Atha (Al-Sayed ,without date ) The connotation of this title shows that the elders in China are very much venerated, and one of them is called Ata, which means father, and this is an indication of what Odoric reached in terms of old age that made him worthy of bearing this title (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

As for his missionary efforts in Hamzan, it was associated with the accompaniment of that new personality to him, in addition to hosting it, he relieved him of the problem of not mastering the language of the people due to the different dialects, and he also provided him with information that was impossible to identify and which will be a reason for revealing some spiritual aspects between Members of the community there, as the missionary narrated that he went out in the company of this man and wandered in the area west of Lake Si – ho . He recorded his observation that it was full of Buddhist temples, the most famous of which was the La Retraite Spirituelle, known by the name Thebe, where the rock that the river flood brought to him was a cave known to the

people as a monkey cave, and this name has its significance among believers in Buddhism, as it symbolizes the story of that pious man who used to blast his whistle so that all the monkeys of the region gathered to him and he fed them. It was rumored that the cave had an underpass that reached India (Al-Sayed , without date ) . Odoric touched on another story which is that when his host took him to that temple, he introduced him to something else that distinguished that place, which is the phenomenon of reproduction of souls, as he believed that they were the spirits of the venerated Christian monks. The host presented him to another man, mentioning that he had come to this country for the sake of The integrity of the emperor's soul. And he asked him to show him some of his miracles, and at that time the man came with two silver jars filled with food, and knocked on a wooden instrument that might be a drum with a stick, and large numbers of animals ran over him, reaching three thousand, most of them were monkeys, as they resembled human beings. And when the man offered food and knocked on his machine again, they arranged themselves in a system according to the nobility of their origins that they were in this life, and he refused to answer Odoric's questions and to negotiate with him in this regard, so this was his evidence that this people is not ready to reveal their secrets to strangers (Al-Sayed ,without date ).Odoric indicated "If someone wants to write about the paranormal of this city, ask him to write a huge book" (Al-Sayed ,without date ).

The information referred to by Odoric confirms the difference and plurality of dialects in Chinese society, and this is normal for the expansion of the country and the multiplicity of races (Al-Sayed ,without date ). On the other hand, despite what surrounds the Odoric story regarding the doctrinal aspects of the Buddhists overcoming the differences, it does contain a doctrine related to the ancient heritage (Al-Sayed , without date ). The missionary Odoric shed the light on a palace owned by one of the rich people, and he did not refer to its location, only that it is in a place close to Hamzan, that is, in southern China.

He described the daily life of this rich man, as follows :Fifty girls were under his service. They were arranged so that they would serve him food in his meals. A group consisting of five of them carried the dishes to the table and replaced them with five others, and soon the first group feeds him in his mouth in an atmosphere full of singing, then the second group comes carrying other dishes and singing different types of songs, and these scenes is repeated on a daily basis with a change in the melodies and songs. Odoric estimated this man's wealth equivalent to three hundred thousand sacks of rice, every one of sacks is very heavy and cannot be carried except by a strong donkey. Then, he described the palace as two miles in length, and as for its floor, half of its tiles are of gold and the other half of silver, and in the middle Palace Square There is a statue made of gold and silver, and it resembles statues in monasteries (Al-Sayed ,without date ) .This confirms that rice has an important place among the Chinese since the AH 3rd / AD 9th century is the main food for the whole people (Al-Sayed ,without date )

### **Ibn Battuta 'S Journey to China (D. 771 AH / 1369 AD)**

Ibn Battuta mentioned that China is vast, and there are many resources, fruits, crops, gold and silver, and in these it is parallel it is divided by a river called the water of life it is also called the river of siba like the name of a river in India .it has its rise in the mountain which are in the neighborhood of the city of KhanBalik, it is called Kho bozne, meaning a mountain of monkeys, and it is a six-month march passes through central China until it ends in Chan, and is surrounded by villages, farms, orchards and markets like the Nile of Egypt, but there more buildings and it has many waterwheels (Ibn Battuta,2011)

### **The City of Khan Baliq, Or "Khan Balik", "Present-Day Beijing"**

It is the base of the Kingdom of Khitai and the center of it, located in the far east of the country, and it is a famous city for merchants and for its people also.Silver metal is abundant in it, and it is two cities, old and new, the new one is called Dido. The great khan is housed in it, and his great palace is located in the middle of it and is called "Kok Taq", meaning in the Mughal language the green palace, because Taq means palace, and Kok means green, and the houses of the princes are located around this palace, while the old city is the original one and it was built Before the new city. Khan Baliq is a good city with a wide resources, with cheap prices, where the water freezes in the winter season. There are many different types of fruits except for grapes, as they are few. There is no cultivation of Citrus, lemons and olives but sugar is made there, and there are many

horses, cows and sheep, and the lands of Khan is bordered by the mountains of Belharra from the south (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Sugar is abundant in China and its comparable to Egyptian sugar, but it is better. Pears and grapes are much better too, and even better than pears in Damascus. In addition to watermelon that resembles watermelon Khwarazm and Isfahan, and most of the fruits in China are better than what is found in other countries, as well as it distinguished it with wheat, as it was described as not being tastier than it, and lentils and chickpeas are also abundant in it (Ibn Battuta, 2011). In addition to watermelon, which resembles the one in Khwarazm and Isfahan, most of the fruits in China are better than what is found in other countries, as well as the distinction of wheat, as he described it as the most delicious ever. and lentils and chickpeas are also abundant there (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

Khwarazm is a region located on the two edges of the Gihon River. its great reed is in Heitl and it has another reed in Khurasan. It is a vast and venerable region with many cities spanning architecture, many orchards, homes, farms, trees, fruits and goodies, and surrounding Khwarazm Al Mafawaz on every side, and there is no gold, silver or any other metal in their countries. Khazar and Khurasan one of the most important and largest cities in it is the city of Jarjaniyah, and from there trade caravans leave to Gorgan, Khazar and Khorasan. Among its other most important cities are Hazrasab, Khiva Tozoar, Cordran, and Khawash and others (Al-Astakhari, 1927, Ibn Hawqal, 1938, Al-Maqdisi, 1906). Isfahan is one of the most important cities in the Khorasan region, and it has two cities, one of them is called Ji, which is the old district of Isfahan, known as Shahrstan, and it is on the shore of the Zendron River. The second is called Judaism, its people are mixtures of the Persian, Arab and Arab tribes from Thaqif, Tamim and Khuza'a. The city is famous for making clothes, especially brisam, sushi and cotton, and it also has saffron and fruits that bring its fruits to Iraq and other countries. It has good walks and rides, it also has running water from the valleys and waterholes (Al-Maqdisi, 1906, Al-Yaqoubi, 2002, Ibn Khardathba, 1889). Chinese pottery is made only in the city of Zeitoun and in China Clan. It is made of the dust of the mountains there, in which fire is burned like coal, and they add stones and they light fire for three days, then pour water on it, then all return dirt, then ferment it, So the good one is what is fermented for a whole month not more. and it may be brewed for ten days, and it is there as much as pottery in Morocco or is cheaper. It is carried to India and other regions until it reaches Morocco and is considered one of the finest types of pottery for its creativity (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta referred to making pottery in the city of China and the China Clan, and exporting the surplus to their needs to several countries.

Ibn Battuta talked about Chinese chickens and their roosters, describing them as huge, he described geese as being bigger than what is found in Morocco, and also, chicken eggs are bigger than goose eggs, but their geese are small. Ibn Battuta said, "We bought a chicken and wanted to cook it, and one jar [the pot of stones] was not enough to cook all meat. So we put it in two jars. The rooster in this city is as big as an ostrich, and its feathers may be plucked out, leaving a few red ones. The first time I saw the Chinese rooster in the city of Kulm, I thought it was an ostrich and I was amazed, so its owner told me that in China there is something bigger than it. When I arrived in China, I saw that what he told was really true (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

Ibn Battuta referred to the belief of the people of China that they are infidels who worship idols, and burn their dead as the Indians do, and their king is a Mongolian Tatar from the descendants of Genghis Khan. And in every city in China there is a city devoted for Muslims only where they have have mosques, and most of them are respected. The infidels in China eat pigs and dogs and sell it in the markets, and they are rich people and their standard of living is high, except that they do not celebrate in a restaurant or clothing. The big merchant among them, who owns a lot of money, has a coarse cotton robe, and all the people of China celebrate in pots of gold and silver, and each one of them has a cane to walk with and they say that it is the third foot. They have a lot silk because the silkworm is attached to the fruits and eats them, so it does not need much supplies, and it is the clothes of the poor and people in need, Without merchants, it would have little value, and a single cotton garment is sold to them with many clothes of silk. Their custom is that the merchant cast what he has of gold and silver in pieces, Every piece should be one quintal or more or less. And he puts that on the door of his house, and whoever has five pieces of it put a ring on his finger. And whoever had ten would make two rings, and whoever had fifteen they would call it sati, which means karmic in Egypt, meaning among the rich, and they call one piece of it Barakala (Ibn Battuta, 2011). This story shows that the standard of living for wealthy families is high, as well as the existence of a class disparity among the population. In other words, the people of China do not use the dinar or the dirham in the buying and selling process, and all



that happens in their country from that is definitely casting it. Rather, buying and selling them in pieces like bills, each bill is as much as the palm, printed with the stamp of the Sultan, and the twenty-five of them are called the shet, which is the meaning of the dinar, and if those bills were torn in the hands of a person, he carried them to a house like Dar El Sikka in Morocco and took in place of them new ones. And he will not be given a wage or anything else, because those who take over their work have the livelihoods flowing from the Sultan, and a senior emir was assigned to that house, And if anyone went to the market with a silver dirham or dinar to buy anything, it will not be taken from him and no one turn to it until he spent it in balckets and bought what he wanted (Ibn Battuta,2011). Ibn Battuta mentioned that: "the charcoal, fo the people of China and the Khitai, is dust. clustered like a clay , and its color is the same as the clay too.The elephants come with loads of it, so they cut it into pieces according to our pot of charcoal, and they set fire, so it ignites like coal, It is hotter than coal fire, and if it became ashes, they knead it with water, coat it and cook with it again, and still do with it until it fades, and from this soil they make Chinese pottery vessels, and add other stones to it (Ibn Battuta,2011). Ibn Battuta described the people of China as one of the greatest nations in industries and the most proficient ever, as for photography, no one matches them in its rulings, whether from the Romans or others (Ibn Battuta,2011).

He described (and it is amazing what I saw from them, whenever I entered one of their cities and then returned to it, I saw my picture and the picture of my friends engraved in the walls and papers, placed in the markets, and I entered the Sultan's city so I passed by the engraver market, and reached the Sultan's palace with my companions wearing like Iraqis, When I returned from the palace on the evening I passed by the aforementioned market, and I saw my picture and the pictures of my friends engraved in a paper, which they had affixed to the wall. They were identical and Don't mistake anything. And he mentioned to me that the Sultan had ordered them to do this, so they came to the palace while we were there, and photographed us when we did not feel that, and this is a habit for them to photograph everyone who passes by.And their goal in that is that if the stranger did what necessitates his escape from them, his image will be sent to the country to searched and catch him (Ibn Battuta,2011). Among the customs of the Chinese people, if a junk (a ship) wanted to travel, the owner of the sea and his writers went up, And they wrote the archers, servants and the navy traveling in it, then they are allowed to travel, so if the Junk is returned to China they also climbed to it and met what they wrote with people. If they lose any of what they are bound, they will ask the owner of the junk for it. He must come with an evidence of his death, escaping.. etc otherwise he will be arrested. And if they were done with that, they instructed the owner of the boat to dictate to them in detail all the goods in it, few and many, Then those who are in it come out, and the keeper of the diwan sits to see what they have, and if they find an item that has been hidden from them, the junk returns what has money for the store (Ibn Battuta,2011).

Ibn Battuta said about that and this is a kind of injustice that I have never seen in countries of the infidels and Muslims, except in China, and it is close to what happen in India too. Ibn Battuta said that if the Muslim merchant came to China, it would be better to go to a Muslim merchant who settled in a hotel. If he wanted to go to the merchant, his money will be seized. and the settler merchant insure him and spent on him by favor, then if he wanted to travel he searched for his money, and if anything lacks from his money , the settler merchant who received him would pay the compensation. But if he wanted to go to the hotel, he gave his money to the owner of the hotel who guaranteed it, and he buys for him what he loves and then after, he pay him, and if he wants to concubinage, he buys a slave girl. And he gives him a room whose door is in the hotel and spend money on them, the slave-girls are cheap, because all of the people of China sell their sons and daughters, and this is not considered a flaw for them, but they are not forced to travel with their buyer, and they are not prevented from choosing him, and if he wants , he marry her, But he is not allowed to spend his money in corruption (Ibn Battuta,2011). Ibn Battuta mentioned that, saying "and they say: We do not want to be heard in Muslim countries that they are losing their money in our country, for it is a land of corruption and great good " (Ibn Battuta,2011).

Ibn Battuta shed light on the availability of safety in China, so anyone can travel individually for a nine-month march with his money, so he is safe, as they had a hotel in every house in their country where a ruler lived in a group of knights and men, so if after sunset and dinner the ruler would come to the hotel With his writer, he writes and seals all the travelers overnight with it, and closes the hotel door for them. In the morning he comes with his clerk, calls each person by name and writes details about him, and sends with them someone to take them to his second house. And he comes back with a quittance from his judge, that everyone has reached him, even if he does not do his request with them, This work takes place in every house throughout their country,

from China clan to Khan Al-Balq. These hotels supply all what the traveler needs, especially chicken and rice, except for sheep, they are few (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

## Ibn Battuta's Journey to the Zeitoun city

Ibn Battuta mentioned during his visit to Zeitoun city that it is a city without olives, and there are no olives in all countries of China and India, except that it is an arabic name given to it. It is a great city, in which the clothes of Karkha and Atlas are made, and it is famous there and preferred than the khansa and khan baliq's clothes, and its anchorage is one of the greatest anchors in the world. There are about a hundred big Junks in it, while the small ones are not counted. and it is a large creek of the sea that enters into the land until it mixes with the greatest river, and in this city and all the countries of China a person has the orchard and the land and his home in the middle. The Muslims live in a separate city (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

Ibn Battuta said: " On the day I arrived there, I saw the prince who went to India as a messenger with a gift and went with us and drowned with the junk. So he greeted me and the owner of the court introduced me, so he took me to a nice house, and the Muslim judge Taj al-Din al-Adwili came to me, and he is one of the generous honorable people. And Sheikh of Islam Kamal Al-Din Abdullah Al-Isfahani, who is one of the the good people too. And the great merchants came to visit me too, including Sharaf al-Din al-Tabrizi, one of the merchants from whom I borrowed when I came to India, he treated people in best way. He knew Quraan by heart and recited a lot. And these merchants would reside in the country of the infidels. If the Muslim came to them, they were very happy with him and said: He came from the land of Islam, and to him they give the Zakat of their money, so he returns as rich as one of them" (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

He pointed out that there are a number of honorable sheikhs, such as Burhan al-Din al-Kazruni, and he has a Zawiya outside the country, and merchants offer him the vows they make to Sheikh Abu Ishaq al-Kazarooni. When the news of the arrival of Ibn Battuta reached the owner of the court, he wrote to Al-Qan, who is their greatest king, and told him of his arrival from the countries of India. Ibn Battuta asked him to send with him someone to drive him to the country of China, and they called it the China Clan, to watch it, and when the Qan agreed, he sent his companions with him to get him there, so Ibn Battuta rode the river in a boat that resembles the lids of the conquering in Morocco.

However, the rowers were rowing in it standing, and most of them were in the middle of the boat, and the passengers were at the front and rear of the boat, and they would shade the boat with clothes made from a plant grown in their country that resembles linen and is thinner than hemp. The journey in this boat lasted twenty-seven days, and every day the boat was anchored at midday in a village from which the passengers would buy everything they needed and perform the noon prayer, then descend at dinner to another village Ibn Battuta described the city of China, the Clan, saying: "Pottery is also made there and in Zeitun city too, and there is the river Abhir pouring into the sea, ..., and it is one of the largest and best of the cities, and one of its greatest markets is the pottery market, from which it is carried to the rest of China, India and Yemen" (Ibn Battuta, 2011). He mentioned that there is a church in the city center that has nine gates, inside each gate, there are Cylinders and terraces where the inhabitants sit, And between the second and the third gate, there is a place in which houses are inhabited by people with blindness and chronic diseases, and each one of them has his expenses and his clothing from the endowments of the Church, As well as between all the doors, and inside them the bimaristan for the sick and the kitchen for cooking food, and also doctors and servants.

The elders who do not have the ability to earn and live are charged by this church in addition to orphans and widows who have no money. a number of their kings give money to this church, the king made this city and its villages and orchards as Waqf to the church, and there is an image of the king in the church and they worship it (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta described the city of China as an accurate description, confirming the availability of public services from the markets and the church, and inside, there are two bimaristan and a kitchen, as well as the presence of doctors and servants. The church is also a refuge for the elderly and the disabled.

In some parts of this city, there is a Muslims town that has a mosque, a zawiya, a market, a judge, and a sheikh, as there must be in a city in China a Sheikh of Islam who is responsible for the affairs of Muslims in it, and a judge to rule them (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta pointed out that despite the spread of Christianity in this city, there is a community of Muslims and they have a mosque, a

zawiya and a judge who judges among them and is responsible for the affairs of Muslims and the fulfillment of their needs.

Ibn Battuta mentioned: "My descent was with Waheed Al-Din Al-Sinjari, who is one of the great merits of great wealth. I stayed with him for fourteen days, and the judge's masterpieces and the rest of the Muslims followed me, And every day they make a new invitation, and bring to it the good collectors and singers" (Ibn Battuta,2011).He added, "There is no city behind this city, neither to the infidels nor to the Muslims, and between it and the Gog and Magog Dam sixty days as mentioned to me.It is inhabited by infidels travelers who eat people if they catch them, and therefore do not travel to their country. in this country I didn't meet who saw the aforementioned dam, nor anyone who met someone who saw it" (Ibn Battuta,2011).

And when Ibn Battuta was in the city of China Clan he met an old sheikh who was two hundred years old and that he did not eat, drink, he lived in a cave outside it worshiping god, so he visited him. He was thin, very red, with signs of worship, and had no beard, so he greeted him, so he held his hands and sniffed them (Ibn Battuta,2011).He said to the translator, "This is from one side of the world as we are on the other. Then he said to me, I have seen a wonder! Do you remember your coming to the island where the church is and the man who was among the idols, and he gave you ten dinars of gold?" He said : It is me. So i kissed his hand, and then he thought for an hour, then he entered the cave and did not come out to us, as if he showed remorse for what he had spoken, so we frowned and we entered the cave against him, but we did not find him. We found some of his companions with a group of Al-Balasht among him, and he said: This is your hospitality, so they left. We said to him, we wait for the man, and he said: If you stay ten years, you will not see him, because his habit is if someone reveals one of his secrets he will not see after him, and you do not think that he is absent, but he is present with you!! was amazed at that and left. So I informed the judge, Sheikh of Islam and Waheed Al-Din Al-Sinjari of his case, so they said that his habit is with those who come to him from strangers, and no one knows what he is impersonating of religions, and what I thought one of his companions was he. And they told me that he had been absent from this country for about fifty years, then he came back a year ago, and the sultans, princes and elders would come to him as visitors, and he would give them artifacts and the poor came to him every day, and he was given to every one . He mentioned the Prophet (may God's prayers and peace be upon him and his family) and says if you were with him to support him, and he mentions the two caliphs Omar bin Al-Khattab (may God be pleased with him) and Ali bin Abi Talib (peace be upon him) with the best of remembrance and praises them .." (Ibn Battuta,2011).

Ibn Battuta referred to what they told him about him, saying: "Awhad Al-Din Al-Sanjari told me: I entered the cave and he took my hand, and it seemed to me that I was in a great palace, and that he was sitting in it on a bed with a crown above his head, and on either side of it were beautiful attributes, and the fruits were falling in rivers there, and I imagined I took an apple to eat it, suddenly I found myself inside the cave and he was laughing at me. A severe illness afflicted me for months, and I did not return to him. And the people of this country believe that he is a Muslim, but no one has seen him pray, but he is always fasting. The judge told me: I mentioned the prayer to him on some nights, and he said to me, Do you know what I do? My prayer is different from yours " (Ibn Battuta,2011). Ibn Battuta returned to the city of Zaytoun, and after several days the order of the law arrived to him to reach His Holiness, on the mainland or the river, and he chose to travel on the river, so they prepared for him a good boat of boats intended for riding the princes, and he sent his companions with them.The prince, the judge, and the Muslim merchants charged them in abundance (Ibn Battuta,2011).

### **Ibn Battuta Trip to The City of Khansa**

Ibn Battuta arrived in Khansa after 17 days from the city of Vengivu, "Kien-Chang-fu". He mentioned that her name is after the poetess Al-Khansa . It is larger than any city he saw before. The length of this city is three-day march. The traveler goes there and stop for relax, and each one has his orchard and his home, and it is divided into six cities. He was received upon his arrival by its judge, Fakhr al-Din and Sheikh of Islam in it, and the children of Othman bin Affan al-Masri, who are senior Muslims in it, with a white flag, drums, flames, and trumpets, and its prince went out in his procession, which are six cities surrounded by walls (Ibn Battuta,2011).Ibn Battuta indicated that the first city of it was inhabited by the guards of the city and their emir, and it is said that they were twelve thousand in the reins of the military, and he stayed for one night in the city when he entered it; in their prince's house [3]. On the third day, Ibn Battuta entered the third city inhabited

by Muslims, which is a good city, and their markets are arranged according to their order in the countries of Islam. It includes the mosques and the muezzins, and he heard them call to prayer at noon when they entered Medina, Ibn Battuta resided in the home of Othman bin Affan Al-Masry's children, and he was one of the great merchants who favored this city and lived in it and was known to him. He bequeathed his endowment with virtue and sanctity, and they followed their father's approach to altruism for the poor and aid for the needy (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

And they have a zawiya known as the Othmaniyah, which is well-built and has many endowments and it includes a sect of Sufism, and Othman al-Masri built the mosque in this city and made a big waqf to it. It is worth noting that the number of Muslims in this city is very large, and Ibn Battuta stayed with them fifteen days, and they were every day invited and they accompanied them every day for a picnic (Ibn Battuta, 2011). We notice here that Muslims are present in abundance in this city as in other cities, which confirms the strength of Islam in most of them. They accompanied Ibn Battuta when he entered the fourth city, which is the house of the emirate and in it the residence of the great prince Qorti, then his companions left him when he entered the city and the minister received him and went with him to the house of the great prince Qurti, and took from him the Farajiya that Jalaluddin Al-Shirazi gave him (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta indicated that this city is alone for the residence of the servants of the Sultan and his servants, and it is one of the best of the six cities, divided by three rivers, one of which is a bay emerging from the greatest river and in which the young boats come to this city with facilities of food and fuel stones, and there are ships for picnics. Al-Mashur is in the middle of this city, and it is very large, and the emirate's house is located in the middle of it, surrounded by all sides, and there are sheds in which craftsmen make valuable clothes and war machines. Prince Qurti told him that their number reached one thousand six hundred teachers, each one of them was followed by three or four educated people, and they were all slaves of Al Quan. In their feet there are restrictions and their homes are located outside the palace, and they are allowed to go out to the city markets without going out at its door. Every day they are presented to the Emir a hundred hundred, so if one of them lacks the Emir requested him. Among the most important of their habits is that if one of them served ten years, his restriction would be removed, and he had the choice whether to reside in the service unrestricted or to go wherever he wanted from the country of Al Quan and to not leave it. If he has reached fifty years, he is freed from work and spent on it, and is spent on those who have reached this age, and whoever reaches sixty years old, he is considered like a child, so judgments were not imposed on him (Ibn Battuta, 2011). The elders in China are very much venerable, One of them is called Ata, which means (Ibn Battuta, 2011). And the great prince Qurti is the prince of the princes of China.

He invited Ibn Battuta to his house and made a feast called the Tawa, and it was attended by the senior men of the city, and the Muslim cooks were brought, so they slaughtered and cooked food. Despite the greatness of this prince, he used to eat them with his hand and cut the meat with his hand, and he stayed in his hospitality for (3) days, and he sent his son with him to the Gulf (Ibn Battuta, 2011). So everyone rode on the ship with the son of al-Amir in another ship, and with him the people of music and sang in Chinese, Arabic and Persian, and the son of al-Amir admired Persian singing, so they sang poetry from it and ordered them to repeat it until they memorized it (Ibn Battuta, 2011). And Ibn Battuta pointed out: "In the Gulf, lot of ships met there, they have colorful castles and silk umbrellas, and their ships are carved, and they started playing and throwing each other with orange and lemon, and we went back to the prince's house, so we settled there, and the musician sang kinds of wondrous singing" (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta referred to one of the sorcerers from Ubaid Al-Qan, and the prince said to him: (Show us one of your wonders, so he took a wooden ball with a hole with long thongs and threw it into the air. Ibn Battuta referred to one of the sorcerers from Ubaid Al-Qan, and the prince said to him: "Show us one of your wonders, so he took a wooden ball with a hole with long thongs and threw it into the air. When there was nothing left of the thread in his hand but a small part, he commanded to one of his students, and he clung to him and ascended in the air until he lost sight of us. So he called him, but he did not answer him three times, so he took a knife in his hand like an exasperated one and got stuck in the thread until he was absent as well. Then he threw the boy's hand to the ground, then threw his leg, then his other hand, then his other leg, then his body, then his head, and then he landed blowing and his clothes stained with blood. He kissed the land in the hands of the prince and spoke to him in Chinese. And the prince ordered him something. Then he took the boy's organs, and he stuck them together and ran him with his leg, so he got up together. I was astonished at him. And my heart palpitations struck me like what I had when I saw something

like that India when, So they gave me a medicine to go away from what I found. Judge Fakhr al-Din was at my side, and he told me: I swear by God, there was no ascending nor descending, or cutting organs, but a sorcery" (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Ibn Battuta talked about the fifth city, which is one of the largest cities inhabited by common people, and its markets are good, and its craftsmen are very clever. And the khansa domes are made there and they make dishes called al-Dust, which is of reed, and a piece is pasted over and painted with a bright red dye, and the number of these dishes is ten in one hollow, It appears to the beholder as if it is a single plate because of its thinness, and they make a blanket to cover all of them, and they make a sahaf from this reed (Ibn Battuta, 2011). Among its wonders is that if it falls from the top, it does not break, and hot food is made in it so that its colors do not change, and it is brought from there to India, Khorasa etc, Ibn Battuta stayed his night in the hospitality of the emir of the city (Ibn Battuta, 2011). On the next day, Ibn Battuta entered from a gate called Kshi Wanan to the sixth city, and it is inhabited by the sea, the fishermen, the Galtas, and the carpenters, and they called Dod Karan. All of them are slaves of al-Sultan, and no one else lives with them, and their number is large, and this city is located on the coast of the greatest river, and Ibn Battuta stayed for a night in the Emir's hospitality, and Prince Qurfi provided him with what he needed, and his companions sent with him a fee for this hospitality (Ibn Battuta, 2011).

## Conclusion

The research reached a number of important results, the most important of which are:

- 1- Odoric and Ibn Battuta's Journey to China is complementary to each other due to the agreement of both of them in a number of points, which confirms the accuracy of their observations concerning the cities they visited.
- 2- Both of them described a number of Chinese cities accurately, as they indicated their geographical location and the area, the most important of which are the China Clan, Zeitun city, Khansa and others.
- 3- Both of them referred to the standard of living of the population, the nature of their homes and what they contained, the most important food they ate and the clothes they were wearing.
- 4- Both of them mentioned the city markets, the money they used to deal with, and the trade routes that merchants used to follow.
- 5- Both of them mentioned the religious beliefs that were widespread in China, especially Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and they referred to the existence of temples, churches and mosques.
- 6- Ibn Battuta met with a number of senior sheikhs and scholars, stressing the positive role of Muslims in a number of Chinese cities.
- 7- Both of them described the wealth and natural bounties, rivers and minerals of Chinese cities.

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