Introduction

This essay studies a Ming-dynasty (1368-1644) book dated to the late-fifteenth century, the *Illustrated Catalogue of the Foreign Realms* (*Yiyu tuzhi* 異域圖志), now in the Cambridge University Library (thereafter the Library), and its lasting influence on later encyclopaedias (*leishu* 順書) produced between 1590s and 1610s.¹ The essay argues that the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s and later projects’ visual representations of real and imaginary foreign peoples reveal the Ming people’s evolving perceptions of the Other, and reflect the Ming editors’ various strategies to incorporate the *yi* 異—the foreign, exotic or strange—into a late-imperial Sino-centric world order.² The essay underlines that the Cambridge copy of the *Yiyu tuzhi* is a previously neglected yet crucial lens through which we can gauge *how* knowledge about the foreign was transmitted from the class of the scholar-literati to a wider audience in the Ming dynasty, and *vice versa*.

The book was first collected by a Chinese scholar named Peng Yuanrui 彭元瑞 (1731-1803), then donated to the Library in the late-nineteenth century, but not studied thoroughly until recent years.³ The book bears three collector’s stamps and an introduction of the title, written neatly in red, copied from the *Summarised Inventory*

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1 Arthur C. Moule dated the Cambridge *Yiyu tuzhi* to as early as 1430s, Arthur C. Moule, ‘An Introduction to the I Yü t’u Chih’, *T’oung Pao*, 27i (1930).
2 According to records such as the *Shangshu* 尚書 (*Book of History*, c. tenth century BC), the Chinese already considered themselves the most cultural and civilised, whereas other peoples outside the Central Plain were seen as the Other, the foreign and the barbaric. By the late-imperial period and the Ming, it was widely accepted that the less a people were exposed to Chinese culture and rites, the more foreign and barbaric they would be. See John K. Fairbank, ‘A Preliminary Framework’, in *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*, vol. 32, Harvard East Asian Studies (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), 1–19; Wang Edward, ‘History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview’, *Journal of World History* 10, no. 2 (1999): 285–305.
3 Except Moule’s 1930 article; Moule, ‘An Introduction to the I Yü t’u Chih’. 
Yiyu Tuzhi: Imagining and representing the foreign in Ming China (1368-1644), c.1480s-1610s

of the Complete Books from the [Imperial] Four Repositories (Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao 四庫全書總目提要, 1781; thereafter Siku tiyao 四庫提要), all added by Peng. Peng’s care towards the copy suggests that the Yiyu tuzhi was probably quite widely known in the late-eighteenth century. The British diplomat and sinologist Thomas F. Wade (1818-1895) then acquired the book during his time China between 1843 and 1883, and donated it to the Library upon his return to Britain in 1883. Thanks to the Library’s efforts in digitising it and a wider interest in studying the Ming’s flourishing print culture, scholars today, namely He Yuming and Lu Yilu, have studied closely the title’s relationship with an earlier now lost book titled The Records of Naked Insects (Luochonglu 蠃蟲錄), although the Yiyu tuzhi was not at the centres of their inquiries.

The essay is the first in examining the Yiyu tuzhi’s content through close visual and textual analyses, and contextualising its significance in reference to the Ming’s prosperous overseas trading activities and print industry. The essay starts by discussing the dual nature of the Cambridge Yiyu tuzhi as both a scholarly project and a low-brow production. Next, it considers the contradictions between text and image in the Yiyu tuzhi and how these reflect different views of some real or imaginary foreign peoples. In the third and fourth parts, the essay examines how different editors of the low-brow daily compendia (riyong leishu 日用類書) and the scholarly

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5 For provenance of the book, see the Library’s catalogue entry: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-FC-00246-00005/1.
6 Yuming He, Home and the World: Editing the ‘Glorious Ming’ in Woodblock-Printed Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 82 (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Asia Center, , 2013); Lu Yilu, Yiyu yiren yishou--Shanhai jing in the Ming dynasty 異域 葬人 葬歐——《山海經》在明代 (Taipei: Showwe Information Co Ltd, 2021).
encyclopaedias appropriated and adapted *Yiyu tuzhi*’s visual representations to substantiate their respective, updated understandings of the foreign peoples and visions of a Sino-centric world order.

**The Cambridge *Yiyu tuzhi*’s dual nature**

**A scholarly project**

The origin of the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content can be tentatively traced back to two interrelated scholarly publications, the *Records of Foreign Realms* (*Yiyuzhi 異域志*) and the *Luochonglu*. Firstly, most of the real and imaginary countries and peoples represented in *Yiyu tuzhi* have been mentioned in the *Yiyuzhi*. A preface to the *Yiyuzhi* transcribed in the *Compiled Writings of the Ocean of the Arts* (*Yihai huihan 藝海彙函*) in 1507 by Jingmingzi 靜明子, notes that the Ming-prince Zhu Quan 朱權(1378-1448) re-edited the *Luochonglu* and gave it the new title ‘*Yiyuzhi*’. According to Jingmingzi and the introductory paragraph in the *Siku tiyao*, the *Luochonglu* was authored by a Yuan-dynasty(1271-1368) diplomat named Zhou Zhizhong 周致中, and was presented by Zhou to the Yuan court. The *Yiyu tuzhi* was, therefore, part of a series of continuous efforts to re-edit and re-adapt the *Luochonglu*’s content since the early Ming.

The *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content, however, shows that it was a demanding scholarly project in itself. The anonymous editors of the *Yiyu tuzhi* did not simply copy from the

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7 ‘Now my brother has re-edited it, and changed its name into the *Yiyuzhi*.’ (今吾兄重編，更其名曰異域志。) Lu, *Luochonglu Zai Mingdai de Liuchuan--Jianlun Yiyuzhi Xiangguan Wenti* 《盧撾錄》在明代的流傳——論《異域志》相關問題, 134.

8 See the transcribed preface cited in Lu, 134.
Yiyuzhi. Descriptions of different foreign countries in the Yiyu tuzhi were based on a wider range of existing sources which includes the Yiyuzhi. For example, descriptions of Yanqiguo 燕耆國 (modern-day Xinjiang) and Poluozhe 婆羅遮 (modern-day Brunei) are copied from the Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang (Youyang zazu 順陽雜俎, c. ninth century). Those of Dadupoguo 大闍婆國 (modern-day Surabaya) and Nani hualuo guo 南尼華羅國 (modern-day Gujarat) were amalgamations of corresponding entries from both the Vast Records of Affairs (Shilin guangji 事林廣記, c.1127-1279) and Yiyuzhi. Other sources include the Classic of Mountains and Seas (Shanhaijing 山海經, c.475 BC), Answering Questions from the Land beyond the Pass (Lingwai daida 嶺外代答 c. the twelfth century), The Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty (Yuanchao mishi 元朝秘史, c.1228-64), and The History of the Yuan Dynasty (Yuanshi 元史, 1370). Furthermore, Lu Yilu points out that the version of Yiyu tuzhi recorded in the Siku tiyao would have included even more extensive content than the extant Cambridge copy does. The Siku-tiyao version, for example, mentioned that the Ming court had crowned a prince in Tam-ra (modern-day Jeju island), but this is not found in the Cambridge book. Prefaced by a scholar-official named Jin Xian in 1489 and collected by the renowned studio, the Tianyige 天一閣, the Siku-tiyao version and hence the prototypical Yiyu tuzhi project was apparently valued as a

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9 See Yunfeng Zang, "Sancai Tuhui Yuwaizhishi Wenxian Laiyuan Kao -- Yi 'dilijuan' He 'Renwujian' Wei Kaocha Zhongxin 三才圖會域外知識文獻來源考——以《地理卷》和《人物卷》為考察中心", Master's Diss., (Zhejiang University, 2014), for the original texts on the countries mentioned from the above sources, 33-52.

10 See Zang, 33-52.

11 ‘The thing that the Ming court crowned Yuanliang as the prince in Tam-ra’ (明封元梁王子於耽羅事) Quoted in Lu, 'Luochonglu Zai Mingdai de Liuchuan -- Jianlun Yiyuzhi Xiangguan Wenti 羅城錄在明代的流傳——兼論《異域志》相關問題', 138.
useful scholarly work.

A low-brow production

On the other hand, the Cambridge copy was produced at a low cost and most likely for a mass audience. Many pages bear double and blurred impression, and the frame on each page is blurred (fig. 1). There is no name of an author or a publisher. In addition, mistakes in the book reflect the low literacy level of the makers. Some graphic variants were used to replace the correct characters in earlier sources; for example, *zhenren* 真人 (‘real people’ or ‘Daoist masters’) is used in the place of the word *qiren* 其人 (‘these people’). 12 Some other characters were replaced with their homonyms; for instance, where it should be *zhanshou* 斬手 (‘chopping off the hands’) is now *zhanshou* 斬首 (‘chopping off the heads’). 13 It may be safe to extrapolate that many more mass-produced copies and versions of the *Yiyu tuzhi* were circulated in the late-fifteenth century, facilitating the transmission of the originally scholarly content to and amongst a mass audience.

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13 *Yiyu Tuzhi* 異域圖志, 26r°.
**Contesting worldviews in *Yiyu tuzhi***

Contradictions between text and image in the *Yiyu tuzhi* sometimes reflect the old and contemporary views of a foreign people. Taking Japan’s (*ribengo* 日本国) entry as an example, on the one hand, the image depicts a monk performing *zuoyi* 作揖, a Chinese greeting gesture of bowing one’s body forward slightly and folding one’s hands in front (fig.2), possibly based on the entry of Japan in the *Yiyuzhi*. The entry ascribes a Chinese origin and founder to Japan, describing that ‘the country was founded by the boys and girls brought over by Xu Fu 徐福’, a Daoist priest sent by the first emperor of the Qin dynasty (221-206 BC) to look for longevity elixirs.14 After his arrival, Xu decided to stay in order to escape the emperor’s despotism.15 The Buddhist attributes of the *Yiyu-tuzhi* image are derived from the latter half of the entry, ‘only since the Tang dynasty [the Japanese] started to trade with China. Since

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15 ‘福因遙秦之暴虐，已有逺去不返之意。’ Zhou, 3.
then there were people who followed Buddhism.’

By contrast, the text describes that the Japanese people ‘rely on being pirates for a living; China therefore calls them the \textit{Wo} pirates,’ which reflects a more updated perception of Japan in the Ming. In order to prevent the Chinese inhabitants living along the coastline from conspiring up with the foreign pirates, the Hongwu emperor (r.1328-98) set up four units of \textit{zihui shishi} 指揮使師 (i.e. special troops under the emperor’s direct command) near the Ningbo port to deal with the pirates, and issue \textit{qianjieling} 遷界令 to local inhabitants, ordering them to move away from the coastline. After the Xuande period (1425-35), the situation only worsened. As the court imposed stricter restrictions on the number of visits that people from foreign states were allowed to China, Chinese maritime merchants began colluding with

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\item [16] See Zhou, 3.
\item [17] ‘日本國既倭國，在新羅國南大海中，依山島居，千百餘里，專一沿海盜寇為生，國呼為倭寇。’ Yiyu Tuzhi 異域圖志, 3r.
\item [18] See Jin Yan, ‘Mingchao Qianqi Zhongri Guanxi Qianxi 明朝前期中日關係淺析’, \textit{Lishi Dangan}, no. 2 (2021), 54.
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primarily Japanese pirates to profit from larger-scale, armed smuggling activities.  

The rewritten text shows that in light of the rampant piracy along China’s eastern coast, the previous description of Japan constructed by a Chinese historiography in the Yiyuzhi was no longer relevant.

In the image alone, a little detail also reflects the tension between the two contradictory perceptions. Despite being a civilised monk, the figure is depicted barefoot in the picture, a sign that is consciously employed in the Yiyu tuzhi’s visual language to signify someone’s foreignness and primitiveness in contrast to the civilised Chinese. For example, whereas the Zhuawa爪哇(modern-day Java) people—depicted as eating leaves with hands and being covered in hair—are barefoot, the figure of Gaoli高麗(modern-day South Korea)—which was considered a close, civilised neighbour of China—is represented fully clothed and wearing a pair of boots (figs.3,4). To the fifteenth-century illustrator, representing the Japanese simply as an innocent monk sharing a Chinese origin must have felt unnatural and distant from reality.

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59 One of the reasons for tightening overseas trading restrictions was because the court could no longer afford the high costs of receiving and hosting the incoming foreign diplomats and merchants. See Zhihong Shi, ‘China’s Overseas Trade Policy and Its Historical Results: 1522-1840’, in Intra-Asian Trade and the World Market (London: Routledge, 2006), 6.
The discrepancy between the text and image of the *Busiguo* 不死國 (‘Country of the Immortal’) underlines a new effort to sinicise the foreign and create the Chinese imagination of the Other. Whereas the text describes that ‘the bodies of people of the country are black’ (*qirenshen heise*) 其人身黑色, the figure’s body in the image is not (fig.5). Sitting casually in nature, wearing a robe, and putting his hair into a bun which is a Han-Chinese hairstyle, the figure now resembles a Daoist priest. Longevity and immortality, what the *Busiguo* was known for, were enthusiastically pursued particularly in Daoism, and Chinese culture widely. Lu Yilu argues convincingly that the editor of the text *Yiyuzhi*, Zhu Quan, an avid Daoist himself, put the *Busiguo* and *Fusangguo* 扶桑國 (possibly modern-day Sakhalin) top of the list of all countries because of the two’s associations with longevity. This association between *Busiguo* and Daoism might have been absorbed by the *Yiyu tuzhi* editors and was eventually manifested in the *Busiguo*’s new visual representation.

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20 *Yiyu Tuzhi* 異域圖志, 55v°.
However, contradictions could also occur in a reversed way; in the entry of *Dengliumei* (the Kingdom of Ligor), the image renders the figures’ acts strange, incomprehensible, and exotic, whereas the text attempts to contextualise those and relate them to Chinese rites (fig.6). The image shows nothing more than three half-naked people sitting cross-legged in a triangular formation and fold their arms in front of their chests. The text explains that ‘when the foreign king comes out and sit, which is called ‘ascending onto the stage’, all foreign [subordinates] worship, sitting and folding their arms. This is the rite. [It is] like chaoshou 抄手 in China.’

Neither is there a clear distinction between the appearance of the king and those of his subordinates in the image. By contrast, images in later daily-use compendia illustrate the content of the text more accurately (fig.7); the king is often given a throne and a crown, and the subordinates given two simpler seats beneath the king. The *Yiyu-tuzhi* image has thus taken away the ritualistic context and a clear sense of hierarchy.

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22 ‘每朝番王出座，名曰登场，众番皆拜罢座，交手抄手两膊为礼，如中国抄手也。’ *Yiyu Tuzhi 異域圖志*, 56r.
conveyed in the text.

**Appropriated by popular culture**

**As elite knowledge**

The *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content became an inextricable part of the late-fifteenth-century *riyong leishu* and was appreciated as valuable knowledge. These compendia usually contained information and knowledge from astrology, geography, and history, to practical instructions for conducting rituals for a wider audience’s consultation. Such information would have only been available to scholars and professionals before the production and wide circulation of these compendia. The new audience or ‘reading publics’, a term used by Anne E. McLaren, also created a demand for new ways of organising and conveying that knowledge. As a result, the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content was given different, indeed more attention-grabbing, titles when included in the

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23 Anne E. McLaren, ‘Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China’, in *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (University of California Press, 2005), https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520231269.003.0004.
compendia, such as the ‘Assorted Records of Every Barbaric People’ (Zhuyi zazhi 諸夷雜誌), ‘the Class of Western Barbarians’ (Xiymen 西夷門) and the ‘Records of Naked Insects’ same as the title of the previous Luochonglu. Under these titles, knowledge about the foreign was not only desirable but as essential as astrology, history and geography for the Ming readers.

The Yiyu tuzhi’s content was also appropriated as an authoritative source to teach the readers to differentiate between the Chinese (hua 華) and the foreign (yi 夷), thus reinforcing a Sino-centric hierarchical world order. Most Yiyu-tuzhi sections in the these compendia start with the same preface that contains a quote by Confucius: ‘managing the foreigners and barbarians are like managing animals…because they do not know ethics or rules…they are greedy and lascivious…therefore they are far from possessing something like human nature.’

The preface shows that one of the important reasons for the Yiyu-tuzhi content to exist in the compendia was to define a superior Chinese, home identity for the Ming readers by exposing them to the an allegedly comprehensive knowledge about the Other.

As up-to-date/outdated information

However, the Yiyu-tuzhi images actually evolved to reflect contemporary knowledge and perceptions of the foreign peoples in the daily-use compendia, rather than exaggerating their exotic or even barbaric traits. One of the reasons was that the

compendium-editors were under pressure to provide different information from that included in other compendia in order to attract prospective buyers who would inevitably compare different versions. For example, the two contradictory perceptions of Japan in the *Yiyu tuzhi* developed into two distinct representations of the Japanese in the daily encyclopaedias a century later. On the one hand, the *Newly Carved Complete Miscellaneous Books of Five Chariots for the Convenience of The Four Peoples* (*Xinqie quanbu tianxia simin liyong bianguan wuche baijin* 新鑿全補天下四民利用便覓五車拔錦) of 1597, the *Newly Carved Complete Ocean of Ten-thousand Books Compiled for the Convenient Use and Viewing of the People* (*Xinke quanbu shimin beilan bianyong wenlin huijing wanshu yuanhai* 新刻全補士民備覽便用文林彙錦萬書淵海) of 1610, and the *New Version of the Complete Books of All Treasures and Miscellaneous Knowledge under the Heaven for Convenient Use* (*Xinke quanbu tianxia bianyong wenlin miaojin wanbao quanshu* 新刻全補天下便用文林妙錦萬寶全書) of 1612 all depict the Japanese figure as a top-naked bandit in a striding pose, carrying a long knife on his back (figs.8,9,10). The new iconography would have been a more accurate representation of the contemporary situation involving Japanese pirates. Notably, the Jiajing emperor (r.1522-66) banned all foreigners from coming to or trading with China in 1523 in the hope that this would curb conflicts between overseas merchants and Chinese inhabitants, but the ban only caused more piracy and smuggling activities in the East China Sea for it was now illegal to trade.

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25 McLaren, ‘Constructing New Reading Publics in Late Ming China’, 175.
within China’s maritime territory.\textsuperscript{26}

On the other hand, the images in the *Newly Carved Complete Books of Ten-thousand Treasures Compiled from Five Chariots* (*Xinke souluo wuche hebing wanbao quanshu* 新刻搜羅五車合併萬寶全書, thereafter *Wuche hebing* 五車合併) of 1614 and the *Best Carved Book of a View of the Ocean of Knowledge Without the Need of Seeking for Help* (*Dingqi longtou yilan xuehai buqiuren* 鼎鍾龍頭一覽學海不求人) of c.1610s depict a Japanese monk, harking back to the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s iconography (figs.11,12). The Japanese figure here is now wearing shoes and his *kun* 勾 hairstyle is rendered rather accurately. This revived representation of a Japanese figure as a monk may be because of the Ming public’s increasing contacts with different kinds of Japanese people, other than just the pirates, after the Jiajing emperor’s ban had been lifted in 1567. During the Longqing emperor’s (r.1567-72) reign, foreigners were allowed to come to and trade in Ming China freely as long as they paid the taxes.

\textsuperscript{26} For details about the 1523 ban and the catalytic event the Fighting for Permission to Trade in Ningbo (*Ningbo zhenggong* 宁波爭貢) involving Japanese merchants, see Shi, ‘China’s Overseas Trade Policy and Its Historical Results: 1522-1840’, 6.
It is, therefore, more reasonable to suggest that perceptions of the Japanese became more varied in late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. In contemporary Ming readers’ mind, the Japanese could be fiendish pirates and civil merchants at the same time, so both the bandit and monk images of the Japanese resonated with the Ming readers. This also explains why the Yiyu-tuzhi iconography of Japan, an amalgamation of contradictory perceptions, was still relevant. For instance, the Japanese figure in the Newly Carved Authentic Teaching for Every
Occasion by Santai for the Convenient Consultation of All People (Xinke tianxia simin bianlan santai wanyong zhengzong 新刻天下四民便覽三台萬用正宗; thereafter Santai 三台) of 1599 resembles the Yiyu-tuzhi iconography closely, portrayed as a monk but still barefoot (fig.13).

Representations of Zhuawa show how some countries had been gradually sinicised in the late-Ming editors’ and readers’ mind. In the Cambridge Yiyu-tuzhi image, two Zhuawa people are covered in hair and, exactly as the accompanying text describes, ‘using wood and leaves as containers for their food and drinks, and picking up food to eat using [their] hands’ (fig.3)²⁷ Arranged in the same composition, the two figures in the Zhuawa images in the Miaojin quanshu and Wuche hebing are now fully clothed, using a bowl, and have their hair wrapped up in buns (figs.14,15). The Wuche hebing has also notably replaced the sentences describing their primitive ways of eating in Yiyu tuzhi it with a brief comment, ‘what they eat and drink [are] plentiful

²⁷ ‘飲食以木盛葉，手撮而食。’Yiyu Tuzhi 異域圖志, 26v°.
and clean’ (yinshi fengjie 餐食丰潔). 28 This change of perceptions can be explained by the Zhuawa’s increasing interactions with the Chinese through trades. The Veritable Records of the Emperor Mingyingzong (Mingyingzong Shilu 明英宗實錄, c.1427-64) specifically mentions that Zhuawa merchants asked for the Ming government’s permission to allow them to purchase ‘bowls, porcelain and other similar types.’ (wanciqi zhilei 碗、瓷器之類) in Canton (modern-day Guangzhou). 29 During the Longqing period, Zhuawa people would have also been able to trade more freely in China. The new perception of and information about the Zhuawa, which had only existed in the fifteenth-century court record, now became important and well-known enough to enter the Wuche hebing and Miaojin quanshu.

Into the canon

The Yiyu tuzhi can be seen as a predecessor of later scholarly projects which sought to

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re-conceptualise and re-contextualise the foreign. Although no preface to the *Yiyu tuzhi* survived, the contradictions between texts and images show that the *Yiyu tuzhi* project was intended to challenge information and representations of foreign peoples in earlier sources. The *Collection of Illustrations of the Three Realms* (*Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會) edited by Wang Qi and his son Wang Siyi 王思義, dated to 1607, is more radical in this respect. Firstly, the encyclopaedia classifies the foreign countries, peoples and mythological beings into the same ‘renwujian 人物卷’ (the volume of people), which contain all other historical figures and religious deities. Furthermore, the preface to the *renwujian* by He Erfu 何爾復 (fl. c.1600s) suggests that knowledge about all kinds of people should be seen as equal: ‘from up to the emperors, down to the foreigners and the commoners, immortals, Buddhists, ghosts and deities’, ‘images of all these figures [should be] printed’. 30

Whilst scholars have long argued about whether the *renwujian* was based on the *Yiyu tuzhi*, I believe that some images in the former were in direct debt to those in the latter. 31 Notably, the *renwujian* bears some contradictions that are seen solely in the *Yiyu tuzhi*. I argue that the Wangs appropriated these intentionally in order to present a new understanding of the foreign that was in line with the Ming scholar-literati’s cultural imagination. For example, the Wangs did not follow Hu’s the *Newly Carved Record of Naked Insects* (*Xinke Luochonglu* 新刻羸蟲錄, 1603) or the daily-use

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31 Lu Junling argued that the *renwujian* was copied from the *Yiyu tuzhi*, but more recently He Yuming and Lu Yilu contend that the similarities between the two were only because they both were indebted to the *Luochonglu*. See Zhou, *Yiyuzhi 異域志*, 3; Lu, ‘Luochonglu Zai Mingdai de Liuchuan—Jianlun Yiyuzhi Xiangguan Wenti《異域志》在明代的流傳——兼論《異域志》相關問題’, 147; He, *Home and the World*, 210.
compendia in colouring the Busiguo figure black (figs.16,17,18). This would not have been due to miscommunication or a limited budget, because the body of the Gulinguo 故臨國 figure and the cape of the Wuyiguo 烏衣國 figure are coloured black. Rendered more carefully with a Chinese old man’s physiognomy and complemented with stylised trees and rocks in the background, this Busiguo figure in the Sancai tuhui resembles the iconography of a Daoist priest even more. However, the Wangs did not change the original Yiyu-tuzhi text which describes that Busiguo’s ‘people’s bodies are black’ (qirenshen heise 其人身黑色), thus retaining the text-versus-image contradiction.\(^{32}\) Noticeably, the same contradiction is also retained in the Sancai tuhui’s entry of Dengliumei for it was also directly copied from the Yiyu tuzhi (fig.19), when the Wangs could have chosen to follow the more correct or coherent representation circulated in the daily-life compendia. The Wangs’ appropriations from the Yiyu tuzhi perhaps reflects their vision for the project stated in the prefaces; these contradictions show that the images were an independent source of knowledge rather than just illustrations for the texts.\(^{33}\)

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\(^{32}\) Yiyu Tuzhi 異域圖志, 55r.\(^{c}\).

\(^{33}\) ‘The key to obtain knowledge is to study the objects, following and inquiring through the images…the variations of things cannot be known through text alone.’(致知在格物，按圖而索…形形色色不可以文字協摩). Wang, Sancai Tuhui 三才圖㑹, 3.
Adapted representations of other countries based on the *Yiyu tuzhi* in the *Sancai tuhui* reflects a broader desire of the Ming literati to incorporate the former into an imaginary world order centred around the Chinese literati culture. The Wangs’
intention was to underline the potentiality of the foreign to join a new Chinese order of the world through new visual representations. The image of *Cangguo* 藏國 in the *Sancai tuhui* is clearly based on those in the *Xinke luochonglu* and *Yiyu tuzhi*, but the figure looks much less exotic (figs.19, 20, 21). Removing the figure’s body hair, his aggressive glare and leaves on his costume, the Wangs turned the *Cangguo* figure into almost a fictional character in Ming novels. In addition, one of the monkeys in the image of the Country of Monkeys (*Housunguo* 猴孫國) now hold two branches of prunus blossoms which are absent from the *Yiyu-tuzhi* image (figs.22, 23). The prunus blossoms are rendered in the literati-painting style from contemporary painting manuals. The two prunus blossoms take the two monkeys from the realm of the foreign and relegate them to that of Ming popular culture for entertainment; the foreignness of the monkey is here caricaturised and received with more open-mindedness, a strategy and mentality that were probably foreshadowed in the making of the popular contemporary fictional character *Sunwukong* 孫悟空 in *the Journey to the West* (Xiyouji 西遊記, c.1592).³⁴

³⁴ See Yue, *Monstrosity and Chinese Cultural Identity: Xenophobia and the Reimagination of Foreignness in Vernacular Literature since the Song Dynasty*, 113, for a discussion on the popular reception of barbaric and bestial characters in Ming fictions.
Conclusion

The essay has argued that the *Yiyu tuzhi* had a far-reaching influence on later representations of real and imaginary foreign peoples in both the daily-use compendia and scholarly encyclopaedic projects in the late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth...
centuries. Through close analyses of the extant Cambridge copy, the essay reveals the book’s value as an autonomous scholarly project to the Ming literati-scholars and appeal to a much broader audience as a source of entertainment. The co-existing, contradictory views of foreign peoples seen in the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s texts and images were inherited in later projects, and remained relevant to the late-Ming audience as contacts between China and people from other countries became more frequent. Finally, the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content was appropriated by later editors in order to provide updated information about particular foreign countries, and to represent a revised worldview according to the Chinese scholar-literate’s ideals. The essay has shown that the Cambridge *Yiyu tuzhi* was a nexus, to which studies of early modern visual art, print culture, and views of the world are connected. More research could be done into the intercultural and interregional afterlife of the *Yiyu tuzhi* beyond Ming China. For instance, thanks to the circulation of the *Sancai tuhui* in Japan, the *Yiyu tuzhi*’s content was appropriated in the *Sino-Japanese Illustrated Catalogue of the Three Realms (Wakan sansai zue 和漢三才図会)* published in 1703, adapted to reflect a Genroku (1688-1704) Japanese understanding of the Other. Through the making and circulation of the *Yiyu tuzhi*, as material objects, a constantly evolving body of content, and a common heritage shared amongst East Asian countries, scholar-editors and readers exercised their imagination to define their own place in the global early-modern world.
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