

Comparative Asian Research Network
Monthly Lecture Series on Issues and Research in the Asian Region
Organized by the Department of Japanese Studies, CUHK

All are Welcome!!

**Re-orienting Garden
and Environmental History:
Diasporic Chinese and their landscapes in southern
New Zealand and southern China, 1860s-1910s**



Speaker: Dr. James Beattie

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Date: 12 September 2012 (Wednesday)

Time: 11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m.

**Venue: Arts and Humanities Hub (G24),
Fung King Hey Building**

Abstract:

Much has been written about the dramatic environmental transformations wrought in China and across the British Empire from the eighteenth century. Yet, despite the migration of millions of Chinese to parts of the British Empire, little or no attention has been given to the role of Chinese as agents of environmental change in Australasia either by Australasian scholars of environmental history or by researchers of Chinese environmental history.

This short talk introduces some of the interconnections between Otago (New Zealand) and Cantonese (China) environments facilitated by nineteenth-century Chinese migration to New Zealand. It focuses on Cantonese views of the Otago landscape and their role in its environmental transformation.

The term I use to describe these processes – diasporic landscapes – conveys how physical landscapes and landscapes of the mind were created through Cantonese migration and the environmental knowledge, plants and management techniques they brought to New Zealand. Examining diasporic landscapes can, I think, add significantly important new spatial and environmental dimensions to existing studies of overseas Chinese, which primarily focus on self-help societies, businesses and migration networks and political organisations.

Keywords: imperialism, Canton, migration, colonisation, environmental history, New Zealand

No registration necessary.

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