Mandeville's Medieval Audiences

A Study on the Reception of the *Book* of Sir John Mandeville (1371–1550)

ROSEMARY TZANAKI

ASHGATE

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Preface

This book is intended as a study of the audiences and reception of the *Book* of Sir John Mandeville. There has been a great upsurge of interest in early travel writing in recent years, but although Mandeville's work is being studied in more detail in academic circles, the question of his audiences has been inexplicably neglected.

Mandeville's account of his fictitious travels to the Holy Land, India and Cathay, drawn from a wide variety of other writings, was immensely popular throughout Europe during the late medieval period, being translated into nine different languages and many regional dialects. My main emphasis is on the reception in England and France, although other European countries are also discussed. The period covered is from the time of writing of the *Book* in the 1350s to the mid-sixteenth century.

The *Book*'s popularity was due to the way audiences interpreted the work, which is open to a multiplicity of readings depending on wider social and cultural contexts. These readings are classified thematically, according to whether audiences responded to the work as pilgrimage, geography, romance, history or theology; each of these themes is discussed in a separate chapter. The author's own intentions are considered by comparing the *Book* to its sources and examining how these were chosen and modified. The author's aims and attitudes are then compared to the various responses to the work, often demonstrating a dynamic contrast between intentionality and reception.

The audiences are identified in several ways. The many versions of the *Book*, often significantly altered redactions of the original, are presented and discussed in depth. Later authors who used material from Mandeville in their own work are introduced, with information on how they did so and to what purpose. Details of the marginalia and illustrations of the texts themselves are provided in order to demonstrate exactly what the readers found of interest; this research formed a major part of my doctoral thesis, on which the present book is based. Finally, the compendia of works bound with Mandeville are mentioned, as these suggest in what context the work was often placed.

In conclusion, the *Book* was seen and used in many different ways by a wide variety of audiences. The author's own intentions were rarely understood and his religious syncretism was often ignored, with audiences preferring the more marvellous aspects of his work. Attitudes towards the

work changed according to the cultural environment of each country and period, with a general move away from regarding it as a pilgrimage account towards seeing it chiefly as a source of geographical information. Many of Mandeville's stories survived independently, demonstrating his continuing popularity. It is interesting that even today most scholars have heard of Mandeville even if they have never read the *Book*.

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Thanks are due to the staff of the Departments of History, English and French at Reading University for introducing me to many different aspects of medieval culture. The humour, patience and practical help of many friends has also been of great assistance.

Finally there is my mother, without whose inspiration and support this work would never have been considered, let alone accomplished. This book is dedicated to her.

List of Abbreviations

AUMLA	Journal of the Australian Universities language and Literature Association
BL	British Library
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
EETS	Early English Text Society
EHR	English Historical Review
LPPTS	Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society
MLR	Modern Language Review
MP	Modern Philology
N&Q	Notes and Queries
RHS	Review of Historical Studies
RS	Rolls Series
YES	Yearbook of English Studies

Introduction

The *Book of Sir John Mandeville*[1] was one of the most popular works of the late medieval period, being read by a wide range of audiences from its inception in the 1350s or early 1360s until the seventeenth and even eighteenth centuries. The huge number of surviving manuscripts - around three hundred - and early editions across Europe attest to its importance.[2] By the 1420s there were versions of the *Book* in French, Anglo-Norman French, English, German, Flemish, Czech, Castilian, Aragonese and Latin, and within another fifty years it had also been translated into Italian, Danish and Gaelic.

My aim is to examine this extraordinary reception through a study of the *Book*'s audiences themselves. The *Book* was read in a wide variety of ways by different groups of people in different periods, against a background of social and cultural changes, and these readings often reflected views and attitudes directly opposed to or ignorant of the author's original intentions. My discussion of audiences is therefore twofold: I will examine not only who read the *Book*, but precisely what they read it for.

There are certain necessary restrictions on the scope of this study: I do not intend to examine reception beyond c. 1550. With the progressive exploration of the New World, Mandeville, seen only as a traveller, became gradually relegated to the status of fabulist and romancer. While editions continued into the seventeenth century, the responses to the *Book* had become fixed and modes of reception no longer reflected the rainbow of attitudes produced in earlier periods.

The general question of Mandeville's audiences in any period is an area inexplicably overlooked by most modern scholars, or studied in only a limited way. Hitherto most attention has been paid to questions such as the identity of the author, identification of the *Book*'s sources and textual interrelationships and criticism. Commentators who do examine the

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1 I am following Deluz in referring to the work by its medieval designation of a 'book' rather than as the 'Travels', as most scholars, excepting Warner and Higgins, have hitherto named it. The author himself refers to it as a 'liure' or 'liuret'. It was not known as the 'Travels' in England until Thomas East's edition of 1586, 'The Voiage and Travayle of Syr John Maundeville Knight', and in France until 1729. Medieval titles included 'livre', 'geste', 'romant', 'tractatus' and 'itinerarium'.

2 Altogether 72 editions of the *Book* are known to have been printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

possible audiences either analyse isolated references to Mandeville or are attempting to prove the validity of their own reading of the *Book*. Hamelius is among the most extreme, declaring it an 'anti-papal pamphlet in disguise'.[3] Bennett, intent on presenting the *Book* as a 'romance of travel', and Deluz, who sees it as a 'geography', stress those particular types of reception.[4] Bennett's assertions are often vague, studded with possible rather than proven audiences and prone to generalisation; Deluz's study of European reception is wide-ranging but not particularly deep.

As these authors were aware, any attempt at determining the *Book*'s audiences must start from an analysis of the author's intention as it appears in the development, structuring and voices of the work. In an inspiring article, Moseley[5] points out that 'many people wrote travel books; only this one achieved an enormous and lasting popularity. The reasons for that popularity and the considerable influence it exerted must be sought in the nature of the book and its treatment of its material - and in the handling of the audience's assumptions'. Almost thirty years later, Mandeville scholars are turning to a comprehensive examination of these issues.

The question of the author's identity might be thought crucial to a study of his intention, and the ensuing debate has concerned scholars for well over a century.[6] In 1887 John Ashton astutely predicted that 'I know of nothing more likely to be provocative of a literary war than the question of Sir John Mandeville's personal identity'. All to no avail: 'Mandeville' remains an enigma, and newer schools of thought stress the evidence of the text over and above any tentative identification which has been postulated. In fact this may be all to the good, as hypotheses based on a knowledge of any author's life often prove far-fetched and more tenuous than the evidence of the text itself would permit. I will however give a brief account of the authorship debate to the present day, in order to demonstrate the many possibilities on offer in the puzzle presented by 'Mandeville' himself.

The author of the *Book* presents himself as 'John Mandeville, knight ... born and bred in England in the town of St Albans, who crossed the sea in the year 1322 on Michaelmas Day, and who have since been a long time beyond the sea'.[7] He says that he is writing in 'the year of grace 1357, the

3 Hamelius, P. (1923), *Mandeville's Travels*, Vol. II, EETS O. S. 154, pp. 13-15.

4 Bennett, J.W. (1954), *The Rediscovery of Sir John Mandeville*. Deluz, C. (1988), *Le Livre de Jehan de Mandeville: une 'géographie' au XIVe siècle*.

5 Moseley, C.W.R.D. (1974), 'The metamorphoses of Sir John Mandeville' in *YES* 4, pp. 5-25.

6 Ashton, J. (1887), *The Voiage and Travayle of Sir John Mandeville, Knight*.

7 Iehan de Mandeuille, cheualier ... nez et nourris dengleterre de la ville de Saint Aubin, qui passay la mer lan mcccxxii. le iour de Saint Michiel, et que depuis ay este oultre mer par longt temps'. Letts, M. (1953), *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, Vol. II, p. 231.

35th year since I left our country'.[8] (In the Insular Version the year is given as 1356). This internal date is now generally accepted as being very likely, with critical consensus placing the *Book*'s inception at c. 1360. It could not in any case have appeared before Jean le Long's French translations of 1351, one of the author's main sources.

There is no such consensus on 'Iehan', although his self-presentation as an English knight was accepted by Bennett. There is an early connection with Liège, based on the contemporary author Jean d'Outremeuse's assertion that a certain doctor Jean de Bourgogne confessed to him on his deathbed that he was Mandeville. Outremeuse was also probably the person who inserted an epilogue into the Liège Version, in which 'Mandeville' tells of his reunion with an old acquaintance - the physician Jean de Bourgogne.

Scholars have argued both for a Jean de Bourgogne using the pen-name of Mandeville and for a real English Mandeville who assumed this alias.[9] Hamelius claimed that both 'Mandeville' and 'Jean de Bourgogne' were inventions of Jean d'Outremeuse, the true author of the *Book*.[10] The Liège connection has since been disproved; the Liège Version was most probably written by Jean d'Outremeuse, but this is no more than an adaptation of the original text, itself probably linked to the Continental Version. Deluz believes the author of the *Book* to have been a young French nobleman who travelled at least as far as Egypt; Seymour argues that 'Mandeville' was a native French speaker, compiling his work c. 1357 in a large, probably ecclesiastical library in Northern France or Flanders. While this seems the most likely hypothesis to date, his further tentative proposal of Jean le Long as the author is, by his own admission, unproven.[11]

In any case, the author's identity is far less important than his intention. Discussion of this intention will be divided into two key areas: the author's use and adaptation of his sources and his development of the Mandeville *persona* within the *Book*. The genres the *Book* drew on will also be examined, placing the work in social and historical context. Each genre corresponds to a reading of the *Book* according to the issues raised by the

8 'lan de grace mil ccc. lvii., le xxxve an que ie me party de nostre pays'. Letts, *ibid.*, p. 411.

9 Warner, G. (1889), *The Buke of John Maundeuill*; Fazy, R. (1949), 'Jehan de Mandeville: ses voyages et son séjour discutés en Egypte', in *Etudes Asiatiques* 3. See also Letts, M. (1949), *Sir John Mandeville - The Man and his Book*, who, unlike Fazy, denies that Mandeville ever travelled.

10 Hamelius, P. (1919), *Mandeville's Travels*, EETS O.S. 153, 154.

11 Seymour, M.C. (1984), 'Sir John Mandeville', in *Authors of the Middle Ages* I , p. 27.

author, and the work's reception is determined by the extent to which audiences understood, accepted, ignored or rejected these readings.

The dynamic tension between intentionality and response is of major importance in understanding the *Book*'s popularity. My approach is thematic, as the issues raised by Mandeville and the dominant types of reception fall naturally into five main areas: pilgrimage, geography, romance, history and theology. The *Book*'s readers tended to view it as coming under one or more of these headings to the exclusion of the rest; the author's intention was interpreted accordingly, sometimes being severely misrepresented. In some cases, of course, readers of the *Book* were catholic - or indiscriminate - in their tastes, equally fascinated by all its information. More often, though, they were interested in specific subject-areas - the Holy Land, or the shape of the earth, or monsters. Mandeville's work, weaving all these elements into an integrated whole, was deliberately unpicked or carelessly unravelled.

The fact that the *Book* was always intended for a wide audience is proved by the author's choice of language: that most widely accessible to a French public.

> And know that I would have put this little book into Latin in order to describe more briefly. But because many people understand French better than Latin, I have put it into French, so that each may understand it, and so that the lords and knights and other noble men who know little or no Latin, and who have been beyond the sea, should know and understand if I am telling the truth or not.[12]

By the late fourteenth century Latin was no longer the main language of literature; romances had long been composed in the vernacular and even traditionally clerical genres such as history were beginning to turn to a more familiar tongue. This change was defended by many authors on the grounds that the nobility, in particular, were not literate in Latin. Jean de Vignay explains the necessity for his translations thus: 'But because the book is in Latin, which is not commonly understood by knights, it was as if it had become a matter of indifference'; 'And because most noble men, and especially knights, are not commonly literate, I have put the aforesaid book

[12] 'Et sachies que ie eusse cest liuret mis en latin pour plus briefment deuiser. Mais pour ce que pluseurs entendent mieulx rommant que latin, ie lay mis en rommant, par quoy que chascun lentende, et que les seigneurs et les cheualiers et les autres nobles hommes qui ne sceuent point de latin ou pou, qui ont este oultre mer, sachent et entendent se ie dy voir ou non'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 231.

from Latin into French'.[13] Even when Latin was understood, French was seen as a more pleasant alternative; Jean de Meun dedicated his translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* to Philippe le Bel: 'Although you may understand Latin well, anyway it is much easier to understand French than Latin'.

The true significance of the author's choice of language for the *Book* is that he visualised audiences reading and listening to his work in the vernacular, whether they were the knights he mentions or commoners, clerics or laymen. This choice certainly added to the *Book*'s popularity from the beginning, allowing a wide dissemination not restricted to a learned readership. The later translations of the work into Latin, particularly the Vulgate Version, allowed the further transmission of the *Book* outside France into Europe; once established, the work was often retranslated into the local languages, thereby becoming available to the general populace once more. Thus the *Book* benefited both from the erudite use of Latin as a *lingua franca* and from the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century rise of vernacular languages as a literary medium throughout Europe.

Several of Mandeville's sources were themselves translated from Latin. One of these is the collection of slightly modified translations of works on the East, made by Jean le Long of Ypres, a monk of Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer, in 1351. Le Long himself drew on Jean de Vignay's earlier translations, as in *Les merveilles de la terre d'Outremer*. The works Le Long gave were the following: the Franciscan friar Odoric of Pordenone's *Descriptio orientalium partium* of 1330, recounting his missionary expeditions in the Orient from India to China; the Dominican William of Boldensele's *Liber de quibusdam ultramarinis partibus*, an account made in 1336 of his pilgrimage to Egypt and the Holy Land; the Dominican missionary Ricoldo da Montecroce's *Liber Peregrinationis*; the Armenian prince Hayton's strongly political *Fleur des histoires de la terre d'Orient*, a history of the Tartars presented to Pope Clement V in 1307; an account of the Khan by the Archbishop of Sultaniyeh to Pope John XXII; and a letter of 1338 from the Khan to Pope Benedict XII. Of these, Mandeville made extensive use of Odoric, Boldensele and Hayton.

Other sources of the *Book* were available in French, including the twelfth-century *Romance of Alexander* and the *Letter of Prester John* on the marvels of his Eastern land. There was also Jacques de Vitry's thirteenth-century *Historia orientalis*. Brunetto Latini had written his

[13] *De la Chose de Chevalerie*, 1320 ; *Les Enseignemens de Theodore Paliologue* (1335-50). In Jean de Vignay, *Les Merveilles de la Terre d'Outremer*, ed. Trotter, D.A. (1990), p. xxiii.

encyclopaedic *Livres dou Tresor* in c. 1264, justifying his use of French rather than Italian with the words 'the speech is more delightful and more common to all languages'.[14] The Dominican William of Tripoli's *Tractatus de statu Saracenorum* (1273) may also have been used in French.[15]

This is not to say that the *Book*'s author was illiterate in Latin. He used Vincent of Beauvais's great work - the *Opus Majus*, composed of the *Speculum historiale* and *Speculum naturale* (c. 1256-59) - mainly in a French translation, but he compared this to a Latin text in order to supplement missing passages. He also used the *Otia imperialia* in Latin. He does make occasional mistakes, leading Deluz to conclude that his Latin, though adequate for reading, was 'assez incertain'.[16]

Thus Mandeville had a wide variety of sources to draw on. He was writing at a time when the classical authors had been available to the Christian West for some time, having been translated from Arab sources during the twelfth century. Aristotle, Plato, Ptolemy and Pliny were known as authorities, as were Solinus, Seneca and Macrobius. Church authors such as Augustine and Bede were also popular. Jacques de Vitry, writing in c. 1220, presented a picture of the Near East which still drew largely upon Pliny, Solinus and Isidore.

New knowledge of the East was also flowing in during the thirteenth century, following the conquest of Constantinople and the opening of routes via the Black Sea, and in particular because of the stability and security of Central Asia following the Mongol invasion. A new East was soon to appear through the works of travellers like John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck and Odoric of Pordenone, among the first to journey to the Tartar Empire. Marco Polo also benefited from the more secure trade routes to China. By Mandeville's time, Mamluk expansion and the conversion of the Khans of the Golden Horde to Islam had reduced Christian access to the East once more, but this only served to increase interest in those lands. Pilgrim itineraries to the Holy Land were also becoming ever more popular. It was in this climate of geographical enthusiasm and curiosity about the Asian continent that the *Book* was written.

During this period travel literature itself was moving away from traditional attitudes towards a new kind of writing. A secular reading public was on the increase, with the rise of general levels of literacy and the wider availability of books. Travel writing was developing towards a new empirical mode, championed in the late thirteenth century by Marco Polo.

[14] *Le Livres dou Tresor*, ed. Carmody, F.J. (1948), p. 18.
[15] Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 62-3.
[16] *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Mandeville, while giving his work the framework of a conventional fourteenth-century pilgrimage to the Holy Land, was also attempting to express himself in new forms.

One such form was used to great effect: the author's authority is based not on the written *authoritas* of his sources but on his traveller-*persona* of Sir John. As Rubiés and Elsner have discussed, 'after Marco Polo the authority of the traveller replaced that of the book; the book was only authoritative if the traveller whose report it contained was authoritative too'.[17] The author of the *Book* accordingly created a traveller with a consistently developed personality to give his unacknowledged compilation a voice. Although we now know that he never truly existed, 'Sir John Mandeville' contributed immensely to the *Book*'s reception by linking the accounts used and constantly reinforcing their veracity.

The literary techniques used by the author in developing this *persona* and its adoption and adaptation by other redactors will be analysed fully below; for the present, only a brief overview of its narrative function will be given. 'Sir John Mandeville' constantly inserts personal comments into the narrative, describing his experiences (he has been in the service of both the Sultan of Egypt and the Emperor of Cathay) and stressing that he has seen many wonders with his own eyes. He has drunk from the Fountain of Youth, seen great canes that all his companions could not lift and made measurements with his astrolabe. In inspired displays of verisimilitude, the author of the *Book* even makes 'Mandeville' deny seeing some marvels in order to lend greater credence to his other assertions. He cheekily explains the omission of some lands and 'diverse things' by saying that he wants to leave something for others to record.

This *persona* affords the author many opportunities for humour. Part of this stems from the ironical contrast between 'Mandeville's' apparent disingenuousness and the author's hidden - or sometimes plain - intent. This is seen in the Sultan's colloquy, where the knight is surprised to find the infidel ruler so well aware of the evils of Latin society. It is also found in other discussions between 'Mandeville' and local people: on one occasion he is informed of the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation, on another he discusses the relative strangeness of the exotic Vegetable Lamb and the more familiar Barnacle Goose. In each case the author improves upon his material, making the information more plausible and simultaneously drawing conclusions which may differ widely from those of his sources.

[17] Elsner, J. and Rubiés, J-P. (1997), *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, p. 37.

The Mandeville-*persona* is also a vehicle for the author's silent but direct rejection of his sources. For example, he often contradicts Willam of Boldensele: where the true traveller states that the Pyramids are tombs, Mandeville reverts to the legend of Joseph's granaries. Where Boldensele proudly claims to have astonished the monks of Mount Sinai by being the first Christian to ride there on horseback, Mandeville declares categorically that only camels can cross the desert, as a horse would not find anything to eat or drink.

This deflation of a specific source is yet more marked in the *Book*'s treatment of the intolerant and self-aggrandising Friar Odoric. The harrowing episode of the Vale Perilous, a vision of hell placed between the false paradise of the Assassins and the real but inaccessible Earthly Paradise, is based on Odoric's account. The infernal valley is full of devils, noise, music and tempests, with a great fiery head in the centre, mysterious dead bodies and deceptive riches strewn about. Odoric proudly relates how he overcame the latter temptation and, sustained by his faith, escaped unharmed - thereby impressing the local Saracens as a holy man.

Sir John's journey through the Vale is described at much greater length. He and his companions debate whether to enter, and take communion first. Once inside, they pass into darkness, tread on wailing corpses and are beaten down by terrible storms. The knight resists the gold and silver because he does not want to lose the feelings of deep piety and devotion the horrors have aroused in him. He emerges, but not unscathed - he will carry the black mark he has received for many years until he repents of his sins. Odoric's bragging, literally holier-than-thou attitude is completely rejected.

It is in this episode that Mandevillian irony comes most obviously to the fore and not simply because of the moral reworking of the tale. The knight's companions who give communion to the others and encourage them are two friars minor from Lombardy. Although they are not named, this is a clear reference to Odoric himself. This subtle claim of companionship did not go unnoticed. In one fifteenth-century German manuscript of Odoric, the author is actually described as 'faithful Brother Odoric, companion of the knight Mandeville in India'.[18] Michel Velser, the translator of a German version of the *Book*, interrupts the narrative to confirm it from a book he has seen in a Franciscan library - seemingly Odoric's account, reworked to agree with Mandeville. The Vulgate Latin Version interpolates Odoric's own account, at the end of which 'Sir John' says that Odoric 'did not endure as much as I did in the valley'. A

[18] 'Itinerarius fidelis fratris Oderici socii militis Mandavil per Indiam...' Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek, MS. Weissenburg 40, f. 57v. Quoted by Reichert, F.E. (1992), *Begegnungen mit China: Die Entdeckung Ostasiens im Mittelalter*, p. 204, n. 40.

manuscript dated 1518-20 containing extracts from the Italian Version, together with excerpts from Odoric and others, contains the following marginal note: 'De questa valle parle Zuan de Mandevilla più diffusamente, peroché lui fu in essa cum frate Uderico'.[19]

These examples show how the *Book*'s humour was often received as literal truth. Some readers, like the redactor of the Vulgate Latin, actually returned to the source and deliberately erased 'Mandeville's' interpretation, making him as opinionated as Odoric himself. When audiences saw through the fabrication this often led them to reject the *Book* in its entirety, as later geographers did. Generally, however, any unease people may have felt was dispelled by Sir John's earnest claims to personal knowledge.

The ironies in his work, which passed mostly unnoticed as such, indicate that the author was aware of the possibility that people would read it on a single level. Writing in several established genres, he risked being read only as an example of those genres. He retaliated by taking each format to extremes. In one mode, Christian pilgrimage is unfavourably compared with Indian piety; in another, the circumnavigation of the globe itself becomes an amusing story. Mandeville's irony excludes those who cannot see it, while those who notice and appreciate it are rewarded by being included in a select, knowing group of readers.

The circumnavigation story brings out another of the author's underlying interests, again one that does not seem to have affected a wide audience: language. In the tale, a man sets out from Europe and travels around the world until he comes to an island where he hears someone driving oxen with words like those used in his country. He wonders at this, then turns round and goes back the way he came. Many years after his return, he visits an island off Norway which he realises is the place he went to; if he had continued only a short way onwards, he would have arrived home without difficulty.

The story's humour is thus based on a linguistic misunderstanding. Yet language is a vital tool to understanding not only one's geographical position but the mental and spiritual positions of other people. When Mandeville wonders how the Sultan of Egypt can be aware of the true state of Christendom, he is introduced to four Egyptian nobles who not only know Western countries as if they had been born there, but speak very good French - as does the Sultan himself. These are not simple spies but educated, cultured members of court. How many European rulers and lords speak Arabic? The issue has wider implications than simple spying; the Saracens are apparently open to conversion if one tells them of the law of

[19] Venice, Biblioteca Marciana MS. It. VI 208, f. 25v. Quoted by Reichert, *Begegnungen*, p. 204, n. 40.

Christ. How will they be told unless one speaks their language? The way is already open, as they have the Bible 'in writing in their language'. Perhaps this is why the author makes a point of noting the place where St Jerome translated the Bible into Latin, making it accessible to the West. The plate in Hermes' tomb prophesying the coming of Christ was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The three main languages of the Bible are both an authorisation of the prophecy and an aid to understanding it.

Language is also an element of cultural unity, sometimes in a sinister way. Jews across the world learn Hebrew, not as an innocent affirmation of identity, but in order to be able to communicate with the Ten Tribes when they break out of the Caspian Mountains and attack Christendom. Here, according to Mandeville, a foreign tongue has become a threat; but more often languages are a source of fascination. The *Book*'s six alphabets - corruptions or inventions of Greek, Hebrew, Egyptian, Saracen, Persian and Chaldean - are proof of simultaneous diversity and similarity. The alphabets are exotically unfamiliar but prove a shared literacy, as does the Quran. Mandeville even compares the Saracen alphabet to English: they have four extra letters, just as we have thorn (þ) and yogh (ȝ).

The reception of the *Book*'s alphabets could be taken as indicative of its reception as a whole. In many texts some or all are omitted, dropped either by the redactors (in the Vulgate Latin Version, for example) - or, more frequently, scribes unwilling to copy the bizarre symbols. Some copyists are interested in an academic way: in BN MS. n.a. 4515, the alphabets were not in the scribe's original exemplar, so he added them at the end with a correct Hebrew one. Other audiences are more responsive; the Liège Version adds three extra alphabets, those of Tartary, Cathay and Pentexoire. Two Low German manuscripts add not three but nine exotic scripts, resulting in a grand total of 15.[20] Another text of the von Diemeringen Version was compiled with a Hebrew alphabet from the *Letter of Prester John*.[21] Readers, too, sometimes marked them in the margins: 'alfabeto grecorum', 'nota de alphabeto egipciorum', 'Hebrew ALPHABET'.[22] Thus the subject was rejected, noted or elaborated on, depending on the audiences' response to the *Book*'s information and its author's intention.

20 Berlin, Staatsbibliothek HS. Germ. Fol. 204 (dated 1430) and Lüneburg, Ratsbücherei HS. hist. c 2o 8.

21 Rome, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Rossiano 708. Cf. Seebold, E. (1998), 'Mandevilles Alphabete und die Mittelalterlichen Alphabetsammlungen', in *Beitrage zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 120, pp. 435-49.

22 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. CFM 23, ff. 15v, 16; BL MS. Arundel 140, f. 17v.

The author's cultural concerns and deeply moral attitudes are set within the overall pilgrimage-structure of the *Book*. This may not be a traditional pilgrimage, due to the account of the East, but the latter is neither a digression nor a 'renunciation ... an abandonment of the dream of a sacred center upon which all routes converge and a turning instead toward diversity'.[23] On the contrary, the journey towards the margins of the inhabited world stresses the basic centrality of the work. The author of the *Book* has created a religious geography centred upon the physical and spiritual Jerusalem, stressing the unity of this world through its very diversity. Each mention of difference is juxtaposed with the familiar, culminating in an attitude of religious syncretism based on traditional morality. Thus, while the *Book* has been seen as a linear journey[24] or the 'account of a curious man's exploration of the earth',[25] for the author religious issues are paramount. A philosophical viewpoint underlies all the marvels described; cultural diversity is seen not as an example of fragmentation but as evidence of an underlying unity bestowed by the grace of God.

The *Book*'s audiences rarely responded to this syncretism. Instead, they treated the work as a mine of information on a variety of issues, seeing it as pilgrimage guide, geographical study, collection of marvels, historical source or moral treatise depending on their personal interests. This was inevitable given the age the *Book* was written and flourished in. Against a background of new cultural and social ideas, pilgrimage literature was growing into a new kind of travel writing whose empirical aims encouraged an attitude of curiosity rather than piety - an attitude which was to lead to the exploratory spirit of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Geography was turning away from traditional modes towards a new type of interest in ethnography and science. Devotional literature was likewise developing in the period before and during the Reformation.

Thus, while some audiences saw Mandeville as a traditionalist, others regarded him as an inspiration for innovation in a variety of areas, both devotional and practical. Although Mandeville did not design his work to be subversive, it became so by the very nature of the genres it followed and the historical moment it was written in. The enigma of the knight's identity and intention quickly developed, in its reception, into the enigma of the *Book*'s multiple texts, readings and audiences.

23 Greenblatt, S. (1991), *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*, p. 29.

24 Howard, D.R. (1980), *Writers and Pilgrims: Medieval Pilgrimage Narratives and their Posterity*, p. 76.

25 Zacher, C.K. (1976), *Curiosity and Pilgrimage: The Literature of Discovery in Fourteenth-Century England*, p. 131.

This latter enigma is a fascinating and complex one. Mandeville's audiences and their responses to his work are valuable guides to medieval and post-medieval culture, knowledge, assumptions and beliefs - in effect, to the way people saw the world. They are also difficult to define and place in context: such an analysis is only possible by thorough examination of the various types of evidence available.

The first type of evidence is that provided by the *Book*'s versions - the multiplicity of translations, redactions and variants which form the textual tradition of Mandeville's work. These show us exactly how their authors viewed the *Book*, according to their emendations, redactions or abridgements. The further reception of each version helps to demonstrate how successful it went on to be.

Apart from the redactors and translators of the *Book*, other authors used Mandeville in their own works. These might be pilgrimage guides, geographical works, romances, history or other types of literature. Mandeville might be quoted or mentioned in some way, but more often material from the *Book* was silently incorporated. Sometimes such usage extended to other media; the geographer Martin Behaim, for instance, acknowledged Mandeville's importance on his 1492 globe of the world. These audiences afford us a large amount of information on how Mandeville was read and how pervasive his influence was in various genres - pilgrimage, geography, romance, history and theology - at key points in time.

A third type of evidence is that afforded by the compendia in which the *Book* was included. Although many manuscripts are miscellaneous, most have a thematic thread running through their choice of components. This allows us to determine how the *Book* was seen, according to the company it kept and the way it was classified. It must be remembered, however, that many compendia were not originally written as a whole but progressively added to, making the dating of the *Book*'s inclusion uncertain.

The fourth way of determining the *Book*'s audiences is through examination of the manuscripts themselves. Here the question of ownership arises. The *Book*'s owners came from all classes. They included, as the author obviously intended from his remarks in the Prologue, many members of the nobility. This acceptance of the work as part of court culture was particularly noticeable in the early years after it was written.

The history of the *Book*'s transmission thus demonstrates the links between the European courts. The earliest existing copy, BN MS. n.a. 4515, was presented to Charles V by Gervaise Chrétien, the royal physician. Valentina Visconti, the famous bibliophile daughter of the Duke

of Milan and Isabella of Valois, owned a copy.[26] Valentina's son, Charles d'Orléans, acquired another Mandeville after his mother's death. In October 1380, the future Juan I of Aragon asked his uncle, Charles VI of France, for a copy of the *Book* in the French language which was then translated into Aragonese.[27] A Mandeville was also in the inventory of the effects of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, in 1397.[28] Over the following centuries, Isabella of Castile and many lesser nobles across Europe owned manuscripts.

Mandeville was also popular among the clergy and figured in many monastic libraries, from St Albans, Reading and the Augustinian Priory of Bolton to Würzburg and Klosterneuburg. As time went by, there was an obvious gradual popularisation of the *Book* among the middle and lower classes. People from many walks of life owned copies - for instance, John Heruy, admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1509, and 'Thomas Foluylle fisician'. Unfortunately, while this is most informative on the dissemination of the *Book* and the social status of its audiences, it does not tell us what particular aspects they were interested in.

Even more problematically, it is often difficult to determine the identity of specific users with any precision. Among the means of ascertaining a manuscript's possible ownership and/or the social status of that version's audiences, is external evidence such as the amount of decoration in the book and the material (vellum or paper) of which it is made. The care with which the text has been copied sometimes indicates a bespoke volume, particularly in the earlier manuscripts, but the increase in literacy and wealth in the fifteenth century - followed by the supply of cheaper books and above all the advent of printing - makes the ownership of many texts all but impossible to determine.[29]

Without ignoring the ownership evidence mentioned above, I have chosen a different method for determining Mandeville's audiences' exact areas of interest. This is the study of marginal notes, symbols and underlining drawing attention to specific parts of the text. These can rarely be connected to a specific owner, but as a firsthand response to the text in question they are invaluable. A relatively large number of owners of

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26 See Camus, J. (1894), 'Les "Voyages" de Mandeville copiés pour Valentine de Milan', in *Revue des Bibliothèques* 4, pp. 12-19.

27 Rubió y Lluch, A. (1921), *Documents per l'Historia de la Cultura Catalana Mig-eval*, Vol. II, pp. 221, 225.

28 Viscount Dillon and St. John Hope, W.H. (1897), 'Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, Duke of Gloucester', *The Archaeological Journal* 54, pp. 275-306.

29 The most comprehensive source of ownership details is Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, App. I.

manuscripts of the *Book* expressed their interest in this way; their choice of language, whether Latin or vernacular, can also be revealing. With this in view, I have examined a wide selection of texts of the Continental, Insular, English and Independent Latin Versions (see list and Table 2 below).

This direct source of information on the *Book*'s audiences has been surprisingly neglected. Christiane Deluz has so far been the only commentator to discuss the marginalia in any way. She devotes some pages to them at the end of her work, as evidence of the readers' diversity of interests.[30] She also provides a comparative table of marginalia and illustrations,[31] providing statistics of the frequency with which readers of 24 manuscripts evinced an interest in any part of the *Book*. While this is an interesting addition to Deluz's study, it has not been taken far enough. I propose to go beyond this research, discussing a larger number of manuscripts in greater detail and using the evidence collected to examine the patterns of readership and audiences of the *Book* in depth. The full list of marginalia in each text is the subject of a paper currently in preparation.

The illustration of the *Book* is another useful indicator, according to the subjects thought worthy of pictorial depiction. This is evidence of the scribes' and illuminators' tastes rather than those of the owners, but all are equally valid as audiences. In the case of printed editions the illustrations are doubly important, as there are usually very few marginalia. Unfortunately, once the *Book*'s versions were in print both text and illustrations became largely standardised. The woodcuts were used in several editions for reasons of cost and convenience; this is the case with the popular Sorg woodcuts discussed here. Anton Sorg's 1481 Augsburg edition of Velser's German Version contained 121 woodcuts. Copies of these are found in many French, English and Spanish editions; they had been acquired by the Lyon printers Philippi and Reinhart by 1482, and Wynkyn de Worde copied 68 woodcuts for his 1499 edition.[32]

The Versions

This is a general overview of the versions of the *Book*, in order to give some idea of the dissemination of the work up to the sixteenth century.

[30] Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 291-300.

[31] *op. cit.*, Appendix V. 5.

[32] Cf. Bennett, J.W. (1953), 'The woodcut illustrations in the English editions of *Mandeville's Travels*', in *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 47, pp. 59-69.

These versions will be more thoroughly examined in the following chapters. The basic transmission is shown in table 1 below.

The *Book*'s archetype, written c. 1357-60, is no longer in existence so far as is known. It can only be postulated from the two versions directly descended from it, the Continental and the Insular.

The earliest text of the Continental Version was written in 1371. About 26 manuscripts survive, all dating from the late fourteenth to the late fifteenth century and mainly written in France. All the French editions (12 between 1480 and 1560) are derived from this version.

The Continental Version was the original of translations into several European languages during the late fourteenth to early fifteenth century. One was into German, the Velser Version made in c. 1393-99 which is extant in 40 manuscripts and three fifteenth-century editions. Three translations were made into Hispanic languages: there is evidence of a Catalan manuscript of 1394, and one Aragonese text of approximately the same period survives. An independent translation into Castilian c. 1500 gave rise to seven editions. The Continental Version was also translated into Dutch before 1430 and Italian before 1432.

A second major family of manuscripts is that of the Liège Version, based on the Continental with various interpolations. This version, comprising seven manuscripts, was made c. 1390, almost certainly by the chronicler and romancer Jean d'Outremeuse. It includes many interpolations on the epic hero Ogier the Dane. The Ogier Interpolations, as these are known, are not particularly subtle; in his attempts to glorify his hero, Outremeuse deliberately reverses the *Book*'s attitudes to self-aggrandising conquerors and pagan peoples, praising the former while patronising the latter.

The Liège Version is the original of an early Latin redaction, the Vulgate Latin Version made after 1396. This is a severe revision of the *Book*, cutting it by about a third. Its author is intolerant in the extreme, condemning all but the most doctrinally sound Christianity and rejecting Mandeville's theological syncretism. Sir John himself becomes another Odoric, travelling the world only to sneer at and anathematise the diverse faiths of the people he finds. Despite this, the version was popular throughout Europe; 41 copies and four fifteenth-century editions, printed in Germany and the Netherlands, survive.

The Vulgate Latin redaction was translated into Danish in 1444. A popular 1390s German redaction by Otto von Diemeringen, canon of Metz, was based on the Liège Version and probably also drew on the Vulgate Latin. Von Diemeringen's version was then translated into Czech in the early fifteenth century.

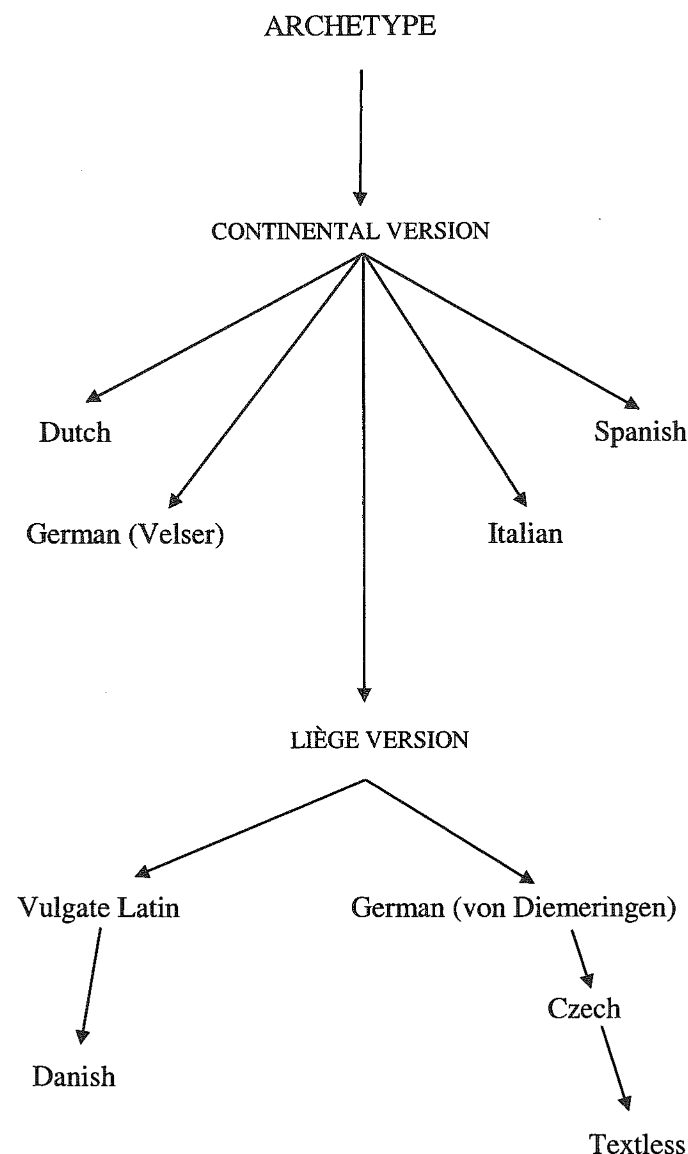
The Insular Version, derived, like the Continental, from the *Book*'s lost archetype, was made in England before 1390, probably in the late 1370s. Most of the c. 25 manuscripts extant circulated in England, apart from a subgroup which entered France; six manuscripts of the *Book* are conflations of the Insular and Continental Versions. This version, in Anglo-Norman dialect, omits part of the account of the Vale Perilous, adds a passage on Job and differs on the shape of the earth among other more minor variations.

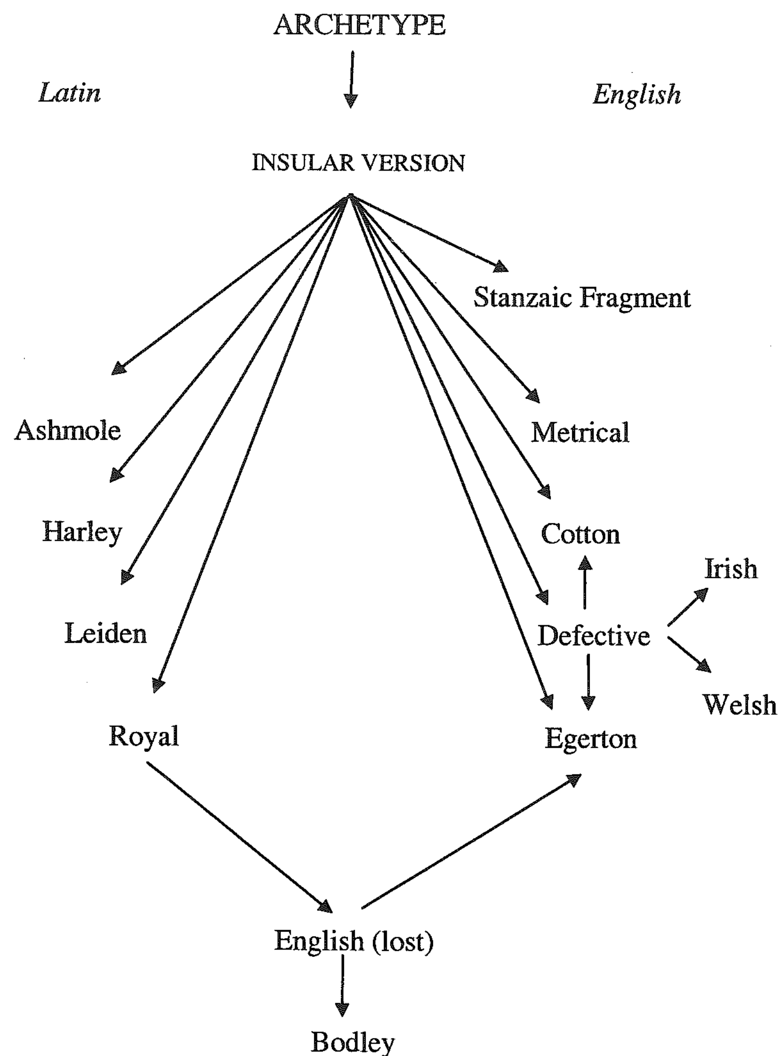
The Insular Version gave rise to a number of other redactions in England which are extremely important in charting the progress of interest in the *Book* in one country. The Defective Version, so called because it lacks a quire of text in the account of Egypt, was translated directly from the Insular Version c. 1400. This proved the most popular English text; about 38 manuscript copies remain and all the English editions stem from it. There were also four separate Latin translations of which only a few manuscripts survive. The highly individual Bodley and Metrical Versions stem from two of these Latin recensions.

Two other English versions of the early fifteenth century, Cotton and Egerton, are based mainly on the Defective; the former is, like its parent, a fairly straightforward translation. An extraordinary stanzaic fragment, a sort of 'redactio ad absurdum' was possibly derived from the Cotton Version. The Defective Version later also gave rise to the Irish Version, a translation made in 1475. Finally there is a Welsh Version from the early sixteenth century, contained in one illustrated manuscript copied from an English Defective edition.[33]

[33] British Library MS. Add. 14921. A study of this manuscript is forthcoming.

Table 1 Basic transmission of the *Book*





Methodology

The basic text used throughout this book is the Continental French Version, based on Letts' edition of BN MS. n.a. 4515, the earliest surviving text of the *Book*.[34] This is the version closest to the lost archetype, which makes it all the more surprising that it has been largely ignored until recently.[35] This lack of interest is due partly to English commentators' insularity and preoccupation with the Insular and English versions; Deluz was the first to analyse the Continental Version in depth, in her reading and source study *Le Livre de Jehan de Mandeville*.

However, while this is the primary version used in my analysis, it is impossible to read the *Book* as a single text due to its multiplicity of incarnations and reincarnations across Europe. This intertextual richness has been largely ignored by modern scholarship, with each commentator choosing a single text as the basis of their reading. This has resulted in the *Book* being read in very limited ways, at least partly due to the version studied. Inevitably, scholars have unwittingly emulated medieval audiences in this stress of one facet of Mandeville above all others, and the work's multiplicity of possible readings has gone largely unnoticed. Higgins, in his multitextual reading of the *Book*, is one of the few to have acknowledged the importance of this issue. These multiple texts are a vital source in my analysis of Mandeville's audiences.

I have focused my detailed study of the *Book*'s versions on the Continental and Insular French, English, Liège and Latin Versions. These are the primary versions for a discussion of the *Book*'s reception in England and France, my chief areas of interest; they are also important as the texts from which all other versions originate. The sheer magnitude of such an undertaking does not allow me to include every version in depth, although most are used. The German versions have been discussed in detail by Morall[36] and Ridder,[37] and readings of them are given by Higgins.

Where these are available I have used modern editions of the *Book*'s versions in my discussions of these texts. The Insular Version follows Deluz's recent edition, *Le Livre des merveilles du monde*.[38] Insular variants

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[34] Letts, M. (1953), *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, Vol. II, Hakluyt Society 2nd ser.

[35] Cf. Deluz, *Le Livre* and Higgins, I.M. (1997), *Writing East: The 'Travels' of Sir John Mandeville*.

[36] Morall, E.J. (1974), *Sir John Mandevilles Reisebeschreibung in deutscher Übersetzung von Michel Velser*.

[37] Ridder, K. (1991), *Jean de Mandevilles 'Reisen': Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der deutschen Übersetzung des Otto von Diemeringen*.

[38] Deluz, C. (2000), *Le Livre des merveilles du monde*.

on the Continental text are generally given from Letts' edition of the former, where they appear, as here, in brackets. For the Egerton text I have chosen M. Letts' 1953 edition.[39] Seymour's editions of the Cotton, Bodley, and Metrical Versions are used.[40] The Vulgate Latin Version exists in print only in Hakluyt's 1589 edition, the *Liber Ioannis Mandevil*, reprinted by the Hakluyt Society.[41] The translations of this and other material are my own unless otherwise stated.

My methodology provides a continuing juxtaposition of authorial intention and audience reception of the *Book*. In order to examine the audiences themselves, I have divided them into categories according to the central themes of the *Book*. Each of the five main chapters deals with one of these themes and the issues it raises, presented under the headings of pilgrimage, geography, romance, historiography and theology. It is important to note here that not all the *Book*'s audiences fall exclusively into separate categories; overlapping readings are possible, with the same readers interested in two or more aspects. This is inevitable given the multiplicity of possible readings, and I have tried to show how some audiences appreciate more than one facet of the *Book*, while others are more limited in their approach.

The first chapter deals with the major issue of Mandeville read as pilgrimage. The main focus here as regards authorial intention is on the devotional world centred on Jerusalem and placed in the context of the end of the crusades and the new shift towards mission as a method of communication with other religions. The question of the development of attitudes towards wonder as a form of curiosity rather than piety is also brought out, and audiences are shown to have read the *Book* in a variety of ways within this wider pilgrimage theme.

The next chapter discusses the geographical aspects of the *Book*. Again, the original intention is seen as one of depicting a unified religious geography of the world and human culture. Yet Mandeville came to be seen as a source of purely practical information, and part of his influence was connected to his popularisation of the idea of circumnavigation. Many audiences of the *Book*, particularly in later periods, saw it in this light.

'Romantic Interludes' brings out subjects belonging to the genre of romance. Here again intentions and reception differ widely: where the

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[39] Letts, M. (1953), *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, Vol. I.

[40] Seymour, M.C. (1967), *Mandeville's Travels*, Clarendon, Oxford.; (1963), *The Bodley Version of Mandeville's Travels,* EETS O. S. 253; (1973), *The Metrical Version of Mandeville's Travels,* EETS O. S. 269.

[41] Hakluyt, R. (1589, 1965), *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation: A Photo-Lithographic Facsimile*, Hakluyt Society, 2 vols.

author usually inserts episodes based on the traditions of romance, his conclusions are strongly moral and even didactic. The *Book* was sometimes read as pure romance and borrowed from by romance writers. Its moralising views were eliminated from later redactions such as the Bodley Version and romantic elements were even interpolated in the Liège Version.

This is followed by a discussion of the *Book* considered in the context of vernacular prose historiography. The author used history as a means of reinforcing the centrality of his work in time as well as space, as a background to biblical events - a sacred history of his geography - and an often moralising explanation of the rise of peoples. This linking of past, present and future was often ignored by audiences intent on using the *Book* only as a source of historical information, reducing it to the status of a chronicle.

The final chapter concentrates on Mandeville's theological questions and their audiences. I examine the author's philosophical approach to human culture and his development of a syncretic religious viewpoint, characterised by tolerance and a faith in natural goodness and belief. This is perhaps where his development of his sources has advanced furthest beyond them, transmuting friar Odoric's intolerant attitudes into a far more thoughtful comparison of the often corrupt culture of Latin Christendom with a variety of other religious systems. This humanising approach to otherness was often misread by his readership, who often preferred to emphasise the weirdness of the exotic over and above the common humanity implicit in the *Book*'s attitudes. Other audiences went in the opposite direction, rejecting Mandeville's tolerance in favour of a more traditionally hard-line attitude towards people seen as heretics, infidels and pagans.

List of Manuscripts

The following is a list of the manuscripts containing marginalia or illustrations used in this study, in order to give a general idea of readers and illustrators' interests. Information on materials, size, ownership etc., has been compiled chiefly from Bennett, Seymour and Deluz, and presented together with my own observations. While it is often difficult to date the marginalia, some of which are only symbols and or a few scribbled words, I have tried to eliminate those obviously from the seventeenth century or later. In my classification I use the numbering conventions proposed by De Poerck[42] (in brackets) followed by Bennett's numbering. While many more manuscripts were examined (see Table 2 below), most were devoid of marginal notes. In two cases the few marginalia are exclusively of a late date, while in another copy any marginalia or side-notes have been trimmed.[43]

Continental Version

Paris, BN MS. nouv. acq. 4515 (P13) Bennett no. 21. Printed by Letts.
Parchment, ff. 96, 230 x 155 mm. 1371. French hand.
Ornamentation including arms of Charles V and fleurs-de-lys. Capitals in gold and colours. Headings and rubrics in red. Latin underlined in red.
Ownership: Presented to Charles V by the royal physician Gervaise Chretien.
Compiled with Jean de Bourgogne's *De pestilentia.*

Illustrations: f. 1: Miniature in four parts: Mandeville writing his book, an older Mandeville in audience with a king, a knight approaching the castle of Cos with the dragon within, the dragon flying after the fleeing knight. Gold and colours. Rich foliated border with the arms of France.
f. 34: The Transfiguration. Christ and three apostles. Gold and colours, border of gilded leaves and dragon.
f. 36v: St Paul and St Luke. Gold and colours.

Marginalia: Two 15th c. marginal notes in Latin on Athanasius and idols. Eight scribal Latin *notae* on the earth and marvels of the East.

Paris, BN MS. fonds fr. 5637 (P8) Bennett no. 22
Parchment, ff. 102. 14th c. Probably copied directly from above.
Capitals in red and blue. Latin underlined in red. Some late marginalia.

[42] De Poerck, G. (1956), 'La tradition manuscrite des *Voyages* de Jean de Mandeville' in *Romanica Gandensia* 4.
[43] Bodleian MS. Douce 33 and CUL MS. Ff.v.35; Bodleian MS. Add. C.285.

Illustrations: f. 3, Miniature of the *Book*'s presentation to Charles V. Gold and colours, border of gilded leaves and dragon.

Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS. 3219 (P) Bennett no. 27
Parchment, ff. 107, 232 x 162 mm. 14th c. Norman-French hand. Provençal dialect. Initials in gold and colour on f. 1. capitals in red and blue. Latin underlined in red. Saints' names on yellow background.
Compiled with: fragments of Ovid's *Heroides*.

Marginalia: A few 15th c. marginal notes in Latin and a variety of symbols: (-), (+), (┌), (x). The symbols are used mostly in the early chapters to Egypt and again after Ethiopia. The marginal notes include measurements of the firmament and refer to Orosius on the Enclosed Nations and the Pygmies.

Paris, BN MS. nouv. acq. 10723 (P 14) Bennett no. 26
Parchment, ff. 100, 250 x 170 mm. 14th c. French hand.
Gilded and foliated initial at beginning of text. Crude capitals in red. No headings or rubrics.

Marginalia: Many 14th or 15th c. marginal notes in different hands, mainly in French at the beginning and end and Latin in between. Almost everything is noted throughout. A few plain or circled crosses correspond to miracles in the Holy Land. Two hands pointing (☞) to the Temple and the age of the Virgin.

Paris, BN MS. fonds fr. 6109 (P9) Bennett no. 24
Parchment. ff. 136 Early 15th c.
Decorated initials in red and blue. Capitals in red and blue, headings in red. Latin underlined in red.
Ownership: Harlay, Marguery de Hudebert, 'Jehan Bonin, prisonier à la Consiergerie' (15th c.)

Illustrations: f. 1: Miniature of a knight on horseback. Foliated border.

Paris, BN MS. fonds fr. 5634 (P6) Bennett no. 23
Paper, ff. 87. Incomplete. 15th c. French hand.
Initial in black. Latin underlined.
Originally compiled with Jean de Bourgogne's *De pestilentia.*

Marginalia: 15th c. marginal notes in French and Latin, pointing hands. The chief interests are ancient, biblical and contemporary history as well as the courts of the Sultan, the Great Khan and Prester John.

London, BL MS. Harley 3940 (Lo4) Bennett no. 35
Parchment, ff. 49, 4° size. Early 15th c. French hand. From Joué Etiau (Angers).
No ornamentation or rubrics.
Ownership: 'Jhan Vauguelin escuyer sieur des Quetcaulx' (16th c.)
Compiled with an Old Testament history from the Creation to Isaac.
Marginalia: Only three Latin *notae* but there is evidence that many others have been erased. The word 'Gregoire' (St Gregory) in the text is underlined and framed.

Paris, BN MS. fonds fr. 20145 (P 10) Bennett no. 42
Paper, ff. 91, 380 x 250 mm. 15th c. French hand. Fragmentary.
No rubrics.
Compiled with: Chronicle of the kings of France, 376-1461.
Marginalia: A few marginal notes in French, partly erased.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS. Fond. Smith-Lesouëf 65 (P15) Bennett no. 56
Parchment, ff. 90, 4o size. Late 14th c. French hand.
Rich ornamentation with illuminated initials and foliated borders in gold and colours.
Illustrations: f. 1: Miniature of the *Book*'s presentation to Charles V. Mandeville's cloak has pilgrim's scallops, while the king is dressed as Grand Master of the Hospitallers. Arms of France at the top of the page. Gold and colours.
Marginalia: Some late marginal notes in French, mainly giving names of countries; the same names are underlined in the text. Two 15th or 16th c. notes on the Fountain of Youth and Mandeville's service with the Khan.

Insular Version

Seymour classifies the texts into three sub-groups: A and B derive independently from the lost archetype, while C derives from a lost manuscript of sub-group B which was carried into France before 1402 and there developed alongside the Continental Version, with which it was sometimes conflated.

Sub-Group A

London, British Library MS. Harley 212 (Lo2) Bennett no. 3
Parchment, ff. 107, 191 x 132 mm. Late 14th c. English hand.

Initial in red and blue at beginning of text. Red headings, blue paragraph marks, small blue capitals flourished in red. Latin underlined in red.
Ownership: Given in 1425 to the Augustinian Priory of Bolton in the West Riding. Owned by John Dee in the 16th c.
Marginalia: 16th c. French and English marginal notes, some probably by John Dee himself.[44] Most are found in the second part of the *Book*, demonstrating a strong interest in geographical material and the Great Khan. A few hands pointing to circumnavigation, Cathay, the Vale of Darkness and the Vale Perilous. Small triangles mark cities and double wavy lines mark rivers.

London, British Library MS. Harley 4383 (Lo5) Bennett no.1
Parchment, ff. 58, 273 x 178 mm. 14th c. Two English hands. Possibly owned in Devon.
Headings and plain capitals in red, Latin underlined in red.
Bound with a *Formulae epistolarum Latinae* and a leaf of *Rentale manerii de Tawton Court*, originally separate.
Marginalia: 16th c. Latin marginal notes at the top of the page, corresponding to 'n°' in the margins. Interest in place-names, mountains and fountains, kings and saints.

London, British Library MS. Royal 20 B. x (Lo 7) Bennett no. 13
Parchment, ff. 85, 267 x 178 mm. Early 15th c. English hand.
Decorated initial at beginning of text. Headings and plain capitals in red. Latin, proper nouns and names of religious orders in black. Latin and names of cities underlined in red.
Ownership: In the Royal Library at Richmond Palace from 1535.
Marginalia: Several crosses marking Babylon, the Holy Land, diamonds and Sugarmago. One 15th c. English marginal note (f. 13v at the phoenix, unconnected to text): 'Meny men speke of robin hoode that never shote in his bo'- a popular proverb.

London, British Library MS. Harley 1739 (Lo3) Bennett no. 8
Parchment and paper, ff. 80, 210 x 140 mm. 15th c. Three English hands.
Headings and plain capitals in red. Spaces for capitals. Latin and proper nouns mostly underlined.
Ownership: Richard Lee, Warden of the Grocers' Guild in 1442, alderman in 1452-54, 1459 and 1486. Suthwell (15th c.), Alys Warwyk and Alys Maynwaryng (16th c.)

[44] The marginal notes are printed alongside the text in Deluz's edition of the Insular Version, *Le Livre des merveilles du monde*.

Marginalia: Some marginal notes on the East in a late hand. Late 16th or early 17th c. notes in English on the Greek Church. Two 15th c. Latin *notae* on Mohammed and the diamond.

London, British Library MS. Harley 204 (Lo1) Bennett no. 7
Parchment, ff. 100, 210 x 160 mm. 15th c. Three English hands. Possibly owned in Devon. Bound with Harley 1739.
Headings and Latin in black on yellow background. Spaces for capitals.
Ownership: George Carew (1555-1629), baron of Clopton and Count of Totnes.

Marginalia: Names of places and people, dates, figures and foreign words such as Saracen names have been underlined by the scribe throughout. Occasional crosses.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Bodley 841 (O1) Bennett no. 6
Parchment, ff. 89, 246 x 160 mm. c. 1430. English hand.
Small initial and partial border, foliage and a little gold on f. 1. Blue capitals flourished in red. Rubrics as far as ch. 22, f. 60. Latin and proper names underlined. Good contemporary stamped binding.
Ownership: Christopher Wiswick, almoner.

Marginalia: 15th c. Latin *notae* and pointing hands, mainly for Jerusalem and the Plinian Races.

Sub-group B

London, British Library MS. Sloane 560 (Lo 8) Bennett no. 14
Parchment, ff. 61, 229 x 152 mm. 15th c. English hand.
Spaces for capitals at the beginning of chapters.
Ownership: George and Elizabeth Browne (15th c.); Blorab, Lord of Volvers and Stafford (late 15th c.)
Compiled with a Latin verse *History of England* from the birth of Edward III to 1346 and a fragment of a Latin *Chronicle of England* from 1346 to 1358.

Marginalia: 15th-16th c. marginal notes in Latin on pepper and the Fountain of Youth.

London, British Library MS. Sloane 1464 (Lo 9) Bennett no. 15
Parchment, ff. 164, 186 x 171 mm. Late 14th c. English hand.
Headings in French or Latin. Capitals in red. Proper nouns, quotations and Latin underlined in red.

Marginalia: 14th or 15th c. marginal notes in Latin and French in the same hand, marking almost everything throughout. There is particular interest in Mohammed and the Quran, diamonds and pepper. There are also a few Latin notes in a different hand, the author of lines on the age of the Virgin (f. 61).

Oxford, Bodleian MS. Add. C 280 (O 2) Bennett no. 16
Parchment, ff. 127, 167 x 191 mm. 1400-1450. English hand.
Ownership: John Heruy, admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1509.
Compiled with a fragment of a French herbal and two English poems.

Marginalia: A few crosses in the account of the rich man of Tibet.

Sub-group C

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fonds fr. 5635 (P7) Bennett no. 17
Parchment, ff. 65, 295 x 140 mm. 1402. French hand.
Capitals in red and blue.

Illustrations: f. 2v: A miniature of Mandeville presenting his *Book* to the King of France. Small drawing in coloured inks.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fonds fr. 2810 (P 3) Bennett no. 18
Parchment, ff. 307, 421 x 300 mm. 1410. French hand.
Known as the *Livre des Merveilles*. Richly decorated throughout. Headings in red on gold, capitals in red and blue flourished in gold. Arms of the owners in initials and borders.
Ownership: Made most probably for Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy, who gave it to the Duc de Berry in 1413. Passed to the Duke of Nemours and lost at his death, resurfacing in the royal collections under François I.
Compiled with Marco Polo, Odoric, Boldensele, a letter from the great Khan to Pope Benedict XII, *The Great Khan's Estate*, Hayton and Ricoldo da Montecroce.

Illustrations: 265 rich miniatures of which 74 are in Mandeville. The style of illumination varies: most belong to the group of the Master of Boucicaut, with 19 by that of the Egerton and Bedford Masters. The stress is on the marvellous, from the religious miracles of the Holy Land to the Great Khan and the strange animals and races of the East. Pilgrims often appear in exotic landscapes, noting their wonders.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fonds fr. 5633 (P5) Bennett no. 19
Paper, ff. 188, 287 x 188 mm. 15th c. French hand.

Headings from f. 38v, in black. Capitals at chapter or paragraph heads in red. Latin underlined.
Ownership: Pierre Godet, barber. Jehan Bouhard (1584).
Marginalia: Marginal notes on circumnavigation in a late hand. Much of the text - proper nouns and longer passages - is underlined, but only in the first part of the *Book*.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fonds fr. 25284 (P12) Bennett no. 11
Paper, ff. 157, 205 x 145 mm. 14th c. French hand, Parisian spelling.
Headings in red or black. Capitals in red. Latin underlined.
Ownership: Paris Celestines. Philopot, Celestine oblate. Louis Dotruy (16th c.)
Illustrations: f. 108v: marginal drawing of a large cross on steps (the Khan worships the cross).
146v: marginal drawing of the world resembling circle containing a capital A in red and yellow (the four rivers of Paradise).
Marginalia: Many 14th or 15th c. marginal notes in Latin, some underlined. One pointing hand at the shadow of Mount Athos. Attention is chiefly drawn to miracles religious and natural.

Durham University Library Cosin V.i.10 (Du2) Bennett no. 9
Paper, ff. 96, 292 x 204 mm. c. 1425. Several French hands.
Headings from f. 30, in black. Large capitals in black ink. Spaces for capitals.
Marginalia: A cross and flourishes at the Ark of God (f. 32). The text of the Great Khan's imperial seal underlined (f. 83).

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. CFM 23 (C2) Bennett no. 52
Paper and parchment, ff. 114, 290 x 210 mm. Second half of 15th c. French hand.
Capitals in red to f. 14, then spaces.
Ownership: 'tercius et quartus Monadii Conradi est'.
Compiled with a fragment of John de Walleys' *Communeloquium.*
Illustrations: f. 12: A marginal drawing of a woman, possibly representing Simony.
Marginalia: Some *notae* in the index of chapters, chiefly on the Cross, the Holy Land, the Saracen faith, Prester John and strange things in the East. 15th c. Latin marginal notes as far as Calvary. A few other Latin notes in a different hand on the relics of the Passion, Aristotle, the Greek Church, simony and Samson. One hand pointing to the Danube. A line drawn down the page at St John, the garden of balm and the riches of the Great Khan.

Defective Version

The manuscript from which the Defective Version derives had lost its second quire, resulting in a substantial lacuna in the account of Egypt, the 'Egypt Gap'. This lacuna is present in all texts of this version. Seymour[45] divides it into five sub-groups: A and B derive independently from the lost archetype, and C, D and E represent successive dependent stages in the transmission of the text of B. Seymour's numbering is given in brackets after Bennett's.

Subgroup A

Cambridge, Magdalene College MS. Pepys 1955 no. 21, p. 293 (Sey 2)
Paper and parchment, ff. ii + 78 + ii, 235 x 200 mm. 1st half of 15th c. S.E. Midlands hand.
Marginalia: Many marginal notes erased and the pages have been trimmed, eliminating others. There are also some English marginalia in a later hand, mainly at the beginning of the text. The few remaining marginal notes are in English, showing an interest in Jerusalem, confession to god, the Sultan's speech, 'myschapynge pepyl' and the Vale Perilous among others. A hand pointing to Mandeville's name.

London, British Library MS. Royal 17 C. xxxviii no. 8, p. 290 (Sey 10)
Parchment, ff. v + 61 + iv, 240 x 170 mm. Early 15th c. S.E. English hand.
Ownership: Wylliam Osborne, Edward Bannyster (16th c.)
Compiled with part of an itinerary from Northern Europe to Florence, a diagram of a compass and names of winds, in Italian.
Illustrations: 117 tinted drawings, mainly in the lower margins. They are ornate, in bright colours with some gold and silver. Titles are given next to each picture in red. Many are of significant objects such as the relics of the Passion; there are also mountains, castles, animals and trees. Kings, saints, the monstrous races and other peoples are depicted often but rather statically.

Subgroup B

London, British Library MS. Arundel 140 no. 19, p. 293 (Sey 11)
Paper, ff. iii + 181 + iii, 290 x 220 mm. Early 15th c. North Essex hand.

[45] Seymour, M.C. (1986), 'The English manuscripts of *Mandeville's Travels*', in *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 4, pp. 169-210.

Rubricated. Place-names, etc. underlined in red.
Ownership: Thomas, Earl of Arundel (d. 1579).
Compiled with *Ipotis*, *The Prick of Conscience*, *Speculum Mundi* and the *Seven Sages of Rome*. Also bound with an originally separate ms containing Chaucer's *Tale of Melibee*.

Marginalia: a hand pointing to the words 'Ecce agnus Dei'; an (x) and the words 'Hebrew ALPHABET'; a Latin *nota* (the road to Jerusalem); text underlined at the Castle of the Sparrowhawk and the feast of the idol.

London, British Library MS. Royal 17 B. xliii no. 9, p. 291 (Sey 12)
Parchment, ff. iii + 181 + iii, 205 x 145 mm. Early 15th c. West English hand. Initials and borders flourished in colours. Rubricated.
Bound with three originally separate manuscripts, containing *Sir Gowther*; William Staunton's *Vision in St Patrick's Purgatory*; *Tundale's Vision* and a 16th c. carol.

Marginalia: A few 15th c. marginal notes in Latin and English: 'Crux'; 'Adam sent Seth to ye Angell'; 'of a jyons bone'; vide grete grapes'; *notae* at Cassath, Cheman and those who pay for their wives' defloration.

London, British Library MS. Harley 2386 no. 26, p. 294 (Sey 13)
Paper, ff. iii + 139 + iii, 210 x 140 mm. 2nd half of 15th c. Devon hand.
Ownership: William Cresset (late 15th - early 16th c.), Thomas Brampton (16th c.)
Compiled with *Amis and Amiloun*. Bound with an originally separate manuscript of Latin historical notes including *Brut*.

Illustrations: f. 80v: A rough drawing of a winged dragon down the side of the page (the Daughter of Hippocrates).

Marginalia: Two crosses, at the Holy Sepulchre and the Great Khan's seal.

London, British Library MS. Harley 3954 no. 10, p. 291 (Sey 14)
Parchment, ff. iii + 124 + iii. 1st half of 15th c. Norfolk hand.
Compiled with *The Childhood of the Saviour*, *The Merit of Mass*, *The Virtues of Masses*, *The Seven Virtues*, *The Seven Works of Mercy*, *The Seven Sacraments*, *The Seven Principal Virtues*, an abc poem on the Passion, *The Lament of the Virgin*, *Piers Plowman*.

Illustrations: 103 tinted drawings and 38 blank spaces left for more. The drawings are crude but colourful and energetic, even lurid. There are some of the Holy Land, but most are taken up with the strange beasts, races and customs of the East. The artist is particularly fond of depicting multicoloured animals, gruesome sacrifices and cannibalism.

Subgroup C

Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.4.20 no. 13, p. 291 (Sey 18) Parchment, ff. iii + 172 + iii, 255 x 180 mm. 2nd quarter of the 15th c. S.E. Midlands hand.
Foliated borders, gilded chapter initials. A pictorial initial of 'Sir John Mandeville' (a knight with a sword). Unidentified coat of arms on f. 1.
Ownership: Danyell Dunstayn, Sire Thomas Potter preste, John Hyde (all late 15th and early 16th c.) Richard Crumpe in Newgate Market gave the book to his apprentice John Wyke in 1571.
Compiled with Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*, three stanzas from *Troilus and Criseyde* and various songs and hymns.

Illustrations: f. 1: A miniature of a knight, one hand indicating the text. Gold and colours.

Marginalia: Some marginal prayers and other notes unconnected to the text, as well as some late notes. Some 15th or 16th c. notes in Latin and English. Two crosses, at Panonia and 'A Domino facto est istud'.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D. 100 no. 7, p. 290 (Sey 21)
Paper and parchment, ff. iii + 73 + iii, 220 x 140 mm. Early 15th c. Worcestershire hand.
Ownership: Thomas Chylde of Loughton (15th c.), John Longby and John Churchman (16th c.)

Marginalia: two scribal rubrics indicating Jerusalem and the centre of the earth, with marks where more should go. A hand pointing to 'the Saracens say that the Jews are wicked'.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Lat. Misc. e 85
This is a single quire containing chapters 13-15 only, ff. 84-91.
Place-names are underlined.

Illustrations: f. 84v: rough drawings of a harping dog, another dog and a head (unconnected to text).
f. 85v: A marginal drawing of two dragons with women's heads and a red rose (unconnected to text).
f. 87v: Three red roses with green stalks in margin (Christ appears to the Virgin in the form of three trees).
f. 90: A marginal drawing of a dragon (unconnected to text).

Marginalia: A hand pointing to the image of the Virgin which drips oil. 15th or 16th c. marginal notes, most in English with some in Latin. Mainly on religious subjects and the roads to Jerusalem.

Subgroup D

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Tanner 405 no. 32, p. 295 (Sey 26)
Paper and parchment, ff. ii + 42 + ii, 210 x 140 mm. Mid-15th c. S.W Midlands hand.
Compiled with a list of English kings to Henry IV.
Marginalia: Some 16th or 17th c. marginal notes in English. A Latin note on the Antichrist.

Subgroup E

National Library of Scotland MS. Advocates 19.1.11 no. 24, p. 294 (Sey 27)
Paper and parchment, ff. i + 176 + i, 285 x 200 mm. 2nd half of 15th c. S.E. Midlands hand. Capitals in red and blue. Some names in red. Rubricated.
Ownership: Thomas Haselsote (1544), William Patrike, John Atkynson and William Costerdemonger (all 16th or early 17th c.)
Bound with originally separate manuscripts of *Sir Cleges* and Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*.
Illustrations: f. 1: A small illustration has been cut out. f. 7: Crude drawings of a man's head and a monster. (Unconnected to text).
Marginalia: A few 15th or 16th c. English marginal notes on the Greek faith, the Carmelites, the first roses, Godfrey de Bouillon, the Fountain of Youth, Cathay and the Vale Perilous.

London, British Library MS. Sloane 2319 no. 28, p. 295 (Sey 30)
Paper, ff. ii + 42 + iii, 220 x 145 mm. 2nd half of the 15th c. S.E. Midlands hand.
Rubricated. Proper names underlined in red.
Ownership: George Thomlynson (16th c.)
Marginalia: a cross at the Templum Domini. Two notes in an unformed English hand copying the scribal rubric on the diamond.

Cotton Version

This version, made c. 1400, is based on a lost manuscript of subgroup A of the Defective Version. The conflator has expanded and altered his base text by detailed reference to a manuscript of sub-group A of the Insular Version, thereby avoiding the Egypt Gap. It exists in one manuscript.

London, British Library MS. Cotton Titus C. xvi p. 288 (Sey 33)
Parchment, ff. ii + 132 + ii, 215 x 150 mm. Early 15th c. Hertfordshire hand.
First initial in gold on red and blue. Other initials and rubrics in blue flourished in red.
Ownership: John Addams (16th c.)
Marginalia: Many 15th or 16th c. marginal notes in English. The author's main interests are the Greek, Samaritan and Saracen faiths, strange customs, monsters and natural marvels. There are several notes on Prester John but none on the Great Khan.

Egerton Version

A conflation of a lost manuscript of subgroup A of the Defective Version and a lost English translation of the Latin Royal Version. It does not contain the Egypt Gap. Exists in one manuscript.

London, British Library MS. Egerton 1982 p. 288 (Sey 34)
Parchment, ff. xii + 130 + xiv, 215 x 150 mm. 1st quarter of 15th c., possibly NW Yorkshire. Large first initial. Other initials in red and blue. Latin underlined.
Ownership: A leaf now lost declared, 'This fayre Boke I have fro the abbey at Saint Albons in thys year of our Lord m.cccclxxxx the sixt daye of Apryl. Willyam Caxton. Richard Tottyl, 1579'.
Marginalia: A few 15th c. notes in English and Latin on the road to Jerusalem, ginger, the Brahmans and Paradise. Two hands, pointing to the effect of heat in Ethiopia and the rich man of Tibet.

Bodley Version

This version, probably made between 1390 and 1450, is derived from a lost English version translated from the Royal Version.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. e Musaeo 116 p. 289 (Sey 36)
Parchment, ff. iii + 151 + i, 265 x 190 mm. First half of 15th c.
Ownership: Thomas Foluylle *fisician* (16th c.)
Compiled with part of Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, Godfrey's *Super Palladium* and Latin recipes for wine making. Bound before 1600 with an originally separate manuscript containing a *Treatise on Urines*, some notes on astrology, commendations in French and bills and recipes dated 1548-50 at Pecham, Kent.

Marginalia: Only two marginal notes, on Edward III (in English) and ox-worship (in Latin). There is also a hand pointing to St Thomas.

Epitome

The Epitome is abstracted from a manuscript of sub-group E of the Defective Version. It exists in one manuscript.

London, British Library MS. Add. 37049 p. 297 (Sey 39)
Paper and parchment, ff. iii + 96 + iii, 265 x 195 mm. Mid 15th c. E. Nottinghamshire hand. Carthusian, possibly Axholme.
Compiled with religious drawings, a drawing of the world, drawings of Rome and Babylon, an abstract from a chronicle on Babylon, the *pseudo-Methodius*, prayers for the Last Judgement, other prayers and songs, the Carthusian Order, extracts from the *Prick of Conscience*, Hoccleve lyrics, the abc of Aristotle, an extract from Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale* and other religious writings.

Illustrations: f. 2v: A T-O map of the world with the names of the continents and the elements, Jerusalem, Rome and other cities. Below is a text (not from Mandeville) on the division between Noah's sons.
f. 3: 'Ierusalem civitas sancta', a walled city containing many churches. The Mandeville text starts immediately below.
The coloured drawings, like the others in the manuscript, may well be Carthusian.

Royal Version

A Latin translation of the Insular Version, subgroup A. It circulated in England in the 15th c.

London, British Library MS. Royal 13 E. ix. no. 4, p. 299
Parchment, ff. iii + 326 + I, 350 x 315 mm. Written at St Albans c. 1400.
Compiled with 24 other items in Latin and French, mainly historical and geographical, including a fragmentary inventory of relics at St Albans and Walsingham's *Chronicle* of 1373-93.

Marginalia: 15th c. Latin *notae* at the caliphs, Tartary and the Tartar belief in God. A few (x) and (+) symbols at Sicily, Compas, the Tigris, the Great Khan and the Gymnosophists.

London, British Library MS. Cotton App. IV. no. 5, p. 299
Parchment, ff. 124. 1st half of 15th c.

Ownership: Oliver Nayler, 1596.
Compiled with *Guido de arte dictandi epistolas*; *Prophecies of Merlin*; *Philobiblon Ricardus de Aungervile*; *Provinciale catholicorum Cristianorum vivorum*, 1343.

Marginalia: Some 15th c. Latin marginal notes in two different hands. They only cover the first part of the *Book*, showing a special interest in the Sultan, the Three Kings and distances between lands.

London, British Library MS. Harley 175 no. 6, p. 299.
Parchment, ff. 106, small 4° size. 15th c.

Marginalia: Crosses at Edom, Latori and Cathay.

Ashmole Version

An independent Latin translation of a lost manuscript of subgroup B of the Insular Version.

Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 769 no. 11, p. 301.
Parchment and paper, ff. 108, 4° size. c. 1450.

Marginalia:15th or 16th c. Latin *notae* on the Fountain of Youth, Tracoda, giants, Cathay and Gathonolabes.

Harley Version

A Latin translation of a lost manuscript of subgroup B (i) of the Insular Version. It exists in one manuscript.

British Library MS. Harley 82 no. 10, p. 301.
Parchment, ff. 104, 250 x 165 mm. Last quarter of 14th c. Probably written at Reading Abbey.
Spaces for initials. Rubricated.
Bound for Harley with a fragment from a register of Nicholas de Quaplod, abbot of Reading, a *Martyrologium*, readings for certain days, legends etc.

Illustrations: f. 35: A marginal sketch of what could be the Cross.

Marginalia: Two 15th c. English marginal notes on Hungary and Engedi.

Leiden Version

A Latin translation, made before 1390, of a lost manuscript of subgroup B(ii) of the Insular Version.

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 275 no. 3, p. 298.
Parchment, ff. iii + 255, 275 x 183 mm. 15th c. Rubricated.
Ownership: Left to his college by Thomas Markaunt in 1439.
Compiled with twenty items including Odoric, the *Voyage of St Brendan*, the *Letter of Prester John*, Latin tracts, the *Vision in St Patrick's Purgatory*, the Three Kings, and a tract on the Saracens.

Marginalia: Two hands pointing to the Antarctic star and Jacobite confession in fire.

Liège Version

A recension of the Continental Version made at Liège c. 1373, most probably by Jean d'Outremeuse.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. McClean 177 (C1) Bennett no. 49
Parchment, ff. 83, 302 x 217 mm. 15th c. French hand, well written.
Decorative initials.
Ownership: Jacobus Bodueler (15th-16th c.).

Marginalia: 15th c. marginal notes in French on the Daughter of Hippocrates, Sicily and the Bedouins. Crosses at Mount Carmel and the hermit.

Textless Version

The Textless or Pictorial Version, made possibly in Prague in the early 15th c., is based on the Czech Version and exists in one manuscript.

London, British Library MS. Additional 24189
Parchment, ff. 14, 225 x 181 mm. No headings or text.
The manuscript consists of 28 full-page paintings corresponding to the first thirteen chapters of the Czech Version, as far as Samson and Gaza. The artist depicted relics, tombs, cities and landscapes. He also provided many human scenes, as of the three crownings of Christ, Seth at the gates of Paradise and Samson. The light green underlay is generally retained in the landscapes. Colours are used in the background for the sky, sea and trees, with a skin tone for human figures. Gold is used for decoration.

Table 2 Number of manuscripts examined for marginalia and illustrations

Version	*Manuscripts extant*	*Manuscripts examined*	*Used here*
Total	c. 121	73 (60.3%)	48 (39.6%)
Continental	30	12	9
Insular	25	18	15
Defective	c. 38	24	12
Cotton	1	1	1
Egerton	1	1	1
Bodley	2	2	1
Epitome	1	1	1
Stanzaic frag.	1	1	-
Royal Latin	7	5	3
Ashmole	1	1	1
Harley	1	1	1
Leiden	5	3	1
Liège	7	2	1
Textless	1	1	1

1 The Pilgrimage Route

The subject of pilgrimage is a major concern of Mandeville's *Book*, ostensibly an account of Sir John Mandeville's pilgrimage to the Holy Land which almost accidentally develops into a description of the East. Mandeville himself could be seen primarily as a pilgrim rather than a general traveller, a fact reflected in the way some illustrators chose to portray him. It is therefore important to examine the ways in which Mandeville addresses pilgrim audiences and how those audiences react to the issues raised. Chief among these issues are the evolution of pilgrimage and crusade, and the specific interests of travellers to the Holy Land.

I will begin by providing an overview of pilgrimage literature, its development and modes, followed by a discussion of the crusades and attitudes towards them, particularly in the course of the fourteenth century. I will then demonstrate in what ways the *Book* followed traditions of pilgrimage and crusade literature and where it was more innovative, in order to identify its possible audiences before moving to more direct evidence of these.

Pilgrimages were originally undertaken in fulfilment of vows, to do penance, to ask for divine aid or from a desire to come closer to the holy figures by physical proximity to the area they had lived in. A pilgrimage could be written down to commemorate this important Christian act; a principal aim of earlier pilgrimage literature to the Holy Land was to report back on the places where Christ lived and died, in order that those who wished to travel there could find the relevant areas. Those unable to 'worship in the places where his feet stood', as more than one author phrased it, could learn about them 'so that, in hearing the description of the holy places, they might be mentally transported to them, from the depths of their souls, and thus obtain from God the same rewards as those who have visited them'.[1] Such pious motives were often expressed in the prologue; John of Würzburg (c. 1160-70) states:

> This description I conceive will be acceptable to you for this reason, that when each of these places has by it been made known to you, should you ever by

[1] Daniel the Abbot, *Pilgrimage of Daniel the Abbot, 1106-8,* PPTS 4, p. 2.

divine inspiration and protection come hither, they will all present themselves to your eyes naturally and without any delay or difficulty in finding them, as well known objects; or if perhaps you may not go thither and behold them with your corporeal eyesight, nevertheless by such knowledge and contemplation of them you may obtain a more devout sense of their holiness.[2]

Pilgrimage literature did not remain static. It developed in a variety of ways from the earliest pilgrim reports - the first accounts date from the age of Constantine - and simple itineraries to highly worked travel accounts. J.G. Davies[3] divides the genre into nine basic categories; there are, firstly, itineraries, listing places to be visited and the routes and distances between them; these could be expanded into personal diaries. Letters, devotional manuals and maps were all part of the wider literature. However, one of the most popular styles was that of the travel account, of which it is estimated that about 526 writers produced examples between 1100 and 1500. Books of indulgences were most popular from the early fourteenth century onwards; such books include Giacomo de Verona's *Peregrinationes et indulgentia Terre Sancte* (1335) and *The Stacyons of Rome* (1370). Itineraries, diaries and books of indulgences could be brought together to produce the more comprehensive guidebooks to specific places, from the twelfth-century *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* to Wynkyn de Worde's 1498 edition of the *Information for Pilgrims unto the Holy Land.*

Travel accounts are of course of particular interest, as Mandeville's *Book* comes under this general heading. The authors of travel accounts and their intentions varied widely depending on the period in which they were writing. Up until the mid-thirteenth century the vast majority of pilgrimage texts was written in Latin by clerics. Most of these accounts were relatively impersonal, listing the holy places and their histories. Pilgrimage was seen as a strictly moral and religious undertaking. Saewulf (1102-3), Daniel the Abbot (1106-8), Pseudo-Fetellus (c. 1130) and the author of the *Pelerinaiges por aler en Iherusalem* (c. 1231) all fall into this category. From the end of the thirteenth century to the end of the fourteenth century there were still many clerical authors. The German Dominican William of Boldensele in his *Hodeporicon ad Terram Sanctam* (1336) followed this literary tradition, indefatigably listing the appropriate Old and New Testament figures and their actions as he travelled through the Holy Land.

From the fourteenth century onwards, pilgrimage literature was also increasingly being written by laymen from all walks of life, often in the

2 John of Würzburg, *Description of the Holy Land*, PPTS 5, p. 2.

3 Davies, J.G. (1992), 'Pilgrimage and crusade literature', in Sargent-Baur, B.N. (ed.), *Journeys Toward God*, pp. 1-30.

vernacular with the rise of vernacular prose literature. Such authors include lord Ogier VIII d'Anglure (1395), the merchant Leonardo Frescobaldi (1385), the notary Jacques le Saige (1510) and bourgeois women like Margery Kempe (1414); the latter was, like some other lay pilgrims, aided by a priest in writing her account.

Such writers, while still interested in the devotional aspects of their journey, tended to stress the practical particulars to a far greater extent. In these increasingly personal accounts, details of itineraries and transport to the Holy Land, stages of travel, distances, indulgences and financial costs were given a disproportionate amount of space compared to the hagiographical legends and significance of Palestine. Ludolph von Sudheim, for example, devoted a third of his account of c. 1340 to choosing a ship and the islands, cities and natural features such as volcanoes to be admired on the journey across the Mediterranean. Niccolò of Poggibonsi's *Voyage beyond the Seas* (1346-50) states that he took with him two measuring rods and that he entered all that he saw and touched on 'two small tables'. He intends 'to provide you with all the indulgences in order, and the distances, and the dimensions of the holy places, and also what things are within them and how they are arranged'.[4] The fifteenth-century compilation *Advice for Eastbound Travellers* is full of practical advice on what equipment one should take, when to travel, how to choose guides and what wines to drink. Other pilgrims gave information on their personal experiences of seasickness, their pilgrim companions and encounters with the local Muslims.

Some pilgrims declared that they wrote for those wishing to make a similar journey: Arnold von Harff opens his pilgrimage account of 1499 by addressing his patrons, for whom the book has been written, 'so that if your princely Graces should make such a pilgrimage you should have at hand, by my favour, a trusty sign-post'.[5] It is uncertain how likely their princely Graces actually were to go on pilgrimage, but they would have been flattered by the assumption that they might.

Other writers, however, obviously chose their subject-matter with a view less to the salvation than to the entertainment of their audience. Mandeville, as Zacher[6] has shown, was to a certain extent such an offender, but he was by no means alone in catering to human curiosity. As early as 1220 Jacques de Vitry mentioned the 'light-hearted and inquisitive persons' who 'go on pilgrimage not out of devotion but out of mere curiosity and

4 Quoted by Davies, 'Pilgrimage and Crusade Literature', pp. 9, 10.

5 Letts, M. (1946), *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff*, p. 2.

6 Zacher, *Curiosity and Pilgrimage*, pp. 130-157.

love of novelty. All they want to do is travel through unknown lands to investigate the absurd, exaggerated stories they have heard about the east'.[7]

By the fourteenth century clergy and laity alike pandered to this new trend of *curiositas*. Simon Semeonis, for instance, (1323-24), 'describes his journey onwards from Great Britain with infinite detail relating to women's clothes, the practices of customs officials, natural products, etc'.[8] In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such non-religious pilgrimages had become so common that they were condemned by several writers, from Chaucer's satire in the *Canterbury Tales* to the Italian Santo Brasca, on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1481: 'A man should undertake this voyage solely with the intention of visiting, contemplating and adoring the most Holy mysteries ... and not with the intention of seeing the world, or from ambition, or to be able to say "I have been there" or "I have seen that" in order to be exalted by his fellow men'.[9] In his *Chronica Majora* (1376-1420), Walsingham was equally scathing of Henry Despenser's Flanders 'crusade' of 1383:

> And not only laymen did this, but the religious of every sort presumed as if of one mind to undertake the journey, having sought but not obtained permission. It was to their great shame and detriment that they decided to go on pilgrimage not so much for the sake of Jesus, but in order to see the countryside and the world.[10]

These, then, are the particulars of the pilgrimage genre Mandeville is writing in when he gives his account of the journey to the Holy Land. He draws on many traditions, taking and conflating details and incidents from various sources, forming an intricate patchwork of borrowings. Those of Mandeville's sources in the first part of the book classifiable as pilgrimage literature include William of Boldensele's *Liber de quibusdam ultramarinis partibus* of 1333 as a framework, supplemented where appropriate with information from Pseudo-Odoric's *Liber de Terra Sancta* (c. 1330), Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* (c. 1283), Eugesippus' *Tractatus de distanciis locorum Terrae Sanctae* (first half of the twelfth century), John of Würzburg's *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* (c. 1160-70), Thietmar's *Peregrinatio* (c. 1217) and the continuator of William of Tyre (after 1170).

7 Sumption, J. (1975), *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion*, p. 257.
8 Davies, 'Pilgrimage and Crusade Literature', p. 11.
9 Zacher, *Curiosity and Pilgrimage*, p. 42.
10 Gransden, A. (1982), *Historical Writing in England*, Vol. II, p. 154.

In the *Book*, as in the literature and culture of the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, pilgrimage is also inextricably linked to crusade. The concept of crusade itself is the subject of debate; traditionalists only allow expeditions to the Holy Land to be classified as crusades, while the pluralists define crusade rather according to evidence of papal validation and granting of crusade status, preaching of the cross and recruitment. Thus the crusades as a whole can be seen either as declining in the later Middle Ages, or, in the view of the pluralists - with which I agree - as being transformed into something new. In the context of the *Book*, only crusade to the Holy Land is discussed, but the process of transformation is still most relevant.

Crusade itself was seen as a form of pilgrimage and commonly referred to as a 'pilgrimage in arms', for example by Fulcher of Chartres in his *Historia Hierosolymitana* (1105-06), and crusaders as pilgrims, as in this extract from William of Tyre (c. 1170): 'We have also described the condition of the faithful, who ... roused the princes of the kingdoms of the West to assume the responsibility of a pilgrimage for the purpose of liberating their brethren'.[11] Pilgrims and crusaders had many common characteristics; their vows and privileges were similar, they carried insignia of their holy purpose, visited shrines and relics, attended religious services and might undertake their journeys as a penitential effort or in fulfilment of a vow. Indulgences were a powerful incentive to embark on either a pilgrimage or on a crusade, which, with the plenary indulgence, counted as a remission of all sins in itself.

Originally the ultimate aim of both pilgrimage and crusade was to reach the Holy Land and Jerusalem. This, more than any other factor, is what made the crusade itself a pilgrimage. Guibert of Nogent, writing c. 1104-7, said:

> If ... this land was the inheritance and the holy temple of God before the Lord walked and appeared there, how much more holy and worthy of reverence must we consider it became when the God of Majesty was incarnate there, was nurtured, grew up and in his physical nature walked and travelled from place to place? ... If you consider that you ought to take great pains to make a pilgrimage to the graves of the apostles [in Rome] or to the shrines of other saints, what expense of spirit can you refuse in order to rescue, and make pilgrimage to, the cross, the blood, the Sepulchre?[12]

11 William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, ed. Babcock, E.A. and Krey, A.C. (1976), Vol. I, p. 57.
12 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, quoted in Riley-Smith, J. (1986), *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, p. 146.

It is in this context that pilgrimage could be seen as the contritionist side of Christianity while crusade was its militant aspect.[13]

Crusade was also seen as a means of converting the unbelievers. Jacques de Vitry, writing from Acre in 1217, believed that the arrival of the crusaders would persuade many Saracens to convert to Christianity. William of Tripoli, also one of Mandeville's sources, supported peaceful conversion. This interrelation between mission and crusade persisted in various forms throughout the later Middle Ages.

The practical likelihood of crusades to the Holy Land began to decline after the mid-thirteenth century, with the loss of Jerusalem in 1244 and the fall of Acre in 1291. Only the islands of Cyprus, Crete and Rhodes were left as Mediterranean outposts, and the real possibility of regaining Palestine from the Mamluk Sultans grew ever more remote. Crusade ideology was used as a tool in papal politics, and armies could no longer be made up of volunteers. But enthusiasm for the idea of crusade had not abated, as the large number of early fourteenth-century 'recovery treatises' attests. There are thirty French projects dating from the beginning of the century. The great crusade theorist Ramón Llull wrote on the subject from 1291 to his death in 1316.

In the first half of the fourteenth century, such projects for the recovery of the Holy Land - some, by men who knew Palestine, quite realistic - were written encouraging European rulers to attempt a new crusade. The Armenian prince Hayton included a detailed plan for the recovery of Palestine and the liberation of Armenia in his *Flos historiarum terre orientis*, written at the request of Pope Clement V. This was followed by Guillaume Adam's *De modo Saracenos extirpandi*, Pierre Dubois' *De recuperatione terre sancte*, Marino Sanudo's *Secreta fidelium crucis*, Burcard's *Directorium ad Philippum Regem* and the anonymous *Directorium ad faciendum passagium transmarinum*. In 1311 Clement V's general council at Vienne discussed plans for a crusade and began to levy a tenth to finance it, though without a definite programme; Philip IV of France was to lead the general passage in 1319, but both he and Clement V died in 1314. Philip V (1317-22) and Charles V (1322-8) both made crusading plans which came to nothing. In the 1330s Philip VI Valois presented an important project to Pope John XXII, but this last organised attempt failed with the diversion of the crusade fleet to the Channel in 1336 and the outbreak of the Hundred Years War.

In the 1340s there were several smaller crusading enterprises against the Turkish threat in the eastern Mediterranean, but with the Black Death of

[13] Sargent-Baur, *Journeys Toward God*, pp. vii-viii.

1348 crusade became practically impossible due to the twin demographic and economic disaster that ensued. Peter I of Lusignan, king of Cyprus, tried to gain support for a new crusade in the early 1360s, but the attempt fell apart after the sacking of Alexandria in 1365. By the later fourteenth century the emphasis of crusade strategy and aims was changing in response to the newer Ottoman threat; in 1396 the army of Sigismund of Hungary was routed by Bayezid at the battle of Nicopolis, and the fifteenth century saw fighting in Eastern Europe until the tacit acceptance of Ottoman power by the Papacy and the Italian states, more interested in trade than the re-conquest of the Holy Land.

This, then, was the background against which Mandeville's *Book* - purporting, for the first half at least, to be a guide to the Holy Land - was written. Its author's preoccupation with both pilgrimage and crusade is obvious from the Prologue, the very first words of which stress the supreme importance of the Holy Land to the Christian mind:

> Since it is so that the land beyond the sea, that is to say the Holy Land, the land of promise, is among all others the most excellent and the most worthy, and lady and sovereign over all other lands; and is blessed, hallowed and consecrated by the precious body and by the precious blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, where it pleased him to be conceived in the Virgin Mary and take human flesh and nourishment, and to walk and travel around the said land with his blessed feet ... And he wished to be called King of that land especially, he who was King of heaven and earth, of air and sea, and of all things contained therein; and he himself called himself King especially of that land, saying, *Rex sum Iudeorum*, for then that land properly belonged to the Jews.[14]

In the *Book* the Holy Land is therefore the centre of the Christian world in both a spiritual and a physical way. This too is stressed in the Prologue:

> And that land he had chosen for himself among all other lands as the best, most virtuous and most worthy in the world; for it is the heart and centre of all the

[14] 'Comme il soit ainsi que la terre doultre mer, cest assauoir la terre sainte, la terre de promission, entre toutes autres soit la plus excellente et la plus digne et dame et souueraine de toutes autres terres; et soit benoite, saintefiee et consacree du precieux corps et du precieux sanc nostre seigneur Ihesu Crist, ou il ly plaisoit soy envmbrer en la vierge Marie et char humaine prendre et nourricon, et la dicte terre marchier et enuironner de ses benoites ioies [piez] ... Et de celle terre singulierement voult estre appelle Roy, cil qui estoit Roy des cieulx et de terre, dair et de mer, et de toutes choses contenues en yceulz; et il meismes sapella Roy par especial de belle [cele] terre en disant, *Rex sum Iudeorum*, car lors estoit celle terre proprement des Iyus'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 229.

lands of the world and also, as the philosopher says, 'The excellence of things is in the middle'.[15]

This perception of Jerusalem was valid for both pilgrims and crusaders; Purcell[16] remarks, 'The abiding symbolism of Jerusalem, adopted from Judaism, had exerted an incalculable influence on Christian thinking from the time of the early Fathers, and had been the source of the intense desire for repossession of the Holy Places as well as of the strong support for the crusading movement'. The twelfth-century pilgrim Theoderic says in his booklet on the Holy Places, '[Jerusalem] is holier because it is illuminated by the presence there of our God and Lord Jesus Christ and of his good Mother, and the fact that all the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles have lived and taught and preached and suffered martyrdom there'.[17]

The central issue raised in the Prologue is the possibility of a new crusade to reclaim the Holy Land, described in terms of a common Christian birthright which all should fight for:

> Well should the land which was watered with the precious blood of Jesus Christ be delightful and fruitful; it is the land which Our Lord promised us as heritage, and in the said land he wished to die and be seized of it, to leave it in heritage to his children. For this reason every good Christian who is able and has the means should exert himself and work hard to conquer our aforesaid true heritage and remove it from the hands of the misbelievers and appropriate it to ourselves. For we are called Christians from Christ, who is our father; and if we are his true sons, we should lay claim to the heritage our father has left us and remove it from foreign hands.[18]

This insistence on the Promised Land as Christian heritage is common in pilgrimage and crusade literature. Jacques de Vitry, for example, states that: 'So utterly did the Lord give His people over unto the sword, and was

[15] 'Et celle terre il auoit esleue pour li entre toutes autres terres comme la meilleur la plus vertueuse et plus digne du monde; car cest le cuer et le mylieus de toute la terre du monde, et aussi, comme dist le philosophe, *Virtus rerum in medio consistit*'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 229-30.

[16] Purcell, M. (1975), *Papal Crusading Policy, 1244-1291*, p. 13.

[17] Wilkinson, J., Hill. J. and Ryan, W.F. (1988), *Jerusalem Pilgrimage, 1099-1185*, p. 276.

[18] 'Bien doit estre delitable et fructueuse la terre qui fut arouzee du precieux sanc Ihesu Crist; cest la terre que nostre seigneur nous promist en heritage, et en la dicte terre vouloit il mourir comme saisi, pour la laissier en heritage a ses enfans. Par quoy chascun bon crestien qui pouoir en ha et de quoy, se deuroit pener et mectre en grant [trauail] de nostre surdit et droit heritage conquerir et mettre hors des mains aus mescreans et de laproprier a nous. Car nous sommes appelez crestiens de Crist, qui est nostre pere; et se nous sommes ses drois filz, nous deuons leritage que nostre pere nouz a laissie chalenger et oster des mains estranges'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

wroth with His inheritance; so completely were our enemies made the head, and we the tail, that they took from us by force, not only the Promised Land, but almost all the countries, cities, and castles, from the going in unto Egypt even to Mesopotamia'. Mandeville is no less forceful, continuing with an impassioned tirade against worldly rulers, blaming the continuing loss of the Holy Land on their lack of accord:

> But today pride, covetousness and envy have so inflamed and kindled the hearts of earthly lords, that they care more about disinheriting each other than laying claim to and acquiring their true and proper heritage aforesaid. And those of the common people, who have a good will to give body and goods to conquer our aforesaid heritage, can do nothing without the sovereign lords. For an assembly of the common people without a head is like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, which scatter and do not know where they ought to go or what they ought to do. But if it pleased our Holy Father the Pope, for it would please God well, that the earthly princes should be in good accord and with some of their common people and wished to undertake the blessed voyage across the sea, I believe it to be most certain that in a short time the Promised Land would be reconsecrated and placed in the hands of its true heirs, as of Jesus Christ.[19]

This theme of lack of unity is a central one both during the crusades themselves and, more significantly, after they became no longer possible, due in part to the continuing wars among the Christians themselves and the Hundred Years War in particular. Many authors of pilgrimage literature expressed their regret at the loss of the Holy Land in conjunction with their anger at the lack of unity among Christians that they often saw as having caused that loss. Even potentates shared this opinion; in 1345 Pope Clement VI wrote to Edward III, claiming that 'the right wars for Christian kings and princes are those through which their temporal realms are not lost but expanded, and through which they acquire for themselves the crown of the everlasting kingdom'.[20]

[19] 'Mais au jour duy orgueil conuoitise et enuie ont ainsi les cuers des seigneurs terriens enflames et esprins, que il tendent plus a autrui desheriter que il ne font a chalenger et aquerre leur droit et propre heritage dessus dit. Et ceulz du commun, qui bonne volente en ont a mectre corps et auoir pour conquerir nostre susdit heritage, ne pueent riens faire senz les seigneurs souuerains. Car assemblee de communaute senz chief est comme tropel de brebis senz pasteur, qui sespandent et ne sceuent ou il douient aler, ne que ilz doiuent faire. Mais se il plaisoit a nostre saint pere le pape, car a Dieu plairoit il bien, que les princes terriens fussent de bon acort et auecques aucuns de leurs communs et voulsissent entreprendre le saint voiage doultre mer, ie cuide estre bien certain que en brief terme seroit la terre de promission reconciliee et mise es mains des drois hoirs, si comme de Ihesu Crist'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 230.

[20] Housley, N. (1992), *The Later Crusades, 1275-1580*, pp. 38-9.

The question here is one of authorial intentionality in the *Book*. Many of the authors and political theorists still vehemently calling for a military expedition were doing so for rhetorical purposes, using their calls to arms as a means to a different end. Even before 1291, Burchard of Mount Sion, for instance, in the preface to his *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, remarks: 'Well may we groan over the lukewarmness of the Christian people of our time, who having so many and such great examples before their eyes, hesitate to snatch away from the hands of the enemy that land which Jesus Christ hallowed with His blood, and whose praises are daily sung by the Church throughout all the world'.[21] In the rest of his work, however, he writes about the infidel and heretic inhabitants of Palestine with a tolerance that belies this introduction. This is similar to what Mandeville was doing in his Prologue, conforming more to the expectations of all those who might desire to hear about the Holy Land, no matter whom it belonged to: 'And because it has been a long time since there was a general passage across the sea, and many people delight to hear the said Holy Land spoken of and take comfort from it...'[22]

Atiya does not agree; he takes the Prologue at face value, ignoring its stylistic niceties and arguing that Mandeville's work is 'paramountly a work of propaganda'.[23] In support of this view, he comments that Mandeville's estimate of the Sultan's army was specifically intended for crusaders. This number is in fact taken from Hayton's detailed account, and neither this nor Mandeville's remarks on the strength of Alexandria are of any real practical use. Mandeville's account is written for the single traveller, not for an entire army; it is hardly of any strategic military value.

The *Book*'s opening impassioned call to crusade is less a true expression of a heartfelt aspiration on the author's part than a thinly veiled criticism of the state of Western Christendom. There was little possibility in practice of a new military effort, and it seems more than likely that the author is quite aware of this. In the rest of the *Book* he no longer insists upon the need for a real crusade, but instead periodically castigates the Christian sins which, according to him, make a reclamation of the Holy Land no more than a vain dream.

The lack of recent crusading efforts, on the other hand, is apparently the ill wind that makes the author's project possible, providing him with an audience for his guide to the Holy Land and its marvels, both for those who like to hear of such things and for those who actually want to attempt the

21 Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, PPTS 12, p. 3.

22 'Et pour ce que il a lonc temps que il ny ot passage general oultre mer, et pluseurs gens se delitent en oyr parler de la dicte terre sainte et en ont soulas'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 231.

23 Atiya, A.S. (1938), *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 163.

journey themselves. He addresses both the nobility - in his explanation of why the work is in French rather than Latin - and, implicitly, the common people and indeed minor nobility whose rulers will not allow them to go on crusade, and who must therefore satisfy themselves with pilgrimages and accounts of pilgrimages. Thus the *Book* is explicitly intended, at least according to the Prologue, as a guide to intending pilgrims, who may expect to be given accurate routes to Jerusalem and accounts of what they will find there:

> of which lands and islands I will speak more plainly and describe a part of the things that are there, when it is time to speak of them, according to what I can remember, and especially for those who wish to visit the noble city of Jerusalem and the holy places that are thereabouts; and I will describe and show them what road they could take, for I have often travelled and ridden over it in good company, God be thanked.[24]

Given these stated intentions of the Prologue and the concerns it raises, it would be surprising if some of the *Book*'s intended and actual audiences did not include bona fide pilgrims to the Holy Land. There are certain aspects of the early part of the *Book* which would make the work attractive to such prospective travellers, whether they chose to make the journey themselves or simply enjoyed the vicarious experience through reading or listening to the work. It is interesting to see how far their expectations were actually met.

Mandeville does not follow later pilgrimage literature in giving a great deal of practically useful information. There was no reason for him to do so, as that was not his intention; had he wished to write a standard pilgrimage guide, he was perfectly capable of using his sources in a different way, giving information of a more pedestrian, factual nature - for instance, how and where to embark for the Holy Land, prices one could expect to pay, and tips on avoiding robbery or seasickness. Mandeville to a large extent eschews such details, concentrating instead on more general descriptions of the places and peoples to be found in the Holy Land, and examining the ways in which they differ from or can be compared to the familiar world of the West.

24 '... des quelles terres et ylles ie parleray plus plainement et deuiseray vne partie des choses qui y sont, quant il sera temps de parler, selon ce que il me pourra souuenir, et especialment pour ceuls qui volente ont de visiter la noble cite de Ierusalem et les sains lieux qui la entour sont; et leur deuiseray et demonsterray quel chemin ilz pourroient tenir, car ien ay par maint passe et cheuauchie auecques bonne compaignie, Dieu grace'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 231.

Yet the author does not avoid such details altogether; it must be admitted that although the *Book* is not a firsthand account, it does contain many factual remarks drawn from earlier sources which could have been of actual use in journeying towards and through the Holy Land. One of the main aims of the pilgrimage guide was naturally to provide a comprehensive itinerary to and through the Holy Land. Mandeville's own main route through Palestine and Egypt is derived from the Dominican William of Boldensele's *Hodeporicon ad Terram Sanctam* of 1336. From Bethlehem to Damascus Mandeville relies largely on the *Liber de Terra Sancta*, written c. 1330 and wrongly attributed to Odoric of Pordenone, a Franciscan friar. This route is as follows: starting from western European countries such as England, Ireland or Norway, the aspiring pilgrim may go through Germany, Hungary and Greece to Constantinople. From here he can proceed via Patmos, Ephesus, Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus to Syria, make a detour to Egypt, Cairo and Alexandria and finally press onwards to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. In other words, the trail leads in a wide, comprehensive loop around the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, through Egypt and overland to Palestine.

Alternative routes are given at various stages. Mandeville considerately provides alternatives for those pilgrims who would rather avoid sea voyages, for whom he recommends the overland journey through Greece, Constantinople, down through Turkey to Antioch and Acre to Jerusalem. Otherwise one can proceed via Germany, Prussia and Tartary, or take the faster way by sea from Venice to Cyprus and on to the Holy Land. Yet the author seems to register some disapproval for such unseemly haste; for him the journey will not be rushed, and he intends to give the longer route to his goal. He therefore encourages pilgrims to follow him through Egypt and Babylon the Lesser, or Cairo:

> Now I want to go back, before I proceed any further, to describe to you the roads leading even to Babylon where the Sultan dwells, which is at the entrance to Egypt, because many people go there first and then to Mt Sinai and return by Jerusalem, as I have told you elsewhere. For they complete the further pilgrimage first and then return by the nearer one, even though the nearer is the most worthy, that is Jerusalem; for no other pilgrimage is comparable to it.[25]

[25] 'Or men vueil retourner, auant que ie procede plus auant, pour vous deuiser les chemins qui tendent mesmes a Babiloine ou le Soudan demeure, qui est a lentree degypte, pour ce que maintes gens y vont premierement la et puis au mont de Synay et retournent par Iherusalem, si comme ie vous ay autreffoiz dit. Car il acomplissent deuant le plus loing pelerinage et puis retournent par le plus pres, combien que le plus pres soit le plus dignes, cest Iherusalem; car nul autre pelerinage na comparoison a celui'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 257.

Mandeville insists on the practical benefits of a visit to Egypt, where one can get a safe-conduct from the Sultan. The knight himself, having gained the Sultan's personal favour, is allowed to enter various places that he could otherwise not have visited without let or hindrance, incidentally allowing his readers a glimpse inside.

Clearly for Mandeville the journey itself is almost as important as the destination; the more that can be seen and commented upon along the way, the more understanding we will gain about the world around us. The customs and sights to be met with are significant, not simply in themselves but also as a prelude to and preparation for the Holy Land. Events in the Old Testament were seen as prefiguring the events of the New; so too do the places along the road to Jerusalem prefigure the city itself. Constantinople and its wonders are a reflection of the greater wonders to be found there; the relics and holy places described on the way allow the traveller to keep sight of his goal, the more significant relics and places of the Promised Land. The life of man is a pilgrimage to the Celestial City; the journey to the earthly Jerusalem should be similarly full of incident. Both travelling to the centre and arriving there are significant experiences.

The author does, however, accept that not everyone may be of his opinion on taking the longer route, listing the reasons a prospective pilgrim might not choose to waste too much time on the way to Jerusalem:

> For many people go to Jerusalem, who have no intention of going further, either because they do not have the wherewithal to do so, or because they do not have sufficient company, or because they cannot endure the effort, or because they are too afraid to cross the desert, or because they are in too much of a hurry to return because of their wives or their children, or for other reasonable causes.[26]

A certain air of pity for such men with family ties or other reasons to cut their journey short is apparent; reasons which obviously did not apply to the Mandeville-*persona*, as this passage comes at a point very soon before the narrative leaves the Holy Land altogether and expands eastwards.

For intending pilgrims certain practical matters were of the utmost importance: many standard pilgrimage guides would have included rates of exchange in various countries, the availability and cost of transport by land and sea, the equipment appropriate to each area and, of course, the

[26] 'Car pluseurs vont a Iherusalem, qui nont entencion de passer oultre, ou pour ce quil nont pour quoy, ou pour ce quil nont compaignie souffisant, ou pour ce quil ne peuent endurer la paine, ou pour ce quil doubtent trop a passer le desert, ou quil se hastent trop de retourner pour leurs femmes ou pour leurs enfans, ou pour aucunes choses raisonnables'. Letts, *Travels* II , p. 297.

indulgences available at religious sites and the prayers to be said there. On all these counts the *Book* tends to be of very little use; the occasional piece of advice on crossing deserts or buying certain products is all the author deems fit to give. Instead he offers a bewildering range of alternative information of varying degrees of practical use. The description of the isle of Cyprus is a good illustration of what the reader may expect throughout the first half of the *Book.*

Cyprus is, first of all, described in general terms as a beautiful island with four major cities, of which Famagusta is one of the largest harbours in the world. Then we are told what the island contains in the way of noteworthy places connected with saints and their relics:

> In Cyprus is the Mountain of the Holy Cross, where there are black monks; and there is the cross of the thief Dismas, as I have told you before. In Cyprus lies St Sozomenos, for whom the people of the country hold a great feast. And in the castle of Amours lies the body of St Hilarion, and the King has it kept very diligently. And near Famagusta St Barnabas the Apostle was born.[27]

This information, of obvious concern to pilgrims, is taken from the *Otia imperialia* and William of Boldensele. It is followed by an account of local hunting methods using leopards, also from Boldensele, and we are told in detail how the inhabitants eat sitting in trenches around cloths laid on the floor and the reason for this behaviour (the excessive heat), an observation for which there does not appear to have been an earlier source than Mandeville. We have also been told that Cyprus is famous for its red wines which turn white after being kept for a year. Thus geographical facts are followed by religious material and then by interesting, though in this case strictly secular, local customs.

Often, though by no means as often as a purely practical itinerary would warrant, useful distances between islands or cities are given: 'It is five leagues from Bethany to Jericho'; 'Three leagues from Jericho is the Dead Sea'; 'This island is nearly eight leagues by sea from Constantinople'.[28] Such information is not always limited to a bare list of distances. For example, a passage chosen almost at random demonstrates the author's narrative technique in action even on a small scale:

[27] 'En Cypre est la montaigne de Sainte Croiz, ou il a moines noirs; et la est la crois du larron Dismas, si comme ie vous ay dessus dit. En Cypre gist saint Zenomines, de qui ceuls du pays font grant feste. Et ou chastel damours gist le corps Saint Hylariun, et le fait le Roy garder moult diliganment. Et pres de Framagoche fut nez Saint Barnabe lapostre'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 242.

[28] 'De Bethanie a Iherico a v. lieues'.; 'De Iherico a iii. lieues est la Morte Mer'.; 'Ceste ylle est pres a viii. lieues de Constantinoble en passant par la mer'. *op. cit.*, pp. 282, 283.

> And, returning, thirty miles from that castle is the city of Dan, otherwise called Selynas or Caesarea Philippi, which lies at the foot of Mt Lebanon, where the River Jordan rises.[29]

This single example shows how easily the author combines different kinds of factual information, both giving a route to a city accessible from Jerusalem, including a visit to a different city on the return journey, and mentioning certain relevant linguistic or topographical details, serving to place the location more firmly in classical and biblical space.

The author's *persona*, in fact, states at an early stage in the *Book* that he is reluctant to spend his time giving exhaustive information and precise guidance:

> He who wishes to go across the sea can go by many roads, both by land and by sea, depending on the regions he sets out from, most of which come to the same end. And do not think that I wish to set out all the places, cities, towns and castles by which you should go, for I would make too long a tale of it, but only some countries and principal places one should pass through to go the right way.[30]

Thus, in effect, the pilgrim whose intention is to use the *Book* as a precise itinerary has been fairly warned before the journey has even begun: this is not a comprehensive guide to each and every stage on the road to Jerusalem. This warning is echoed later on, when the author refuses to give details of the way through France, because the way is familiar to many people. A certain amount of prior knowledge on the part of likely audiences may therefore be assumed, possibly based on the variety and availability of earlier travelogues, although the author never states this explicitly, nor does he use it as an excuse for his avoidance of long descriptions of an uninteresting nature. Yet perhaps the discerning reader would have realised that, if this early promise were kept, the *Book* would not be suitable to take the place of a more detailed, if prosaic, guide. The fact that some readers were not so discerning - as Moseley[31] remarks, 'one owner of the Cotton text of the *Travels* tore out those pages that could be used as a pilgrim

[29] 'Et en retournant de ce chastel a xxx. miles est la cite de Dan, qui est autrement appelee Selynas ou Cesaires le filz Appou, qui seoit au pie de la montaigne de Lyban, ou le flueue de Iourdain commence'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 292-3.

[30] 'Qui veult aler oultre mer, il puet aler par pluseurs chemins, et par mer et par terre, selon les parties dont il mouuera, dont les pluseurs tournent tous a vne fin. Et nentendez mie que ie vueille declarier tous les lieux, citez, villes, chasteaulx par ou il conuenra passer, car ie feroie trop lonc compte, mais seulement aucuns pays et lieux principaulx par ou on doit passer pour aler droite voie'. *op. cit.*, pp. 231-2.

[31] Moseley, C.W.R.D. (1983), *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, p. 23.

guide - one suspects in order so to use them' - points out the often serious discrepancies between authorial intentionality and the actual reception of the *Book*.

In spite of this, the *Book* has a great deal of information to offer on many levels, and it is by a study of these levels that we may begin to understand whom the author intended to address in the first part of his work at least, the journey to Jerusalem. Apart from the suggested itineraries, many potentially useful facts are arrayed before us, concerning such varied subjects as relics and shrines, saint's lives and miracles, curiosities of nature and local political history.

One of the most obvious concerns of pilgrims, indeed the underlying purpose of the whole voyage, was naturally the visiting of shrines and other places of religious importance, in order to seek indulgences for their sins and say prayers for their souls or those of others. The journey to the centre of the Christian world was also an allegorical spiritual journey towards salvation. Accordingly a great part of Mandeville's itinerary is taken up with descriptions of holy places, the lives of the saints connected with them and the miracles performed there. Among the first facts mentioned about each area visited are the sites of particular interest to pilgrims, their accessibility and what one might expect to find there. A great amount of time is spent in Constantinople with its array of relics and in the famous places of the Holy Land, particularly those connected with Christ himself.

The author's method of constantly referring to Biblical material whenever he mentions a place or saint linked to the Scriptures is typical of pilgrimage literature. It is only to be expected that each place should be connected with an appropriate biblical episode; here Samson destroyed the Temple, there John the Baptist was born, there one can still see Moses' burning bush. This is a land where, to Christian senses, past and present are one and the same, and following in the footsteps of Christ means in some way to follow his teachings and path through life itself.

This is a theme often repeated among pilgrimage writers: 'There are very many other places which the Lord has deigned to visit and sanctify by His bodily presence, for wherever the Lord's feet have trodden, the place is held by the faithful to be holy and consecrated, and a precious relic'.[32] History, geography and religious episodes become inseparable parts of one another; this mountain is Ararat, that river is the Jordan, and each has its story to tell the devout pilgrim.

Sometimes added spiritual profit is to be gained in specific places, and Mandeville points these out - although he does not itemise the indulgences

[32] Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, PPTS 11, p. 46.

offered as other pilgrimage guides often did. 'Libri indulgentiarum' were popular throughout the later Middle Ages, and after 1350 such lists were increasingly common in pilgrimage accounts. Once again, the *Book* omits details vital to any intending pilgrim while providing more general information in the same area.

Some information on the subject of relics, however, is both practically useful and genuinely interesting in other ways. The author sees it as his duty to warn pilgrims in cases of possible false relics, a common enough problem, as many medieval writers, including Chaucer, pointed out; for instance, there are two Holy Spears, one at Paris and a larger one in the keeping of the Emperor of Constantinople. Mandeville avoids expressing an opinion on their relative merits, but he does condemn the keepers of certain other relics who lie about their properties:

> Some people believe that half of the Cross of Our Lord is in Cyprus at an abbey of monks. This cross in Cyprus is that on which Dismas the good thief was hanged, but not everybody knows it. And it ought to be known, as they encourage people to honour it for the profit from the offerings, and let it be understood that it is from the Cross of Our Lord.[33]

Other writers commented on the same phenomenon; an exasperated Arnold von Harff remarks, 'The blunders of priests I leave it to God to settle'.[34]

At other times Mandeville sets his personal seal of approval on certain relics, explaining why there should be more than one example of more famous ones, such as the Crown of Thorns. He tells us that four crowns were set on Christ's head at different times, made of hawthorn, barberry, briars and the last of 'reeds of the sea', probably sea holly:

> And although it is said that this crown is of thorns, know that it is of white reeds of the sea that prick like thorns. For I have seen it and looked at it very diligently many times, both that of Paris and that of Constantinople. For it was a whole crown twisted and made of reeds, but it has been separated and divided into two, of which one part is in Paris and the other in Constantinople. And I have one of these precious thorns, which looks like a white thorn; and it was given me by great favour.[35]

[33] 'Aucunes genz cuident que la moitie de la crois nostre seigneur soit en Cypre a vne abbaye de moines. Celle crois en Cypre est celle ou Dimas le bon larron fu pendu, mais chascun ne le scet mie. Et ce est de necessite de sauoir, car pour le proffit des offrandes il la font honnorer, et donnent a entendre que ce soit de la crois nostre seigneur'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 233.

[34] Letts, *Arnold von Harff*, p. 252.

[35] 'Et combien que on die que celle couronne soit despines, sachies quelle est de ions de mer blans, qui poignent comme espines. Car ie lay veue et regardee moult diliganment

Such details, despite the fact that they originate from many different sources, are re-used in such a way as to make the *Book* come vividly alive, lending it a verisimilitude that would otherwise be lacking.

The author is also fascinated by miracles of all kinds, whether miraculous apparitions of the Virgin, rocks that produce water or flocks of birds which go on annual pilgrimage to the monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai; this last example also lends itself to moral exposition. According to Thietmar, the *Book*'s source for this tale, the miraculous oil is provided by the Virgin Mary. Mandeville says it is made from olive branches brought by birds which arrive every year 'as one goes on pilgrimage', supplying enough for the cooking needs of the monastery. Thus he does not only transform a religious miracle into a natural one, as Bennett remarks, but also adds a detail of such practicality that some of the wonder seems lost; few miracles are so down-to-earth that they provide cooking oil!

It seems strange that Mandeville, so keen to defend miracles and stories against the advice of his sources, should here transform his source in such a way as apparently to diminish the marvellous. Yet the tale of the 'pilgrim' birds not only serves to remind us of the pilgrimage the author himself is engaged on, but also stresses the amazing qualities of nature. The mere fowls of the air can be compared to devout Christians, flocking to a shrine in such numbers that they are blessed with the performance of an annual miracle, of service to both the spiritual and physical needs of humans. A parallel can be found in the Sufi mystics; Farid Ud-Din Attar's twelfth-century *Conference of the Birds* depicts the birds' arduous quest for their king, the Simurgh, as an allegory of the soul's journey towards God.

Mandeville also expresses his own conclusions regarding the holiness of a saint (one of the most popular in England at the time) to whom even the birds come in piety: 'And since birds, which have no natural reason, go there to seek that glorious virgin, well ought men to exert themselves to seek and worship her'.[36] Thus Mandeville has not docked the tale of its miraculous element, but embroidered it in such a way as to increase wonder and stress the sanctity of the location.

par pluseurs fois, et celle de Paris et celle de Constantinoble. Car ce fu toute vne couronne entortillee et faite des ions, mais en la desseuree et departie en deux, de quoy vne partie est a Paris et lautre a Constantinoble. Et si en ay vne de ces precieuses espines, qui semble estre vne espine blanche; et celle me fut donnee par grant especiaulte'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 235.

36 'Et puisque les oyseaus, qui nont point de senz naturel, y vont pour requerre celle glorieuse vierge, bien se doiuent pener les hommes de la requerir et aourer'. *op. cit.*, p. 260.

The strongest condemnation is reserved for those who attempt to hide miracles from common view, as do the monks of St Catherine:

> They did not want to tell me anything, until I told them that they should no longer conceal the grace of God and the courtesy he did them, but make it public in order to bring people to greater devotion; and that they sinned in concealing it, so it seemed to me, for the miracles God has made, and still makes every day, are the witnesses to his power.[37]

Nothing that demonstrates the power of God should ever be hidden.

It is interesting that the man who has been cautious concerning false relics sometimes refuses to follow his sources when the authenticity of miracles is questioned. For instance, at one point William of Boldensele remarks about the weeping columns at Calvary that 'the simple say that they weep over and lament Christ's death; which is not true, because, where nature suffices, there is no need to resort to miracles', and goes on to report his scientific arguments against another such miracle. Mandeville, who has used Boldensele as his main source for his description of Jerusalem, chooses not to report his source's misgivings and simply qualifies the story with the impersonal statement that 'some say' the columns weep for Christ's death.[38] A similar *contretemps* is evident when Boldensele and Mandeville examine the Pyramids; Boldensele is firm in his conviction that these are tombs, and again calls those who would believe otherwise 'simplices'. Mandeville does not hesitate to number himself among these 'fools', and insists that:

> They are Joseph's granaries, which he had made in order to conserve grain in lean years ... And some say that they are tombs of great lords of old; but this is not true, for the common opinion in all the land near and far is that they are Joseph's granaries, and thus they have written it in their chronicles. And on the other hand, if they were tombs, they would not be empty inside, nor would they have no doors by which to enter, nor be of such size and height. Which is why it is not to be believed that they are tombs.[39]

37 'Il ne me vouldrent riens dire, tant que ie leur dis que il ne deuoient point celer la grace de Dieu et la courtoisie que il leur faisoit, mais le deuoient publier pour mectre les gens en plus grant deuocion; et que il faisoient pechier de celer, ce me sembloit, car les miracles que Dieu a faiz, et encore fait tous les iours, ce sont les tesmoins de sa puissance'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 261.

38 *op. cit.*, p. 270.

39 'Ce sont les greniers Ioseph, que il fist faire pour ble garder par les chieres annees ... Et dient aucuns que ce sont sepulcures de grans seigneurs de iadis; mais ce nest mie voir, car la commune renommee est par tout le pays pres et loing que ce sont les greniers Ioseph, et ainsi lont il escript en leurs croniques. Et dautre part, se ce fussent tombes,

Such a forceful refutation of the tomb theory, using both local *auctoritas* and logical proofs, might seem unreasonable given Mandeville's level of dependence on his sources. Perhaps the story of Joseph's granaries is not only more interesting but also provides an opportunity to connect the episode with Biblical material, as Mandeville so often does. This, together with his reluctance to refute the miracle of the pillars, could be evidence of the author's intention to provide his audience with tales of the miraculous and marvellous, rather than burst the bubble of agreeable fictions.

Miracles also occur beyond the Holy Land. At the Tomb of St Thomas in India, the saint's relics are put to practical use. His hand, which is left emerging from the tomb, distinguishes between truth and falsehood written on pieces of paper; 'And so they come from very far away for judgement of doubtful affairs'.[40] Thus St Thomas works miracles even for pagans. His church is also home to a great idol, to which people go on pilgrimage 'as often and through as great devotion as Christians do to St James of Galicia'.[41] Like the birds of St Catherine, pagan idolaters demonstrate a natural piety comparable to Christian pilgrimage.

The author does not view only religious marvels as miracles. Natural wonders are also testimonies to the grace and power of the divine will, and are therefore to be examined in as much detail as the lives of saints. Sometimes they may be used to highlight moral or religious points. The phoenix, for example, is not simply described but - far more importantly - shown to be a metaphor for Christ's sacrifice: 'And this is truly a great miracle of God, and this bird can well be compared to God, in that there is but one God and that Our Lord was resurrected on the third day'.[42] This is a common medieval theme derived from early Christianity, where the phoenix was adopted as a symbol both of the Resurrection and of Christ himself.

The greatest 'natural' wonder of all is the miracle of the fish in Calanoc. All the fish in the sea come here once a year, throwing themselves on the shore for three days, one kind after another. The local people say that God sends the fish to do reverence to the king of Calanoc, who, with his

elles ne feussent mie voides par dedenz, ne elles ne eussent nulles portes pour entrer enz, ne grandesse ne telle hautesse. Pour quoy ce nest mie a croire que ce soient tombes'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 256.

40 'Et ainsi viennent de bien loing pour auoir iugement des causes doutables'. *op. cit.*, p. 327.

41 'ainsi communement et par aussi grant deuocion que Crestiens font a Saint Iaques en Gallice'. *op. cit.*, p. 328.

42 'Et vraiement cest grant miracle de Dieu, et puet on bien cel oysel comparoir a Dieu, en ce que il nest Dieu que vn seul et en ce que nostre sires resuscita le tiers iour'. *op. cit.*, pp. 253-4.

thousand wives, is doing his best to obey God's order to 'multiply and replenish the earth'. Mandeville neither agrees nor disagrees, saying that only God knows the reason, but for him the spawning fish have become an important if inscrutable sign:

> But this thing seems to me a greater marvel than anything I have ever seen in the world. For nature produces many diverse and many marvellous things, but this marvel is not of nature, for it is entirely against nature that fish, which have the whole world to travel in, should come and offer themselves up to be killed of their own will and without any constraint. And for this reason I am completely certain that this cannot be without great significance.[43]

A typical example of a purely secular miracle - from which no deeper conclusions are drawn - is the Gravelly Sea or Fosse of Memnon, whose unlimited contents are used for glass-making:

> And people come to seek that gravel by sea in ships and by land in carts. And when that pit is completely emptied, the next day it is as full as before. And there is always a great wind in that pit, which constantly stirs that gravel in a marvellous way. And if one were to put any metal into that pit in the gravel, that metal would be turned into glass; and if the glass made from that gravel is put into that pit, it becomes gravel as before.[44]

The above passage is remarkable not only for its description of a fivefold natural miracle, but also for the mention of such prosaic matters as the methods of transport of the gravel by land and sea. This is evidence of yet another facet of the *Book*: an attention to details of everyday life combined with useful, yet exotic information for the traveller. Nowhere is this more evident than in the extensive chapter concerning the properties of balsam, a valuable aromatic resin used in perfumery and medicine:

43 'Mais ceste chose me semble la plus grant merueille que nulle chose ou monde que ie veisse onques. Car nature fait trop de diuerses choses et trop merueilleuses, mais ceste merueille nest mie de nature, aincois est de tout encontre nature que les poissons, qui ont tout le monde a enuironner, se venroient rendre a la mort de leur propre uolente et senz nulle constrainte. Et pour ce suy ie tout certain que ce ne puet estre senz grande significacion'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 339.

44 'Et vient on querre celle grauele par nef en mer et par terre en charroy. Et quant on a forment desempli celle fosse, lendemain elle est aussi pleine comme par deuant. Et tousiours y a grant vent en celle fosse, qui remeue tousiours celle greine merueilleusement. Et qui mectroit aucun metal en celle fosse dedenz la greine, celui metal se conuertiroit en voirre; et le voirre qui est fait de celle grauelle, se on le met en celle fosse, il deuient greine comme deuant'. *op. cit.*, pp. 244-5.

And know that he who does not know well how to recognise balm would do well to avoid buying it; for one may easily be deceived ... And thus are many people and great lords deceived, who think to have balm when it is nothing of the kind; for the Saracens adulterate it to deceive Christians, as I have seen and experienced many times, and then the merchants and apothecaries adulterate it once more, so it is worth less. But if it pleases you I will show you how you may know and test it, so that you will not be deceived.[45]

This is an example of the strictly practical mercantile advice which would be of use to travellers, incorporating as it does not only a description of the product, its whereabouts and methods of cultivation, but also a warning against deception and a guide to recognising the genuine article. Yet no mention is made at any stage of the actual price of balsam, surely one of the most vital facts. Here the *Book* is both following and by extension popularising the non-religious interests of late medieval pilgrimage guides; balsam in particular is mentioned by von Breydenbach in his pilgrimage of 1483. Mandeville's advice on the subject was extracted and presented separately in two different fifteenth-century manuscripts, along with his description of the qualities of diamonds.[46]

Thus several types of pilgrim are addressed during the first part of the *Book*. Although the work may not have been of very much use as a straightforward guide to the Holy Land, containing as it does few details of itineraries and other practical matters, it follows a coherent route to Jerusalem despite its many digressions, continually drawing parallels between natural phenomena and religious experiences. For the traditional seeker after real or vicarious religious experience there is the constant iteration of Old and New Testament stories along the road to Palestine. For the clerical moralist there are satirical glances at Christian society in the West and its manifold shortcomings. For the growing ranks of the curious there are innumerable details on history, geography and the strange customs prevalent in other climes. Romance plays its part in the many stories, and learned warnings are given at various stages, yet Jerusalem remains the ultimate spiritual, cultural and physical goal and gives the narrative its

[45] 'Et si sachies que il se fait bon garder de acheter du balme, qui ne le scet bien cognoistre; car on pourroit de legier estre deceu ... Et ainsi sont maintes genz et grans seigneurs deceus, qui cuident auoir du balme et ce nest riens; car les Sarrazins le sophistiquent pour deceuoir les Crestiens, si comme ie lay pluseurs foiz veu et prouue, et puis les marcheans et les apoticaires le sophisticent encore autre foiz, si en vault pis. Mais sil vous plaist ie vous monsterray comment vous le pourrez sauoir et prouuer, par quoy vous ne soies deceus'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 255.

[46] MSS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fonds fr. 14830 and 2043; cf. Fery-Hue, F. (1984), 'Un extrait des *Voyages* de Jean de Mandeville: le chapitre du baume', in *Romania*, Vol. 105, pp. 511-25.

centre and focus. Any pilgrim, whether they actually set out on the journey or remained at home, as did Mandeville himself, would have drawn a wealth of spiritual treasure from the *Book*.

Having examined the author's intentions as evidenced by the text, I will now turn to the issue of reception and likely audiences. I will begin with an examination of the later versions of Mandeville's *Book*, showing how alterations and additions to the original text reveal the redactors' personal attitudes and reactions. Of these versions, the following are the most significant for a study of the work's pilgrim audiences. Firstly, the Vulgate Latin Version, dating from the early fifteenth century and preserved in 41 manuscripts. Then there is the abridged Metrical Version, composed in England c. 1400-1425 and finally the 'Epitome', each preserved in a single surviving copy from the fifteenth century.

The Vulgate Latin Version is a particularly significant redaction, partly because of the way in which the text is adapted to conform more to received Church ideals, stressing the pious elements, and partly for its restructuring and abbreviation of the work. This makes it more precise and orderly, though losing much of its individual character.

This restructuring begins in the Prologue, where the opening concerning the Holy Land and its excellence is abridged to:

Since the land of Jerusalem, the promised land of the sons of God, is for many reasons worthier of being possessed than all the lands of the world, and principally for this reason, that God the creator of heaven and earth deigned to value it so much that there he revealed his own son, Christ the saviour of the world, to the human race though incarnation from the chaste Virgin ...[47]

This is a far terser introduction to the work, condensing the extended account of the life of Christ into the simplest of statements. Evidently the redactor of this version believes in letting piety speak for itself, with none of the more elaborate phraseology of the original. He also believes in stressing the miserable state of Church and clergy and other evils of contemporary Christian life, to which the continuing loss of the Holy Land is due.

[47] 'Cvm terra Hierosolimitana, terra promissionis filiorum Dei dignior cunctis mundi terris sit habenda multis ex causis, et praecipue illa, quod Deus conditor coeli et mundi, ipsam tanti dignatus fuit aestimare, vt in eo proprium filium saluatorem mundi, Christum exhibuerit generi humano per incarnationem ex intemerata Virgine'. Hakluyt, R. (rpt 1888), *The Principall Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, Vol. 8, *Liber Ioannis Mandevil*, p. 63.

Rather more strangely, Mandeville's condemnation of the princes of the world is transposed to the very end of the Vulgate text. The knight's travels have enabled him to escape bloodshed at home:

> For from the time I left, our two kings of England and France did not cease to wage mutual destruction, depredations, ambushes and murders through which, unless preserved by the Lord, I could not have passed without death or peril of death, and without a great accumulation of crimes. And lo, now ... I hear that the said enmity of those lords has been lulled through the grace of God.[48]

This conclusion is an extraordinarily bathetic reworking of the *Book*'s attitude: the Christian division that, incidentally, prevents the recapture of the Holy Land has severely incommoded the knight. Now the quarrels of kings have supposedly come to an end, Sir John can live out his life in peace.

More logically, perhaps, the translator is stern in his treatment of Mandeville's *curiositas* - which he excises wherever possible. The work is specifically aimed at pilgrims:

> Wherefore in this first part of this work I describe the road by both land and sea from the country of England to that land, and briefly and diligently recall notably the holy places that are within it, insofar as this description may avail to serve pilgrims to some extent, both on the way and on arrival.[49]

The passage about the delight men have in hearing of diverse customs is accordingly omitted. Such distracting and irrelevant episodes as that of the dreadful Head of Satalia or the Dragon-woman of Cos are simply paraphrased or even ignored altogether.

Even miracles are not spared, and some of the more marvellous are questioned critically or removed. That of the lamp in the Holy Sepulchre, for instance, is treated with extreme suspicion. According to Mandeville this lamp remains lit all year round, going out only on Good Friday. On Easter Sunday - as Greek Orthodox faithful still believe today - the flame is miraculously rekindled. The Vulgate redactor has this to say:

48 'Quoniam a tempore quo recessi, duo reges nostri Angliae, et Franciae, non cessauerunt inuicem exercere destructiones, depraedationes, insidias, et interfectiones, inter quas, nisi a Domino custoditus, non transissem sine morte, vel mortis periculo, et sine criminum grandi cumulo Et ecce ... audio dictas Dominorum inimicitias, per gratiam Dei consopitas'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 9, p. 82.

49 'Quapropter et in hac prima parte huius operis iter tam peregrinandi, quam nauigandi, a partibus Angliae ad ipsam describo, et loca notabiliter sancta, quae intra eandem sunt breuiter commemoro et diligenter, quatenus peregrinis tam in itinere quam in prouentione valeat haec descriptio in aliquo deseruire'. *op. cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 64.

> This (if it is so) is a manifest miracle of divine favour. And albeit that most Christians foolishly believe it by great virtue of their piety, nevertheless it is mistrusted by very many. Perhaps the Saracen guardians of the Sepulchre, inventing them, made such things known in order to increase the profits from the tribute that would result from this, or the offerings that are given.[50]

Religion is too serious a matter to become an occasion for wonder or a plaything of rogues.

Prophecies of a Christian reclamation of the Holy Land are, perhaps surprisingly, also omitted. It would seem that Christians are not yet worthy of Jerusalem, and the redactor prefers to castigate them rather than raise their hopes in vain. One place where he elaborates on the original is at the end of the Sultan's scathing condemnation:

> Now therefore, (I ask), let us piously consider and take to heart how much confusion there is, and what kind of opprobrium, as long as the enemies of the Christian name reproach us for our crimes. And let each one take pains to improve, as far as he can (God willing) in a short time, in order that this delightful to God, of which we speak, this sacrosanct land, promised to the sons of God, may be restored to us, the adopted of God.[51]

The redactor of the Latin Version has restructured the text to make this impassioned plea his chosen ending to this section of the *Book*, a position of additional significance.

The Latin Version is thus one of the most important for a consideration of Mandeville's possible pilgrim audiences. In this case at least, religion is taken extremely seriously and the original author's *curiositas* is silently condemned by exclusion. The redactor seems to be trying to avoid the kind of condemnation of insincere pilgrims evinced in much late medieval literature, as in the Wife of Bath's 'wandrynge by the weye' and Piers Plowman's pilgrims, given 'leave to lie all their lives after' by virtue of their travels.

50 'Quod (si ita est) euidens diuini beneficii miraculum est. Et quamuis id plurimi Christiani simpliciter in magno pietatis merito credant, plerisque tamen est in suspicione. Forte talia Sarraceni custodes sepulchri fingentes diuulgareurunt, pro augendo emolumenta tributi, quod inde resultaret, seu oblationum quae dantur'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 124.

51 'Nunc pie igitur (rogo) consideremus, et corde attendamus, quantae sit confusionis, et qualis opprobrij, dum Christiani nominis inimici nobis nostra exprobant crimina. Et studeat quilibet in melius emendare, quatenus (Deo propitio) possit in breui tempore, haec de qua loquimur, terra Deo delecta, haec sacrosancta terra, haec filijs Dei promissa, nobis Dei adoptiuis restitui'. *op. cit.*, p. 145.

The pious, orthodox aspect of the author's *persona* is stressed and magnified, particularly in the opening and closing sections, and few pagan views are tolerated unless they reflect a just condemnation of Christian morality. The result is sometimes reminiscent of a sermon, despite the redactor's reluctance to rely on rhetorical devices. The abridgement is methodically made so as to restructure parts of the work, giving them a logical coherence while stripping them of much of the vitality of the original; the result is considerably tauter and dryer and, from a strict religious point of view, more sound. Its popularity is attested by the number of surviving manuscripts, and its choice of language indicates that it is intended for a clerical audience familiar with Latin and appreciative of conciseness, though wary of the wonderful and any subject or attitude not strictly orthodox from a Catholic viewpoint.

A very different audience is addressed by the Metrical Version. The author was an experienced writer, possibly a cleric, fluent in Latin and a skilful redactor. This latter characteristic is evident throughout the work, which differs greatly from the Insular Version from which it is derived. The *persona* of 'Sir John Mandeville, Knight' has almost disappeared, wonders are stressed and little of the more serious subject-matter is retained. This is in fact an almost complete antithesis to the Vulgate Latin Version. It opens with a frank appraisal of the original work, condemning it as both overlong and, amazingly enough, boring:

> But in þat boke is moch thinge / That nedeth naught in þis talkinge. /
> And þerefor seth hit nedeth nauȝt, / As I haue herde men sein offt, /
> Be it in geste othir in songe, / And it be made ouerlonge, /
> Hit maketh men werie and lothe to here / Thouȝ hit be neuer so good matere.[52]

The redactor then proceeds to insert a 400-line extract from the *Stations of Rome*, a popular thirteenth-century guide to the relics, shrines and indulgences of Rome. This is not an obvious choice for someone who wishes to continue with a description of the Holy Land, as the tenor of the entire guide is to stress the superiority of Rome:

> Hit were no neod to mon in cristiante / To passe in to þe holy lond ouer þe see /
> To Jerusalem ne to kateryne.[53]

52 Seymour, *Metrical Version*, ll. 35-44.
53 Zacher, C.K. (1986), 'Travel and geographical writings', in Hartung, A.E. (ed.), *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, Vol. 7, p. 2239.

Though this particular extract is, not surprisingly, not included in the redaction, it is hardly encouraging to undercut a version of the *Book* with a text that states of Rome that,

> þe pilgrimes þat come to toun / Thai had more deuocioun /
> To seen þe meruailis in þat stage / Than to fulfillen thaire pilgrimage'.[54]

It seems strange in any case that anyone who has stated his aim of reporting fascinating marvels should then give a long list of place-names. Having provided this report of the indulgences available in Rome, the redactor proceeds to eliminate the Sultan's colloquy, having already rejected any mention of crusade, moralising instances and accounts of foreign religions, presumably as being too heavy for his audience.

The Metrical Version, therefore, is an indication of the lack of importance certain people might ascribe to Mandeville's pilgrimage section. Not only is pilgrimage itself treated as an opportunity to observe marvels and collect indulgences, but religious feeling itself seems to have small chances of recognition in a world where marvels are exaggerated and serious discussions minimised to the point of non-existence. While a standard subdivision of the genre of pilgrimage literature is used, the guidebook extract does little to convey any serious feelings of piety, and serves rather as a reminder of Mandeville's genius in his choice and use of sources. Obviously some audiences were uninterested in the religious aspect and preferred the more exciting thrills of romance and the crudely marvellous.

Other abridged versions of the *Book* concentrate almost exclusively on events in the Holy Land; one such example is the fifteenth-century 'Epitome' based on the Defective Version. Its author was most interested in the devotional aspects of the *Book*, concentrating first on the Holy Land and Jerusalem, then on the routes there and finally devoting a few lines to the rest of the East. A similar interest is apparent in the late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century Bodleian MS. Ashmole 751, composed of extracts from the first third of the Defective Version of the *Book*. There is an evident interest in Christian subjects while items of less interest are summarised or omitted, although there is no structured plan to the work. Altogether, while we do not know who owned each of these manuscripts, they do provide evidence of a particular interest in the pilgrimage and devotional character of the *Book* in fifteenth-century England.

Evidence external to the text and manuscripts of the *Book* can also help to determine the extent of their popularity due to the treatment of a

54 Seymour, *Metrical Version*, ll. 431-4.

particular theme; one major example of such evidence is the use made of the *Book* in later specifically pilgrimage literature. Several pilgrim guides do draw on Mandeville, usually without acknowledgement. John Capgrave, Prior Provincial of the Order of St Augustine in England and author of theological and historical works, mentions Mandeville as a source of inspiration. This is in the prologue to his *Solace of Pilgrims*, dating from c. 1450, where Mandeville is listed with such famous authorities as Plato, Jerome and Marco Polo:

> Many men in þis world aftyr her pilgrimage haue left memoriales of swech þingis as þei haue herd and seun þat nowt only here eres schuld ber witnesse but eke her eyne ... Eke jon maundeuyle knyth of yngland aftir his labour made a book ful solacious on to his nacyoun. Aftyr all þese grete cryeris of many wonderfull þingis I wyl folow with a smal pyping of swech straunge sitis as I haue seyn and swech straunge þingis as I haue herd.[55]

Zacher correctly points out that 'Capgrave's crediting Mandeville with having "made a book ful solacious on to his nacyoun" acknowledges Mandeville's own remark that Christians find "gret solace" in hearing about revered holy places'.[56] The work itself, however, is a description of Rome rather than any place supposedly visited by Mandeville. In this instance we have proof of the social standing of one type of mid-fifteenth-century audience, who considered the *Book* a paean to *curiositas* and its author 'a crier of wonderful things'.

In his account of his pilgrimage of 1496-99, the German knight Arnold von Harff made good use of Mandeville. Six German translations of the *Book* were printed before 1499 and were therefore available to von Harff. He was the son of the hereditary chamberlain at the court of the Dukes of Jülich and Gelders, near Cologne, who visited Alexandria, Cairo and Mount Sinai, crossed the Arabian desert and then, though this is most probably untrue, went to India, Ceylon, Madagascar, and east and central Africa to the source of the Nile. He returned via the Holy Land, Asia Minor, Constantinople and Compostella. Letts believes it certain that he did travel everywhere except from India to central Africa.[57]

In his travels, von Harff is interested both in religious matters - he itemises many indulgences to be had at holy places - and in the marvellous, information on which he draws from Marco Polo, Mandeville and possibly Odoric independently of the latter. Some items such as the magnetic rocks

55 Capgrave, J., *Ye Solace of Pilgrimes*, ed. Mills, C.A. (1911), London, p. 1.
56 Zacher, 'Travel and geographical writings', p. 2244.
57 Letts, *Arnold von Harff*.

and the rivers of Paradise were common knowledge; he had probably firsthand experience of the incubators in Egypt and the Pyramids being called granaries. He mentions Prester John as being lord of India and says that he lost sight of the Pole Star in the south, but these references cannot be attributed positively to the *Book* - although Jerusalem is certainly mentioned in terms familiar from the latter:

> ... the holy and pleasant province called Jerusalem, which was the centre of the earth, where God chose to make the first creatures, so that they might spread out on all sides. Further God chose that country and made it the land of promise before all other countries. Also God sent his Son Jesus Christ there to be born in that province, and hung on the Cross there in the centre of the earth, to redeem the whole world. Wherefore Jerusalem was the most holy and most famous pilgrimage place in the world.[58]

Other references are definitely derived from Mandeville. These include accounts of the Greek religion, St Catherine's monastery, the number of date trees at Helym, the derivation of the name Jordan, the description of the Samarians and Job's Well with its changing colours. In the *Book*, these details are taken variously from Vitry, Boldensele and Würzburg. The derivation of von Harff's text from the *Book* is clearly shown in his very similar account of the Transfiguration. In this one passage Mandeville drew on Boldensele, Würzburg and Honorius of Autun, a synthesis von Harff could hardly have reproduced independently.

Von Harff's *Pilgrimage* also uses the *Book* for details of the exotic East he never actually visited. White lions, giant snails and the well of St Thomas' church, filled with gold and jewels by worshippers, are all present. In Malabar there are naked people who

> mocked at us for wearing clothes and took us to be people from another world and not of Adam's race, since God created Adam and Eve naked ... they do not have separate wives; all are in common. They also have the produce of the land in common, and are therefore both rich and poor'.[59]

Also, 'the people in Lack worship oxen, but in honour of him who made them. They think that it is not possible to find a more simple or innocent beast to compare with God than an ox'.[60] This story, like the others on the East, originated with Odoric, but the reason given for choosing the ox as representative of God is Mandeville's own invention.

58 Letts, *Arnold von Harff*, p. 175.
59 Letts, *Arnold von Harff*, p. 167. Cf. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 330.
60 Letts, *Arnold von Harff*, p. 168. Cf. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 323.

Von Harff, a real traveller, is quite deliberately reinventing himself as a fictional character. Whether he believes Mandeville's self-presentation or not, he is copying Mandeville's style, describing lands he has not visited as though he has first-hand experience of them. Like the author of the *Book*, he presents both religious information on the Holy Land and alien oddities from further afield. The German knight also copies - and presumably shares - Mandeville's attitude of religious tolerance.

This evidence of borrowing by a bona fide pilgrim, one who actually travelled to the Holy Land and could therefore judge the veracity and accuracy of other accounts for himself, is most significant. It would seem to indicate that by this time Mandeville was an accepted authority on matters connected with the Holy Land, and that he was relied upon to provide specific information on the subject of pilgrimage places and sights of note.

That this was true in England as well as Germany is borne out by two other works. *The Pilgrimage of Sir Richard Guylforde to the Holy Land*, written by Guylforde's chaplain after their journey - on which Guylforde died - in 1506, was published by Pynson in 1511. While the pilgrimage was a real one, the author borrowed material from Bernhard von Breydenbach's pilgrimage of 1483 and also from the *Book*. Guylforde was an engineer, shipbuilder, privy councillor and controller of the royal household to Henry VII; the identity of his chaplain remains a mystery. *The Pilgrimage of Sir Richard Torkyngton to the Holy Land*, an account of a pilgrimage made in 1517-18 by a Norfolk parson, is an almost word-for-word copy of the above, thereby consciously or unconsciously borrowing from Mandeville as well.

Guylforde's chaplain is more selective than von Harff when it comes to choosing suitable material from the *Book*. All the borrowings are from the description of the Holy Land, with nothing extraneous to a religious purpose. Again, while some similar details could have been seen on the spot or derived from other authors, several are definitely from Mandeville. These include Jerusalem's water supply, history and geographical position, where the lists of names and countries are given in exactly the same order as in the *Book*:

> It stands fair among hills, and there is no other river coming thereto nor well in it, but the water comes all by conduit in great plenty from Hebron ... This land of Jerusalem has been in the hands of many sundry nations, as of Jews, Canaanites, Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, Medes, Greeks, Romans, Christian men, Saracens, Barbaryns, Turks and many other nations. Jerusalem is in the land of Judaea, and it marches eastwards to the kingdom of Arabia, southwards to the land of Egypt, westwards to the great sea, and northwards to the kingdom of Syria and to the sea of Cyprus in some part.[61]

Distances taken from the *Book* are also used on several occasions. So are details of places and items seen, as in the Holy Sepulchre and Bethlehem's fortifications and ancient name of Effrata, the account of which is followed by the abbreviated tale of the miraculous origin of roses. The derivation of the river Jordan from the streams Jor and Dan is also repeated, as is the story of the birth of Antichrist in Chorosaym. The description of the Temple of Solomon is taken from the *Book* wholesale; in this instance the author explains honestly that 'I saw not this temple within, but I write as I heard thereof there, and saw in writing'.[62]

The author does not include any of Mandeville's less believable miracles or non-religious stories, despite journeying past Satalia and Rhodes. He does not hesitate to contradict Mandeville on occasion, saying that the footprint of Christ on Mount Olive is that of the right rather than the left foot. He also elaborates on his sources; the Church of Our Lady in Nazareth may be ruined, but the chapel still stands. Altogether, then, the information taken from the *Book* is limited to strictly devotional material and practical itinerary details.

Thus the *Book* was accepted as a true account of an actual pilgrimage and Mandeville's tales were taken at face value, in these instances at least. His journey must have seemed fairly convincing, since it was used not only by non-travellers but also by real pilgrims who journeyed to the Holy Land themselves. Yet I believe that the discrepancies between the texts and their reception demonstrate that there is far more to the *Book* than a simple travel guide; the usual reception of this part of Mandeville's work shows that audiences often did not understand the text's underlying complexity of purpose, misinterpreting the author's intentions and accepting the *Book* simply as another example of the genres the author imitated and yet reconstructed in such a masterly fashion.

It is evident from the marginalia found in texts of the *Book* that the information on the Holy Land, its relics and sights, was considered extremely important by many readers. Even those manuscripts which do not show a particular interest in the pilgrimage route, preferring to concentrate on the geography and wonders of the Orient, make some mention of the Cross and/or Jerusalem at least.[63] Other manuscripts

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61 *The Pylgrymage of Sir Richard Guylforde to the Holy Land, AD. 1506*, ed. Ellis, H. (1851), p. 22.

62 Guylforde, *Pylgrymage*, p. 46.

63 Cf. BN Arsenal MS. 3219, Nat. Lib. Scotland MS. Adv. 19.1.11.

annotate only the Holy Land, ignoring the later itinerary into the East almost altogether. Even a manuscript with relatively little underlining, the fourteenth-century BN MS. ff. 5637, notes the Crown of Thorns, the two spearheads and the fact that St John does not mind where he is worshipped.[64]

This is also the case with the fifteenth-century Insular/Continental text Cambridge Fitzwilliam 23 and the Insular BN MS. ff. 5633. A reader of the first was interested in the Cross and Crown of Thorns relics, mentions of saints and St Catherine in particular, although Jerusalem is only remarked upon in the table of chapter headings.[65] BN 5633 underlines all of the above and the routes towards Jerusalem, although it too largely ignores the Holy City. Other texts include notes on major points such as Babylon, the Red Sea, Mount Sinai, Bethlehem, Calvary, the Templum Domini, Mount Sion and the Ascension.

The Continental BN MS. ff. 5634 has hands pointing to a variety of information in the Holy Land: Gaza, the phoenix, the Holy Sepulchre, Pilate's house, Simon, John the Baptist, the Ark and Abraham are among these.[66] The reader marked St Thomas's tomb in Malabar twice; others with an interest in relics and miracles also did so. BL MS. Harley 4383 notes many pilgrimage facts throughout the Near East, with both marginal descriptions and *notae*.

Two manuscripts show a more detailed preoccupation with the pilgrimage information of the *Book*, although they note almost everything throughout. The first is the fourteenth-century Continental BN MS. n.a. 10723. The French marginalia mark many points of note, whether sacred or not, from Constantinople to Palestine, but they single Jerusalem out for special attention. The Holy Sepulchre, the place of the Crucifixion, the spot where the Cross was raised, the columns of scourging and the discovery of the Cross are all marked with a particular symbol, a cross within a circle.[67] This is also used for Bethlehem, while certain other points of religious note before Jerusalem have a simple cross. From the Templum Domini onwards, a different hand takes over the task of marginal annotation, this time in Latin. The interest in pilgrimage subjects, however, continues to the end of the Holy Land, with extensive descriptions of each; St Thomas' 'manus qui intrauit in plagis domini' is also noted later.[68]

[64] ff. 6, 6v, 34.
[65] ff. 2, 12-13v, 27.
[66] ff. 8v, 12, 19, 22, 24v, 27v, 40v, 42.
[67] ff. 22v-23v.
[68] f. 55.

The second manuscript, also from the late fourteenth century, is the Insular BL MS. Sloane 1464. The types of wood and dimensions of the Cross are described in detail in Latin marginal notes, as are the relics, saints and holy places to the city of Jerusalem. This is given the general heading 'de ciuitate Ierusalem' at the top of each page, in addition to remarks on every place of interest; the Holy Sepulchre is allocated five separate marginal notes.[69] Within and without the walls, each fact relative to pilgrimage is noted.

Both manuscripts described above take an interest in subjects along the pilgrimage route which are not strictly religious. This is particularly the case with the passage on balsam; Sloane 1464 has a rare note in French as well as one in Latin: 'Les cristiens cutefient seulement lez baummes et nul autre', 'Nota ad cognoscendum verum balsamum'.[70] BN MS. n.a. 10723 awards the text one of its rare crosses.[71] Many other manuscripts with fewer marginalia also note this.[72] The Egyptian incubators, the Nile and other such subjects are often remarked upon, denoting the curiosity which was becoming an intrinsic part of Christianity; even 'long apples', or bananas, and the phoenix, both symbols of Christianity, are sometimes noted simply for themselves.

The marginalia therefore point towards various types of reception of the *Book* as pilgrimage account. Both early and later readers are preoccupied by the subject as a whole, although by the late sixteenth century, just beyond the period discussed in this book, this had become a minority interest. The itineraries, relics and places of note in the Holy Land were remarked upon, as was Jerusalem itself; but there was also increasing interest in extraneous material, human customs and natural marvels which were not part of the *Book*'s religious information. As far as the opening call to crusade is concerned, it was rarely noted, although the names of crusader kings were sometimes repeated in the margins and the Sultan's homily was widely annotated. While the *Book* was seen as a pilgrimage, responses to it as such usually mirrored Sir John's curiosity rather than his apparent eagerness for reconquest.

The illustrations of the *Book* are particularly interesting as evidence of Mandeville's audiences. They demonstrate a very definite progression from the *Book* seen as pilgrimage to an almost total eclipsing of this attitude by

[69] ff. 39v-51, 40-40v.
[70] f. 26.
[71] f. 15.
[72] BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 13; BN MS. ff. 20145, f. 19v; BL MS. Royal 20.B.x., f. 14v; BL MS. Cotton Titus C. xvi, f. 23; CFM MS. 23, ff. 25-25v.

the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century editions. The manuscripts and editions containing them are therefore presented in chronological order.

The first extant dated manuscript of the *Book*, the 1371 copy presented to the King of France, contains one painting at the beginning of the text and two further on.[73] Although the first illustration shows Mandeville the knight and scenes from the tale of the Daughter of Hippocrates, the latter two represent strictly religious subjects connected with the Holy Land: the Transfiguration and St Paul with St Luke. The artist stressed the sacred aspects of the *Book* as well as its romance elements.

This manuscript is followed by the Insular 'Livre des Merveilles', made for Philippe, Duc de Bourgogne in c. 1403. Its lavish illuminations stress the pilgrimage aspects of the journey by showing pilgrims on their way to and around the Holy Land. The first is of Mandeville, with a gold cross on his breast, taking his leave of the King of England.[74] We then see five pilgrims out in the country speaking to a guide; two pilgrims being shown the relics of Christ at Constantinople; three pilgrims being told the way to Jerusalem.[75] Later on the pilgrims are on horseback, when we are told that 'Here Mandeville shows his companions the road to Babylon'.[76] The knight is our guide, pointing out the way not only to his fellow pilgrims but also to the reader.

The pilgrims are depicted at various points along their route, often examining holy places such as St Catherine's monastery, where two other pilgrims are praying, the Promised Land or the Church of the Virgin at Sardenay. As in the *Book* itself, several events or aspects of the same event may be interconnected. In the illustration of the Dry Tree, for example, the pilgrims' imposing guide points towards the Dry Tree at the centre of the picture and, beyond it, Adam and Eve (Ill. 1). Adam delves while Eve, addressed by an angel with red, bat-like wings, spins. The Fall is thus juxtaposed with Redemption, symbolised by the tree withered at Christ's death, and future promise, when the tree flowers again at the Christian recapture of the Holy Land.

Sometimes biblical legends are illustrated without their attentive observers. It is significant, however, that the pilgrims themselves are not interested only in religious subjects. In Sicily they watch children being tested for bastardy and one being consumed by a dragon; beyond the Holy Land they point out wild beasts, the Fountain of Youth and naked people. They even become major subjects of illustrations themselves, comparing

[73] ff. 1, 34, 36.
[74] f. 141.
[75] ff. 142v, 144, 146.
[76] 'Cy deuise mandeuille le chemin de Babilonie a ses compagnons', f. 153.

their own Barnacle Geese with a Vegetable Lamb and crossing the Vale Perilous. Thus the curious pilgrims show us what to look for, attracting our attention whether as passive observers or actors; sometimes they confer amongst themselves, sometimes they look out of the picture towards the reader, involving us in their curiosity.

Even this lavishly decorated text is eclipsed by the magnificence of the Textless or Pictorial Version of the *Book*. Made in the early fifteenth century, probably for the court of Prague, this descendant of the Czech Version contains 28 full-page paintings of the first chapters in the International Style of painting of the period around 1400.[77] Most of the paintings are concerned with the sights and relics of the Holy Land; on several occasions these are pointed out by Mandeville himself at the head of his fellow pilgrims. Sir John, a young and richly-dressed nobleman, travels by sea and land, gesturing knowledgeably at cities and countryside scenes (Ill. 2). The pilgrims are individuals with clearly depicted clothing and facial features; Mandeville's two most prominent companions are distinguished by the sword of one and the dog of the other. They eagerly look around them at cities and landscapes and are forced to pay a fee to enter Syria. This is not an overly idealistic depiction of pilgrimage, but one dealing with reality as well.

The pilgrims are not always allowed to intrude in pictures of relics and sights of note. Constantinople stands alone in all its glory, the statue of Justinian with its fallen apple pointing eastwards and the Church of St Sophia in the centre. Then we are shown the procession of the Cross, crown, garment and sponge of Christ parading before the Greek Emperor. In a parallel picture further on, another Crown of Thorns is shown to the King of France. A further illustration expressly depicts the confusion surrounding relics: we see the French King and the Roman Emperor identified by their standards in their respective courts, each holding the spearhead from the lance that pierced Christ's side (Ill. 3). Krása comments on the spearhead's significance as an emblem of imperial rule;[78] in the next picture the pilgrims are looking at the Greek Emperor clasping yet another version of the relic. They also watch a tournament in Constantinople from a safe distance.

Scenes from the Bible and medieval religious legends are also given. We see Seth, both at the gates of Paradise and placing the seeds in Adam's mouth. The four types of wood of the Cross are depicted as the Jews fit them together; three Crowns of Thorns are forced onto Christ's head in

[77] Cf. Krása, J. (1983), *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville: A Manuscript in the British Library*.
[78] *op. cit.*, commentary on pl. 15.

three separate pictures. Elijah fed by a raven on Mount Carmel and Saints John and James outside Sephor share an illustration. The last picture of the manuscript shows Samson carrying away the gates of Gaza.

The artist also shows places as he imagines them to appear at present: the tombs of Saint Anne, Luke the Evangelist and John Chrysostom are depicted together inside a church, uniting the separate references. The relics of Cyprus are also shown in an island countryside. Yet even in this manuscript not all the pictures deal with religious subjects; we are shown the tomb of Aristotle, the philosophers on Mount Athos, the discovery of the corpse of Hermes, the Greek reply to the Pope and his curia, a hunt and a feast in Cyprus and the Fosse of Memnon. It would have been interesting to see what the painter made of the sights beyond Gaza.

The fascination of this artist with the *Book* as pilgrimage is apparent. The detailed depiction of Christ's Passion and the relics connected with it echoes the interest of the Prague court in the subject at the turn of the fifteenth century. Charles IV's authority was seen to be augmented by his possession of some of Christ's relics; 'It is in this sense, as part of the insignia, majesty, and power of individual rulers, that the relics are depicted in the illustrations'.[79] The Passion was also a favourite theme in Czech art just before the Hussite Rebellion. It is the contrast between the presentation of the *Book*'s illustrations in Paris and Bohemia which is most interesting here; where both BN MS. n.a. 4515 and the *Livre des Merveilles* depicted romance legends such as the Daughter of Hippocrates at Cos and the Head of Satalia, the Czech artist has avoided such themes altogether. He has also developed the pilgrim Mandeville and his companions into vivid characters compared to the rather standardised depictions of BN MS. 2810.

Two English Defective manuscripts also contain illustrations of the Holy Land and the pilgrims travelling through it. BL MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii and Harley 3954 both date from the early fifteenth century; the attitudes of their respective illustrators are however quite different. The Royal manuscript depicts many relics, saints and sights, all unframed at the bottom of the page below the text. We are shown simple drawings of the Cross, Crown of Thorns and spear shaft, St John and St James. The latter is dressed appropriately as a pilgrim with hat, staff, scrip and scallop. This is not the only image of a pilgrim in this text; 'a pilgryme' with hat and staff stands near the tomb of St Thomas (Ill. 4). Other figures include the Three Kings, St Julian, Solomon and the Virgin and Child. There are also pictures of Mount Sinai, the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary and other places of Egypt and Palestine.

[79] Krása, *The Travels*, p. 24.

This style of depiction, far removed from the paintings of the three previous manuscripts, is very static; we are shown people and places, but not the events they are famous for. The artist certainly regards the Holy Land as important, devoting roughly half of his pictures to this section of the *Book*; he hardly shows any non-religious subjects until reaching India. Yet in spite of this, he appears more concerned with depicting natural formations - mountains in particular - rather than biblical events, and this detracts from his presentation of the *Book* as sacred pilgrimage.

The illustrator of Harley 3954 adopted a very different approach. His drawings are more complex, full of vivid action and movement. The first pictures are of Mandeville and a companion taking their leave of monks who are blessing them, and then travelling in a ship and on foot through a countryside containing distant cities. The pilgrims again become a part of the depiction. At Constantinople, a pilgrim stands in the margin outside the frame, pointing at the city. The devout pilgrims are shown worshipping the relics of Constantinople in three pictures; later, one prays to the image of the Virgin and Child at Bethlehem, and another receives oil from the sacred image of Mary at Sardenak.

On the whole, however, there are not many depictions of relics in the Holy Land. There are some legends, such as those of Seth, St Helen, the Dry Tree and Noah's Ark, but the artist is evidently far more interested in the exotic possibilities of India and the Orient. The pilgrims remain as observers of ever more marvellous wonders, horrific rites and monstrous men and beasts. They drink from the Fountain of Youth; a lone pilgrim representing Mandeville watches a child being bought by cannibals, naked snake-eaters and examples of the Plinian Races. In one image he is even taking notes on two Blemmyae in a book. He prudently hides behind some rocks to observe centaurs devouring a man, and later appears on board ship, crossing the perilous sea to Pentexoire.

For this illustrator, therefore, the Holy Land and its relics are far less important than the marvellous events of the Orient which he prefers to show. Mandeville the pilgrim remains an important figure, appearing in order to stress the fact that, as he says in the *Book*, he has seen these wonders with his own eyes. His pilgrimage, however, has been changed into a sightseeing tour of Asia; after a few token images of devotion in Constantinople and Palestine, Mandeville has wandered off to record the wonders of Asia.

This attitude towards the *Book* continues with the woodcuts of Anton Sorg's 1481 edition of the Velser Version, most of which were later adopted by the French, Spanish and English editions. In the frontispiece Mandeville himself has become not a bearded pilgrim but a young warrior

with a cross on his brow to signify his pilgrimhood. Neither he nor any other pilgrim appears in the illustrations. There are depictions of the relics and sacred buildings of the Holy Land, including the instruments of the Passion, the tomb of St John the Evangelist, the monastery of St Catherine complete with birds bringing olive branches, the Holy Sepulchre and the columns of scourging. The tomb of St Thomas is drawn as a tomb with a hand emerging from it, without the scroll added in some illuminations (Ill. 5). The artist also shows the martyrdoms of St Catherine, St Stephen and St James, the death of Judas, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel and Abraham and Isaac. All these are depicted in standard ways according to medieval artistic tradition.

These illustrations are not the only ones covering the Holy Land. Other subjects are prevalent, from the hunting leopards of Cyprus and the incubators of Egypt to the Bedouins in the Arabian desert. The artist's interest in such non-religious material is evident from the many pictures of the men and monsters of India that follow. Lacking the intervention of the pilgrim Mandeville, the reader becomes the primary onlooker whom the scenes are designed to impress. They are not as violently sensational as those of MS. Harley 3954, but the move away from the pilgrimage view of the *Book* towards an anthology of marvels has become even more evident. Most illustrated editions copied Sorg's woodcuts; the iconography of the *Book* would become set at this point of stressing the exotic over the sacred.

The lack of illustrations of Jerusalem in the manuscripts and editions of the *Book* is striking, although this is partly remedied in two fifteenth-century English compilations. The first of these includes the Leiden Latin Version of Mandeville which is immediately followed by a map of Jerusalem and its surroundings, marking the most important areas.[80] The second is BL Add. 37049, an illustrated compendium of religious works connected with the Carthusians. Here Mandeville is preceded by a map of the world with Jerusalem clearly marked near the centre, and by a tinted drawing of Jerusalem marked 'Ierusalem ciuitas sancta'. The Epitome of the *Book* which follows this begins 'The cyte of Ierusalem standes fayr emange hylles'. The nature of both the Epitome, discussed above, and the compilation as a whole show that the *Book* was seen primarily as a religious pilgrimage text. Among the many tracts, prayers and poems it contains are a tract on the Virgin, verses on Christ, several indulgences, and extract from *The Miracles of Our Lady*, the pains of the Passion and the Complaint of Christ on the Cross.

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80 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College No. 426.

The illustrated BL MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii contains a drawing of a compass with the names of the winds in Italian and part of an itinerary from Northern Europe to Florence, useful information for an intending pilgrim. Another compilation[81] also contains non-religious pilgrimage details: an extract from John of Hildesheim's *Historia Trium Regum* on the Garden of Balm, that favourite subject. With this are *Piers Plowman*, the legends of Susan and Daniel and the *Flight into Egypt*; the latter works are well chosen to accompany a pilgrimage. Another manuscript of the Defective Version[82] is placed with the Ten Commandments, a prayer before Communion, the moral sayings of the fathers, part of a Latin chronicle and a text entitled *De mirabilibus mundi*, which contains information on the Cynocephali and other sights of the East; this echoes the way in which Mandeville could be seen as both religious work and wonder-book.

Other compilations included pilgrimage accounts and works on the East: the Vulgate Version was bound with the *Peregrinationes* of Jacobo de Verona, Johannes de Witte de Hese's *Itinerarium* and Henricus de Hyspania's *Itinerarium de locis Terrae Sanctae* in one instance,[83] and Boldensele, Hayton, Theoderic's *Libellus de locis sanctis* and the *Gesta Godefrici Ducis de Boulyon* in another.[84] BL MS. Harley 3589 contains Ludolph von Sudheim's *Liber de Terra Sancta*. The von Diemeringen Version was compiled in one manuscript with several pilgrimage works: the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, the pilgrimage of Lorenz Egen made in 1385, the relics at Bamberg and another text on Rome.[85] In another case it was bound with a Passional and a work on the city of Jerusalem.[86] Finally, a copy belonging to the Dominicans of Würzburg was accompanied by Robertus Monachus' *Historia Hierosolymitana*.[87]

Altogether, the evidence of the illustrations and compilations proves both that the *Book* could be regarded as a pilgrimage work above all else, and that this view was gradually becoming rarer. The wondrous elements so beloved of the illustrators would soon prevail over the more serious religious aspects of the *Book*. The marginalia, however, show that even when the work was seen as a source of marvellous material, the Holy Land, the relics of the Passion and Jerusalem itself were never completely ignored by Mandeville's many audiences.

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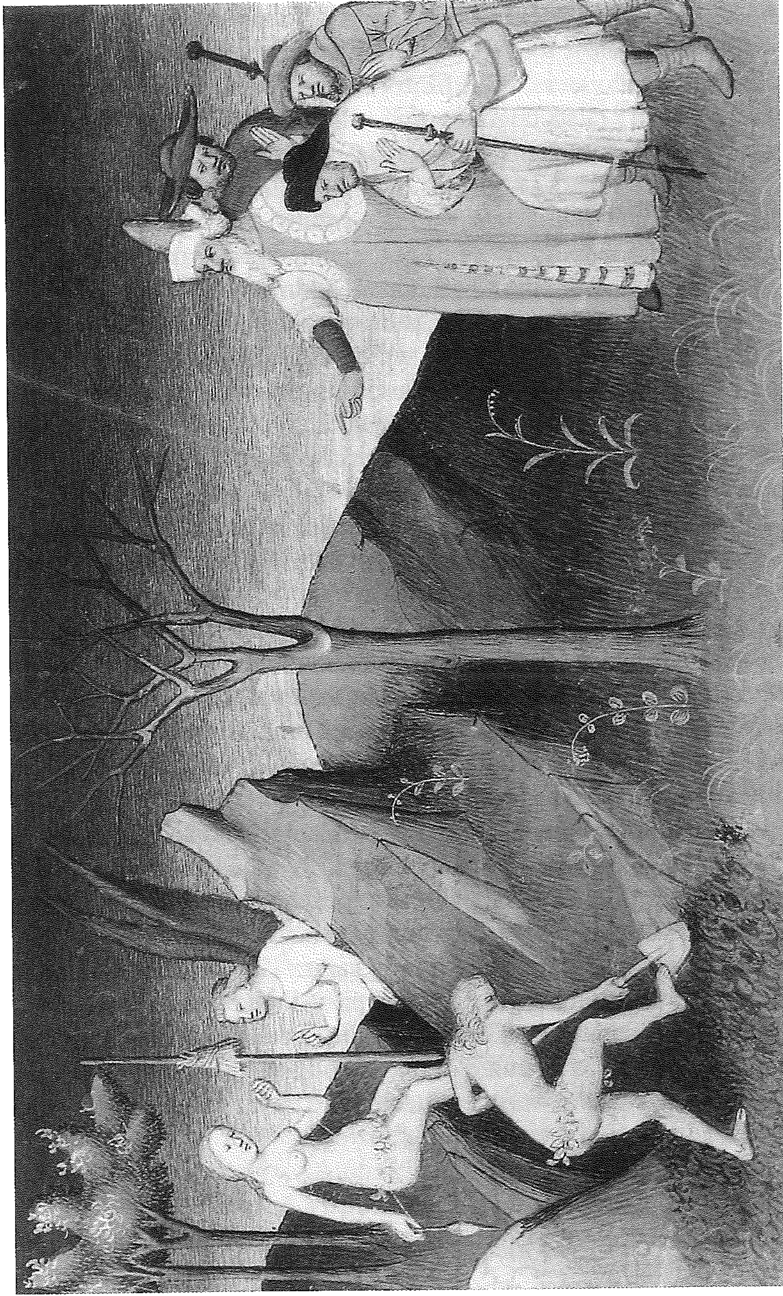
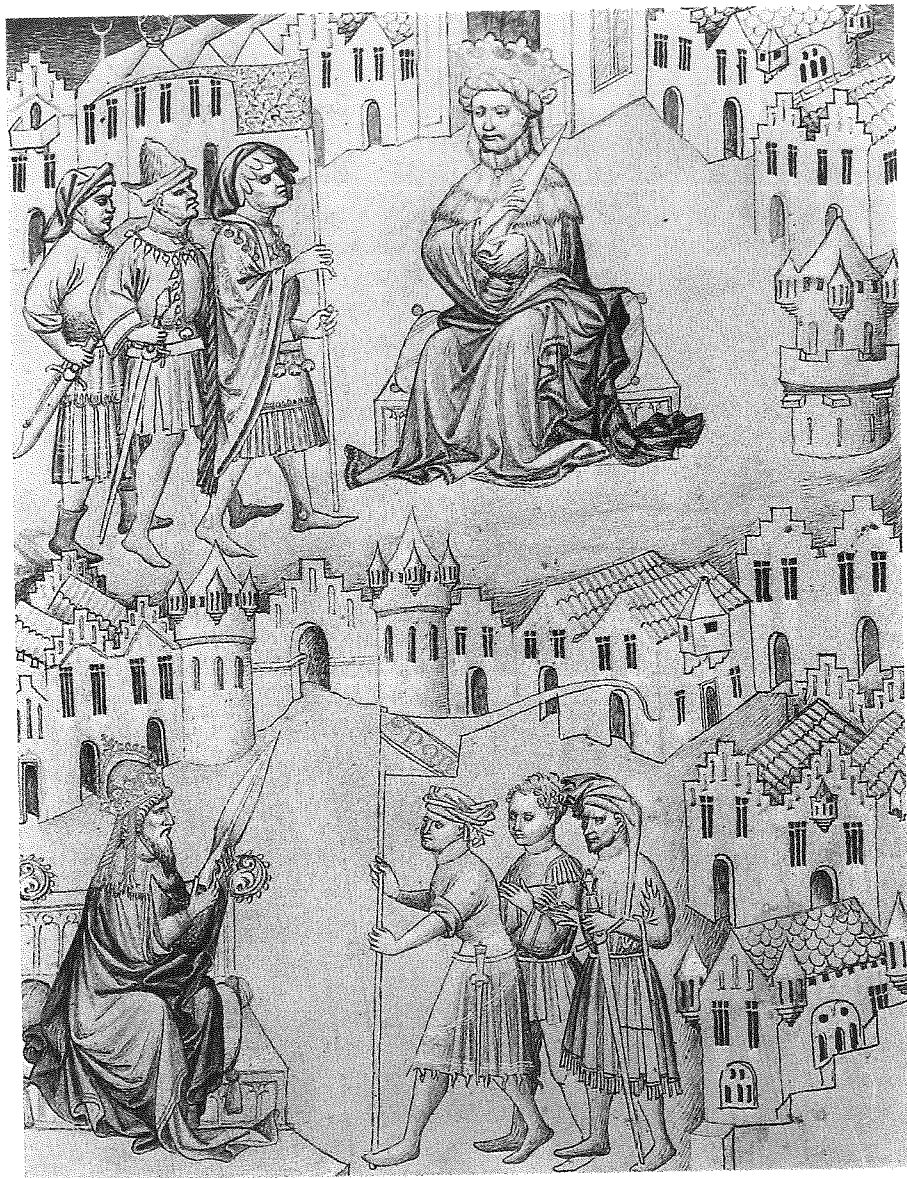
81 California, Huntingdon Library MS. HM 114.
82 Bodleian MS. Laud Misc. 699.
83 New York, MS. belonging to H.P. Kraus, Vol. II.
84 New York, MS. belonging to H.P. Kraus, Vol. I.
85 Coburg, Landesbibliothek Sche. 16.
86 Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek Cod. Ch. A 26.
87 Würzburg Universitätsbibliothek M. ch. f. 38.



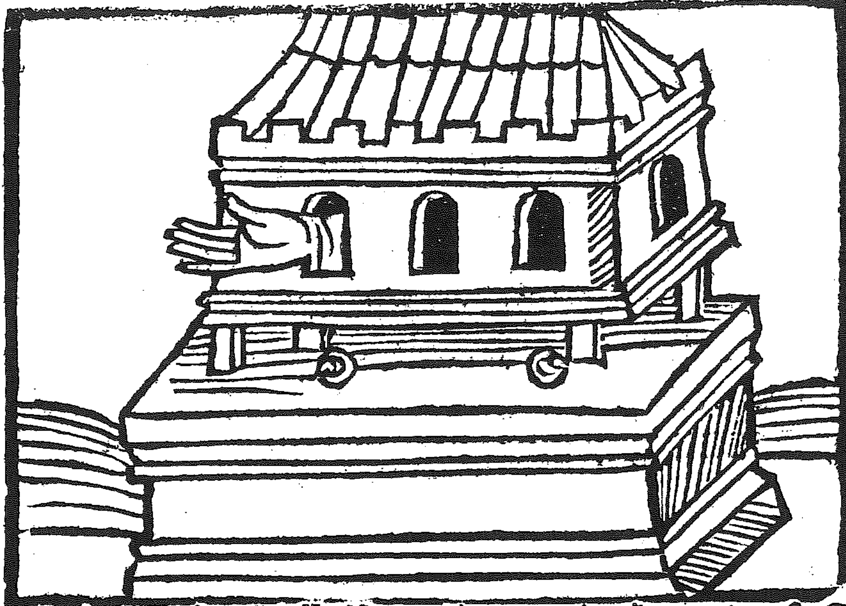
1 The Dry Tree, Adam and Eve and pilgrims, from the *Livres des Merveilles*. Cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. fonds fr. 2810, f. 157v).

2 Mandeville leading the pilgrims, from the Textless Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Add. 24189, f. 4v).



3 The French King and the Roman Emperor with spearheads, from the Textless Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Add. 24189, f. 10).

4 A pilgrim, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii, f. 39).



5 The Tomb of St Thomas, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lxiiii v).

2 Geographical Information

A large portion of the *Book* is devoted to various forms of geographical consideration. Here I will investigate the ways in which Mandeville's work drew upon and developed contemporary geographical thought in order to further his designs, continuing with an examination of the *Book*'s audiences and the ways in which they responded to it primarily as a work of geography. Geography is viewed as a backdrop to human activities, framing them as do the rivers, seas and mountain ranges of the *mappae mundi* and influencing them on a cultural and social level. The political map of Mandeville's world is centred on countries, their rulers and major cities. There is great interest in new scientific methods, the exciting possibility of circumnavigation and the question of the inhabitability or otherwise of certain regions. Finally we return to one of the central issues of the *Book*, geographical and spiritual centrality itself, with Jerusalem 'in medio mundi'.

When discussing the concept of geography in the Middle Ages, it is necessary to examine the term itself. Its definition can be problematical; geography was not seen as a separate, well-defined science with its own place in the quadrivium, but was often included under the subjects of geometry or astronomy. The very word 'geography' was rarely used in the Middle Ages; instead, 'the term *cosmographia*, sometimes employed to distinguish certain aspects of our subject from geometry, included practically all aspects of natural history, the sciences of animals, rocks, monstrosities, and meteorological phenomena'.[1] Even in the fifteenth century Jacopo d'Angelo preferred to call his translation of Ptolemy's *Geography* a 'cosmography'. Thus geography was not limited to a purely physical science, but could include a far more varied range of knowledge of the world. In this respect, Mandeville's *Book* was indeed - as Deluz argues - a 'geography'.

The physical geography of the *Book* owes much to both biblical and classical cosmography. In accordance with classical and medieval tradition, the world is divided into three parts - Europe, Africa and Asia - as depicted in the T-O maps of the early Middle Ages, where the T is the rivers Don and Nile and the vertical Mediterranean, dividing the circle of the earth (see

1 Wright, J.K. (1925), *The Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades. A Study in the History of Medieval Science and Travel in Western Europe*, p. 127.

Ill. 8 for a later example). The continents are encircled by the ocean - which contains numerous islands - and separated from each other by the Mediterranean, lying between Europe and Africa, and by the four rivers of Paradise that delimit and define the countries of the earth. The physical features of the *Book*'s landscape are significant in themselves, demonstrating the variety of the world and multiple effects on human life. Mountains, rivers, deserts and seas form a scenic backdrop to colourful human cultures, and play a large part as geopolitical boundaries between countries. This aspect of geography is emphasised throughout the *Book*; the shape, size and climate of the world are examined only after the author has detailed its countries and the routes linking them.

In general terms, Mandeville progresses from the familiar lands of Europe and Palestine in the first part of the *Book* to the increasingly nebulous countries of Asia. He spends little time describing Europe, concentrating mainly on Greece and the Mediterranean islands, with a longer excursion to Cyprus. Each land is described in terms of its ruler, main cities and religions. Constantinople, the first major city encountered, is pictured in some detail:

> And there the Emperor of Greece usually lives. There is the most beautiful and noblest church in the world, which is that of St Sophia ... Constantinople is a very beautiful city and very noble and well-walled, and the city is triangular. And there is an arm of the sea called the Hellespont.[2]

The North African coast is limited to a list of kingdoms, apart from the detailed examination of Egypt and a short detour to Ethiopia. Babylon receives similar treatment to Constantinople, being the seat of the Sultan of Egypt: 'Know that Babylon the Lesser and Cairo, where the Sultan lives, are very great and very beautiful cities, and lie very close to one another'.[3] The author is careful to differentiate between this 'Lesser' Babylon and the 'Greater', where the Tower of Babel was built, and which is in the hands of a different ruler.

> And this is not that great Babylon in the land and power of the Sultan, but it is rather in the power and the lordship of the emperor of Persia. But he holds it of a great and high man, that is the great emperor of the Tartars, who is called the Great Khan, who is the greatest sovereign over all regions there and of the world. He is lord of the island of Cathay and many other islands and of a large part of India and of all the land of Prester John. He holds so much land that he does not know its limits, and is incomparably greater and more powerful than the Sultan.[4]

[2] 'Et la demeure communement lempereur de Gresce. La est la plus belle eglyse et la plus noble du monde, qui est de Sainte Sofie ... Constantinoble est moult belle cite et moult noble et bien muree, et est la cite triangulere. Et y a vn bras de mer que on appelle Hallespont'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 232, 236.

[3] 'Sachiez que Babiloine la mendre et le Cair, ou le Soudan demeure, sont moult grandes citez et moult belles, et sieent lune bien pres de lautre'. *op. cit.*, p. 251.

The Great Khan's power and estate are detailed in the second part of the *Book*; before then, 'Mandeville' will have travelled through the Holy Land, Armenia, Ethiopia, the Indian subcontinent and the Land of Prester John. The *Book* is careful to point out the existence of three Indias: 'Lesser' India stretches to the Indus River, 'Middle' India contains Media, and 'Greater' India covers the Indian subcontinent and the Far East. The precise identity of 'India' in the Middle Ages was vague at best. It was usually taken to mean Ethiopia and central and eastern Asia, and could be divided into two or three parts, roughly along the lines indicated by Mandeville. India the Greater is ruled by the Great Khan, whose court is at Cambaleth in Cathay - the *Book* seems unique in making Cathay itself an island. In the north of the Khan's territory lies the fabulous land of Prester John, himself a subject of the Khan. Mandeville is among the first to attempt a detailed description of his land. Yet further east is the unattainable Earthly Paradise.

The southern part of the Great Khan's realm is made up of islands, each a country in itself. These are described in a fairly haphazard fashion, with hardly any details of distance and direction relative to each other. They are devoted largely to the Plinian Races of humanoid monsters, each allocated a separate island. In this the *Book* echoes such works as the Hereford Mappa Mundi, in which the row of islands along the southern border of the Asian continent is inhabited by strange peoples. The human geography of the *Book* is often brought into focus: attention is paid to the lives and cultural habits of different peoples, while physical geography fades into the background.

On a more practical level, the author of the *Book* gives a variety of measurements for distance, although these distances are in fact of varying accuracy and limited use to a traveller on the spot - due only in part to scribal errors. Mandeville alternates between days' journeys and the more precise leagues, miles and stadia. Even more confusingly, there is more

[4] 'Et si nest mie ceste grande Babiloine en la terre ne ou pouoir du Soudan, ancois est ou pouoir et en la seigneurie de lempereur de Persie. Mais il le tient de grant et de hault homme, cest le grant empereur des Tartarins, qui est appelle le Grant Cham, qui est le plus souuerain de toutes les parties de la et du monde. Il est sire de lille de Chatay et de maintes autres illes et de grant partie dinde, et de toute la terre Prestre Iehan. Il tient tant de terre que il ne scet les confines, et est plus grant et plus poissant senz comparoison que le Soudan ne soit'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 250.

than one kind of league. 'Leagues of Lombardy' were roughly equivalent to English miles, but only half the length of 'great' leagues:

> And in breadth, that is from Jericho to Jaffa, it contains a good sixty leagues, that is to say leagues of our country or of Lombardy, which are short. They are not leagues of Gascony or of Provence or of Germany, where there are long leagues.[5]

Mandeville's enthusiasm for geographical measurement really comes into its own in the chapter on the two Pole Stars. Here he draws on multiple sources, constantly turning from one to the other in order to formulate his ideas concerning the form of the earth. His main sources are John de Sacrobosco's *De sphera*, Brunetto Latini's *Tresor*, Macrobius' *Commentarium in somno Scipionis* and the *Directorium ad faciendum passagium transmarinum*. Out of these Mandeville constructs arguments concerning the size, shape, circumnavigability and inhabitability of the earth, woven together into a conclusive whole echoed elsewhere in the *Book*.

Mandeville has no doubt that the world, as medieval authorities had held for centuries, is a sphere. The world was sometimes pictorially represented as an orb in the shape of a T-O globe. In Lambert's *Liber Floridus* (c. 1112-21), for example, the emperor Augustus is shown with such an orb, referring to his survey of the world. In the mid-thirteenth century Psalter Map, Christ is depicted as overseer of the earth, also holding an orb; this tradition continued into the sixteenth century, when Joos van Cleve's painting of Christ as *Salvator Mundi* depicts him with a crystal globe containing seas and lands. In the *Book* the round earth is represented by the golden apple once held by the statue of Justinian in Constantinople: 'This apple signifies the lordship that he had over the world, which is round'.[6]

Later Mandeville remarks that east is relative due to this sphericity, and also that the earth is placed in the centre of the universe:

> But that is not our east here, which we call east, where the sun rises to us. For when the sun is east towards these regions of paradise, it is then midnight in our regions over here, because of the roundness of the earth, as I have told you before. For Our Lord made the earth round exactly in the centre of the firmament.[7]

5 'Et de large, ce est de Iherico iusques a Iaffe, elle contient bien lx. lieues, cest a dire lieues de nostre pays ou de Lombardie, qui sont petites. Ce ne sont mie lieues de Gascoingne ne de Prouence ne dalemaingne, ou il a grandes lieues.' Letts, *Travels* II, p. 293.

6 'Celle pomme signifie la seigneurie que il auoit sur le monde, qui est ront'. *op. cit.*, p. 233.

The rotundity of the earth is proved both by direct observation and scientific evidence. Mandeville takes his cue from the observation made by Odoric that in Lamory (near Sumatra) he could no longer see the North Star. Marco Polo had made the same observation in Java and Sumatra. Mandeville, however, adds that a southern star, first observable in Libya, is visible instead:

> In that land and in that country and in many others there one no longer sees the tramontane star, that is the star of the sea which does not move, which is to the north. But one sees another, which is opposite that one, to the south, which is called Antarctic. And just as sailors here steer and guide themselves by that star to the north, so do the sailors over there by that star to the south, which does not appear to us, and that to the north does not appear to them.[8]

These observations are taken from Sacrobosco, who speaks of the Antarctic star, and Brunetto Latini, who observes its use to mariners. Mandeville is interested in the phenomenon as direct proof of the earth's sphericity:

> By which one may perceive that the earth and the sea are of a round form; for the part of the firmament which belongs to one country does not belong to another ... The whole firmament turns by these two stars, which are not moveable, as the wheel turns round its axle'.[9]

The two stars thus form the points of the axis around which the world turns. This will be proven by technological means: the astrolabe. Mandeville says

7 'Mais ce nest mie nostre orient de deca, que nous appellons orient, ou le soleil lieue a nous. Car quant le soleil est orient vers ces parties de paradis, il est donques myenuit en nos parties par deca, pour la rondesce de la terre, si comme ie vous ay autresfoiz dit. Car nostre Seigneur fist la terre ronde tout en my lieu du firmament'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 404.

8 'En celle terre ne en ce pays ne en pluseurs autres par dela on ny voit point destoille tremontaine, cest lestoille de mer qui ne se muet point, qui est vers bize. Mais on voit vne autre, qui est au contraire de celuy, vers mydi, que on appelle Antartique. Et tout aussi que les maronniers prennent aduis yci et se gouuernent par ceste estoille vers bise, aussi font les maronniers de la par ceste estoille deuers mydi, la quelle ne appartient point a nous, et ceste deuers bise ne appartient point a eulz'. *op. cit.*, p. 331.

9 'Pour quoy on puet apperceuoir que la terre et la mer sont de ronde fourme; car la partie du firmament appartient a vn pays qui ne appartient point a autre ... par ces ii. estoilles, qui ne sont point mouuables, tout le firmament tourne, ainsi comme la roe se tourne par son moyeul'. *op. cit.*

that he has measured the height of both Pole stars from various points on the earth's surface:

> Which thing I prove according to what I have tested, for I have been to the region of Brabant and by the sign of the astrolabe I find that the tramontane star is 53 degrees in height, and in Germany and Bohemia it is 58 degrees, and further towards the countries of the north it is 62 degrees and several minutes in height; for I myself have measured it with the astrolabe.[10]

These measurements are in fact inaccurate, 'quelque peu confuses' as Deluz remarks. 'La demonstration manque ici de clarté. La seule explication plausible de son raisonnement semble être qu'il mesure le ciel d'abord d'ouest en est, d'Angleterre, point du départ des itinéraires vers Jérusalem, jusqu'aux îles de l'Insulinde, puis du nord au sud, des régions du "septentrion" jusqu'à la "haute Libie" et au-dela'.[11] This inversion may have been due, as Higgins argues in *Writing East*, to 'his having approximated the second and third measurements with the aid of a circular *mappamundi*. On the Ebstorf and Hereford maps, for instance, the named sites lie in roughly the south-to-north order that the *Mandeville*-author gives them'.[12]

The non-European measurements are even more inaccurate, but correspondingly hard to recognise as such. In effect, Mandeville has measured the known world, which makes the author's next assertion technically correct: 'Mandeville' has seen three fourths of the roundness of the earth's surface. This is not only a claim to fame for 'Mandeville' himself, but, more importantly, evidence of a far more vital possibility: the circumnavigation of the world: 'Wherefore I say with certainty that one could travel around all the lands of the world, both below and above, and return to one's country'.[13]

This claim has already been made twice, once as a theoretical possibility and once as a choice Mandeville himself would have made had he been able: 'And if I had found ship and company to go further, I believe it to be

10 'La quelle chose ie preuue selon ce que ie ay essaie, car ie ay este par les parties de Braibant et par le signe de lastrolabe ie treuue que la tresmontaine estoille est liii. degres de haut, et en Alemaigne vers Rome [et Beome] elle a lviii., et plus auant vers les parties de septentrion elle a lxii. degres de haut et aucuns minus auec; car ie meismes lay mesure a lastrolabe'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 331.

11 Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 182.

12 Higgins, *Writing East*, p. 136.

13 'Pour quoy ie di certainement que on pourroit enuironner toute la terre du monde, aussi bien par dessouz comme par desseure, et retourner arriere en son pays'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

certain that I would have seen all the roundness of the firmament all around'.[14] It is repeated yet again at the end of the *Book*:

> And whoever wished to follow the other islands further on, travelling around the earth beneath, who had God's grace, to keep a direct way, he could return directly to the lands he set out from and thus travel around the whole earth. But because it would take too long a time to make the journey and because there are many dangers to come through, as much because of the various islands and because of the sea as because of the provisions, few people attempt this voyage, although it could easily be done by whoever could navigate well, as I have told you before.[15]

The tantalising possibility of circumnavigation is borne out by the anecdotal tale, based on a story in the *Otia imperiala*, of a man who accidentally circumnavigated the globe without realising it:

> He passed India and the islands, where there are more than 5,000, and travelled around the world so much for many seasons that he found an island where he heard his language spoken and oxen driven by saying such words as people did in his country, at which he marvelled greatly, for he did not know how it could be. But I say that he had wandered so much by land and sea that he had travelled around the whole world and returned in travelling as far as his own country, and that he had only to continue further to find himself in his own country and his familiar places. But he turned back by the way he had come; so he had much trouble for nothing, as he himself said a long time afterwards. For it happened that he once went to Norway and there a storm at sea caught him and he was carried to an island, where he realised that it was the island where he had heard his language spoken in driving the oxen at the plough.[16]

14 'Et se ie eusse trouue nauie et compaignie pour aler plus auant, ie cuide estre certain que nous eussions veu toute la rondesse du firmament entour'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 331.

15 'Et des autres ylles plus auant, qui les vouldroit poursuir par dessouz terre enuironner, qui aroit grace de Dieu, a tenir droite voie il pourroit tout droit reuenir aus parties dont il mouuroit et aussi enuironner toute la terre. Mais pour ce quil conuendroit trop grant temps a faire le voiage et quil y a mains perilz au passer, tant pour les diuerses ylles et pour la mer comme pour le fournoier, pou de gens essaient a faire ce voyage, combien que on le pourroit bien faire, qui pourroit bien esdrecier, si comme ie vous ay autres foiz dit'. *op. cit.*, p. 406.

16 'Si passa Ynde et les ylles, ou il en a plus de v. mile, et tant enuironna le monde par maintes saisons quil trouua vne ylle ou il oy parler son langaige et cachier les buefz en disant telles parolles comme en faisoit en son pays, dont il se merueilla moult, car il ne sauoit comment ce pouoit estre. Mais ie dy quil auoit tante erre par terre et par mer quil auoit auironne toute la terre et quil estoit reuenus en auironnant iusques a son pays, et quil ne fausist que auoir passe auant quil se fust trouue en son droit pays et a sa cognoissance. Mais il retourna arriere par illeuc dont il estoit uenuz; si perdy assez de ses painnes, si comme il meismes le disoit i. grant temps apres. Car il auint quil aloit vne

Although this story is presented as a childhood memory rather than a fact taken from some incontrovertible authority, combined with the earlier detailed measurements and arguments it is forceful and encouraging. The tale is also an example of Mandeville's sense of irony, which emerges at various points in his work. Here it is an irony of misunderstanding: the circumnavigator, unaware of his achievement and unable to recognise the familiar, is forced to make an unnecessary journey before finally reaching home. Greenblatt comments that 'it suggests that this relativizing understanding is purchased at the price of never again feeling quite at home',[17] connecting this 'uprooting in one's origins' to the work itself as a collection of information uprooted from other sources. This misinterpretation is also, I believe, symbolic of how Mandeville himself was misread.

Returning to the geographical aspects of the work, there are major obstacles to circumnavigation quite apart from the danger of mistakenly repeating one's journey. Only one in a thousand of the possible routes leads directly home, 'For the earth is so large that its girth around and about, without the sea, is 20,425 miles, according to ancient sages, whose word I do not doubt. But according to my limited understanding it seems to me, saving their grace, that there are more'.[18] The 'ancient sages' is a reference to Brunetto Latini's Ptolemaic measurement of the earth's size, 20,245 miles. This information is rejected in favour of Eratosthenes' very nearly accurate 31,500 miles, taken from Sacrobosco's *De sphaera* - a more specialised work still used as an obligatory text in fourteenth-century universities.

It is significant that the author of the *Book* is willing to make such a daring departure from medieval convention, by apparently rejecting authority and providing his own proof of a different fact. The knight's credibility as both observant traveller and intelligent thinker is seemingly enhanced, since he would have to be very sure of himself indeed to criticise *auctoritas* so openly. His handling of the astrolabe and description of the degrees of a circle as applied to the circumference of the earth is both confident and seemingly competent, to the extent that he can decide for himself what information he will accept from others - 'according to all

fois vers Norwaide et il li prist tempeste en mer et fut porte en vne ylle, ou il se recognut que cestoit lylle ou il auoit oy parler son langaige a mener les buefs a la charrue'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 333-4.

[17] Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 48.

[18] 'Car la terre est si grande que elle tient de rondeur entour et enuiron, par desseure et par dessoubz, senz mer, xx. mile cccc. et xxv. milles, selon loppinion des anciens sages, le dit des quelx ie ne repreuue mie. Mais selon la petitece de mon sens il me semble, sauue leur grace, quil y a plus'. Letts, *op. cit*, p. 334.

authors of astronomy 700 stadia correspond to one degree of the firmament'[19] - and what he will take from his own experience. This innovation may not be as risky as it seems; even Mandeville's 'own' measurement is taken from a well-known authority, despite its lack of acknowledgement, and he is careful to conclude with a short appeal to the experts: 'The earth is of such a size around and about, according to what I can understand and through the words of the astronomers'.

The author uses his *persona* to demonstrate not only the sphericity and therefore circumnavigability of the earth, but, just as significantly, the fact that it is everywhere inhabitable. 'We are foot against foot with those who live beneath us; for all the regions of sea and land have their inhabitable and traversable opposites both here and there'.[20] This is proved by the fact that Prester John's land is beneath our own. The notion that those on the underside of the earth might fall off is quickly dismissed as ridiculous; they can no more fall off the globe than we can fall into the sky. In any case, if we could fall upwards, so would the much heavier land and sea, which is obviously impossible.

Thus the antipodes exist, and are both inhabited and reachable. This affirmation is of supreme importance in the context of the *Book* and indeed medieval learning as a whole, for it solves the problem of the 'torrid zone', a belt of land between the tropics where the heat would be too fierce for life to exist. This notion had its roots in the ancient world; Aristotelian cosmography divided the world into five zones along parallels of latitude, including two cold polar zones and a hot equatorial zone, all three uninhabitable. This zonal theory was accepted by Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologiae*, and via him by many medieval authors.

There was however another theory according to which the temperate zone below the equator was inhabited, though inaccessible to us. This theory was held by Capella and Macrobius, whose *De natura rerum* was widely known in the medieval period. Unfortunately it clashed badly with Christian theology; Augustine and later Bede and Isidore argued that Antipodeans could not exist as they could not have been descended from Adam nor reached by the word of God. How could salvation come to the whole human race if part of it were cut off from the prophets and apostles?

These questions, both physical and theological, are answered clearly by the author of the *Book*: the 'torrid', uncrossable zone simply does not exist.

[19] 'Selon tous aucteurs dastronomie les vii. cens stades respondent a vn degre du firmament'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 335.

[20] 'Nous et ceulz qui demeurent dessouz nous sommes pie contre pie; car toutes les parties de mer et de terre ont leurs opposites habitables et trespassables et de ca et de la'. *op. cit.*, p. 334.

The races of men on the other side of the world can be reached, though not easily, and indeed some, like those of Prester John's land directly below us, have been introduced to Christianity. I do not agree with Deluz[21] that Mandeville's certainty on the subject is due to his lack of knowledge on the subject. This seems a deliberate and quite definite statement about the world and humankind, in keeping with the overall outlook of the *Book*.

Another such statement is made by Mandeville's examination of the 'climates', Ptolemy's system of seven zones partitioning the northern temperate part of the earth, each coming under the influence of one of the seven heavenly bodies. As Mandeville points out, the original climates did not extend as far as Britain or Ceylon. Letts remarks that 'They covered only the belt of the earth between 16½ N. and 50° to 51° N., and the medieval commentators were at pains to point out that this must have been merely because they were limited to known lands of the day'.[22] Mandeville extends these zones himself, noting their deep significance for the development of the human races. The astrological influence of the seven heavenly bodies on the lands they rule cannot be underestimated, as in India:

> In each island there is a great multitude of cities and towns and people without number; for the Indians are of such a kind that they never leave their country, and so there is a great multitude of people. For they do not move, because they are in the first climate, which is under Saturn, and Saturn is slow and moves little, for he delays making his tour of the twelve signs for a space of thirty years, and the moon crosses the twelve signs in one month. And because Saturn moves so slowly, the people of his climate have such a nature and will that they never wish to move from one country to another.[23]

The detail of the time the planets take to make a full revolution is taken from Latini, but belief in the influence of the planets on mood and character as applied to individuals was widespread. Where Mandeville is original is in stating that the planets can have an influence on entire nations,

[21] Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 183: 'Dans le débat sur l'habitabilité de la terre et l'existence d'antipodes, Mandeville, sans doute parce que moins savant, ne partage donc pas les hésitations d'un Buridan ou des autres maîtres de son temps, un Oresme par exemple'.

[22] Letts, *Travels* I, p. lvi.

[23] 'En chascun ylle y a grant foison de cites et de villes et de genz sans nombre; car Yndois sont de telle maniere quil nyssent point de leur pays, et pour ce y a grant multitude de gens. Car il ne sont point mouuables, pour ce quil sont au premier climat, qui est de Saturne, et Saturne est tardif et pou mouuable, car il demeure a faire son tour par les xii. signes lespace de xxx. ans, et la lune passe les xii. signes en i. mois. Et pour ce que Saturnes est de si tardif mouuement, pour ce ont les gens de son climat nature et uolente que il ne quierent point de mouuoir de pays en autre'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 321.

attributing the large population of India to astrological influences that keep the people in one place. There is little evidence to suggest that such an association of planetary influence and country of origin was regularly made. Mandeville's next step is to compare the Saturnian climate of India to the lunar climate of England:

> And in our country it is exactly the opposite. For we are in a climate which is under the moon, and the moon moves quickly and is thus a planet of travel. And for this reason she gives us the nature and will to move easily and travel by diverse ways and to seek strange things and the diverse things of the world; for she circles the earth more hastily than any other planet.[24]

This comparison of the exotic with the familiar is typical of the author of the *Book*; he often supports his claims regarding the unknown with parallel claims for the known. Seymour remarks that 'the restlessness of the English was notorious in the Middle Ages';[25] the moon was known, as Ptolemy said, to be a mutable, unreliable influence. And if England as a whole comes under the climate of the moon, then so does that great English traveller 'Mandeville' himself. The result is to enhance his credibility while stressing the importance of the climates as a reason for the diversity of human behaviour.

Climate - as opposed to the Ptolemaic climates - also plays a major role, not only in the specific antipodean discussion but throughout the *Book*. It is linked to human activity and the habitability of various areas across the earth. Mandeville constantly remarks on the idiosyncrasies and variability of temperatures from country to country. Seasons, weather, heat, cold and moisture are all worthy of comment, particularly where they affect the behaviour of those races exposed to them.

One of the more startling 'facts' Mandeville gives us is that in Ceylon the seasons occur twice a year, with two summers and two winters. No reason is provided to explain this phenomenon, which is taken from the *Speculum Historiale*. A similar event is also described much closer to home, in the marvellous Sicilian garden: 'In this island of Sicily there is a garden where there are many different fruits; and the garden is green and

[24] 'Et en nostre pays est tout au contraire. Car nous sommes en i. climat qui est de la lune, et la lune est de legier mouuement et si est planete de voie. Et pour ce que elle nous donne matere [nature] et uolente de mouuoir legierement et de cheminer par diuerses voies et de cerchier choses estranges et les diuerses choses du monde; car elle enuironne la terre plus hastiuement que nulle auctre planecte'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 321.

[25] Seymour, *Mandeville's Travels*, p. 247, n. 119/20.

flowering at all seasons of the year, in winter as in summer'.[26] The garden is a localised marvel, less extraordinary than the double seasons because it is far more limited in scope. Only a small change in climate is needed to effect the perpetual flowering, whereas the concept of two summers and two winters is a far bolder departure from normality. Significantly, the larger miracle also has more effect on human actions; the inhabitants of exotic Taprobane have two harvests, no small matter.

Other climatic differences or abnormalities with varying effects are also noted. Heat is the cause of many remarkable natural phenomena. In Libya the sun is so hot that the sea is too warm for fish; in Nubia it causes people to have black skin, and elsewhere to go naked or to be even more strangely affected:

> But it is so hot in that island that because of the great distress of the heat, men's testicles, and all that there which you know well, come out of the body, hanging to the middle of the leg, to the great dissolution of the body ... In this country and in Ethiopia and in many other countries the people lie in rivers and waters all day long, men and women all together, from the hour of tierce to low noon and they lie all in the water apart from the face because of the great heat there, so that one can barely endure it.[27]

Thus the physical effects of extreme climates also have sociological repercussions; human behaviour is intimately linked with and explained by the surrounding conditions. In Tartary, for instance, the people are as evil as the land is poor and the climate extreme. Such effects of environment on human races are a classical concept, used by Hippocrates, Plato, Herodotus and Aristotle with many variations: a harsh environment may lead to stronger, more intelligent people, whereas a gentler climate results in physical and mental softness and sloth.

In some areas human life becomes altogether impossible, as in the Arabian desert, where the land is completely barren due to lack of water.

[26] 'En celle ylle de Sicile il a vn iardin ou quel il a moult de diuers fruis; et est le iardin vers et fleuri toutes les saisons de lan, aussi par yuer comme par este'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 257.

[27] 'Mais il fait si grant chaut en celle ylle que pour la grant destrece de la chaleur la perpendelle de lomme, et trestout ce la que vous sauez bien, ist hors du corps, pendant iusques enuiron la iambe, pour la grant dissolucion du corps ... En ce pays et en Ethiope et en maint autres pays les gens gisent toute iour ens es riuages des eaues, hommes et femmes tous ensemble, de leure de tierce iusques a basse nonne; et gisent tous dedenz leaue fors que la face pour le grant chaut quil y fait, si que a peine le peut nulz endurer'. *op. cit.*, pp. 321-2.

> There is too much desert and one cannot live in this desert for lack of water. For it is a sandy and dry land, and it is not fruitful because there is no humidity. And so there is so much desert; for if there were rivers or fountains and the land were good as it is elsewhere, it would be just as full of people there as elsewhere, for there is a great multitude of people where the habitable lands are.[28]

Here Mandeville is making the important geographical and social observation that people will live anywhere possible. This is another proof that the antipodes and indeed any reasonably temperate clime must contain humans; if a place is habitable, it will be inhabited.

Of course, habitable areas - particularly the exotic islands of India - will not necessarily be inhabited by humans as such. The islands of India are home to a wide variety of humanoid monsters from Sciapods to Blemmyae, taken from the *Speculum historiale* and ultimately derived from Pliny. Mandeville gives a brief description of each, from the Cyclopes and Blemmyae to hermaphrodites and the men who walk on their knees. This is a simple listing of attributes, with none of the sociological commentary accorded other strange peoples such as the Cynocephali. Elsewhere, in the islands beyond the land of Prester John, there are man-eating giants, people who live on the smell of apples and furred people.[29]

The only description of any length is reserved for the Pigmies in the land of the Great Khan. These live only six or seven years, and are the best silk and cotton workers in the world. The popular legend of their battles against cranes is also mentioned. But the author of the *Book* cannot resist a thought-provoking inversion: 'Among them there are large people, like us ... And the little people mock these large people, as we would large people nine or ten feet tall, if they lived among us'.[30] We are invited to see things from the Pigmies' point of view; our reaction would be the same as theirs.

[28] 'Trop y a de desert et ne puet on habiter en ce desert pour deffaute de eaue. Car cest terre sablonneuse et seche, et nest point fructueuse pour ce que il ny a point de humidite. Et pour ce il y a tant desert; car, se il y eust des riuieres ou des fontaines et la terre fust bonne si comme elle est autre part, elle fust toute pueplee de genz aussi bien la comme ailleurs, car il y a grant multitude de genz la ou les terres habitables sont'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 250.

[29] For detailed discussions of the history of the portrayal of the Plinian and other exotic races, see Friedman, J.B. (1981), *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*; Wittkower, R. (1942), 'Marvels of the East: A study in the history of monsters', in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5, pp. 159-97, and Husband, T. (1980), *The Wild Man*.

[30] 'il y a entre eulz grans gens, si comme nous sommes ... Et de ces grans gens les petites genz les moquent, ainsi comme nous ferions des grandes gens de ix. piez ou de x. piez, sil sembatoient entre nous'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

Despite their peculiarities, such exotic people are very similar to us - a point Mandeville will make time and again.

The Pigmies are one of the few Plinian Races to live on the mainland. Instead, they are partly separated from other people by the river Dolay, the largest river of fresh water in the world. In its depiction of the physical landscape that contains and influences humans and humanoids alike, the *Book* shows a particular interest in rivers. To start with, the earth is divided by the four rivers issuing from the Earthly Paradise. These are described in detail both in the section on Paradise itself and in the countries they run through. The Ganges or Phison, for instance, is full of gold and precious stones; its nature changes from calm to rough and from hot to cold. The Tigris and Euphrates are great natural boundaries between lands; the Euphrates runs underground from India to surface in the Near East.

The Nile, or Gyon, is the most fascinating of the four. Its regular flooding is mentioned by classical and medieval authors from Herodotus and Pliny to Abelard. Mandeville tells us that it runs underground and then through Ethiopia and Egypt, carrying precious stones and *lignum aloes* from Paradise. The following account is derived from Latini:

> Every year, when the sun enters the sign of Cancer, this river Nile begins to rise and it keeps rising as long as the sun is in Cancer or Leo. And it rises in such a way that sometimes it is so great that it is a good twenty cubits deep or more; then it does great damage to property on land, for one cannot then work the lands due to the excessive moisture, and so there is a lean time in the land. And also when it is too small there is a lean time for lack of moisture. And when the sun enters the sign of Virgo, then the river begins to fall little by little, so that, when the sun has entered the sign of Libra, it enters between its banks.[31]

In this description the human consequences of the Nile's peculiarity are emphasised. If the river rises too high the land cannot be worked, and if it remains too low there is drought. It gives Egypt its distinctive shape, for the land and its people rely on it for water. Thus rivers are vital to the human communities they serve, making otherwise hostile lands habitable.

[31] 'Celle riuiere du Nyl tous les ans, quant le soleil entre ou signe de cancre, elle commence a croistre, et croist tousiours tant come le soleil est ou cancre et ou lyon. Et croist en telle maniere quelle est aucune foiz si grande quelle a bien xx. cubites ou plus de parfont; si fait adont grant damage aus biens dessus terre, car on ne puet adont labourer les terres pour trop grant moisteur, et pour ce y a il chier temps ou pays. Et aussi quant elle est trop petite y a il chier temps pour deffaut de douceur. Et quant le soleil entre ou signe de la vierge, adonques commence la riuiere a descroistre petit a petit, si que, quant le soleil est entre ou signe de libra, adont elle entre dedenz ses riues'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 251.

The author's interest in topography as it relates to humans extends to his treatment of seas and lakes. The Dead Sea, for instance, is a hellish place, whose bitter water ruins the land: 'If the land were watered with that water, it would never bear fruit again ... And trees grow there which bear apples that are very beautiful and of a very beautiful colour to look at and seeming completely ripe; but whoever should break them or cut them in half would find nothing but ashes within'.[32] In this instance the cause is God's punishment of the Cities of the Plain, whose negative effects on the land around are still evident.

Mountains are also of interest, particularly the more imposing ones such as Mount Athos. This is so high that its shadow stretches seventy-six miles away, and the air at the summit is so dry and rarefied that the ancient philosophers who used to climb it had to hold a moist sponge to their faces. The letters they wrote in the dust one year would still be there the next, perfect as when they were made due to the purity of the air. Thus while the mountain's height makes it uninhabitable, it also permits the preservation of the philosophers' work, and their experiment that mountains reach into the pure air at a high altitude.

There are other natural aids to human understanding. The volcano of Etna is used, rather surprisingly, to predict the weather. 'And by the changes of its flames the people of the country know when it will be bad weather or good weather, cold or hot, damp or dry, and in all other ways how the weather will be'.[33] In Egypt the climate is suitable for astronomical observations: 'And because it never rains in this country, but the air is always pure and clear, there are good astronomers there; for they find no clouds to hinder them'.[34] The scientific aspect of the *Book* is brought to the forefront once more.

Thus the author has drawn on both classical traditions and contemporary sources in forming his view of physical geography. Biblical cosmography also plays an important part, both in the general form and origins of the earth and in the topographical details of the first half of the *Book*. If Mandeville's world resembles an Isidorean T-O map, it is also closely

[32] 'Se la terre estoit moilliee de celle yaue, elle ne porteroit mais point de fruit ... Et si croissent arbres delez qui portent pommes trop belles et de tres belle couleur a regarder et toutes meures par semblant; mais qui les brisera ou trenchera par my, il ne trouuera dedenz que cendre'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 283.

[33] 'Et par les changemenz de ses flambes sceuent les genz du pays quant il sera chier temps ou bon temps, froit ou chaud, mol ou sech, et en toutes autres manieres comment le temps se gouuernera'. *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[34] 'Et pour ce que il ne pluet point en ce pays, mais est tousiours lair pur et cler, pour ce y a des bons astronomiens; car il ne treuuent nulles nues qui les empeschent'. *op. cit.*, p. 252.

allied to such works as the Psalter map, overseen by Christ and full of Biblical allusions, or the Hereford Mappa Mundi, 'where history and theology are projected onto an image of the real world'.[35]

The earth itself hangs in the firmament by the grace of God: 'And for this reason Our Lord said, "Have no fear of me, who have hanged the earth from nothing".[36] Its physical morphology is due to the Flood, prior to which there were no mountains; 'For our lord made the round earth right in the centre of the firmament, and what there are of mountains and valleys, are due to Noah's flood, which damaged the damp earth, and the hard earth remained in great mountains'.[37] The earth's three continents are each allocated to one of the sons of Noah. Interestingly, Mandeville breaks with tradition by giving Asia to Ham, perhaps in an attempt to correlate his name with that of the Great Cham - although this is later refuted.

> These three brothers seized all lands. That Cham because of his great cruelty took the greatest eastern part, which is called Asia; Shem took Africa; and Japheth took Europe. And thus the world is divided into three parts, by reason of these three brothers.[38]

The Earthly Paradise is an important feature of the *Book*'s world-view, being situated at the extreme eastern part of Asia.[39] This view was shared by most medieval authors, including Abelard and Gervase of Tilbury. Many *mappae mundi* place the Earthly Paradise in the extreme East, from the Beatus Map of 1109 and the Psalter Map of c. 1250 to the Hereford and Evesham *mappae mundi* in the fourteenth century. In the *Book*, the Garden of Eden is also given its place in biblical space: 'where our first father Adam and Eve were put, who did not stay there long...'[40] It is placed at the top of a mountain so high that it almost reaches the circle of the moon, making it the only land not covered by Noah's Flood.

Paradise itself is surrounded by a mysterious mossy wall, with one entrance blocked by flames. It cannot be approached by land or by sea,

35 Whitfield, P. (1994), *The Image of the World*, p. 20.

36 'Et pour ce dist nostre Seigneur, *Ne timeas me, cui respondi [suspendi] terram in nichilo*'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 334.

37 'Car nostre Seigneur fist la terre ronde tout en my lieu du firmament, et ce quil y a des montaignes et des valees, cest par le flueue de Noel, qui gasta la terre molle, et la dure si demoura es grans montaingnes'. *op. cit.*, p. 404.

38 'Ces iii. freres saisirent terres toutes. Ycelui Cham pour sa grande cruaute prist la plus grande partie chumenciel [orientele], qui est appellee Ayse; Sem si prist Affrique; et Iaphet si prist Europe. Et pour ce est la terre partie en iii. parties, pour la choison de ces iii. freres'. *op. cit.*, p. 354.

39 'vers orient au commencement de la terre'. *op. cit.*, p. 404.

40 'la ou Adam nostre premier pere et Eue furent mis, qui gaires ny demourerent'. *op. cit.*

being beyond a land of deserts, mountains and dark lands. The four great rivers that flow from its centre, dividing the world as stated in Genesis, are unnavigable and many great lords have died in the attempt to sail up them to their source. These lords are not killed by supernatural means, but by the natural violence of the waters. Mandeville concludes that 'no mortal man can approach, except by the special grace of God'.[41]

Thus Paradise is unattainable, but this is because of its position in a dangerous landscape rather that fierce angels. The fiery entrance is scarcely mentioned; far more space is devoted to the rivers, their names and special qualities. Those who have tried to gain access are shown as using conventional exploratory methods, as though Paradise were simply another geographical location. Their failure is due not only due to a lack of grace but also to natural barriers; similar seemingly insurmountable obstacles have been overcome in other parts of the *Book*. This description of Paradise in terms of physical geography rather than spirituality and theology reflects a growing trend in late medieval cosmography. It seems to have become a place of mountains and rivers, important for its geographical attributes in themselves, a source of life not because it contains the Tree of Life, but because of its four great rivers that water the earth.

This reading, however, is not entirely justified in the context of the *Book* as a whole. There are several references to the Fall - Adam and Eve remained in Paradise for only a day before being excluded from it forever. This has considerable poignancy, for not only Adam and Eve, but all humankind has lost the Garden of Delight, never to regain it in this world. Adam's son Seth was the only one to approach its walls, to be told that his fallen father would not be allowed the oil of mercy. Sir John, on a personal note, remarks that he has not been there himself because he is not worthy of doing so.

The *Book*'s biblical geography refers to the beginning of the world; it also refers to its end. In the Caspian Mountains are enclosed the Ten Tribes, under their kings Gog and Magog, to be released at the coming of the Antichrist. The Enclosed Nations also figure on the Psalter and Hereford maps, placed as they are in the *Book* between the Caspian Sea and the mountains. Both literary and visual works, then, contain this juxtaposition of the Garden of Eden and the mountainous prison, Adam and Antichrist. These are set at the limits of the physical and spiritual world, Paradise inaccessible since the beginning, the Ten Tribes contained until the end of things. They lie at the ends of history, removed from present reality.

41 'nuls homs mortel ny puet approuchier, se ce nestoit par especial grace de Dieu'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 406.

These liminal themes are eclipsed by the central concern of the *Book*, the *mappae mundi* and Christian theology in general: Jerusalem. The Holy City lies at the centre of history, humanity and the physical world itself. As Paradise and the Enclosed Tribes are defined by their inaccessibility, so Jerusalem is defined by its universal accessibility, crucial to Christianity; as they are banished to the ultimate limits, so Jerusalem is enthroned in the midst of the world. This centrality is stressed from the opening of the *Book*:

> And that land he had chosen for himself among all other lands as the best, most virtuous and most worthy in the world; for it is the heart and centre of all the land of the world and also, as the philosopher says, 'The excellence of things is in the middle' ... For he who wishes to make a thing public, so that everyone may know it, has it cried and proclaimed in the centre of the city, so that the thing may be known in all parts. In the same way the creator of the whole world wished to suffer death for us in Jerusalem, which is in the centre of the world, in order that the thing should be published and made known in all the parts of the world.[42]

The Aristotelian or Ciceronian golden mean has here been transmuted into a Christian affirmation of salvation. Mandeville's later defence of inhabited and accessible antipodes has its roots here; 'tous les costes du monde' must learn of the spiritual message proclaimed in the centre.

The tradition, based on Biblical authority, of Jerusalem being at the centre of the earth, was expounded as early as St Jerome's *Commentary on Ezekiel* of A.D. 367. The relevant passages are Ezekiel, 5:5, 'Thus saith the Lord God: This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations that are round about her'; Ezekiel 38:12, 'the people that are gathered out of the nations ... that dwell in the midst of the land'; and Psalms 74:12, 'For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth'. Thus Jerusalem was the 'navel of the earth'. By Mandeville's time, the tradition was well established in cartography as well as writing; Jerusalem occupies a central position in twelfth- and thirteenth-century maps.

John of Würzburg (1165), one of Mandeville's sources, says that 'Jerusalem, the glorious metropolis of Judaea, is, according to

[42] 'Et celle terre il auoit esleue pour li entre toutes autres terres comme la meilleur la plus vertueuse et plus digne du monde; car cest le cuer et le mylieus de toute la terre du monde, et aussi, comme dist le philosophe, *Virtus rerum in medio consistit* ... Car qui veult aucune chose publier, si que chascun le sache, il le fait crier et prononcier en my la ville, si que la chose soit sceue de toutes pars. Aussi le createur de tout le monde voult souffrir mort pour nous en Iherusalem, qui est en my le monde, a la fin que la chose fust publiee et sceue de tous les costes du monde'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 229.

philosophers, placed in the middle of the world'.[43] In the *Book* it is made clear that this is literally true:

> For the earth and the sea are of round form, as I have told you before, and what one ascends on one side one descends on the other. Now, you have heard it said before that Jerusalem is in the centre of the world; and this appears from a lance fixed in the earth at the hour of noon, which casts no shadow on any side, and that it is in the centre of the earth is testified by David where he says, 'And he wrought salvation in the midst of the earth'.[44]

On a scientific level, the proof of the lance casting no shadow at the equinox is of course false, as Jerusalem is not on the equator; a similar story was told by Arculf in the seventh century, describing a column 'on the north side of the holy places, and in the middle of the city, which casts no shadow at midday at the summer solstice'. Gervase of Tilbury had also attempted to prove that there was as much land to the east of Jerusalem as there was to the west.[45] Scientific accuracy, however, is not the question here. Jerusalem is not a mere physical area, but the spiritual heritage of Christianity; its centrality is not simply a physical but a theological necessity.

The very centre of Jerusalem lies in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, at the 'compas':

> In the centre of the body of the church is a compass where Joseph of Arimathea placed the body of our Lord, when he had taken him down from the cross, and just there he washed his wounds. And they say that this compass is right in the centre of the world.[46]

This echoes Saewulf's twelfth-century account of the Holy Land:

> At the head of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the wall outside, not far from the place called Calvary, is the place called Compas, which our Lord Jesus Christ himself signified and measured with his own hand, as the middle

[43] *Description of the Holy land*, PPTS 5, p. 10.

[44] 'Car la terre et la mer sont de ronde fourme, si comme ie vouz ay deuant dit, et ce que on mont a vn coste on auale a lautre. Or auez vouz oy dire par deuant que Iherusalem est en milieu du monde; et y pert par vne lance fichiee en terre sur leure de midy, qui ne fait point dombre en nul coste, et que ce soit en mylieu de la terre Dauid le tesmoigne la ou il dist, *Et operatus est salutem in medio terre etc'*. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 333.

[45] Cf. Wright, *Geographical Lore*, p. 461 n. 19.

[46] 'ou moien du corps de leglise a vn compas ou quel Ioseph darimathie posa le corps nostre seigneur, quant il lot roste de la crois, et la mesmes il lauoit ses plaies. Et dist on que ce compas est droit ou moien du monde'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

of the world, according to the words of the Psalmist, 'For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth'.[47]

This, then, is the ultimate centre: as the world lies at the centre of the universe, and Jerusalem at the centre of the earth, so this spot in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is at the centre of Jerusalem itself.

This issue of centrality, stressed in one place after another in the *Book*, is crucial to our understanding of Mandeville's world-view. It is to a large extent a traditional one, based firmly on the Bible and theological authority, echoing the *mappae mundi* in which Christ is pictured as overseer of the world. The place of the Resurrection is therefore of prime importance on both a physical and a spiritual level; its power and message radiate equally to the furthest parts of the earth.

Nor is this theme limited to the discussion in the geographical portions of the *Book*. The knight's voyage as a whole is structured as a circular journey from England, through and around Jerusalem, on to the furthest East and back; or otherwise from home to the outermost limits, passing through the spiritual and geographical centre. This circularity is echoed on many levels: in the journey from Western Christendom to the multiplicity of faiths in the Holy Land and thence to the stranger faiths beyond; in the journey from the familiar to the foreign, itself often described and explained in familiar terms; and in the circumnavigation story, where two full circles are made, the strangely familiar exotic proving to be home itself, unrecognised.

At the same time, this centrality on a geographical level is reinforced by a more modern way of thought, which seeks scientific proofs, practical measurements and witnessed details. The *Book's* description of the world, rooted in theology, branches out into new geographical themes such as the real possibility of circumnavigation of the globe; its influence will be accordingly diffuse, in the spheres of both theological and practical geography.

The *Book*'s encyclopaedic style of geography also includes the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms. This is particularly true of the more exotic lands, although the Holy Land has its share of weird and wonderful creatures and natural products. We have seen how Mandeville stresses the miraculous aspects of the phoenix and the Gravelly Sea. Egypt also produces leafless Pharaoh's figs, paradise apples (a wonderful term for bananas), which reveal the shape of a cross when cut, and Adam's apples, with a bite out of one side. Medieval travellers were also most impressed with the Egyptian method of hatching eggs in heated incubators.

[47] Wright, *Geographical Lore*, p. 260.

Further afield, Mandeville notes crocodiles, elephants, the thirty-foot-long eels of the Indus, the huge snails of Calanoc, the giant rats of Chana, hedgehogs large as pigs and pigs as large as oxen, bats the size of crows and fierce gold-digging ants the size of dogs. Animals familiar to us - crocodiles, giraffes, rhinoceri - are still exotic beasts from bestiaries, as strange as the unicorn and the griffin. In Ceylon even the farm fowl are odd, including two-headed geese and wool-bearing hens.

Vegetable wonders also abound. Even the plants suffer from gigantism in the East; one may find giant bamboo with magic protective stones at the roots, and grapes so large 'a strong man would have difficulty in carrying a bunch with all its grapes'.[48] At the other end of the scale are the tiny ephemeral trees which grow till noon, bear fruit and shrink back into the earth by sunset. Other marvellous trees produce meal, honey, wine, poison and even cotton.

The Vegetable Lamb is even more miraculous. Animal and vegetable characteristics are combined in it:

> There grows a sort of fruit like a gourd, but much bigger. And when they are ripe, people cut them in half and find an animal of flesh, bones and blood inside, just like a little lamb without wool, so that one eats both the fruit and the animal. And this fruit is a great marvel and a great work of nature.[49]

But perhaps it is not such a great marvel after all. Sir John, unimpressed, tells the locals about a wonder of his own land:

> Nevertheless I told them that I did not consider it very marvellous, because there were trees in our country too that bear fruit which becomes a flying bird and good to eat, and those that fall on the ground soon die. And they marvelled much at this in that country.[50]

The exotic Vegetable Lamb is eclipsed by the familiar Barnacle Goose.

[48] 'vn fort homme aroit assez a faire du porter vne troppe de roisin a toute la grappe'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 380.

[49] 'La croist vne maniere de fruit aussi comme courges, mais elles sont plus grosses assez. Et quant elles sont meures, on les fent par my et treuue on dedenz vne beste en char, en os et en sanc, tout ainsi comme vn petit aigniel senz laine, si que on mangue et le fruit et la beste. Et cest grant merueilles de ce fruit et si est grant oeuure de nature'. *op. cit.*, p. 380.

[50] 'Non pour quant ie leur dis que ie ne le tenoie pas a grant merueille, car aussi bien auoit il arbres en nostre pays qui portent fruit qui deuiennent oysel volant et sont bons pour mangier, et ceuls qui chieent a terre meurent tantost. Et de ce sen merueillent il souuent [fortement] en ce pays la'. *op. cit.*

This playful comment smoothly unites two entirely different traditions in such a logical way that one can only wonder why the connection has not been made before. Sir John seemingly juxtaposes the two in a spirit of patriotic one-upmanship, but the *Book*'s author is making a different point. The weird can equally well be found at home - the West has its own marvels just as the East does. We are also being put in the others' place: what is familiar to us is extraordinary to them and vice versa. Where does 'otherness' begin? The natural miracles are wonderful in their similarity; the people of Cadilhe, like the Pigmies earlier, react just as we do. Diversity has come full circle once again.

Mandeville is well aware of what people find interesting, and gives extensive descriptions of the most exotic, glamorous and useful luxury products known to his time: spices and gems. The spice trade - a lucrative Venetian near-monopoly - included perfumes, medicines and seasonings or combinations of these. Mandeville thoughtfully provides ways of testing balm, used in both perfumery and medicine, and mentions cambile - a red powder from an Arabian shrub used for skin complaints - and calamel, 'which is what sugar is made from'. Further East is Java: 'There grow all manner of spices more abundantly than anywhere else, such as ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, cedar and mace'.[51]

Pepper is the most important spice of all. The *Book* devotes a chapter to it, taken from Beauvais' *Speculum Naturale*, describing the pepper forest on the Malabar coast. We are told how it grows and the various types - long, black and white. White pepper is the best and rarest, which is why the inhabitants keep it for themselves. Mandeville makes his own additions and corrections, adding the name of each kind - black pepper is called 'fulful', the Arabic for pepper. He disagrees with one of his sources, Isidore of Seville, who says that people light fires around the trees to drive away the snakes; in fact, says Mandeville, they would not risk setting fire to the pepper, but use lemon juice and herbs to keep the snakes away.

Gems, like spices, are to be found across the East. The palaces of the Great Khan and Prester John (whose bed is made of sapphires to reduce lust), are full of precious jewels, dazzling signs of wealth and power. Prester John's land contains the river of gems that flows from the Earthly Paradise. There are also sources nearer home: Tyre has rubies, while emeralds are abundant and cheap in Egypt. But Mandeville reserves his greatest praise for the diamond, which, like pepper, merits its own chapter.

51 'La croissent toutes manieres despices plus habundamment que nulle part, si comme gingembre, kanelle, clous de giroffle, nois mouscades, sedre et mastic'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 336.

The best diamonds grow from frozen crystals on rocks in northern India, and Mandeville himself has often seen diamonds grow when watered:

> They grow together, male and female, and feed on the dew of heaven and continue and breed, and they make children beneath them, which multiply and grow each year.[52]

Diamonds have many virtues; although these are already known from lapidaries Mandeville will repeat some of them, 'according to what the men of across the sea say and affirm, from whom has come all science and all philosophy'.[53] Diamonds - especially when freely given and worn on the left side of the body - bring victory, courage and strength, deter wild beasts, resist magic, cure madness and detect the presence of poison.

There are many different kinds, and Mandeville explains how to recognise true diamonds just as he did with balm.

> And because great lords and bachelors seeking honour in arms willingly wear them on their fingers, I will speak a little more of diamonds, although I am drawing out my subject, in order that they should not be deceived by merchants, who travel around the country to sell diamonds.[54]

Although ostensibly addressing lords and knights (those most in need of valour), Mandeville's instructions are for all who want to know more about diamonds, whether they can afford them or not. As with the spices, he is addressing practical needs, theoretical curiosity and sheer greedy fascination all in one. As his audiences will show, his knowledge of human nature here is remarkably accurate.

The author reserves rather different treatment for another source of universal wonder: the Fountain of Youth. Disappointingly, it does not confer eternal life but more prosaic, if impressive, health benefits. Anyone who drinks of the water fasting will be cured of any disease, but one must stay there and drink regularly to avoid further illness. Nor does the fountain actually confer eternal youth - it just makes people *seem* young. Sir John

52 'il croissent ensemble, masles et femelles, et se nourrissent de la rousee du ciel et continuent et engendrent, et font des petis delez euls, qui mouteplient et croissent tous les ans'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 319.

53 'selon ce que ceulz doultre mer le dient et laffient, des quelles toute science et toute philosophie est venue'. *op. cit.*

54 'Et pour ce que les grans seigneurs et les bacheliers qui quierent honneur darmes les portent uolentiers en leurs dois, ie parleray vn pou plus des dyamans, combien que ie eslonge ma matere, a ala fin que il ne soient decheus par les portans, qui vont par le pays pour les dyamans vendre'. *op. cit.*, p. 320.

offhandedly tells us that, 'I drank of it three or four times and it still seems to me that I am better for it'.[55] Given the arthritic gout which has put an end to the knight's travels, the author's tongue-in-cheek humour has obviously surfaced again.

We will now turn to an examination of the *Book*'s audiences, firstly through its various versions. On the whole these do not show much interest in geographical science. One exception is the Insular Version, derived from the same lost archetype as the Continental Version, which contains a significant variation in the passage on the shape and size of the earth. At the end of the chapter, where the Continental text speaks of India being beneath 'our land' and says that the land of Prester John is outside the climate zones, the Insular Version replaces this with a detailed discussion of the seven climates as they relate to the British Isles:

> And know that, according to ancient wise philosophers and astronomers, neither our country, nor Ireland, nor Wales, nor Scotland, nor Norway, nor the other neighbouring islands, are at all reckoned on the surface of the earth, as it appears from all books of astronomy. For the surface of the earth is divided into seven parts by the seven planets, and these parts are called climates, and our parts are not of the seven climates, for they descend towards the west in drawing [entering] towards the roundness of the world. And there are the islands of India, and they are opposite us, which are in the lower part, and the seven climates extend around the world.[56]

Thus the *Book*'s astrological expansion of the climates to bring Britain under the influence of the moon is elaborated and eventually agreed, while the *Book* itself is compared to 'all the books of astronomy'. This variant text has been inherited by all the English translations made from the Insular Version.

Of the English versions of the *Book*, the Metrical and Bodley Versions both tend to diminish the importance of geographical considerations, omitting the entire chapter on the earth, circumnavigation and the antipodes. The Bodley Version also omits much of the geography and

[55] 'Ie en beu iii. fois ou iiii. et encore me semble que ien vaille mieulx'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 326.

[56] 'Et sachez qe, solonc l'opinioun de aunciens sages philosophes et astronomienz, nostre pays ne Irelande, ne Gales, ne Escoce, ne Norveye, ne les autres isles costeantz ne sont mie en la superficie countez dessure terre, si come il apiert par touz les livres de astronomie. Qar la superficie de la terre est departie en VII parties pur les VII planetes, et celles parties sont appellez climatz, et noz parties ne sont mie de VII climatz. Qar ils sont descendant vers occident en trehant [entrant] vers la rondure du mounde, et la sont les isles de Ynde, et sont encountre nous qe sont en la basse partie et lez VII climatz s'estendent environant le mounde'. Deluz, *Le livre des merveilles du monde*, pp. 340-1.

itinerary, including the size and site of Babylon, the flooding of the Nile, the centrality of Jerusalem, the division of India and many other geographical details its redactor obviously did not consider interesting enough to merit inclusion.

The Metrical Version gives only the sketchiest information on routes and the descriptions of countries and its account of the circumference of the globe is unknown, due to missing leaves that may have contained the information. The one addition of any geographical significance is that of a description of Purgatory as a land of darkness north of and bordering on the Earthly Paradise. Medieval authors did not commonly give Purgatory a geographical location on the surface of the earth. Dante did so, also joining it to Paradise - the Earthly Paradise is at the summit of the mountain of Purgatory - but he placed both in the southern hemisphere, at the Antipodes of Mount Calvary.

On the other hand, the Metrical Version retains most of the *Book*'s information on spices. The description of balm is much abridged, but the pepper forest is kept and added to - it is enchanted to prevent pepper thieves. The trees bearing meal, honey, wine and poison occupy about forty lines. Mandeville's one short sentence on the wool-bearing trees becomes a long digression, as we are warned: 'And yif ye wille abide a throwe / I shal telle alle howe it doth growe'.[57] The cotton trees are similarly treated. The redactor also expands on the spices of Java, adding the 'brasile nut' and a list of several more. Finally, the poem is brought to an end with a wholly new account of the land of 'Sapheran', the saffron found there and the way it is gathered. Obviously the redactor was interested in spices more than any other aspect of Mandeville's geographical information.

The Egerton Version makes only one major change to the text. At the end of the *Book*, just before the description of Paradise, there is an interpolation on the island of 'Tile', or Thule. This is 'the furthest isle of the world inhabited with men', two year's journey or more from Britain 'what for the long way and what for the impediment that they had because of waters and wicked weathers'.[58] On the eastern side of the island runs a great river, beyond which are fierce beasts which attack the populace. The whole interpolation is in fact an excuse for a miracle of St Thomas of Canterbury, who heals the ailing king of the country and banishes the beasts, despite already being dead. The episode concludes, 'Here you may see how glorious this martyr is in heaven, whose virtues God would publish and show in the furthest end of the world'.[59]

[57] Seymour, *The Metrical Version*, ll. 2256-7.

[58] Letts, *Travels* I, pp. 212, 214.

[59] *op. cit.*, p. 214.

In the Insular tradition of texts as a whole, an important insertion, known as the Papal Interpolation, is made. It appears at the end of the Cotton, Egerton and Defective Versions and one Insular Latin manuscript; the Cotton and Defective forms are the earlier. The interpolation describes how 'Sir John Mandeville' broke his return journey at Rome in order to show his work to the Pope; the Pope compared Mandeville's book to an authority of his own and confirmed that all it said was true. The Cotton Version states:

> And amonges alle I schewed hym this tretys that I had made after informacoun of men that knewen of thinges that I had not seen myself, and also of merueyles and customes that I hadde seen myself as fer as God wolde yeue me grace; and besoughte his holy fadirhode that my boke myghte ben examyned and corrected be avys of his wyse and discreet conseille. And oure holy fader of his special grace remytted my boke to ben examyned and preued be the avys of his seyd conseille, be the whiche my boke was preeued for trewe; in so moche that thei schewed me a boke that my boke was examynde by that comprehended fulle moch more be an hundred part, be the whiche the *Mappa Mundi* was made after. And so my boke, alle be it that many men ne list not to yeue credence to nothing but to that thei seen with hire eye, ne be the auctour ne the persone neuer so trewe, is affermed and preued be oure holy fader in maner and forme as I haue seyd.[60]

Thus the *Book* is compared both to an earlier authority and to a '*Mappa Mundi*'. Seymour hypothesises that the book referred to may be Jean le Long, Vincent of Beauvais or Higden's *Polychronicon*, in which case the map might be one of the world maps added to Higden's work.[61] In any case, Mandeville's book is - apparently - treated seriously as a geographical work worthy of examination by the Papal council, an examination confirmed by authorites which include a *mappa mundi*.

The Egerton Version is slightly but significantly different:

> And for als mickle as many men trow not but that that they see with their eyes, or that they may conceive with their own kindly wits, therefore I made my way in coming homeward unto Rome to show my book til our holy father the Pope. And I told him the marvels which I had seen in divers countries, so that he with his wise counsel would examine it with divers folk that are in Rome, for there are evermore dwelling men of all nations of the world. And a little after, when he and his wise counsel had examined it all through, he said to me for certain that all was sooth that was therein. For he said that he had a book of Latin that contained all that and mickle more, after which book the *Mappa Mundi* is

60 Seymour, *Mandeville's Travels*, pp. 228-9.
61 *op. cit.*, p. 258 n. 229/8.

> made; and that book he showed to me. And therefore our holy father the Pope has ratified and confirmed my book in all points.[62]

Mandeville's work is here compared to a Latin book, and the Pope's court now plays a role in the examination of the *Book*'s veracity. The court is pictured as a cosmopolitan meeting-place for foreigners 'of all nations', men who could personally testify in the knight's favour. Thus the Egerton Version enhances the authority both of the work Mandeville's is compared to and of the circle of people available for informed consultation.

The Latin manuscript containing the Papal Interpolation, MS. Cosin V.iii.7, is a copy of the Royal Version dating from the late fifteenth century. The interpolation takes a unique form, one significantly different to either of the above versions. The knight is kindly treated and invited to an audience with the Pope after the latter has examined his work:

> And he had a cardinal show me a certain spherical instrument, a wonderful object that he called a *Sphere of the World*, carefully and wonderfully made, containing in itself as carvings or pictures nearly all kingdoms and races of people. And he said that the instrument had been made according to the arrangement and form of the aforesaid volume previously shown to me. And there I found all the kinds of both men and beasts contained in my little book noted previously.[63]

Here the mysterious book that the Pope compares Mandeville's effort to is definitely identified as Higden's *Polychronicon*. Unlike in the Cotton and Egerton Versions, however, the *mappa mundi* drawn from it cannot be one of Higden's maps; it is a sphere of the world, a globe containing pictures of lands and peoples. The *Book* is thus appropriately compared to a three-dimensional sphere rather than a flat map, and its geographical modernity and scientific credibility are decisively ratified by the authority of the Pope himself.

Moving on from the English versions, the Vulgate Latin Version of the *Book* makes major changes to the geographical material it contains. It eliminates much of the chapter on the earth, allowing only a vestige - one

62 Letts, *Travels* II, p. 222.
63 'Et fecit cardinalem michi demonstrare quoddam instrumentum rotundum curiose et modo mirifico compositum, in eo continens per sculpciones vel depicturas pene omnia regna et genera nacionum, mirificum quod appellauit *Speram Mundi*. Et dixit quod instrumentum fuerat compositum secundum disposicionem et formam predicti voluminis michi premonstrati. Et ibi inueni omnia genera tam virorum quam bestiarum contentorum in libello meo prenotato'. Seymour, *The Bodley Version of Mandeville's Travels*, pp. 174-5, n. 146/7.

sentence - on the height of the Antarctic star in Ethiopia to remain in its original location. Most of the other measurements are moved to the chapter surveying the islands of India, concluding this discussion of the islands before the author turns to Cathay. The measurements are altered, being made from England and Scotland in accordance with 'Mandeville's' nationality.

The earth's size is also given here, but the amount of land Mandeville has travelled across is significantly reduced: instead of three quarters of the globe, the knight has seen only one. If only a small part can be seen by such a traveller as Mandeville, it would seem that the Latin redactor disagrees with the *Book*'s theories on the traversability of the earth. Accordingly, all mention of circumnavigation and the antipodes is excised - they do not merit even a passing mention. The place of such matters is taken by a long passage on the marvels of God, among them the creation of the world and all its wonders - a more hidebound view, conforming to traditional theology and eschewing the *Book*'s more modern assertions altogether.

Strangely enough, the Latin redaction, usually supportive of theological authority, does the exact opposite in its discussion of Jerusalem. The Holy City's centrality is denied in no uncertain terms. Neither Judea nor Jerusalem nor the Holy Sepulchre are in the centre of the world, because they are demonstrably not on the equator: 'it is certain that Judea is not in the centre, as then it would be under the circle of the Equator, and it would always be the equinox there, and both Pole Stars would lie on the horizon'.[64] In longitude, too, Jerusalem would have to be directly opposite the Earthly Paradise, a fact not borne out by experience. Thus Jerusalem cannot be in the centre of the earth.

These modern proofs are juxtaposed with a logical explanation of David's '*in medio terrae*' - obviously it is not meant to be taken literally. Perhaps David claimed his city to be in the centre of the world because he was its king. Or perhaps the phrase was not intended to be applied to the spherical world, but was meant more as an approximation on a flat map:

> To me moreover it seems that one can expound the aforesaid writing of the Prophet, '*in medio terrae*', that is, around the centre of our habitable regions, namely as Judea is around the midpoint between Paradise and the antipodes of Paradise, being only 96 degrees distant from Paradise in the east, just as I myself have tested by the eastern road.[65]

[64] 'certum est Iudaeam non esse in medio, quod tunc esset sub circulo Aequatoris, et esset ibi semper aequinoctium, et vtrumque polorum staret iis in horizonte'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 126.

[65] 'Mihi autem videtur, quod praefata Prophetae scriptura, potest exponi, in medio terrae, id est, circa medium nostri habitabilis, videlicet vt Iudaea sit circa medium inter Paradisum et Antipodes Paradisi, distans tantum ab ipso Paradiso in oriente 96. gradibus, prout ego ipse per viam orientalem tentaui'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 127.

Thus we can see how the redactor of this version has chosen to include certain aspects of geography, using scientific measurements - confirmed by the knight's personal experience - to refute the physical centrality of Jerusalem, while simultaneously adhering to a rigid view of the world. The geographical science of the *Book* is either relegated to a minor place, used against itself or denied altogether by omission. Obviously the Latin redactor was uncomfortable with these elements, preferring to stress the traditional theological aspects of the Holy Land while ignoring the wider world as far as possible and excusing the *Book*'s Cathay diversions as necessary demonstrations of the marvels of God's creation.

Beyond its versions, the *Book* was undoubtedly influential as a geographical work, due both to the details of lands and peoples it included and to the wider concerns of circumnavigation and inhabitability which it raised and popularised. It was used by authors of literary works, geographers and arguably travellers and explorers as well. Geographical information was drawn from it during the fifteenth and well into the sixteenth century. The antiquary and historian John Leland in his 1549 *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britanniae* called Mandeville another Ulysses, comparing him favourably to Polo and the great explorers of his own time, including Columbus.

On a literary, though not strictly speaking a geographical level, the *Book* was used, as Toynbee[66] demonstrates in detail, by Christine de Pisan in her poem *Le Livre du Chemin de Long Estude*, written in 1402 and dedicated to Charles IV of France. The work takes the form of a dream vision, in which the Cumaean Sybil takes Christine on a tour of the real world before taking her to the other world: 'I will show you many notable / places which it will delight you to see...'[67] While little is made of Constantinople and Jerusalem - they are too well-known - the Holy Sepulchre receives some attention, and the dreamer actually enters it. Toynbee remarks that, 'It will be observed that she again more than once in the course of her narrative prides herself on having done or seen things, which Maundeville says were especially difficult to do or see'.[68]

Christine then describes the site of Troy:

> There was Troy / The city of such great renown /

[66] Toynbee, 'Christine de Pisan and Sir John Maundeville', *Romania* 21 (1892), pp. 228-39. Most of the following examples are taken from this work.

[67] Pisan, *Le Livre du Chemin de Long Estude*, ed. Püschel, ll. 1187-88.

[68] Toynbee, 'Christine de Pisan', p. 231.

> Now you see nothing but ruins / But the walls still appear / Along the sea, high, long and strong.[69]

In Egypt,

> Afterwards I saw the city of Cairo / Which is larger than any other two / I saw the Nile that rises and falls / I saw the field where balm grows / I saw how Babylon lies / In a lovely land very well placed / Below the river Gion.[70]

Unlike the knight, Christine and the Sybil are able to cross the Arabian desert easily, 'Although no man passes there/ who does not carry his provisions / On camels'.[71] The monastery of St Catherine of Sinai is described in terms very close to the *Book*:

> And we climbed the mountain / Where there is a very beautiful abbey, /
> Enclosed, so that it should not be invaded / By snakes or evil beasts ... /
> There are many lamps and many candles there; / And I kissed the head of the virgin / And received from the abbot himself of the oil / Which issues from her precious bones.[72]

On their way through the lands of the Great Khan, the two pass crocodiles, dragons, lions, unicorns and elephants. They then continue through Tartary and Syria before coming to Cathay, an island, as in the *Book*, rich in gold and spices. Christine sees the phoenix, the pepper-tree, assorted monsters and the Brahmans, before giving a detailed description of the four rivers of Paradise in precisely the same terms and order as the *Book*. Noah's Ark, the birthplace of Samuel, Gog and Magog and the body of St Thomas are also mentioned before she visits the marvellous land and palace of Prester John. 'I passed all that great land / Of Prester John which leads to where / There are so many miracles / That no man would ever see their like, / If he did not go there to know them'.[73]

With the aid of her divine mentor, Christine is able to see the otherwise inaccessible Trees of the Sun and Moon which spoke to Alexander, before reaching the Earthly Paradise, which even she is unable to enter. She has covered the world as described by Mandeville, and will now leave him to go on through the firmament and beyond. The proximity of the text to the *Book*, added to the fact that Mandeville himself drew all this information

69 Pisan, *Chemin*, ll. 1296-1300.
70 *op. cit.*, ll. 1319-25.
71 *op. cit.*, ll. 1336-8.
72 *op. cit.*, ll. 1342-52.
73 *op. cit.*, ll. 1479-83.

from many different sources which Christine de Pisan could not have compiled in exactly the same way, leaves no doubt that this was the work she drew on. Thus the *Book* was used at the turn of the fifteenth century to give a bird's-eye view of the whole world, its landmarks and marvels.

One example of the ways in which the *Book* could be used by a bona fide traveller is provided by *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger*. Schiltberger, a Bavarian of uncertain origin, eventually became chamberlain to Duke Albrecht III. Writing between 1427 and 1443, he gave an account of his experiences as a slave in the East after being captured at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396. The fact that he did indeed travel is not in doubt, but his book equally undoubtedly borrowed substantially from Mandeville.[74] Brunn, editor of an 1879 edition of Schiltberger, believed Schiltberger to have been illiterate and have dictated his work: 'There is nothing to show that Schiltberger was a reading man, or that he availed himself of the writings of others, except in one instance, in which it can scarcely be doubted that he had recourse to some authority when giving the dimensions of the walls of Babylon'.[75] I would argue that his 'ghost-writer', possibly a cleric, was the person responsible for this and other interpolations from Mandeville's *Book*.

After the Ottoman Turkish occupation of Bulgaria during the fourteenth century, Sigismund I of Hungary led a military expedition to the Danube to repel the Turks. His army was routed by the Sultan Bayezid at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396. Captured soldiers aged over 20 were slaughtered on the spot; Schiltberger was spared, being fifteen years old. He was then employed as a runner in the service of Bayezid, serving on campaigns in Egypt and Asia Minor. Bayezid was killed at the battle of Ankara in 1402 and Schiltberger was captured by the victorious Timur. Over the next twenty-five years, as the property of various rulers, he joined in the invasion of Armenia and Georgia, escorted a Tartar prince into Greater Tartary, joined expeditions to Siberia and Crimea and travelled back to Egypt, Palestine and Arabia before finally escaping from the shores of the Black Sea and reaching safety in Constantinople in 1427.

Some of the overlapping information between Schiltberger and Mandeville could be excused on the grounds that Mandeville's sources were writing about the peoples Schiltberger actually lived with. The similarity between the accounts of the eating habits of the Tartars, the Sultan's couriers, the pigeon post, Constantinople and the Greek faith could easily be explained this way, and indeed in these cases Schiltberger usually gives enough additional details to prove his personal experience. When he

74 *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger*, ed. and trans. Bruun (1879).
75 *op. cit.*, p. xix.

mentions that the Red Sea is not in fact red, or that the ruins of Troy can still be seen, the context shows that he is probably speaking of what he has seen. Speaking of the statue of Justinian, Schiltberger says not only that it is bronze, but also that it was made in one casting and that some locals say it is made of leather - which he does not believe, as it would have rotted. He mentions the golden apple, 'that meant that he had been a mighty emperor over Christians and Infidels; but now he has no longer that power, so the apple has disappeared'.[76] At this final point it is hard to tell whether Schiltberger is repeating local legend or if his ghost-writer is quoting Mandeville.

In other cases, the influence of the *Book* is unmistakable. In the description of the tower of Babylon, Schiltberger's text is as follows:

> The great Babilonie was surrounded by a wall, twenty-five leagues broad, and one league is three Italian miles; the wall was two hundred cubits high and fifty cubits thick, and the river Euffrates courses through the middle of the city; but it is now all in ruins, and there is no longer any habitation in it. The tower of Babilonien is distant fifty-four stadia, and four stadia is an Italian mile, and in several places it is x leagues in length and in breadth. The tower is in the desert of Arabia, on the road when one goes into the kingdom of Kalda; but none can get there because of the dragons and serpents, and other hurtful reptiles, of which there are many in the said desert. The tower was built by a king who is called in the Infidel tongue, Marburtirudt.[77]

The *Book*'s version is this:

> ... Babylon the Great, where the different languages were discovered by God's miracle, when the great Tower of Babel was first built, where the walls were indeed built 64 stadia high; which is in the great desert of Arabia, on the road as one goes towards the kingdom of Chaldea. But it is a long time since any man dared to go to or to approach the tower, because it is all waste and there are a great many great dragons and snakes and diverse venomous beasts thereabouts. That tower together with the city was walled about, a good 25 leagues in circumference, as those of the country say and as one can estimate and understand. And although it is called the Tower of Babylon, nevertheless there were many mansions and many great and large houses set out there. And this tower covered a great expanse in circuit, for the tower was ten leagues square. This tower was founded by Nimrod, who was king of this country, and he was the first king of the world.[78]

[76] Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, p. 80.

[77] *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[78] '... la grant Babiloine, la ou les diuers langaiges furent trouuez par le miracle de Dieu, quant la grande tour de Babel estoit commenciee a faire, ou les murs estoient ia fais lxiiii. stades de haut; qui est es grans desers darrabe, sur le chemin quant on va vers le royaume de Caldee. Mais il a lonc temps que homs nosa aler ne aprouchier a la tour, car elle est toute deserte et y a grans dragons et serpens et diuerses bestes venimeuses grant plante la entour. Celle tour auec la cite auoient bien xxv. lieues de tour de murs, si comme ceulz du pays dient et si comme on le puet estimer et comprendre. Et combien que on lapelle la tour de Babiloine, neent moins il estoient ordenez pluseurs mansions et pluseurs habitacions grandes et lees. Et contenoit celle tour grant pays de circuite, car la tour tenoit x. lieues de quarrure. Celle tour fonda Nemroth, qui fut roy de celi pays, et ce fut le premier roy du monde'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 249.

The similarities between the two passages are evident. The author of Schiltberger's *Bondage* has copied from Mandeville, omitting minor details, rearranging the material and adding his comparison of forms of measurement. He cannot be referring to a common source as Mandeville has drawn on both Boldensele and Latini with small adjustments. It is also worth noting that Schiltberger does not say that he has actually visited the tower himself.

Even more material is borrowed in Schiltberger's account of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. While he did visit the area, the writer of his book or perhaps Schiltberger himself obviously found it easier to rely on the *Book* for information on what he had seen. The Holy Sepulchre is described verbatim though some details are omitted; the only point added is that on Easter Saturday there is a brightness above the Holy Sepulchre which people come from Armenia, Syria and the land of Prester John to see. For the rest of the journey from the Holy Sepulchre to Jordan, Schiltberger follows faithfully in Mandeville's footsteps. He does not mention all the details Mandeville does, but the reduced amount left is presented in exactly the same order as in the *Book*. Then the flow is broken by a personal statement that 'on this same plain we encamped with our young king, with thirty thousand men sent to him by the Turkish king'.[79] This is followed by an account of Hebron and the church the Saracens will not allow infidels to enter, and then information on testing the purity of balm, taken from an earlier chapter of the *Book*.

The next two short chapters are devoted to the rivers of Paradise and 'how pepper grows in India'. Both of these are taken from the *Book*, though Schiltberger's narrative again adds personal touches. After describing the rivers, he says 'Of these four rivers I have seen three ... I have been many years in the countries through which these rivers flow'.[80] Introducing the next chapter, he remarks with a mixture of honesty and deceit that 'I have

[79] Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, p. 60.

[80] *op. cit.*, p. 61.

not been in India where the pepper grows, but I have heard in the Infidel country from those who have seen it, where and how it grows'.[81]

In the above extracts, Schiltberger's work has used the *Book* for purely factual information on places, measurements and natural products of interest. But more fabulous accounts are also inserted, such as that of a country 'which has a high mountain where many precious stones are found; but nobody can take them because of the serpents and wild beasts. When it rains, it is the torrent that brings them down, then come the experts who know them, and pick them out of the mud. There are also unicorns in those mountains'.[82] This is strongly reminiscent of, though not directly copied from, the *Book*'s account of the land of Prester John, where wild beasts, snakes, abundant precious stones and unicorns are mentioned in three consecutive sentences.[83]

This, however, is not as impressive as a borrowing in the three chapters previous to this passage in Schiltberger's work: 'Of the castle of the sparrow-hawk, and how it is guarded'; 'How a poor fellow watched the sparrow-hawk'; and 'More about the castle of the sparrow-hawk'.[84] In the *Book*, anyone brave enough to watch the hawk for a set length of time will be granted a wish by the fairy lady of the Castle of the Sparrowhawk. Schiltberger's passage is a very close retelling of the *Book*'s tale, with minor variations and additions: the lady of the castle is a virgin but not explicitly a fairy; the hawk screams at the end of the vigil to summon her; the knight who keeps watch is now a Hospitaller rather than a Templar. The legend is followed by an account of how Schiltberger and his companions tried to visit the castle, but their guide objected because of the danger of the vigil and because 'the castle is also hidden by trees, so that nobody knows the way to it. It is also forbidden by the Greek priests, and they say the devil has to do with it, and not God'.[85] It is amusing that Schiltberger should try to confirm the tale's veracity by saying that he has attempted to visit the castle, going further than Sir John Mandeville himself.

The German traveller, therefore, has used the *Book* as a source of both geographical and, less often, marvellous information. In spite of his having travelled through so much of Asia himself, he or his ghost-writer still felt the need to draw on a written authority. This has been done in variety of ways: giving information Schiltberger could not easily have discovered for himself, as in the description of Babylon and the gathering of pepper in

81 Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, p. 61.
82 *op. cit.*, p. 46.
83 Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 401-2.
84 Schiltberger, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-3. Cf. Letts, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-12.
85 Schiltberger, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

India; using the *Book* as a guide to describing what he has done himself; or, finally, picking out precious jewels to adorn his own narrative.

Schiltberger's account seems to have been a popular one, and not only in manuscript form; it was first printed c. 1473, and then again at regular intervals up to 1606. One manuscript, now lost, belonged to a Receiver of Revenues named Matthias Bratzl, who in 1488 had it bound together with manuscripts of Marco Polo, *St Brendan's Voyage*, Odoric and the *Book* itself.[86] In it he wrote:

> Having acquired the herein-named books, I have had them bound together, and have added a valuable and accurate map. Should the reader of these writings not know where the countries are, whose customs and habits are described, they are to look into the map. The map will also serve to complete what may be wanting in the books, and indicate the roads by which the travellers went. The map and the books quite agree. Whoever inherits this volume after my death, is to leave the different books together, and the map with them.[87]

Obviously this owner of the *Book* regarded it as a work of geography and travel, to be used in conjunction with an 'accurate map' of the countries described. The *Book* - in the von Diemeringen version - and Schiltberger were also bound together in two other fifteenth-century German manuscripts.[88]

Specific geographical portions of the *Book* were also used by cosmographers and geographers. Deluz[89] remarks that the Danish cosmographer Claussøn Swart or Claudius Clavus mentioned Mandeville in his description of Scandinavian and Arctic regions of 1427. In answer to the question of the origin of the Eskimo invasions of Greenland, he argued that they, like the *Book*'s tale of the man who circumnavigated the globe, could have come from halfway round the world. He defended Mandeville's authority in these words: 'The noble English knight John Mandeville did not lie, who said he navigated from Seres in India towards the island of Norway'.[90]

86 Nürnberg, Stadtbibliothek Solgeriana 34.
87 Schiltberger, *The Bondage*, p. ix.
88 St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek Cod. 628, and Strasbourg, Bibl. Nationale et Universitaire MS. 2119. cf. Schiltberger, *op. cit.*, pp. viii-ix ; Ridder, *Jean de Mandevilles Reisen*, pp. 89, 95.
89 Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 316-17.
90 Deluz gives the Latin: 'Nec dixit mendacium nobilis miles Johannes Mandevil Anglicus, qui dixit se de Seres Indie navigasse versus insulam Norvegie'. *Le Livre*, p. 317.

On the other hand, as John Larner[91] points out, one fifteenth-century cosmographer was not convinced of Mandeville's accuracy and rejected his information. Friedrich Ammann, a monk of the Benedictine house of St Emmeram, transcribed a manuscript collection of geographical works including Ptolemy, Vitry and Burchard, between 1447 and 1455.[92] In the descriptive legend intended to accompany a map of the world, he states that his sources were Ptolemy, Honorius Augustoduniensis - called 'the Pope' - 'Marco of Venice' and Pomponius Mela - but not 'Johannes de Montevilla' or the Lucidarius. No reason is given for this deliberate exclusion, nor is it certain that the passage was written by Ammann himself rather than translated from a Latin legend originally attached to the map. Someone, however, obviously did not think Mandeville worthy of inclusion.

This was the exception, at least during the medieval period. Mandeville's account, having been confidently used by Clavus, the earliest Northern cosmographer, was also of service to the Martin Behaim, maker of the earliest globe of the world. Moseley[93] has examined in detail how Behaim's globe, made at Nuremberg in 1492 according to cosmographical ideas before the discovery of the New World, relied on the *Book* for information. There are two legends on the globe naming its sources: the first mentions Ptolemy, Pliny, Strabo and Marco Polo, while the second gives Ptolemy, Polo, Mandeville and the explorations of João II of Portugal.

There are three direct references to Mandeville on the globe. One is in East Asia, after mention of the Ichthyophagi: 'Ptolemy did not describe the world any further, but Marco Polo and Mandeville have written on the rest'. In the island of Nekuran, 'Here there were found in Mandeville's time men having dogs' heads'; this is immediately followed by a reference to the Magnetic Rocks. In Candyn, finally, Mandeville is directly quoted:

> This isle of Candyn and the other isles ... are placed so far to the south that the Pole Star itself can no longer be seen, but another star is seen named Antarctic, which means that this same land lies foot against foot under our land above. When we have day they have night and when we have our sunset they have their day, and they see half the stars which are under us, which we do not see, because the earth and the water are round in shape, as God has willed it. Thus writes Johannes de Mandavilla in his book in the third part of his travels.

[91] Larner, J. (1999), *Marco Polo and the Discovery of the World*, p. 213 n. 58.

[92] Durand, D.B. (1952), *The Vienna-Klosterneuburg Map Corpus of the Fifteenth Century : A Study in the transition from Medieval to Modern Science*, pp. 174-7, 371.

[93] Moseley, C.W.R.D. (1981), 'Behaim's Globe and "Mandeville's Travels", in *Imago Mundi* 33, pp. 89-91. The translations are Moseley's. See also Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 313-15.

The globe also mentions the pepper forest, the seventy-two kings under Prester John, the ruby of the king of Ceylon, the Sciapods, St Thomas and 'gold, pepper, and lignum aloes'. These are not necessarily derived from Mandeville, but the above references to the *Book* prove that it was an important source for the globe. As Moseley remarks, 'clearly, at the very end of the period when Europe was a world to itself, some of the foremost geographical thinkers of the day were using the later despised Mandeville quite seriously as a source of hard information - the best available'.[94]

Moseley mentions in passing that the legends on Behaim's globe may have been made by Hieronymus Münzer and Hartmann Schedel.[95] If this is true it is extremely interesting, as Schedel's *Nuremberg Chronicle* also mentions Mandeville as a figure of authority. This substantial work on the history and geography of the world from the Creation to the late fifteenth century was first published in both Latin and German in 1493. This information was copied and compiled from earlier works.[96]

Unfortunately many of the possible Mandeville stories could have come from common sources. The accounts of the four rivers of Paradise, the Amazons, Egypt and the description of the Plinian Races (in the context of which Pliny is actually mentioned), cannot be definitely attributed to the *Book*. In chapter 197 there is a description of Prester John, his 72 kings and the body of St Thomas whose hand still administers the sacrament.[97] This is strongly reminiscent of Mandeville, although Schedel could again have used other sources such as the *Letter of Prester John*. Yet in spite of this lack of total certainty on specific borrowings, Schedel undeniably regarded Mandeville as an authority. This is proven by the short paragraph on him in chapter 227, where he is placed alongside such figures as Petrarch and Odoric of Pordenone, shortly before an account of the Turkish Sultans:

> Johannes Mandena or Montevilla, a famous doctor of medicine and an English knight wandered over a large part of the world and circumnavigated most of the globe, and wrote about the marvels of the world and the various languages and delights of Asia and India and ended his life in this time.[98]

Both Behaim's globe and the Nuremberg Chronicle, therefore, produced at the very end of the period before the discovery of the New World, made use of the *Book* as an authoritative and familiar text on geographical

[94] Moseley, 'Behaim's Globe'.

[95] *op. cit.*, p. 91, n. 11.

[96] Cf. Wilson A. & J.L. (1976), *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle*, Amsterdam.

[97] Schedel, facsimile of the German edition of 1493, ed. Brussel and Brussel (1966).

[98] The 'doctor of medicine' is an allusion to the Jean de Bourgogne legend.

knowledge and regarded its supposed author with respect. Yet even in the new era Mandeville influenced the process of exploration and discovery.

This influence is shown in Andrés Bernáldez' account of Columbus' voyages in his *Historia de los Reyes Catòlicos Don Fernando y Doña Isabel* of 1513. Columbus himself may very well have owned or at least read a copy of the *Book* before his First Voyage of 1492, though this cannot be proved. He certainly owned Pliny's *Natural History*, Marco Polo, Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* and Aeneas Silvius' *Historia rerum ubique gestarum*, as well as using Ptolemy.[99] Fernando Columbus, writing a biography of his father after the latter's death, cited Mandeville in his long list of authorities (Aristotle, Averroes, Seneca, Strabo, Pliny, Solinus, Pierre d'Ailly, Guido Capitolino and Marco Polo) explaining why Christopher named the new lands 'Indies'. Unfortunately, the biography's authorship and veracity are both contested.[100]

In any case Bernáldez, a priest and court chronicler who had known Columbus well, certainly believed that Mandeville was a prime source of reliable geographical information, and alludes to him on several occasions. The first is as follows:

> And he conceived of a way in which a land, rich in gold, might be attained, and he had the opinion that, as this world and the firmament of land and water can be traversed round about by land and water, as John Mandeville relates, it followed that one who had such ships as were suitable and who was ready to persevere through sea and land, of a surety would be able to go and to pass by the westward ... which would be to encompass all the earth and the roundness of the world.[101]

Here the *Book*'s story of the possibility of circumnavigation has, according to Bernáldez, been acted upon by the Admiral. And Bernáldez specifically reports that Columbus used his knowledge of the *Book* to guide him during the Second Voyage:

> And the admiral wished to go to the south and to leave these islands on the right hand, but, remembering that he had read that all that sea is so entirely filled with islands, and that John Mandeville says that in the Indies there are

[99] Cf. Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 319, and Nunn, G.E. (1992), *Geographical Conceptions of Columbus*, New York, p. 57.

[100] This 1571 Italian edition was published over thirty years after Fernando's death in 1539; the Spanish original is lost. Modern scholarship has been divided over whether Fernando was indeed the original author.

[101] Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, p. v.

> more than five thousand islands,[102] he resolved to go forward, and to follow and not to lose sight of the mainland of Juana and to see certainly whether it was an island or no.[103]

A parallel is also drawn between Mandeville's story of the Gymnosophists and the people of the province of Ornofay:

> There they told the admiral that beyond there lay Magón, where all the people had tails, like beasts or small animals, and that for this reason they would find them clothed ... it seems that this was first told as a jest, in mockery of those that went clothed. So John Mandeville, in the seventy-fourth chapter of his book, says that in the Indies, in the province of la Moré [Lamory], all go naked as when they were born, and that they make a jest of those who go clothed. And he says that they are a people who do not believe in God, that He made Adam and Eve our parents, Who made them naked, and they say than none should feel shame of that which is natural.[104]

This association is indicative of Bernáldez' enthusiam for Mandeville, an enthusiasm which earlier led him to cite the *Book* giving specific chapters and even question the Admiral's choice of direction and tell him of his error. Columbus sought Cathay:

> Of it is read, as John Mandeville says and others who have seen it, that it is the richest province in the world and the most abounding in gold and silver, in all metals and silks. But the people are idolaters and subtle; they are necromancers and learned in all arts and noble, and of them many marvels are written, as the noble English knight, John Mandeville relates, who went there and saw and lived with the Grand Khan for some while. Any one who wishes to know the truth of this may read in his book in the eighty-fifth and eighty-seventh and eighty-eighth chapters, and there he will see that the city of Catayo is very noble and rich, and that its district has the name of the city. This province and city lie in the parts of Asia, near the lands of Prester John of the Indies, in the district which dominates and looks towards the north, and in that direction in which the admiral sought it. I say that it must needs take a great deal of time to reach it, for the Grand Khan was anciently lord of the Tartars, and Grand Tartary is on the borders of Ruxia ... Accordingly it is my belief that in the direction in which the admiral sought for Catayo, traversing the firmament of

[102] Cf. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 321.

[103] Jane, C. (1930), *Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus*, Vol. 1, Hakluyt Society Series II, Vol. 65, p. 130.

[104] Jane, *Select Documents*, p. 138.

sea and land for a further thousand two hundred leagues, he would not arrive there, and so I told him and gave him to understand in the year 1496...[105]

If Columbus had not known of Mandeville before this meeting with Bernáldez, he probably did afterwards!

To conclude, even if Columbus did not use the *Book* himself - and there is no absolute proof that he did - one of his contemporaries with an interest in geography and exploration did, and connected this information with Columbus' voyages to the New World, unhesitatingly assuming his familiarity with the work. Thus even in the early sixteenth century, in the light of new information on the world, Mandeville was being read as a geographical authority of some standing.

Later authors, cosmographers and explorers thus drew upon Mandeville for geographical information, whether this was in the context of purely literary journeys such as that of Christine de Pisan, or in the more practical spirit of Behaim and Columbus. The possibility of circumnavigation popularised by the *Book* was viewed with interest, and the accounts of strange lands and their peoples remained popular for many years.

All these concerns are mirrored in the marginalia to the texts themselves. Almost every manuscript containing marginal notes betrays the readers' interest in the geographical aspects of the *Book*. This interest may be strongly linked to the Holy Land itinerary, as in the fourteenth-century Insular MS. BL Harley 4383 and the fifteenth-century Insular BN MS. ff. 5633. In these examples, the geography of the Holy Places is often connected to religious events along the pilgrimage route, although other material is also pointed out. Marginal notes in the above manuscripts mention such non-religious details as the high mountains Olympus and Athos, the Fosse of Memnon and the Arabian desert.

Olympus and Athos, in particular, are often the object of attention in the marginalia. BL MS. Sloane 1464 mentions both, with an extra *nota bona* for the philosophers' experiment.[106] At least four other manuscripts follow suit.[107] At the opposite end of the text, Mount Colphus or Cochaz, the highest mountain in the world, is noted in BL Sloane 1464 and Harley 204.[108] Rivers, wells and fountains are also of interest, both as important geographical features and for their marvellous qualities; Harley 4383[109] notes many of these, as do BN MSS. ff. 10723 and 25284.

105 Jane, *Select Documents*, pp. 114, 116.
106 f. 8v.
107 BN MS. ff. 25284; BN MS. n.a. 10723; Harley 4383; BN MS. ff. 5633.
108 ff. 134v and 79v respectively.
109 ff. 6v, 12v, 20v.

Many readers were also interested in precise measurements. BN Arsenal 3219 and BN MS ff. 5634, both of the Continental Version, remark upon the hill of the Scala Tyriorum and its height;[110] BN MS. ff. 5633 underlines some details of stadia and leagues,[111] and Harley 204 notes the Lombard miles.[112] BL Sloane 1464 - which admittedly marks almost everything - even notes the measurements of Babylon, the height of Mount Ararat and the size of Prester John's land.[113]

It is in their treatment of the chapter on the size of the earth that the marginalia are most revealing; even BN MS. 4515 devotes one of its few scribal notes to the subject.[114] Some ignore it altogether, but most remark on its features. Of the Continental Versions, Arsenal MS. 3219 makes three notes on the various measurements of degrees and the roundness of the earth, including a Latin translation of part of the text;[115] BN 5637, which has already noted the precise size of the Sea of Galilee, places a line down most of the chapter.[116] A reader of BN MS. 10723 showed even greater interest, with no fewer than twelve separate notes covering the whole chapter, from the Pole Star to the circumnavigation tale and the relative positions of England and India.[117] The Insular BN MS. 5633 - another whose readers noted the size of Babylon - also marks the chapter.[118] The centrality of Jerusalem is generally marked, either at this point[119] or at the mention of 'compas' in the city itself.[120]

Two manuscripts show a further interest in the science behind Mandeville's measurements. BL Sloane 1464 adds the heading 'Astronomia' to the relevant pages, and notes both the Arctic and Antarctic stars, 'De stellis Artyk et antartyk' and the instrument used to determine their height: 'Item Astrolabia de stellis Artyk et antartyk'.[121] The Cotton manuscript BL Cotton Titus C. xvi, having noted 'Ierusalem the myde of the worlde', the 'marvell' of circumnavigation and the 'compas of all the world' gives the heading 'philosophis astronomeres oure countrees abouen'.[122]

110 f. 10; f. 8.
111 ff. 18, 22v.
112 f. 40.
113 ff. 20v, 82v, 145.
114 f. 56v.
115 ff. 61v-63.
116 ff. 36, 56.
117 ff. 57-59v.
118 ff. 106v-107v.
119 BN MS. ff. 25284, f. 73v; Harley 4383, f. 41, Sloane 1464, f. 100; Royal 13 E. ix., f. 47.
120 BN MS. n.a 10723, p. 359, f. 32v.
121 ff. 98v-100.
122 ff. 76v, 77v, 78.

Moving away from this scientific geography, many manuscripts are more concerned with the natural produce of exotic lands, such as spices, fruit and precious stones. The pepper-trees of India are often remarked upon.[123] BN MS. 10723 notes mastic, the hill of salt, ginger, pepper - four times - and spices twice more,[124] as well as the trees of meal and honey, cotton and a river of precious stones coming from the Gravelly Sea.[125] Sloane 1464 mentions the various types of pepper seven times[126] and also bananas, ginger, spices and cotton.[127] But perhaps the most interesting of all types of natural wealth in the *Book* are the diamonds; these are remarked upon in manuscripts of most versions and times, and the marginal notes refer both to the way diamonds grow and to their virtues.[128]

There was also widespread interest in the human geography of the *Book*, particularly in the exotic East. The cities there are often noted, particularly Cathay, the largest in the world.[129] But it was the strange peoples who captured the reader's eye most often, particularly the Plinian Races; almost every annotated manuscript draws attention to the extraordinary aspect and customs of the inhabitants of countries beyond the Holy Land. Even the remarkable animals, ranging from parrots to griffins, did not impress as much as the weird and wonderful human or semi-human races found in the Orient.

This fascination with the monstrous peoples belonging to faraway lands is also very much apparent in the illustrated manuscripts and editions of the *Book*. It is immediately obvious that the more scientific side of the *Book*'s geography, while not totally ignored, has not been considered to lend itself to illustration quite as easily as the countryside and monstrosities more often drawn.

The illustrations of BN MS. 2810, the *Livre des Merveilles*, live up to its name. We are shown Mount Etna, the mountain itself secondary to the dragon-like serpents which kill bastard children. The Dead Sea picture contains men cultivating the trees on its shores and others swimming in its waters. Ethiopia is represented by two men pointing out a lion and a bear; this is followed by a very explicit picture of a man whose testicles are swollen by the heat. The land of Lombe is notable for the Fountain of

[123] BN MS. n.a. 25284, f. 67v; Harley 4383, f. 37; Sloane 560, f. 27.

[124] ff. 6, 47v, 53v, 54v, 60, 84.

[125] ff. 61, 92, 86v.

[126] ff. 93v -94.

[127] ff. 25, 94v, 102v, 138v, 140v.

[128] Cf. for instance Sloane 1464, ff. 88v -90; Cotton Titus C. xvi, ff. 66-67v; BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 43v; BN MS. n.a. 10723, ff. 50-51v; Advocates 19.1.11, f. 37v.

[129] Sloane 1464, f. 111; BN MS. n.a. 10723, ff. 65, 65v, 66v; BN MS. ff. 25284, f. 86v.

Youth and the Pepper Forest; we see the pepper gathered and offered to the king, a scene repeated with the spices of Simobos.[130]

The chapter on the earth is condensed into a picture of the man who sailed round the world: two men on a ship are using a compass, as another vessel is rowed to an island. Otherwise, the illuminator's geographical attention from here onwards is on the monsters and wild animals of the East, from the Blemmyae and Hermaphrodites to centaurs and griffins. The Caspian Mountains, Gravelly Sea and various rivers are depicted as backgrounds to the peoples around them, as are the cotton-bearing trees. Strange beasts appear, either in the background or claiming the picture for themselves: bears, stags and dragons watch the foreground action, and there is even a leopard with bat wings set in a rocky countryside.[131]

The *Livre des Merveilles* also contains a beautiful illumination of the Vegetable Lamb (Ill. 6). Mandeville's exemplum is faithfully presented, stressing its marvellous aspects. Two men in robes and exotic headgear split open a large fruit to reveal the lamb within, while three Europeans - one of them presumably Mandeville himself - proffer a branch of tiny barnacle geese. This visual juxtaposition of the groups and their respective marvels reinforces the *Book*'s message of similarity in diversity.

This preoccupation with local fauna, though not the deeper message, is echoed in BL MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii. The illustrator of this Defective manuscript, also from the early years of the fifteenth century, chose the giant eels, giant snail, griffin, popinjay and giraffe to place in his pictures. There are also representatives of the strange human races: the Sciapods, Cynocephali, Cyclopes, Blemmyae and feathered men. The flora shown include the trees bearing honey and poison and the giant canes of Thalamasse.

Most attention, however, is paid to the mountains of the *Book*; all those of the Holy Land are drawn, usually in the same style of rocks reaching to the sky, sometimes with one or two distinguishing features. Athos and Olympus are barren rock; Mount Carmel has a monk, Mount Sinai bears Moses' tablets, and Calvary is pierced by a hole from the foot of the Cross.[132] Mount Syon, Mount Joy, Mount Olive and Mount Galilee are also shown.[133] Further on there is Mount Lebanon and Mount Syria, both populated by wild rabbits and other animals entering or leaving their burrows.[134] The Caspian range with its Enclosed Tribes is represented by a

[130] ff. 153v, 165v, 182, 183v, 186, 190v.

[131] f. 217.

[132] ff. 10v 15, 15v, 19v.

[133] ff. 23v, 14, 14v.

[134] ff. 27v, 29.

fox disappearing into its hole - an allusion to the Tribes' escape after following a fox.[135] Even Jacob's Well and the Fountain of Youth are mountain springs.[136]

In spite of this insistence on one geographical feature, the manuscript does contain pictures belonging to the passages on astronomy and the earth as a whole. 'Saturnus a planete' is shown, a dome with wavy lines and clouds;[137] there is a rayed star, 'þe sterre transmontane',[138] and 'þe compas of þe erthe'.[139] This last is a red circle containing a basic T-O map of the world, one-quarter land and the rest sea. One owner's interest in this type of geographical information has already been signalled by the inclusion of a full-page illumination by a different hand before the text of Mandeville on f. 3: a compass with its points and the names of the winds in Italian.

The illustrated BL MS. Harley 3954 shows less concern with these aspects of geography. The artist ignores scientific considerations, and only a few features of the landscape have been thought worth rendering: Mount Athos in the clouds and with its philosophers, the Fosse of Memnon, the river Jordan, the hill of salt and the Well of Youth.[140] The city of Cathay is depicted as a typical medieval town complete with church.[141] Otherwise the emphasis is on the marvellous trees of meal and honey, the giant canes with precious stones at their roots, and, above all, the extraordinary humans and animals of the East. As in the *Livre des Merveilles* and BL MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii, these are of primary importance.

The artist obviously takes great pleasure in the depiction of the grotesque. Although his Plinian Races are not as violent as some of the more recognisably human peoples he draws, their features are deformed in the extreme, from the grinning flat-faced people to the man covering himself with his own lip.[142] The cannibal giants and centaurs are shown bloodily dismembering people and gnawing on human limbs.[143] But the artist truly excels with his strange beasts: crocodiles, 'giraffes', unicorns and lion-like 'chameleons'. The latter come in exotic colours, being red, blue and rainbow-hued, the wild boars are partly purple and even the lions

[135] f. 53.
[136] ff. 26v, 36v.
[137] f. 37v.
[138] f. 40.
[139] f. 41v.
[140] ff. 6, 6v, 10, 20, 29v, 34v.
[141] f. 44v.
[142] f. 42v.
[143] ff. 58v, 54.

are many-coloured.[144] The *Book* has become a source of exotic marvels rather than understandable calculations on the earth.

The English Epitome, BL MS. Add. 37049, is a text of the *Book* which both contains and is bound with pictures alluding to more strictly geographical material. The Mandeville-text is preceded by a detailed T-O map of the world, on which Rome and Jerusalem figure prominently (Ill. 7). The four elements are shown, as is the 'medius mundi' in the Mediterranean Sea under Jerusalem. The tinted illustration is captioned with a text on the division of the world among the sons of Noah. The Epitome of the *Book* itself contains a picture of 'Ierusalem civitas sancta' (Ill. 8) just above the description of the city. Mandeville is followed by an extract from a chronicle containing pictures of the Tower of Babylon and Rome. Although the compiler and epitomiser's interest is mainly theological, Mandeville is closely linked to geographical information centred on Jerusalem.

Another illuminated manuscript depicting geographical material from Mandeville is the Czech Textless Version. While the illustrator's main subjects were the holy relics and Constantinople, his beautiful landscapes are ever present behind the foreground detail. Krása correctly remarks that 'The artist felt a need for capturing forest and groves, valleys in the foreground and distant mountains, walled towns on hillsides, castles on the crests of hills, fenced country cottages. He wanted to paint the great sweep of nature, the world in all its variety and breadth'.[145]

Apart from this general appreciation of nature and use of Mandeville as a rich source of scenery, the artist also chose to depict two of the *Book*'s tales which have attracted the attention both of readers and of illustrators. One is the Fosse of Memnon, shown as a pit from which sand is being extracted; in the foreground is a glassworks, with glassblowers and finished articles.[146] The second tale is that of the philosophers on Mount Athos (Ill. 9). It is night on the mountain, and three robed men are drawing strange letters in the dust. Behind them four others use quadrants and astrolabes to take measurements from the stars. The philosophers' astronomical purpose is introduced in the Czech translation and the artist has rendered it beautifully, with the instruments faithfully depicted in every detail. This has become not only a depiction of the story of the philosophers, but a prefiguration of the Mandeville-*persona*'s own later measurements of the earth.

[144] f. 61v.
[145] Krása, *The Travels*, p. 43.
[146] *op. cit.*, pl. 27.

The woodcut illustrations of the *Book* are by no means as ornate as those of the above manuscript, but they too reflect an interest in certain geographical aspects of the text. De Worde's woodcuts show the Fosse of Memnon, although Mount Athos is a simple rock rising to the clouds; there is no real background scenery, although there are several trees, both in their own right and as decoration. Such geographical features as the hill of salt and the Arabian desert with its hot sun are portrayed, but the main emphasis is on the human and animal oddities of the *Book*. There are naked men and women, snake-eaters, Cyclopes, Hermaphrodites, woolly hens, a crocodile and a two-headed goose among other marvels (Ill. 10). All these woodcuts come from Sorg's 1481 Augsburg edition, which included even more strange beasts and races. On the whole these woodcuts stress the wonders of foreign lands far above physical and scientific geography, with no pictures made of the chapter on the earth.

Thus the illustrations of the *Book*, dating from both ends of the fifteenth century, demonstrate widely differing attitudes to the geographical information it contains, although there is a general tendency to depict monsters and fierce beasts rather than less exciting features. On the whole, rivers, mountains and valleys are seen as a background to the more important sights and activities actually being portrayed, much as the *Book* itself uses geographical scenery to highlight or sometimes explain human actions and attitudes. Unlike the *Book*, however, integrated geographical arguments on the Antipodes and even circumnavigation are largely ignored, as is the geographical centrality of Jerusalem.

The compendia present a rather different picture, providing evidence that Mandeville was often seen as a work of geography and travel. The *Book* was twice closely juxtaposed with maps of the world, once in the Epitome discussed above and once in a manuscript of the Liège Version. The latter contains, among various short poems and prayers, a zonal map of the world showing its division into seven circles.[147] Another manuscript of the *Book* is followed by a few pages giving the latitude and longitude of various areas, particularly the city of Alexandria.[148] Mandeville was also bound with Chaucer's short *Treatise on the Astrolabe* and Roger Bacon's *Tractatus in quatra parte mathematice de situ orbis*.[149]

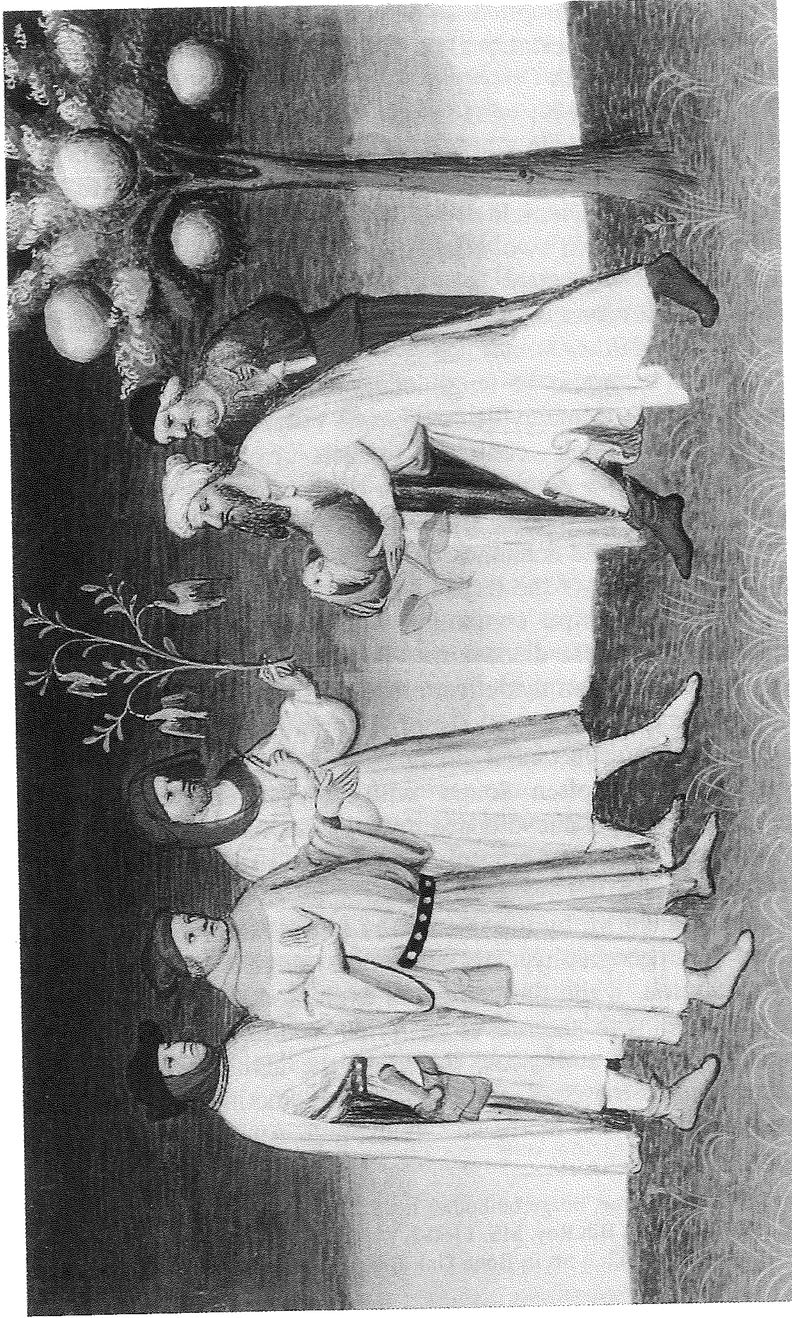
[147] BN MS. ff. 24436, f. 73v.
[148] Cambridge Uni. Library, MS. Gg. i. 34.
[149] BL MS. Bodley e Musaeo 116 and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 426 respectively.

The *Book* was often compiled with works of travel literature, among them Jean le Long's translations of Odoric, Boldensele, Hayton and others.[150] It was placed with Odoric in Milan, Ambrosiana MS. H. 188 and Vienna, Nat. Bibl. HS. 4449; with Odoric, the *Voyage of St Brendan* and the *Letter of Prester John* in Cambridge, Corpus Christi MS. 275; with Odoric and Marco Polo in Glasgow, Hunterian MS. T. 4.1; and with Marco Polo alone in Mikulov, Dietrich. Bibl. Sig. II. 162. St Brendan was also bound with Mandeville in two more manuscripts,[151] one of which also contained the *Letter of Prester John*. Other works found in conjunction with the *Book* are Sacrobosco, the *Imago Mundi*, the *Speculum Mundi* and a text entitled *De mirabilibus mundi*.[152]

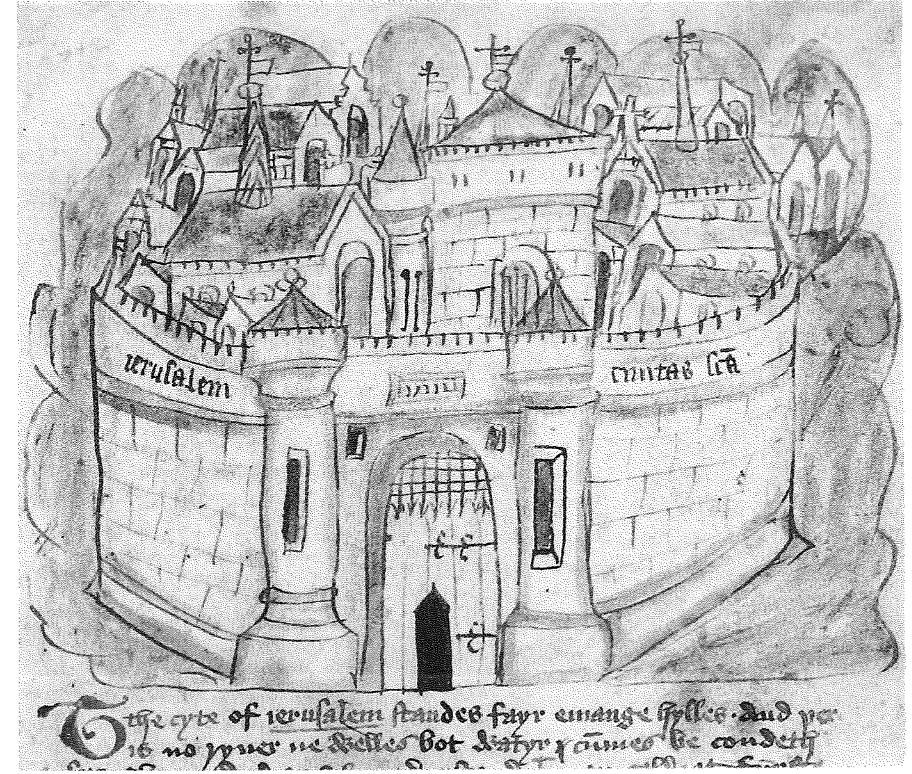
There are also examples of lengthier compendia with a geographical theme which include Mandeville. A Latin Vulgate manuscript in the Vienna Nationalbibliothek contains extracts from Boldensele and Hayton.[153] Leeu's 1484-5 Antwerp edition of the same version was often bound with other travel books from the same press, including Polo, Ludolph von Sudheim and Johannes de Witte de Hese.[154] In the sixteenth century, two manuscripts of the Italian Version are of special interest. One is the Vaglienti manuscript, containing Mandeville, Marco Polo, Piero Vaglienti on the Portuguese discoveries, Vespucci and Vasco da Gama.[155] The second is a compilation made from manuscripts and printed texts by a Franciscan, and includes the travels of Odoric, Polo, Don Mañuel of Portugal, Columbus, Vespucci and others.[156]

Thus the *Book* is often found with several different kinds of geographical work: maps, encyclopaedic works such as the *Imago Mundi*, and travel literature including not only Mandeville's sources but also later voyages to Africa and the New World. In spite of the relative lack of interest in this area shown by the illustrators of the *Book*, its readers were ready to see it as geography. The annotators singled out geographical material for attention, while the compilers expressed their preferences by placing Mandeville with the travel material mentioned above. On the whole, therefore, many audiences, including the authors who borrowed from it, responded to the *Book* either partly or sometimes primarily as a work of geography.

[150] BN MS. ff. 2810 and Berne, Bürgerbibliothek no. 125.
[151] Tours, MS. 947; Brussels Bib.Roy. MS. 1160-3.
[152] Bibl. de Charleville no. 62; a ms in Bonn Uni. Bib.; BL MS. Arundel 140; Bodl. Laud. Misc. 699.
[153] Vienna, Nationalbibliothek no. 3529.
[154] Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, p. 362.
[155] Florence, Bib. Riccardiana, Cod. 1910.
[156] Venice, Bib. Marciana It. VI 208, dated 1518-20; cf. Introduction, p. 9.

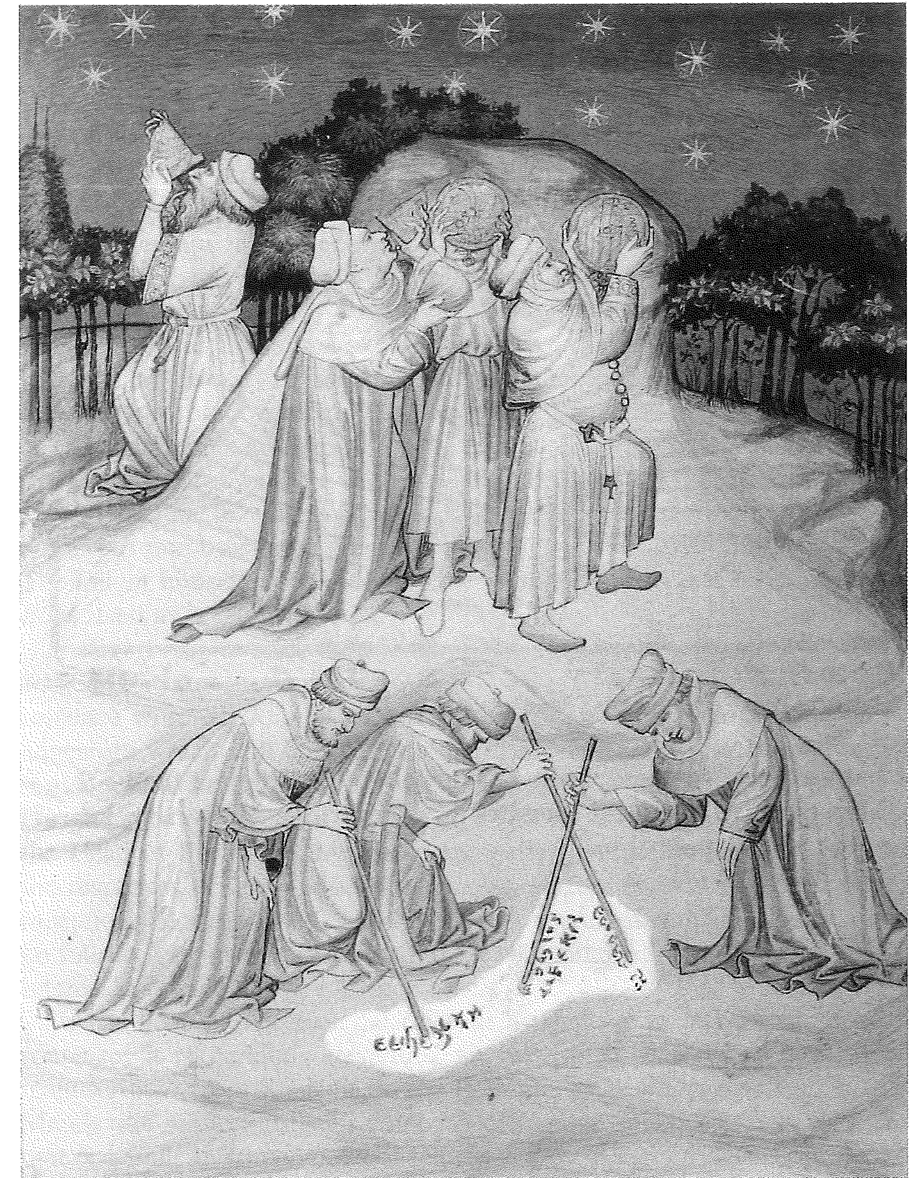


6 Barnacle Goose and Vegetable lamb, from the *Livres des Merveilles*. Cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. Fonds fr. 2810, f. 210v).

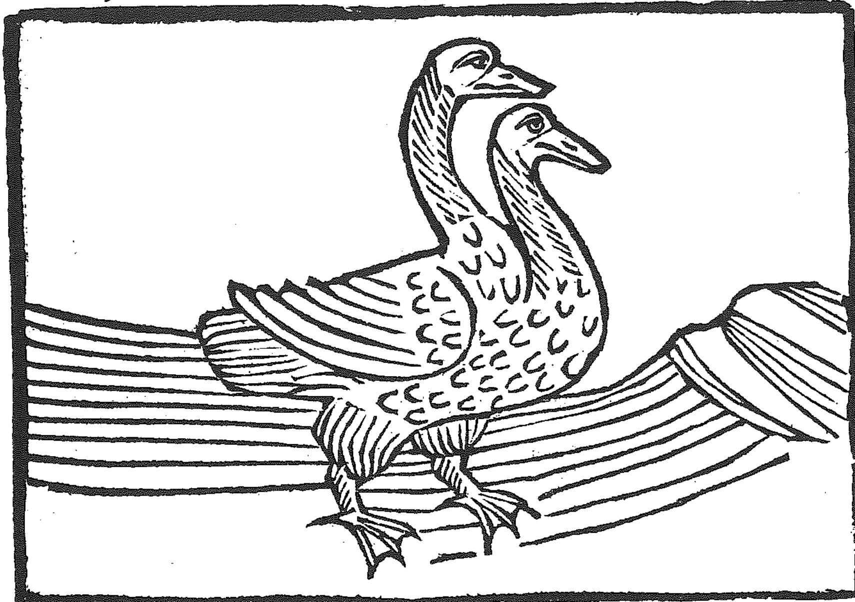


7 Jerusalem, from the Epitome. By permission of the British Library (MS. Add. 37049, f. 3).

8 T-O map of the world, from the Epitome. By permission of the British Library (MS. Add. 37049, f. 2v).



9 Philosophers on Mount Athos, from the Textless Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Add. 24189, f. 15).



10 A two-headed goose, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lxxii v).

3 Romantic Interludes

In this chapter I examine issues in Mandeville's *Book* connected with the genre or perhaps more precisely genres of romance. In discussing romance in the *Book* I intend to examine romance elements rather than discussing genre as such. Use is made of motifs including the supernatural, adventures, and forms of love and chivalry, but these are only part of the elements which might have led contemporaries to classify the work among diverse types of 'romance'. Romance themes such as courtly idealism are occasionally apparent in the *Book*, but the author tends to use them as ideas to be criticised or turned to his own purposes. Aristocratic 'heroes' usually behave in less than heroic ways; such figures appear to be set up for humorous purposes or to point a moral often at odds with romance ideals. The knight himself is considered as a romantic figure, not so much in the *Book* itself as in later readings.

After giving a brief definition of the term 'romance' in a medieval context, I will examine the ways in which the *Book* could be regarded as a romance with 'Sir John Mandeville, Knight' as its hero, embarking on an adventure which will take him around the world and back. I then discuss romance themes including the adventures of Alexander in the East, the Daughter of Hippocrates at Cos, the Castle of the Sparrowhawk and the Head of Satalia, in each case comparing the author's intentions with the responses of later redactions. Finally, as further evidence of audience reception, later works using the *Book* as a source of romantic themes, will be followed by marginalia, illustrations and compilations demonstrating an interest in Mandeville as romance.

It has been argued that the *Book* as a whole is in fact an example of romance; it is certainly described as such in at least three of its own manuscripts.[1] Even Rabelais, in the Prologue to *Pantagruel* (1532), places Mandeville in the illustrious company of famous romances: 'It is very true that one finds in some books of luxuriant growth certain occult properties;

[1] These are: Modena, Biblioteca Estense Francese No. 30, where the *Book* is called 'le romant messire Jehan de Mandeville' and Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana Codex 816, 'li romans de Messire Jehan de Mandeville', both of the Continental Version; and a text of the Insular Version, Lyon, Palais des Arts MS. 28, entitled 'Le romant de Mandeville'. BL Harley 212 and Pierpoint Morgan Library M 957, also of the Insular Version, call it 'Le geste de sire Jehan Maundeville de mervailles de mounde'; BL Royal 20 A.i. refers to it simply as a 'geste'.

and among these are accounted Toss-Pint, Orlando Furioso, Robert the Devil, Fierabras, William the Fearless, Huon of Bordeaux, Mandeville, and Matabrune'.[2] The *Complaynt of Scotlande* (1542) also includes the 'meruellis of mandieuil' in a lengthy catalogue of romances.[3]

'Romance' is notoriously difficult to define. This critical confusion arises at least partly from the etymology and multiple meanings of the word 'romance' itself. It was originally used to denote a language developed from popular Latin, and, by extension, a work translated into or later written in the vernacular. In England, however, the term came to mean any work in French or Anglo-Norman as opposed to the vernacular. Eventually almost any fictional narrative poem could be called a romance.

Romance appears to be defined by what it is not; thus, for example, Ker discusses the issue of 'romance' as opposed to 'epic', ending with a description of what is in effect the courtly romance; 'courteous sentiment, running through a succession of wonderful adventures, is generally enough to make a romance'.[4] As Finlayson observes, 'By almost common consent, all narratives dealing with aristocratic *personae* and involving combat and/or love are called *romances*, if written after 1100. As a loose, deliberately inclusive way of categorising narrative poems, this has some merit in distinguishing them from rustic tales, homilies, satires, histories, and allegories'.[5] While the *roman courtois* is admittedly a main type, there are many others: saints' lives, for instance, often contain elements perceived as being of a romance type, as do some of the later *chansons de geste* and indeed most histories. Such 'romance' elements can include courtly love itself, marvels, exotic adventures, feats of arms, the code of chivalry, or deeds of great heroes of the past, although these are by no means common to all works classified under the label of 'romance'.

Romance as a literary style was not exclusive to the layman. By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it had also been adopted by the clergy. The modes of chivalrous love and adventure were transformed into allegorical material on divine love. The Arthurian legends, for example, were appropriated and turned into the quest for the Holy Grail, with chivalry being determined to a large extent by faith. Lay themes were thus used for religious moral purposes, and it is against this background of clerical romance writing that the *Book* must be considered; its author was

2 *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, ed. and trans. Cohen, J.M. (1955), p. 168.
3 Ed. Murray, J.A.H. (1872), EETS ES 17, p. 64, l. 30.
4 Ker, W.P. (1908), *Epic and Romance*, p. 328.
5 Finlayson, J. (1980), 'Definitions of Middle English romance', in *Chaucer Review* 15, p. 45.

most probably a cleric himself, and as we will see he often uses romance themes to make a moral point.

Moving on to the *Book* itself, one theory for the naming of the narrator-*persona* of the *Book* as 'Iehan de Mandeville, cheualier', of St Albans, is that the author wanted to impart to his work an air of added importance. Our hero is, appropriately, a member of the aristocracy; as Seymour remarks, 'in England especially the romantic interest attaching to a seemingly historical knight adventurer (who perhaps served as the role model for Chaucer's *verray parfit gentil knyght*) rivalled the popularity of the traditional heroes of romance'.[6] 'Mandeville' introduces himself in the following terms:

> I John Mandeville, knight, although I be unworthy, born and bred in England in the town of St Albans, who crossed the sea in the year 1322 on Michaelmas Day, and who have since been a long time beyond the sea, and have seen and travelled around many countries and many diverse lands and provinces and many diverse regions and diverse islands, and have passed through Turkey, through Armenia the Lesser and the Greater, through Tartary, through Persia, through Syria, through Arabia, through Egypt the Upper and the Lower, through Libya, through a great part of Ethiopia, through Chaldea, through Amazonia, through India the Greater and the Lesser and the Middle...[7]

This announcement bears a striking resemblance to certain elements in Chaucer's description of his knight in the *Canterbury Tales*:

> A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man, / That fro the tyme when he first bigan / To riden out, he loved chivalrie /.../ And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre, / As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse /.../ This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also / Somtyme with the lord of Palatye / Agayn another hethen in Turkye; / And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.[8]

There are indeed similarities between this account of Chaucer's knight and Mandeville's *persona* as portrayed in the *Book*, notably the breadth of

6 Seymour (1967), *Mandeville's Travels*, p. xiv.
7 'Ie Iehan de Mandeuille, cheualier, ia soit ce chose que ie ne seie mie dignes, nez et nourris dengleterre de la ville de Saint Aubin, qui passay la mer lan mccccxxii. le iour de Saint Michiel, et que depuis ay este oultre mer par longt temps, et ay veu et enuironne moult de pays et maintes diuerses terres, prouinces, et maintes diuerses regions et diuerses ylles, et ay passe par Turquie, par Armenie la petite et la grant, par Tartarie, par Persie, par Sirie, par Arabie, par Egypte la haute et la basse, par Libie, par grant partie dethiope, par Caldee, par Amazone, par Inde la meneur et la maieur et la moienne'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 231.
8 *The Canterbury Tales, General Prologue*, ed. Benson, L.D. and Robinson, F.N. (1987), *The Riverside Chaucer*, ll. 43-66.

travel into lands both Christian and heathen, and the sojourn in the service of a foreign lord. Yet there are even more differences, notably the fact that 'Mandeville' makes no mention of such extended fighting prowess as Chaucer's knight can claim. Critics who posit the existence of a possible link between the two accounts do so with caution, admitting a certain lack of proof on the subject.[9]

At issue here is not Chaucer's dependence or otherwise on the *Book*, but rather the extent to which the author intends to present his Mandeville-*persona* as a typical knightly hero. If we are to judge by Chaucer's description of his own knight, such a personage was expected to be very definitely a man of arms and action, taking part in single combat, battles and tournaments on a regular basis. This is an attitude typical of most romances, where the hero is expected to fight his way out of danger or otherwise demonstrate his courage at every opportunity which presents itself. Even given Sir John's self-deprecating attitude, it seems strange that he does not describe personal experiences of combat, and indeed admits his own leanings towards discretion on more than one occasion: in the Vale Perilous, for instance, he was as terrified as the other travellers.

'Mandeville's' *explicit*, mock-modesty and all, does not encourage us to believe him a heroic adventurer. He has been incapacitated by gout rather than injuries sustained on the field of battle, hardly a knightly ailment, and the author is fairly obviously having fun, given that it is extremely unlikely that he ever actually travelled:

> And I, John Mandeville aforesaid, who left our country and crossed the sea in the year of grace 1322, who have since seen many lands and many countries and who have been in much good company and seen many fair deeds, although I never did any fair deed or fair undertaking or other good things, of which one should take account or value, and who have now come to rest despite myself, because of arthritic gout that hinders me.[10]

Another characteristic shared by most, if not all, heroes of standard romances is the sense of the personal quest or endeavour precipitating their

[9] Cf. Bennett (1953), 'Chaucer and Mandeville's Travels', in *MLN* 68, pp. 531-4; Moseley (1974-5), 'Chaucer, Sir John Mandeville, and the Alliterative Revival', in *MP* 72, pp. 182-4.

[10] 'Et ie, Iehan de Mandeuille dessus dit, qui me parti de nostre pays et passay la mer lan de grace mil ccc. et xxii., qui mainte terre et maint pays ay depuis cerchie et qui ay este en mainte bonne compaignie et veu maint biau fait, combien que ie ne feisse onques nul bel fait ne nulle belle emprise ne autres biens, dont on doie faire compte ne riens tenir, et qui maintenant suy venue a repos maugre moy, pour goutes artetiques qui me destraingnent'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 411.

travels and leading them into adventure. Chaucer's knight is in the service of his lord; other medieval heroes may be motivated by a similar sense of duty, religious beliefs, a search for love in some form, a desire for domination or, ultimately, personal glory whether temporal or spiritual. 'Mandeville' does not specify any reason for setting out on his travels, although his English nationality is one which supposedly inspires wanderlust. While he is apparently, according to his Prologue, in favour of crusade, he does not fight for his faith; he is in no-one's service until he arrives at the Egyptian, and later the Great Khan's, court; while keen to point out the estimation he is held in, he does not put himself obviously forward as a conventionally heroic character. To begin with he has no stated personal mission to spur him on beyond a desire to visit the Holy Land and describe its wonders to those who are unable to go there themselves. It is soon apparent that Jerusalem is not in fact his ultimate target; he will continue into the 'diuers pays' which lie beyond, eventually arriving at the Earthly Paradise itself before turning back.

Thus it would appear that the Mandeville-*persona*'s motivation is a religious one: to visit the holiest parts of the world, as a pilgrim first to Jerusalem, its geographical and spiritual centre, and then to the outermost limits accessible to man. Yet he is not specifically doing penance for his sins, as various romance heroes must, nor is he seeking a Holy Grail symbolic of chivalric virtues and spiritual cleanness. More to the point, 'Mandeville' does not pretend to have achieved great personal glory by travelling as he has; indeed, it is stressed that he is unable to enter the Earthly Paradise himself, as one may only enter by the special grace of God. His reward for his lengthy travails in foreign lands seems to be the journey itself rather than the arrival at a specific spot or the achievement of a particular personal goal.

This exploration of new and wonderful lands is his true motive for travelling; 'Mandeville' delights in seeing strange wonders and continually discovering curious facts. It is curiosity, as Zacher[11] points out, that encourages him to risk unknown perils in strange lands. Unlike Alexander, he has no interest in conquering the territory he covers; unlike Ogier the Dane, his aim is not to convert the heathen to Christianity. As a romance hero, he is surely more than a little out of the ordinary.

Some, though not all, 'romances' are concerned with questions of 'courtoisie', giving rise to the sub-genre of courtly romance. Nobility and knightly virtue are desirable attainments, and the action usually provides opportunities for the hero to demonstrate these characteristics and thereby

[11] Zacher, *Curiosity and Pilgrimage*, pp. 130-57.

prove himself worthy of attaining his goal. In 'Mandeville's' case, such concerns are far from paramount; his own behaviour is usually portrayed as less important than his surroundings. It is not often the case that his environment provokes action in him, and certainly not the kind of heroic action expected of a conventional adventurer. He fights no battles, rescues no maidens, and on meeting strange beasts and men, 'Mandeville' prefers to observe rather than attempt to affect them. When he does react to what he encounters, it is usually in the form of conversations designed to explain the new: he discusses various points with Saracens, monks, Brahmans and Chinese artisans, usually in an effort to gain insight.

'Mandeville's' main test lies in the crossing of the Vale Perilous, which he accomplishes with no great distinction but with far more humour and humility than did Odoric, whose tale the author has borrowed and altered with a certain mischievous satisfaction. In the longer Continental passage - possibly interpolated - we are told that he received a blow on his neck, leaving a black mark which remained over 18 years. At the time of writing, when he has repented of his sins and serves God as he can, the mark has become white. This visible absolution is neither a claim to fame nor a sign of personal favour but a moral example to us all.

As an enlightened observer and unpretentious traveller, 'Mandeville' is peerless - but anyone expecting a hero overcoming physical tests in allegorical struggles would be disappointed. Physical and moral trials and tests are left to the characters in the stories the Mandeville-*persona* recounts; there, knights are free to face dragons and fairies, hermits confront monsters and 'historical' heroes defeat enemy armies. 'Mandeville' simply recounts these vicarious adventures, but it is noticeable that he also allows himself to make fun of them in various unobtrusive ways. Heroes are not always to be taken seriously; the author often implicitly and explicitly questions their actions and their motives. In this he is partly following a wide medieval tradition of didactic moralising, as in his view of Alexander as a proud prince corrected by the Brahmans and the Gymnosophists. Yet there is also a subtle humour pervading his work, whereby romance motifs and ideals are quietly criticised and made amusing. The author never seems content to remain within the confines of a single genre.

Viewed in this light, the plot of the *Book* as a whole contains certain romantic themes, though these are perhaps not handled in entirely standard ways. Yet I cannot agree that the book is a 'romance of travel' as Bennett suggests.[12] As I have explained above, 'Mandeville' is by no means a

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[12] Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, ch. 3.

typical chivalric hero. His personal encounters with the fabulous and the supernatural are rationalised either in terms of science or as manifestations of the power and grace of God. He does not do battle with the heathen but tries to understand them, in a manner which would seem singularly anti-climactic in a *chanson de geste* or an Arthurian romance. There are no amorous encounters with the opposite sex - although he could have married an Egyptian princess, as 'Mandeville' remarks with another touch of humour.

One redaction of the *Book*, however, the early fifteenth-century Metrical Version, does view 'Sir John' as its hero, and tends to stress the romantic elements to the exclusion of much else. The version as a whole has been structured and adapted to become a romance itself. This is evident from the stylised invocation typical of such works; according to Seymour, the author may have been a professional story-teller.[13]

The abridgement of the *Book* is dramatic and effective. The author excises all items, such as itineraries, which he considers unexciting. On the other hand, he is careful to include all the marvellous tales and fascinating details of the original, expanding on these when he considers it necessary. He adds several references to figures of romance, such as Brutus, Hengist and Horn, Merlin, who transported the stones of Stonehenge, Arthur, one of the nine conquerors, and the Seven Sages. Mandeville, the principal hero of this romance, is introduced accordingly:

> Som time in Engelonde was a knyght, / A fers man boothe stronge and wyght. /
> He was a man of noble fame, / Sir Iohn Mavndevile was his name /... /
> A worþi sowdioure forsothe was he / And wel trauailid biyonde the see /
> In many a dyuers kinges londe.[14]

'Mandeville' is described embarking at Dover, 'The wondres of þis worlde to sene'.. In spite of his romatic write-up, though, he makes few appearances in the rest of the poem, mainly used as linking phrases: 'And toward the south þe knyght gan drawe / Moo meruailes to see and haue'.[15] Thus the knight becomes 'an English romance hero',[16] no longer telling his own story but having become a character in it. Mandeville's work becomes 'a marvellous romance'.[17]

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[13] Seymour, *Metrical Version*, p. 79, n. 1-14.
[14] *op. cit.*, ll. 15-18, 23-5.
[15] *op. cit.*, ll. 2750-1.
[16] Zacher, 'Travel and Geographical Writings', p. 2239.
[17] Seymour, *op. cit.*, p. xx.

We will now return to the *Book* itself and its author's own complex designs. As an example of the multiple motives behind his use of romance themes, I will examine his treatment of the Alexander legend. While certain aspects of this legend, such as the Brahmans and Enclosed Tribes, are presented in more detail in the chapters on historiography and theology, at this point I would like to draw attention to the ways in which the author has used romantic elements and the figure of the hero Alexander himself, and what this implies about his intended audiences.

The Alexander legend has its roots in classical tradition, although it was greatly changed and developed throughout the medieval period. It derives partly from the Greek prose Pseudo-Callisthenes, compiled in the third century from literary sources and Egyptian popular tradition,[18] which was translated into Latin by various authors. In the early twelfth century these versions became popular with French romance writers,[19] culminating in Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre*, which stresses the hero's chivalric aspects. Among historical sources of the legend are the life of Alexander by Quintus Curtius, Justin's *Epitome of Trogus Pompeius* and Orosius' *Historia adversus paganos*.

Other stories widespread in the middle ages are derived from Jewish traditions such as that of the Ten Tribes and Alexander's journey to the Earthly Paradise - which was popularised in the Latin prose *Iter ad Paradisum*, dating from the early twelfth century. Alexander was also evident in Arabic texts, and anecdotes from Cicero, Seneca, Valerius Maximus, Augustine and Jerome.[20] The popularity of the Alexander legend in the first half of the fourteenth century is attested by the number of works written in that period: *Voyage d'Alixandre au paradis terrestre* (c. 1270-1350); Jacques de Longuyon, *Voeux du paon* (1312); Jean le Court, dit Brisebare, *Restor du paon* (before 1327); *Perceforest* (1314-40); Jean de la Mote, *Parfait du paon* (1340). Five prose versions, plus fragments of others, survive from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.[21]

In the medieval period there were two main methods of depicting Alexander. In the romances, he was seen as a chivalric hero, a warlike and generous king. But he could also be treated as a moral exemplum of worldly pride. 'Medieval moralists, whose admiration for Aristotle and his pupil Callisthenes, executed by Alexander, predisposed them to accept the

[18] Cf. Barron, W.R.J. (1996), 'The *Wars of Alexander* from reality to romance', in Fellows, Rogers, Weiss (eds), *Romance Reading on the Book*, p. 23. For a fuller discussion of texts, see Cary, G. (1956), *The Medieval Alexander*.

[19] Cf. Kelly, D. (1993), *Medieval French Romance*, p. xiii.

[20] Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, pp. 18-23.

[21] Kelly, *op.cit.*, p. xiii.

denunciations of Diogenes and Seneca and later the Fathers of the Church, merely substituted for Fortune the Power of God to raise him and cast him down'.[22]

Mandeville's material is drawn from the *Roman d'Alexandre*, the *Letter of Prester John* and Vincent de Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale*, which contains an anthology of historical and legendary sources in roughly chronological order. Interestingly, the *Book* was bound with the *Roman d'Alexandre* more often than with any other text; Deluz cites twelve instances.[23] Alexandrine elements in the *Book* include wonders in the palaces of the Great Khan and Prester John; the Bactrian beasts near the Caspian Mountains and the people who live on the smell of apples; the legends of the Fountain of Youth, the Trees of the Sun and Moon, the Enclosed Nations and the Amazons; the Earthly Paradise; and, perhaps most importantly, the tale of Alexander's meeting with the Brahmans.

Much of the wonder-material is not openly connected to Alexander himself, and is used for its own sake rather than as part of a wider romance scheme. The cotton trees, hippopotami and griffins of the Bactrian, as well as the apple-smellers of Puchany, are simply more among the many marvels of India. The golden vine with clusters of precious stones for grapes - originally from the palace of Porus - are placed in that of the Great Khan to enhance its richness, while the mechanical birds are no longer a magical marvel but a jealously guarded trade secret. The Fountain of Youth from the *Letter of Prester John* is similarly diminished, becoming, as we have seen, a cure for diseases rather than a source of immortality. Even the Trees of the Sun and Moon which foretold Alexander's death are simply mentioned as being too difficult to attain:

> It is also said that balm grows in India and in that desert where Alexander spoke to the tree of the sun and moon. But I have not seen it, for I have never been so far, for there are too many perilous lands to pass ... We would willingly have gone towards these trees, if we had not been afraid; but I do not believe that a hundred thousand soldiers could cross that desert.[24]

The details concerning the Earthly Paradise, too, are not used as romance but rather as topography explaining its inaccessibility. They are

[22] Barron, 'The *Wars of Alexander*', p. 24.

[23] Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 288.

[24] 'On dit aussi que le baulme croist en Ynde et en ce desert ou Alixandre parla a larbre du soleil et de la lune. Mais ie ne lay mie veu, car ie nay mie este tant auant, car trop y a de perilleus passages a passer ... Nous fussions voletiers ales vers ces arbres, se nous neussions paour; mais ie ne croy mie que cent mile hommes darmes peussent passer ces desers'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 255, 401.

taken from the twelfth-century *Alexandri Magni Iter ad Paradisum*, describing how Alexander and his men, after overcoming many perils, arrived at Paradise journeying up the Ganges. Deluz's comparison of the *Book* with the original reveals word-for-word borrowing.[25] Yet there are differences; in the *Book* Alexander himself is not mentioned here and the tale is told as an impersonal example of the consequences of any ill-advised attempt:

> Many great lords have attempted very determinedly many times to go beyond by these rivers towards paradise in great companies, but they could never use their ships to go forward.[26]

The legend of the Amazons is also transformed into something rather different from its originals.[27] In the *Roman d'Alexandre* and the *Letter of Prester John*, the Amazons are seen as an inversion of normal customs: instead of the knights returning from warfare to their ladies, it is stressed, sometimes comically, that the roles are reversed by the warrior-women. Mandeville's approach is not the same. The Amazons, no longer historical legend but contemporary exoticism, are remarkable more for their admirable political system than their sexual roles. Their queen is elected according to prowess in arms and they are fine warriors, even to the extent of serving as mercenaries:

> In this land is a queen who governs the whole country, and all are obedient to her. And they always choose a queen by election of her who is bravest in arms. They are good warriors and worthy and wise and brave. And they willingly become mercenaries and help other kings in order to earn money, and they uphold themselves very vigorously.[28]

The Amazons seem eminently suited to their task, mentioned later in the *Book*, of guarding the Enclosed Nations and receiving their tribute.

[25] Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 181.

[26] 'Moult de grans seigneurs ont essaye par moult grant uolente maintes fois que pour aler oultre par ces riuieres vers paradis a grandes compaignes, mais onques ne peurent esploitier leur vaissel a aler auant'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 406.

[27] Deluz, *op. cit.*, p. 214: the Amazons come from Latini, the *Roman d'Alexandre*, the *Letter of Prester John*, Orosius and Vincent of Beauvais. For a detailed examination of sources, see pp. 230-3.

[28] 'En ceste terre a vne royne qui gouuerne tout le pays, et toutes sont obeissans a luy. Et tousiours font royne par eleccion de celle qui est plus vaillant en armes. Elles sont bonnes guerroierresses et preus et sages et vaillans. Et vont bien en soudees et aidier les autres roys pour argent gaaignier, et se maintiennent moult viguereusement'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

Thus far we have seen how Mandeville has used romantic elements from the Alexander legend separately from the tale of the hero himself. Alexander makes several appearances in the *Book*, but he is not treated as a romantic hero *per se*. His chief fame, implicit rather than explicit, lies in his conquest of Asia, with which he is linked. He is used either as a historical figure, a founder of many cities bearing his name and the man who trapped the Enclosed Nations, or as a moral exemplum in the tale of his meeting with the Brahmans.

While Alexander the Great had always remained the type of the conqueror, Mandeville does not appear interested in this aspect as an inspiration for a Christian conquest of Asia. Although Alexander served a Christian purpose in enclosing the kings of Gog and Magog in the Caspian Mountains, having appealed to 'Dieu de la nature' to help him, this does not make him praiseworthy: 'combien quil ne fust mie dignes de estre oys'.[29] Indeed, he is shown in a decidedly bad light in the Brahman episode, where Mandeville follows the moralist tradition. The hero and his conquests fade into the background as the virtuous people of Bragmey describe the admirable simplicity of their way of life, implicitly chastising Alexander for his pride and greed:

> King Alexander, whom the whole world obeys, content yourself with doing us no harm. For you will find nothing in us for which you must make war on us. For we have no riches or possessions, nor do we wish for or covet any. All our country's goods are common to us all. We have nothing in perpetuity except peace, of which you want to disinherit us. And we have a king, not in order to do justice, for he finds no criminals, but only to preserve nobility and to know that we are obedient. For justice has no place among us. For we do nothing to another that we would not wish him to do to us. Thus neither justice nor vengeance have anything to do with us. For which reason you may take nothing from us but our good peace, which has always lasted among us.[30]

[29] Letts, *Travels* II, p. 380.

[30] 'Roys Alixandre, a qui tout le monde est obeissant, souffise toy de nous faire nul grief. Car tu ne trouueroies nulle chose en nous par quoy tu nous deusses guerroier. Car nous nauons nulles richesces ne nul auoir, ne nulles nous nen voulons ne ne conuoitons. Touz les biens de nostre pays sont communs a nous tous. ... Riens nous nauons a perpetuite fors que paix, de la quelle vous voulez desheriter. Et si auons i. roy non pour iustice faire, car il ne treuue nuls forfaisans, mais seulement pour noblece garder et pour sauoir que nous sommes obeissans. Car iustice na entre nous point de lieu, car nous ne faisons enuers autrui chose que nous ne vourrions que en nous feist. Si na iustice ne veniance entre nous que faire. Pour quoy vous ne nous pouez tollir que nostre bonne paix, qui tousiours a dure entre nous'. *op. cit.*, pp. 398-9.

Recognising their goodness, Alexander leaves them in peace - but he has not understood their lesson on the vanity of worldly possessions. This is explained to him more forcefully by the Gymnosophists, whom he refrains from challenging but to whom he proudly offers anything they desire, demonstrating his traditional generosity. They respond by showing him that nothing he can offer has any real value: they ask for immortality, which he admits he cannot grant.

> Why then, since you know that you are a mortal man, are you so arrogant, so haughty and so presumptuous that you want to make the whole world subject to you, just as though you were immortal God? And yet you do not know the length of your life, neither day nor hour, and yet you want to collect all the wealth of the world, which you will have for a short time before you leave it when you die, when in any case it was another's before yours. For you will take nothing with you. As you were born completely naked, so will you return to the earth, of which you were created. Thus you ought to know and consider that none is immortal except God, who created everything. Wherefore you ought not to covet so much, for you cannot keep it.[31]

This time Alexander is properly chastened: 'King Alexander was completely astounded at this answer and left them without doing anything'.[32] There is nothing he can do or say, as the wise people have deprived him of any argument defending his behaviour, and indeed his very existence as a conqueror of the world. In the Gymnosophists' attack on worldly pride, Mandeville has substantially expanded on the *Roman*, not merely reporting the story but implicitly supporting it. This stance of overall support of the clerical, moralistic viewpoint would seem to confirm that the *Book*'s author was himself a cleric; he certainly treats Alexander as a source of *exempla* castigating pride and ambition rather than as a hero of romance.

This intention was not always understood or followed in the *Book*'s redactions. The Alexander of the Metrical Version is quite different from the original, in accordance with this redactor's leanings towards romance.

[31] 'Et pour quoy donques, puis que tu sces que tu es homs mortel, es tu si orgueilleux, si fier et si oultrecuidie que tu veulz tout le monde mectre en ta subieccion, tout aussi bien comme se tu fusses Dieu immortel? Et si nas terme de ta vie, ne iour ne heure, et si veuls tout lauoir du monde assembler, le quel tu lauras courtement ou tu le laisseras en mourant, et tout aussi bien que ce fu autrui auant que tiens. Car tu nemporteras riens auec toy. Si comme tu nasquis tout nu, tu retourneras en terre, dont tu fus cree. Si dois sauoir et penser que nuls nest immortel fors que Dieu, qui tout crea. Pour quoy tu ne deusses mie tant conuoitier, car il ne te pourra demourer.' Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 399-400.

[32] 'le roy Alixandre fu tout esbahi et se parti deuls senz riens faire'. *op. cit.*, p. 400.

When enclosing the Ten Tribes, for instance, Alexander prays for God's aid:

> Vppon his knees he sette hym doun / Hertelich with good deuocioun /
> And praied God with alle his myȝte / And to grete penaunce he hym hiȝte /
> So þat he wolde sende hym myght and grace...[33]

Alexander is as devout as any Christian knight of the Arthurian cycle, entreating and receiving help from God in his quest. In his meeting with the Brahmans he is presented in an equally good light: when he hears of their way of life, 'Of ham the kinge was fulle blithe /And thankid God fulle many a sithe'.[34] His message to them is a test of their good faith rather than a challenge, and he approves warmly of their response, thanking God once more and considering the virtues of mercy. Overall he is quite a different figure from that presented in the *Book*.

The redactor of the Liège Version, most probably Jean d'Outremeuse, goes much further in denying the *Book*'s anti-heroic attitude. The 'arch-romancer'[35] Outremeuse was fascinated by the figure of Ogier the Dane, a hero of the Old French 'epic of revolt' cycle of *chansons de geste*. Ogier was one of Charlemagne's Twelve Peers, a famous warrior who was originally presented as a loyal, honourable and dependable vassal. By the fourteenth century he had evolved into a rebellious baron, revolting against Charlemagne after the latter's son had killed his own.[36] Outremeuse, however, still regarded him as a great hero, the 'champion de Dieu' as he called him, and not only included his adventures in the *Myreur des Histors* - which will be examined with reference to the material taken from Mandeville later in this chapter - but also in his own redaction of the *Book* before the *Myreur* was completed. The Ogier Interpolations, as these additions to the *Book* are known, appear in all seven manuscripts of the Liège Version. BN MS. ff. 24436 contains the most with twenty-four references, and this is the text to which I will refer.

[33] Seymour, *Metrical Version*, ll. 2193-7.

[34] *op. cit.*, ll. 2477-8.

[35] Hamelius, *Mandeville's Travels*, p. 18. In his major study of the author, Kurth had also called him a romancer. Kurth, G. (1910), *Etude critique sur Jean d'Outremeuse*, p. 10.

[36] The earliest mentions of Ogier the Dane are in the Latin *Conversio Othgerii Militis* of c. 1070-80, the *Nota Emilianense* of the same period and the *Chanson de Roland*, c. 1100. For a discussion of the evolution of this figure see Togeby, K. (1969), *Ogier le Danois dans les littératures européennes* and Suard, F. (1967), 'Ogier le Danois aux XIVe et XVe siècle', in *Studia Romanica* 14.

The first references to Ogier are in Egypt and the Holy Land, where he made such an impression as a conqueror that his exploits are still spoken of:

> In the country of Egypt they tell how Ogier the Dane, a brave Duke of France who once conquered fifteen kingdoms in one passage and twelve in another in that country there, killed all this evil people of whom I speak and destroyed them, but they caused him more harm than all the battles he had fought against the Saracens.[37]

The 'evil people' mentioned are the Bedouins, whose numbers unfortunately have since been multiplied by the Devil. Ogier's deeds are thus already implicitly connected with the will of God. There are even Saracen prophecies concerning him: he will return and conquer the whole country, converting it to Christianity. This glorification of Ogier at times verges on the blasphemous:

> And none could last against him, as I will tell you more plainly when I come to India and the great countries which he conquered, where they accordingly believe more in him than in God.[38]

This statement is completely contrary to the spirit of the *Book*, in which the people of India believe in God through natural inclination, in some cases more virtuously than Christians.

In the Templum Domini, the bringing of Christ's foreskin to Charlemagne is expanded to include the peers of France and Ogier, all following their king on pilgrimage, and a quick lineage of the kings of France. But Charlemagne's overshadowing of Ogier is only temporary. From now on he is mentioned only indirectly, as the Dane begins his career of Christian expansionism with the building of Castle Cruk, which he names Mont Royal as proof of his loyalty to Charles. He even continues the work of the apostles themselves:

[37] 'Ilz dient ou pays de Egipte comment Ogier le Danoys, un vaillant Duc de France qui conquist jadiz xv. royaumes a un seul passage et xii. au vn autre en ce pays de la, occist toute celle mauuaise gent dont ie parlle et les destruit, maiz il luy firent plus de duail que toutes les batailles que il ot fait les Sarrazins. 'Et sachiez quil dient merueilles de la proesce celui Ogier. Et dient que il reuenra et si conquerra tout leur pays et conuertira a la foy Crestiene'. (f. 16).

[38] 'Et ne pooit nenz durer contre lui, ainsy que ie vous en parleray plus plainnement quant ie vennay en Ynde et es grans pays quil conquist ou il croient plus en luy que en Dieu a lauenant'. (f. 24).

> The people of this country who are called Samaritans were first converted and baptised by the apostles, but were then defeated by the Sultan and renounced their faith. And in the time of Charles the Great the great king of France and emperor of Rome, Ogier the Dane converted them and had them baptised.[39]

This conversion is a violent one, by the sword rather than reason, again in contrast to Mandeville's advocacy of Saracen conversion based on common points of faith. The French army, seeking Ogier's release after his betrayal by the Templars, even destroyed Mecca, where Mohammed was supposed to have been buried. The Saracens are terrified of Ogier, who, in another prophecy, never died but will one day return 'and conquer and destroy all Mohammed's law'.[40] They are right to be worried; the Ganges received its name from king Ganges, who drowned when Ogier threw him in the river after he refused to be baptised. This episode is related with even more relish in the *Myreur*. The contrast between this bloodthirsty viciousness and the *Book*'s condemnation of Alexander's pride in conquest could not be greater.

Generally speaking, Ogier has conquered kingdoms and founded cities, churches and monasteries across the East, to the glory not only of God but of his own name, family and reputation. These establishments endure to the present day; two cities are still named after his grandmothers Flandrine and Florence, although the second 'is more commonly called Zinglaus'.[41] Ogier's life even forms the subject of the decoration of the palace of the king of Java, where his history is well known.

All this is quite reasonable given his amazing career. Ogier built a church for the remains of St Thomas and laid him in a rich tomb; the trees of meal, milk and honey were miraculously provided for his starving army and still bear his name; even one of Mandeville's most significant miracles, originally intended as a demonstration of the benevolent power of God, has become a paean to this 'champion of God'. The fish that willingly come to Calanoc to be eaten - in the *Book* in homage to the king - now do so as part of God's personal favour to Ogier: 'This could certainly not be without a

[39] 'Lez genz de ce pays que on appelle Samaritans furent premierment conuertis et baptizies des apostles, mais puis furent defertus par le Souldane et renis en leur foy. Et au temps Charle le Grant le grant roy de France et de Romme empereur, les conuerti et les fist baptizier Ogier le Danos'. (f. 24).

[40] 'et conquerra et abatra toute la loy Machomet'. (f. 39).

[41] 'Et la demeurent moult de Crestiens de bonne foy et y a moult de belles eglises de religieux que Ogier le Danoys fonda. Sy les nomme on encore les eglises danois... Et en cel forest a ii. belles citez que Ogier le Danoys fonda quant il conquist cel pays. Et les nomma lune Flandrins apres sa taye mere ... et encore le nome on Flandrine la cite.Et lautre il lappella Florente aprez son autre taye mere ... Mais maintenant il appellent plus communement la cite Florence desseur estre Zinglaus'. (f. 34v).

great miracle of God. And because God loved this Duke Ogier so much I quite easily believe that which they say of him. And all this is also found in their chronicles and in those of our own country of England, and elsewhere'.[42]

Perhaps Ogier's most important role in the Liège Version is as the man who 'created' Prester John. The *Book*'s version of the king who was so impressed by a church service that he took the name of priest is given - only to be refuted on the authority of a chronicle 'Mandeville' allegedly found in the Indian city of Nyse:

> And among the others he had a cousin, the son of his uncle Gondebuef of Frisia, who was named John at his christening, and who frequented churches in his youth. So much so that his father king Gondebuef said that he would make a priest of him. And in order to dissuade him from frequenting churches so often outside certain times and to make him ashamed, he had everyone call him priest John, in such a way that it stayed with him all his life. He crossed the sea with Ogier, and Ogier gave him the kingdom of Pentexoire, that is that of India ... And because he was the first Christian king of India, all the others after him were and still are called Prester John'.[43]

An almost identical story, seemingly invented by Outremeuse, is given in the *Myreur*. Its significance lies in the fact that Ogier, by conquering and bestowing India on his religious cousin, has become the major converter to Christianity in the East. Even St Thomas' peaceful apostolic role is eclipsed; the priests of St Thomas mentioned by Mandeville at the court of the Great Khan had their faith restored by the Dane. In Mancy, too, he is responsible for the faith of the inhabitants: 'And they are all Christian believers, nearer to our faith than any other there. For it is one of the lands

[42] 'Et dient ceulz du pays que il ne sceuent par quelle raison ce puet estre autrement quil ont en leurs ystoires, que quant Ogier le Danoys conquist cet ylle cy, lui enuoya Diex ces poissons pour famine quil eut sicomme je vous ay dit quant il prist farine, vin et miel aux arbres en lisle de Calamach ... Ce certainement ne puet estre sanz grans miracles de Dieu. Et pour tant que Diex ama tant ce Duc Ogier le Danoys je croy assez legierement ce quil en dient. Et aussy on treuue tout ce en leur croniques et en ceulz de nostre pays maismes dengleterre et autre part'. (f. 39v).

[43] 'Et entre les autres il auoit i. cousin fil de son oncle de roy Gondebuef de Frise, qui fu nommez Iehan en baptesme, qui en la jouuente frequentoit eglises. Et tant que son pere le roy Gondebuef dist quil feroit de lui i. prestre. Et affin quil se relassait de si tresforment a frequenter les eglises outre les certaines heures et pour lui fere honteux il le faisoit a chascun nommer prestre Jehan, par telle maniere que puis ne ly failly toute sa vie. Il passa mer auec Ogier, et Ogier luy donna le royaume de Pentexoire, cest assauoir de Ynde ... Et pour tant que ce fu le premier roy de Ynde que fu Crestiens, tous les autres apres luy ont este nommez et sont tousiours Prestre Jehan'. (f. 58v).

that Ogier the Dane conquered, as they say'.[44] His policy of violent conversion has been extremely successful, scattering churches over the face of pagan Asia.

Thus where the *Book* showed the great hero Alexander humiliated by the Brahmans and Gymnosophists, the Liège Version justifies Ogier's conquests in the name of God. The Dane is mentioned in conjunction with Alexander - he eats the balm of Alexander's Trees of the Sun and Moon and is granted immortality. He even meets the Brahmans, but, approving of their virtue, graciously leaves them alone, avoiding Alexander's fate. The reasons for the different treatment of the two heroes are clear: Alexander was a pagan while Ogier triumphs over pagans with God's personal aid. Christianity reigns supreme, and Mandeville's tolerance and humanity are completely ignored. Yet more importantly, Ogier was Jean d'Outremeuse's personal hero, and the author of the Liège Version has done his best to make Ogier both a Christian and a romantic hero of the East. The Dane's deeds are a personal even more than a religious triumph, and nothing, not even the *Book*'s readily apparent disapproval of hero-worship, has been allowed to supersede them in any way.

Other versions of the Liège Redaction deal differently with these interpolations. The Vulgate Version contains fewer references to Ogier. It abbreviates his personal ancestry in the naming of Flandrine and Florence, allows Sir John to catch some of the miraculous fish himself, questions Ogier's immortality and generally reduces the romantic aspect of the interpolations in favour of reinforcing this redaction's strongly Catholic attitude towards paganism. The Alexander exemplum is retained as a condemnation of war: 'and so it happened by divine will that the fierce king turned to other things, and was destroyed soon afterwards, because the Lord scatters those who wish for war, and peace remains to the faithful in many places'.[45]

In his German translation of the Liège Version, von Diemeringen prefers to retain twenty-three references to Ogier. Alexander's imperialism and Ogier's pious conversions by the sword are openly contrasted. Where Alexander's aim was to subject lands, including that of the Brahmans, Ogier 'called himself God's soldier, for he fought not for countries or power, but only that he might convert the people to Christianity. Some say in the country that Ogier still lives and dwells with godlike people, and that

[44] 'Et sont tous Crestiens creans plus pres de nostre loy que nul autre par dela. Car ce est vne des terres que Ogier le Danoys conquist sicomme il dient'. (f. 41v).

[45] '... sicque diuino nutu est actum vt Rex truculentus ad alia se verteret, atque in breui postmodum caderet, quia dissipat Dominus eos, qui bella volunt, et istis manet pax multa diligentibus eam'. (Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 9, p. 61.)

he will come again to set all lands to rights'.[46] Thus the von Diemeringen Version follows the Liège Version in its support of the military propagation of Christianity so foreign to the *Book*'s original author. In both this and the Vulgate Latin Versions, though, the romance element of the Ogier legend is reduced; the redactors obviously did not share Outremeuse's extreme enthusiasm for his hero.

Having discussed the *Book*'s attitudes towards the *topos* of the romance hero and the redactors' various responses, I will now move on to examine three episodes from the *Book*: those of the Daughter of Hippocrates, the Head of Satalia and the Castle of the Sparrowhawk These are significant because they demonstrate not only Mandeville's use of certain other types of romance theme in his work, but also the way in which these themes were recognised and adapted by producers of other versions of the *Book* and later romance writers. They are linked primarily by the theme of love and to a lesser extent by the common elements of damsels, knights and the supernatural, in each case transformed into a short allegory on human nature.

The first episode is that of the Daughter of Hippocrates, living on the island of Cos or Lango, who has been transformed into a dragon and can only be rescued by a knight's kiss. It combines several romance elements: that of the damsel wronged because of jealousy caused by her beauty, the magical transformation of a human into an animal or monster, the *fier baiser*[47] and the adventurous knight.

The immediate source of the tale remains undiscovered, though Aelian[48] mentions a giant snake on Cos, presumably connected with the cult of Aesculapius, the god of medicine of whom Hippocrates was a disciple. Hippocrates himself had a son or grandson named Draco. Loomis remarks that 'we may surmise that the tale of Hippocrates' daughter represents an episode from Arthurian romance, transplanted and localized in the Mediterranean'.[49] Felix Fabri, however, reports a local legend heard when he visited the island in 1483, prompting Deluz to hypothesise that 'Mandeville' had also been to Cos.[50]

Whatever the author's source for the legend (though I see no need to assume he garnered it on the spot), he reworks the tale into an episode

46 Letts, *Travels* II, p. 486.

47 Loomis draws attention to the parallels between the 'dragon kiss' in this episode and in two early thirteenth-century Arthurian romances, *Lanzelet* and *Le Bel Inconnu*. Loomis, R.S. (1951), 'The Fier Baiser in Mandeville's Travels, Arthurian Romance, and Irish Saga' in *Studi Medievali* 17.

48 Seymour, *Metrical Version*, p. 95 n.

49 Loomis, 'The Fier Baiser', p. 112.

50 Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 216-17.

worthy of any medieval romance. To begin with, we have the outline of the story:

> And they say that on this island of Angho the daughter of Hippocrates still remains in the shape of a great dragon, a good hundred feet long, as it is said; for I have not seen it. And the people of the island call her the lady of the country. And she lies at the foot of an ancient castle, and she is seen two or three times a year; and she harms nobody unless she is harmed. And she was thus altered and changed from a beautiful damsel into a dragon by a goddess called Diana. And it is said that she will return to her own state, when a knight is found brave enough to dare go and to kiss her on the mouth. But after becoming a woman again she will not live long.[51]

The romance elements here are obvious, beginning with the magical transformation of the girl into a dragon by the jealous goddess Diana. The Metrical Version makes the jealous woman her stepmother, thereby following a more traditional theme of romance. In any case, the deed done, the perpetrator fades from the scene while the curse continues. The dragon is impressively large, although the author distances himself from the tale by saying that he has not seen it himself. The damsel herself is of famous blood, lives near a castle and is named the lady of the land; the island belongs to her, as it will be conferred on whoever lifts the curse. Thus we are dealing with a person of noble birth; her noble nature is at least partly retained while she is externally a monster, since she harms no one who does not harm her. Naturally, one day a knight arrives:

> It is not very long since a knight of the castle of Rhodes, who was brave and hardy, said that he would go to kiss the dragon. And he mounted a good courser and went to the castle, and entered the cave, and the dragon began to move her head against him. And when the horse saw it so hideous, it ran away and carried the rider against his will up a high rock; and from that rock it leapt into the sea, and thus the knight was lost.[52]

51 'Et dist on que en celle ylle de Angho est encore la fille Ypocras en guise dun grant dragon, qui a bien cent toises de lonc, si comme on le dist; car ie ne lay mie veu. Et ceuls de lylle lappellent la dame du pays. Et gist au bout dun ancien chastel, et si la voit on deux foiz ou trois lan; et ne fait a nully dommage, se on ne li fait annuy. Et fut ainsi muee et changiee dune belle damoiselle a vn dragon par vne dieuesse qui auoit nom Dyane. Et dist on quelle reuendra ecore arriere en son estat, quant on trouuera vn chevalier si hardy qui lose aler baisier en la bouche. Mais apres ce quelle sera reuertie en femme elle ne viura gaires'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 240.

52 'Il na mie longtemps que vn cheualier du chastel de Rodes, qui preux et hardis estoit, dist que il yroit le dragon baisier. Et monta sur vn bon coursier, et ala iusques au chastel, et entra en la caue, et le dragon commenca a leuer la teste contre ly. Et quant le cheual le

The misfortune of this brave knight is counterbalanced by the deserved fall of the next man to attempt the damsel's rescue:

> Item a young man, who knew nothing of this dragon, disembarked from a ship and walked across the island to the castle. And he entered the cave and went forward until he found a room. And there he saw a damsel who was combing her hair and looking at herself in a mirror, and there was much treasure around her. And he thought that she was a woman of easy virtue, who lived there in order to receive her companions; and he waited so long that the damsel saw his shadow in the mirror and turned towards him and asked him what he wanted. And he replied that he wanted to be her lover. And she asked if he was a knight, and he said that he was not. 'Then you cannot,' she said, 'be my lover'.[53]

This second would-be rescuer is not as obviously part of the chivalrous nobility. Not only is he not yet a knight at the beginning of his adventure, but he was not even looking for adventure at the time. His way of thinking, too, leaves something to be desired; on seeing the damsel alone in the castle surrounded by treasure, he immediately assumes the worst and bluntly solicits her attentions. She tells him to return to the ship to be knighted and return the next day to kiss her, but his motives for accepting her offer are suspect. We are not told whether he will attempt the kiss out of love or cupidity, but his unchivalrous behaviour is not encouraging. His fate, under the circumstances, is not surprising; he shows a lack of bravery that cannot be blamed on a horse:

> And when he saw her come out of the cave in such a terrible form, he was so much afraid that he ran away towards the ship. And she followed after him. And when she saw that he would not return to her, she began to cry and bray as if in distress, and turned back. And soon afterwards the knight died. And ever since no knight can see her without dying soon afterwards. But when one comes who is brave enough that he dares to go and kiss her, he will not die; thus the damsel will turn into her true form and he will be lord of the land.[54]

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vit si hideus, il fuit sa voie et porta le cheualier maugre li sur vne haute roche; et de celle roche sailly en la mer, et ainsi fut perdu le cheualier'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 240-1.

53 'Item vn iones homs, qui riens ne sauoit de sest dragon, yssit dune nef et ala par my lylle iusques au chastel. Et entra en la caue et ala tant auant que il trouua vne chambre. Et la vit vne damoiselle, qui se pignoit et resgardoit en vn mirouer, et y auoit moult de tresor entour ly. Et il pensoit que se feust vne folle femme, qui demourast illeuc pour receuoir les compaignons; si actendit tant que la damoiselle vit lombre de ly ou mirouer, et se tourna vers li et li demanda quil vouloit. Et li respondit quil vouloit estre ses amis. Et elle demandoit se il estoit cheualier, et il dist que non. 'Dont ne pouez,' dist elle, 'vous estre mes amis'. *op. cit.*, p. 241.

54 'Et quant il la vit issir de la caue en fourme si terrible, il ot si grant paour que il fuit sa voie vers la nef. Et elle le suiuit apres. Et quant elle vit quil ne retourneroit mie vers li, si

The knight's death seems deserved; we already know that the damsel will not harm anyone unless she is hurt herself, and her sorrow and despair are obvious. Deluz remarks that Mandeville has placed on the future Mélusine 'la marque d'humanisme courtois qui caractérise son oeuvre'.[55] And it is true that an episode which could have been no more that a frightening monster story has been transformed into a tale where the 'knight' unexpectedly proves to be an anti-hero and the dragon is the wronged victim. This reversal of the expectations of romance, while preserving its attributes, is a humorous development; the image of the first knight carried off by his horse against his will is also an amusing one. It seems that the author's humanism, while undoubtedly in evidence, may not be as courtly as it first appears; Mandevillian irony is used here to parody romance as well as to make a more serious point.

Later English redactors of the text make their own amendments to the story. In the Egerton Version, the first knight, though not motivated by greed, is to blame for his own demise, and the dragon becomes a more vindictive character:

> And she began to lift up her head against him; and the knight saw it so hideous, and fast he fled away. And the dragon followed and took the knight and bare him maugre his head til a crag of the sea, and over that crag she cast him in to the sea; and so was that knight lost.[56]

With this change to the story the whole tone is changed. The knight is unworthy and not in fact 'doughty' and 'hardy'; the humour of his horse carrying him away is lost, and he becomes simply a coward rather than a victim of unfortunate circumstances. Seymour sees this as evidence of a scribal error in the Insular Version confusing *cheual* with *cheualier*.[57] Another, deliberate, difference is that the dragon is now the one who throws the knight to his death. Her motives are not developed, so no excuse is given for her act. The failure of the second knight is now all too certain: the dragon's bestial nature will not allow him to escape.

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commenca a crier et a braire comme dolente, et retourna arriere. Et tantost ce cheualier mourut. Et onques puis nuls cheualiers ne la peut veoir, que il ne moumst tantost. Mais quant il vendra vn si hardy qui lose aler baisier, il ne mourra mie; aincois reuendra la damoiselle en sa droite fourme, et sera sire du pays'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 241.

55 Deluz, *Le Livre*, pp. 217-18.

56 Letts, *Travels* I, p. 16.

57 Seymour, *Bodley Version*, pp. 152-3.

The Bodley Version follows suit concerning the horse and rider. However, the damsel's beauty before her transformation is stressed far more than in the Paris Version:

> ... the doughtir of Ypocras, whan she was fayr, yong, and louely, that a goddesse that hight Dyane, for gret enuye that she hadde to her grete beute, shop here into the lyknesse of an oryble dragoun...[58]

But the greatest change in the treatment of the legend is in the meeting of the damsel and the young man from the ship:

> The damesele saw at the laste the shadewe of a man in the merour and loked aboute and saw hym and seyde, 'Thow man, what dost thow here?' 'Sertis,' he syde, 'ladye, to ben thyn leman yif it be thyn wille'. 'Art thow thanne a knyght?' sche side. 'Nay, forsothe,' he seyde, 'I am non'.[59]

This move to direct rather than reported speech in the first phrases they exchange is a significant one; the personages are imbued with a little more character, and the damsel's surprise at seeing a man in her mirror is more evident when she speaks. It makes her appear more human, and serves to cancel the unfavourable impression her killing of the first knight left. When she is disappointed once more, her feelings are made clear:

> And whan sche say that, she folwid hym almost to the shep, and whan sche say hym entryn into the ship and was dispaired of his comynge ageyn, thanne sche criede with orible vois and made a gret lamentacioun for sorwe that she hadde, and turned ayen to here place. And the knyght deyede sone aftyr.[60]

The dragon ceases to be the vicious, unreasoning beast of the Egerton Version, and is humanised once more.

The Metrical Version both simplifies the tale and lessens the cruelty of the dragon; she kills neither of the knights, as the first has a skittish horse once more and we are not told what happens to the second. The second knight is now the master of the ship, looking for food and drink in the castle:

> A woman þere he fonde anone, / So faire sawe he neuer none /.../
> And in his armes he gan hir foolde, / Hir haue kist fayn he wolde.

[58] Seymour, *Bodley Version*, p. 17.
[59] *op. cit.*
[60] Seymour, *Metrical Version*, p. 21.

> Do wai, she saide, þat mai not be. / Thou woste nat howe it stant with me.[61]

Here the shipman does not believe the girl to be a prostitute, but instead tries to kiss her unasked; rebuffed, he is most disappointed and returns the next year, having been knighted in a more reasonable amount of time. His failure is explained as the result of the dragon's great ugliness rather than his own lack of courage:

> Hit was so horrible vppon to se / That for alle the goode in cristiante /
> He derst noo lenger there abide, / But fast to shippe he gan to ride /
> And put þe shippe fro the londe. / The dragoun come glidinge on þe sonde. /
> Hit was grete sorowe to see and heere / Howe sho ferde with hevie chere. /
> He durst noo lenger abide for dreede.[62]

The tale ends there, with the knight unpunished and no reminder that the dragon is still waiting for a deliverer to this day. While this version is kinder to all concerned, it is also unsatisfyingly insipid compared to the other texts. No conclusions may drawn on the subject of knightly virtue, and the ending is bathetic. The Paris Version is undoubtedly the most interesting and emotionally unsettling, striking a balance between fearfulness, pity and humour.

The legend which follows shortly afterwards in the Paris Version is an interesting counterpoint to that of Hippocrates' dragon daughter. It is that of the dreadful Head of Satalia, in which a young man's unhallowed actions lead to the destruction of an entire city. As with the previous tale, the immediate source is unknown, although Seymour says that 'The theme of necrophily is part of the story of Callimachus and Drusiana of Ephesus told by the pseudo-Abdias, where the crime is avenged by a serpent. And the theme of *la laide semblance*, thrown by Merlin into the Gulf of Satalia, is part of the Arthurian cycle'.[63]

The author of the *Book* assembles these themes into a short moral tale on the consequences of unbridled passions:

> And on the way to Cyprus one passes by the gulf of Satalia, where there was once a good island and a beautiful city, which was named Satalia; which city and country were lost through the folly of a young man, who loved a lovely and beautiful damsel who died suddenly and was placed in a marble tomb. And for the great love the young man had for her, he went to her tomb at night and opened it and lay with her, and then left. And at the end of nine months a voice

[61] Seymour, *Metrical Version*, ll. 706-7, 715-18.
[62] *op. cit.*, ll. 736-45.
[63] *op. cit.*, p. 97 n.

came to him and told him, 'Go to the tomb of that woman and open it and see what you have engendered in her. And be careful not to leave it; for if you do not go there, evil will come to you'. And he went there and opened the tomb, from which leapt out a very disfigured head and horrible to see; which head flew around the city and the country, and soon sank into the abyss.[64]

The moral of the story is quite clear, but the author of the Metrical Version decides to expand the tale, make the 'hero' a burgher's son, make the hideous head even more terrifying and point out the conclusions to be drawn in no uncertain terms:

And out there fliȝe a brennynge hede / With brennynge eie, brennynge chere, / And alle that cite he sette a fere / And brent it clene vnto þe grounde, / That man ne beeste was none founde, / And þat cite through hap and chaunce Was destroied through such veniaunce. / Therfor me thenkith hit mai be said / In holie writte as it is laid, / *Ve facienti iniquitatem in confusione multorum / Quorum ciuitas igni succensa est, et cetera.*[65]

The romance elements in this story are superseded by the didactic tone of divine retribution, though they are present nonetheless. Coming as it does so soon after the dragon-woman tale, this story shows certain thematic similarities: a lady, love, a wrongful deed, a horrible monster and vengeance wreaked on the perpetrator of the act. I would not, however, go so far as to follow Howard's admittedly tentative conclusions concerning the pairing of the stories: 'Whether one interprets these two tales as folkloristic, Jungian, or "allegorical", they are neatly juxtaposed - both involve a damsel, a knight, and a fabulous creature; one is about the possible and hopeful, the other about the forbidden and dreadful; in one death may be overcome, in the other death is hideously reproduced. It would not be impossible to see in them a suggestion of salvation and damnation, spiritual life and spiritual death'.[66] I would prefer to consider

[64] 'Et passe len en alant vers Cypre par le gouffre de Sathalie, ou il souloit auoir vne bonne ylle et vne belle cite, qui auoit nom Sathalie; la quelle cite et pays estoient perdus pour la folie dun iouuencel, le quel amoit vne damoiselle belle et fetisse, la quelle mourut soudainnement et fut mise en vn sarqueul de marbre. Et pour la grant amour que le ieunes homs auoit a ly il ala de nuit a sa tombe et louurit et iut auecques li, et puis sen parti. Et quant il vint au chief de ix. mois, si venoit vne voiz a ly et ly dist, 'Va a la tombe de celle femme et leuure, et regarde ce que tu as engendre en ly. Et garde bien que tu ne le laisses; car si tu ne y vas, mal ten vendra'. Le quel y ala et ouurit la tombe, dont il saillit hors vne teste moult deffiguree et hideuse a veoir; la quelle teste remyra la cite et le pays, et tantost fondi iusques en labysme'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 242.

[65] Seymour, *Metrical Version,* ll. 783-93.

[66] Howard, D.R. (1971), 'The World of Mandeville's Travels', in *YES* 1, p. 6.

the two tales as two versions, or rather inversions, of the romance theme of courtly love, taken to unpleasant extremes.

The third tale with strong romance elements developed along similar lines is that of the Castle of the Sparrowhawk in Armenia. Once again the source is unknown, although it has inspired the romance of *Mélusine* independently. Mandeville does appear to be the first to mention the story. This legend contains a strong otherwordly theme, the fairy nature of the lady of the castle being stressed. Those who watch over her sparrowhawk without sleeping for three or seven days are granted their wish, as long as it concerns something earthly. Like the dragon-woman of Cos, this marvel is still to be seen and the truth of it has been tested; and like the earlier legend, accounts of more than one attempt are given. The first is the most important for an understanding of the purposes behind this legend and the ways in which it achieves them:

And even a king, who was a very brave prince, once watched; and when he had watched, the lady came to him and asked him what he wished for, as he had done his duty well. And the king replied that he was a great enough lord and well in peace and had enough riches, and that he wished for nothing but the body of that beautiful lady to have his will. And she replied that she did not know what he was asking, and that he was foolish and could not have her, because he must ask only for earthly things, and she was not of the earth but of the spirit.[67]

The king of Armenia, in asking for the lady herself, has not shown good judgement, tact or humility. Had it been a question of releasing the lady from imprisonment of some sort, such as the dragon-shape the Daughter of Hippocrates was trapped in, his bravery would have been rewarded in this way. Here, however, the king's demand is fuelled by arrogance and self-aggrandisement; he possesses great wealth, and power, the peace of his kingdom is assured, and in effect he wants for nothing. It is presumptuous of him to undertake the trial in the first place, and to ask for the fairy herself is an example of *desmesure*, 'fol courage' as she rightly calls it. The king is warned but persists in his folly, so his punishment is appropriate: he

[67] 'Et mesmement vn roy, qui estoit moult vaillant prince, y veilla iadis; et quant il eut veillie, la dame vint a lui et li dist quil soushaidast, car il auoit bien fait son deuoir. Et le roy respondi quil estoit asses grans sires et bien en paix et auoit asses richesces, et quil ne soushaideroit chose nulle a auoir, [forsqe le corps de celle bele dame a auoir sa voluntee. Et elle ly respondi qelle ne sauoit quoi il demandoit, et qil estoit fool et ne la purroit auoir, qar il ne deuoit demander qe] choses terriennes, et elle nestoit mie terrienne mais esperituelle'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 312.

will lose all he was so sure of, and he and his descendants to the ninth degree will be subject to their enemies.

The theme of foolhardiness punished is a common one in romance, particularly when a man has offended a lady; this is combined with the theme of the unwanted fairy gift. Most important, though, is the demonstration of worldly pride abased, the 'fall of princes' so popular in medieval literature. To drive the moral home, we are given two more examples. A poor man's son wishes for success in trade, and becomes the richest merchant in the world. A Knight of the Temple also keeps watch - he

> wished for a purse that would always be full of gold, and the lady granted it him. But she told him that he had asked for the destruction of their order because of their reliance on that purse, and they would be destroyed by it because of the great pride they would have in it; and so they were.[68]

The fairy keeps her word when the request is reasonable. The poor man's son, who keeps within the rules and is deserving of the gift he asks for, becomes wealthy and powerful. It is inappropriate for the Templar to make a similar pecuniary demand, for in doing so he is betraying his vows and his order. As a result of this greed - common it seems to all the Templars - the order will be destroyed; the gift does not come without payment. The author is stressing that certain standards are to be expected of both rulers and the knighthood. If the nobility no longer act in keeping with the rules of chivalry, they must be brought low. The king is responsible for and represents his country; his actions will affect all his people and descendants, in the same way that the knight's actions will ruin his order and the misdeeds of a single citizen destroyed Satalia.

Thus in all three legends, those who do not live according to the rules of virtue, particularly members of the nobility, are punished accordingly through supernatural means. Necrophilia leads to the wasting of a city - and in the context of courtly romance, cowardice and greed in a knight and arrogance in a ruler, particularly coupled with offences against a lady, are equally offences against nature. It should be the nature of *chevaliers* to be chivalrous, and anything less is unforgivable. In this the author is true to the spirit of courtly romance, which is far more important than the external elements of perilous adventures involving dragons and fairies.

[68] 'si souhaida vne bourse tousiours pleine dor, et la dame li octroya. Mais elle dist quil auoit demande la destruccion de leur ordre pour la fiance de celle bourse, et pour le grant orgueil quilz en auroient en seroient il destruis; et aussi furent il'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 312.

Yet even while using the structures and motifs of romance, the author shows us its absurdities and flaws. Romance modes can be subverted to make non-romance points by upsetting our expectations. People are not perfect and will rarely behave as such; human characters are far more moving when given realistic motivations, like the Daughter of Hippocrates, rather than being set in stereotypical situations and expected to respond in stereotypical ways. The stories function on several complementary levels: as entertaining breaks in the narrative progress across near and far countries; as ironical commentaries on the excesses of romantic writing; as moral exempla for the edification of the readers; and as demonstrations of Mandeville's tolerance and fairness towards humans of whatever form.

Later authors, however, did not always appreciate or respect Mandeville's attitudes towards romance. As we have seen, Jean d'Outremeuse used information from the *Book* in his *Myreur des Histors*, written over many years up to the author's death in 1400 and comprising five books of which the fourth is lost. It is supposedly a prose history of the world from Noah's Flood to the fourteenth century, but Outremeuse used not only chronicles but legends and romance works, and freely invented names of kings and other details. He was also the author of the *Geste de Liège*, a poem in *laisses* written in the style of the *chansons de geste* which, like the *Myreur*, contains much material on Ogier the Dane.[69]

Outremeuse acknowledged his debt to the *Book* in a statement, giving Mandeville spurious titles, which strongly indicates that Outremeuse had already prepared the Liège Version:

> This country of India and Ethiopia is a diverse place, according to the chronicles and according to that which master Jehan de Mandeville, knight, lord of Campoli, of Montfort and of Case Perouse, recounts in his writings which he made of this country of India and of the regions where he lived a long time - over thirty-three years, and he returned thence in the year of the nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1316 - in which he recounts all that Ogier conquered and did in his time.[70]

Otherwise Outremeuse's borrowings are unacknowledged. They are scattered throughout his work: he mentions the fountain that runs both hot and cold, tells the story of Seth's seeds from Paradise, and gives an account of St Thomas's tomb. Much later he repeats the story of the Khan's sons

[69] For a discussion of Outremeuse's use of legends and the Ogier stories in particular, see Michel, L. (1935), *Les légendes épiques carolingiennes dans l'oeuvre de Jean d'Outremeuse*.

[70] Original quoted in Letts, M. (1949), *Sir John Mandeville*, p. 109. This passage is not in the printed edition translated below.

and the arrows.[71] But his most extensive use of Mandeville is in the account of Ogier's voyage to the East made in 819 A.D. Here he gives all the Ogier stories interpolated into the Liège Version, in a lengthy passage which is in effect a résumé of the *Book* from India to the Earthly Paradise. The Dane has decided, as there are currently no wars in France, to fulfil his vow of going to fight the Saracens in the East. He and his companions conquer and convert throughout the Near East before turning to further lands. Once they reach India, the *Book* is used to provide an exotic and exciting background to Ogier's adventures, as this extract shows:

> And he came to Combar on the river Argins, where Ogier founded two cities, and named one Flandrine and the other Florentine; and he named them thus after his two grandmothers: his father's mother and his mother's mother, and the aforesaid cities are still there. And pepper grows there just as grapes on tree trunks; as a wild vine does. There are dragons, basilisks and snakes there; and there are rats as big as mastiffs, and they are hunted with mastiffs like hares. And at the head of that forest lies Mount Palombe; and there is a fountain there which lies under two firs, which smells of every kind of spice, which is the fountain called that of Youth. Ogier and all his people drank of it. It cures all evils one can feel or have, if they are not deadly. Ogier founded a large, well enclosed town there, which was called Palumbe; then Ogier came to Mabarene, where the strongest wine in the world grows, but there the women drink it and not the men.[72]

Nearly all the strange peoples and customs of India are mentioned without comment, including suttee, the naked people of Lamory, the women held in common, cannibalism and the warriors who brand their foreheads as a demonstration of nobility. Sometimes there is a quick condemnation: 'And then he came to Nulke, which is a large island where there are evil customs; for when people have a sick friend, they take him and hang him from a tree all alive, so that the birds eat him'.[73] The *Book*'s careful presentation of the reasoning behind such customs is omitted. Outremeuse is not interested in the logic but the weirdness of these races, although he implicitly criticises Mandeville by saying that some of them are almost unbelievable: 'There are many other kinds of men there, and diverse things one would find it hard to believe'.[74] Ogier's army moves through a landscape populated with fierce blood-drinkers - no obstacle to

[71] *Ly Myreur des Histors*, ed. Borgnet and Bormans (1864-87), Vol. I, pp. 294, 320, 457; Vol. 5, p. 185.

[72] *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 57.

[73] *op. cit.*, p. 60.

[74] *op. cit.*, p. 64.

the heroic Dane - and dragons, griffins, elephants, lions and other wild beasts. These do not interact with Outremeuse's hero, by attacking him for instance, but simply provide a colourful backdrop.

The many cities play a more vital role in Ogier's adventures. Often they are merely named as places he has conquered, but sometimes the larger capitals provide him with opportunities for sieges. These are inevitably followed by victory, the coronation of Ogier, his bequeathing of the crown and kingship to a cousin, and the mass conversion of the population. Outremeuse develops these battles and victories, providing the enemy kings with names - though not personalities - and huge armies. Ogier increases his glory by killing King Scirastus of Calamy in single combat, his army overcomes the warriors of the city of Caydon, 'and 60,000 Saracens were killed and the rest were baptised', after which the Christians disguise themselves in the Saracens' armour and enter the city. Inside Caydon, 'Baldwin the Breton ... took king Brulans prisoner, asked him if he would believe in God, and he answered no; so he cut his head off'.[75] Similar treatment, as we have seen in the Liège Version, is meted out to King Ganges. It is almost an anticlimax when King Joserans of Carken agrees to be baptised George.

Between battles, Ogier proves his Christian virtue. As in the Liège Version, he comes across St Thomas' tomb in Mabaron. Overjoyed, he has the tomb opened and sees the saint's body, 'where it still is today; and the church was built a long time afterwards'.[76] The hand of St Thomas chooses between right and wrong just as it does in the *Book*. God's providential gift of the trees of meal and honey comes during a seven-month siege, when Ogier's army is close to starvation. An angel leads them to the nearby island of Orquebans, where the miraculous trees are to be found along with many fish. Outremeuse thus repeats the Liège Version's assumption that God encourages and rewards the Dane's campaigns of conversion. Even Cathay has become a great city only after being conquered and given a Frankish king by Ogier.

The story of Ogier's coronation of his cousin Prester John also stresses Ogier's piety. 'Then Ogier crowned priest John who kneeled before him, giving great thanks, and said to him: "Cousin Ogier, love God and serve him willingly and fear him, and he will love you"'. It is Ogier who ordains that all the kings to follow must take the name Prester John, giving rise to one of the great legends of the East.

Outremeuse thoughtfully provides Ogier with a guide to the wonders of India, the 'marshal of India' Malatris, who itemises them perhaps less with

[75] *Ly Myreur*, Vol. 3 , pp. 59-60.

[76] *op. cit.*, p. 58.

a view to ethnography than to taxation: 'He recounted to Ogier all the things of the country of India, and how far it extended, and the rights he should have over other people, and what they owed'.[77] The Gravelly Sea, rivers of precious stones, trees that grow in a day and parrots which not only talk but give directions are all among the marvels listed. Alexander is also mentioned in passing as the encloser of the Ten Tribes.

Listening to Malatris, Ogier decides to visit the Earthly Paradise. With an army of 20,000 men, he passes the Vale Perilous without mishap. Along the way there are more monsters and strange peoples, again merely described in passing. Ogier meets the Brahmans, of whom it is said that 'they serve God and God loves them';[78] he also eats the fruit of the Trees of the Sun and Moon, mentioned in the *Book* as being inaccessible due to the dangerous surroundings. When he finally reaches the Earthly Paradise, Ogier does not try to enter but camps outside for a well-earned rest; having conquered fifteen kingdoms, 'si estoit travelhies' - 'he was weary'.[79]

Outremeuse has therefore used the *Book* in a very different way from that intended by its author. The peoples of India, who in the *Book* were important in their own right, are reduced to exotic figures populating the countryside. Cities and lands are simply added to the long list of Ogier's conquests. The Great Khan and Prester John both ultimately owe their greatness to the Dane's munificence and virtue, and it is only a pity that the civilisation he brought has not lasted everywhere. The marvels and miracles are either decorative or evidence of Ogier's Christian heroism. The *Myreur* provides a very good example of Mandeville used for a romantic author's own ends, while the deeper message of the *Book* is at best ignored and at worst completely rejected.[80]

A very different way of using the *Book* in romance writing is demonstrated in *Mélusine*, which makes use of the romantic episode of the Castle of the Sparrowhawk. *Mélusine*, written by Jean d'Arras during the period from 1387 to 1394 tells the story of the House of Lusignan and its founder, the fairy Mélusine. Bennett holds that Jean d'Arras may have drawn his inspiration for the Armenian episode directly from the 1371 copy of the *Book* made for Charles V. He probably chose the tale due to its connection with the lords of Lusignan - Bohemond of Lusignan, cousin of

77 *Ly Myreur*, Vol. 3, p. 65.
78 *op. cit.*, p. 67.
79 *op. cit.*
80 The annotators of BL MS. Add. 37512 of the Vulgate Version share Outremeuse's interest; four out of seven notes in three different hands are on Ogier the 'bon danes' (ff. 22v, 33v, 37v, 41v).

the Armenian king Leon IV, was lord of the nearby castle of Cruk from 1336.[81]

In Jean d'Arras' version, the lady of the castle becomes Melior, one of Mélusine's sisters. She is cursed by their mother to guard the sparrowhawk until Judgement Day, granting the wishes of successful knights. They may not ask for her body or her love on pain of being cursed to the ninth generation. At the end of his work, Jean d'Arras rather clumsily adds an embroidered version of the episode of the king of Armenia, almost as an afterthought: 'And here ends our history of the line of Lusignan, but because the kings of Armenia are descended from them, I wish to tell you an adventure that befell a king of Armenia'.[82]

The king is invited into the castle by an old man dressed in white who explains the rules to him. The hawk is perched on a unicorn's horn and the rooms are hung with tapestries telling the story of Mélusine's family. These fairy elements are offset by a room full of the arms of the knights who failed the test and are now the lady's captives. Only three men have ever succeeded in watching over the hawk, but we are not given any details of their circumstances or rewards.

The king's conversation with the lady is expanded considerably, with an added twist to the king's folly:

> And when the lady saw that he would not change his mind, she was very angry, and said to him: 'Foolish king, now you have lost me and your gift, and have placed yourself at risk of remaining here for ever more. Poor fool, are you not descended of the line of king Guion, who was the son of Melusine, my sister, and I am your aunt, and you are so close to my lineage, that even if I were to consent to having you, the church would not allow it'.[83]

The king's incestuous passion leads him to attempt rape, whereupon he is beaten by invisible hands - a relatively common occurrence in the perilous castles of medieval romance - and thrown out. 'And know that his heirs have since had much ado, and many troubles and pestilences, as it appears and has appeared now and in the past'.[84]

It seems probable that Jean d'Arras' version was indeed taken from Mandeville. The basic elements of Mandeville's tale are quoted almost verbatim, while the additional details are either standard *topoi* of romance - such as the wise old man, the unicorn horn, the arms of the failed knights

81 Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 219.
82 Original text in Stouff, L. (ed., 1932), *Mélusine*, p. 301.
83 *Mélusine*, p. 303.
84 *op. cit.*, p. 307.

and the invisible assailants - or links to the Lusignan tale in order to justify the story's inclusion in *Mélusine*. The episode has lost the overtly moralising flavour of greed condemned and virtue rewarded of the *Book*; it has become nothing more than an entertaining fairy-tale appended to the main storyline, used solely for its 'romantic' possibilities.

Another, later work which has certainly drawn on Mandeville's *Book* is the fifteenth-century Catalan romance, or more appropriately novel, of *Tirant Lo Blanc*. *Tirant* was written between 1460 and 1464 by Joanot Martorell, a Valencian knight. The work drew on *Guy of Warwick*, Ramón Llull's *Llibre de l'ordre de cavalleri*, Guillem de Torroella's *La Faula*, Petrarch, the *Decameron* and various Catalan authors among others. Dedicated to Prince Ferran of Portugal (1433-1470), son of king Duarte and Lionor of Aragon,[85] it details the knightly adventures of the hero Tirant in love and war. Bennett is convinced that the episode of the dragon-woman of Cos in this work was taken from Mandeville, an opinion is shared by Entwistle and Riquer in his more recent work.[86] The *Book* had already been translated into Catalan before 1484, and was of course widely available in French, English and most Romance languages.

There are several minor borrowings from the *Book* in Martorell's novel. In chapter 276, Tirant says that he wishes to 'sleep my life away as it is said of the glorious Saint John the Baptist ... they say his glorious soul sleeps'.[87] In the *Book*, 'some say that he did not die but that he rests until the Day of Judgement'.[88] Elsewhere the city of Stagira is mentioned, 'which is Aristotle's birthplace and whose inhabitants worship him as a saint'; 'then they left the city of Stagira and went to Macedonia, to the city of Olympia. This city takes its name from a nearby mountain, one of the highest mountains in the world, which is called Olympus'.[89] Finally, Tirant's army conquers 'the great city of Thauris (Tabriz), which is most delightful and rich in trade; and the cities of Boterna (Bukhara) and Senoreiant

[85] The dedication itself is plagiarised from that of Castilian writer Enric de Villena's *Los dotze treballs d' Hèrcules*. Cf. Entwistle, W.J. (1927), 'Observacions sobre la dedicatòria i primera part del "Tirant lo Blanc", in *Revista de Catalunya* 7 (1927), pp. 381-98.

[86] Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, p. 50; Entwistle, W.J. (1922), 'The Spanish Mandevilles', in *MLR* 27, pp. 252-7; de Riquer, M. (1992), *Tirant lo Blanch, Novela de Historia y de Ficción*; *Aproximació al Tirant lo Blanc* (1990). In the light of new evidence, de Riquer has disproved the formerly prevalent theory that certain parts of *Tirant*, including the Lango episode, were inserted after Martorell's death in 1568 by Martí Joan de Galba.

[87] Own translation of *Tirant lo Blanc*, ed. de Riquer, M. (1970), Vol. 2, p. 189.

[88] Letts, *Travels* II, p. 240.

[89] *Tirant*, ch. 459, p. 531; cf. Letts, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-7.

(Samarkand) on the Ganges',[90] and his fleet is sent to recapture the Greek islands of 'Calistres, Colcos, Oritige, Tesbrie, Nimocha, Flaxen, Meclotapace and many others'. All these places are found in Mandeville, the islands in exactly the same order.[91] It is worth pointing out that nearly all these borrowings come from the third and fourth chapters of the *Book*, where the legend of Saint John is closely followed by that of Hippocrates' daughter, Martorell's most extensive borrowing.

The account, at first a direct plagiarism, soon begins to differ substantially from Mandeville's version; while the basic plot remains the same, the details are amplified in such a way as to develop the successful knight's character more fully. The man in question is Espèrcius, a close friend of the hero Tirant, and the episode concerns his adventures after he and two companions are shipwrecked on Lango.

The three men are welcomed by a hospitable shepherd, the island's sole inhabitant apart from the enchanted dragon-woman. His description of her and of the knights who have tried and failed is a word-for-word translation of the Continental Version. The author has encapsulated the whole Mandeville episode in the shepherd's tale, and used it as a basis for the adventure of Espèrcius. The story's veracity is both doubted and reaffirmed:

> When the valiant knight Espèrcius had heard the old man's words, he thought for a moment. Then he said to the old man: 'Tell me, my good man, is this tale true?' The old man replied, 'My lord, there can be no doubt I have told the honest truth, as most of what I have told you has happened in my own time, and I would not lie to you for anything in the world'.[92]

Espèrcius creeps away the next morning without rousing his companions, in case they should try to prevent him from going. On reaching the cave he prays to God: 'that through His infinite mercy and pity, He might free and inspire him that he might not fear the dragon, for He may save any soul from torment and bring it into the true and holy catholic faith'.[93] This prayer does not appear to work very well, as the knight is petrified when the dragon emerges, and an amusing episode ensues:

[90] *Tirant*, ch. 465, p. 543. Cf. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 313, 'Taurizo'; p. 328, 'Boccura'; p. 376, 'Seornegant'.

[91] Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 236: 'Calistres, Colcos, Oritighe, Cesbie et Nurtaflaxon, Melo, Capace'.

[92] *Tirant*, ch. 410, p. 443.

[93] *op. cit.*, p. 446.

> The knight, who felt the thundering rumble of the dragon, was sorely afraid, and fell to his knees with many fervent prayers. And as the dragon approached and he saw its ugly face, he shut his eyes as he could not bear to look at it, and remained absolutely motionless, for in that moment he was more dead than alive. And the dragon, seeing that the man was motionless, was yet filled with hope, and softly and gently came close to him and kissed him on the mouth; and the knight fainted dead away, and the dragon turned into a beautiful maiden, who took him in her lap and began to rub his temples, saying: 'Brave knight, fear nothing and open your eyes to see what is before you'.
>
> And the knight Espèrcius remained unconscious and out of his senses for an hour. And the gentle lady continued rubbing his temples and kissing him in order to restore him.[94]

This humorous and bathetic lifting of the dragon-woman's curse, with the hideous dragon kissing the knight rather than vice-versa and the brave man fainting away, is certainly a new twist to the romantic theme the reader might have expected. It may be an echo of the twelfth-century romance *Li Biaus Desconneüs*, in which the hero Guinglain is kissed by the serpent-woman he is attempting to rescue.[95] This is brought out yet more by the long flowery speech the awakening Espèrcius makes to the lady, and by her equally gracious response, in obvious and amusing contrast to the dragon's kiss. The use of an almost ridiculously verbose style in Espèrcius' conversation with the lady is not typical of *Tirant*, and here it serves an ironic purpose.

The hero and heroine consummate their love, return to the shepherd's hut to the amazement of the others, and eventually the island is repopulated, a new city is built called Espertina and Espèrcius and his lady live happily ever after. The detail of the lady's short life after being rescued is therefore omitted in order to give the story an appropriately happy ending. Overall, Mandeville's rather sad and pitying tale has been transformed into an amusing adventure with a light-hearted conclusion. The dragon-lady theme has certainly been used romantically, but with a far different purpose in mind; it has become pure entertainment rather than a way to arouse pity and terror.

The whole episode is an undisguised interpolation into *Tirant Lo Blanc* by the author himself; Entwistle and Riquer both remark on the contrast between the author's clear style and the 'involved and "aureate" declaration

94 *Tirant*, p. 446.

95 'la guivre vers lui se lança / et en la bouce le baissa', Renaut de Beaujeu, *Le bel inconnu*, ed. Williams, G.P. (1929), p. 97, ll. 3184-5. The relationship with *Tirant* has been shown by Paris, G. (1886), 'Guinglain ou le bel inconnu', in *Romania*, Vol. 15, pp. 1-24.

of love to which the disenchanted lady capitulates - or succumbs'.[96] Yet in spite of the fact that 'Joanot Martorell is a realistic narrator, who does not admit unrealistic or supernatural elements or episodes into the novel',[97] his handling of the story demonstrates his literary ability. In effect, he completes Mandeville's open-ended fable, allowing it to stand alone within the framework of *Tirant*. It is interesting that an episode from Mandeville should be thus used by an author whose creation, with its overall imaginative realism, played a vital part in the evolution of romance into the novel.

It is also useful to compare elements of romance in Mandeville with those in contemporary and later authors, even where those authors cannot conclusively be proven to have drawn on the *Book* for their information. In this context, Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*, written in about 1392-95, is of some interest, echoing as it does Mandeville's description of the Khan's court:

> At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye, / Ther dwelt a kyng that werreyed Russye, / Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty man. / This noble kyng was cleped Cambyuskan, / Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun / That ther was nowher in no regioun / So excellent a lord in alle thyng: /.../ This Cambyuskan, of which I have yow toold, / In roial vestiment sit on his deys, / With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, / And halt his feeste so solempne and so ryche / That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche /.../ Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtes olde, / Ther is som mete that is ful deynte holde, / That in this lond men recche of it but smal; / Ther nys no man that may reporten al.[98]

The similarities between this passage and Mandeville's description of the Great Khan's court are striking. Bennett argues that the 'knyghtes olde' is 'a clear allusion to Mandeville',[99] and that the strange Tartar food is taken from the *Book*'s adaptation of Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale*: 'And they eat all kinds of wild and other meat, such as dogs, cats, foxes, mares, foals, rats and mice and other wild and domesticated beasts, large and small'.[100] Even the phrase 'Ther nys no man that may reporten al' is, according to Bennett, from the end of the *Book*: 'For it would be too long a thing to recount and describe all'.[101]

96 Entwistle, 'The Spanish Mandevilles', p. 253.

97 Riquer, *Aproximació*, p. 296.

98 Benson and Robinson (eds), *The Riverside Chaucer*, ll. 9-15, 58-62, 65-72.

99 Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, p. 225; see also 'Chaucer and Mandeville's Travels', in *MLN* 68, pp. 531-4.

100 'Et si manguent toutes manieres de chars sauuaiges et autres, si comme chiens, chas, renars, iumenz, poulains, ras et souris et autres bestes sauuages et priuees, grandes et petites'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 370.

101 'Car trop longue chose seroit du raconter et de tout deuiser'. *op. cit.*, p. 411.

While this evidence is by no means conclusive - Mandeville's sources would also have been available to Chaucer - it is at least possible that Bennett's reasoning may be accurate. In any case, Chaucer's indebtedness or otherwise to the *Book* may not be as significant as the fact that the splendour and customs of the Tartar court were indeed seen as romantic elements; for the *Squire's Tale* is nothing if not a deliberately archetypal romance. It is a tale of adventure, chivalry and magic objects against a rich exotic setting ideally suited to such a purpose. While Chaucer may or may not have been among them, it is inevitable that some of Mandeville's readers would have enjoyed his descriptions of the Tartar court at least partly for their romantic and exciting atmosphere.

A similar argument could be made for Matteo Maria Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, a later romance written in the years 1482-1484. It includes many mentions of exotic lands, romantic Tartars (as opposed to Saracens) and magical adventures of noble knights, among them a 'fier baiser' episode involving a serpent-woman. Near the beginning of the work, the author mentions lands including Persia, Arabia and the island of Taprobane:

> He had conquered all the sea of India / And that large island of Taprobane, Persia with Arabia on one side / Land of blacks, which is so far away; / And the essential part of the world had he circled by sea / Before he had entered the straits of Spain.[102]

Such a general picture could have been drawn from any travel book, but in Cantos 25 to 26 there is an episode close to that of the dragon-woman. The knight Brandimarte arrives at a castle containing a sepulchre, and having killed various guards is urged by a young woman to enter and kiss whatever he sees there. Meeting a huge serpent with big teeth he is understandably reluctant, but eventually kisses it - whereupon it turns into a beautiful maiden. Brandimarte has rescued the fairy Febosilla, doomed to turn into a serpent after living a thousand years.

Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* was followed by Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, written in 1504-16. Bennett remarks that 'He makes his great traveller Astolpho an Englishman, and the places he visits are suggestive of Mandeville'.[103] 'L'aventuroso Astolfo d'Inghilterra'[104] has been instructed to travel home to England along 'the route which skirted the lands of the Scythians, the far Indies and the realm of the Nabateans, to arrive among

[102] *Orlando Innamorato*, ed. Bruscagli, R. (1995), Vol. I, iv, 23.
[103] Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, p. 248.
[104] *Orlando Furioso*, ed. Caretti, L. (1995), xv, 10.

the Persians and Eritreans'. He passes by 'the rich, populous cities of the aromatic Indies; on either hand a thousand scattered islands came into view. As he sailed on he sighted the land of Thomas the Apostle ... they saw the Ganges frothing into the sea; they sighted Ceylon and Cape Comorin'.[105]

Astolpho asks, 'did vessels hailing from the lands of the setting sun ... ever appear in the Eastern Seas?'[106] He is told, in a lyrical prophecy, that the day will come when men will sail to discover a new world beyond the pillars of Hercules. He then wanders around Europe, Africa and Ethiopia, where balsam originated in the opulent kingdom of the Senapo, or Prester John. Prester John himself is blind, cursed when he tried to attack the Earthly Paradise situated on 'that craggy mountain which rose above the clouds and reached to the sky',[107] at the source of the Nile.

Both Boiardo and Ariosto, therefore, include exotic elements in their romances. These elements, as I have said, cannot be positively attributed to the *Book*; many details are different, particularly in Ariosto where the countries of the world are described in the light of new discoveries and Prester John's kingdom is placed firmly in Ethiopia. The 'fier baiser' of Brandimarte could also be derived from other sources. Yet both these and the *Squire's Tale* are important in showing how travel-writing and romance were not always separate from each other. Even given that the author of the *Book* was not writing romance, his travels as a whole could be read as such in the later Middle Ages.

Thus the redactors of the *Book* and those 'romantic' authors who borrowed from it demonstrate the many different ways in which the work could be viewed and used as a romance. In every case this usage has gone against or ignored the *Book*'s underlying intentions. Mandeville had little use for heroes. 'Sir John' himself, a knight who avoids undue dangers, refrains from marrying the Sultan's daughter and is immobilised at the end of his travels not by wounds but by arthritic gout, is a consciously ironical construct. The stories, too, function on one level as ironical asides, parodies of the romantic genre itself. On another level they are intended as moral exempla, not frivolous entertainment. The audiences examined thus far in this chapter seem to have been unaware of the underlying purposes of the romance elements, treating them as the decorative details and amusing tales which found their way into later romantic writing.

I will now move to a discussion of the marginalia and the evidence they provide concerning the *Book*'s reception as romance. This is not as

[105] *Orlando Furioso*, ed. and trans. Waldman, G. (1974), p. 155, xv, 16-17.
[106] *op. cit.*, xv, 18.
[107] *op. cit.*, xxx, 110.

extensive as might be expected; while several manuscripts show an interest in, for example, the Daughter of Hippocrates at Cos, there is little indication as to whether the story was seen as an exemplum or merely as an entertaining tale. In many texts of the Defective Version,[108] the scribes' own side-notes often refer to this and the Satalia episode simply as 'a tale' or 'a goude tale', and readers' marginal notes are not much more helpful.

Only two manuscripts of the Continental Version, both fourteenth-century, contain marginal notes referring to the 'romantic' tales. BN Arsenal MS. 3219 has two marks against the tale of the dragon-woman of Cos and two against that of the Head of Satalia.[109] BN MS. n.a.10723 - which annotates almost everything - remarks on 'la fiyle ypocras en guise de dragon de c toise' and the young man of Satalia.[110] Of the Insular Version, BL MS. Harley 4383[111] notes the dragon-woman, and BN MS. ff. 5633 underlines two points in the Satalia tale.[112]

The fifteenth-century Insular BL MS. Sloane 1464, which also notes everything, gives a Latin nota[113] for the dragon-woman and also calls this and the Satalia tale a 'narratio'.[114] The Amazons are entitled to two full headings at the top of the page.[115] There is also interest in Alexander, who is noted both for the twelve cities he has founded and, three times, for his encounter with the Brahmans and Gymnosophists.[116]

The Royal Version BL MS. Royal 13 E. ix places two crosses against Alexander and the Brahmans.[117] The owners of the Cotton manuscript showed more interest by noting the dragon-woman four times ('a womman being transformed into a dragoun'),[118] the Satalia tale once, and the Amazons, 'the land of women without any men'.[119]

Altogether, then, the stories of the Daughter of Hippocrates, the Head of Satalia, the Castle of the Sparrowhawk, the Amazons and Alexander's exploits are not widely remarked upon in the marginalia. This may sometimes be due to the already existing scribal side-notes, but it seems

[108] BL MS. Royal 17 B xliii is one example. BL MS. Royal 13 E. ix, an exemplar of the Royal Version, notes the 'narratio de filia ypocratis' (f. 41); this is worth mentioning as one of only three scribal side-notes in the text.
[109] ff. 7v, 8v.
[110] ff. 7, 8.
[111] f. 5v.
[112] f. 15v. This ms. is missing the chapter on Hippocrates' daughter.
[113] f. 12.
[114] f. 12v.
[115] ff. 87-87v.
[116] f. 87; ff. 151v, 152, 152v.
[117] f. 69v.
[118] ff. 10-11.
[119] ff. 12, 64v.

that the tales in general are not often picked out from the wealth of detail in the *Book*.

The relative lack of interest in the marginalia is not echoed in the illustrations. BN MS. n.a. 4515 contains a leaf beautifully illuminated with a picture divided into four compartments (Ill. 11). The first two miniatures depict Mandeville writing his book and its presentation to the French King. The second pair show a knight on horseback approaching the castle with the dragon waiting inside, and the same knight fleeing as the dragon flies after him. The border of the whole illumination also includes a small dragon.

The illuminator of the ornate *Livre des Merveilles* shows an enthusiasm for rulers. He illustrates the legend of Satalia making the young man a king in the process. In the Castle of the Sparrowhawk, it is the Armenian King who is depicted with the crowned fairy lady. The Amazon Queen is shown with her court, while Chinggis Khan's adventure of the White Knight and the bird which saved him from discovery by his enemies is also depicted as a romance theme.[120] Alexander is a favourite heroic figure, presented in several episodes: Alexander's Gates, the Trees of the Sun and Moon - with a white dragon in the background - and the attempt to reach Paradise by ship.[121] In the illustration of Alexander and the Gymnosophists, the conqueror, resplendent in his rich robes and crown and followed by his army, is strikingly contrasted with the three men in loincloths who kneel before him. (Ill. 12). The foremost Gymnosophist's gestures indicate that he is explaining their philosophy, perhaps at the very point of requesting immortality.

The two main illustrated manuscripts of the Defective Version also use the figures of romance in Mandeville. BL MS. Royal Cxxxviii only shows the 'lond of Wymmen' - a woman in a dress - but both the Great Khan and Prester John are presented as knightly figures on horseback. (Ill. 13).[122] Harley 3954 includes the dragon of Cos, the Sparrowhawk, and the Amazons in its subjects.[123] The Daughter of Hippocrates also intrigued one annotator of a non-illuminated manuscript, who drew a rough sketch of a winged dragon in the margin.[124]

The Sorg woodcuts mirror the manuscript illustrations by depicting the dragon-woman with a knight, the Castle of the Sparrowhawk and the Amazons. In one image, a demonic figure - the Head of Satalia

[120] ff. 147, 178v, 181, 199v, 200v.
[121] ff. 208v, 220, 222.
[122] ff. 36, 48v, 54v.
[123] ff. 8v, 28v, 30.
[124] BL MS. Harley 2384, f. 80v.

transmogrified, as in some versions, into a monster - attacks a young courtier (Ill. 14). The frontispiece shows Mandeville himself as a young knight with a cross on his brow holding a sword and flag.

Altogether, it is not surprising that the illustrators of the *Book* liked to use these stories in exciting pictures in their work. Dragons, fairy ladies, knights, conquerors and monsters all provided wonderful material for illuminations and woodcuts alike. The *Book*'s moral fables have been turned into tales of fantasy and adventure.

Further evidence of the *Book*'s reception as romance is provided by its inclusion in manuscripts along with romantic works. On the Continent, it was twice bound with the *Roman de Fauvel*,[125] and both the Continental and Defective Versions were placed with the *Romance of the Seven Sages*.[126] One fifteenth-century compilation, BL MS. Arundel 140, contained not only the *Seven Sages* but also *Guy of Warwick*, and Chaucer's *Tale of Melibee*. Huntingdon Library MS. 114 contains *Troilus and Criseyde*; BL MS. Royal 17 B. xliii includes *Sir Gowther*. The Defective Version was also bound with Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* several times,[127] as was a Bodley manuscript - the latter also included a romance of Gawain and Galaron and a tale from Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, among other items.[128]

The *Book* was often bound with the *Romance of Alexander*, although on some occasions this was in compilations of historical works. One Defective manuscript pairs Mandeville with *Alexander and Nectanabus*[129] and two Vulgate Latin copies contain the *History of Alexander the Great*.[130] Fifteenth-century German versions in particular were often included with Alexander material; in most of the latter cases the *Alexander* seems to have been regarded as a legendary chronicle rather than a romance.[131] Finally one more German manuscript of the Velser Version is worth mentioning: it contains a fragment of Mandeville bound with Boccacio's *Griselda*,

[125] BN MS. ff. 24436; Tours, Bibl. Mun. 947.

[126] BN MS. ff. 5586; Cam. Uni. Lib. Dd. i.17.

[127] Cambridge, Trinity MS. R.4.20, also including a romance of Gawain; the lost Coventry School copy containing several of Lydgate's poems; Coventry Corporation Record Office MS. f 77v.

[128] Bodleian MS. Rawlinson D. 99.

[129] Cambridge Uni. Lib. Gg.i.34.

[130] Glasgow, Hunterian MS. T.41; Torino, Bibl. Nat. MS. H-III-1, both fifteenth century.

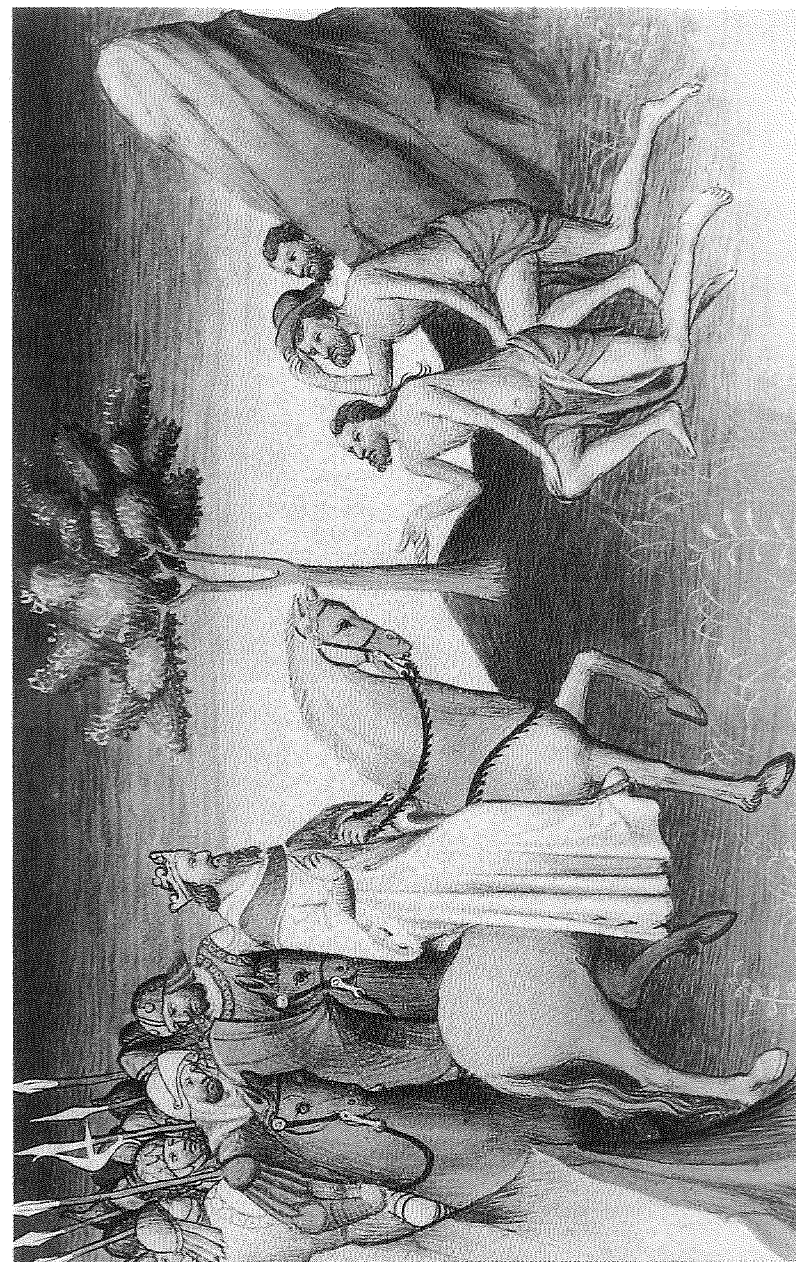
[131] Coburg, Landesbibl. MS. Sche. 16; Gotha, Forsch. Cod. Chart. A 26; Gotha, Forsch. Cod. Chart. A 582; St Gallen, Stiftsbib. Cod. 628; Strasbourg, Bib. Nat. MS. 2119; Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibl. Cod. 32.8 Aug 2°; Berlin, Staatsbib. Germ. Fol. 1066.

Godfrey of Bologne, and, appropriately enough, the romance of *Mélusine*.[132]

To conclude, the *Book* was certainly received as a source of romance material and even regarded as a romance in itself. The redactions of the text and the Metrical Version in particular show that medieval authors felt free to adapt the work by heightening its romantic aspects. Later authors, too, used tales from Mandeville in their own works of romance, also commonly ignoring the underlying moral exempla originally intended. The relatively few marginalia on the subject are eclipsed by the interest shown by the illustrators, who saw the romantic themes as an opportunity for rich decoration. The frequent inclusion of the *Book* in compendia with romances, added to the fact that it was sometimes actually called a romance, indicate that other audiences of the work also regarded it as romantic. Once again, a single facet of Mandeville's complex work has been isolated from the rest of the prism.

[132] Munich, Bayerische Statsbibliothek MS. CGM 252.

11 Mandeville writing his book and presenting it to Charles V; the Dragon-woman of Cos, from a manuscript of the Continental Version. Cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. nouv. acq. fr. 4514, f. 1).



12 Alexander the Great, from the *Livre des Merveilles*. Cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. fonds fr. 2810, f. 219).

13 The Rydynge of Prester John, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii, f. 54v).

& theyr eyen are in theyr ſhulders & theyr mouth is on theyr breſt. An other yle are men ŷ haue no heed ne eyen & theyr mouth is behynde in theyr ſhulds.

N ii

14 The Head of Satalia, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. xii v).

4 Historical Interest

Mandeville's use of history conforms to several medieval traditions, although his historical references are scattered throughout the *Book* rather than comprising a definite chronology of events in a specific area of the work. He was not trying to create an annalistic chronicle, but rather using chronicle information and styles to bring his colourful *mappa mundi* to life, providing a framework for the events portrayed in order to locate them in both space and time. The *Book*'s views of history are manifold, from the wider biblical chronology used to provide a universal history of mankind from the Creation to the Day of Judgement, to the detailed lineages and accounts of battles and personal lives, as in the case of the Sultan and the Great Khan and the biography of Mohammed. The great confrontation of Christian and Muslim is woven through the whole work.

Some tales, such as that of the Khan's sons and the sheaf of arrows, the fall of Justinian or the greedy caliph starved amidst the wealth he refused to spend to defend his country, are used to point out various morals in the best Orosian tradition of history as exemplum. At other times the anecdotes are interesting but lacking any deeper significance, as when we are told that England used to be called Britain. In almost every case, however, the history - digressive or not - does not stand alone but is linked to a specific place. Events are defined by the place as much as the place is defined by the events. An area is noteworthy by reason of its history as well as its current status. Holy places are holy because of the saints who passed through them and the acts of piety or miracles performed there; even cities that are now diminished or destroyed are mentioned because they were once great. It is in this sense above all that Mandeville understands history.

His aims are varied: to give an outline of biblical chronology and details of the biblical history of the Holy Land expected when describing the area; to show contemporary Christian history in the light of the expansion of the Saracen and Mongol empires; to give ethnohistorical accounts of peoples; to draw moral exempla from historical legends, and, certainly, to include interesting asides for the curious as part of his descriptions of people and places. In this Mandeville's work resembles the encyclopaedic compilation popular from the twelfth century onwards, a form of historiography to which the *Imago Mundi* attributed to Honorius of Autun, with its discussions of geography and chronology as well as history proper, belonged. A century later, Vincent of Beauvais' *Opus Majus* of c. 1250 -

one of Mandeville's major sources - included sections on doctrine, natural history and history and quickly became one of the best-known medieval works, as did Brunetto Latini's *Livre dou Tresor*.

Mandeville draws on many and varied sources for his historical information. Apart from those mentioned above, his chief reference works are Eugesippus' twelfth-century *Tractatus*, John of Würzburg's *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* of 1160-70 and Jacques de Vitry's *Historia Hierosolymitana* for the Holy Land, Hayton's 1307 *Flos historiarum* for the accounts of the East and Odoric of Pordenone's *Descriptio* on the Far East. Of these, Jacques de Vitry in the thirteenth century and the strongly politicised Hayton in the fourteenth wrote a form of historical writing sparked by the crusades; lay authors had begun to produce eyewitness accounts, often in the vernacular, bearing some similarity to Mandeville's style. To this clerical and lay selection Mandeville adds tales from the *Legenda Aurea* and, naturally, the Bible. I will begin by analysing the use of these sources for each area of history detailed in the *Book*.

One of the most important subjects is that of biblical history. This covers the ages of the world from the Creation to the Apocalypse, taking in major events from the Old and New Testaments as well as many apocryphal legends prevalent in the medieval period. Christian historiography was influenced to an incalculable extent by the Bible and its commentaries. The word of God was the truth, implicitly believed in; both the Old Testament and the New were supremely important authorities to be respected as such. Thus the early Christian historians, who themselves influenced medieval thought for centuries, based much of their work on biblical history.

Unlike classical authors, they were less interested in national histories than in a universalistic approach. The first key work was Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, written c. 323 AD and translated into Latin by St Jerome in 379. Eusebius provided 'an authoritative chronology for the West',[1] dividing world history into seven ages from the Creation to the Day of Judgement. These were: 1. Creation to Flood; 2. Flood to birth of Abraham; 3. Abraham to David; 4. David to Captivity; 5. Captivity to birth of Christ; 6. Christ to Second Coming; and 7. Time fulfilled. Based on Matthew, 1:17, the theme was elaborated from the second century onwards until it was given its definitive form by St Augustine. It was further popularised by Bede's *De temporum ratione*.

Mandeville did not list the Seven Ages as Augustine and others had done, but he was certainly aware of the convention by which the men of his

1 Cf. Barnes, H.E. (1937), *A History of Historical Writing*, p. 47.

time were living in the Sixth Age, lasting from the birth of Christ to the Second Coming. In this vital period mankind was at last given the chance of salvation through Christ's sacrifice; it was also seen as a time of preparation for the Day of Judgement, a final opportunity to work towards redemption. The unification of mankind, in this and previous ages, in the search for God and moral truth is a central theme of Mandeville's work.

In the *Book*, major events of all seven ages are mentioned, though not in any chronological order. Each is linked to the appropriate physical location; the geographical itinerary, forming a sacred geography of pilgrimage centred, as I have discussed, around Jerusalem, takes precedence over the purely historical journey. Mandeville's use of history provides the equivalent to the text on a *mappa mundi*, legends placed where necessary to complete the picture and help the viewer to understand what he sees. This is particularly true of the *Book*'s biblical history.

The Creation is indirectly alluded to in the passage discussing the size and shape of the earth: 'And for this reason Our Lord said, 'Have no fear of me, who have hanged the earth from nothing'.[2] The act of Creation is thus a proof both of God's omnipotence and of his benevolence, even in this more 'scientific' chapter of the *Book*. Adam is mentioned several times. He was created near Damascus, before being taken to Paradise:

> And quite close to this place is a cave in the rock, where Adam and Eve lived, when they were thrown out of Paradise; and there they begot their children. And there was Adam created and formed according to some people's words ... And from there he was transported to the Paradise of delights, as they say, and after he had fallen from Paradise he was put back there.[3]

Adam's creation is inevitably linked to the Fall and mankind's loss of Paradise, although his redemption is foretold in the story of Seth and the apples of Paradise, taken from the *Legenda Aurea*. When Adam was dying, his son Seth travelled to Paradise for oil from the Tree of Mercy to heal him. The angel at the gate refused but instead gave Seth three seeds from the Tree to place in Adam's mouth, saying that he would be healed when the trees bore fruit. Although this tale belongs to the First Age, it is in fact a prefiguration of the coming of Christ; the seeds grow into the trees from which the Cross was made:

2 'Et pour ce dist nostre Seigneur, *Ne timeas me, cui suspendi terram in nichilo*'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 334.

3 'Et assez pres de ce lieu a vne caue en la roche, ou Adam et Eue demouroient, quant il furent ietez de Paradis; et la engendrerent il leurs enfans. Et la fut Adam crees et fourmez selon les dis daucuns ... Et de la fut il translate en Paradis de delices, si comme on dist, et apres ce que il fut cheus de Paradis, fut il la remis'. *op. cit.*, p. 264.

So he placed these seeds in his mouth, and they grew and became three great trees, of which the cross was made that bore the good fruit Jesus Christ, by which fruit Adam and those who descended from him have been healed and delivered from eternal death, unless it is by their sin.[4]

The last phrase is significant; men must work hard for their own salvation rather than relying wholly on God's mercy.

Paradise itself is described only at the end of the *Book*, the first home of man being the most inaccessible, both physically and spiritually. Adam and Eve only remained there for one day before being expelled; their copious tears formed a lake in Ceylon. They were sent back to the place of Adam's creation, where they lived in the cave still to be seen today. Mandeville constantly provides such threads of continuity running from past to present and even into the future. The Dry Tree, another herald of the Resurrection, dates from the earliest times, its history linked to that of the world itself:

And they say that this tree has existed since the beginning of the world. And it was always green and leafy until our lord died on the cross; and then it began to wither. And there are certain prophecies which say that a lord, prince of the West, will win the promised land with the help of the Christians, and have mass sung under the Dry Tree, and then this tree will become green again and bear branches and leaves and fruit, by which miracle many Saracens and many Jews will believe in and be converted to the Christian faith.[5]

In other allusions to the First Age, the story of Cain and Abel appears twice, once in the Vale of Tears where Adam wept for Abel, and again at Mount Cain where the blind Lamech, father of Noah, killed Cain. This episode is used to set a definite length for the First Age: '[Cain] had lived from the time of Adam to the time of Noah. And so he lived over 2,000

[4] 'Si li mist ces grains en la bouche, si parcrurent et deuindrent trois grans arbres, des quelz la crois fut faite qui porta le bon fruit Ihesu Crist, par le quel fruit Adam et ceuls qui descendirent de ly sont guaris et deliures de la mort perpetuele, se ce nest par leur coulpe'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 234.

[5] 'Et dit on que cel arbre a este des le commencement du monde. Et estoit tousiours vert et fueilliez iusques atant que nostre seigneur mourut en la crois; et adont y commenca a sechier ... Et sont aucunes prophecies qui dient que vn seigneur prince doccident gaignera la terre de promission auec layde des Crestiens, et fera chanter messe dessoubz cel arbre sech, et puis cel arbre reuerdira et portera branches et fueilles et fruit, pour le quel miracle Sarrazins et mains Iuyfz creront et se conuertiront a la foy Crestienne'. *op. cit.*, p. 265.

years'.[6] Here Mandeville is following Isidore's chronology rather than that of Bede given by Vincent of Beauvais; Isidore gives the time from Adam to Noah as 2245 years as opposed to Bede's 1656 years.[7]

The Deluge is an event of paramount importance, dividing the First Age from the Second in what was often regarded as a new Creation and dramatically changing the face of the earth. Noah's Ark remains on Mount Ararat in testimony, still visible though unattainable except in exceptional circumstances. Only one devout monk has ever reached it, with an angel's help. He was allowed to bring back one plank, not as the trophy of a *curiosus* but as evidence of God's grace in occasioning Noah's miraculous escape.

Noah's sons and their partition of the world is also a historical event of great significance, providing an unorthodox explanation for the dissemination of the races of men as we have seen.

So Cham was the greatest and the most powerful, and more generations are descended from him than from the others ... And of this generation of Cham have come the pagan peoples and the diverse people who live in the islands of the sea all across Asia. And because he was the most powerful and nobody could fight against him, he called himself the son of God and ruler of the whole world. And because of this Cham, all the emperors have since called themselves Great Cham and son of nature and ruler of the whole world ... And of the generation of Shem have come the Saracens, and of the generation of Japheth has come the people of Israel and we and the others who live in Europe.[8]

The reason for Mandeville's surprising change to the legend is his attempt at etymology, by which the Great Cham is descended from Ham - a pleasing invention, which is then partly rejected: 'Nevertheless, the truth is that the Tartars and those who live in greater Asia are descended from Cham. But the emperors of Cathay do not call themselves Cham at all, but

[6] '[Caym] auoit vescu du temps Adam iusques au temps Noe. Et ainsi il vesquit plus de ii. mile ans'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 291.

[7] Cf. Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 207.

[8] 'Cham si fu li plus grans et li plus poissans, et de lui descendirent plus de generacions que des autres ... Et de celle generacion de Cham sont venuz les paienne gent et les diuerses gens qui sont es ylles de mer par toute Ayse. Et pour ce quil estoit le plus poissans et que nuls ne pouoit encontre lui, il sappelloit filz de Dieu et souuerain de tout le monde. Et pour celui Cham tous les empereurs se sont depuis appelez Grant Cham et filz de nature et souuerain de tout le monde ... Et de la generacion de Sem sont venus les Sarrasins, et de la generacion de Iaffet est venuz le pueple de Israel et nous et les autres qui demourons en Europe'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

Chan'.[9] The thirteenth-century *Mirabilia Mundi* - possibly one of Mandeville's sources, which also associates the fox with the escape of the Enclosed Nations - also mentions that the Tartars are said to be descended from 'Cham the son of Noah'.[10]

Braude, however, argues that this is further proof of Mandeville's anti-Semitism: 'The effect of this misreading is to supplant the old Israel - the Jews - with the new true Israel, Christian Europe ... It removes from the Jews the claim to Israel'.[11] While the *Book* certainly misses few opportunities to discredit the Jewish race, I think that in this case the author was more interested in the Ham-Cham side of the question, especially as one effect is to claim common descendance for Jews and Europeans. The episode is typical of the way in which the author of the *Book* brings human considerations to the fore, emphasising the ethnographical aspects of history.

Biblical historiography is often linked to cites still extant, though changed in name or appearance. Jaffa, now called Joppa, was founded by Japhet and is the oldest city in the world. The Tower of Babel was built soon after Noah's time by Nimrod, the first king, also mentioned elsewhere as one of the sons of Ham.

> This tower was founded by king Nimrod, who was king of this country, and he was the first king of the world. And he had an image made in the name of his father and compelled all his subjects to worship it. And Ninus did the same with his father. And then other lords began to do likewise, and that is where idols came from.[12]

[9] 'Neentmoinz verite est que les Tartarins et ceuls qui demeurent en la grant Ayse descendirent de Cham. Mais les empereurs de Cathay ne sappellent mie Cham, mais Chan'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 355.

[10] Burnett, C. and Dalché, P.G. (1991), 'Attitudes towards the Mongols in medieval literature: the XII kings of Gog and Magog from the court of Frederick II to Jean de Mandeville', *Viator* 22, pp. 153-67. Cf also Braude, B. (1996), 'The sons of Noah and the construction of racial identity in the medieval and early modern periods', in *Constructing Race: Differentiating People in the Early Modern World, 1400-1700*, pp. 1-40.

[11] Braude, B. (1996), 'Mandeville's Jews among others', in Le Beau and Mor (eds), *Pilgrims and Travelers to the Holy Land* pp. 133-58, 143.

[12] 'Celle tour fonda le roy Nemroth, qui fut roy de celi pays, et ce fut le premier roy du monde. Et fist faire vne ymage ou nom de son pere et contraingnoit tous ses subgiez a laourer. Et aussi fist Ninus de son pere. Et lors commencierent autres seigneurs a faire ainsi, et de la vindrent les ydoles'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

Nimrod's idolatry is in a sense even more important than his arrogant edifice, given Mandeville's interest in the modes of worship among the pagan peoples of the East, some of whom also pray to graven images.

The time from Abraham to Exodus is covered by a few names scattered about the landscape. Some are mentioned in more detail because they define famous landmarks and biblical stories, reminding us of the power of God. Lot is naturally linked to the Dead Sea and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Pyramids are Joseph's granaries and the Red Sea and the desert of Sinai cannot be mentioned without Moses, any more than Gaza could lack Samson. There is the occasional mistake: Nebuchadnezzar is placed in the wrong Babylon, in Egypt rather than Babylon the Great. With the coming of David, the author makes another attempt at accurate chronology: 'David first reigned in Hebron for seven and a half years, and in Jerusalem he reigned for 33 and a half'.[13]

Solomon's Temple provides a link with more modern times:

> Know that this is by no means the same temple that Solomon built. For that temple lasted only 1,102 years; for when Titus the son of Vespasian the emperor of Rome, who was besieging Jerusalem to defeat the Jews, because they had put Our Lord to death without the emperor's leave, had taken the city, he burned the temple and destroyed it ... And then in later times the emperor Julian the Apostate gave the Jews permission to rebuild the temple, because he hated the Christians; and yet he was a Christian and a monk, but he had renounced his faith. And when the Jews had nearly built the temple, there was an earthquake by the will of God, which destroyed that which they had made. And then Hadrian the emperor, who was of the line of Troy, rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and the temple in the same fashion that Solomon had built it, and would allow no Jews to live there, but only Christians.[14]

[13] 'En Ebron regna premierement Dauid vii. ans et demy, et en Iherusalem il regna xxxiii et demy'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 263-4.

[14] 'Sachies que ce nest mie ce mesme temple que Salemon fist. Car ce temple ne dura que m.c.ii. ans; car Titus le filz Vespasien lempereur de Romme, qui tenoit le siege entour Iherusalem pour desconfire les Iuys, pour ce que ilz auoient misa mort nostre seigneur senz congie de lempereur et quant il ot pris la cite, il ardi le temple et labatit ... Et puis ou temps apres donna lempereur Iulien le Apostates congie aus Iuys de reedifier le temple, pour ce que il haioit les Crestiens; et si estoit Crestien et moines, mais il estoit renoiez. Et quant les Iuyfz orent pres fait le temple, si vint vn terremote par la uolente Dieu, qui abatit ce que fait auoient. Et puis apres Adrian lempereur, qui estoit de ceulz de Troyes, refist la cite de Iherusalem et le temple en celle meisme guise que Salemon lauoit fait, et ne vouloit que nulz Iuyfz y demourast, fors que Crestiens'. *op. cit.*, p. 273.

Here biblical and ancient history overlap. The tale of the Temple, carefully and coherently synthesised from Orosius, Vitry, Pseudo-Odoric and the *Legenda Aurea* in a distinctly anti-Semitic way, spans time from the Fourth Age to the Sixth. The Temple is also the place where, more recently, Charlemagne received the foreskin of Christ from an angel. The author describes both its present-day appearance and the biblical events commemorated there, drawing on Boldensele, Würzburg and Eugesippus. Interestingly, although Mandeville does not mention it, there was also a prevalent Christian legend according to which the Temple would be rebuilt by Antichrist, giving it a future as well as a past history.[15]

The *Book*'s biblical history has now reached a defining moment of the Christian religion: the birth of Christ, signalling the beginning of the Sixth Age. This was prophesied by Hermes Trismegistus two thousand years earlier. The Gymnosophists were granted a prophecy of the incarnation two thousand years earlier still. The story of the Three Kings, whose cult developed after their relics were brought to Cologne in the twelfth century, is given in some detail: they met in Cassath, and made the 53-day journey to Bethlehem in nine days, 'which was a great miracle'. The Three Kings are also mentioned on three more occasions.

Episodes from the birth, life, Passion and Resurrection of Christ are described from Constantinople to Jerusalem and throughout the Holy Land. Mandeville is usually content simply to mention the story linked to a place or a relic, drawing heavily on Boldensele and the *Legenda Aurea.* Sometimes a more important point needs to be made: Adam's skull, for instance, was discovered under Golgotha at the time of the Flood, 'as a sign that Adam's sins would be pardoned or redeemed in this same place'.[16] Thus we are reminded that biblical history moves inexorably forward, the Old Testament prefiguring the New.

The Near East is also, inevitably, a place of saints. Apostles, martyrs and hermits are each accorded a place, albeit in passing. Hagiography was a popular form of historical biography which retained its appeal throughout the Middle Ages, but Mandeville is not concerned with writing detailed hagiography. The stories of the people he mentions would in any case have been well known. There may sometimes be a more extensive note, as in the case of St Jerome, - 'who was a cardinal and translated the Bible and the Psalter from Hebrew into Latin. And outside the monastery is the chair on

15 Braude, 'Mandeville's Jews', p. 143.

16 'en signe que les pechiez de Adam seroient pardonnes ou rachetez en ce meismes lieu'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 269.

which he sat when he translated it'[17] - but the lives of the saints are used as staging-posts through the holy places rather than as hagiographical histories in their own right.

History, however, does not end there. The Sixth Age will end with the Apocalypse, and Antichrist will appear before the Second Coming: 'In Chorazin Antichrist will be born, as the prophet says ... This Antichrist will be brought up in Bethsaida and reign in Capernaum'.[18] The legend of Antichrist is closely linked with that of the Enclosed Tribes, which the *Book* discusses in detail. According to Mandeville, the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, ruled by the kings Gog and Magog, were enclosed in the mountains of Scythia by Alexander. Escape is impossible, as they are imprisoned by the mountains on all sides except one, on which lies the Caspian Sea; even if they were to escape, they could not speak any language other than Hebrew. The only other exit is barred by a dangerous desert guarded by the Queen of the Amazons. But 'in the time of Antichrist' a fox will dig a hole through the wall from the outside and, following the unknown animal, the Jewish tribes will escape and slaughter many Christians.[19]

Thus the medieval legend of the Ten Tribes and Gog and Magog is elaborated to frightening effect. The Ten Tribes were mentioned in the *Letter of Prester John*, while the legend of Gog and Magog, the kings from Ezekiel and Revelations whose tribes will be freed by Satan, was originally quite separate. Josephus told of Alexander enclosing the Scythians, whom he identified with Gog and Magog, within an iron barrier. Eventually the enclosed kings and the enclosed tribes were conflated into one legend.[20] Mandeville's information is drawn from several sources: the main part of the tale comes from Vincent of Beauvais, but he has also used the *Roman d'Alexandre*, which numbers the kings at twenty-two, Brunetto Latini for the exit surrounded by desert and possibly the *Mirabilia Mundi* mentioned above for the fox. He has given the legend an unsettling immediacy, accepting the escape of the Tribes as an inevitable catastrophe in spite of the fact that the legend itself is set in the furthest regions of the world.

After Antichrist will come the Day of Judgement. This end to the Sixth Age is meticulously linked to the events prefiguring it, using information from Boldensele, Würzburg and Honorius of Autun's *Elucidarium* as well

17 'qui fut cardinal et translata la Bible et le psautier debrief en latin. Et dehors le moustier est la chaiere sur quoy il seoit quant il la translata'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 266.

18 'En Chorosaym Antecrist naistra, si comme dist le prophectes ... Cilz Antecrist sera nourri en Bethsayda et regnera en Capharnaum'. *op. cit.*, p. 289.

19 *op. cit.*, pp. 380-2.

20 Hamilton, B. (1996), 'Prester John and the Three Kings of Cologne', in Beckingham, C.F. and Hamilton, B. (eds), *Prester John, the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes*, pp. 171-85.

as the Bible. Judgement will take place on the mountain of the Transfiguration, 'on that mountain and in that same place' where Peter and James saw Moses and Elijah before them in spirit,

> on Easter Day and in that hour when Our Lord ... raised himself from death into life at the resurrection. And that judgement will begin at the same hour that Our Lord descended into hell and harrowed it, for in that same hour he will harrow the world and lead his friends to glory, and condemn the others to eternal suffering.[21]

The history of the world will end in the mercy of God, who, in the words of the *explicit*, is 'without beginning and without end', 'present in all places and understanding all things', 'who lives and reigns in perfect Trinity through all centuries and all times'.[22]

Thus Mandeville's biblical history covers the Seven Ages fairly comprehensively, providing a running commentary on the *Book*'s itinerary. Yet biblical history, while extending from the beginning to the end of the world, does not cover all human history. Ancient history was another rich source of exempla for medieval historiographers dealing with pre-Christian culture. In his use of history both as exemplum and simply as interesting fact, Mandeville introduces events and persons from the ancient world whose stories would have been as familiar to his audiences as those of the Bible.

The site of Troy is one of the first places worthy of note, although, disappointingly, 'the city appears little, because it was destroyed so long ago'.[23] It is mentioned again with reference to Dido and Aeneas and the founding of Carthage, another renowned city of the ancient world. Aristotle's birthplace of Stagyra is a popular piece of ancient history. Alexander as a historical figure is seen chiefly as a founder of cites, encloser of the Ten Tribes and conqueror; one nameless king's only claim to fame is to have been so powerful that he fought Alexander. Cyrus is remembered for his destruction of Babylon.

21 'En celle montaigne et en ce mesmes lieu ... le iour de Pasques et a telle heure que nostre Seigneur se releua de mort a vie a la resurreccion. Et sera ce iugement commencie a telle heure que nostre Seigneur descendi en enfer et le despoilla, car a celle heure il despoillera le monde et menra ses amis en gloire, et les autres condempnera a peinnes perpetuelles'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 291.

22 'senz commencement et senz fin ... en tous lieus presens et en toutes choses comprenans ... qui en Trinite parfaicte vit et regne par tous siecles et par tous temps'. *op. cit.*, pp. 411-12.

23 'la cite y pert pou, par tant quil a si grant temps quelle fut destruite'. *op. cit.*, p. 236.

Only a few later kings and famous figures are called upon, some only very briefly. There is Julius Caesar, the inventor of the Julian calendar; Constantine the Great, who, by virtue of a nail from the Cross given him by his mother St Helen, conquered Asia as far as Lesser India; Justinian, who held the world in his hand but lost it. The latter two, examples of Christian dynamism whether successful or not, are opposed by the example of the reviled Julian the Apostate. St Athanasius and his Creed are also allowed some space in a simplified account taken from Odoric. The extensive biography of Mohammed, designed to reveal the Saracen faith and customs, is synthesised from William of Tripoli, Vincent of Beauvais and Philippe de Valois.

When he uses historical figures and events from more recent years, however, Mandeville demonstrates more coherent planning. This part of his historiography is based mainly on sources written during or since the crusades, and a Christian-Saracen polarity develops. On the Christian side of the equation is Charlemagne, miraculously receiving Christ's foreskin, Charles the Bald, who sent it to Poitiers, and the more dynamic Godfrey de Bouillon and Baldwin II, who lie in the Holy Sepulchre with other Christian kings of Jerusalem. Baldwin, wrongly called king of France, also built the crusader castle of Krak des Chevaliers.

On the Saracen side of the equation lie the castles and cities lost to the enemy over the years: Tyre, Tripoli, Acre and Damietta. Once Constantine the Great held much of Asia, but now Asia the Lesser is known as Turkey because of the extent of Turkish conquests. The wars between Christians and Muslims are treated more extensively in the chapter on the lineage of the Egyptian Sultans: Richard I fought Saladin, St Louis was taken prisoner and ransomed, King Edward of England fought the Saracens in Syria. This information, all taken from Hayton,[24] follows the chronicle tradition of lists of rulers while also offering a concordance with European history. Mandeville even gives a rare date: Tripoli was taken in 1289.

This brings us to contemporary history, in his use of which Mandeville preserves the same Christian-Saracen polarity. Christian holdings are stressed. The king of Hungary (Louis I, 1342-82) is a powerful expansionist:

> And the king of Hungary is a very powerful and very brave lord, and he holds a very large great land; for he holds Hungary, Slavonia and the greater part of Comenia, and Bulgaria, which is called the land of the Bulgars, and he holds a

24 Hayton, *Flos historiarum*, Book IV, vi-ix (ed. C. Deluz, in *Croisades et Pèlerinages*, pp. 803-78).

great part of the kingdom of Russia, which he has made a duchy that extends as far as the land of Niflan and borders Prussia.[25]

Cyprus is Christian, the Hospitallers hold Rhodes, and Crete, as Mandeville anachronistically asserts, belongs to the Genoese - in fact it had been ruled by the Venetians since 1211.

The Sultan of Egypt, on the other hand,

> is lord of a kingdom [five kingdoms] which he has conquered and appropriated to himself by force. This is the kingdom of Canopat or the kingdom of Egypt, and the kingdom of Jerusalem, of which David and Solomon were kings; and the kingdom of Aleppo in the land of Hamath; and the kingdom of Syria, of which the city of Damascus was the capital; and the kingdom of Arabia, which belonged to one of the three who went to present gifts to Our Lord when he was born; and many others he holds in his hand. And along with this he is the Caliph; which is a very great affair.[26]

We are treated to a long ethnohistorical account of the Sultanate, taken from William of Tripoli, Vitry and Hayton, followed by a description of the Sultan's magnificent estate. This includes an army of 20,000 soldiers, plus at least 5,000 men he can raise outside Egypt. Each of his many emirs governs four to five hundred men; Mandeville is exaggerating Hayton's number of one to two hundred men. Altogether the Sultan is presented as a formidable enemy in the event of a new crusade such as that called for in the Prologue.

Yet Christian hopes may be raised by the presence of a great Christian empire in the East: that of Prester John. The first documented reference to the famous, though unfortunately fictitious figure was in the twelfth-century Chronicle of Otto von Freisingen, who wrote that the Nestorian king 'Johannes Presbyter' had won a victory over the Persians and Medes

25 'Et est le Roy de Hongrie moult puissant et moult vaillant sires, et tient moult grant terre forment; car il tient Hongrie, Sclauonie, et des Comains la plus grande partie, et Bulgarie, que on appelle la terre des Bougres, et tient du royaume de Rousie grant partie, dont il a fait duche qui dure iusques a la terre de Niflan et marchist a Pruce'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 232.

26 'Le Soudanc est sires de vn royaume [v roialmes] que il a conquis et approprie a li par force. Cest le royaume de Canopat ou le royaume degypte; et le royaume de Iherosolmitam, dont Dauid et Salemon furent roys; et le royaume de Halape en la terre de Emath; et le royaume de Surie, dont la cite de Damas fut chief; et le royaume darrabe, qui fu a lun des trois qui alerent faire present a nostre seigneur quant il fut nez; et pluseurs autres tient en sa main. Et auecques ce est il Caliphes, qui est moult grant chose'. *op. cit.*, p. 246. Cf. Hayton, *Flos historiarum*, IV, x.

before Edessa was captured by the Saracens in 1141. This was in fact a garbled account of the victory of the Turkish Qara-Khitai over the Seljuk Sultan Sanjar in 1141.[27] The legend was furthered by the forged *Letter of Prester John*, supposedly addressed to Manuel I of Byzantium and forwarded to Frederick Barbarossa about 1165.[28] Drawing freely on the Alexander legends, the *Letter* described the amazing Empire of Prester John in Greater India, full of monsters, marvels and astonishing riches. The populace was Christian, worshipping St Thomas of India.

The *Letter* proved astonishingly popular - over 100 manuscripts survive - and fired the European imagination for centuries, although there were no immediate attempts to find the emperor. The legend arose against the background of the crusades, and Jacques de Vitry wrote in 1217:

> I believe that there are more Christians than Muslims living in Islamic countries. The Christians of the Orient, as far away as the land of Prester John, have many kings, who, when they hear that the crusade has arrived, will come to its aid and wage war on the Saracens.[29]

The importance of a possible ally on the other side of the Muslim empire was obvious, and once the Mongol conquests opened the Asian routes to the West the hunt for Prester John was on. Marco Polo thought he had found him in Ong Khan, a Christian Turk killed by Chinggis Khan in 1200; both Carpini, sent on an embassy to the Mongol Khan in 1245, and Rubruck, on a similar mission in 1253, hoped that they had traced him. By the late fourteenth century, however, Prester John's kingdom had begun to emigrate to Ethiopia - one of the three Indias - where it remained, until by the mid-fifteenth century 'Prester John' meant the King of Abyssinia.

Mandeville's chief source for the legend, apart from the *Letter* itself, is Odoric's journal of his own voyage to the Far East in 1330. Odoric, the last traveller to locate Prester John in Asia, believed him to be a king of the Onguts, near the lands of the Great Khan. He disparagingly remarked that, 'not one hundredth part is true of what is told of him as if it were undeniable'.[30] Mandeville strongly disagrees, preferring to retain and expand upon the marvels of the legend. His account can only loosely be

27 Cf. Hamilton, B. (1996), 'Continental Drift: Prester John's Progress through the Indies', in *Prester John: the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes*, pp. 237-70.

28 The *Letter* was forged in order to lend support to Barbarossa in his opposition to Pope Alexander III, perhaps by Christian, Archbishop of Mainz, who was supposed to have translated it from Greek into Latin. Pope Alexander's reply in 1177 was probably also false, written to refute the forgery; cf. Hamilton, 'Continental Drift', p. 183.

29 Quoted by Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

30 Translation by Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, Vol. II, pp. 244-5.

called 'historical', in the sense that parts of it are written in a historiographical manner. According to the *Book*, Prester John controls 72 provinces, each with its own king, many days' journey beyond Cathay. His army is vast; each of his 13 golden crosses used as standards is guarded by 10,000 knights and 100,000 foot soldiers. His palace and his chief city of Buse in the land of Pentexoire are unimaginably luxurious.

Yet even this marvellous monarch is no match for one yet greater: the Great Khan of Cathay.

> Under the firmament there is no other lord as great or as powerful as the Great Khan, neither on the world nor beneath it. Neither Prester John, who is emperor of Upper India, nor the Sultan of Babylon nor the Emperor of Persia all together have any power against him, neither in riches nor in nobility, for in all this he surpasses all the earthly princes of the world. So it is a great shame and pity that he does not believe firmly in God.[31]

It is indeed a pity that this supreme emperor of the world is not a Christian. The Khan's lands are a year's (in some versions seven years') travel across, divided into twelve provinces each of which contains 2,000 cities and countless towns. This account of the Khan's estate is again taken from Odoric, although the author of the *Book* also uses Hayton and Vincent of Beauvais' version of Carpini when detailing the Khan's lineage, relatives and Tartar methods of warfare.

It is at this point that Mandeville's treatment of his subject begins to follow chronicle historiography, as it did when referring to the Egyptian Sultan. Chronicles were 'by far the most popular medieval historiographical genre, encompassing the wide spectrum of works from Eusebius' pioneering codification of dates and facts to the comprehensive and narrative portraits of the past and finally to histories limited to regions or states during the centuries in which the universal scope of life was merely referred to or hinted at'.[32] In this context the author's choice of birthplace for his *persona* is significant. Mandeville was seen as a historian at least partly because of his association with St Alban's, famous within and without England as a centre for the writing of chronicle history.

[31] 'Par dessoubz le firmament na point de seigneur si grant ne si poissant comme est le Grant Cham, ne dessus terre ne dessouz. Ce nest mie Prestre Iehan, qui est empereur de la haute Inde, ne le soudan de Babiloine ne lempereur de Persie trestous ensemble nont nulle poissance enuers lui, ne de richesce ne de noblesce, car en tout ce il passe tous les principaux terriens du monde. Dont cest grant damaige et pities quil ne croient fermement en Dieu'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 368.

[32] Breisach, E. (1983), *Historiography*, p. 103.

Mandeville's 'chronicle' style falls into the category of 'comprehensive and narrative portraits of the past', as can be seen from the substantial chapter devoted to the history of the Mongols, their wars and succession. Mandeville has made many errors in his account of the relatives of Chinggis Khan and the length of Kublai's reign (35 years rather than 42), but historical accuracy is not vital to his narrative purpose. The chapter is strewn with stories about the chief protagonist, Chinggis Khan, and one tale in particular has an interesting moral: when Chinggis was dying, he gathered his twelve sons around him and asked them to try and break three arrows tied together. When they failed, he told the youngest to snap the arrows singly, which was easily done. The Khan then said,

> My children, thus is it with you. For as long as you are bound together with the three bonds of love, loyalty and concord, none will be able to harm you. But if you are loosed from these bonds, so that one does not help the other, you will be destroyed and put to death. So remember and love one another; thus you will be lords and sovereigns and loved by all.[33]

This moral could well serve as an exemplum for the warring Christian kings whom Mandeville castigated in the Prologue. Seymour observes that a close parallel to this story is found in Lydgate's prose treatise *The Serpent of Division* (c. 1422), in which the Roman Senate is presented with a horse's tail, the hairs of which can only be pulled out one by one.[34] Seymour believes that this story could have been developed from Mandeville, but Aesop's fable involving a bundle of sticks was the source for a widespread medieval story - and Lydgate had translated Aesop's *Fables* himself.

The virtue of unity is underlined a few sentences further on. Mangu Khan, a Christian, sent his brother to win the Holy Land and give it to the Christians, and the attempt was only thwarted by the Khan's death. Mandeville omits the fact that Batu Khan, as Hayton said, had invaded Europe as far as Germany in 1240-4, and that Hulagu certainly had no intention of delivering the Holy Land to anyone else. For the author of the *Book*, the Tartars are potential allies almost as much as Prester John and even if they are not at present aiding Christianity, their history still has many lessons to teach us.

[33] 'Mes enfans, ainsi est il de vous. Car tant com vous serez ensemble liez des trois liens damours, de loiar cuer et concorde, nulz ne vous pourra greuer. Mais se vous estes desseures de ces lienz, que li vns nayde a lautre, vous serez destruis et mis a mort. Si vous ensouuiengne et ames lun lautre; si seres seigneurs et souuerains et amez de tous'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 358.

[34] Seymour, *Mandeville's Travels*, p. 251, n. 164/27.

History is used to illustrate a similar point in the tale of King Saures (Sharpur II, d. 379). This king of Persia trapped the local Christians in a valley and was about to slaughter them, when God responded to their prayers by sending a cloud of darkness to cover the king and his host. In Hayton, the source of this story, the king had ordered all his subjects to sacrifice to idols; some Christians were martyred, some complied and others ran away into the mountains. Mandeville, on the contrary, presents the Christians as united in their faith and extracts a moral echoed elsewhere in the *Book*:

> they can well say that all good Christians ought to be more devout towards our Lord than they are; for without a doubt, if it were not for their wickedness and sin, they would be lords of the whole world. For the banner of our Lord is always unfurled and prepared everywhere to help his good friends ... Thus we can see clearly that, if we served well, loyally and steadfastly, in order to be good and blessed men, none could last against us.[35]

History has once more proven that Christians united could rule the world.

There is one more extensive historical anecdote in the *Book*. It concerns the Old Man of the Mountains, Gatholonabes and his Assassins. These were men whom he invited to his mountain castle, where there was a wonderful garden, full of fountains running with milk, honey and wine, lovely youths and maidens, mechanical birds and music. The victim was given a drugged drink and taken to the garden, supposedly that of Paradise, and told he could return only if he killed a certain person on Gathonolabes' orders. As a result the Assassins were greatly feared until the rich men of the surrounding countries laid siege to the castle and killed the Old Man.

The story of the Assassins, brought back by crusaders,[36] was well known in Europe, although the element of the garden seems to be Arabic. The founder of the Assassins was Hasan ibn Sabbah,[37] who started his operations in a remote mountain valley in 1096. The Order was eliminated by Hulagu in 1256. The main part of this story seems to have been taken

[35] 'il peuent bien dire que tous bons Crestiens deuroient estre plus deuos enuers nostre Seigneur quil ne sont; car senz doubte, ce nestoit la mauuaistie et le pechie deulz, ilz fussent seigneurs de tout le monde. Car la baniere nostre Seigneur est tousiours desploiee et appareilliee par tout pour aidier a ses bons amis ... Si que nous pouons veoir appertement que, se nous voulions bien seruir, loiaument et de ferme cuer, pour estre bons eureus, nuls ne pourroit durer contre nous'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 377-8.

[36] Accounts were written by Benjamin of Tudela (1164-73), William of Tyre and Jacques of Vitry. William of Rubruck and Marco Polo also referred to the Assassins in Persia. Cf. Metlitzki, D. (1977), *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*, p. 223.

[37] Hodgson, M.G.S. (1955), *The Order of the Assassins*, equates Ibn Sabbah with 'Gatholonabes'; cf. Metlitzki, *Matter of Araby*, p. 230, n. 30.

from Odoric, who did not mention the mechanical birds, the youths or the name Gatholonabes. It has been argued that Mandeville was drawing on an oriental source, but this is unclear.[38] In any case, he places the tale in a vague past 'not long ago', linked to no specific date or ruler, more legend than history despite the fact that there is a basis in historical fact. It is a reminder both of the true Paradise awaiting the Christian faithful and of the Earthly Paradise, gaining more force from being placed immediately preceding the account of the infernal Vale Perilous.

Mandeville is usually vague as to dates; the only precise dates he gives are those of Mohammed's reign (509 AD) and of the fall of Tripoli (1289). He does sometimes give an approximate indication as to the period - 'from the time of Abraham', 'the time of Melchisedech' - but more often he uses even vaguer terms: 'once', 'now', 'a long time ago'.[39] Although he twice claims to have used local 'chronicles' or 'writings' - in his account of the Pyramids and the legend of Seth - he does not usually base his facts on authority and never gives his sources unless they are biblical. He often uses the phrases 'some say' or 'it is said', giving no indication of whether this should be interpreted as doubt on his part. The 'common opinion' linked to local written evidence is authority enough for him to decide that the Pyramids are indeed Joseph's granaries rather than tombs.

Evidently the *Book*'s historical elements are not intended as history *per se*, an itemisation of dry facts. Mandeville followed medieval historiographical custom in presenting moral exempla drawn from the past, but historiography was not his main concern. The *Book* is above all a pilgrimage, and it is as the history of that pilgrimage's itinerary that the past is important. Even the lengthy chronicle passages are not simply intended as diverting tales; each, as I have shown, has its part to play in Mandeville's syncretic world-view.

This distinction was too subtle for many of the *Book*'s audiences, and few of them seem to have appreciated the work's use and adaptation of historiographical modes. Certain redactors of the text made significant changes and interpolations to Mandeville's synthesis. It is obvious that these authors were among those who once more ignored or were unaware of the complicated intentions of the author.

Of the English versions only two are worth studying in the context of the *Book* as history. The Bodley Version is as usual abridged, with no

[38] Metlitzki, *Matter of Araby*, pp. 226-31, mentions an Arabic tale related by Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282), which mentions both subterranean channels and young men. Both Metlizki and Deluz argue that this is evidence of Mandeville having garnered the story from local legend on the spot.

[39] On the frequency of such phrases, cf. Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 192.

specific treatment of the historical aspect. The Egerton Version contains one or two interesting changes and additions, in particular its transposition of the names Shem and Ham in the division of the world in order to conform with the usual tradition. It also adds brief references to Hercules and Achilles but is otherwise unhelpful. It is, perhaps paradoxically, the Metrical Version which is most informative as to the development of Mandeville's historical comments. The Royal Version is also interesting for its comparison of the *Book* to Higden's *Polychronicon* in the Papal Interpolation discussed earlier in the context of Mandeville's geography.

The Metrical Version betrays its author's considerable interest in the subject of history. Not only is it written in a format occasionally devoted to chronicle historiography[40] but it chooses to develop those parts of the *Book* which are particularly reminiscent of this style. Accordingly, the author omits most of Mandeville's general biblical history of the world, mentioning Adam as one of the Patriarchs, Noah's sons only in the context of Jaffa's founding by Japhet, and excising all references to Seth, Cain, the Dry Tree, the effects of the Flood, Antichrist and the Second Coming. Some space is allowed the Tower of Babel[41] and the Temple of Solomon, but these are exceptions to the rule. Otherwise only hagiographic details are retained, sometimes being expanded as in the case of St John the Evangelist. Nor are historical exempla used for moral purposes. Even the statue of Justinian is replaced by the mention in Rome of a statue of the sun god holding a golden orb, 'In tokene þat Rome was chieff cite / Of alle this worlde vnto se'.[42]

The author is thus obviously uninterested in Mandeville's preoccupation with humanity, redemption and morality, preferring to stress the importance of chronicles as authorities:

> Lesteneth and ye shalle weten / Howe in croniclis it is written /
> Fro the time þat God the worlde bigan / Til þat Rome was makid than /
> Was iiii.ml. and cccc. yere / And iiii. and fiffti ferre ne nere. /
> And fro the fundacioun of þat toun / Vnto Cristis incarnacioun /
> Were vii. hundrid yere and fiffti also, / Beth written in þe croniclis and no mo.[43]

[40] Cf. the *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, ed. Zettl, E. (1934), EETS 196. Examples of such rapid surveys of English history are fairly common.

[41] The fifteenth-century Harley Version, probably written at Reading Abbey, also finds this important and adds an extract from Bede: 'Et quare de ista famosa Babilone fit iam sermo noster, vnum verbum inserere quod in *Maundeville* non vidi sed in cronicis repperi. Dicit enim Beda, *De Ymagine Mundi*, quod Nembrot ...'. Seymour, *Metrical Version*, p. 160, ll. 21-3.

[42] *op. cit.*, ll. 411-2.

[43] *op. cit.*, ll. 79-88.

While these specific chronicles cannot be identified, Seymour remarks that here and elsewhere, 'there is a general correspondence between the Metrical Version ... and Capgrave's *þe Solace of Pilgrimes* and *Chronicle of England*, and it seems possible that both men followed identical sources'.[44] We do know that the author drew heavily on the twelfth-century *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* and the thirteenth-century encyclopaedist Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De proprietatibus rerum*.

The redactor of the Metrical Version pays particular attention to the former work, using it to insert a long interpolation on Rome and its history. After the siege of Troy, Romulus and Remus, the sons of Aeneas, left with seven other kings and founded Rome. These events are given a historical concordance with Old Testament reigns:

> And þat time regned, I vndirstonde, / In Ierusalem and Iewerie londe /
> Kinge Achaz and kinge Ozie, / And Ioathan and Ezechie.[45]

Rome itself is full of references to its rulers, linked to their palaces and other places of note. In fact the Metrical Version is fond of listing famous men. The seven kings of cities by the Tiber before Aeneas are named but confused with Troy. The philosophers of Mount Athos have become the Seven Sages; this is the only reference to Aristotle. In a short allusion to Old Testament history, the Patriarchs are listed with their wives:

> Adam þe first and Abraham, / Isaac and Iacob lieth with ham, /
> And with hem liggeth her foure wifis / That thei had in her lifis, /
> Eve þe frist and than Sarra, / Rebecca the third, the fourþe Lya.[46]

The author also cannot resist adding a list of the Nine Worthies: David, Joshua, Judas Maccabeus, Alexander, Hector, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, Arthur and Godfrey de Bouillon. All of these except Arthur and Hector are actually given more space in the *Book*. In this sense, the Metrical Version makes less use of history than Mandeville. We are told little about each personage apart from their name, and they are not connected to specific places in the knight's itinerary.

The redactor does, however, betray an intense interest in his national history, in keeping with the rise of national historiography in the fifteenth

[44] Seymour, *Metrical Version*, p. 81n. Capgrave's *Chronicle* (c. 1464) was compiled from Walsingham's *Chronica Majora* (1376-1420), itself intended as a continuation to Matthew Paris' (d. 1259) work of the same name on the history of England to 1392. Cf. Gransden, A. (1982), *Historical Writing in England*, Vol. 2, pp. 124, 390, ch. 5 *passim*.)

[45] *op. cit.*, ll. 119-22. These are common chronicle references.

[46] *op. cit.*, ll. 1110-15.

century throughout Europe. There are several interpolated references to Britain and its real and mythic history. Brutus, the founder of Britain according to the *Brut*, is mentioned in almost all English chronicles referring to early history; here he is one of the Trojans fleeing the city. Horn and Hengist are also figures from the early history of the island: 'Here of Engist and eke of Horn / In Saxone were tho bretheren born'.[47] The tale of Merlin's magical building of Stonehenge from the stones of giants was also commonly reported in English chronicles:

> And afftirwarde longe tyme / Vter Pendragon and Merlyne / Thoo stoones froo thens they fette / And here in Engelond thei ham sette / Vppon the plaine of Salisbury.[48]

Julius Caesar is noteworthy for having conquered Britain and built the Tower of London:

> That Iulius Cesare þat al þis [land] wan / Of a kinge þat highte Cassibilan. / And when he this lande conquerid hade / The toure of London anone he made, / And þe truage þat longeth to Rome / Beth the Petir Pens þat of þat conquest come.[49]

Finally, the story of St Helen's discovery of the Cross leads to the information that her father King Coel founded the city of Colchester.

These pieces of information are more in the tradition of historical romance writing. The author omits the account of the Sultan and his lineage altogether, which would seem to point to a lack of interest in history for its own sake; we do not know what he might have said of the Khan, as there is a lacuna in the relevant area of the manuscript. On the whole, apart from in the account of Rome, the Metrical Version uses chronicle history in a manner less suited to pure historiography and more reminiscent of romance. Yet at the same time the allusions to ancient history are in keeping with the increased interest in classical antiquity and themes in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. An educated cleric, as the author of the Metrical Version seems to have been, would have drawn such information from contemporary chronicles, among them Higden's *Polychronicon*.

47 Seymour, *Metrical Version*, ll. 2524-5.
48 *op. cit.*, ll. 2131-4.
49 *op. cit.*, ll. 371-5. The association of Peter's Pence with Caesar's tribute from Cassivellaunus is novel; other writers attribute the payment to Ine, Offa II and Aethelwulf. Cf. Seymour, *op. cit.*, p. 90 n. 371.

It is an allusion to this work that makes the Royal Version important here. In one manuscript dating from the late fifteenth century,[50] there appears a version of the Papal Interpolation in which Mandeville's work is compared to Higden's *Polychronicon*:

> Then he had a certain very large book brought in, which he called *Polichronica*, and had read in it many great and wonderful things and even more than were contained in my book.[51]

It is not surprising that an English redactor should decide that the 'book of Latin' referred to in other versions was the *Polychronicon*, the most famous English history of the later Middle Ages. Written by the Benedictine monk Ranulph Higden from c. 1327 to the 1360s, it was an encyclopaedic universal history from the Creation to the author's own day. It covered geography, natural history, ethnography and intellectual history, and its popularity is attested by the fact that over 120 manuscripts survive. Unlike contemporary chronicles, which focused on current events, 'the *Polychronicon* was a mine of information on a great number of subjects, and an essential reference book for the cleric of the time'.[52]

Although the *Polychronicon*'s appeal was originally restricted to educated clergy, John de Trevisa's translation into the vernacular in the 1380s made it accessible to a lay audience. By the fifteenth century it would have been one of the first chronicles to spring to mind when an authoritative work was needed to check the veracity of the *Book*. The encyclopaedic nature of Higden's work would make it a doubly appropriate choice, given Mandeville's similarly all-encompassing use of history.

Thus in at least two of its redactions, dating from opposite ends of the fifteenth century, the *Book* was seen to contain a significant historical element specifically linked to chronicle historiography. It would seem that the continuing popularity of the genre during this period contributed to this attitude, regardless of Mandeville's original intentions. His use of biblical history was ignored in both the Metrical and the Vulgate Latin Versions - although the latter gives the *Book* a more systematically historical slant. While certain key episodes are ignored or changed, more contemporary historiography is encouraged and developed.

50 Durham University MS. Cosin V. iii.7.
51 'Tunc asportari fecit quemdam librum magni voluminis quem appellauit *Policronica*, et fecit in eo legi multa maiora et mirabiliora ac etiam plura quam in libro meo continebantur'. Seymour, *The Bodley Version*, p. 175.
52 Taylor, J. (1966), *The Universal Chronicle of Ranulf Higden*, p. 149. Cf. also Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, Vol. 2, p. 151.

In the first place, the author of the Vulgate Latin Version provides many more dates than the original *Book*. In the account of the Caliphs, the first, Saracon, reigned from 1150 and his son Saladin from 1190, the year Saladin conquered the Holy Land and took it from the Christians. The fall of Acre in1291 is also recorded. Godfrey's capture of Jerusalem took place circa 1100; he and other Christian kings (Baldwin is omitted) 'subdued and gained possession of the Holy City with all the country from the hands of the Saracens, and by this won themselves a great name enduring to the end of ages'.[53]

Some new dates are also added to the account of Mohammed. He was born around 600 AD, and reigned from 612, writing his book in June of that year. Mandeville had given the date of his reign as 509. Mohammed's body was adored for 260 years, before being transferred to Iachrib c. 900. No more dates are given until the Tartar history, where it is recorded that they were enslaved after 1100.[54]

While both of Mandeville's local chronicle references are omitted - neither Seth nor the Pyramids are mentioned - the author interpolates his own authority, comparing the *Book* with Odoric throughout the account of the East.[55] Sometimes Odoric's name is inserted simply in order to confirm a fact, as with the Khan's summer and winter palace, but more often Odoric's account is used to correct or give an alternate reading to the *Book*. In spite of his obviously careful reading, the author does not seem to have realised that Odoric is one of Mandeville's sources, believing instead that the accounts bear each other out.

The most substantial use of Odoric in the Latin text occurs at the crossing of the Vale Perilous, where Mandeville's far more humble revised story is replaced with Odoric's original tale. At the end of the passage, the knight himself supposedly mentions Odoric's book, which he has compared to his own adventures.[56] This has the effect of making Sir John Mandeville

53 '... qui circa annum incarnationis Domini, 1100. debellauerunt et obtinuerunt sanctam vrbem cum tota patria ex manibus Sarracenorum, et per hoc conquisierunt sibi magnum nomen, vsque in finem saeculi duraturum'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 125.

54 This is given as 80 years before Mandeville's time of writing in the Continental Version and 160 years in the Cotton. Hayton does not give a date, while Beauvais says the rise of the Tartars took place in 1202.

55 This is the case in two of the incunable editions and Hakluyt's 1589 edition.

56 'Odericus ad literam hic terminat suum librum: non fuit tot perpessus in valle, sicut ego. Anno Domini 1331. Ianuarij nono, migrauit ad Christum, in conuentu Minorum: cuius vitam statim in fine, et vsque nunc claris miraculis diuina prouidentia approbat, et commendat, prout continebatur in quaterno, a quo concordantias hic superseminaui'. *op. cit.*, Vol. 9, pp. 43-4.

a scholar as well as a man of action, although it is the result of the redactor's own comparative research.

Sometimes the corrections are minor: Odoric places the city of Menke four leagues from the river Dalay rather than five; he calls the city of 'Laucherim', 'Leuyim'; he says that of the Khan's three wives, two are concubines. On the other hand, the Latin Version's author correctly inserts Odoric's claim that the 'height' ('pinna') in the middle of the palace is in fact a jar ('pigna'). Some of Odoric's observations on the Khan's hunting and the city of Cassam which are not found in the *Book* are also added to the text, quoting their source each time: the Khan shoots only five arrows, when hunting he uses twelve gerfalcons, and Cassam is the best province in the world.

There are other alterations to historical details. In the tale of the Enclosed Tribes there is no mention of Gog and Magog. A short sentence at the end of the story of the Assassins adds verisimilitude to the story by making the knight visit the ruins of the garden himself. The author also uses other sources to contradict Mandeville's inversion of biblical authority in his derivation of the Khan's title (Can) from Ham:

> I have heard in the region of Jerusalem that he was so called because of Cham [Ham], the son of Noah; but in the land of Cathay I received a different and pure truth of this matter. For the two names are also written differently, because Noah's son Cham is written with four characters, of which the last is M, and this Can with only three, of which the last is N.[57]

Thus the author of the Latin Version had a clear sense of history, inserting additional dates for historical events already mentioned in the *Book* and comparing the text to Odoric's on several occasions. Although the redactor's primary aim is clearly not historiography, he nevertheless shows an interest in the issue by his use of such historical information. Once more, though, Mandeville's authorial intention - history in the service of the sacred geography so carefully developed throughout his work - is ignored completely.

The Danish Version is also an important one in this context. I have found it convenient here to refer both to the version itself and to the works it is associated with in the manuscripts, as well as use of the *Book* by contemporary Danish authors. The Danish Version uses the *Book*

57 'Audieram ego in partibus Ierosolymorum hunc esse sic dictum, a filio Noe, Cham: sed in terra Cathay accepi et aliam, et meram huius rei veritatem. Nam et scribendo haec duo nomina habent differentiam, quod filius Noe Cham scribitur quator elementis, quorum vltimum est M. et iste Can tribus tantum, quorum vltimum est N'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 260.

somewhat differently to the redactions discussed above. It is a translation of the Vulgate Latin Version, made in Denmark in 1444, with one copy known to have been made in 1459 and two copies and a summary made in the late sixteenth century. It contains the Ogier interpolations common to the version; here, though, Ogier is not seen simply as a Christian knight conquering pagan countries. He has become the Danish national hero whose conquests are a source of Danish pride, at a time when Denmark is no longer a major power. The *Book* is turned into a source of national history, a major reason, as Bradley[58] argues, for the work's popularity in Denmark in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

This view is borne out by the association of copies of the *Book* with works of legendary history. One may originally have been bound with a Legendary Chronicle of the Danish kings.[59] Another is followed by 'An anthology of various ancient authors' books, concerning people of certain kinds who in ancient times went forth under arms from these nordic lands and subsequently gained sway over many lands and realms in the world'.[60] Known as the *Urdvandrere*, this early sixteenth-century anthology is considered the work of the Danish historiographer Christiern Pedersen (d. 1556). It was also very probably part of a codex containing another copy of the *Book*.[61]

Mandeville is in fact cited as an authority by the *Urdvandrere* itself, along with historians including Isidore and Vincent of Beauvais:

> All these things which are written before and follow hereafter are extracted from three bishops' chronicles, namely Isidore's, Anthony's and Vincent's, *Item*, from Bartholomew, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, from *Fasciculus Temporum*, and from the *Itinerarium* of Sir John the Englishman, *Item*, from Saxo *in extenso* and from the *Gesta Danorum*, and therefore shall no-one say that it is idle gossip or falsehood.[62]

The *Urdvandrere* is a strongly nationalistic account of the Danish people, who

> constrained the world's captains, emperors and kings under Danish power and tribute and they extended Danish might and sovereignty throughout all

[58] Bradley, S.A J. (1978), '*Mandevilles Rejse*: Some aspects of its changing role in the later Danish Middle Ages', in *Medieval Scandinavia* 9, pp. 146-63. The following translations are Bradley's.

[59] SKB MS. M 37. *op. cit.*, pp. 156-7.

[60] SKB MS. 306. *op. cit.*, p. 158.

[61] Odense Landsarkivet MS. E III 6.

[62] Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

> Christendom, across the sea and throughout heathendom and to the great land of India and the furthest ends of the world, further than the Romans, Greeks or any other of the world's commanders or peoples have done at any time in the world.[63]

It includes chapters on three Danish heroes, the Roman emperor Aurelian, Ogier the Dane and Prester John, although the material on the latter two could be drawn from the *Fasciculus Temporum* as well as Mandeville.

The contemporary Franciscan scholar Peder Olsen also used the *Book*, this time in its Latin Version, parts of which he summarised in his *Collectanea* for a Danish history up to 1340. He too paid special attention to Ogier and Prester John. The importance of such information on ancient Danish heroes to historians at the time can be seen in Pedersen's 1534 Chronicle of Ogier the Dane - which does not mention Mandeville - in which he states, with some nostalgic retrospection:

> How much the greater pleasure and joy should all Danes rightly have in it, when they hear, see or read the same chronicle about their own countryman, that he lived so nobly and strove so manfully in foreign lands and realms, that they [these kings], on account of this great manfulness of his, should have had set out and printed many thousands of his chronicles, from which young men both there in those lands and here in his own fatherland, may take good example and instruction, so as to use them manfully in battle and war both within the land and likewise in other lands and realms abroad, as Danish men did in former times, as one finds clearly set out in many foreign and ancient Latin chronicles, which surely ought to be held worthy of belief, even though there appear in them many remarkable particulars which seem to many to be impossible.[64]

To conclude, it would appear that in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Denmark the *Book* was seen primarily as a source of historical information on Danish national heroes. As in the Latin Version, Mandeville's views of history and its purpose have been superseded by other concerns in keeping with the climate of Danish historiography at the time. The *Book*'s tolerance and acceptance of diversity are transmuted into a nationalistic celebration of Danish conquests and glory.

Mandeville and his *Book* are also mentioned or used as a source of information in other historical works. This is especially the case with English authors, although they do not necessarily see Mandeville himself as a historian. Thomas Walsingham, for instance, author of a history of

[63] Bradley, 'Mandevilles Rejse', p. 159.

[64] *op. cit.*, p. 162.

England to 1392 continuing Matthew Paris' *Chronica Majora*, may have been influenced by the *Book* in his version of Dictys Cretensis' account of the Trojan War, in which he details the wonders of Ethiopia and its people 'for the amusement of those who do not know about that race of that country'.[65] Walsingham was a monk of St Albans, the supposed birthplace of Mandeville - who was later mentioned in the monastery's *Annales* of 1421-40.[66] Walsingham's occasional inclusion of geographical details in his chronicles show that curious facts about other countries were not out of place in histories, as the works of the encyclopaedists had already demonstrated.

John Rous' indebtedness to Mandeville in the late fifteenth century is more certain. Rous, working under the patronage of the Beauchamps and the Neville family, wrote his *Historia Regum Anglie* between 1480 and 1486. He cited many sources for his work, among them the historians Bede, William of Malmesbury, Gerald of Wales, Matthew Paris, Caesarius of Heisterbach, Vincent of Beauvais and Ranulph Higden. He mentioned John Mandeville as well as other non-historical writers. Rous was interested in British and foreign legends, and his work contains digressions on subjects of interest to him. One such subject is that of giants, and he inserted the story of Andromeda, who was confused in the Middle Ages with the monster from which she was rescued:

> [In] Jaffa (so called after Japhet son of Noah, who built it and named it after himself) great poles may be seen to this day, which seem to hang from a certain cliff, and to which boats were moored. There are also chains of amazing size where a giant named Andromadus was held captive, one of whose ribs extended in length to forty feet, as can still be seen. That worthy man Bernard [de Breydenbach] saw this rib on the first of July 1483 ... I also remember reading in the *Travels* of John Mandeville (an Englishman born at St Albans and a doctor of medicine) that he had seen this same rib of the giant Andromadus.[67]

Again, the *Book* is used for encyclopaedic information by a historian, this time one who was not writing a contemporary record of events but rather allowing his own curiosity to appear in his history.

One final example of a historian's interest in the *Book* is provided by Ridder's research into the Strasburg author Jacob Twinger von

65 Gransden, *Historical Writing*, Vol. 2, p. 127.

66 John Amundesham's *Annales Monasterii S. Albani* (ed. H.T. Riley, *RS* 1871), Vol. II, p. 306. See below, pp. 272-3.

67 Gransden, *op. cit.*, p. 322, quoting from *Johannis Rousi Antiquarii Warwicensis Historia Regum Angliae*, ed. Thomas Hearne (1716), Oxford, p. 4.

Königshofen (1346-1420).[68] A priest, canon of St Thomas in Strasburg, archivist, librarian and chronicler, Twinger owned a copy of the von Diemeringen Version of Mandeville's *Book*. He was the author of a history of the world, among other chronicles. In his work he, like Rous, moves from a chronological to a more episodic structure, and there are many thematic similarities to Mandeville in his choice of subject, including Old Testament history, Trojan and Alexander material and a chapter on the history of Mohammed. It is not surprising that a compiler such as Twinger would possess a copy of the *Book*.

Thus we have seen how Mandeville was of interest to several historians, although not so much as a historian himself rather than as a natural choice of encyclopaedic reference book. It cannot be argued that his style influenced historical writing, since thematic, compilatory historiography was nothing new. While data from the historiographical sections of the *Book* are used by other authors, Mandeville's own sense of history goes completely unremarked.

Other types of audience differed in their views. Writers of marginalia often picked out historical details from the *Book*, although they did not usually confine themselves to one type of history. They marked classical, biblical and later events almost indiscriminately, although some, being more interested in the itinerary up to and including the Holy Land, covered a more limited period. The Insular BN MS. ff. 5633, for instance, notes Troy, Alexander of Macedonia, Aristotle and Hermes Trismegistus before moving on to Elijah, Jaffa, Gaza and Nimrod and finally the Saracen Caliphs, European kings and the loss of Tripoli in the year 1289.[69] Thus this reader covers three distinct kinds of history, an attitude repeated even in those who annotated the text far more.

Certain historical figures are constantly noted. The philosopher Aristotle[70] is a prime example, as is Japhet, founder of the oldest city in the world[71] and Nimrod, builder of the tower of Babel.[72] Old Testament figures are generally popular, particularly heroes like Samson[73] or kings such as

68 Ridder, *Jean de Mandevilles 'Reisen'*, pp. 280-4.

69 ff. 12, 13, 17, 17v, 18v, 22v, 20-20v.

70 Cf. BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 5; BN MS. ff. 10723, f. 5; BN MS. ff. 5633, f. 12; BL MS. Sloane 1464, f. 8; Cotton Titus C. xvi, f. 7v; Cambridge Fitzwilliam MS. CFM 23, f. 14.

71 BN MS. ff. 10723, f. 9; BN Arsenal MS. 3219, f. 9v; BN MS. ff. 5633, f. 17v, among others.

72 BN MS. ff. 10723, f. 12; BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 42; BN MS. ff. 5633, f. 22v; BL MS. Sloane 1464, ff. 21, 118; Cotton Titus C. xvi, f. 17v.

73 BN MS. 10723, f. 9v; BN Arsenal MS. 3219, f. 10; BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 8v; BN MS. ff. 5633, f. 18v.

David and Solomon,[74] although the stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and Lot are also frequently annotated. In the New Testament, the birth of Christ is naturally considered important, along with details on the age of the Virgin at her marriage, childbirth and death.[75] There is also interest in the three Herods,[76] the names and route of the Three Kings[77] and the names of the three children in the furnace,[78] a more detailed form of history than the *Book*'s usual simple allusions to events.

Several annotators are also interested in the more recent history of the Holy Land, noting Mandeville's Christian/Saracen opposition in the two most obvious places, the history of the Caliphs and King Louis, Richard and Edward, and Baldwin's building of Mount Royal. There does not appear to be any English versus French nationalism evident in the manuscripts; Louis, Richard and Edward are mentioned indiscriminately in the Continental, Insular and English Versions.[79]

Despite Christian/Muslim enmity - or perhaps because of it - many marginal notes refer to Mohammed's history and reign. In BN MS. n.a. 10723 Mohammed's first miracle and the time of his reign are noted.[80] BL MS. Harley 4383 notes only the 'mirum machometi',[81] complemented by the note - possibly handwriting practice - in BL Cotton Titus C. xvi that 'Thys machomet reygnid in Arabye the ȝere of our lord'.[82] The only marginal sign in BL Royal 17 C xxxviii is a hand pointing to Mohammed's reign.[83] BL MS. Sloane 1464 notes Mohammed four times, including the story of the murdered hermit.[84]

There is also some interest in the history of the Khans, usually confined to a note on the Khan's name but sometimes, as in BN MS. ff. 10723, going considerably further. This Continental manuscript's annotator mentions both Chinggis Khan's vision of the White Knight and the Tartar lineage.[85] BN MS. ff. 5634 prefers to draw attention to the historical exemplum of the arrows,[86] as do BN MS. n.a. 10723[87] and BL MS. Sloane 1464; the latter notes the Khan's vision, the arrows and the Saracen ruler starved by his greed for gold, also giving the account of the Tartar wars as a 'narratio bona de quod bello'.[88]

Other scattered historical elements are also remarked upon in various manuscripts, including the legend of the Antichrist, the Enclosed Nations and the origin of the name of Prester John. It is therefore apparent that, even when the annotators' interest was not confined to history, this aspect of the *Book* was seen as a major one, incorporating biblical history, ancient and modern rulers and exempla to be noted.

As far as the illustrators of the *Book* were concerned, historical figures and tales were well worth depicting. The *Livre des Merveilles* includes several images devoted to biblical history, including two of Adam and Eve in Paradise, a dramatic rendering of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob's Ladder, the Annunciation accompanied by an Old Testament battle, the Dormition of the Virgin and Antichrist.[89] The artist has also shown Mohammed and his book, the murder of the hermit and Athanasius in prison.[90]

The Great Khan is accorded several images, as befits his status in the *Book*. One of the most impressive is that of him revering the Cross (Ill. 15). The powerfully-built ruler doffs his crown in respect before the cross carried by an acolyte, while a bishop followed by other clergy blesses him. As the Khan's power and riches have already been shown in the previous images, his humility before God and presumed favour of Christianity are accordingly underlined.

The Khan's lineage is also honoured. The tale of Chinggis Khan is told in three consecutive pictures - one of the White Knight visiting the Khan, another of the Khan hiding in the forest from enemy soldiers, and one of his sons and the arrow-test.[91] Finally there is the exemplum of the Saracen king forced to eat gold and jewels.[92] Thus this artist has used history as a valid excuse for the depiction of interesting stories, some widely known and loved, others new and exciting.

74 BL MS. Sloane 1464, ff. 35, 39, 49; BN MS. ff. 1043, f. 33v; BN MS. ff. 20145, f. 32.
75 Cf. especially BL MS. Sloane 1464, f. 61.
76 BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 22; BN MS. ff. 10723, f. 27; BL MS. Harley 4383, f. 19; BL MS. Sloane 1464, f. 48.
77 BN MS. ff. 5634, f. 41; BN MS. n.a. 10723, ff. 21, 47v; BL MS. Harley 4383, f. 15; BL MS. Sloane 1464, ff. 37v, 38, 84; BL MS. 17 B. xliii, f. 59; BL MS. Cotton App. IV, f. 79.
78 MS. Bodley 841, f. 9v; Cambridge Fitzwilliam MS. CFM 23, f. 20; BN MS. ff. 5633, f. 19v.
79 Cf. BN MS. ff. 5634, ff. 9, 27; BN MS. n.a. 10723, f. 10v; BN MS. ff. 5633, ff. 20, 20v; BL MS. Sloane 1464, f. 22v; BL MS. Cotton Titus C. xvi, ff. 15v, 19; BL MS. Royal 13 E. ix, f. 43; BL MS. Harley 4383, f. 16v; Nat. Lib. of Scotland, MS. Adv. 19.1.11, f. 13v.
80 ff. 43v, 44
81 f. 30.
82 f. 59.
83 f. 33v.
84 ff. 77-78v.

85 ff. 71, 73v.
86 f. 61v.
87 f. 72v.
88 ff. 118v, 119v, 121.
89 ff. 157v, 221, 161v, 167, 168v, 163, 168.
90 ff. 174, 177, 178.
91 ff. 199v, 200v, 201.
92 f. 201v.

BL MS. Harley 3954 also contains historical subjects. Its biblical history includes Seth being given the seeds from Paradise, Noah's Ark and Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt.[93] In one scene St Helen discovers the True Cross. Themes from ancient times are Troy, the tomb of Aristotle and the tomb of Hermes.[94] From more recent history there is the statue of Justinian, Athanasius, and the legend of the Enclosed Tribes.[95] This last image shows the kings of Gog and Magog entering the Caspian Mountains with their soldiers.

The Great Khan is again an obvious subject, and his estate is faithfully depicted in the only full-page picture in the manuscript (Ill. 16). He is seated in state at the head of his court, with the nobility at lower tables on either side, lords to the left and ladies to the right. The latter are his three wives, seated on the first, second and third steps below the dais in order of seniority; the upper left-hand table is occupied by the Khan's eldest son. Lesser mortals are crowded together at the foot of the page while trumpeters blow their instruments. All are in European dress; this could be a standard depiction of a king's court, except for one detail: the scribes crouched under the Khan's table, recording his every word.

The artist of BL MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii is rather more static in his rough drawings, and this is apparent in the way he depicts historical figures rather than events. The first picture, that of the statue of Justinian, is followed by equally unmoving kings and saints. The Three Kings Jasper, Melchior and Balthazar wait to present their gifts; the emperor Hadrian joins his hands in prayer, while Solomon bears a sceptre.[96] The three Herods are portrayed with their names and saints' heads at their feet (Ill. 17). Mohammed and Athanasius simply stand there.[97] The only illustrations with some movement are those of Samson destroying the House of the Philistines and Japhet covering the sleeping Noah as Ham raises his robe.[98] This artist presents both biblical and later history as a record of personages rather than the events we are meant to infer from them.

Of Sorg's original woodcuts, only eight can be said to portray historical aspects of the *Book*. Most of these are from the Old Testament: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah's Ark, Abraham and Isaac and Samson.[99] From later times there is only the hanged Judas, Justinian's statue and Mohammed lying on the ground, being treated for epilepsy by a man

[93] ff. 4, 29, 19v.
[94] ff. 4v, 5v, 6, 7.
[95] ff. 2v, 28, 53.
[96] ff. 17v, 18, 21v, 22.
[97] ff. 23, 33, 34v.
[98] ff. 15v, 46, 47.
[99] nos. 610, 630, 634, 623, 592.

applying a flame to his naked foot - a rather surprising image (Ill. 18).[100] De Worde's editions omit the picture of the Ark. Altogether, it is obvious that, for the woodcut artist and the editors who used his prints, history was no more than a marginal interest at best.

The compendia give a completely different picture of reception. The *Book* was bound together with historical works in many works ranging from legendary and biblical history to contemporary chronicles. Many fifteenth-century French and English manuscripts contain national histories. One Continental manuscript appears with a chronicle of the French kings and another with a chronicle of Louis XII.[101] The Insular Bodleian Ashmole 1804 includes the *Prophecies of John of Bridlington* and the *Brut*. Of the Defective Version, one manuscript also contains the *Brut* while another has a chronicle from Brutus to the siege of Rouen; John Page's *Siege of Rouen* appears in a third.[102] Bodleian Laud. 619 gives a chronicle from the Creation to the coronation of Richard II; a Leiden Latin copy has a history of England to the end of Edward III's reign.[103] Bodleian Fairfax 23 contains Edward I's claim to Scotland and a list of Scottish kings. A Vulgate Latin text owned by an English monk c. 1475 contains a *Chronicon Angliae* to 1437.[104]

Other compilations are more general. Glasgow, Hunt. T. 41 contains Guido de Colonna's *Historia destructionis Troiae* and Julius Valerius' *Historia Alexandri Magni*. A Vulgate Latin manuscript from Turin is similar, placing Mandeville with Geraldus Clericus' *Historia Troianae* and Julianus' *Vita Alexandrii Magni*.[105] Cambrigde Uni. Lib. Dd. i.17 is one of two larger English compilations with a pronounced historical bias, containing Geoffrey of Monmouth, Guido de Colonna, Jacques de Vitry, Jacobo de Theramo, Gildas, Hayton and Higden's *Polychronicon*. The other is Royal 13 E. ix, an Insular Latin manuscript of c. 1400 giving Mandeville among a huge variety of Latin historical extracts including lists of Roman Popes and Emperors, British kings from Brutus to Edward III, the *Prophecies of Merlin*, a life of Mohammed, the chronicle of Martinus Polonus, part of the *Polychronicon* and Walsingham's *St Albans Chronicle* to 1393.

[100] nos. 581, 613, 621, 631.
[101] BN MS. ff. 20145, Aix Bib. Mun. 437.
[102] BL Harley 2386, Rawlinson B 216, Bodleian e Musaeo 124.
[103] Egerton 672.
[104] Copenhagen, Kongeliche Bibl. Ny kgl. S. 172.
[105] Turin Bib. Naz. H-III-1.

Some owners linked the *Book* with crusade history: it was bound with the *Gesta Godefridis ducis de Boulyon* at least twice[106] and also with Robertus Monachus' *Historia Hierosolymitana.*[107] An owner of the Vulgate Version was more interested in genealogies, including a *Historia regum Francie et comitum Flandrie*, a *Genealogia ducum Lotharingie*, a compendium of chronicles, an extract from the *Libro gestorum ponitificum Leodienum* and Martinus Polonus' *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum.*[108] Polonus' history and Jordanus of Osnabrug's *De translacione Imperii Romani* were particularly popular in Germany.[109]

German compilers were generally fond of combining the *Book* with history. One owner of the Vulgate Version included it with the *Wars of Charlemagne*, Polonus, Guido de Colonna and other chronicles.[110] An owner of the von Diemeringen Version with similar tastes brought together a Life of Charlemagne, Colonna, verses on German and Roman emperors, prophecies and the *Alexander Romance.*[111] Another used Colonna, the *Alexander Romance*, the *Sächsische Weltcronik* and John of Hildesheim's *Historia Trium Regum*, a popular work on the Three Kings containing descriptions of the monstrous races.[112] The latter was included in two more compilations with von Diemeringen's Mandeville.[113]

The Three Kings bring us to the subject of biblical history, which was also sometimes included with texts of the *Book.* The French-owned BL Harley 3940 gives an Old Testament history from the Creation to Isaac. In this respect the von Diemeringen Version was again popular, being bound in one manuscript with works including Petrus of Poitiers' *Compendium historiae veteris ac novi testamenti*, a tract of the Old and New Testament, the Proverbs of Solomon and the *Gesta Romanorum.*[114] It was also included with a work on the Antichrist.[115]

The most interesting compendium of biblical history is a fifteenth-century manuscript of the von Diemeringen Version written by a monk of

[106] Both the Vulgate Latin Version: New York, MS. owned by H.P. Kraus, and Hamburg, HS Hist. Germ. 31b.

[107] Wiesbaden, Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Cod. Abt. 3004, B 25 and Würzburg, Uni. bibl. M. ch. f. 38.

[108] Rome, Bibl. Vaticana Fon. Chigi F VII 171.

[109] Cf. Giessen, Uni. bibl. MS. 160; Berlin, Staatsbib. HS Diez. C. Fol; Hamburg, HS Hist. Germ. 31b; Berlin, Staatsbibl. HS Lat. Fol. 179; Königsberg Uni. Bibl. 334 (this also includes the *Historia Alexandri Magni*).

[110] Strasbourg, Bibl. Uni. MS. 30.

[111] Coburg, Landesbibl. Sche 16.

[112] Strasbourg, Bibl. Uni. MS. 2119.

[113] Lawrence, Kansas Uni. MS. E 16 and St Gallen, Stiftsbib. 628.

[114] Vienna, Österreichische Nat. bibl. Cod. 12449.

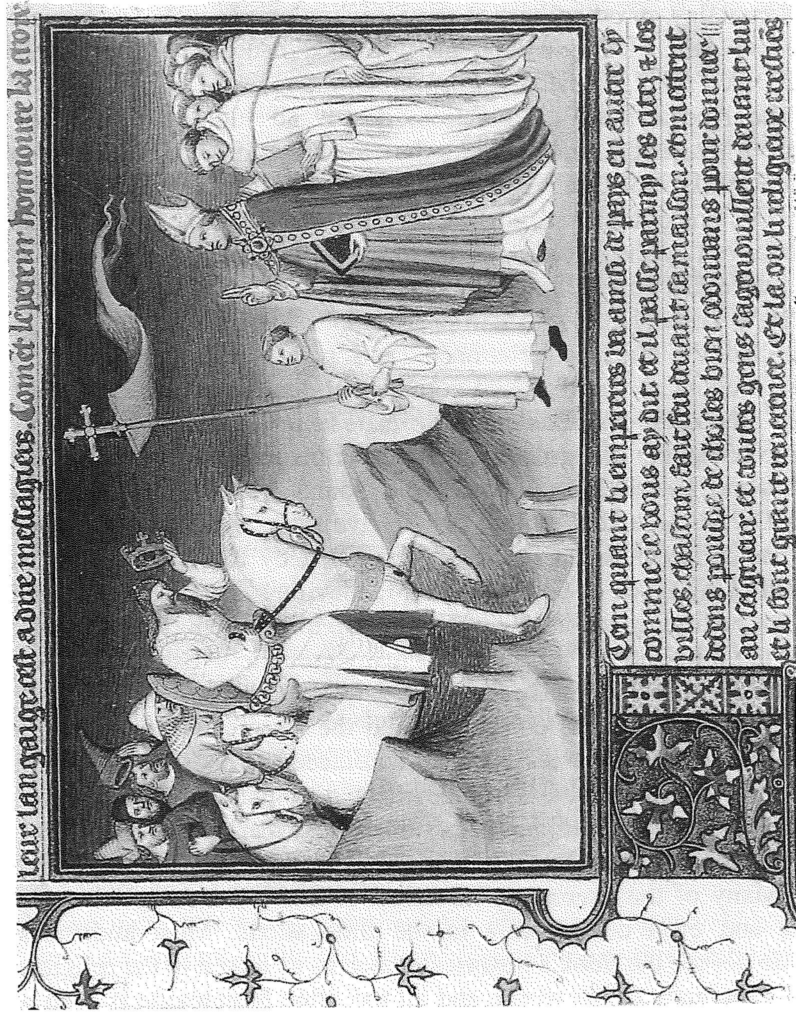
[115] Vienna, Österreichische Nat. bibl. Cod. 2838.

Trier.[116] It contains, in order, part of the Sibylline prophecies, Augustine's *De quantitate animae*, Exodus and the Ten Commandments, the Fifteen Virtues, a Dutch religious piece, a *Lucidarius*, the *Gesta Romanorum*, two texts on the Apocalypse, 'the creation, death and future of mankind', Antichrist, a tract on Judgement, the Resurrection, 'the Heavenly Jerusalem', 'the Tree of Life', extracts from Honorius of Autun's *Speculum ecclesiae*, 15 signs of the Last Judgement, Mandeville and the Redemption. I do not believe that the inclusion of the *Book* in this catalogue of texts on past and future Christian religious history is accidental; it too covers the Old and New Testaments, with particular emphasis on the Latter Days - Antichrist and the Enclosed Nations - and man's redemption. It was presumably this interest in things to come which led the compiler to place Mandeville among the last texts on the ultimate future of mankind.

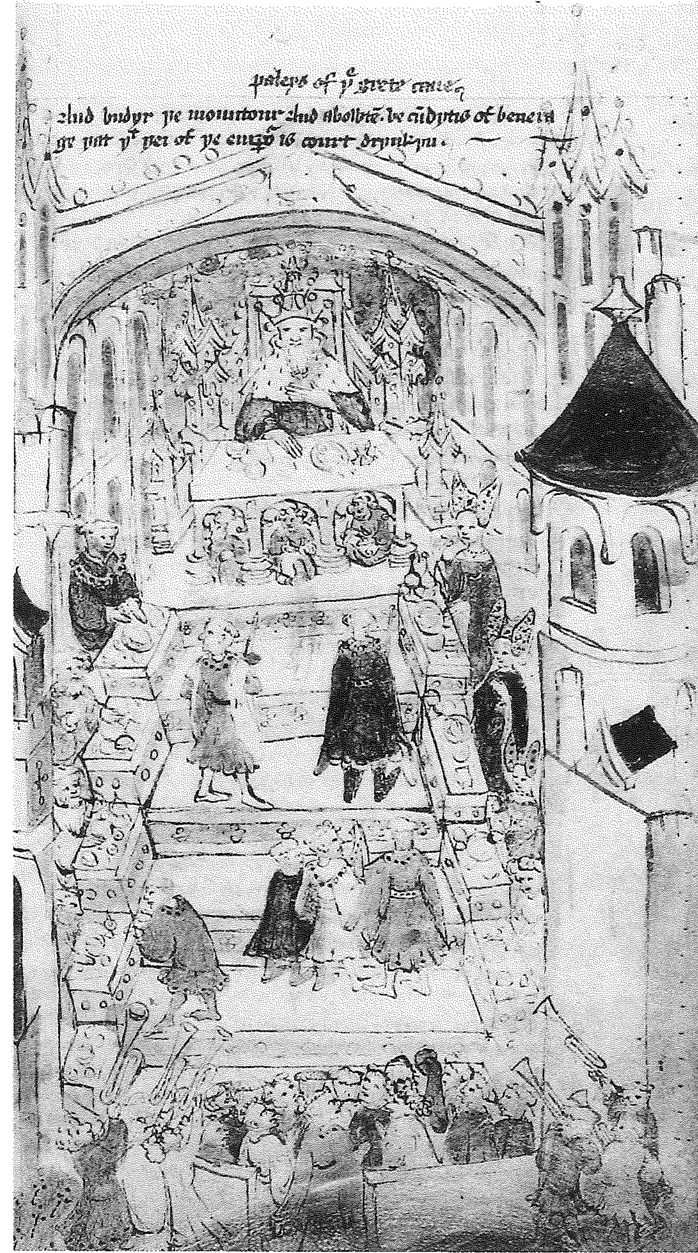
Thus the compilers of a great many manuscripts regarded the *Book* as a historical work. In one case it was even bound with Jacob Twinger's *Strasburg Chronicle*, a text which, as we have seen, may have borrowed from it. The different facets of history provided by the *Book* led to its inclusion in many types of compilation. Mandeville's lists of rulers could be the factor justifying the link with chronicles; his references to Troy and Alexander are reflected in the choices of many compilers. Biblical history, too, has struck a chord with some.

The evidence of both the compendia and the marginalia points to this diversity of reception of the *Book*'s historical facets, as does the use of the work by historians themselves. Mandeville's own purpose is sometimes hinted at by his audiences, as annotators of the text mark dates and events, particularly those of the Holy Land, as an intrinsic part of pilgrimage concerns. Many of the exemplary historical stories are also noted in the marginalia and even occasionally in the illustrations. Most audiences, however, do not see the *Book*'s historical concerns as linked to the religious and moral geography of the world, and all too often Mandeville is used to further nationalistic rather than unificatory views.

[116] Trier, Stadtbib. 1935/1432 4°. Cf. Ridder, *Jean de Mandevilles 'Reisen'*, pp. 343-4.



15 The Great Khan, from the *Livre des Merveilles*. Cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. fonds fr. 2810, f. 205).



16 The Great Khan's Estate, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Harley 3954, f. 46).

17 The Three Herods, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii, f.23).

made. ¶ Any Liquor that may be drank

Also it befalleth somtyme that crysten men beco/me sarrasyns/eyther thrugh pouerte or symplenes

18 Mohammed in an epileptic fit, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lii).

5 Theological Considerations

Issues of faith and religion are among the main themes throughout the *Book*, underlying all the levels on which it can be read. The discussion of belief in its many forms creates a thread running through the work, giving it structure and unity of expression. I will begin by examining the extent to which the *Book* conforms to traditional clerical and lay values and modes, including theology, moralising and anti-clerical satire, and the author's personal tolerance and syncretic approach to religious otherness.

Mandeville's interest in belief and religion has led, as discussed in the Introduction, to the hypothesis that he may have been a cleric himself. His use of scriptural quotations lends credence to this, especially as they are presented in Latin; his use of the vernacular, however, may point to his being a learned layman. In any case, the author of the *Book* is well aware of important theological issues and contemporary debates such as that on the salvation of the gentiles, and his audiences were certainly interested in this aspect. Mandeville's choice and adaptation of his sources demonstrates the extent to which he agrees with clerical and learned tradition.

The author's sources, as we have seen, included religious literature ranging from the Old and New Testament to Comestor's *Historia scolastica* and William of Tripoli's *De statu Saracenorum*. In his discussion of various faiths he also draws heavily on friar Odoric of Pordenone, drastically modifying the latter's expressed opinions of non-Catholic Christians, infidels and pagans. His own ideas based on these sources are unfolded gradually throughout the *Book*. Its audiences are presented with increasingly unfamiliar and exotic religions and systems of belief, compared to Christian values in the same way that the *Book* returns us to a geographical Christendom after a peregrination of strange lands.

Mandeville starts on familiar ground in the Prologue; 'we Christians' are the heirs of Christ, king of heaven and earth, who was born of the Virgin Mary and took on human flesh, and who then died for love of us in order to redeem us. This declaration of faith is the starting point for the *Book*'s investigation into religion and belief, assuming a shared Roman Catholic Christianity in its audiences. This Christianity and the manner in which it is upheld will be measured against other religions and even itself. Although it is presented as the true faith and Christians are accorded special

status among all peoples, Christian mores are by no means perfect. Mandeville's condemnation of the state of Christendom in his day is typical of medieval complaints. These, often taking the form of satire, were not confined to lay writers; clerical authors often castigated the lax state of Christian morality in their day, condemning rulers, clerics and the general populace alike for their abandonment of religious faith. As we shall see, this is not the only time the author criticises the morals of his fellow-Christians.

In the meantime Mandeville begins carrying out his promise to speak of 'many diverse people and of diverse faiths'. The first such novel faith is that of the Greeks, who, although fellow-Christians, present audiences with major differences of dogma. Here Mandeville's chief source is Jacques de Vitry's *Historia Hierosolymitana*. He retains Vitry's accurate information concerning the Orthodox Church, but shows a far greater tolerance of its customs. Tensions between the churches of Rome and Constantinople had existed since the early Middle Ages, culminating in the schism of 1054, and relations had worsened with the Fourth Crusade of 1202-4. It is no surprise that Vitry, writing c. 1220, should remark,

> But in many other things these schismatics contradict the teaching of the holy and supreme Church of Rome, breaking the ordinance of God, who hath appointed Rome to be the metropolitan and capital city of the whole world, and to rule the faithful in things spiritual even as it did in things temporal ... Clearly, then, since Christ's Church has been built and founded upon this rock, Peter, for whom the Lord prayed that his faith might not fail, all they who fall away from the Church of Rome labour in vain, because they build without a foundation, and are separated from him whom the Lord called Cephas, and should be regarded as headless monstrosities.[1]

These remarks on 'schismatics' are very far from the *Book*'s attitudes; Mandeville's interest in 'headless monstrosities' only extends to the Blemmyae - which he does not associate with this phrase.

By Mandeville's time, the Byzantine emperors, under pressure from Islam, had made several overtures towards the Western Church, although the schism would not officially be healed until the Council of Florence of 1438-9. The differences, however, remained; the Patriarchate did not recognise papal jurisdiction, and there were still major theological and liturgical variations. Mandeville agrees that 'although the Greeks are

1 Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, PPTS 11, Ch. lxxiv, pp. 71-2.

Christians, they differ greatly from out right belief',[2] and goes on to tell the story of the Greek response to demands made by Pope John XXII:

> And for this reason Pope John XXII wrote letters to them about how Christianity should all be one, and that they ought to obey one pope, who is the true vicar of God and to whom God gave full power to bind and loose, wherefore they ought to obey him. And they sent him many different answers, and among other things they said thus, 'We firmly believe your power is great over your subjects; we cannot tolerate your great pride; we do not intend to satiate your great avarice. The Lord be with you, for the Lord is with us'. And the Pope could get no other answer from them.[3]

The letter is fictitious. The Avignon popes were generally regarded as avaricious - John XXII, pope from 1316 to 1334, had collected large numbers of benefices, increased the Church's wealth and allocated ecclesiastical honours as he wished, so he could be seen as a reasonable satirical target. It is interesting to note that although Mandeville presents the Pope's request as sensible, he then reports a most insulting response which is not condemned in any way. He seems willing to allow his audiences to draw their own conclusions.

This attack on Church avarice is not coincidental, as after listing some differences in Greek religious observation, the author draws particular attention to one detail: the selling of benefices. The fault is not limited to the Orthodox Church:

> The same is now done elsewhere, whereby is great harm and great scandal. For today Simon is crowned king in holy church. May God amend it; for as long as Holy Church totters and limps, the world cannot be in good condition.[4]

Mandeville's aim is not to insult the Greek faith, but rather to condemn his own society in a rhetorical outburst that mirrors the phrasing of many

2 'combien que les Gregois soient crestiens, ilz varient moult de nostre droite creance'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 237.

3 'Et pour ce le pape Iehan xxii^e^. leur escrist lectres comment crestiente deuoit estre tout vn, et que il deuoient obeir a vn pape, qui est droit vicaire de Dieu et a qui Dieu donna plain pouoir de lier et dabsoudre, pour quoy ilz deuroient obeir a ly. Et li enuoierent a li response moult diuerse, et entre les autres choses il disoient ainsi, *Potenciam tuam summam circa tuos subditos firmiter credimus. Superbiam tuam summam tolerare non possumus. Auariciam tuam summam saciare non intendimus. Dominus tecum, quia Dominus nobiscum est.* Et autre response ne pot le pape auoir deulx'. *op. cit.*, p. 238.

4 'Aussi fait on maintenant autre part, de quoy cest grant dommage et grant esclandre. Car au iour duy est Symon Roy couronne en sainte eglyse. Dieu le vueille amender; car tant que saint eglyse chancelle et cloche, le monde ne puet estre en bon estat'. *op. cit.*

medieval sermonists on the ever popular subject of benefices and Church corruption. This is not an isolated condemnation within the *Book*. The author continues to castigate Christian vices through didactic tales, such as that of the Knight Templar whose avarice caused the dissolution of his order in the Castle of the Sparrowhawk. There are also the Christians who die in the Vale Perilous because of their greed, a detail not in Odoric's account: 'But few return from there, especially misbelievers and Christians who go there only through desire to have the gold or silver; for they are soon strangled by devils'.[5]

Mandeville offers a list of Orthodox differences, but he does not seem particularly shocked at any of them, not even the fact that Greek priests wash the altar if a Latin mass has been said there. Later in his travels, when Mandeville meets the Greek monks of Mount Sinai, he stresses their holiness: 'and they are like hermits, and drink no wine, unless it is on feast days. And they are very devout and live in poverty and simply and on dates, and often fast and do penance'.[6] He is echoing Burchard of Mount Sion, who said that 'in the Greek Church all the prelates are monks, and are men of exceeding austerity of life and wondrous virtue'.[7]

The author of the *Book* always takes particular note of Christian groups as he travels further afield. While many of them would be regarded as heretical by certain clerics, Mandeville again largely refrains from condemnation when describing Syrians, Georgians, Arrians, Nubians, Nestorians and Jacobites, who 'are baptized, and have different laws and different customs. But all believe in God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. But they still fail in certain articles of faith'.[8] He does argue against the convictions of the Jacobite Christians on the subject of confession directly to God, but considers them misled by their 'authorities':

> They say that one should make confession to God alone and not to man ... neither God nor the prophets ever ordained or set out, as they say, that a man should confess to any other than God, as Moses wrote in the Bible ... And they say that David and the other prophets say this, and nevertheless we read in holy

5 'Mais pou en retournent, especialment des mescreans et des Crestiens qui ny vont fors que pour la conuoitise de lor ou de largent a auoir; car il sont tantost estranglez des dyables'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 390.

6 'et sont aussi comme hermites, et ne boiuent point de vin, se ce nest aus sollempnites. Et sont moult deuos et viuent pourement et simplement et de dates, et font moult dabstinences et de penitences'. *op. cit.*, p. 260.

7 *A Description of the Holy Land*, PPTS 12, ch. XIII, p. 104.

8 'sont baptizies, et ont diuerses loys et diuerses coustumes. Mais tous croient en Dieu le Pere et le Filz et le Saint Esperit. Mais tousiours seulent il faillir en aucuns articles de la foy'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 293. All these are taken from Vitry's *Historia Orientalis*. Cf. Hamilton, B. (1986), *Religion in the Medieval West*, pp. 158-60.

> scripture that certain of the holy authors such as St Augustine, St Gregory and St Hilary agree in part with their opinion ... And it is true that this confession is natural and primitive, but the holy fathers and the popes who have come afterwards have ordained that confession should be made to man, and with good reason.[9]

Typically, Mandeville gives reasons both for the differing beliefs of the Jacobites and for the decision of the Fathers and the pope concerning the way confession should be made. Both systems are treated as being based on reasonable premises. While the Jacobite Christians are ultimately mistaken, they argue from Scripture and Church authorities in a perfectly sensible and understandable manner. Only the 'bonne raison' given at the end - the necessity of confession to a priest so that the appropriate penance may be imposed - is drawn from Vitry.

Vitry himself is far more virulent about non-Catholic Christians:

> Men call these Nestorians, from an arch-heretic named Nestorius, who has infected most of the East with the deadly poisons of his doctrine ... The aforesaid son of perdition, Nestorius, who was (Arch)bishop of Constantinople, and all his crew, say that the Blessed Virgin Mary was not the Mother of God.[10]

The Nestorian Church was based on the teaching of Nestorius, who had been condemned as a heretic in 431 A.D. The Nestorians had established their faith throughout Asia and expanded into China, gaining power in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries after converting the khan of the Keraits and bringing the Malabar Church of St Thomas under their control.[11] They are mentioned by most western travellers in the Far East, including William of Rubruck (as scathing as Vitry, but in more detail),[12] Marco Polo, Hayton

9 'Il dient que on doit faire sa confession a Dieu seulement et non pas a homme ... ne Dieu ne ordena ne ne deuisa onques ne les prophestes aussi, si comme ilz dient, que homme se confessast a autre que Dieu, si comme Moyses lescripst en la Bible ... Et dient que Dauid et les autres prophectes le dient, et toutes fois que nous lisons en la sainte escripture, que aucuns des aucteurs sains hommes sacordent en partie a leur opinion, si comme Saint Augustin, Saint Gregoire et Saint Hylaire ... Et voir est que ceste confession est naturele et primitiue, mais li saint pere et le pape quis ont depuis venuz ont ordene a faire confession a homme, et par bonne raison'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 293-4. The Lollards and other dissenters were also accused of refusing to confess to priests.

10 de Vitry, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ch. lxxvi, p. 77.

11 Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West*, p. 159-63. Henry Yule, though older, is still relevant; cf. *Cathay and the Way Thither*, (1913-16), Vol. I, pp. 116-21.

12 'The Nestorians there know nothing. They say their offices, and have sacred books in Syrian, but they do not know the language, so they chant like these monks among us who do not know grammar, and they are absolutely depraved. In the first place they are usurers and drunkards; some even among them who live with the Tartars have several

and Odoric of Pordenone. Although their church had declined in the fourteenth century, particularly after its persecution and destruction by Tamerlane, this is not reflected in the *Book*.

The author once again disagrees with Vitry's verdict. The Nestorians of Cathay and the land of Prester John are not treated unfavourably: 'they do not have the twelve articles of faith as we do. They well believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and they are very devout and very loyal to each other, and they have nothing to do with disputes or guile or any fraud'.[13] The Ethiopian priests at Jerusalem 'know nothing of the additions that several popes have made, but they sing most devoutly'.[14] In Georgia, Abkhazia and Armenia,

> they are good Christians and devout. For they take communion and confess once or twice a week, and there are many who take communion every day; and we do not do so here, although St Paul commanded it ... They keep it and do well, but we do not keep it and do not do so.[15]

These schismatic or heretical Christians are presented as providing an example to their fellows in the West, in spite of their liturgical lapses. Again, this is comparable to Burchard of Mount Sion:

> Many, too, are frightened when they are told that in parts beyond seas there dwell Nestorians, Jacobites, Maronites, Georgians, and other sects named after heretics whom the Church has condemned, wherefore these men are thought to be heretics, and to follow the errors of those after whom they are called. This is by no means true. God forbid! But they are men of simple and devout life; yet do I not deny that there may be fools among them, seeing that even the Church of Rome itself is not free from fools ... I have seen many other commendable

wives like them. When they enter church, they wash their lower parts like Saracens; they eat meat on Friday, and have their feasts on that day in Saracen fashion. The bishop rarely visits these parts, hardly once in fifty years. When he does, they have all the male children, even those in the cradle, ordained priests, so nearly all the males among them are priests. Then they marry...and they are bigamists, for when the first wife dies these priests take another. They are all simoniacs, for they administer no sacrament gratis...' Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, Vol. I, pp. 116-17, n. 4.

13 'il nont mie les xii. articles de la foy ainsi comme nous auons. Il croient bien le Pere et le Filz et le Saint Esperit, et sont bien deuos et bien loiaus lun a lautre, et nont cure de barat ne de cautelle ne de fraude nulle'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 384.

14 'ne sceuent riens des addicions que pluseurs papes ont fait, mais il chantent bien deuotement'. *op. cit.*, p. 271.

15 'y sont bons Crestiens et deuos. Car ilz sacommichent et confessent toutes les sepmaines vne fois ou deux, et si en y à pluseurs qui tous les iours sacommichent; et ainsi ne faisons nous mie par de ca, combien que Saint Pol le commandast ... Il le gardent et font bien, mais nous ne le gardons ne ne faisons mie'. *op. cit.*, p. 378.

> practices in that land, both among laymen, clerks, and monks, which in our land would scarce be believed to be done.[16]

In the *Book* it is not only non-Catholic Christians who are given tolerance and respect for their devotion. The Muslim faith is portrayed in a relatively favourable light, in spite of the occasional accusation of Saracen persecution and attempts at proselytisation of Christians. Mandeville claims to have read the Quran carefully on several occasions. This is not as shocking as it might appear; Peter the Venerable had commissioned a translation of the Quran as early as 1143-4, and Ramón Llull argued that a better knowledge of the Muslim faith would be advisable with a view to conversion to Christianity. In fact the *Book*'s chief source is William of Tripoli's *De statu Saracenorum* (1270). Mandeville reports on Saracen avoidance of pork and wine, and devotes two chapters - often annotated by his readers - to the Saracen faith and Mohammed. He proves once again more tolerant than his source; where Tripoli describes the 'lies' and 'fables' of the Saracens, Mandeville finds it natural to tell us about their faith: 'And because I have spoken of the Saracens and of their country, if you would like to know a part of their law and of their belief, I will describe it to you, according to what their book Alcorem sets out'.[17]

Similarities and differences between the Christian and Muslim faith are both described. The Saracens believe in Paradise, but it is a Paradise of the senses. They believe in Jesus as the greatest prophet, born of the Virgin, who did not die on the cross but rose alive to heaven. They believe in the persons of the Trinity but not in their unity; they know the Gospels, but do not truly understand Scripture. Mohammed is portrayed without the worst extremes of medieval Christian writing. His first miracle is mentioned as a true one, although his prophetic visions are explained as epileptic fits. There is also a story of how he banned alcohol after being tricked into believing he killed his mentor when drunk.

Significantly, the many similarities between Islam and Christianity mean that Muslims should be easily converted:

> And because they come so close to our faith, they would thus be easy to convert to the Christian faith. And when one sets out and preaches and clarifies the law of Jesus Christ and tells them of the prophecies, they also say well that according to the prophets the law of Machomet will fail just as the law of the Jews has, which has failed, and that the law of the Christian people will last

16 *A Description of the Holy Land*, PPTS 12, ch. xiii, pp. 107, 111.

17 'Et pour ce que iay parle des Sarrasins et de leur pays, se vous voules sauoir vne partie de leur loy et de leur creance, je le vous deuiseray, selon ce que leurs liures Alcorem le deuise'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 302.

> until the end of the world ... And all those who know and understand scripture and the prophecies will be converted easily. For they have the gospels, the prophecies and the Bible all in writing in their language.[18]

This attitude is not very common among medieval writers, although in the thirteenth century attempts were made to evangelise the Saracens. Ramon Llull's extensive writing in support of Saracen conversion was exceptional, as was his appreciation of the Quran on stylistic grounds, and even he was a strong advocator of crusading efforts. William of Tripoli's advocacy of conversion as an alternative to crusade was the exception rather than the rule. Jacques de Vitry's calls for 'conversione vel destructione' were echoed in the early fourteenth century by the crusade propagandist Marino Sanudo. Robert Holcot's popular commentary (c. 1340) also advocated killing Muslims if they would not convert.[19]

In spite of this, there is evidence that some later medieval writers were prepared to consider conversion before crusade. Langland does so in *Piers Plowman*:

> And sith that thise Sarasenes . Scribes, and Iuwes / Han a lippe of owre byleue . the liȝtliker, me thynketh, / Thei shulde torne, who so trauaille wolde . to teche hem of the trinite.[20]

In the latter half of the fourteenth century, therefore, Langland and Mandeville - both very popular writers - were still advising evangelisation of the Muslims, albeit in a theoretical rather than a practical manner. For Mandeville, this belief in the ease of converting those who share 'many articles of our faith' is an intrinsic part of the *Book*'s underlying optimism as regards the salvation of all mankind. Even where pagans do not share beliefs, conversion is still possible; it is a pity, for instance, that the Great Khan of Cathay has not become a Christian in spite of his respect for the Church.

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[18] 'Et pour ce que ilz vont si pres de nostre foy, seroient il si legiers a conuertir a la foy crestienne. Et quant on leur deuise et presche et destinte la loy de Ihesu Crist et on leur deuise les prophecies, aussi dient il bien par les prophectes que la loy Mahomet faudra aussi que la loy des Iuyfz a fait, qui est faillie, et que la loy du pueple crestien durra iusques en la fin du monde ... Et seront de legier conuertis tous ceuls qui sceuent et entendent lescripture et les prophecies. Car ils ont les euuangiles, les prophecies et la Bible tout en escript en leur langaige'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 304, 305.

[19] On the question of Saracen conversion attempts and theories in the medieval period, see Kedar, B. (1984), *Crusade and Mission*, and Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West*, pp. 148-9.

[20] William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, ed. Schmidt, A.V.C. (1978), B XV, ll. 492-4; cf. also ll. 594-601.

In order to be able to convert infidels and pagans, however, Christians need to be devout in themselves. This is a major problem, for Christian faith, as the author has already strongly declared, is decidedly lacking in western Christendom. As we have already seen, he stresses more than once that the Holy Land has been lost through God's punishment for Christian lack of faith: 'For God does not suffer wicked people or traitors or great sinners to reign in this holy land for very long, whether they are Christians or other people'.[21] Nor is it only Palestine which has been removed from Christian control; Constantine once held sway over Asia Minor, India and Ethiopia, 'and now they are all Saracens and pagans. But when it please God, just as this land was lost through the sins of Christians, so will it be regained through their prowess with God's help'.[22]

The most shocking indictment of current Christian morality is not expressed directly by 'Mandeville' himself but placed in the mouth of an infidel, the wise and pious Muslim Sultan of Egypt. This discussion comes at the end of the chapter on Saracen religion. The Saracens, says Mandeville, condemn the Jews for not keeping the law of Moses, and the Christians for not keeping faith with Christ. Having invited the knight to tell him in private about Christian countries, the Sultan launches into searing diatribe on the sorry state of affairs in the West, where corrupt and cynical clergy cannot set a good example for the populace and are guilty of each of the seven deadly sins:

> For your priests and your prelates do not care about serving God. They should set the common people examples of good deeds and they set them examples of evil deeds. And therefore on fast days, when they ought to go to the temple to serve God, the common people will be in the taverns and live in gluttony all day and all night. They eat and drink like beasts that do not know when they have had enough. And also all Christians dispute with and deceive one another in every way they can or know. And with this they are so proud that they do not know how to dress ... And they ought to be simple and humble and charitable and confess and take communion, as Jesus did, in whom they believe; but they are otherwise and inclined to evildoing. And they are so covetous that for a little money they sell their daughters, their sisters and their own wives to bring into the light of the sin of debauchery. And they take each other's wives. And

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[21] 'Car Dieu ne sueffre mie longuement regner genz mauuais ne traites ne grans pecheeurs en celle sainte terre, soient Crestiens, soient autres gens'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 268.

[22] 'Et maintenant ce sont tous Sarrazins et paiens. Mais quant il plaist a Dieu, ainsi que celle terre a este perdue pour les pechiez des Crestiens, aussi sera elle regaignee par la proesse deulz a laide de Dieu'. *op. cit.*, p. 270.

none keeps faith with another, but they violate all the law that Jesus had sent them for their salvation and set out with his own words.[23]

The Sultan concludes by stressing that 'vostre Dieu' has given the Holy Land to the Saracens as punishment for this behaviour, and that if Christians served Him well nothing could stand in their way. Sir John concludes with the admission that this is all too true:

> Alas, what great harm and great insult this is to our law and to our faith when people who have neither faith nor law reprove us thus. And those who ought, by our good examples and our acceptable life, to be converted to our law of Jesus Christ, are distanced and estranged from the blessed true belief because of our wickedness and our errors.[24]

Although this colloquy is based on a similar incident in the *Dialogue on Miracles* by Caesarius of Heisterbach, in which an emir complains about Christian shortcomings, Mandeville's own response, the use he makes of the incident and the position he chooses for it in the text are all perfectly arranged. This kind of homily, dwelling on the themes of gluttony, pride, lechery and covetousness, was common during the medieval period - for example, the description of the Seven Sins in *Piers Plowman* or the argument between knight and cleric in the *Songe du Vergier*, both dating from the end of the fourteenth century. Mandeville's use of the genre is masterly. He demonstrates the powers of his already established first-person narrative *persona*: the knight is the ideal audience for the Sultan's

[23] 'Car vos flamines et vos prelas ne font conte de Dieu seruir. Ilz deussent donner exemples aus communes gens de bien faire et ilz leur donnent exemple de mal faire. Et pour ce aus iours de festes les communs, quant ilz deuroient aler au temple pour Dieu seruir, adont vont il estre aus tauernes et estre en la gloutonnie toute iour et toute nuit. Manguent et boiuent comme bestes qui ne sceuent quant il ont assez pris. Et aussi tous les Crestiens sefforcent en toutes les manieres quil peuent ne quil sceuent de bareter et de deceuoir lun lautre. Et auecques ce il sont si orgueilleus quil ne se sceuent comment vestir ... Et ilz deussent estre simples et humbles et charitables et eulz confesser et escumichier, aussi que fist Ihesu, en quoy il croient; mais il sont autres et enclins a mal faire. Et si sont si conuoiteus que pour i. pou dargent il vendent leurs filles, leurs seurs et leurs propres femmes pour mectre a la lumiere du pechie de luxure. Et fortraient lune femme lautre. Et nulz ne teint foy a lautre, mais violent toute la loy que Ihesus leur auoit bailliee pour leur sauuement et deuisoit de sa propre parole'. Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 305-6.

[24] 'Helas, comme ce est grant dommages et grant esclandres a nostre loy et a nostre foy quant genz qui nont ne foy ne loy nous reprennent ainsi. Et ceuls qui deussent pour nous bons exemples et nostre acceptable vie estre conuertis a nostre loy de Ihesu Crist, sont pour nos mauuaistiez et pour nos erreurs eslongiez et estrangiez du tout de la sainte vraie creance. Si nest mie merueilles sil nous appellent mauuais; car il dient voir'. *op. cit.*, pp. 306-7.

speech, ready to accept criticism and quickly draw the desired conclusions in a fairly realistic, if necessarily didactic, way. It is a measure of the author's rhetorical skills that he is able to make the Saracen ruler speak on behalf of Christian devotion and make claims to which European audiences would be sympathetic, thereby lending force to the argument, as Sir John acknowledges. This episode, as we shall see, particularly impressed the redactors of the *Book*.

The one exception to Mandeville's otherwise startlingly tolerant treatment of religious otherness is his treatment of the Jews. They are presented from the beginning as 'crueux' and 'felons Iuys', the killers of Christ. They are portrayed as villainous torturers, sadistically crowning Christ with thorns three times after his capture, choosing the wood for the Cross with diabolical meticulousness as they anticipate Christ's body hanging there and rotting, and nailing him to the Cross on the ground before raising it in order to increase his pain. Later Mandeville describes how they persecuted Christ on his travels round the Holy Land, lying in wait and trying to stone him; fortunately their attempts were frustrated. They even tried to desecrate the body of the Virgin as the apostles carried it away to be buried. The destruction of the Temple is accordingly described with great vindictiveness:

> And [Titus] took all the Jews and put 11,000 to death, and the others he put in prison and sold them into slavery at thirty for a silver penny, for he said that they had bought Jesus Christ for thirty pence, and he would sell them more cheaply and give thirty for one penny.[25]

It is not surprising that the *Book* was bound with the viciously anti-Judaic poem on the same theme, *The Siege of Jerusalem*.[26]

The Jews are allowed no redeeming features. Even the Muslim faith is praised over theirs, and they are castigated by the Saracens for abandoning the Old Testament. Mandeville reports the Saracen legend that it was Judas who was crucified instead of Christ, stressing the Jewish act of deicide once more. They cannot even be converted as the Muslims can; the only mention of Jewish conversion comes with the prophecy of the Dry Tree. The evil deeds of Jews in Biblical times are paralleled in the present day by their deliberate causing of the Black Death, verified by the knight himself:

[25] 'et prist tous les Iuyfz et mist a mort xi.^{c} mile, et les autres il mist en prison et les vendit a seruitude xxx. pour i. denier dargent [qar il disoit qils auoient achatez Ihesu Crist pour xxx. deniers, et il ferroit de eaux meilloure marchee qil doneroit xxx. pur vne denier]'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 273.

[26] The single ms of the Metrical Version is included with the *Siege of Jerusalem*, as is the lost Coventry School no. 12.

> The Jews had sent one of their friends to seek of this poison in order to poison all Christendom, as I have heard them say in their dying confession. But by the grace of God they failed in their aim. Nevertheless there were many deaths because of it.[27]

Yet worse is to follow. Antichrist will be born in Babylon or Chorozaim, brought up in Bethsayda and reign in Caphernaum. Here the *Book* follows a contemporary debate on the birthplace of Antichrist, commonly presumed to be a Jew.[28] According to Jerome he would be born in Babylon, while a sibylline tradition had him born, reared and reigning in the cities mentioned above. Mandeville, drawing on Eugesippus and Würzburg, combines the two traditions and compresses the popular medieval legends concerning Antichrist. He was to come after the last human emperor in whose reign all Jews would be converted and Christianity would flourish.[29] This is presumably the time when a Christian prince would once more rule over the Holy Land and the Dry Tree would flower again. The reign of Antichrist would begin when the peoples of Gog and Magog were released from the Caspian Mountains. This legend is in itself an argument against Jewish conversion, as all the converted Jews will still follow Antichrist.

> And nevertheless it is said that they will come forth in the time that Antichrist will come, and that they will commit a great massacre of Christians. And therefore the Jews who live in all lands learn to speak Hebrew, in the hope that, when those of the Caspian mountains come forth, the former will be able to speak to them. And they introduce their children to that language in order to destroy Christendom. For the other Jews say that they are well aware through their prophecies that those of the Caspian mountains will come forth and scatter throughout the world, and that the Christians will be in as much subjection to them as they have been in subjection to the Christians.[30]

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[27] 'De cesti venin auoient enuoie querre les Iuyfz vn de ces ans [amiz] pour empoisonner toute crestiente, si comme ie laur ay oy dire a la mort en leur confession. Mais Dieu grace ilz faillirent a leur propos. Neentmoins si en furent il grans mortalites'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 337.

[28] Cf. Emmerson, R.K. (1981), *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, pp. 79-80, 216-17.

[29] Emmerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 58-9.

[30] 'Et non pour quant si dist on quilz istront hors au temps que Antecrist venra, et quil feront grans occisions de Crestiens. Et pour ce les Iuys qui demeurent par toutes terres aprennent a parler Ebrieu, sur ceste esperance que ceuls des montaingnes de Caspille, quant il istront hors, que ilz sachent parler a eulz. Et de ce langaige ilz entroduisent leurs enfans pour crestiente destruire. Car les autres Iuyfs dient que il sceuent bien par leurs prophecies que ceuls de Caspille istront hors et sespandront par my le monde, et que encore seront Crestiens en leur subieccion, aussi bien quil ont este en la subieccion des Crestiens'. Letts, *op. cit.*, pp. 381-2.

This strongly anti-Judaic propaganda is a strange aberration in the overall tenor of the *Book*. While Mandeville is following commonplace medieval traditions, he has already proved in other parts of his work that this would not normally be a reason for him to comply with religious intolerance. Yet his hatred of the Jews is as evident as it is inexcusable. Greenblatt argues that Mandeville's prejudice is due to the Jews' location 'between the realms of the secular and the sacred ... at once rivals in the dream of repossession and rivals in the dream of wandering'.[31] This is certainly possible given the *Book*'s insistence on the recovery of the Holy Land, the Christian 'heritage' taken from the original chosen people.

Even more convincing is Greenblatt's contrasting of the faraway, 'fantastic' peoples of the East and the Jews, living among European Christians themselves. Their beliefs and modes of existence were not a theoretical postulation or traveller's tale, but part of contemporary reality, at least until the expulsions of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. Even the Saracens, as far as Mandeville - though not his source William of Tripoli - is concerned, were a people of 'Outremer', not Western Europe. Mandeville's is, as Rubiés remarks, the 'wide toleration of a writer who does not need to share his moral space with a different culture, because he is not a real traveller, and it is indeed very significant that it is precisely the Jews, who lived in parts of Europe and shared the same sacred space of Jerusalem, that he cannot tolerate in his writing'.[32]

The *Book* must therefore be seen in the context of fourteenth-century anti-Judaism.[33] Anti-Jewish violence had increased throughout Europe from the thirteenth century onwards, partly as a response to the stereotype of the Jewish usurer originating in the twelfth, and fuelled by the widespread accusations of ritual murder, cannibalism and host desecration. Jews had been expelled from England in 1290, a national expulsion that was to last 350 years. They were expelled from Normandy in 1306, and from France in general in 1321, returning in 1360 for a period of 34 years. Where they remained, the Jews were, as we have seen, accused of well-poisoning during and after the Black Death, and thousands were killed despite papal prohibitions. It seems that in spite of the absence of Jewish communities in France at the time he was writing, the *Book*'s author joined this general

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[31] Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, pp. 50-1.

[32] Rubiés, J-P. (2000), 'Travel writing as a genre', in *Journeys* 1, p. 17.

[33] For a discussion of the evolution of medieval anti-Judaism, see Cohen, J. (1982), *The Friars and the Jews* and Langmuir, G.I. (1990), *Toward a Definiton of Antisemitism*.

wave of anti-Judaism, portraying Jews as the worst enemies of Christianity.[34]

In contrast to his anti-Judaism, Mandeville's otherwise impressive religious tolerance and fair description of other beliefs extends beyond the Christian and Muslim religions, to the 'pagan' idolatries of the East and Hinduism and Buddhism. Mandeville tries to give as much balanced information as possible. In discussing the beliefs of the island of Thana, for example, he takes pains to show the difference between idols and simulacra: simulacra are representations of natural objects, while idols are based in human imagination, depicting unnatural beings. The underlying reason for the reverence shown to such images is a natural awareness of and respect for the power of God.

> For they say that it is the God of nature who made all things and is in the heavens, but they know well that these [simulacra] could not have performed the miracles they did, if it were not by special grace of God, and for this reason they worship them.[35]

These idols are compared to Christian images, whose use is firmly defended:

> And they say well of the simulacra and of idols that they have that there are no people who have no simulacra; and they say this about us Christians, who worship images of our Lady and of the other saints whom we worship. But they know that we do not worship the image of stone or of wood, but the saints in whose name they are made; for just as the letter teaches the clerks what and how they ought to believe, just so do the images teach the lay people to think about and worship the saints in whose name they are made.[36]

The sun, planets and oxen are worshipped because they have been particularly favoured by God. The pagans also revere the first thing they see in the morning because 'No good fortune may come, if it does not come

[34] Cf. Golb, N. (1998), *The Jews in Medieval Normandy*, pp. 543-5, and Bredero, A.H. (1994), *Christendom and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, pp. 295-7.

[35] 'Car il dient quil est le Dieu de nature qui fist toutes choses et est es cieulx, mais il sceuent bien que ceuls ne peussent auoir fait les merueilles que ilz faisoient, se ce ne fust de especiale grace de Dieu, et pour ce ilz les aourent'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 323.

[36] 'Et des simulacres et des ydoles quil ont il dient bien que nulles gens ne sont qui naient simulacres; et ce dient il pour nous Crestiens, qui aourons ymages de nostre Dame et dautres sains que nous aourons. Mais il sceuent que nous naourons pas les ymages de pierre ne de bois, mais les sains en quel nom elles sont faites; car tout aussi comme la lectre aprent les clers quoy et comment il doiuent croire, tout ainsi les ymages aprennent les laies gens a penser et aourer les sains en quel nom elles sont faites'. *op. cit.*, p. 410.

by the grace of God'.[37] Mandeville mentions European superstitions about lucky and unlucky animals, and Saracen augurs who have often been proved right. If Christians, knowing sacred doctrine, believe these things, 'it is no marvel if the pagans, who have no good doctrine except by their nature, should believe more broadly through their simplicity'.[38]

These people possess a natural faith in God, to which they often hold more devoutly than Christians; even pagans can set a good example for lax Catholics. The cult of St Thomas at 'Calamyon', or Mailapur, for instance, is described as idolatrous, although the priests in Cathay and Pentexoire are treated as Christians. The image inside the church, that of 'false Christians', is nevertheless the object of pilgrimage. On pilgrimages and on feast-days, the devout cut themselves with knives 'for love of this idol' and even throw themselves in front of the idol's processional chariot, the Juggernaut. This extreme sacrifice to a false faith is nevertheless commendable: 'They make their body suffer such great penance and such great martyrdom for the love of God that hardly any Christian would dare to undertake the tenth part for the love of Jesus Christ'.[39] Mandeville does not recommend their form of worship but admires their faith and courage in serving their god, as his form of direct address in this passage implies. Unbelievers have once again proven more faithful to their religion than Christians.

The author's constant effort to understand religious customs surfaces in his *persona*'s conversation with the monks of Cathay. On seeing them feeding wild animals, Sir John questions them and is told that the animals have human souls, 'and for this reason they give them to eat for the love of God'.[40] He asks why they do not feed the poor instead. The monks answer that even if there had been poverty in their country (which there is not, a nice touch), it would be better to help these unfortunate souls who cannot fend for themselves. Another parallel with the Christian faith is drawn: as the people of Calamye go on pilgrimage and suffer martyrdom, here almsgiving - even to animals - is a meritorious act, ultimately undertaken for the love of God. In both examples the author has modified his source, the distinctly intolerant and contemptuous Odoric, in order to explain these strange forms of belief and connect them to a more familiar faith.

The *Book* commends virtue wherever it is found as a sign of God's will, and blames non-Christian errors on a lack of proper instruction and, very

[37] 'bon encontre ne peut venir, sil ne vient de la grace de Dieu'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 323.

[38] 'ce nest mie merueilles se les paiens, qui nont point de bonne doctrine fors que de leur nature, sil croient plus largement par leur simplesce'. *op. cit.*, p. 324.

[39] 'ilz font de si grans penances et de si grans martyres souffrir au corps pour lamour de Dieu que a painnes nul Crestien noseroit emprendre a faire la xe. partie pour lamour de Ihesu Crist'. *op. cit.*, p. 329.

[40] 'et pour ce leur donnent il a mangier pour lamour de Dieu'. *op. cit.*, p. 347.

rarely, the wiles of misleading devils, who are honestly mistaken for angels. Very few races of men are evil of themselves; in each case these are demonstrably subhuman, not only in physical appearance but in their very selves. Such are the monstrous man-eating giants who wear animal skins - reflecting their bestial nature - and eat raw meat. Where other races are given a logical reason for killing or cannibalism, these have no such motivation and no potential for good. Lack of speech is another sign of lack of humanity, as with the snake-eating troglodytes of Tracorde: 'and because they eat raw meat, they do not speak, but hiss to one another like snakes'.[41]

The author clearly shows that these races are subhuman. They possess no reason and can therefore never form or participate in any culture, religion, virtue or anything which makes man different from the beasts. They are truly of 'cursed kind'. Few intelligent races are like the 'very evil men' of Milke, cannibals who love killing and drink each other's blood in token of friendship. Another exception is the Chaldeans, described with disgust due to their physical aspect rather than any moral vice. The women are 'very black, not brown, and very ugly and clumsy and very hideous to see. They would have to pay me well to prize them, for there is also so much filth in them that I would not know how to describe it'.[42] This is one case in which Mandeville has outdone Odoric, who only mentions their ugliness in general terms; perhaps the crude personal touch is intended as evidence that he has seen the women himself.

This treatment is exceptional. Even monsters can be worthy of grace, proving their essential humanity, as with the desert satyr that tells a hermit of its belief in God and asks him to pray for it:

> And the worthy man asked him in the name of God, what he was, and the monster replied that he was a mortal creature such as God had made him and that he lived in that desert and hunted his sustenance. And he begged the hermit to pray to that God for him, who to save the human race descended from heaven and was born of the virgin girl and suffered passion and death, as we know, and by whom we live and are.[43]

[41] 'Et pour ce quil manguent crue viande, il ne parlent point, mais sifflent lun apres lautre comme serpens'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 340.

[42] 'bien noirs, non pas brunes, et tres laides et malgracieuses et tres hideuses a veoir. Elles me deuroient donner bon loyer pour elles prisier, car encore y a en elles tant dordures que ie ne sauoie descripre'. *op. cit.*, p. 316.

[43] 'Et li preudons li demanda de par Dieu, qui il estoit; et le monstre respondit que il estoit creature mortelle telle que Dieux lauoit cree et demouroit en ce desert et pourchacoit sa soustenance. Et pria a lermite que il vousist celui Dieu prier pour li, qui pour sauuer lumain lignage descendit des cieulx et nasquit de la vierge pucelle et passion et mort souffrit, si comme nous le sauons, et par qui nous viuons et sommes'. *op. cit.*, p. 253.

Something that can be prayed for must possess a soul, whether it is 'human' or not. Mandeville's attitude may be compared with that of Chrétien de Troyes in *Yvain*, where a knight meets a monstrous giant:

> I said to him: 'Go, tell me / If you are a good thing or not!' / And he told me: 'I am a man'. / 'What man are you?' - 'Such as you see / I am never otherwise'.[44]

Chrétien's humour is very close to Mandeville's notions of essential humanity.

Even the strangest races have a soul and exercise virtue. The Cynocephali are commended as 'rational people and of good understanding'. Their king devoutly says three hundred prayers a day on his paternoster pearls and keeps law and order, 'for which reason one can go more surely about his whole country and carry all one wishes', without fear of being robbed.[45] Although they may not look entirely human, the dog-headed people are intelligent, have an advanced civilisation and are devout in their faith - a virtue even though they worship an ox. Mandeville places great importance on naturally-inspired piety; even when lacking right direction, it denotes a common humanity.

The author reserves his strongest praise for the Brahmans, 'good people and faithful and of good life according to their faith'.[46] They worship God, live simply and possess a deep wisdom, as their answer to the conquering Alexander proves. Their island is known as the 'land of faith', a utopian paradise. They and their neighbouring Gymnosophists are examples to all mankind, Christians included:

> And because they are so faithful and so just and full of such good conditions, there have never been any tempests or lightning or thunder or war or famine or pestilence or other tribulations, as we often have for our sins and our faults. Wherefore it well appears that God loves them and approves of their works.[47]

Thus Mandeville attributes the bad weather, famine, wars and plague besetting Europe at the time to the same Christian sinfulness that prevents

[44] Chrétien de Troyes, *Yvain*, ll. 228-32, ed. Reid, T.B. (1942).

[45] 'pour quoy on puet aler plus seurement par tout son pays et porter tout ce que on veult'. Letts, Letts, *Travels* II, pp. 340-1.

[46] 'bonnes gens et loyaus et de bonne vie selon leur creance'. *op. cit.*, p. 397.

[47] 'Et pour ce quil sont si loyaus et si droituriers et plains de si bonnes condicions, ne furent il onques tempestes ne de foudres ne de tonnoirres ne de guerre ne de famine ne de pestillence ne dautre tribulacion, si comme nous sommes par maintes fois par deca pour nos pechies et pour nos deffautes. Pour quoy il appert bien que Dieux les aime et prent en gre leurs oeuures'. *op. cit.*, p. 398.

the recovery of the Holy Land. The fact the Brahmans are not Christians does not affect their relationship with God:

> Yet they have good natural faith. And on account of their good intention, I believe it certain that God loves them and that he approves of their services, as he did Job's, who was also a pagan. And although there are many diverse laws throughout the world, I believe that God always loves those who love him and serve truth in loyalty and in humility and who scorn worldly vanity for love of him.[48]

This is one of the most important passages in the *Book*, for it encapsulates Mandeville's whole philosophy. The key phrase is 'bonne foy naturelle'. In the Catholic Church this term signified the innocent ignorance of a truth or an involuntary error. A natural faith in God excused an ignorance of Christ and Church doctrine, where a person could not be aware of these.[49] This concept underlies Mandeville's treatment of religious customs among infidel, pagan, alien and monstrous peoples throughout the *Book*; it points to a system of religious syncretism, whereby all human creatures are united in a natural worship of the Creator, independent of any exposure to Christianity. Just as the Saracens prove virtuous despite their erroneous beliefs, so the Brahmans and others like them can be 'full of very great faith'. Nature is the defining and motivating force, for as the men of Lamory believe, 'nothing is ugly that is formed and made by nature'.[50] The author of the *Book* is developing his own theories on faith, God and humanity. It is not only Christians and Muslims, the 'people of the Book' - with the exception of the Jews - who, through scriptural revelation, are allowed a chance of salvation; races all over the world, whether given the chance of Gospel conversion or not, can know and worship God.

Mandeville is taking part in an important contemporary theological debate: could those who were denied knowledge of the Christian faith, but acted righteously nevertheless through natural virtue, be saved?[51] In England there were fervent supporters on both sides: FitzRalph's *Summa de Quaestionibus Armenorum* (1340-4) concluded that Armenians and Muslims could not be saved without conversion. The Benedictine Uthred of Boldon, on the other hand, believed that all men had a moment of *clara visio* at the point of death, when the soul could join God. Wyclif developed this further in his *De fide Catholica*, in which he concluded that some non-Christians could achieve grace, emphasizing the will of God. The more radical Minorite friar Ockham thought that natural good living could lead to salvation independently of faith. Langland considered the question in the C version of *Piers Plowman*, finally concluding that both natural virtue and divine grace were needed, achievable only within Christianity. Ockham's doctrine of nominalism, including his ideas on pagan salvation, found adherents at the Faculty of Theology at Paris: among these were Jean Buridan, rector of the University of Paris in 1327 and 1340 and the contemporary Nicholas d'Autrecourt.[52] However another Ockhamist, Gregory of Rimini, believed that the ancient Greek philosophers, the Romans and gentiles could accomplish externally good deeds, but these were worthless if regarded as ends in themselves without reference to God.[53] Although Ockham's ideas were declared suspect and the teaching of his doctrine banned at Paris in 1339 and 1340, the debate on the salvation of the pagans was alive in both England and France in the fourteenth century.

In Mandeville's view, all have a chance for salvation even if they do not know the Gospels. This is proven by the fact that all are allowed true prophecies and miracles. The pagan philosopher Hermes Trismegistus prophesied the coming of Christ 2,000 years before it took place, as his body proved:

> An emperor once had the body of a dead relative placed inside the church of St Sophia; and when the grave was dug, another body was found in the ground, and on that body a great plate of fine gold, on which letters were written in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin, which said thus, *Jesus Christ will be born of the Virgin Mary and I believe in him.* And the date stated that he had been buried 2,000 years before Christ was born.[54]

[48] 'Si ont il bonne foy naturelle. Et pour la bonne entencion quil ont, ie cuide estre certain que Dieu les aimme et quil prent leur seruices en gre, si comme il fist de Iob, qui si bien fut paie ... Et combien quil ait pluseurs loys diuerses par my le monde, ie croy que Dieu ayme tousiours ceuls qui layment et seruent verite en loyaute et en humilite et qui desprisent la vanite du monde pour lamour de luy'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 400.

[49] Cf. *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Vol. 2-i, col. 1009-14.

[50] 'riens nest lait qui soit de nature fourme et fait'. Letts, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

[51] For a discussion of the issues, see Coleman, J. (1981), *English Literature in History, 1350-1400*, pp. 249-52; Leff, G. (1963), *Richard FitzRalph, Commentator of the Sentences, A study in Theological Orthodoxy* (Manchester 1963); Knowles, M.D. (1951), 'The censured opinions of Uthred of Boldon', in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 37, pp. 305-42.

[52] On the general question of pagan salvation, see *Le Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Vol. 7-ii (1930), 'Le salut des infidèles'. Ockham is discussed in Vol. 11-i (1931), col. 886 ff.

[53] *Dictionnaire de Théologie*, Vol. 11-i, col. 770-1.

[54] 'Dedenz leglyse de Sainte Sophie vn empereur iadis fist mectre le corps dun sien parent mort; et quant on faisoit la fosse, en trouua vn autre corps dedenz la terre, et sur ce corps vne grande plate dor fin, ou il estoient lectres escriptes en ebrieu, en grigois et en latin, qui disoient ainsi, *Ihesu Crist naistra de la vierge Marie et ie croy en ly.* Et la date

Gymnosophist prophets foresaw this even earlier:

> And in this island they prophesied the incarnation of Our Lord, how he would be born of a virgin girl, a good 4,000 [3,000] years or more before Our Lord was born, and they believed in the incarnation perfectly.[55]

Grace may be achieved even without divine revelation. One consequence of this is that Christians do not have an exclusive monopoly of true religion, and indeed the Brahmans provide the perfect counterpoint, almost word for word, to the Sultan's homily. This is by no means a common view. While Christian lack of faith is often castigated throughout the fourteenth century and earlier, sometimes by satirical juxtaposition with 'misbelievers' and pagans, Mandeville is certainly among the first and most radical to consider those same peoples in their own right. His tolerance and fairness are reinforced by his endless quest for reason in the apparent madness of other races, and his often unstated but evident acceptance of their intrinsic humanity. A questioning spirit is linked to a willingness to see nobility and truth in the most unlikely places. Mandeville is neither revolted nor deceived by outward appearances, searching instead for the underlying 'Dieu de nature', as he makes clear at the end of his *Book*:

> But know that in all this country of which I have spoken, and all the diverse lands and all the diverse peoples and diverse laws and diverse beliefs that they have, there are no people, as long as they have reason and understanding in them, who do not have some article of our faith and some good point of our belief and who do not believe in God who made the world, that is called hiretage, which is to say God of nature, according to the prophet, who says, *And all the ends of the earth shall fear him*, and elsewhere he says, *All nations shall serve him.* But they do not know how to speak of him perfectly, for they have no one to describe or teach them except as they understand through their natural reason. For they know nothing of the Father or the Son or the Holy Ghost. But they know of the Bible well, especially Genesis and other prophecies and the books of Moses. And they say well that the creatures they worship are not God, but they worship them for the great virtue that is in them; for they could do nothing without the grace of God.[56]

contenoit que celui estoit mis en terre deux mile ans aincois que Ihesu Crist fust nez'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 237.

[55] 'Et prophetisierent en ceste ylle incarnacion nostre Seigneur, comment il deuoit naistre dune pucelle vierge, bien iiii.^{m} [iii.^{m}] ans ou plus auant que nostre Seigneur fust nez, et crurent lincarnacion parfaitement'. *op. cit.*, pp. 400-1.

[56] 'Mais sachies que tout ce pays dont iay parle, et de toutes les diuerses ylles et de toutes les diuerses genz et diuerses loys et diuerses creances quil ont, il ny a nulles gens, pour tant quil aient raison et entendement en euls, quil nayent aucun article de nostre foy et

Thus the *Book*'s attitude towards religious belief is one that tolerates and accepts diversity, allowing all men to seek grace through their own actions and their underlying natural faith in God. Mandeville goes from satirical comments on Catholic Christianity to a relaxed examination of other Christian religions and Saracen beliefs, culminating in this informed, pious and syncretic world-view. But while Mandeville's audiences are certainly interested in the questions he raises, from Mohammed and the Quran to simulacra and Brahman faith, they do not always agree with this freedom of thought. Nor do they often seem to understand his views as a whole, preferring to pick and choose from the more curious or controversial points.

This is not the case with the Insular Version, which closely reflects the Continental. The one difference concerning theological issues is the addition - perhaps extant in the *Book*'s original - of a passage on Job. This appears where the Continental text simply mentions the rich land of Job, the city of Cheman and the manna found in the mountains. The Insular addition, which begins and ends as the Continental, is as follows:

> Job was a pagan and he was the son of Are of Gosra, and he held that land as the prince of the country, and he was so rich that he did not know the hundredth part of what he owned. And, although he was a pagan, nevertheless he served Our Lord well according to his law. And Our Lord readily approved of his service. And, when he fell into poverty, he was 78 years of age. And afterwards, when Our Lord had seen his patience which was so great, he placed him back in wealth and high standing once more, and afterwards he was king of Idumea after king Esau, and when he was king he was called Jobab. And afterwards he lived 170 years in this kingdom, and thus when he died he was 248 years old.[57]

aucun bon point de nostre creance et quil ne croient en Dieu qui fist le monde, que on appelle hiretage, cest a dire Dieu de nature, selon le prophecte, qui dit, *Et metuent eum omnes fines terre*; et aillieurs il dit, *Omnes gentes seruient ei.* Mais il nen sceurent mie parfaictement parler, car il nont qui leur deuise ne enseingne fors ainsi quil entendent de leur sens naturel. Car du Pere ne du Filz ne du Saint Esperit il ne sceuent parler. Mais il sceuent bien de la Bible, especialment de Genesy et autres prophecies et des liures Moyses. Et dient bien que les creatures quil aeurent ne sont mie Dieu, mais li les aeurent pour la grant vertu qui est en elles; car elles ne pourroient riens faire sens la grace de Dieu'. Letts, *Travels* II, p. 410.

[57] 'Iob fust paen et fust filz Are de Gosra, et tenoit celle terre come prince de païs et estoit si riche qu'il ne sauoit le cent part de ceo qu'il avoit. Et come bien q'il fust paen nient moinz il servoit bien Nostre Seignur solonc sa loy. Et Nostre Seignur prignoit bien soun service en grée. Et quant il cheust en poverté il avoit d'aage LXXVIII aunz. Et après, quant Nostre Seignur auoit veu sa pacience qe estoit si grande, il le remist a richesse et a hautesse derechief, et puis fust roy de Ydumea après le roy Esau, et quant il fust roy il

This passage is significant given the *Book*'s stated beliefs on the subject of pagan salvation. Here they are expounded clearly: although Job was a pagan, God approved of his service and rewarded him richly. The 'law' Job served God under could be a reference to either Mosaic or natural law. The former is more likely in this context, although Mandeville has already referred to the failure of Mosaic law compared to Christianity. All the English versions which follow the Insular contain this insertion which is, as we will see, often noted in the marginalia.

The passage on Job, therefore, is in agreement with the *Book*'s overall tone. This is not the case with the 'Balthazardy Letter' an interpolation found in three manuscripts of the Insular Version after the list of Sultans. The letter, supposedly sent by the brother of the current Sultan to the Pope, is a gloating challenge to the Pope and 'Philip king of the French'. The Saracens have conquered the Holy Land - Jerusalem, Tripoli and Acre. 'Have we not made 355 cities subject to ourselves, which the servants of the Cross once ruled?'[58] The Christians dare not reclaim their lost kingdom. This inflammatory missive has little to do with the Sultan's reasonable castigation of Christianity or with Mandeville's own friendly relations with the Saracen ruler. Instead, the interpolator is trying to turn us against the insulting, overbearing unbelievers who dare to mock our faith and military ability.

There are other variations in the English versions of the *Book*. The four manuscripts of sub-group D of the Defective Version[59] give another interpolation: a Latin translation of part of the Alexander and Didimus correspondence. In his letter to Alexander (given in Mandeville's source Vincent of Beauvais), the Brahman king, as we have seen, supposedly chastises the conqueror. It seems that the redactor of the original sub-group D stems from was impressed by the story of the Brahmans' virtuous life and decided to provide corroboratory evidence.

The Egerton Version develops a point mentioned in passing by the other versions: the blackness of the Numidians. This is done in a way entirely in keeping with the *Book*'s general attitudes towards otherness:

> But they are black of colour; and that they hold a great beauty, and aye the blacker they are the fairer they think them. And they say that and that they should paint an angel and a fiend, they would paint the angel black and the

fust appellez Jobab. Et en ceo roialme il vesquy puis CLXX aunz et ensy eust il quant il morust CCXLVIII aunz'. Deluz, *Le livre des merveilles du monde*, p. 299.

58 'Nonne enim CCCLV civitates nobis subjecimus quas famuli Crucifixi rexerant?'. Deluz, *Le Livre des merveilles du Monde*, App. A, p. 484.

59 Seymour, M.C. (1966), 'The English Manuscripts of *Mandeville's Travels*', in *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 4, p. 169.

> fiend white. And if they think them not black enough when they are born, they use certain medicines for to make them black withal. That country is wonder hot, and that makes the folk thereof so black.[60]

The inversion of outlook by which black is seen as more beautiful than white is typical of Mandeville's occasional comparisons of the strange and the familiar. Even the black angel and white devil are, by implication, logical for a black people; the use of medicines to accentuate skin colour could be seen as a sign of universal human vanity. The idea may come at least partly from Jacques de Vitry, who says 'now we consider black Ethiopians ugly; but among them the blacker thing is judged more beautiful'.[61]

The Cotton Version contains a significant alteration to the Papal Interpolation. The interpolation's opening statement is that Sir John's visit to the Pope is intended as a confirmation of his travels, 'als mickle as many men trow not but that at they see with their eyes, or that they may conceive with their own kindly wits'.[62] This is quite in keeping with the *Book*; the Cotton text, however, has this to say:

> at myn hom comynge I cam to Rome and schewed my lif to oure holy fadir the Pope and was assoylled of alle that lay in my conscience of many a dyuerse greuous poynt, as men mosten nedes that ben in company dwellyng among so many a dyuerse folk of dyuerse secte and of beleeve as I haue ben.[63]

Mandeville's contact with 'diverse folk' has polluted him spiritually to the point where absolution is necessary. This view, completely antithetical to the *Book*'s outlook, gives some idea of how some readers not only resisted but rejected its fundamental messages.

The Metrical Version's changes, on the other hand, are due to indifference rather than resistance. This author was not interested in the finer details of theology, a fact made obvious by his transposition of part of the Saracen faith for that of the Greeks. The Greeks are thus said to believe in Christ and the Trinity but not in the Crucifixion, as Judas was placed in Christ's stead, while the Saracen faith is omitted altogether. The most likely explanation is that the redactor liked the story of Judas being

60 Letts, *Travels* I, p. 33.

61 'Nos autem nigros Aethiopes turpes reputamus, inter ipsos autem qui nigrior est, pulchrior ab ipsis judicatur'. *Historia orientalis*, cited in Hamelius, *Mandeville's Travels*, Vol. 2, p. 46.

62 Egerton text, Letts, *Travels* II, p. 222.

63 Seymour, *Mandeville's Travels*, p. 228.

crucified instead of Christ and decided to insert it out of context, a technique he follows elsewhere.

An English version of the *Book* which conveys a greater interest in theological issues is the Stanzaic Fragment.[64] This is an incomplete verse combination of information from Mandeville and Marco Polo, dating from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. The versifier - in spite of his choice of source - is not concerned with geographical information, omitting the Holy Land itinerary altogether. Instead, in the leaves we have, he describes the Khan of Cathay, Prester John and the Sultan's colloquy in a very didactic fashion with the emphasis on Christian morality. Mandeville himself is described as 'a grete clerke and a wyse'.[65]

We are first introduced to the Great Khan, of whom it is said, as in the *Book*: 'It is grete ruth for so rich a lord / that he ne holdis the Cristyn fay, / for ellis the warld he myght concord.[66] He allows people of every faith to live in his land and will not hinder conversion, 'But alese, few Cristen men haf theye / but the Grekis and the Nestorianese sect / that of Cristyn faith hath not tru waye'.[67] This unfortunate situation is not remedied by the fact that the preachers the Khan requests from the Pope via Marco Polo never materialise. Yet in spite of these setbacks, the Khan is a wise and benevolent ruler who reproves his men for insulting Christ with the words, 'Christ is God, it is provid playn'.[68] His generous almsgiving should set an example to Christian princes and bishops, and Polo says that his reign extends further than that of Saracens and Christians together. This gives rise to the fervent prayer, 'O Ihesu, lat þi mercy falle / opon thes folke the soth to see'.[69]

The description of the Khan's burial, only partly drawn from Mandeville, is given as evidence of Tartar spiritual blindness. In spite of their natural wisdom - they boast of seeing, as Mandeville says, with two eyes where Christians see with one - the Tartar belief that the Khan's array will be waiting for him in Paradise proves 'the blyndnese of þe men'.[70] This theme is developed further:

> Opon God of Hevyn they do belefe, / but mich mawmoutry vse they by. /
> To wychcrafte and nigromance ar þey lef. / In alle lust and plesur do they lye. /
> Thus ar they blyndid worthely.[71]

Thus the Tartars lack religious truth in spite of all their ruler's virtues. The Nestorians and Greeks, as we have seen, are of no use in converting this great realm and their faith is in any case suspect. Even worse is the king of Mancy, whose people sacrifice themselves to their idols:

> But most cursit panym he is, iwisse. / In eury fest of his fals goddis /
> ccc. men thaymselff do sloo. / Thay calle þam martyrs, but far þay mysse; /
> the devylle of Helle he dotis þam so.[72]

Here there is an obvious contrast between the *Book*'s implicit approval of the devotion of these people and this versifier's intolerance of other faiths, attributing their actions to the devil rather than natural piety.

This contrast becomes even more marked when the author of the Stanzaic Fragment discusses the Muslim faith. Even the Great Khan 'hatist most of on / Machometis law for it synfullenesse'.[73] There is no attempt to describe the Saracen faith or the Quran, at least in this fragment. Instead we are told how the Khan wished 'to haue distroyet the law of Machomete'.[74] He captured the 'chef prelate' - not, as in Mandeville, a caliph - and let him starve in his tower of gold and silver. The Khan then sent his brother to the Holy Land, 'and bad alle Turkis and Saracence flee / and gyf the rentis into the Crysten hand'.[75] Unfortunately, as Polo wrote, the brother had to turn back because of the Khan's death, and this dream came to naught; the author explains this failure in the following terms:

> I trust alle was done by Goddis rede, / that no haythyn suld help vs it to wyn. /
> Son after Godfray of Bolan bar vp the hede / and the Holy Land wan more and
> myn. / But agayn we lost it for our syn / right sone, and þat was gret pitee. /
> The Turkis trustis we salle neuer it wyn / als lang ase we thus synfylle be.[76]

These comments on Christian sinfulness losing them the Holy Land echo Mandeville's own ideas. The strange remark about winning the trust of the Turks is explained by the passage that follows, 'the Commonyng of Sir Iohan Mandeville and þe Gret Sowdon' as this section is headed. This is

64 Bodleian Library MS. e Musaeo 160, printed by Seymour (1964), 'Mandeville and Marco Polo: a stanzaic fragment', *AUMLA* 21, pp. 39-52.
65 Seymour, 'A stanzaic fragment', l. 94.
66 *op. cit.*, ll. 6-8.
67 *op. cit.*, ll. 18-29.
68 *op. cit.*, l. 43.
69 *op. cit.*, ll. 71-2.
70 *op. cit.*, l. 293.

71 Seymour, 'A stanzaic fragment', ll. 309-13.
72 *op. cit.*, ll. 148-52.
73 *op. cit.*, ll. 157-8.
74 *op. cit.*, l. 162.
75 *op. cit.*, ll. 171-2.
76 *op. cit.*, ll. 177-84.

a retelling of the Sultan's colloquy: as in the *Book*, the vices of Western priests are condemned and the common people are no better. The Sultan concludes that the Holy Land will not be regained by Christians while this state of affairs continues.

After describing Mandeville's dismay at hearing these things and the Sultan's explanation of his detailed knowledge, the versifier breaks into direct speech. He describes the consequences of sin to individual Christians:

> Loo, Cristyn men, now may ȝe her / how heythen men doth vs dispise. /
> For Cristis loue lat vs forber / our ugly synnes and radly ryse. /
> Our mede is mekylle in Paradise / yf we thus do; or ellis dowtlesse /
> despyst in Helle in paynes grise / sal bee our set in payn endlese.[77]

In the next few lines, however, he quickly returns to the subject of other religions. The evil events in the world are due to the loosing of Satan prophesied in St John's Apocalypse. The Sultan, the Khan, Prester John and all their subjects are arrayed against Christ and the gospel, succumbing to pleasure, covetousness and pride. Shortly afterwards we are told that 'ȝe haue hard how Macometis lay / doth promesse a paradise þat can not bee'.[78] It is unclear whether this is a reference to the above lines, or to an earlier account now lost.

Altogether, in the space of 314 lines, the author of this fragment has condemned Eastern Christians, pagans and Saracens to varying degrees, drawing material from both Polo and Mandeville though he has not copied Mandeville's tolerance. But Roman Christendom is also blamed at several points apart from the Sultan's diatribe. The Khan's munificence is used to criticise Western temporal and spiritual rulers, while dissent within the papacy is blamed for the lack of missionary efforts to the East, where the Khan's empire awaits conversion. The loss of the Holy Land through the sins detailed by the Sultan comes directly from the *Book*, although the references to the Devil's part in the state of the world are the author's own. The Stanzaic Fragment has been highly selective of the *Book*'s theological material, using it in ways both similar to and very different from Mandeville's intentions.

The Vulgate Latin Version is the most important of the *Book*'s redactions as regards clerical reception of its theology. Its very language presupposes a certain level of learning still, in the early fifteenth century, most often associated with the Church. The Latin redactor changes the

[77] Seymour, 'A stanzaic fragment', ll. 237-44.
[78] *op. cit.*, ll. 265-6.

original text substantially, stressing orthodox religious attitudes and revising not only the surface of the work but even the Mandeville-*persona* himself. The whole tone of the *Book* is altered, becoming a strict declaration of the Christian faith and allowing for none of the original author's freedom in matters of belief. The knight becomes, particularly at the beginning, a rigidly intolerant critic of any deviation from the one true Catholic Church. It is almost as if the redactor were returning to Mandeville's revised sources, which in the case of Odoric he explicitly does.

The Latin Version does retain one facet of the *Book's* attitude towards religion. After a no-nonsense opening on Christ and the Holy Land, the author continues with a general condemnation of the miserable state of Church and clergy in a stinging poem:

> Virtue, Church, Clergy, the Devil, Symony,
> Is dead, trampled, in error, reigns, commands.[79]

In spite of his early castigation of Christendom, the redactor does not wish to go too far by lending credence to the Orthodox Church. He accordingly eliminates the story of the Greek letter to the Pope and reduces the account of the Greek faith to two sentences. The other Christian sects of the Middle East are quickly described without condemnation, as are the 'Indian' priests, who have become pilgrims while retaining their piety and devotion.

In this they are fortunate, for the redactor's discussion of the Saracen faith is a scathing condemnation of religious otherness under the heading, 'Of the detestable sect of the Saracens and their faith'.[80] It is stressed repeatedly that Muslims and Jews walk in the dark, while only baptized Christians, who 'firmly serve the Catholic faith in humility of heart under the precepts of the Church'[81] are children of the light and destined for Paradise. The Saracens obstinately persist in their error that Christ was not crucified. The life of Mohammed is, however, given with few changes apart from the fact that he died an evil death, as do all sinners. The Saracen accusation that Jews and Christians do not keep their respective faiths is immediately followed by a severe castigation of their 'false persuasion'.

The Sultan's homily is not reduced. It is placed, most effectively, at the end of the account of the Holy Land and thus serves as a final commentary

[79] 'Virtus, Ecclesia, Clerus, daemon, symonia, / Cessat, calcatur, errat, regnat, dominatur'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 63.
[80] 'De secta detestabili Saracenorum et eorum fide'. *op. cit.*, p. 138.
[81] 'qui firmiter fidem Catholicam in humilitate cordis sub Ecclesiæ præceptis seruaurerunt'. *op. cit.*, p. 139.

on Christian faith. It is altered to include public spectacles among the evils of Christendom but exclude any reference to the selling of wives and daughters, a choice revealing the author's conservatism. Sir John's embarrassment is made yet more obvious; he is confused and stunned by the truth as told by an infidel. He begs his audience to strive for self-improvement, so that the Holy Land may be regained and the Saracens converted to 'Catholic faith and Christian obedience', so all may attain Paradise together.

At the opening of the second part, the Latin Version incorporates a novel digression, entitled 'The argument against those not believing the diversities of the earth throughout the circle of the world'.[82] It is in fact an attempt to give a religious slant to these diversities. The theme is the power of God as it shapes the diversity of the earth, and why it does so:

> Wonderful God created wonders through himself alone, so that he might be comprehended by his intelligent creatures, and through this be loved, and in this creator and creatures might delight in each other.[83]

A sense of wonder at creation is equated with a kind of spirituality of the marvellous, almost a holy awe.

This promise of diversity is fulfilled but there is little sign of Mandeville's open attitude. The inhabitants of Chana are described as 'the most infidel of pagans'; the cult of St Thomas contains 'perverse rites'; the people sacrificing themselves beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut do so through 'demonic inspiration' and 'diabolical devotion' and are not compared to Christians; the doctrine of reincarnation is 'perfidious and most pagan'. Even the Khan's palace is full of 'stupid pagans' with their 'diabolical marvels'.

This rather negative portrayal is capped by a diatribe on the blindness of pagans and the glories of the true faith and the one true God - quite obviously not Mandeville's 'God of Nature'. Tartar ceremonies are generally despicable, 'full of vanity and false insanities', and serve as an exemplum on pride and blindness. The Khan is addressed as the Son of God, a detail the *Book*'s original author gave but did not comment upon. Here this belief is pitiable, demonstrating as it does pagan ignorance about the true Son of God. Pagans are excluded from holy mother Church, whose

[82] 'Persuasio ad non credentes terrarum diuersitates per orbem terræ'. Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 8, p. 175.

[83] 'Mirabilis Deus mirabilia propter semetipsum creauit, vt scilicet ab intellectualibus creaturis suis intelligeretur, et per hoc diligeretur, atque in hoc ipse creator, et creatura se mutuo fruerentur'. *op. cit.*

faith encompasses the earth. Mandeville's religious syncretism is undone and replaced by a form of Christian exclusionism.

After this peroration, the Christian religions of Georgia and Armenia are only mentioned in passing and the tale of the Enclosed Tribes is shortened considerably. At this point the redactor begins to mention Odoric, the *Book*'s original source, and draw information from him as well. One such insertion is a passage on conversion, in which the friars cast out demons and baptise people who then burn their idols.[84] This is hardly in keeping with the spirit of Mandeville's original text, and there is no mention of the reasons idols are worshipped. Odoric is cited again in the account of the Vale Perilous, a terrifying place whose riches, used as an exemplum of avarice by Mandeville, are almost ignored. The value of Christian faith is developed instead: Christians must receive communion and enter the valley in a spirit of penance and contrition in order to survive.

The account of the Brahmans is shortened considerably, with no mention of their encounter with Alexander. They believe in God the Creator and hope for Paradise, but Mandeville's long explanation of natural faith and prophecy is excised. The Tibetan belief that the birds at air burials are angels is condemned as a diabolical error. The redaction ends with an interpolation in the account of the rich man of Tibet, whose long fingernails are a sign of nobility and who is served by 50 maidens, living 'like a pig being fattened'. In the Liège Version the rich man is described as 'a shameful person', for 'all filth lies in such nobility. And their hands are all stinking'. The insertion elaborates on the porcine image, 'And thus they gather great wealth as pigs gather great stinking and dark dunghills, which they spend on drinking and eating without gaining honour or serving God'.[85] The Vulgate Latin Version retains this moral example against greed and caps it with a heavy-handed couplet, happily translated by Higgins as follows:

> Because he lived like a swine,
> Hell will take him supine.[86]

The Latin Version, therefore, works almost completely against the spirit of the *Book*'s basis of belief, tolerance and human unity under God. Instead

[84] Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, Vol. 9, p. 40.

[85] 'une honteuse personne'; 'toute ordure gist en tel noblesce. Si ont les mains toutes puantes'; 'Et ainsi assemble on grant auoir sicomme pourceaux assemblent grant fumier puant et obscur que on despent en boire et en menger sanz honneur conquerre ne Dieu seuir'. Paris, BN. MS. ff. 24436, f. 60v.

[86] 'Quia viuit sicut porcus, / Morientem suscipit orcus'. Hakluyt, *op. cit.*, p. 76; see Higgins, *Writing East*, p. 261.

it stresses the differences between religions, usually describing other faiths in insulting and intolerant language. Varieties of Christianity are let off lightly, while the redactor inveighs heavily against paganism, idolatry and the infidel. The only point at which he could be argued to have retained the spirit of the original is in the Sultan's homily, which however ends as a reiteration of faith in Holy Church as the only hope of salvation.

We have seen how the redactors of the *Book* dealt with its theological material; we will now examine the readers' response. Firstly I will deal with two manuscripts whose annotators have marked almost everything of importance throughout: the fourteenth-century Continental BN MS. ff. 10723, and its English counterpart of the same period, Insular MS. Sloane 1464.

The Paris French text has two different annotators, one writing in French and the other in Latin. Both give notes on theological subjects. The French marginalia are concentrated mainly at the beginning of the text up to the Templum Domini and at the end in Prester John's lands; the Latin covers the part in between. Among the first marginalia in French are two on Hermes Trismegistus and two on the Greek religion. There is also a Latin *nota* on the latter.[87] Other Christian faiths are the subject of four Latin *notae*: 'nota confessionem inter cristianorum stantes inter saracenorum' reveals an interest in the Jacobite faith, followed by those of the Syrians and Georgians.[88]

The Jews are noted by a hand pointing to the destruction of the Temple and a Latin *nota* on the difference of dress between Jews and Christians.[89] The Enclosed Tribes merit four French notes, including 'la terre des iuis', 'pour quoy les iuis aprenent a parller ebrieu' and 'come il troueront issue'.[90] The charge of poisoning, however, is not remarked upon in this or any other manuscript I have examined. The Saracen faith is more thoroughly covered; early French notes on Mohammed's tomb and the reason Muslims drink no wine ('come il leur retourne la maledicion sur eux')[91] are followed by multiple Latin marginalia on Ramadan, their opinion of the Jews, the Sultan's speech and Saracen condemnation of Christian morals, the life of Mohammed and the Arabic profession of faith used by Christian converts.[92]

87 ff. 5v, 6.
88 ff. 36-37.
89 ff. 25, 33.
90 ff. 84-84v.
91 ff. 12v, 21v.
92 ff. 41v-44v.

This interest in the faiths of the Holy Land continues further east; the 'multas leges' and difference between idols and simulacra are commented on before the Latin annotator moves on to ox-worship. The self-sacrifice of the pious is, as in the text, compared favourably with Christian devotion.[93] The strange customs of Indian peoples are remarked upon without comment although the almsgiving to animals is noted at length.[94] The magicians of the Khan's court are 'subciliores mundi'.[95] Tartar beliefs concerning the number nine and the new moon are also marked along with the Khan's reverence to Christian priests.[96]

Near the end of the text, the French annotator resumes, noting a 'cotume folle', a 'farce coutume' and 'le pape de la loy et la coutume folle'[97] - defloration by another, incest and air burial. However, there are favourable comments on the 'bonne iustice' of the elected king and several times on the Brahmans and Gymnosophists. The Scriptural quotations on God's love of pagans are remarked upon, and there is a note on Mandeville's final passage: 'come lez sarasins tenent aucun article de nostre loy et croyent en dieu qui fit le monde'.[98] The 'Saracens' are all the pagans mentioned in the *Book*. The annotators of this manuscript, therefore, have shown great interest in the theological aspects of the *Book*, and generally seem to agree with Mandeville's tolerant spirit, approving of pious pagan customs and noting pagan virtue and belief in God.

The Latin marginalia of BL MS. Sloane 1464 reflect much the same concerns. Here too we find an interest in the Greeks - mainly their use of leavened bread for the sacrament - as well as other faiths such as those of the Samaritans and Jacobites. Mohammed and the Quran are mentioned extensively. The Sultan's homily is called a 'narracione bona'.[99] The simulacra and idols are noted, as are the ox-worshippers, their pilgrimage to the Church of St Thomas and the 'reuerencia et deuocione exhibita ydolem'.[100] The customs of various peoples are mentioned in passing, as are the almsgiving and 'nigromancia' of Cathay.[101]

The Tartar belief in a God of nature merits special attention, with a line drawn down the page.[102] The devout Christians of Armenia are then

93 ff. 52v-53v, 54v-55v .
94 ff. 62-64v, 66.
95 f. 69.
96 ff. 72v, 77v, 78v.
97 ff. 91, 92, 98v.
98 f. 99v.
99 f. 75v.
100 ff. 91v-92v, 95, 96-97.
101 ff. 111v, 116.
102 f. 130.

remarked upon, followed by two *notae* on the Enclosed Tribes and the fact that Jews possess no other land.[103] Prester John's Christianity and crosses are among the relatively few notes on him. These are followed by several marginalia on the 'bona gente bona fidei' of Bragmey and their encounter with Alexander.[104] The vision of St Peter, supporting the theory of pagan salvation, is an 'exemplum bonum', and the prophecy of the Incarnation granted to the people of 'Sinople' is marked at length.[105] Finally the passage on pagan virtue and belief in God is accorded five separate *notae*.

It can be concluded from the above that this annotator of Sloane 1464, apart from his general interest in information from the whole *Book*, agreed with Mandeville's attitudes towards foreign faiths and peoples even more strongly than the annotators of BN n.a. 10723. He did not hesitate to insert approving notes on various passages, particularly those concerning the Indies, and echoed the *Book*'s theological preoccupations at many points.

Of the English Versions, BL MS. Cotton Titus Cxvi is the most heavily annotated, particularly with respect to theological issues. There are marginalia on Hermes' tomb, 'a profity of crist'; the Greek letter and faith; the Samaritans' 'confession only to god'; the 'belefe of the Sarsyns' and the Sultan's homily.[106] This reader was also impressed by the account of idolatry, Prester John's faith, and 'what manere of masse the postelles used'.[107] Although the Brahmans are not noted, 'Job a panem' is written next to the passage on the possibility of pagan salvation which follows.[108]

The marginalia of the Continental BN MS. ff. 5637 are also of interest. The reader has noted, by means of lines down the margin of the text, the whole account of the Greek faith, the Jacobite confession to God alone, the Sultan's speech, the idolaters of Chana and the Khan's submission to the cross.[109] Although no marginal notes are given, it seems that this reader was concerned with matters of belief. He has also underlined the words 'les euesques et les maistres de la loy' in the story of Christ's examination by the Jews; 'les euesques des Iuyfz' at the account of Judas and the thirty pence; and 'prelas' in the Sultan's speech.[110] It is possible that this marking of references to priests, all in uncomplimentary contexts, denotes a criticism of the European clergy.

[103] ff. 137, 139-139v.
[104] ff. 150v-152v.
[105] ff. 152v, 153.
[106] ff. 8, 8v-9, 49, 53, 56, 58.
[107] ff. 71v-73v, 84, 115v, 126v.
[108] f. 124v.
[109] ff. 7v, 37-37v, 43-43v, 54-55v, 75.
[110] ff. 6v, 29v, 43.

Other annotators, although not as prolific, show an interest in the *Book*'s religious concerns. Aspects of the Greek faith are particularly noted in the Insular BL MS. Harley 1739[111] and BN MS. ff. 5633, where the whole passage is underlined.[112] The Continental BN Arsenal 3219 also marks this text,[113] and passages concerning the worship of various animals, reincarnation, the Brahmans and the final explanation of idolatry;[114] a marginal note is given on Orosius' version of the Enclosed Tribes.[115] The difference between simulacra and idols is noted in BN MS. ff. 25284, as well as ox-worship, the Khan's respect for Christianity, the miracle of the Vale of Darkness, the Brahmans and the 'mirabilissimus' prophecy of the Incarnation of Christ.[116] BN ff. 5634 is similarly interested in idolatry, though not in other religions.[117]

Taking all these marginalia together, it is obvious that some of the *Book*'s audiences were deeply interested in matters of theology, with regard to both the Christian and other faiths. They accepted Mandeville's criticism of the Roman Church and concurred with his views on pagan virtue and redemption. Even the Saracen faith was considered worth noting without any adverse comment. There is, however, one major difference between the text and its reception. While the Jews are sometimes noticed, particularly in the context of the Enclosed Nations, they are not on the whole singled out for adverse comment; even manuscripts which note everything of interest pass over the Jewish attempt to poison Christendom in silence. The trees of meal, honey, wine and venom are often remarked, and even the virulence of the poison itself, but I have not found any annotation or underlining of Mandeville's accusation. The *Book*'s anti-Judaism, therefore, was not always shared by its audiences.

The illustrations of the *Book* also demonstrate a preoccupation with other faiths and customs, although not always in the way Mandeville intended. The artists tend to stress the exotic over the familiar, often to the detriment of the *Book*'s underlying message of human unity within diversity. Where the *Book* often gives the reasoning behind strange customs and finds ways of demonstrating points of similarity between European and Eastern modes, most illustrators prefer to ignore this religious and cultural syncretism, stressing instead the marvellous and bizarre. While this attitude is in keeping with medieval depictions of the 'monstrous races' of Pliny

[111] ff. 4v-5.
[112] ff. 13v-14.
[113] ff. 6-6v.
[114] ff. 56v, 58v, 70, 99-100v, 106v.
[115] f. 89.
[116] ff. 66v, 68v, 108, 117, 138, 141v.
[117] ff. 46, 47v, 64v.

and the marvels of the East, it is often inappropriate when treating Mandeville's humanist perspective.

BN MS. ff. 2810 is perhaps the mildest offender in this respect, although it contains many images of weird and wonderful races including Hermaphrodites, giants and apple-smellers. In one illustration, four Blemmyae move through a rocky landscape, carrying clubs and a shield. They are of both types described by Mandeville, those with faces in their chests and those with faces in their backs (Ill. 19). This illustrator of the *Livre des Merveilles* was obviously fond of the Plinian Races, as he also included them in the text of Marco Polo - a work notably lacking in monstrous peoples.

There is some interest in depicting the religious diversity of the *Book*. While there are no references to Eastern Christian churches, we are shown Mohammed with his book and the slaying of his hermit mentor.[118] The idolaters of Malabar are rather more sensational, kneeling before golden idols of horned men and sacrificing a child to an idol of a deer with a man's head.[119] The artist also shows a man killing himself by the tomb of St Thomas.[120] Strange customs are graphically depicted, particularly the exposing of sick men in Caffoles - a man with a green face being hanged from a tree - and Tibetan air burial, in which a high priest dressed as a bishop watches a body being dismembered, the head saved on a platter for the son to make into a cup while the rest is thrown to the birds.[121] Elsewhere, more restrainedly, the artist shows the Khan revering the cross, the miracle of the Vale of Darkness and Brahmans quietly praying and reading.[122] While the emphasis is on the marvellous, the artist avoids the worst excesses of exotic illustration.

This is also true of the Defective MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii of the same period. This includes two pictures of the Greek faith and a purse denoting simony,[123] as well as 'Ackaron a book of lawe' and Mohammed holding a halberd.[124] The picture of a simulacrum - a statue with the heads of a man, an ape and a donkey - is followed by that of a pilgrim, a reference to the pagan pilgrimage to St Thomas' church. There is also a 'mawmet ycoroned', although with no worshippers.[125] This artist has chosen to show

118 ff. 174, 177.
119 ff. 184, 185.
120 f. 186v.
121 ff. 192, 223.
122 ff. 205, 209v, 218.
123 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. CFM 23 has a rough marginal drawing of a woman representing simony on f. 15.
124 ff. 11v, 12, 31v, 33.
125 ff. 39, 39v.

a dog attacking a man - the 'strangling' of the sick in India - rather than exposure on trees (Ill. 20).[126] The monstrous races are depicted quite restrainedly. There are, among others, a Cynocephalus warrior, a cannibal, a Cyclops, a Blemmya, a snake-eater and a feathered man.[127] With the exception of the Cynocephalus and the feathered man, all these are clothed in European fashion, which both conceals their difference and accentuates it. The last picture shows Prester John, his crown beside him, kneeling before a crucifix.[128]

This tasteful depiction of the exotic is completely rejected in the illustrations of Harley 3954. The Saracen faith is ignored and the only reference to any form of Christianity is the picture of Prester John in church being blessed.[129] This artist is far less restrained than either of the preceding; the tone is set by the picture of a Tartar eating a rat while two men and a horse writhe on the ground.[130] This is soon followed by the ugly Numidian women, three naked Sciapods and a graphic depiction of the effects of Ethiopian heat on men's testicles.[131]

The worship of strange things encountered in India is given in three pictures of men worshipping fire, snakes and animals, followed by one of a three-headed idol. Idolatry was one of the artist's favourite subjects, particularly in its more gruesome details: we see a king being anointed with ox urine, child sacrifice and the feast-day of the idol, complete with self-immolation and the Juggernaut.[132] The pictures become ever more violent as we progress through the cannibal islands, where a body is bloodily dismembered before being served to grinning men and women, while in the foreground a sick man is savaged by two dogs. On the same page, a second image shows the warlike men of Milke hacking and stabbing each other, their teeth bared in unpleasant grins (Ill. 21).[133] The rest of the manuscript is filled with images of vicious fighting, another body hacked apart at table while musicians play, centaurs eating a man, women burning their children and Tibetan air burial (Ill. 22). This last is a grim version of Mandeville's description, with a man in a bishop's mitre cutting the body apart while other priests throw gobbets of flesh to the birds.

This artist revelled not only in the exotic but in extreme violence and brutality, and Mandeville's message of human unity and virtue is

126 f. 43.
127 ff. 43, 43v,44, 59.
128 f. 59v.
129 f. 65.
130 f. 24v.
131 ff. 30, 31, 32.
132 ff. 35-37.
133 f. 40.

completely destroyed by the illustrations. The original grieving relatives, consuming the dead body through respect, have become manic bloodthirsty revellers hungry for human flesh. Idols are worshipped with foul pageantry, while the monstrous races have become truly grotesque, graphically naked with hugely deformed features (Ill. 23). Even when people such as the idolaters or cannibals at table are dressed in European clothing, many incongruously lack hose, exposing their private parts. In this manuscript as a whole, the *Book*'s theological and cultural attitudes are not only ignored but actively denied.

The exact opposite is the case with the Textless Version, whose artist was exceptional in his regard for the religious aspect of the *Book*. This is partly due to the fact that the twenty-eight paintings only cover Mandeville's first five chapters, but the subjects chosen betray an obvious theological bias, including, as I have already discussed, Christ's Passion and its relics. The painting of the Greek reply to the Pope's letter[134] is important in the context of fifteenth-century Czech unrest and condemnation of the Church's greed. The representatives of the papal curia are arranged in a horseshoe pattern, scowling at the Greek emissaries. The latter are gesticulating as if to point out the evils of the Roman Church. The Pope, resplendent in crown and robes on a dais, is strongly contrasted with the Greeks in their simple attire; the artist leaves us in little doubt as to which side he is on.

On the subject of other peoples and customs, the artist gives a picture of a hunt with leopards and a feast in Cyprus, showing nobles seated on the floor around a low table.[135] This incongruity is stressed by the Cypriots' Western dress. The Jews are represented unfavourably in the scenes of the Passion, much as they are in Mandeville, and given the exaggerated physiognomy and unpleasant expressions characteristic of medieval anti-Semitic illustration.[136] The artist simultaneously echoes Mandeville's tolerant views on pagan redemption, showing the tomb of Hermes being opened and people marvelling at the corpse's message of salvation.[137] The more romantic tales of dragons and monsters emerging from tombs are avoided, although the giant's rib found at Jaffa can be seen in the painting of that city.[138] Altogether, then, the Textless Version, with its stress on religion, is an exception to the traditions of illustration of the *Book*.

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[134] Krása, *The Travels*, pl. 22.
[135] *op. cit.*, pl. 24.
[136] *op. cit.*, pl. 8, 12, 13, 14.
[137] *op. cit.*, pl. 21.
[138] *op. cit.*, pl. 25.

The woodcuts are more in keeping with the pictures of Harley 3954; while not as vicious in their artistry, they too are largely unconcerned with the *Book* as theology. There is some interest in the religions of the Holy Land; we see the Jacobite manner of confession using a fire, and Samaritans, Syrians, and Georgians, differentiated not by their beliefs but by their dress.[139] Mohammed is shown in an epileptic fit (Ill. 18). There are several images of idol-worship, including one of a man cutting himself with a knife.[140] Further on, a monk is shown with a bell and basket feeding animals, a portrayal of a Buddhist almsgiver.[141]

There are many pictures of the Plinian and other exotic races, including all those mentioned in Mandeville's list of marvellous peoples. A clothed Sciapod lies with his foot over his face, (Ill. 24) while a horseshoe-mouthed Blemmya is also dressed, presumably in individually-tailored clothing. A rather puzzling figure with large nostrils is presumably an apple-smeller (Ill. 25). The Cynocephalus, armed with a spear and with a symbolic ox on his head, as Mandeville notes, stands before an ox-idol. His shield bears a device of a strange animal, part wolf (possibly) and part-dragon - a detail not mentioned in the *Book* (Ill. 26). Some customs are also shown, including exposure on a tree, dogs killing the sick and air burial.

These are all simple depictions with none of the bloodthirstiness of the Harley manuscript, although Sorg's original image of the Hermaphrodites had to be toned down for the de Worde edition (Ill. 27) - it was presumably considered too graphic. Another woodcut, this time the title page of a 1531 edition of the Castilian Version reinforces the general trend. Above the title 'Libro de las maravillas del mundo' are eight representatives of the monstrous races: Cynocephali, Panotii, Cyclopes, Hermaphrodites, furred people, men who walk on their knees and two others not found in the *Book* - a man with six arms and one with four eyes.[142] Altogether, the illustrations reveal a continuing preoccupation with the diversity rather than the fundamental unity of human nature, and cannot be said to have understood or wished to transmit and reinforce the *Book*'s theological concerns.

This lack of interest on the part of the illustrators is not copied in the compendia. Many compilations placed Mandeville in close proximity to works of theology and devotional items, reflecting their readers' tastes and concerns. This is particularly true of the English Versions, the Vulgate

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[139] nos. 672, 624, 628, 629.
[140] nos. 643, 646, 648, 649.
[141] no. 678.
[142] Valencia, Jorge Costilla. Reproduced in Phillips, W.D. and C.R. (1992), *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus*, p. 184.

Latin and its derivative von Diemeringen Version. Only one manuscript of the Continental Version is set with a work which could be classified as religious, *Tundale's Vision*.[143] This description of Hell, Heaven and the Earthly Paradise is included in the Vulgate Brussels Bib. Roy. 1160-63 and the Defective BL MS. Royal 17 B xlii. The latter manuscript also contains William Staunton's early fifteenth-century *Vision in St Patrick's Purgatory*.[144]

While these works may be religious, they are not really concerned with Christian doctrine and morality. *Piers Plowman*, however, was bound with the Defective Version of the *Book* at least five times.[145] In three instances these were larger compendia of religious works. The Penrose MS. also contains Robert Manning's *Handlyng Synne* (a fourteenth-century collection of exempla), the *Assumption of the Virgin* and a gospel history. Huntingdon Library, California MS. HM 114 contains Mandeville, *Piers*, an extract on the garden of balm, the story of *Susan and Daniel* and the *Epistola Luce ad clericos*. This last item, a satirical proclamation by Lucifer, may reflect one owner's appreciation of the *Book*'s castigation of the Roman church. Finally, Mandeville is bound with *Piers Plowman* once more in BL MS. Harley 3954, the illustrations of which I have discussed above. In spite of the crude and violent pictures in the *Book*'s text, the Harley compilation includes texts on *The Childhood of the Saviour*, *The merit of mass*, *The seven sacraments*, *The lament of the Virgin* and other similar devotional works.

Other Defective manuscripts included with religious works are the New York, Corning Museum of Glass MS., which contains the *Long Charter of Christ* and *St Anthony and the Hermit*, and Oxford, Balliol College MS. 239, with the *Speculum Christiani* and Honorius of Autun's *Elucidarium, sive Dialogus de summa totius Christianae theologiae*. The doctrinal concerns of the latter are echoed in BL MS. Arundel 140, with its choice of *Ypotys*, a dialogue on dogma, and the *Prick of Conscience*, an eschatological poem enshrining popular doctrine on death, judgement, heaven and hell. Bodleian MS. Laud. Misc. 699 contains the Ten Commandments with an exposition, a prayer to be said before Communion and some moral sayings of the Fathers. The Stanzaic Fragment discussed in this chapter is compiled with a miscellany of prayers to all the patriarchs and saints, a hundred meditations and two miracle plays, the *Burial of Christ* and the *Resurrection*.[146]

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143 Lyon, Palais des Arts MS. 28.
144 Also included with Mandeville in the Vulgate Latin BL MS. Add. 37512.
145 Cambridge Uni. Library, MSS. Dd. i. 17 and Ff. v. 35.
146 Bodleian MS. e Musaeo 160.

These theological concerns are also evident in BL MS. Add. 37049, dating from the mid-fifteenth century, which contains an epitome of the *Book*. This is an illustrated compilation of short religious pieces in English and Latin, including the *Pseudo-Methodius*, the Ten Commandments, a tract on the Virgin, the *Charter of human redemption*, indulgences, extracts from the *Prick of Conscience* and many other tracts, prayers and lyrics. It also contains the *Carthusian Order*, which along with the pictures of Carthusians suggests that it may have been written by a member of the order, possibly at Axholme.[147] In this case, therefore, Mandeville was seen as a predominantly religious work appropriate for monastic use.

Two other English fifteenth-century manuscripts are also found in compendia of theological works. Bodleian MS. Ashmole 751 contains theological extracts from Mandeville, works by St Bernard and St Edmund Rich, two psalters and moral exempla. The single manuscript of the Harley Latin translation[148] contains, along with a fragment from a register of a Reading abbot, a martyrology, readings for certain days, legends and other religious material.

The Liège BN MS. ff. 24436 is compiled with examples of Latin religious prose, many French and Latin religious poems and, interestingly, two Latin pieces on the condemnation of two Dominicans by the Faculty of Theology at Paris for their heretical opinions on the Immaculate Conception; Mandeville's message of religious tolerance was presumably not the reason for the *Book*'s inclusion in this compendium. Of the Vulgate Latin manuscripts, BL Add. 37512, written in 1457 by a Carmelite monk, includes the *Vision in St Patrick's Purgatory*, the *Vita Malchi Monachi Captivi* and *Vita Pafnucii Monachi*, as well as a work by St Basil. Turin, Bib. Nat. H-III-1 contains St Bernard's *Epistola* and Jacob de Cessolis' *Liber de ludo scacchorum*, a work of exempla and doctrine. This work is also found in another manuscript with Mandeville and seventeen humanistic items.[149]

The von Diemeringen Version, finally, is compiled with devotional writings including the Proverbs of Solomon, hymns, legends of the Virgin and a text on the Apocalypse in BN MS. Alle. 150, and with a text on Antichrist in two other manuscripts.[150] The Vienna MS. 12449, a compendium of mainly religious works, has been discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

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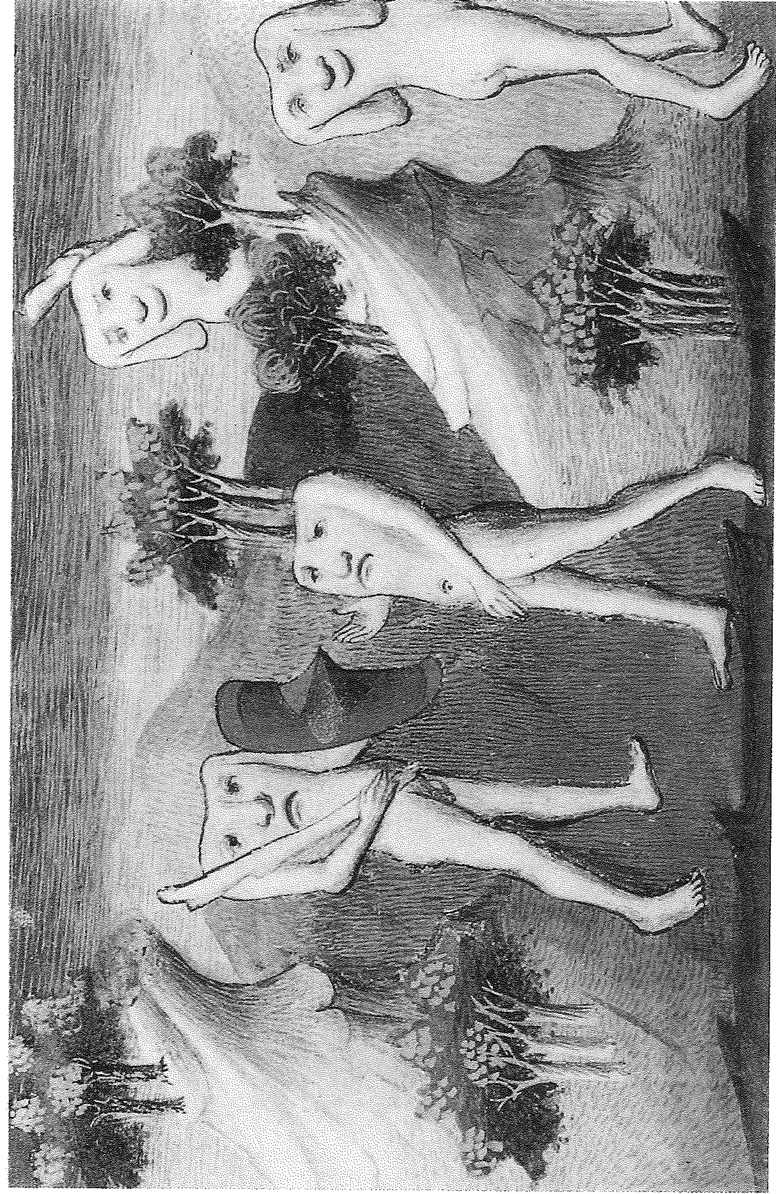
147 Cf. Seymour, 'The English manuscripts', p. 205.
148 BL MS. Harley 82.
149 Mikulov, Fürst. Diet. Bibl. Sig. II. 162; present whereabouts unknown.
150 St Gallen, Statsarchiv Cod. Fab. XVI; Vienna, Öster. Nationalbib. Cod. 2838.

Thus the evidence of the compendia suggests that the *Book*'s theological arguments and attitudes were both observed and respected by many of its readers. It was not only placed with more popular works of religion such as hymns, legends and proverbs, but also and more significantly with major works on doctrine and theology, to be found in the possession of clerics or literate, intellectual laymen. These readers did not condemn Mandeville's tolerant attitudes, but presumably found both his views and his descriptions of other religions, cultures and morality worth retaining in religious compilations.

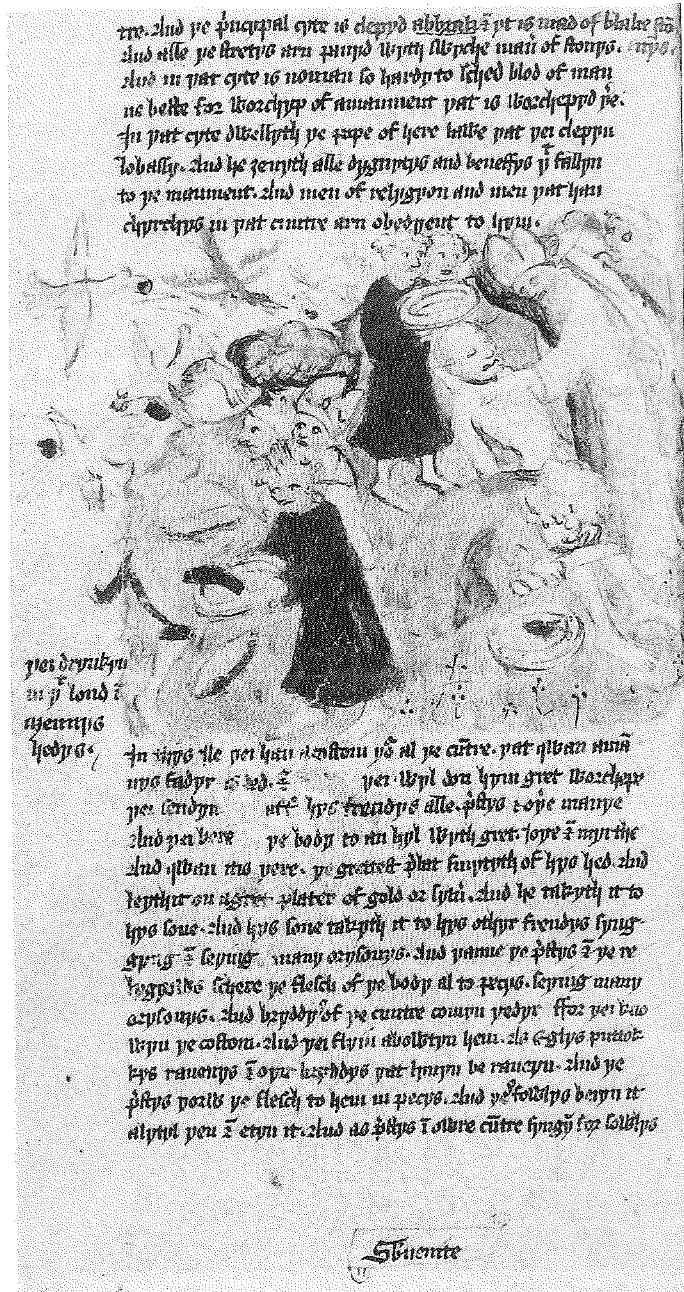
In the area of theology, therefore, the *Book*'s audiences were as varied as the races of the East. Many readers, redactors and illustrators chose to ignore the deeper moral discussions on foreign religions and pagan faiths, noting only the marvellous differences of the exotic Orient. Some, like the redactor of the Latin Version, stressed a more conservative theology and thereby negated the *Book*'s intrinsic humanity. Other audiences, however, saw something at least of what Mandeville was attempting to show them. They appreciated the tolerant and open-minded work Mandeville had grown from his sources, and noted not only the lapses of Roman Christendom but also the natural piety and devotion to God demonstrated by the 'heretics', 'infidels' and 'pagans' of other lands.



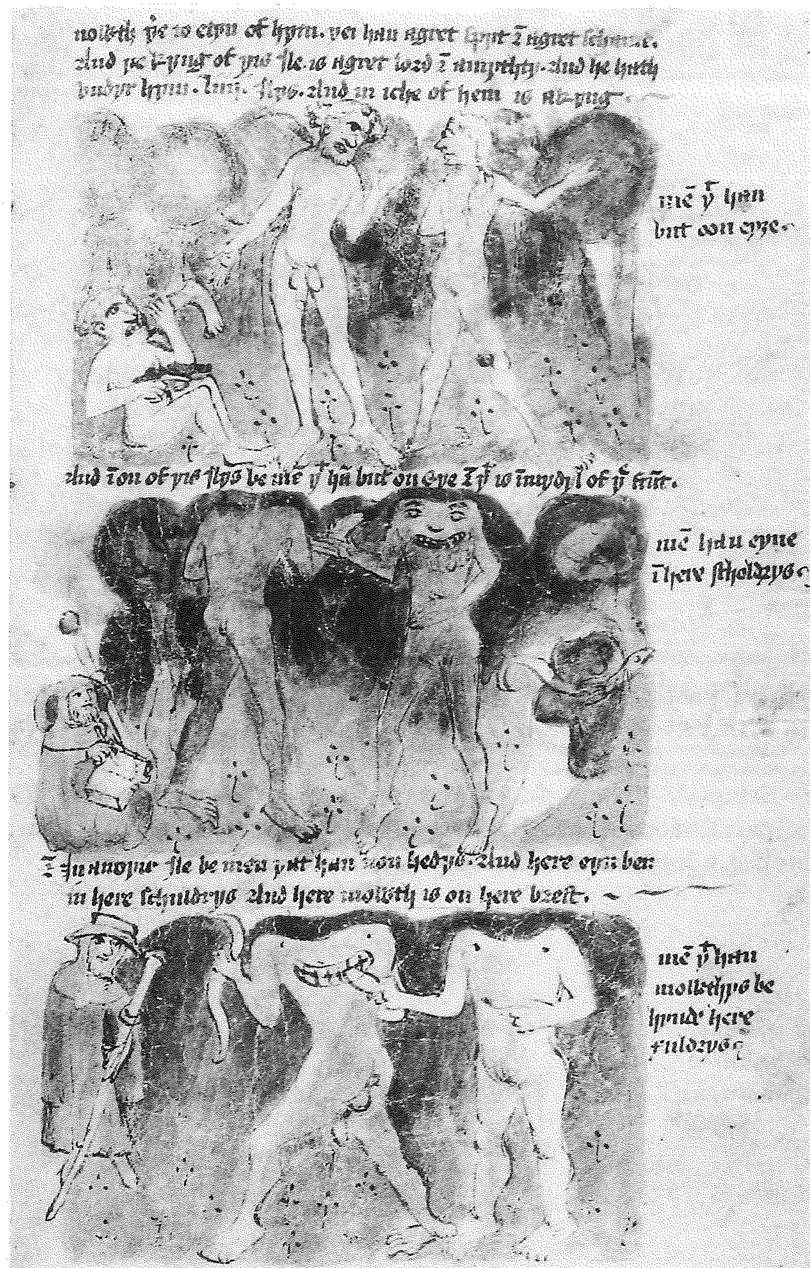
19 Blemmyae, from the *Livre des Merveilles*. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (MS. fonds fr. 2810, f. 194v).

20 A man strangled by a dog; Cynocephalus warrior, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Royal 17 C xxxviii, f. 43).

21 Cannibal feast and a fight between men who drink blood, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Harley 3954, f. 40).



22 Tibetan air burial, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Harley 3954, f. 67v).



23 Cyclopes; Blemmyae; Blemmyae eating snakes, from a manuscript of the Defective Version. By permission of the British Library (MS. Harley 3954, f. 42).

flixe of body and they lyue not longe.

In Ethyope are suche men that hath but one foot

24 A Sciapod, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lviii v).

¶ Of a yonge man & his lemman. ca.v.

25 A Blemmya and an apple-smeller, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lxxiiii).

26 A Cynocephalus, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lxxi v).

27 Hermaphrodites, from de Worde's 1499 edition of the *Book*. By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (Inc.5.d.1.2, p. lxxv).

Conclusion

This study has examined the reception of the *Book* from the time it was written in the 1350s to the point at which it began to lose its credibility as a work of travel in the mid-sixteenth century. I have attempted to chart its paths of progress and adaptation to changing cultural circumstances through its audiences over those two centuries. The author's intentions were ignored, denied, misunderstood and embellished but also sometimes appreciated, as the various readers and redactors of the *Book* and its multiple versions strove to make use of the material and respond to it in their own ways. Along general lines, Mandeville's importance as a pilgrimage writer had diminished significantly in the Renaissance, giving way to a greater influence in the fields of geography and exploration.

The thematic structure has, I hope, proved useful in building up a coherent picture of Mandeville's reception. The categories of 'Pilgrimage', 'Geography', 'Romance', 'History' and 'Theology' are elastic enough to encompass a variety of audiences. These themes were not chosen arbitrarily but emerged very strongly from the evidence itself, each of the many readers responding to the *Book* in one or more of these ways. This categorisation of responses, already implicit in the solid readership patterns, has enabled me to examine the audiences both in general terms - with a contextualisation of the basic types of reception - and in more specific analyses of important readers and other users of the *Book*.

Of all the categories, that of 'Pilgrimage' has been the most important as regards both the author's intention and audience response. As we have seen, the *Book* in its entirety falls within this area and all other themes are in a very real sense subdivisions of this wider approach. This is due to the author's intentions as they emerge from my analysis of the text. He did not write in a single clearly definable genre, preferring to use a diversity of sources in many ways, but his central concerns were above all religious and moral. Mandeville's primary aim was to construct a pilgrimage narrative - one not limited to the confines of the Holy Land but encompassing the whole globe and its inhabitants.

Crucial to this issue of authorial intentionality is the emphasis on universal salvation in the *Book*. Pilgrimage and theology are combined, each becoming a vital component of the other, throughout the work. At first glance, Mandeville presents information on a seemingly irreconcilable diversity of subjects, from fables and hagiography to history and

astronomical measurements; he points out anatomical, religious and cultural differences between the human races. His main message, however, is one of synthesis and acceptance. The centrality of Jerusalem, stressed from both a Christian and a geographical, scientific viewpoint, symbolises the unity of a world laid out around a common centre, within reach of an ultimate salvation promised to all.

A faith in human nature underlies the whole structure and tone of Mandeville's work. The physical places where God became visible to men - either in himself, as in the Earthly Paradise and on Mount Sinai, or through Christ in the Holy Land - are hallowed by virtue of these appearances; every human is also hallowed by God's promises made in those places. The 'bonne foy naturelle' of even the remotest and most bizarre peoples is a tangible manifestation of God's divine mercy, just as the miracles on the road to Jerusalem are. For Mandeville the concealment of a miracle is a crime; the greatest of these, the possibility of human salvation, may not be denied. In the same way that a pilgrimage to the places where Christ's feet once trod is a deep protestation of faith - as well as a satisfying of curiosity - so too a voyage to far lands and strange races can become a pilgrimage in search and testimony of human redemption.

My audience categories have been at least partly a way of showing how far people responded to Mandeville's belief. The readers of the *Book* follow a clear hierarchy according to their understanding of the work. Those who regarded it as a straightforward pilgrimage to the Holy Land, disregarding the rest of the voyage, are grouped mainly in the early years of the *Book*'s reception. They read the work from primarily religious motives, but did not grasp the full significance of revelation and grace. Others over the centuries saw Mandeville as a source of tales: moral stories and exotic histories, providing both instruction and entertainment. These readers were captivated by the colourful descriptions of dragons and fairies, heroes and kings, and could be interested simultaneously in the ethical precepts revealed and in the purely grotesque details of human and animal monstrosities.

Increasingly, audiences turned to the *Book* as a work of scientific information. They often had little regard for the author's moral and theological concerns, preferring instead to draw on the geographical knowledge provided. The circumnavigation of the globe became a purely physical possibility rather than a paradigm of centrality or humorous irony. This was the attitude which was to contribute to Mandeville's becoming a figure of ridicule, a 'liar', once the age of exploration his work arguably helped to institute began to disprove his claims of monstrous races in the East.

Few readers, therefore, can be proven to have truly realised what Mandeville was doing, even when they were attracted to the *Book* for its treatment of more than one subject. Mandeville's satirical condemnation of the Catholic Church and Western European morals was certainly appreciated, from the *Book*'s inception to the Reformation. The corresponding tolerance of other faiths was rarely noted in any great detail. Although some readers have left marginalia pointing out the prophecies revealed to pagans, and many remark on the virtue of the Brahmans, Mandeville's message is more usually ignored or actively denied both in the versions and in the marginal notes. This striking discrepancy between intention and reception appears time and time again.

Mandeville's work was never seen as a static text, unchangeable in its style and message. As we have seen, it quickly took on a wide variety of forms, being revised, edited, corrupted and excerpted - often in a sort of *redactio ad absurdum* - over a relatively short period of time. Each of these incarnations functioned in different ways according to the redactor's vision and the readers' interpretation of it. The *Book* became a more-or-less reliable 'tourist' or pilgrim guide, a Latinised moral diatribe, a scholarly scientific journal, an amusing collection of semi-legendary tales, a heroic nationalistic statement, a respected historical source and a general fount of interesting information of all kinds. Each of these attitudes towards the work was not always limited to a particular group of people or a specific country; readership of the *Book*, as of any book, was and is a highly individual process.

Although it goes beyond the scope of this book, it seems a pity not to give a glimpse of the *Book*'s career in the late sixteenth century. At a moment when travel literature was undergoing profound changes in the light of the scientific and geographical Renaissance, attitudes towards the *Book* were still diverse, with a strong contrast evident between its élite and popular reception. The critical scholars of travel writing, of whom Hakluyt was the prime example, were beginning to regard the *Book* as fiction to be dismissed. At the same time in popular culture Mandeville was still considered an authority, as in the specific example of the Italian peasant Menocchio discussed below.

First it is important to consider to what extent the *persona* of 'Sir John Mandeville' himself had come to life by that stage. There is evidence throughout the fifteenth century of a collective fabrication of Mandeville by people actively engaged in constructing a reality for him external to the text of the *Book*. Mandeville's success in becoming real demonstrates the knight's hold on the popular imagination as an authority of some standing.

Proof of Mandeville's early reputation is provided by a Latin letter, datable to c. 1400, contained in a unique damaged copy.[1] This is a 'certificate of authenticity', as Seymour calls it, of a fine manuscript - possibly of the *Book* itself - and a piece of *lignum aloes* which the cathedral priory of Christ Church Canterbury was interested in buying. Supposedly written by 'John Mandeville, pilgrim', who is seemingly still overseas, the letter contains a reference to the Great Khan and another most probably to Prester John. This shows Mandeville's fame was already widespread and he was regarded as a pilgrim and traveller of some standing.

This fact is also attested by the inclusion of a note on Mandeville by Thomas de Burton in his *Chronica Monasterii de Mensa*, written between 1388 and 1406. The entry, for 1356, is a simple reiteration of information in the *Book*, stressing the many lands and diversity of peoples Mandeville has seen.[2] Obviously the *Book* was seen primarily as a work on marvels and strange races rather than a pilgrimage guide to the Holy Land. St Albans quickly claimed Mandeville as its own, with an entry in its book of benefactors, made after 1415, of several rings donated by Sir John.[3] Two more entries on the knight occur in John Amundesham's *Annales Monasterii S. Albani*, written in the years 1421 to 1440. The first, changing Sir John Mandeville's service with the Sultan and the Great Khan into wars against the enemies of Christendom, connects him with St Albans,[4] while

1 Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library MS. Additional 6. Discussed by Seymour, M.C. (1974), 'A letter from *Sir John Mandeville*', in *N&Q* 219, pp. 326-8.

2 'Eodem anno, Johannes de Mandavilla, miles Anglicus, in villa Sancti Albani oriundus, postquam in 36 annis per universum fere orbem pertransisset, per Turkeiam, Armeniam majorem et minorem, Tartariam, Persidem, Siriam, Arabiam, Egyptum superiorem et inferiorem, Libiam, Caldaeam, Ethiopiam, Indiam majorem et minorem, et alias diversas insulas prope Indiam adjacentes, ubi diversae gentes diversorum rituum et formarum coversantur, scripstit de omnibus mirabilibus orbis, quae in ipso peregrinatione 36 annorum cognoverat, volumen unum, et ipsum dicto Edwardo regi Angliae destinavit'. Thomas de Burton, *Chronica Monasterii de Mensa*, ed. Bond, E.A. (1866-68), *RS* 1866-68, III, p. 158.

3 'Dominus Johannes de Sancto Albano, miles, legavit Sancto Albano plures annulos, in quibus multi continentur lapides pretiosi'. John Trokelowe and Henry Blaneforde, *Chronica et Annales Monachorum S. Albani*, ed. Riley, H.T. (1888), Chronicles and Memorials Series, p. 454.

4 'Dominus Johannes de Mandevile, Miles, pervagator poene totius orbis, et in multis bellis contra nostrae fidei adversarios lacessitus, sed minime fatigatus, librum composuit Gallice de hiis quaecunque vidit, hic in villa de Sancto Albano materno utero fusus est'. *Annales Monasterii S. Albani*, ed. Riley, H.T. (1871), Chronicles and Memorials Series II, p. 306.

the second entry gives details of the rings and their stones.[5] 'Mandeville' was already accepted as an illustrious traveller worth mentioning in the annals of his supposed birthplace.

His reputation was artificially enhanced in France as well. In the *Myreur des Histors*, Jean d'Outremeuse says that Mandeville and the Liège doctor Jean de Bourgogne were one and the same person; the English knight had assumed this alias to protect his identity. He is described as a philosopher, astrologer and extremely good doctor.[6] In fact Jean de Bourgogne was the famous author of a treatise on the plague, the *De pestilentia*. This work, written in 1365, became very popular and was translated into various languages including Hebrew;[7] it was also bound with the *Book* itself on at least one occasion.[8] Outremeuse evidently wished to enhance Mandeville's reputation as a respected man of science.

To this end, Outremeuse's Liège Version of the *Book* contains four additional books, all falsely attributed to Mandeville.[9] The first is a digressive account of the form of the earth, the Flood and the Antipodes, borrowing some statements from the *Book*. The second contains information on the heavens, including the spheres, planets, angels and saints. The third is a herbal 'according to the Indians and the philosophers thereabouts', and the fourth work is a lapidary, also made according to Indian wisdom. This lapidary contains the *Book*'s popular information on diamonds, transposed from its proper place in the Liège text. Outremeuse also attributed a different lapidary to Mandeville in his own *Trésorier de Philosophie Naturelle des pierres précieuses* of 1390.[10] Yet a third Mandeville lapidary appears in Amiens, Fonds l'Escalopier MS. 94, following the text of the Liège Version.

Altogether, then, Outremeuse was instrumental in creating an image of Mandeville as an authority on scientific subjects and precious stones in particular. The Liège Version lapidary was revised and reprinted on its own several times in the sixteenth century; this popularity is not surprising

5 Item, unus annulus aureus cum quator crampones, habens lapidem infixum purpurei coloris ... Item, unus annulus aureus, in cujus castone habetur sapphirus bonus et pretiosus magnae quantitatis ... ex dono Domini Johannis Maundevile, Militis'. Riley, *Annales*, p. 331.

6 Borgnet and Bormans, *Ly Myreur des Histors*, Vol. 7, pp. cxxxiii-iv.

7 Cf. Lejeune, R. (1964), 'Jean de Mandeville et les Liégeois', in *Mélanges de linguistique romane et de philologie médiévale offerts à M. Maurice Delbouille*, Vol. 2, pp. 409-37.

8 BN MSS. ff. 4515 and 4516, originally a single volume.

9 These are preserved in Chantilly, Musée Condé MS. 699. Cf. Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, pp. 111-16, 123-9.

10 On this subject, see Mourin, L. (1955), 'Les lapidaires attribués à Jean de Mandeville et à Jean à la Barbe', *Romanica Gandensia* 4, pp. 159-91.

given the interest in the chapter on diamonds demonstrated in the *Book*'s marginalia. This trend towards viewing Mandeville as a scientific authority, particularly in the field of geography, contributed significantly to the eventual discrediting of the *Book* as fabulous once its scientific and geographical premises were proved false.

As a result of Outremeuse's fabrications, the fiction of 'Mandeville' was developed further with a Liège epitaph, set up in the church of the Guillelmins where Jean de Bourgogne had been buried.[11] Neither date nor author is known, but the epitaph was mentioned by the chronicler Raoul de Rivo (d. 1403) and first quoted in a letter to the Archduchess of Austria written in 1462 by Püterich von Reichertshausen. John Bale gave a short biography of Mandeville based on both the *Book* - a copy of which he owned - and the epitaph in 1548. The geographer Abraham Ortelius also reported a later, slightly different version of it in 1575.[12]

Thus men of the upper classes, historians and scientists all continued to be interested in the knight and his life from the earliest period of the *Book*'s reception until well into the sixteenth century. This élite interest was specific: Mandeville and his *Book* were now part of the geographical Renaissance, and it was as travel writing that the work was seen and judged. The pilgrimage aspect in particular was no longer taken into account; history, romance and religion were thrust into the background.

This polarisation of interest is especially evident in one manuscript of the Insular Version, Harley 212.[13] Its many sixteenth-century marginal notes in English and French are interesting in themselves, but become even more so in view of the fact that the manuscript belonged to the famous astrologer John Dee (1527-1608). Dee's expertise was not limited to hermetics; he was a scholar of geography and mathematics and the author of many scientific treatises, including the *General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the perfect Art of Navigation* (1577).

Given these interests, it seems very likely that some of the notes to Mandeville's text are Dee's own, as Deluz asserts. These ignore the Holy Land completely, moving from the islands around Greece (with no mention of Hermes) directly to the second part of the *Book*. Here the Great Khan

[11] 'Hic iacet nobilis Dominus Joannes de Montevilla Miles, alias dictus ad Barbam, Dominus de Compredi, natus de Anglia, medicinae professor et devotissimus orator et bonorum suorum largissimus pauperibus erogator qui totum orbem peragravit in stratu Leodii diem vitae suae clausit extremum. Anno Domini millesimo trecentesimo septuagesimo secundo mensis Februarii septimo'. Cf. Hamelius, *Mandeville's Travels*, Vol. II, p. 1.

[12] Cf. Bennett, *The Rediscovery*, pp. 90-1.

[13] For a discussion of the manuscript, see Deluz, *Le livre des merveilles*, pp. 37-8. The footnotes are printed in this edition.

and Cathay are noted, with special mention of the 'marchandise de Cathay', the 'oille d'olive en price' and their 'monoÿ de cuir papier'.[14] The great majority of annotations consist of place-names, some brought up to date: 'Silha Isle Seilan now called', 'Casaie est Quinsay'.[15]

The most heavily marked passage, however, is the chapter on the earth. The possibility of circumnavigation is noted repeatedly and sometimes further stressed by a small pointing hand in the margin: 'La Terre est round navigable tout entoure', 'tout le mond est passable'.[16] The man who travelled round the world is mentioned twice: 'un homme autour tout le Mond' and 'fin retorne en Norway'.[17] The latter comment may be significant, pointing out one way from (and to) the East. Dee was a lifelong supporter of the search for the Northwest Passage.

Whether the annotator is in fact Dee or not, his interest in geography and circumnavigation is evident and he appears to take Mandeville at face value. Such faith in the *Book*'s geography was becoming increasingly rare. Although the geographers Mercator and Ortelius mentioned Mandeville as a source as late as 1569 and 1573 respectively, it was with strong reservations as to his veracity. This was the point at which Richard Hakluyt included the Vulgate Latin Version of the *Book* in his collection of travel writing, the *Principall Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the Engish Nation*, first published in 1589.

As the title of his work suggests, Hakluyt was a firm nationalist. The travels of an English knight into the furthest East were an obvious choice for his collection, and he reported both the Liège epitaph and Bale's biography of Mandeville. But he was already uneasy about the authenticity of the *Book* due to the errors and unscientific marvels it contained. In the second edition of the *Navigations and Voyages* Hakluyt's critical spirit led him to replace Mandeville with the accounts of Carpini, Rubruck and Odoric. This choice, at odds with both his patriotic feelings and his staunchly Protestant beliefs, was necessitated not only by his intellectual honesty but by his view of the *Book* as a work to be judged on geographical merit alone.

Samuel Purchas, Hakluyt's successor, shared his suspicions but decided to include Mandeville in his 'Pilgrimes', warning that the text had been corrupted by scribes and printers:

[14] ff. 90v, 84, 97.

[15] ff. 65v, 68v.

[16] ff. 59v, 60.

[17] f. 60v.

> I ... will present some Extracts of our Countriman that famous Traveller Sir John Mandeville, whose Geographie Ortelius commendeth, howsoever he acknowledgeth his works stuffed with Fables ... for his merit and for his Nation I have given a touch of him.[18]

Thus Mandeville was discredited by the new standards of scientific thought. While the critical editor Ramusio had succeeded in integrating Marco Polo[19] into the remade genre of travel literature, his English counterpart rejected the *Book*, excluding it from the culture of scholarship of the late sixteenth century.

In terms of popular culture, however, Mandeville was still influential. At a time when intellectuals had come to see the *Book* as a pack of geographical lies, the name and work of Mandeville were viewed completely differently at another level of society. There they remained as authoritative as they had been during the medieval period. This was certainly the case with the miller Domenico Scandela or Menocchio, whose interest in the work was both personally and culturally significant in the context of late sixteenth-century Italian popular culture. The information on him comes from Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*, an analysis of Menocchio's trials for heresy in 1584 and 1599.[20]

Menocchio's extraordinary beliefs, outlined at the heresy trials, were by his own admission inspired in part by his reading of the *Book*. These beliefs were various and perverse. His strong anti-clericalism was nothing strange for a peasant society in an impoverished area like the Friuli during the Reformation. On the other hand, his ideas on the creation of the world - it formed in chaos like milk curdling into cheese, with the angels appearing in the mass like worms and God relegated to a secondary place - were bizarre. He rejected doctrine and even the Gospels, argued against the omnipotence and sometimes even existence of God and denied Christ's divine aspect. The authorities for many of these beliefs came from the books he had read, thought over and selectively absorbed.[21]

Some of the miller's ideas can be traced to Mandeville, a book lent to him by a priest who had discovered it while going through notarial documents. This was in the Italian translation; Menocchio was literate, but only in the vernacular. According to him, the *Book*

[18] Purchas (1625), *His Pilgrimes in Five Books*. Quoted in Deluz, *Le Livre*, p. 13.

[19] Giambattista Ramusio's printed edition of *Il Milione* was made in 1553.

[20] Ginzburg, C. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-century Miller*, translated by Tedeschi, J. and A. (1980).

[21] At the trials it emerged that he had read at least ten works, including the Bible in the vernacular, the *Fioretto della Bibbia* - a compilation of religious works - and an unexpurgated edition of the *Decameron*.

> dealt with a journey to Jerusalem, and certain differences between the Greeks and the pope; and it also dealt with the great Khan, with the city of Babylon, with Prester John, and Jerusalem, and also with many islands where some lived in one way and some in another. And it told how this knight went to the sultan, who asked him about priests, cardinals, the pope, and the clergy; and he related how Jerusalem once belonged to the Christians and God took it from them because of bad government by Christians and the pope.[22]

The *Book*'s condemnation of the Roman Church obviously struck a chord with Menocchio, who complained about the clergy and their greed even when on trial.

The miller held several other ideas drawn more directly from Mandeville. Two concern Christ: Menocchio believed that Christ was not God, 'instead he must have been some prophet, some great man sent by God to preach in his world'. This is closely linked to the Saracen beliefs reported in the *Book*, where Jesus is described as a prophet. Menocchio also denied the crucifixion, reportedly saying that Simon of Cyrene had died in Christ's place - as the Muslims said Judas had.

He also denied the efficacy of confession to priests, saying that one might as well confess to a tree; when challenged, he remarked that priests could 'impart the knowledge of penance':

> if that tree could give the knowledge of penance, it would be good enough; and if some men seek out priests because they do not know what penance has to be made for their sins, in order that the priests may teach it to them, if they had understood this matter, there would be no need to go to them, and for those who already know, it is useless.[23]

This is very close to Mandeville's description of the Jacobites, who make confession only to God. Mandeville's objection to this is based on the precise point made by Menocchio: people need to be told the correct medicine, or penance, to cure their spiritual illness.

The aspect of the *Book* which really affected Menocchio, however, was the diversity of peoples mentioned in the miller's description above. It was one reason for his 'errors': 'I read that book of Mandeville about many kinds of races and different laws, which sorely troubled me'.[24] When Mandeville compared other peoples' strange customs to familiar ones, inviting questions on his own culture as much as he described foreign ones, this made Menocchio doubt all cultures equally; perhaps none was right:

[22] *The Cheese and the Worms*, p. 46.

[23] *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[24] *op. cit.*, p. 88.

> This same book by the knight Mandeville also related how when men were sick and near death they would go to their priest, and that priest beseeched an idol, and that idol told them whether he had to die or not, and if he had to die the priest suffocated him, and they ate him in company: and if he tasted good he was sinless, and if he tasted bad he had many sins, and they had done wrong to let him live so long. And from there I got my opinion that when the body dies, the soul dies too, since out of many different kinds of nations, some believe in one way and some in another.[25]

Two things are apparent here: Menocchio's probably unconscious embroidering of Mandeville's tale concerning the taste of the corpse (he had read the *Book* some years before), and the radical conclusion he draws from it. Rather than seeing diversity as proof of a common human belief in God, he has interpreted it pessimistically; where none agree, all may be deceived.

At other points Menocchio's admittedly confused theology contradicts itself. He argues that 'the majesty of God has given the Holy Spirit to all, to Christians, to heretics, to Turks, and to Jews; and he considers them all dear, and they are all saved in the same manner'. This is close to the spirit of the *Book* on the subject of pagan salvation, although it was also derived from other reading.[26] When questioned, Menocchio did not understand the term 'predestination', the concept from whose ramifications the theory on pagan salvation had emerged; he was not learned in an intellectual sense, but simply picked up ideas from his varied reading. Nonetheless, the inquisitors accused him that, 'you brought again to light Origen's heresy that all peoples would be saved, Jews, Turks, pagans, Christians, and all infidels, since the Holy Spirit has been given equally to them all'.[27]

Menocchio's stubbornly-held beliefs on the non-existence of the soul were entirely of his own devising. An extremely eclectic reader, he obviously spent some time considering what he had read and coming to his own unique conclusions. He ignored Mandeville's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, sincere worship of Christ and firm faith in God and God's benevolence, being 'troubled' and intellectually stimulated by the *Book*'s more progressive aspects.[28] The *Book*'s tolerance and acceptance of other

[25] *The Cheese and the Worms*, pp. 46-7.

[26] Menocchio related a medieval legend he had read in the *Decameron*, in which a father promises his wealth to whichever son is given his ring; after his death each of the three sons is found to possess an identical ring. The three sons were metaphors for the Christian, Muslim and Jewish religions, all equally valid.

[27] *op. cit.*, pp. 92-3.

[28] At his first trial Menicchio was sentenced to life imprisonment and later released; at his second he was condemned to death and executed.

faiths could have been condemned under 'Origen's heresy'. Its potential for heretical development, present during the medieval period, was shared with the post-Renaissance world.[29]

So there was a dynamic contrast between the *Book*'s reception at an élite, Protestant cultural level on the one hand and a Catholic, 'popular' level on the other. It must be remembered that Menocchio did not belong purely to the peasant class, being both literate and surprisingly well-read for the miller of a small village; on the other hand, he had not received enough of an education to learn to suppress his ideas and follow doctrine unquestioningly. At this intermediate, borderline level of culture, Mandeville was still seen as an authority on the eve of the seventeenth century.

Thus the *Book* was used and read in hugely differing ways both at the beginning and at the end of its period of greatest popularity and development. Its underlying purpose, the development of a sacred geography and pilgrimage centred on the physical and spiritual Jerusalem, was developed through a complex intellectual process into a finished work. Many audiences then chose to separate the multiple threads composing this almost seamless garment, in order to examine the narrower aspects each found of interest; others rewove the materials into new pieces, whether versions of the *Book* or works of their own inspiration. As I have shown, the *Book* as a work of pilgrimage and theology gradually lost its appeal among intellectual circles, although 'Sir John Mandeville' continued to thrive in the popular imagination.

To conclude, this book has been a discussion of the singular variety of forms taken by the *Book*'s reception in the later Middle Ages, and the ways in which these agreed or otherwise with the author's intentions. Mandeville was viewed in his multiple *personae* of pilgrim, geographer, romancer, historian and theologian, with the emphasis on each changing and adapting according to wider cultural circumstances. There was no one reading of Mandeville, no single category in which his work could be neatly filed away. It was precisely this diversity which made the *Book* so tremendously popular among so many social classes across medieval Europe, and which continues to make it an exciting and rewarding study to the present day.

[29] More recently, Hamelius has drawn attention to the arguably heretical aspects of the *Book*; cf. *Mandeville's Travels*, pp. 13-16.

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