

Jacques' third chapter demonstrates that Tangut is relatively conservative in terms of morphology despite the massive phonological changes described in the previous chapter. Jacques provides many textual examples for various morphemes. The superficially Chinese-like Tangut script may lead one to believe that Tangut is an "isolating" language, but Jacques analyses the Tangut verb as having up to ten slots (p. 266). The first is for directional prefixes which are crucial to his sub-grouping of Tangut with Pumi. Three out of the six directional prefixes of Pumi have Tangut cognates. Only one of those three has rGyalrong cognates (p. 289), so the other two may be innovations common to Pumi and Tangut.

The final chapter, on classification, lists three types of evidence supporting Jacques' tree diagram from the first chapter: phonological, lexical and morphological. The lexical evidence is the strongest of the three. On pp. 302–3, Jacques paints pictures of the worlds of Proto-Burmo-Qiangic and Proto-Macro-rGyalrongic speakers using etyma that might be shared innovations. The phonological evidence is the weakest, as it is not clear whether the velarized vowels of rGyalrong and pre-Tangut are innovations or retentions, and the schwa of pre-Tangut is certainly a retention.

Despite my criticisms, I regard this book as a landmark in both Tangut and Sino-Tibetan linguistics. It is the foundation for all future work on Tangut language history. Every page is a mine of ideas to be tested and explored.

**Marc Miyake**  
The British Museum

---

EAST ASIA

TAMARA T. CHIN:

*Savage Exchange: Han Imperialism, Chinese Literary Style, and the Economic Imagination.*

(Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series.) xiv, 363 pp.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014. \$49.95. ISBN

978 06744 1719 9.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X15000890

This is an important book – with an unfortunate title. The word “savage” in “savage exchanges” is ambiguous, and “Han imperialism” suggests something other than the Han dynasty (206BC–220AD) that is the subject of the book. I would dare to suggest that a less elegant but more explanatory title might have been “International exchanges as a source of change: new representations and conservatism during the Han dynasty”. To put it simply, *Savage Exchange* discusses the relationships between the Han dynasty economic expansion and various innovations in literary genres and other practices – and hypothesizes that the conservative orthodoxy that was reasserted during the Han dynasty was a direct reaction to these new representations.

*Savage Exchange* is a feat of erudition and good imagination. It relies on transmitted texts as well as on excavated materials, and very often interprets both sets of sources according to new perspectives. There is indeed a correlation between the genre innovations addressed in the book and the innovation that this book represents. In terms of discipline, *Savage Exchange* is difficult to categorize: it is certainly an enterprise where interdisciplinarity is not an empty word. The main originality of the approach is the blending of the textual and the material, of the literary and the

economic, for the mutual benefit of both, with conclusions that are important for almost all aspects of Han dynasty history: literature and economy of course, but also Confucianism (though the word is hardly used), religion, women's studies, art, mathematics and diplomacy.

The first chapter, "Masters dialogue", establishes the influence of economics on philosophical argumentation in the "Qingzhong" essays of the *Guanzi* and in the *Debate on Salt and Iron (Yan tie lun)*, with the invention of new metaphors and the inclusion of mathematical abstraction into philosophical texts; the "Qingzhong" chapters, composed during the Former Han dynasty, offered a theory of market economy that was a reflection of Emperor Wu's expansionist policies. Chapter 2, "Epideictic fu", shows how the Han dynasty *fu* poems, for instance Sima Xiangru's "Fu on the excursion hunt of the Son of Heaven", with its extended descriptions of luxuries (many of them foreign), are not only descriptive, but reflect Han dynasty markets and their goods in an international context, and conflicting views concerning expenditure and the accumulation of goods, against the background of Emperor Wu's long and extravagant reign. In chapter 3, "Historiography", Tamara T. Chin raises the hypothesis that the *Shiji*'s thematic and formal patterning as well as its "assemblage of competing ethnographic narratives" (notably, the chapter on the Xiongnu people) reflect a market vision of the economy that challenged the political and tributary model of economy advocated in ancient sources.

Whereas the first three chapters deal with discursive genres, chapters 4 and 5 address social and material practices, respectively "Kinship" and "Money", but with the same idea that growing international relations challenged traditional values and influenced social practices. Thus "Chinese" frontier history, notably *heqin* diplomacy (i.e. marrying imperial princesses to foreign rulers) challenged not only the hierarchical vision of frontier relations (the tributary system), but also the "ritual propriety" of marriage and of gender relations; and Silk Road trade produced new economic roles for the thousands of women hired as industrial workers in large weaving factories: they were no longer part of the traditional marriage-based household economy; they were economic actors instead of moral subjects, in a paradigm that maximized their productivity rather than their virtue. The same tension between traditional values and market economy is discussed in chapter 5, devoted to money, in particular during Emperor Wu's reign: against the conservative vision of money as a symbol for the moral and cosmological order (as part of *wen*-culture), foreign exchange instead presupposed a purely quantitative view of money, in a connected world where all currencies could be exchanged on the basis of their metallic value, and by the relative amounts of commodities and money in circulation.

All five chapters thus show the challenges imposed by Han dynasty expansion and international commerce; and to various extents, they all show the successful backlash of conservatism against these innovations. Indeed, such new values were dead ends: they meant challenges to the traditional order, but in the end offered this order opportunities to reaffirm itself as orthodoxy. An important thesis of the book is that advocates of traditional values, "Classicists", as they are often called in recent sinology, did not evolve in a discursive vacuum, but reinterpreted and reinforced traditional claims against the new representations that accompanied Emperor Wu's expansionist economics. Thus, against the innovations discussed above, conservative discourses reasserted the centrality of frugality, of agriculture, of tributary diplomacy and of kinship economy. In sum, as is acknowledged by the author, *Savage Exchange* is largely the narrative of values and practices that failed, but were instrumental in the definition of the traditional values that became unchallenged orthodoxy during the Han dynasty and for the millennia to come.

This book is mandatory reading for researchers of the Han dynasty; but it will also be stimulating for anyone interested in original approaches to ancient history. *Savage Exchange* is certainly one of the best examples of what interdisciplinarity can bring to our knowledge of ancient periods for which data are scattered – too scattered to be interpreted in themselves and according to traditional disciplinary divisions.

**Nicolas Zufferey**  
University of Geneva

PAUL W. KROLL:

*A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese.*

(Handbook of Oriental Studies.) xvi, 714 pp. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015. €199. ISBN 978 90 04 28411 1.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X15000518

Learning to read texts written in the Chinese of the pre-imperial period on to the end of the Tang has been an essential part of the curriculum of any undergraduate degree aiming at an appreciation of the vast riches of the Chinese cultural tradition – or, more simply, any degree concerning China that does not sell the student short. Yet for generations Anglophone students have not been well served by the lexicographic resources placed at their disposal. All teachers were obliged to issue warnings about reliance on the 1931 dictionary of R.H. Mathews, which addressed the linguistic change of its day by mixing the latest neologisms with phrases from high antiquity without any marking of the difference. One of my lecturers, we were told, had actually hurled a copy of this unsatisfactory tome out of the classroom window – a story that I was disposed to believe was fictional until I met the former student whose copy it was. Instead we were instructed to consult for early works the 1957 *Grammata Serica Recensa* of Bernhard Karlgren, an elementary glossary added to a study of early written forms that lacked even an adequate index before one was privately published in 1974.

No one is going to throw “Kroll” out of the window. Though the aims of this work are modest, based on single characters rather than compound expressions, it is much more than a mere glossary. Early and medieval meanings are clearly distinguished, and even the medieval pronunciation is indicated, using William Baxter’s representation of the system, as the helpful and eminently practical introduction states (p. xiii) – a precise online reference would have been yet more helpful, but most students today will surely waste little time in locating the Wikipedia entry on “Baxter’s transcriptions for Middle Chinese” and thus swiftly find reassurance that final X and H only mark tonal features. Better still, Buddhist meanings and transcriptional uses are given, allowing the student to appreciate that these features are integral to the written language of the period, rather than deriving some obscure special interest of the more Indologically minded denizens of the medieval Chinese world.

One does not expect a student dictionary to be comprehensive, but since there were points in my own education when I was assured that “you will not find this meaning in dictionaries” I did check the one or two that I could recollect. The meaning of *de* 德 that occurs in the biography of Xiang Yu 項羽 in the *Shi Ji* when, facing death, he decides to give away his horse to someone “as a favour” is perhaps covered here, though the words “kindness” and so forth listed in the entry (p. 80) do not make entirely clear that the meanings “a kind deed” and the like can occur. In a different category would be the usage of *gu* 故 in Buddhist scholastic prose to mark