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*

(Global Perspectives in Comic Studies.) xiii, 174 pp. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2022. ISBN 978 1 032 37438 3.

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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

reveals that the *Punch* of Victorian times was a very different and much more disturbing beast. True, as historians of humour and cartooning such as Vic Gattrell have shown, by the time *Punch* was founded in 1841 the savagery of the age of Gillray and Rowlandson had faded, as the wildly corrupt elite against whom they had directed their ruderies had given way to rule by respectability. But while under Henry Mayhew, the first editor, *Punch* showed a certain degree of restraint, a jingoistic strain soon becomes apparent, and by the time of the Second Opium War this was well entrenched, together with the high degree of influence on public opinion that it then wielded. In his study of that war entitled *The Arrow War: An Anglo-Chinese Confusion, 1856–1860* (London: Collins, 1967), Douglas Hurd quotes *Punch* twice as a source on contemporary pro-Palmerston political thinking, at the same time as he alludes to the willingness of Palmerston to impugn the patriotism of those like Cobden who opposed the war. Amy Matthewson shows unambiguously that this unpleasant tactic was fully supported by the magazine.

She also shows that a profoundly unappealing tone of mockery persisted regarding China right the way through from the mid-nineteenth century onward, if anything only becoming worse, especially when it became possible to contrast Chinese weakness with the rising power of Japan. A case in point would be the cartoon from 1894 examined on pp. 114–5, which shows a large and pathetic Chinese figure being beaten up by a much smaller Japanese opponent. The cartoon is accompanied by some verses in which the Chinese figure is named as "Younghy-Bung-Boo-Hoo". Now the subtext for these verses is clearly Edward Lear's 1877 poem "The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò", but in that work Lear's humour is gentle – it is, after all, in some measure a self-portrait – whereas here the treatment is vicious and insulting throughout.

Persistent unpleasantness aside, *Punch* also appears to have propagated a highly misleading image of an unchanging and hopelessly outmoded China in at least one respect. Right from the start and right through to the Boxer uprising, Chinese troops are depicted as armed solely with medieval weapons – spears and shields. While it may be true that during the First Opium War some of the troops that the British encountered were from lightly armed local gendarmeries, the officers of Her Britannic Majesty might have reflected on the singular circumstance that in the recent past a Chinese expedition had been able to defeat the Gurkhas, a people so tough that when the British had with great difficulty managed to defeat them too, they were so impressed that they began to hire them as mercenaries, a practice that continues to this day. Soon enough, when British forces encountered properly trained and armed Manchu troops, they found them a much more formidable enemy. Yet the steadily rising levels of militarization in nineteenth-century China first described on the basis of his academic research by Philip Kuhn seem to have entirely escaped the attention of the British public, and indeed their armed forces: Admiral Seymour in the Second Opium War appears to have been quite surprised to have been hit by Chinese gunfire; likewise British soldiers in Tianjin in 1900 found it something of a shock when they encountered utterly unexpected levels of resistance.

In short, Mister Punch on matters Chinese turns out to have been straightforwardly a bully and a liar, uncomfortably close in personality to his seaside puppet manifestation. The research on display here is sober and systematic, introducing in detail what *Punch* was, how it was run, and how China was depicted in its "large cut" cartoons; from what I have seen, a study of its smaller scale imagery would simply reinforce the conclusions established. This book should at the very least be required reading on every course in Britain on "The Rise of China", not just those to do with imagery, though as Harold Isaacs showed in his seminal 1958 study *Scratches on Our Minds*, cartoons form a very important part in the creation of stereotypes. But it is possible to go further: this book

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deserves a readership far beyond the academic world of studying China; read this book, and one will readily see the Chinese phrase "A Century of Humiliation" in a completely new light.

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Lü Shanshan: *A Reference Grammar of Caijia: An Unclassified Language of Guizhou*

(Sinitic Languages of China 8.) xxviii, 600 pp. Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2022, ISBN 978 3 11072480 6.

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Caijia 蔡家 is a Trans-Himalayan (or Sino-Tibetan) language located in south-west China. While the Caijia people (or *meŋ*^{21}*ni*^{33}) have been known from Chinese sources for several hundred years (p. 2), the language was only described in the 1980s. For a long time, the only widely accessible information about the language was a short grammatical sketch produced in Chinese by Bo Wenze 薄文泽 in 2004. The present book by Lü Shanshan 吕珊珊 represents the first comprehensive grammar of Caijia. It finally makes this remarkable language available for general linguists as well as researchers of the Mainland Southeast Asian (MSEA) area.

The Caijia language (or *meŋ*^{21}*ni*^{33}*ŋoŋ*^{33}) is located in the Bijie prefecture-level city in the north-western part of Guizhou province and is estimated to have about 1,000 speakers (p. 1), although the number is declining and could already be lower. The present grammar is based on the author's doctoral dissertation and contains data from the Hezhang variety spoken in Xingfa Township that were collected during fieldwork from 2012 to 2015 (pp. 4–5).

Apart from the introduction (pp. 1–13) and a very brief conclusion (pp. 556–8), the grammar consists of 14 typologically informed chapters covering most topics of the Caijia language, including the phonology (pp. 14–44), the noun (pp. 45–103) and verb phrases (pp. 104–82), ditransitive constructions (pp. 183–99), causatives (pp. 200–18), passives (pp. 219–42) and differential object marking (pp. 243–62), comparative constructions (pp. 263–301), aspect (pp. 302–53), mood (pp. 354–414), negation (pp. 415–26) and questions (pp. 427–58), relative clauses (pp. 459–80), and, finally, clause linkage (pp. 481–555). The appendix contains two glossed texts (pp. 559–73) that might allow further analysis concerning aspects of the information structure. The grammar contains a plethora of analysed and glossed examples. The author consistently adds the Chinese translation to examples, which makes the grammar more accessible to scholars from China and, perhaps, the speech community.

Caijia shares many features of the MSEA languages, such as numeral classifiers (e.g. *nioŋ*^{24} (*ji*^{33}) *ni*^{33} "girl (one) CLF", p. 79), serial verb constructions, a tone system, little to no inflection (p. 11), and many monosyllabic words, e.g. *ɖoŋ*^{33} "heavy". Final consonants are restricted to a few nasals (p. 33). Voiced plosives as in this word are unstable (p. 15) and can appear as voiceless (*ʈoŋ*^{33}, p. 96). At least in some cases, voicedness could go back