

*John Mandeville's Travels: Eastern Exotification as a European Interest Topic Toward the East*

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The Travels of Sir John Mandeville, a popular Medieval travel narrative read by many because of its comprehensiveness, creates and normalizes many troubling assumptions about different cultures, especially of the Southeast Asian culture of Lamary. Although recent scholarship suggests Mandeville ripped his stories from other travel narratives, he establishes his authority based on this supposed first-hand experience and Western European culture lens.

Nevertheless, a disconcerting theme concerning his vocabulary crosses the border of respect and into commodifying and exotifying territory. Mandeville frequently assumes non-European cultures as "evil" and zeroes in on their strangeness rather than their similarities with European culture, and fails to include Lamarian voices to create a more wholesome story of their culture. In this research paper, I intend to expose and interpret this othering vocabulary in order to understand Mandeville's intentions and his ideas of "correct" civilization.