

there was plenty of *modernisasi* (modernization) afoot, and it is the interplay of such forces with *tradisi* (tradition) that first attracted his attention. He correctly perceived that a study of medicine and healing (writ large) would provide insight into the “kaleidoscopic varieties” referenced above. He also correctly perceived that by focusing on *pembangunan* (development) he would be able to couch his micro-level findings within the frame of Indonesian society and its overarching, macrolevel mandate of progressive socio-economic change.

The author describes his work as a “New Order ethnography” (p. 222). This is particularly well illustrated in the first chapter, entitled “Apertures.” As I interpret it, his use of the phrase “New Order” has two meanings. One meaning refers to then-President Suharto’s New Order society, one that was to be imbued with higher levels of progressive socioeconomic development in concert with lower birth rates and lower dependence on outside benefactors, including the United States. This society (building on the motto “Strength through Diversity”) was to respect multiple ethnicities and religious perspectives, while building on the accomplishments of a labor force representing the world’s largest population of Muslims.

The second meaning, as I see it, is Ferzacca’s variant of postmodernism. Discursive analyses are featured, as are deconstructivist interpretations, which can be both maddening in phraseology as well as enlightening in insight. It’s good news, bad news: If a person reads this book carefully, studies it assiduously, and wrestles with it periodically, a tremendous amount of information can be obtained. Wrestling indeed is required at times, because obfuscating terminology is occasionally used. One example is this comment on interpretive history: “my understandings of understandings of the all-over present” (p. 16). Another follows a few paragraphs later: “My concern is with the conjunctures of experience, history, and mimesis in an ethnographic present, which is by now an ethnographic past” (p. 17). Nonetheless, the overall effort on the part of the reader is well worth it.

Ferzacca notes that he became interested in “the ways in which health and medicine provided multi-vocal idioms and registers of expression which Javanese and Indonesians could use to say something of the conditions of their lives and the state of things as they see them” (p. 4). By focusing on the large, well-known city of Yogyakarta, a ready array of persons and possibilities presented themselves. A former stronghold of Javanese orthodoxy, Yogyakarta still exemplifies the swirl of *modernisasi* and *tradisi*. He demonstrates that tradition is not stagnant but ever evolving as it is being re-enacted (e.g., through healing ceremonies) and re-stated (e.g., by herbalists). Quoting A. Giddens, Ferzacca stresses that it involves “active processes of reconstruction, particularly as filtered by its guardians” (p. 48). Ferzacca tackles this by creatively using the human body and to a lesser extent the body politic, to make his points about the social body.

*Healing the Modern* is a very well-researched and well-referenced book. Although my own work in medical anthropology is framed using a postpositivist paradigm, as I reviewed

Ferzacca’s text I thought of several references of potential importance. Checking his bibliography, I found that each and every one was there (e.g., George Foster, Frederik Dunn, Arthur Kleinman). The same can be said for his references on Indonesian culture and development (e.g., Clifford Geertz, Koentjaraningrat, James Peacock). Complementing the referenced literature, the author presents case studies of individuals. Ferzacca’s attention here to detail is impressive. Perhaps the most important case study (presented primarily in the chapter entitled “Healing the Moderns”) is that of the young healer Pak Datang. Everything from Datang’s use of multiple levels of Javanese language, to his use of multiple languages, to his skills in social intercourse—not to mention his capacities as a healer—are laid out in intimate detail. A budding anthropologist not yet familiar with either Java or Indonesia can benefit greatly from the cultural subtleties the author shares here.

One of the most positive things a reviewer can write about a book is that it is useful. Ferzacca’s text is not a work of applied anthropology, but indeed will be extremely useful for any anthropologist desiring to conduct fieldwork in Java. One definitively obtains in-depth insights into the workings of Javanese society, within the Indonesian polity and the Southeast Asian context. The information on healing per se is a bonus dividend.

**Popular Religion in China: The Imperial Metaphor.** Stephan Feuchtwang. Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 2001. 283 pp.

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Chinese popular religion—spectacular, subtle, complex, and unique—has rarely proved of scholarly interest to any but a few enthusiasts, even among anthropologists and historians of China. All of the significant transformations in thought about religion in anthropology have emerged from work in other places, and when China does seize the imagination of scholars of religion it is more often for its minority Buddhist or Islamic traditions, ancient Daoist texts, or official “Confucian” cults, than for the enormously heterogeneous jumble of rites, cults, texts, feasts, habits, processions, pilgrimages, economies, organizations, ways of speaking, modes of sociality, and styles of thought that we call popular religion, even though these have been preoccupations—occasional or continuous, diffuse or intense—for the majority of Chinese for centuries. This book demonstrates both why Chinese popular religion can be so fascinating and why most anthropologists, who must rely on guides such as this, have failed to be fascinated.

*The Imperial Metaphor: Chinese Popular Religion*, first published in 1992, has been republished with the title rotated around the colon, many typos and stylistic infelicities abolished, a few new ones added, a useful new Chinese glossary, and a substantial new chapter on political ritual and religious

revival in the contemporary mainland and Taiwan. The book draws on fieldwork conducted in a Taiwanese village near Taipei in 1966 and 1967 and on the observations of other anthropologists and historians, most also working in Taiwan. The final, new, chapter draws on additional evidence from several mainland provinces, including unpublished observations by the author's sometime collaborator, anthropologist Wang Mingming.

Feuchtwang's starting point is the "Imperial" or bureaucratic metaphor: The observation that the Chinese frequently constructed detailed spirit worlds modeled on the Chinese Imperial court, with hierarchies of spirit officials, bandits, and soldiers. Earlier analysts, especially E. Ahern and P. Steven Sangren, rejected the notion that such spirit worlds merely mirrored and lent legitimacy to the imperial state. They asked instead what other kinds of imagined relations to state or class hierarchies might be evoked through relations to spirit bureaucracies. How, for instance, might engaging with spirit officials teach people to understand and manipulate real bureaucratic apparatuses or to create morally inflected means of imagining the activities of the often distant imperial state? In his introductory chapter, Feuchtwang distances himself from these predecessors, with the result that in all succeeding chapters but the last, all questions of the relations of religious practice to state or class domination are obscured, and religion becomes a play of cosmological representations that create and overcome temporal and spatial boundaries.

Nevertheless, on its first publication, this book was an advance in the field. By combining broad surveys of the literatures on territorial and local cults with careful field observations of local festivals and Daoist rites, Feuchtwang demonstrates that popular religious practices never simply reflected worldly institutions in their bureaucratic metaphors: They established differences to such institutions as well as similarities with them, and they created various levels of alternative cosmologies—some, such as those reflected in official cults, orderly and harmonious, others, such as those represented in popular beliefs about demons, chaotic or militaristic. Feuchtwang insists that bureaucratic metaphors, especially those that emerge from local and territorial cults, are forms of historical imagination, which may provide alternatives to official modes of historicization.

These are stimulating suggestions. Unfortunately, Feuchtwang fails to forge them into a persuasive or unifying argument, producing instead a series of loosely articulated chapters with no clear theoretical focus. In chapter 2, he outlines the ritual calendar and introduces some fundamentals of popular cosmology. In chapter 3, he explores the ways local heterodoxies distinguish themselves from official orthodox cults. Chapter 4 is a useful and interesting investigation of territorial cults, which details some of the complex ways that households and temples become embedded in locally rooted cosmologies. In chapter 5, Feuchtwang investigates divination and spirit writing as modes of communication with gods and posits that all religious ritual is communicative performance. Chapter 6 is a detailed account of a *jiao*, a

major Daoist rite of renewal and cosmic readjustment performed in Feuchtwang's field site in the 1960s. Chapter 7 is a description of the complex and varied representations in festivals, texts, and rites of An Gong, the god of a local cult.

The final, new chapter, a comparative analysis of political ritual and religious revival in the mainland and Taiwan, is apparently the grounds for republishing this book. Here, Feuchtwang considers religion in its social and political contexts for the first time, with the effect, common in the anthropology of China, that introducing the mainland reintroduces history. In a broad survey of memoirs and recent ethnography, Feuchtwang discusses the suppression of popular religion and flourishing of political rites in the Maoist era, a somewhat similar suppression of popular religion by the Japanese colonial administration in Taiwan, and the complex circumstances of the revival of religious practice in both locations. The material on Maoist rituals contains little that is new or illuminating. The discussion of re-emerging territorial cults, however, is the best part of this book: It draws together the best recent ethnography, with some of Feuchtwang's own observations, into a broad, complex overview of the ways temple and cult revitalization articulate with local political practices, memories, and longings.

The virtues of Feuchtwang's book are a refreshingly broad scope and an indefatigable insistence on complexity. Its drawbacks are blindness to historical transformation throughout most of the book, frequently muddled theorizing, capacious details often presented in such a way to be more tedious than enlightening, and no unifying arguments to knit its many limbs together. In its two editions, this book is a centerpiece of the genre of anthropological studies of popular religion in China based largely on fieldwork in Taiwan. As such, it explains something of why that genre has so rarely provided inspiration to, or gained a following, among anthropologists in general.

**Whispers on the Color Line: Rumor and Race in America.** Gary Alan Fine and Patricia A. Turner. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. 270 pp.

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Patricia A. Turner and Gary Alan Fine's new ambitious book seeks to wed folklore studies, social/political commentary, and popular psychology. It is highly unusual in its outright aspiration to assist in dismantling barriers that inhibit racial harmony. Although this underlying impulse has certainly driven many folklore studies, it is rarely acknowledged as an overarching focus. In most instances, scholars have worked toward this end through an examination of materials that expose the racism of the dominant, white American culture (e.g., by focusing on the traditional expressions of African Americans). Implicit in such works is the assumption that the reader will gain a deeper understanding of black Americans, which will lead to improved race relations. In short, such studies may