

Award: Prof. Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros Received 2021 J. Worth Estes Prize for Her Pioneering Research on the History of Chocolate in Qing China

Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros 白雅詩, Assistant Professor at the Department of History, University of Macau was named 2021 J. Worth Estes Prize winner at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM), 14 May 2021. She was awarded for her work “Chocolate in China: Interweaving Cultural Histories of an Imperfectly Connected World,” published in Harold J. Cook (ed.), *Translation at Work: Chinese Medicine at the First Global Age* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020, pp. 58-107). Puente-Ballesteros, licentiate in medicine, *magister* in acupuncture and moxibustion, sinologist and PhD historian of science has immersed herself in the study of Eastern and Western languages and in the exploration of cross-cultural interactions and exchanges between Manchus, Mongolians, Chinese and Jesuits in the fields of medicine, surgery, anatomy and pharmacy during late imperial China. She is also Associated Researcher at Tübingen’s Department of Chinese Studies as well as Project and Translation Collaborator of the DFG Research Project “Translating Western Science, Technology and Medicine to Late Ming China: Convergences and Divergences in the Light of the «Kunyu gezhi» 坤輿格致 (Investigations of the Earth’s Interior; 1640) and the «Taixi shuifa» 泰西水法 (Hydromethods of the Great West; 1612).”

“The prize was established in 2000 in honour of J. Worth Estes, M.D., in recognition of his many invaluable contributions to the AAHM and to scholarship in the history of medicine. The award is made annually for the best published paper in the history of pharmacology during the previous two years, whether appearing in a journal or a book collection of papers. The choice of topics reflects Worth Estes’ long tenure as Professor of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics at Boston University and his own scholarship in the history of pharmacology.” See <http://www.histmed.org/about/awards/j-worth-estes-prize>

The prize-winning article focuses on the analysis of the first written evidence in a non-European language, i.e. Manchu, on the transmission of chocolate to China. Legend tells us that the cocoa pod was the Gods’ Gift to the Mayas. Could this *donum* also have been conferred to the Son of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子), the Kangxi Emperor? Based on a sizeable array of newly found archival documents in Manchu, Chinese and European languages gathered within the last ten years,* Puente-Ballesteros reconstructs the largely unsung story of chocolate during early Qing China. The concept of “global microhistories” was crucial for this endeavor, because it incorporates and defines not only the extent of contacts on both sides of intercivilisational encounters, but also their limits. Moreover, it allows the author to carry out a two-pronged actor-based analysis that concerns on the one hand material phenomena such as the global commodity chain of medicinal substances, and on the other hand the concomitant flow of mental constructs – such as medical ideas – that resulted in new hybrid formations. The entry of chocolate as material object and knowledge into China is instrumental for elucidating the kaleidoscopic processes at work during early modern globalization and its manifold usages and functions as medicine, luxury gift or exquisite food in the hands of the emperor, courtiers, elites or missionaries. In addition, as a paradigmatic case study it not only highlights the fate of the Gods’ Gift in the Middle Kingdom, but it also provides a portrait of a Jesuit *frater* apothecary, Giuseppe Baudino S.J. (1657-1718), and his agency as an unexpected medical interlocutor *vis-à-vis* with the Manchu ruler.

Puente-Ballesteros’ article was recently published also in Chinese translation. See Bai Yashi 白雅詩 (Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros), Cao Jin 曹晉 (transl.), “Qiaokeli zai Zhongguo: Zai bu wanmei lianjie de shijie zhong jiaozhi de wenhuashi” 巧克力在中國：在不完美連接的世界中交織的文化史, in *Guoji hanxue yanjiu tongxun* 國際漢學研究通訊 (Newsletter for International China Studies), 21 (2020), pp. 12-62. Presently, under the aegis of the Sub-Committee on Education and Research, UNESCO Memory of the World Programme, the author is preparing a book on the history of chocolate in China by further elaborating on her article.

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