

“pets” on the basis of medieval European examples. This can immediately be brought into question given that cats in no way functioned as pets in China until the tenth century, while dogs and eagles were largely kept for hunting. As Ann Heirman argues in the upcoming chapter “Buddhist monastics and (their) dogs”, prohibitions around cats, dogs, and eagles were more likely due to their use in hunting, rather than because they were emotionally significant pets.

The remaining chapters are engaging and rich in detail. The second chapter on Confucian administration and its encounters with locusts, pheasants, and tigers highlights the expansion of agricultural and habitation activities which brought humans and animals into shared territories. The increasing overlap between human and tiger territories underpins the tense negotiations between human and animal seen in the following chapters on tiger violence. These chapters provide intriguing evidence for the acceptance and proliferation of animal violence in Confucianism and, perhaps more surprisingly, Buddhism and Daoism, as well as the parallels created between animal behaviour and political order. The threat of tigers, in particular, brought religions, communities, humans, and animals into direct competition. Chen’s analysis of the methods each teaching developed to resolve tiger violence evidences how animals could be sites of religious competition. The chapter on snakes even highlights how Buddhist principles of non-violence could be re-worked in light of competition with Daoism. Far from centring solely on humans, Chen’s appreciation of the animal’s role in recognizing, even reaffirming, the interests of each group makes this a balanced study of human–animal encounters.

While occasional long passages of quoted secondary literature can detract from the pace of each chapter, the focus of this book remains unique in addressing this intriguing intersection between medieval Chinese environmental, animal, social, and religious histories. This book is of significant use for Chinese animal studies specialists and religious scholars interested in environmental–religious interfaces, alongside scholars of either field who do not specialize in China. Concepts novel to non-Sinologists are explained, and the level of detail provided throughout allows for future cross-cultural research. In all, this is a much-needed addition to the ever-growing field of Chinese animal studies, demonstrating the applicability and range of the “animal lens” in scholarship.

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## **Mark Csikszentmihalyi and Michael Nylan (eds): *Technical Arts in the Han Histories: Tables and Treatises in the Shiji and Hanshu***

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This volume collects articles on Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE) topics, paying particular attention to the two histories’ treatises and the realms of techniques (*shu* 術). Its contributions vary in content and research tactics. This review will discuss some of their findings and then get back to the editors’ project.



In introducing the volume, the editors re-read the two histories' tables, an under-researched subject, and in comparative mode arrive at information about how Sima Qian 司馬遷 (?145–?86 BCE) and Ban Gu 班固 (32–92) approached their work. Relying on the Zhangjiashan 張家山 Statutes and Ordinances and re-activating the histories' resources, Michael Loewe creates a narrative on “Land Tenure and the Decline of Imperial Government in Eastern Han” from population figures, the size of land allotments and what they produced, developments in the orders of honour (*jue* 爵) and, with striking documentation, the legal issues that arose with land being treated as property.

Luke Habberstad proposes that in treatises on water control the authors of both histories approach their topic with more concern for the court's decision making than for technical or ecological issues. Habberstad refers to the epistemological remarks in *Analecets* 7.28, as does Ban Gu in the postface to his treatise, and adds that, since projects often failed, the historian distanced the throne from them while attributing responsibility to incompetent advisors. Appended to the article are summaries of the topics of both treatises that document how much one depends on the other.

Lee Chi-hsiang's theme is Ban Gu's historiographical ethos. Lee investigates the historian's proposal in “Geographic Treatise” that from its beginnings the Western Zhou (1045–771 BCE) had two capital cities, one being Luoyang 雒陽, for which there is no archaeological evidence. Lee describes the proposal's multifaceted origin and long-lasting impact, investigates examples of the interchange between *luo* 雒 and *luo* 洛, and suggests that the historian may have followed the lead of earlier sources, now lost, while also taking great interest in enhancing the status of the Eastern Han capital.

Jesse Chapman sees a close interpretative nexus between the *Hanshu's* 漢書 “Celestial Patterns” and “Wuxing zhi” 五行志, where the sequence of baleful omens figures as the outline for the rise and fall of the Western Han dynasty, while “Celestial Patterns” shares information with the *Shiji's* 史記 “Celestial Offices”. For Sima Qian, this astronomical and astrological information came from a tradition that was of independent empire-supporting value. Ban Gu, however, referred observing the sky back to the Classics, in particular the *Documents' “Hongfan”* 洪範 and the *Annals' (Chunqiu 春秋)* handling of omens. For Chapman, this difference reflects ideological changes between 100 BCE and 100 CE.

Michael Nylan understands the *Hanshu's* massive “Wuxing zhi” as an “omen treatise” and investigates several aspects of the text: its intense relationship to the “Hongfan”, the diverse meanings of the term *wuxing* 五行 (five resources, five conducts, five phases), the many references to Western Han scholars of prognostication, the treatise's object and, closely connected, its author. The text's object was to convince the ruler of the day to attend to baleful omens by proving how reliable they had been throughout the Western Han dynasty. While Nylan affirms that this object was close to Ban Gu's interest, she follows Chinese scholars in suggesting that the treatise's core reaches back to late Western Han specialists, in particular, she proposes, Liu Xin 劉歆 (46 BCE–23 CE). Necessarily, a range of pertinent issues remains open-ended, including the function of omens, whether it be ideological or spiritual, and the fine line between the terms “author” and “compiler”.

Tian Tian deals with the histories' treatment of imperial sacrifices to Taiyi 泰一. These were performed in 113 BCE on the command of Emperor Wu (武帝; r. 141–87) at an imperial palace not far from the capital and were replaced in 5 CE by the sacrifices to Heaven in suburban Chang'an (長安) that remained in place until the early twentieth century. In analysing the historians' approach, Tian proposes that the term “suburban sacrifice” (*jiaozhi* 郊祀) underwent change. In Sima Qian's time it was seen in continuity with actual Qin dynasty rituals, while Ban Gu saw links to supposed Zhou dynasty practices. Tian proposes that Ban Gu expressed support for the classicists' final victory but she leaves open whether the treatise documents contempt for Emperor Wu's reliance on *fangshi* 方士, “miracle workers” in Nylan's translation, who had introduced Taiyi.

Karine Chemla refines her previous (2003) thesis that, for Chinese mathematicians, generality mattered more than abstraction. In *Nine Chapters* (Jiuzhang suanshu 九章算術), a commentator (dated to 263 CE) remarks that, for a particular passage, abstract expressions (*kong yan* 空言) do not make the universal procedure (*doushu* 都術) under discussion understandable. From this angle, and supported by excavated material, Chemla reads *Nine Chapters* as formulating procedures (*shu*) at different levels, with abstraction certifying the correctness of operations at a lower level. The controversial meaning of *kong yan*, “empty words” or “theoretical judgments” (*Shiji* 130.2397), thereby gains another context.

With medical texts, Miranda Brown adds a crucial component to the realms of technical arts. She proposes that manuscripts excavated in Wuwei (武威) consist of a primary text and a secondary text that functions as commentary. These manuscripts thus provide evidence counter to the histories’ account (*Shiji* ch. 105) of how medical knowledge was exclusively transmitted from master to student. While it could be argued that a manuscript’s form may derive from an author’s or compiler’s rhetorical preferences, the frequency of archaeological findings of medical texts supports the thesis that tomb owners freely deployed these texts for official and personal needs.

Mark Csikszentmihalyi and Zheng Yifan read the *Hanshu*’s catalogue of writings, “Yiwenzhi” 藝文志, as providing a taxonomic overview geared to the historical perspective that the initial unity of knowledge (*dao*), which was hard to put into words, became fragmented: amidst ongoing fragmentation it deteriorated from informing the public to serving individual wellbeing. Csikszentmihalyi and Zheng find similar ideas in Zhuangzi’s “Tian-xia” (天下) and “Six schools” (*liu jia* 六家) of *Shiji* ch. 130. In slight contrast, they understand the diverse branches of knowledge of the “Yiwenzhi” as representing the offices of the unified body of the Zhou administration.

In the main, these contributions investigate how the Han histories, and the *Hanshu* treatises in particular, deal with techniques of ordering. Some results could be enhanced by more interest in authorship and other philological issues. That the actual Han dynasty presence of technical arts much exceeded their official role is well documented in excavated manuscripts, other archaeological findings and also the re-reading of transmitted sources, and has been the subject of intensive research. This volume’s focus is on the historians, who here appear as the court officials they actually were and who naturally reduced the technical and literary arts to their state-supporting function.

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## **Amy Matthewson: *Cartooning China: Punch, Power, and Politics in the Victorian Era***

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Anyone who still retains memories of the agreeably bland periodical edited during the late twentieth century by the genial Alan Coren should be warned: Amy Matthewson