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Landscape practices and representations in eighteenth-century Dongchuan, Southwest China

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Propositions

1. The novelty of this dissertation for the study of Southwest China is its emphasis on the interdisciplinary study of landscape, space and architecture.
2. Understanding the meanings of landscapes in the past demands a full examination of the political, economic and cultural presence of local society.
3. The landscape of Dongchuan is a fine example of how community and landscape influence each other, how they overlap and intersect with each other, and how they are formed historically.
4. With the overthrow of indigenous rule, the Qing Empire imposed its own civilized landscape both in terms of its actual construction and its representation by officials and literati in the eighteenth century.
5. In Southwest China, the Manchu-centred model was not very clearly embodied in local society and the rhetoric of civilization showed continuity from the Ming to the Qing.
6. Instead of asking how frontier populations were sinicized or colonized, we should emphasize how local actors turned into the makers of state civilization and state authority.
7. Despite everything, the indigenous conceptions of space and landscape have survived in their stories and myths.
8. Tracing history is always about people – how people have remembered and have told their stories; and how in their past, present and future they understand, interpret and imagine the world.
9. Writing is a constant struggle, but also one of the most fascinating things in life.
10. Taking on challenging assignments for the things you are passionate about will make you full of energy and what you accomplish may surprise yourself and others.