The inappropriate strategy notwithstanding, the *modo de ser costarricense*, the Costa Rican heart-warming way of being, shines through in the pride of El Viejo, who takes "care of my own people" (p. 148), in the enthusiasm of Victoria, who believes in "succeeding every time a little better" (p. 192), and in the skepticism of Maestro, who says the only function of the church is "to adapt people to laws of the country" (p. 130). Thus, in this manner, pitfalls or no, *Voices of Migrants* makes its contribution.


**Steven Harrell**
*University of Washington*

The title of this informative book is misleading: the saga told here does go from Malinowski to Moscow to Mao, but it doesn’t stop there. It is the story of Chinese anthropologists’ quest to locate their discipline in the 20th-century intellectual world, so that it has just the right balance between interaction with anthropologists elsewhere and distinctive national characteristics. This quest, Guldin suggests, has been even more difficult for anthropologists in China than in other countries outside Europe and North America because Chinese anthropologists have never had more than a decade or two to develop their discipline before they have had to reinvent it, sometimes almost from scratch, for political reasons.

The saga does not begin with Malinowski, but he certainly played an important part from the time when anthropology first became recognized as a discipline in the 1920s until the heyday of prerrevolutionary anthropology in the 1930s and 1940s, when British functionalist ideas dominated social anthropology, though there were adherents of the American historicist and French structural schools as well. At this time, archaeology, anthropological linguistics, and physical anthropology were developing in some areas as separate disciplines and in others as parts of a four-field approach.

On to Moscow with the communist takeover in 1949; from then until the late 1950s, anthropology as a four-field discipline was eliminated, along with other social science fields, while ethnology was to follow the Soviet model (heavily based on Engels’s interpretation of Morgan’s evolutionism), and archaeology (also Engelsified) was transferred to history departments. Physical anthropology, as a natural science, was less affected by ideological turns, except that scholars had to stress, again following Engels, that toolmaking, rather than bipedalism, was the key to human origins. The 1950s produced much valuable empirical research under the Soviet banner.

Thence to Mao: after 1957, the Soviet Union itself became an object of criticism, and any ethnology and archaeology done from then until the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 stressed China’s chosen role as inheritor of the true Marxist tradition. During the “ten lost years” from 1966 to 1976, very little got done in ethnology, though there were important paleontological and archaeological discoveries. But there is a fourth stage after Mao. Since 1979 Chinese scholars in all fields of anthropology have enjoyed a fair amount of freedom to conduct field research; anthropology departments have been established at two universities; ethnology, linguistics, and archaeology have proceeded relatively unimpeded in other programs; and contact with foreign anthropologists has once again raised the dilemma of how distinctive or derivative is Chinese anthropology.

Guldin’s account is a pleasant and easy read and a compelling tale. It is, however, marred by a large number of careless mistakes, particularly in the spelling of personal and place names. And the reader would like to know a bit more about content: we are told of many scholars and their research topics, but not what they thought or wrote about these topics. These shortcomings are compensated for, however, in the book’s thoughtful discussion of its main question: How can anthropology, a discipline that arose out of an unabashedly colonial consciousness, find a home in an independent third-world country? There are people everywhere who are fascinated by anthropology’s subject matter, and there are practical and moral reasons for wanting to know about human history and variation. The fact that anthropology has endured in China through so many changes of political winds is testimony to these facts, and Guldin’s book, in turn, is testimony both to the discipline’s perseverance and to its as yet unsolved puzzle: from Malinowski to Moscow to Mao to . . . where now?


**C. Fred Blake**
*University of Hawaii at Manoa*

The holistic medical tradition, which enjoys official recognition and widespread popularity in China, has been viewed by foreign scholars as the product of a particular culture history or as knowledge to be tested against the standards of biomedicine. Judith Farquhar offers a third view that describes the technical discourse as it is currently taught and practiced in schools and clinics of Chinese medicine. Arguing that traditional medicine is a technical discourse shaped by clinical experience, Farquhar employs an impressive corpus of teaching manuals, clinical reports, and discussions with doctors, material she
began to collect in 1982, when she was a student at the Guangzhou College of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Farquhar develops the notion that Chinese medicine is embedded in culture and language, that “the body” is a microcosm of interpersonal, political, and cosmic relationships, and that intuitive, concrete, social experience is at the center of medical decision making. Along the way she downplays attempts to reduce or devalue the technical integrity of the medical tradition. In Farquhar's view, Chinese medicine is a nexus of relationships in which doctors mediate the learning gained from professional forebears (a line that stretches back into medical antiquity) with the particular ailments of their past and current patients. This nexus of relationships is manifest in the clinical encounter (kanbing), in which doctor and patient collaborate in “looking at the illness.” The collaboration allows for an impressive array of admissible symptoms in no necessary order of importance, including excessive dreaming, a sour taste in the mouth, constipation, and a strong pulse image. Without overruling a patient’s presentation, the doctor endows the encounter with a medical experience that comprehends symptoms as “manifestations of an invisible and constantly shifting active source” (p. 71). The doctor employs a combination of diagnostic methods, five of which Farquhar describes in detail, to specify the quality, functional location, and temporality or severity of a particular manifestation or illness syndrome. The syndrome and disease differ, as defined in biomedicine, as each entails a different notion of illness causation. The syndrome is a mode of discourse that allows the doctor to identify the “root” of particular symptoms in an imbalance of vital forces and then to link this unique condition to a prior therapeutic experience. Once again, Farquhar’s focus remains on tracing symptoms and linking syndromes, the clinical reality of this medical tradition. And although it is not her main purpose, some of her most interesting discussions include explicit encounters with biomedicine.

The other half—and in some ways the most studied part—of the clinical encounter is the therapeutic application of the materia medica. The illness syndrome is “re-manifested” in the work of “qualifying” an herbal therapy. Each herbal component in its quality and quantity should respond to each symptomatic manifestation. Prescriptions, many from the archive of medical antiquity, are tailored to particular syndromes to such a degree that doctors are able to read illness states from prescriptions alone. “If the great interest of my teachers in Guangzhou in the evaluation of drug formulae is an index, then much of the intellectual life of Chinese medicine revolves around the reading and writing of prescriptions” (p. 190). Formulas are often changed in the course of a treatment as certain symptoms disappear; when the syndrome changes its configuration, other strategies of treatment are tried.

Farquhar’s description of clinical decision making in Chinese medicine is sensitive to the hermeneutics of language, translation, cultural context, and comparison. She does not subject Chinese medicine to historical analysis, to a sociology of cultural beliefs, or to its capacity (or incapacity) to mimic or to demonstrate the scientific standards of biomedicine. The question of standards—“correctness of treatment”—is nonetheless crucial in Chinese medicine, and it is addressed at the center of medical decision making by the all-embracing and critical notion of experience. Farquhar also makes extensive and effective use of several successful cases to illustrate the various phases of the clinical encounter. The book is a major contribution to the medical anthropology of China.


**JEAN DEBERNARDI**
**University of Alberta**

Blood, Sweat, and Mahjong is an ethnographic study of a diaspora Hakka Chinese community in Calcutta, India. This small minority community is involved primarily in the leather industry, an occupational niche that guarantees continued outsider status to the non-Hindu Chinese. As a consequence of inheritance practices and interethnic tension, members of this community have begun to migrate to Canada.

Oxfeld begins her well-grounded ethnographic study by describing her entry into the Hakka community of Dhapa. Using participant observation as her method, Oxfeld lived in the geographically marginal district of Calcutta where the Chinese-run tanneries are located and interviewed a range of individuals. Her interviews and observations provide her with a wealth of close-grained examples with which to explore the relationship between family, entrepreneurship, and ethnic role.

Oxfeld next outlines the history of Chinese migration to India. While for many years the Indian majority tolerated this sojourner minority, conflict between the host country and China eventually led to arrests, deportations, and internment. Indian citizenship might have protected the Chinese from these measures, but citizenship is not easily acquired, and this difficulty combined with social boundaries has led to a continued sense of alienation from Indian society that caused some to emigrate to Canada, where the “Calcutta Chinese” primarily are wage laborers.

Oxfeld explores the entrepreneurial ethos of the Calcutta Hakka community, whose members devote their “heart, sweat, and blood” to their work. While Chinese credit success to hard work and frugality, they are enthusiastic gamblers who draw parallels between gambling and business. They note, for example, that success at the