

Aina's stories, and on the whole they have executed their assignments with sensitivity and aplomb; Zhang Jing, for example, does a fine job of presenting Sessions 5 and 6 in fluid and natural English, and Robert Hegel and Xu Yunjing handle skilfully the poetry in Session 10. Just occasionally, however, the translation falls short of an elegant and fully idiomatic rendering of Aina's expressive yet economical language. Part of the problem is that the translators tend to favour a rather literal translation, when sometimes a more creative solution is called for. For example, the line 始知小弟之言，不似那蘇東坡姑妄言之、姑妄聽之一類話也 (p. 58: "You'll know that my story isn't what Su Shi called 'speaking with reckless words, listening as if it were reckless words'") might have been more helpfully rendered as "You'll know that my story is not the kind of tall tale that Su Shi said can't be taken too seriously". And if one wants to make the book truly come alive for the English reader, a description such as 挺著那件海狗腎的東西相似 (p. 167: "thrusting with that thing like the testicles of a seal") surely invites a translation along the lines of "thrusting with a pecker the size of a seal's penis". It is also unfortunate that some lines for which Hanan or Wu provided an excellent translation are here given an inferior treatment. In Session 9, for example, "Hearing this filled me with panic" (p. 134; the original text reads 在下一聞此言，不覺十分驚駭) does not capture what is meant nearly as well as Hanan's simple "I was astonished". In Session 1, "Now, in the entire world, there are only two ferry crossings haunted by jealous women. The one you just heard about in Shandong sounds pretty common. Let me tell you about one that was really fierce" (p. 14; the Chinese reads 妒婦津天下卻有兩處，這山東的看來也只平常，如今說的才是利害哩) is wordy and awkward compared with Wu's rendering: "There are actually two 'Jealous Wife Fords'. The one in Shandong seems pretty run-of-the-mill, but the one I'm going to tell you about is truly formidable".

Although one may quibble about the translators' word choice here and there, this is a perfectly serviceable English edition of Aina's stories that can be profitably read and consulted by all who are interested in Chinese vernacular fiction and early Qing responses to dynastic change. Its publication is much to be welcomed.

Allan H. Barr
Pomona College

ZHANG YINGYU (trans. CHRISTOPHER REA and BRUCE RUSK):

The Book of Swindles: Selections from a Late Ming Collection.

(Translations from the Asian Classics.) xxxvi, 226 pp. New York:

Columbia University Press, 2017. ISBN 978 0 231 17863 1.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000198

One of the most pleasing trends in the translation of pre-modern Chinese literature over recent years has been the appearance of renditions of a number of lesser-known works, broadening the variety of works available in English far beyond the most famous classics. Adding to this variety is this abridged translation of *The Book of Swindles* from Christopher Rea and Bruce Rusk, both associate professors of Chinese studies in the University of British Columbia.

The Book of Swindles, first published 400 years ago, in 1617, is a unique collection of tales from an obscure seventeenth-century writer named Zhang Yingyu. As the title suggests, it is a themed work, containing 84 brief tales (44 are translated here) of deception and fraud. Each tale is followed by a comment from Zhang

Yingyu which analyses the incident and may suggest possible defensive measures or moral lessons. Some comments express plain admiration for the ingenuity of the criminals. Its original title was *A New Book for Foiling Swindles, Based on Worldly Experience*, reflecting its claim to serve as a handbook for the unwary: by describing the mind-boggling range of scams and swindles found in Ming China, the reader would not fall victim to them. As the translators have observed, however, the work could serve equally as a manual for crooks to consult before swindling others.

At the time the book was published, a claim of practical and moral purpose, whether such a purpose existed or not, was a virtual necessity for any work liable to be suspected of frivolity. An equally important purpose of the work was as a source of entertainment: the practical cautionary function of lurid episodes such as “A eunuch cooks boys to make a tonic of male essence” and “Eating human foetuses to fake fasting” was hopefully rather limited. The tales are recounted in a style familiar from the Chinese court case fiction tradition, in which the identity of criminals and their victims are made clear at the beginning and the interest of the tale lies in finding out not “who” commits the crime but “how” they commit it. The scenarios and character types found in the tales are also familiar from genres such as vernacular fiction, anecdotes, and literary fiction.

The scams themselves reflect the complex, corrupt, and cut-throat world of late Ming commerce and officialdom, and are as varied as the society that produced them. Together, they form a series of vignettes of everyday life in the late Ming period. Towards the humbler end of the spectrum, a crook stops a peddler taking some piglets to market and asks to see one. He deliberately lets it run off and chases it away; the pedlar also runs after the piglet, leaving the crook free to take another from the cage. Finally, the crook releases the final two piglets so that the pedlar has no time to chase him. A more sophisticated scam requires the collaboration of an unemployed scholar. He writes a letter purporting to be from a famous teacher and delivers it to the family of a scholar who is away in the capital taking the examination. The letter claims that the teacher had a divine dream that can only mean that their son is destined to win the coveted top spot in the examinations next year, but to keep this news secret. Similar letters are delivered to each family in the area with a son taking the examinations. As each family is so delighted to hear the news, they tip the messenger handsomely, leaving the crooks with a healthy profit. Zhang dryly observes that this swindle is so ingenious that if they tried it again the families would still be happy to give out a tip. In the universe constructed by the book, swindlers are omnipresent, permeating all sectors of society. They are very often left anonymous and faceless; they appear as a natural hazard of the late Ming landscape, waiting to trip up the unwary. In a reflection of this, Zhang’s commentaries spend more time criticizing the vanity, foolishness, and naivety of the victims than the wrongdoing of the crooks themselves.

The simple plot-driven entertainment value of the tales is readily apparent in this translation, executed in a clear, largely unobtrusive, and colloquial modern style which does much to bring the world of late Ming China towards the contemporary English language reader. It can be difficult to reconcile the often-competing demands of specialist and casual readers, but the translators use their notes to attempt to cater to both. Some explain allusions, place names, and Ming cultural practices relevant to the plots, helping those new to the late Ming context of the tales; others are oriented towards researchers, giving some transparency on translation process and providing background on possible sources that Zhang drew upon. The orientation towards readers not already familiar with the period is particularly

welcome, given the appeal of the subject matter and its contemporary echoes in our own age of phishing scams and Nigerian princes.

The Book of Swindles is at once an entertaining and readable introduction to late Ming society, a good resource for further research, and a timely reminder of some of the less savoury connections between the past and our own time.

Ewan Macdonald

ZHU JIANQIU 朱鑿秋, CHEN JIARONG 陳佳榮, QIAN JIANG 錢江 and TAN GUANGLIAN 譚廣濂:

Zhongwai jiaotong gu ditu ji 中外交交通古地圖集. 14 + 4 + 10 + 335 pp. Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2017. ISBN 978 7 5475 1192 3. 158 RMB.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000241

This finely printed large-size volume on traditional Chinese cartography contains the following parts: a cluster of coloured illustrations; a detailed introduction; 123 entries or short chapters, each on one particular map and each with black-and-white illustrations; a short bibliography; a list of non-Chinese maps shown and briefly discussed in the different entries; a short postscript. The book may serve as a research tool or simply as a guide through the history of ancient Chinese maps. Its focus is on cartographic works that tell us something on China's periphery and foreign relations more generally; this also explains the title of the book, which can be translated as "Collection of ancient maps on Sino-foreign exchange".

The sequence of the 123 segments follows a chronological order; the earliest pieces are based on material or ideas that go back to pre-Han times; the latest pieces are works of the nineteenth century. Each segment shows one non-European map of approximately the same period. This arrangement encourages readers to compare the characteristics of foreign cartography with the essential features of contemporary Chinese works. Some entries also juxtapose related maps; examples are found in the segments on Chinese Jesuit works and their European "counterparts". Evidently, the idea is to show that Chinese cartography was special in many ways; at the same time it was no less important than Near Eastern or European works; also, from the Ming period onwards it absorbed European elements, a process that produced new cartographic styles with mixed characteristics.

The editors/authors of *Zhongwai jiaotong gu ditu ji* are all known for their expertise in the history of Sino-foreign contacts, including geography and cartography. One may add, Tan Guanglian is a collector of ancient maps and has generously supported the Maritime Museum in Hong Kong. Clearly, the chief interest of all authors is China's maritime past; this explains why their book gives a certain preference to maps loosely linked to Sino-foreign exchange across the oceans. Of course, such an observation does not imply criticism; on the contrary, from the sixteenth century onwards, it was mainly through contacts between Chinese intellectuals and Europeans reaching China from the seaside that cartography began to bear new fruits. Therefore it makes sense to find in this book various entries on coastal maps, maps with navigational routes, world maps, and maps of foreign countries accessible via the sea.

However, at the same time, the Inner Asian "frontier" is not neglected. The beautiful *Menggu shanshui ditu* 蒙古山水地圖, discussed in segment 33, is a case in point. Such works as well as some pieces showing China in toto suggest that the