bells, and deities, to mention only a few). specialists will, of course, have their quibbles, but this is a handy volume to have in one's private library.

A Dictionary of Chinese Symbols is a tribute to its author, well-known in Chinese studies circles as a walking encyclopedia of traditional Chinese culture. Wolfram Eberhard is a true generalist in an age of ever-narrowing specialization. He is also, as this volume testifies, a scholar who knows how to convey the joy of discovery to others.

JAMES L. WATSON
University of Pittsburgh


The dust jacket photograph of a little girl in peasant garb is endearing, but it is superfluous to the male voices contained in this book. It is the men who have for generations contended over the New Territories, and it is the men who have left traces of their contentions in genealogies, land titles, litigation records, ritual inscriptions, and orally transmitted legends. Many of these memorabilia representing local traditions have been gathered under the auspices of the Oral History Project of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Faure has assembled some of these local materials alongside historical documents of the "greater tradition" to present a detailed picture of how the Eastern New Territories may once have been organized. His narrative does not, however, make for casual reading. It is a tight weave of names, illustrations, scenarios, analyses, and historical and ethnological references, supplemented by fifty-eight pages of endnotes, almost one-fourth of the total text.

In what sense is the Eastern New Territories a relevant unit of study? Faure sees the area as an objective unit of space-time that lends itself to historical description. He takes the Japanese invasion of Hong Kong as the terminal date for historical documentation and extends the period back some four centuries. The social matrix that became the Eastern New Territories began to take shape with the establishment of Xinan County in 1573, then with the emergence of markets extending east and south of Shenzhen, and finally with the development of a network of village alliances, or yeuk, in the nineteenth century. The Eastern New Territories is thus seen in the greater context of Xinan County, the history of which this book brings into clearer focus than any previous study.

The New Territories derives its name from a later historical context, the British Crown Colony. Faure's history draws examples both from texts of the era of Chinese control and from texts of the recent British period. A valuable and substantial portion of the narrative brings us right into a vivid present with the author's and his students' own accounts of village ritual and interviews with living men.

I find Faure's work meticulous, for the most part, and challenging in the light it sheds on agnatic organizations and local settlements. His work remains within the frame of ethnohistorical research on the lineage and society of Southeast China pioneered by the late Maurice Freedman. Faure, however, significantly modifies the terms of Freedman's discourse by greatly deepening the historical description, which in turn lends much greater credibility to Chinese typifications and thus shifts the functional analysis toward the symbolic order of social life. From this vantage, Faure sees the essence of agnatic organization in its genealogy, and he points out how genealogy is used as a set of references by which members claim settlement rights.
Genealogy, however, is only one set of references by which residents reckon the right to settle, open, and hold land. There are also village-foundation legends that are especially important to residents of the many multi-surname settlements dotting the landscape. Faure illustrates how agnatic organizations and the buildings by which they distinguish themselves develop a variety of forms under varying political, economic, and historical circumstances. He describes the tension between official specifications and indigenous practices in the way some of the "great surnames" signify their claims to official status in their ornate, freestanding ancestor halls, whereas most other villagers of the Eastern New Territories build a more common "bed-chamber type" attached to their rows of dwellings. Faure's insightful discussion should open our eyes to the need for further historical and ethnographic research on the forms, functions, and typifications of ancestral halls.

The formation of agnatic organizations is only part—a historically intrusive part—of the overall settlement process, according to the author. Contentions over a place to settle and new land to open and retain entail a variety of interlineage and intervillage territorial arrangements and alliances. One form that has remained shadowy in the ethnohistory of the New Territories is the yeuk. Faure throws considerable light on the subject by showing that they were a specific type of formal intervillage alliance that appeared in the Eastern New Territories during the nineteenth century. The yeuk seem to have originated in attempts to protect territorial gains of mostly Hakka villagers against the waning power of the larger indigenous lineages.

Discussions of intervillage relations often include a consideration of where women fit into the picture. Readers of the present work, however, may be disappointed with the lack of any particular focus on women's roles. And here I would mention that I find several assertions troublesome concerning an alleged absence of intermarriages between Hakka and Punti settlements.

On the other hand, Faure pays close attention to how formal alliances and other forms of intervillage arrangements constitute a territorial political order that is celebrated in the folk religion of earth shrines, temple deities, and most poignantly in the communal rites of the ta-tsiu. As a symbolic representation of a settlement's territory, the ta-tsiu not only transcends the agnatic fragmentation of local society but also parallels the ancestral cult in placing the villagers' local traditions in direct contact with carriers of the "greater tradition"—priests, officials, and the like.

One of the author's main conclusions is that there is little in the coincidence of agnatic and local community to distinguish the New Territories or Southeast China from the rest of the country. Contrary to a host of previous works on the Chinese lineage, the book argues that the lineage is not reducible to a local community and its economic circumstance. Much less is it a product of an ecological adaptation to "frontier conditions," but neither is it simply the product or tool of the "gentry." Politics, if I may interpret the gist of Faure's thesis, reckons genealogy in a stratified society where men contend for rights to settle a piece of land on the one hand and to dignify themselves with official positions and pretensions on the other.

The book is a storehouse of historical detail coupled with important insights and some very challenging propositions. As an ethnologist, I am particularly impressed by Faure's use of official Chinese and indigenous native texts to typify some important features of the landscape that was once, or is still, the Eastern New Territories.

C. Fred Blake
University of Hawaii