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***Asia. Annotated sources of Ming history: Including Southern Ming and works on neighbouring lands, 1368–1661.* By Wolfgang Franke. Revised and enlarged by Liew-Herres Foon Ming. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2011. 2 vols. Pp. xxxvii + 1289. Bibliography, Indexes.**

Roderich Ptak

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Book Reviews

Asia

Annotated sources of Ming history: Including Southern Ming and works on neighbouring lands, 1368–1661

By WOLFGANG FRANKE. Revised and enlarged by LIEW-HERRES FOON MING

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Modern bibliographies and handbooks related to the study of Ming history abound. Among the indispensable tools is Wolfgang Franke's (Fu Wukang 傅吾康, 1912–2007) famous *An introduction to the sources of Ming history* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1968; hereafter *ISMH*). This work is partly based on an earlier reference by Franke, which in turn goes back to research conducted in the 1940s. The title under review here, *Annotated sources of Ming history* in two volumes (hereafter *AS*), is an enlarged version of *ISMH*. The editor of *AS*, Dr Liew-Herres, an established Ming specialist, known for her excellent work on the military chapters in the official Ming annals — a further classic in Ming studies, if I may say so — took her doctorate with Franke when he was still teaching at the University of Hamburg.

Although *AS* mostly addresses sinologists, historians interested in the relations between Southeast Asia and Ming China can profitably use this work as well, provided they are acquainted with the essential characteristics of Chinese traditional historiography. What is *AS* about? It is an English-language guide through thousands of Chinese 'primary' titles comprising both original editions and modern text versions based on the ancient accounts and their 'derivatives'. The *Ming shilu* 明實錄 may serve as an example. There are different *shilu*, or 'veritable records', for different reigns; each of these texts has its own history; taken together, they form one big set covering the history of nearly 300 years. Other than that, we also have dozens of thematic volumes which list specific *shilu* entries in chronological order. These modern compilations — for example, on Sino-foreign relations and tribute trade, or on Guangdong and Hainan — did not yet exist in the 1960s when Franke prepared his *ISMH*; that also applies, for instance, to Geoff Wade's translation of the Southeast Asian entries in *Ming shilu*, now available electronically on the Internet. Each of these specialised titles, which have become frequently quoted research tools during the last one or two decades, are recorded in *AS*.

How is *AS* organised? The 1968 edition of Franke's bibliography carries a long introduction, which also appears in the first volume of *AS*. In addition, Liew-Herres wrote her own introduction, which discusses the nature and scope of *AS*, different kinds of sources, institutional aspects of Ming historiography, and various technical matters. Both these introductions should be consulted before searching the bibliography for individual titles and authors. Furthermore, while *ISMH* uses Wade-Giles, Liew-Herres has adopted Pinyin throughout.

The main body of *ISMH* is divided into nine sections with a total of 81 subsegments. Liew-Herres has kept this division for *AS*, and also provides short introductions to each section (following Franke's example), but there are now two additional subsegments as well, which brings their total number to 83. Practically all subsegments carry additional entries on works that Franke had not seen, did not know about, or that had not been printed then. Liew-Herres has located these titles in various libraries, across China and elsewhere, usually during long sojourns and as a result of meticulous research. Several new *collectanea* (*congshu* 叢書), such as the gigantic 'Siku quanshu cunmu congshu' 四庫全書躡目叢書 and its supplement were consulted as well and the works they contain listed in the main body of *AS*. It may be added here that the National University of Singapore is perhaps the only Southeast Asian institution which, to date, has acquired all major Chinese *congshu* published during the last two or three decades. Finally, while the 1968 version of Franke's bibliography relied heavily on the famous *Zhongguo congshu zonglu* 中國叢書綜錄 in three volumes (1959) to identify key editions of individual texts, *AS* goes far beyond that level, using numerous other references published since then to carefully contextualise each text.

Generally, each entry within the nine major sections provides details on the original author(s) of the text in question, its overall segmentation, its preface(s), date(s) and publishing history, usually from the *editio princeps* (if known) through to the latest stages (reprints, new editions, etc.). Where applicable, Liew-Herres has also included references to relevant modern books and articles, as well as full or partial translations. The latter mostly concerns English and some French and German titles; works in other European languages are less frequently cited. Russian titles in particular could be added here and there. Clearly, one single editor cannot take care of everything, but the old motto *Rossica non leguntur* should better be given up one day, because there is a large stock of Russian material on Chinese history, as we all know. Nonetheless, volume 2 of *AS* contains a long and reliable bibliography of modern scholarly books and articles (about 70 pages), all related to Ming studies in one way or the other, which is an astonishingly large collection of secondary titles in itself.

Historians dealing with Southeast Asia–China relations and, more generally, traditional Ming texts with data on both insular and continental Southeast Asia will find the entries in the following sections of *AS* most useful: section 7, 'Works on foreign affairs and on military organisation', and section 8, 'Geographical works and local histories' (especially the parts on China's coastal provinces, Hainan and the regions bordering modern Vietnam and Myanmar). Many of the titles presented in sections 1 ('Works in the annalistic pattern') and 2 ('Official and private historical compilations in general') also contain information on Southeast Asia and the borderlands of southern China, but these texts are more difficult to access. The same applies, for example, to some of the items listed in section 9 ('Works on economics and technology, encyclopedias, *collectanea*'). 'Encyclopedias' (*leishu* 類書) in particular copy from earlier materials and very often have gone through an extremely complicated editorial process that is difficult to disentangle. For such texts, as well as for so-called *pulu* 譜錄, one may also consult the standard German catalogues by Christoph Kaderas, *Die Leishu der imperialen Bibliothek* ... (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), and Martina Siebert, *Pulu: 'Abhandlungen und Auflistungen'* ... (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006).

A typical entry in the above sections would be the one on Ma Huan's 馬歡 *Yingya shenglan* 瀛涯勝覽 (no. 7.7.2.). Among other things, it mentions several editions found in diverse *congshu*: Zhang Sheng's 張昇 *refacimento*, the English translation by J.V.G. Mills, a Japanese version, the annotated text by Feng Chengjun 馮承鈞, and the new and highly authoritative edition prepared by Wan Ming 萬明, i.e. *Ming chaoben 'Yingya shenglan' jiaozhu* 明鈔本瀛涯勝覽校注 (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 2005). Furthermore, there are references to various catalogues, as well as books and standard articles discussing Ma Huan's text, or giving partial translations. The overall arrangement thus follows the one in *ISMH*, but there are much more data now than before.

In some cases additional information could have been provided. For instance, the entry on Ma Huan and other works of the same genre deserves a reference to Donatella Guida's *Nei mari del Sud: Il viaggio nel Sud-Est Asiatico tra realtà e immaginazione ...* (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2007) and several of her earlier publications. Similarly, the next entry (7.7.3), on the *Xiyang chaogong dianlu* 西洋朝貢典錄, does not mention Klaus Sonnendecker's complete and annotated German translation of that text, an excellent study of several hundred pages, available electronically, at www.diss-fu-berlin.de/2007/527/sonnendecker-gesamt-pdf. There are also some titles one would have liked to see in the entries dealing with sources related to the Ryukyu Islands, which were in close touch with many Southeast Asian polities during the Ming era. A further item of interest is the *Yiyu tuzhi* 異域圖志 (entry 7.1.2). Recently, Gavin Menzies drew much attention to this source, but his pseudo-historical interpretations are more than doubtful. Surprisingly, he is cited in the bibliography of *AS*, while an authoritative article on the *Yiyu tuzhi*, by A.C. Moule, 'Some foreign birds and beasts in Chinese books', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1925): 247–61, was omitted.

A single bibliographer cannot satisfy all demands and, inevitably, has to delete certain items from her agenda. Important work on Jesuit cartographical material, for example, is a case in point; sources such as these have also been used in the context of Southeast Asian studies. However, we ought to be realistic and fair: *AS* is a fine compendium of references to and valuable comments on individual texts. Almost by definition, guidebooks of this kind can always be criticised, expanded or simplified. Put differently, bibliographies resemble laboratories; they are never 'perfect', there is always something that can be altered.

Two final examples may serve to show where we were — and are — now, thanks to Liew-Herres's tremendous scholarly input here. Both entries on the *Longjiang chuanchang zhi* 龍江船廠志 of 1553 (item 6.5.10) and the *Nan chuan ji* 南船紀 of 1541 (6.5.22) deal with the construction of sea vessels, coastal and river craft, etc. The first work was well known to Joseph Needham and others, and in 1987, Hans L. Scheuring prepared a thorough German study of it, while the second (and earlier) source, which resembles the first one in many respects, had been reported missing, or remained largely 'unexplored' (even by Needham). Meanwhile *Nan chuan ji* has emerged in the 'Siku quanshu cunmu congshu' collection; this is why its title also shows up in *AS*, which tell us what this book is about and where to find copies. In a sense, then, bibliographical notes such as these serve like well-balanced appetisers to a full meal — in this case

mid-Ming vessels, shipyards, timber resources, caulking techniques, nautical technology, and so forth.

Hundreds of similar entries can be identified, where the finely printed *AS* compendium supplements and/or supersedes the older *ISMH* in one way or the other. Liew-Herres has endowed historians with a wonderful research tool, equipped with reliable indices and various appendices, and designed in such a way that it can be used with great ease. This work will become another indispensable guide for sinologists and Southeast Asianists alike and it should be acquired by all specialist libraries.

RODERICH PTAK

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich