Note from the Editor

This issue of *East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine* includes two articles that illustrate possible ways of combining methodologies in a sophisticated way to tackle the history of science and technology in imperial China. The first article brings together a close reading of local historical sources with fieldwork, while the second one uses philology and botany together.

Yang Yuda 杨煜达 and Nanny Kim present a part of their on-going project on the history of silver metallurgy in late imperial China, a topic on which they have been publishing jointly since 2012. Here they focus on the mines located in Southwest China, bringing together the analysis of written sources with fieldwork that draws on the study of archaeological remains and oral history. Their discussion of the various steps involved in silver mining and metallurgy leads them to date the introduction of the reverberatory furnace in cupellation to sometime during the fifteenth or sixteenth century. They also argue that the size of furnaces increased during the eighteenth century. Altogether they show that silver metallurgy provides a convincing counter-example to the received idea that Chinese technology stagnated during the late imperial period.

In his study of "Storax, Benzoin, and the Chinese *Anxi xiang* 安息香," Stephen G. Haw combines philology and botany to discuss one of the many cases in which names of plants and of substances derived from them have changed during the imperial period. Reviewing earlier interpretations, he argues that *Anxi xiang*, which nowadays refers to benzoin, was probably identical to the ancient Mediterranean storax. For this purpose, he relies on a number of textual Chinese sources ranging from the fifth to the nineteenth centuries.

These two articles are followed by three book reviews.

Catherine Jami

CNRS

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