

INTRODUCTION: ASIAN ENVIRONMENTS

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Environmental issues have been grabbing headline space around the world in recent years. Mounting concerns over climate change have been added to an already growing list of problems—salinization, air and water pollution, biodiversity loss, and so on. These concerns are often strongly focussed on Asia, whose states' burgeoning economies and industries, increasing populations and energy needs are heightening both resource demands and anxieties about the ability of the planet to sustain its human population.²

Such anxieties, however, can mask the complex, historing

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Chinese' garden into European soils. The second phase of this interaction, he notes, has come about in more recent years, again through effortse

mainland, but which on the Ogasawara group are made more acute by its fragile nature. Guo's article charts the emergence of a growing ecological consciousness among the region's people, one initially used to challenge the developmental ethos at the time and which, in more recent years, has spawned a successful programme of conservation and eco-tourism.

The final three papers in this volume provide a fascinating overview of European interactions with the remoter areas of Asia, in this case Central Asia and the Himalayan region. They emphasise two of the themes of this volume: the extension of global patterns of interaction and the growing knowledge of spaces and people; and, the ways in which humans have identified themselves with (or against) particular environments. Each of the three articles illustrates the variegated ways in which Europeans have depictt

sensations of the mausoleum ring with the present but also the past. In 'Taking Leave of a Friend', Bridge takes inspiration from the legendary Tang (618-906 CE) poet, Li Bo 李白 (701-762 CE),¹² one of whose poems' titles, as translated by Ezra Pound, Bridge also takes for hers. Sriyalatha Kumarasinghe explores memory and landscape in a different way, through the associations of place evoked by a tropical plant growing in a temperate landscape and through the development of an overseas Japanese garden. 618716220

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