

The Lizhi (Lychee). The Peerless Fruit

The world's first monograph on any fruit (Lizhi pu, 1059) and its followers

edited by Michael J. Hagerty and Hartmut Walravens

DESCRIPTION:

Lizhi fruits (*Litchi chinensis*) have been widely available in greengrocers and supermarkets around the world for several decades. In their country of origin, China, they have been highly prized for more than a thousand years and are regarded as the "queen of fruits". It is therefore perhaps not surprising that a monograph on lizhis by the statesman, poet and calligrapher Cai Xiang (1012-1067) was published as early as 1059. This treatise proved to be the first comprehensive description of a fruit in the world. This book was quickly adopted as a model, and numerous other books were subsequently published to supplement Cai Xiang's work.

Lizhis were already mentioned and praised in the first descriptions of China by European Jesuit missionaries and were even presented in a colored plate in Michael Boym's *Flora sinensis* in 1656. The Chinese lizhi literature first sparked the interest of the US Department of Agriculture in a possible cultivation of the fruit in Florida, but this proved to be problematic. The far-sighted Walter T. Swingle (1871-1952) then had the *Lizhi pu* (monograph on the Lizhis) by Cai Xiang and eight other treatises from the Ming and Qing periods translated by the talented Michael J. Hagerty (1876-1951). As a result of the Second World War, these careful translations were not published but disappeared into the archives. They are presented here in a revised and edited form, with an introduction, a bibliography and annotations as well as the original Chinese spelling throughout and an index.

ISBN:
9783447122801 (pb)

PRICE:
\$64.00 (pb)

PUBLICATION DATE:
18 September 2024 (pb)

BINDING:
Paperback

PAGES:
240

PUBLISHER:
Harrassowitz Verlag

IMPRINT:
Harrassowitz Verlag

SERIES:
Asien- und Afrika-Studien
der Humboldt-Universität
zu Berlin

READER INTERESTS:
Asian and Pacific Studies
Cultural Studies