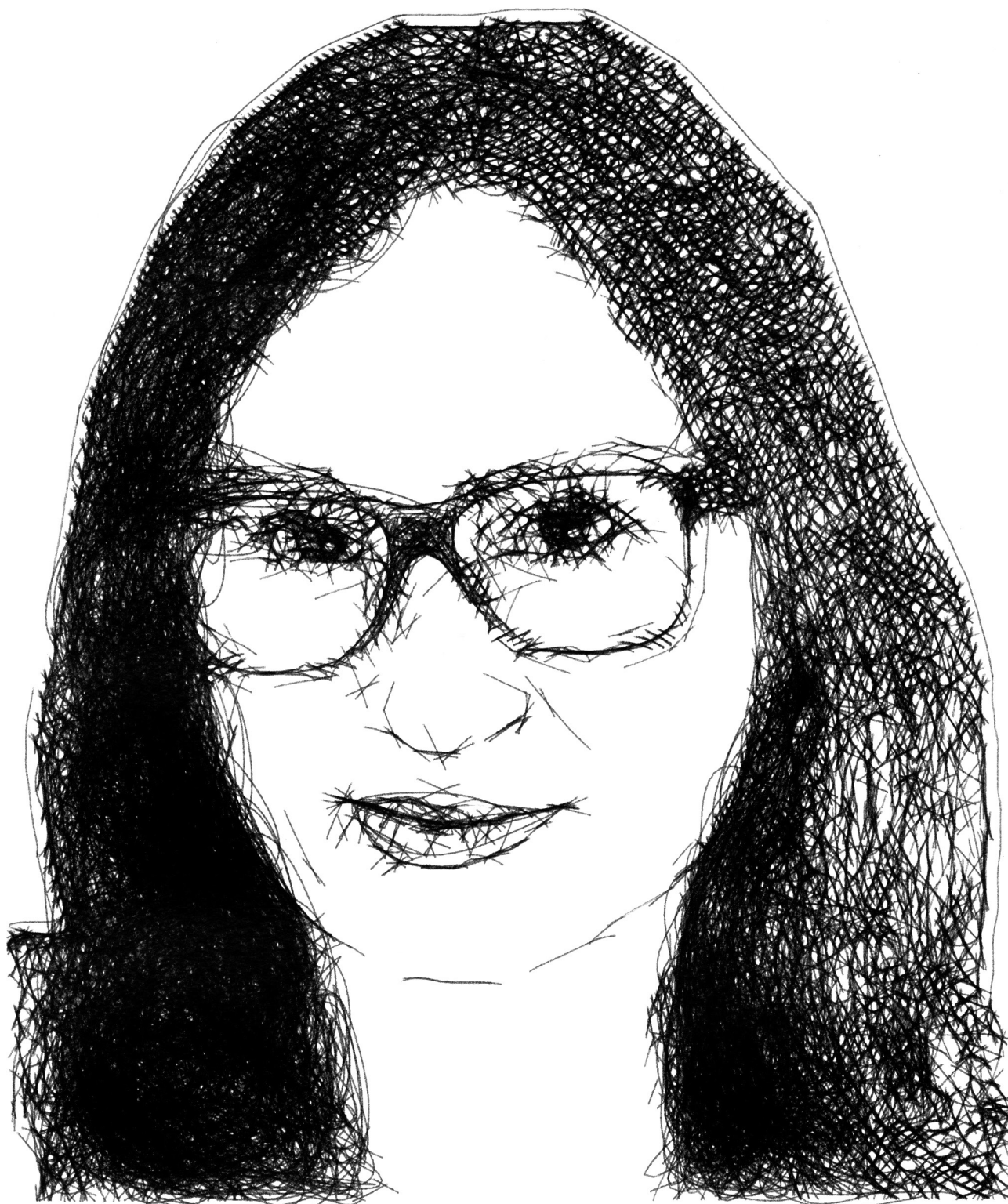


# Alumna Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros



Alumni Portrait Nr. 12—2017

Assistant Professor of  
East-West Interactions  
and Exchanges, University  
of Macau

# Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros



“I consider myself more and more as an artisan than a scholar.”

**What did Beatriz Puente-Ballesteros, now an assistant professor in the Department of History at the University of Macau, appreciate the most during her time as a Postdoctoral Fellow? “The Zukunftskolleg provided me with time - for all my massive research, which is now crystalizing into six articles and two books.”**

Beatriz is sure that joining the Zukunftskolleg after a postdoctoral position at the Catholic University of Leuven was the best option for continuing her career. Although she had other offers, she chose to go to the Zukunftskolleg. “I think that the Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship is simply the most prestigious grant in Europe.” Not only was she excited about taking advantage of the general opportunities that the Zukunftskolleg has to offer, but also about the prospect of working with Professor Jürgen Osterhammel from the Department of History and Sociology at the University of Konstanz, “a pioneer in global history and somebody I simply admire.”

Thinking back on her time at the Zukunftskolleg, Beatriz remembers especially her positive experience with Research Fellow Sebastian Schutte, who is affiliated with the Department of Politics and Public Administration: “In structural terms, our topics were similar and therefore we had enough ammunition ready for animated interdisciplinary discussions.” She emphasises that while research provides new chances, new contacts and fresh scenery, it also involves the bitter aspect of often saying farewell.

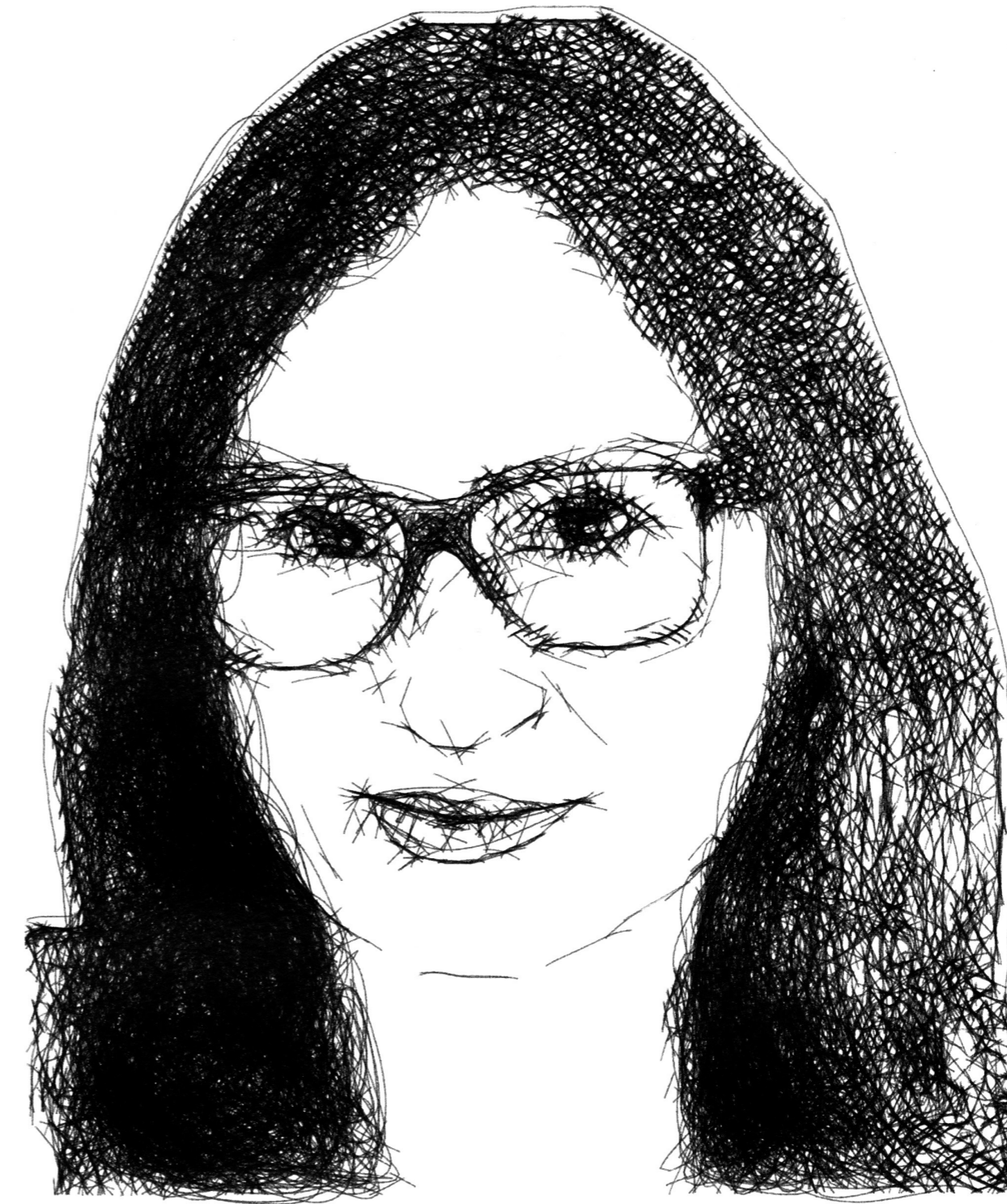
Beatriz’ career within academia is an unusual one. On the one hand, she is a medical doctor, sinologist and historian of science by formation, while on the other hand she considers herself “more and more as an artisan than a scholar.” She comes from a family of doctors and humanists and has always been surrounded by people with great interest in the sciences and arts. “Their knowledge and curiosity moved beyond the medical field itself. This unique context condi-

oned the beginning of my career.” To enter university was a natural process and she always wanted to become a historian of medicine in China. While she was still working on her PhD in history of science at Universidad Complutense de Madrid, as well as thereafter, Beatriz started to apply for different research and exchange programmes and was able to spend extended periods of time in China, France, the UK, Italy, Belgium and Germany. She learned Chinese in Beijing and specialised further in reading original Manchu documents in Beijing and Tübingen. After a postdoctoral position in Belgium, she became a fellow of the Zukunftskolleg. Ultimately, she says “after twenty-two years of interdisciplinary and transcultural formation, I was appointed as an assistant professor for East-West Interactions and Exchanges in the Department of History at the University of Macau.” Moreover, Beatriz’ contribution to the field has been recognised by her appointment as corresponding member of the Sub-Committee on Education and Research, UNESCO Memory of the World Programme.

Beatriz’ research focuses on intercivilisational encounters between China and Europe in the field of medicine. She highlights three different key aspects in her research: First, the reconstruction of the unsung and fascinating biographies of Jesuit physicians, surgeons and apothecaries who worked at the court of the Kangxi Emperor (1654-1722). Second, there is the totally unknown introduction of chocolate to China during the period of early modern globalization. Finally, she is also captivated by the transmission of Western anatomical thinking to the court of the

Manchus, an ethnic minority who had established the Qing dynasty in China in 1644. “Anatomy does not exist in other medical traditions and thus can be considered as the crown of Western medicine.” These unique research topics allow her to make contributions to theoretical debates about the Great Divergence – the process in which the Western world progressed and emerged as the most powerful world civilisation and theoretically left Qing China behind.

“Because all these research fields are absolutely new, there was no secondary literature on it, and I therefore had to build into the unknown.” By highly sophisticated research she collects information in archives and libraries all over the world and in eleven different Eastern and Western languages in order to find the bits and pieces relevant to her research questions, with the firm conviction that new theoretical approaches emerge in a quasi-artisanal and empirical fashion from findings of new evidences. Travelling and adapting to archives and communicating with local archivists can be a challenge. Sitting hour upon hour over old documents and trying to revive the spirit of long deceased actors is equally challenging. But Beatriz is convinced that her research will deepen the understanding of what defines modernity in China and in other regions of the world. “Moreover, it intends to contribute to a redefinition of the process of early globalization in a then still imperfectly connected world.”



## Distinctions, Awards and Honorary Posts

- 2018 – 2021** Multi-year research grant level 2, Research & Development Administration Office, University of Macau, Macau SAR, China
- 2016** Corresponding member of the sub-committee on education and research, UNESCO Memory of the World Program
- 2015 – 2018** Start-up research grant, Research & Development Administration Office, University of Macau, Macau SAR, China
- 2013 – 2015** Fellow of the Zukunftskolleg, University of Konstanz
- 2010 – 2012** Postdoctoral research scholarship, Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation, Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, China
- 2010** Prize ‘Hernández Morejón’ for the best doctoral dissertation in the history of medicine, Spanish Society of History of Medicine
- 2009** Prize for the best doctorate, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- 2009** Postdoctoral research scholarship, University of Leuven, Belgium
- 2009** Doctoral scholarship for further academic research and training, DAAD, Germany
- 2008** Doctoral scholarship, Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation, Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, China
- 2006** Doctoral scholarship, Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China
- 2005** Doctoral scholarship, Ministry of Finances of Spain through the I.C.O Foundation, Asia-Pacific Exchange Programme

## Curriculum Vitae

### Education

- 2009** Ph.D. (with an additional European doctoral degree), Department of History of Science, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- 2006 – 2009** Licentiate in sinology (specialization in China, Japan and Korea), Open University of Catalonia (UOC), Spain
- 2006 – 2007** Master of Advanced Studies on History of Medicine, Centre for the History of Medicine, Peking University, China
- 2004 – 2009** Ph.D. student under the supervision of Prof. Luis E. Montiel, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, and Prof. Catherine Jami, CNRS & Université de Paris-Diderot, Paris, France
- 2001 – 2003** DEA Dissertation (master diploma), Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- 2001 – 2003** MA in History of Science, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain

### Scientific Career

- 2001** Licentiate in medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- 2000 – 2003** Master of acupuncture, moxibuxtion and tuina, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- 1995 – 2001** Medical studies, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- since 2015** Assistant Professor (tenure track) of East-West Interactions and Exchanges, Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Macau, China
- 2013 – 2015** Postdoctoral researcher, Department of History and Sociology, University of Konstanz
- 2009 – 2012** Postdoctoral researcher, Department of Sinology, University of Leuven, Belgium
- 2007 – 2009** Researcher, Needham Research Institute (Cambridge), Department of History of Science, École Normale Supérieure (Paris), and Department of Chinese and Korean Studies, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen (Germany)
- 2006 – 2007** Researcher, Centre for the History of Medicine, Peking University, China
- 2005 – 2006** Researcher, Institute for the History of Natural Sciences, Academy of Social Sciences, Peking, China
- 2004 – 2013** Honorary teaching fellow (“Colaboradora honorífica docente”), Unit of History of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain