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Book Review: The Labor of Care: Filipina Migrants and Transnational Families in the Digital Age, by Valerie-Francisco-Menchavez

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disrupts presumed alliances among historically oppressed groups and specifically calls into question desires for inclusion, assimilation pressures, and longings for citizenship with regards to immigration. Saranillio's deployment of a comparative race analysis, between and among multiple groups, supports theorizing outside of a limiting binary analysis of power, e.g. settler/native or immigrant/citizen. The author is able to simultaneously analyze the positionalities of Kānaka 'Ōiwi, different Asian groups, and haole (white) settler elites in relation to one another, creating a more thorough and complex understanding of the dynamics at play in Hawai'i's statehood. While this methodology has fortunately innovated the field of Critical Ethnic Studies and the discourse of Asian Settler Colonialism, a pitfall that Saranillio speaks to, with which I agree, is that the dialogue of "settlers of color" reaches a vexing stagnation for those settlers of color whose political work is invested in being in solidarity with Indigenous struggles for sovereignty, to which Saranillio suggests: "...interrogating one's relationship to a system of settler colonialism might have more efficiency by questioning what one is doing, rather than how one identifies." I am hopeful that the ongoing investments in the work of comparative critique will take up Saranillio's insight.

Finally, *Unsustainable Empire* highlights investments in Critical Ethnic Studies to center Indigenous knowledges and politics in relation to racial-capitalism, anti-black racism, and other minoritized, racially oppressed groups. In theorizing Asian settlement, the text contributes to the growing field of Asian Settler Colonialism, which, also speaks to the field of Filipinx American Studies. A similar dynamic is operating in relation to Filipinx American studies which focuses on settler/Native/Filipinx immigrant/Filipinx American dynamics imbricated within a complex history of Spanish and U.S. colonialism and imperialism of the Philippines.

In closing, *Unsustainable Empire* calls for serious engagement with Indigenous resistance and refusals to occupation, statehood, and federal recognition, writ large. It is a compelling summoning for non-Native peoples to be accountable and responsible to Indigenous land and presence.

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***The Labor of Care: Filipina Migrants and Transnational Families in the Digital Age*, by Valerie Francisco-Menchavez. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2018 + 256 pp., \$83.17 (hardcover); \$28 (paper). ISBN 978-0252083341.**

In *The Labor of Care: Filipina Migrants and Transnational Families in the Digital Age*, sociologist Valerie Francisco-Menchavez presents a poignant

ethnography focused on the “incommensurability of the currencies and capital of care work in transnational families” (7), by investigating the different ways in which Filipina migrant domestic workers in New York and their families in the Philippines interpret and perform care work. Francisco-Menchavez’s work departs from the narrative of the migrant as the sole supporter of the family to encounter a more productive and inclusive narrative that considers the transnational family as an adaptive social institution constituted by multiple actors, migrant and non-migrant individuals, biological and non-biological members, all of whom are part of a system of innovative arrangements and practices of care that ensure the survivability and functionality of the family. Working at the interstices of sociology, anthropology, Filipinx critical studies, queer migration studies, and Black feminist thought, this book provides a new lens for understanding immigrant social networks and their strategies for crafting intimacies across continents as an alternative structure of care work based on collectivity and solidarity.

Previous scholarship on migrant domestic labor has provided essential insights into the adverse effects of long-distance mothering, focusing on the destabilization of family dynamics due to the absence of the mother/migrant.¹ Although foundational in making visible the violence of family separation and the precarious lives of migrant workers and their families, normative assumptions around family, gender roles, marriage, heterosexual reproduction, and biological motherhood remained unchanged within the dominant narrative. By decentering the mother/migrant from her study of care work and forced migration, and instead focusing on the care practices and social networks built to sustain transnational family operations, Francisco-Menchavez’s work shows how a queer analysis of the political economy of care provokes critical and provocative insights and theorizations. Among these, the most crucial being the concept of multidirectional care, which Francisco-Menchavez conceives as the reciprocal exchange of care and responsibilities in transnational families, a remapping of care circulation that expands the notion of family involving biological and fictive kin in the daily maintenance of family ties and unity. The involvement of multiple actors in this chain of transnational reciprocal care, as Francisco-Menchavez observes, can be read as the possibilities of a reconfiguration of social reproductive work as non-gendered and multilateral, through the actual practice of shared responsibilities. In the study of how different families in Manila perform what she calls “maintenance work” (30), we are introduced to a series of shifting social dynamics such as the reconstructing of masculinities, the adjustment of gender roles outside patriarchal logics, and the inclusion of non-biological mothering in the collective effort of “doing family” (17).

1. Geraldine Pratt, *Families Apart: Migrant Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love*. NED - New edition (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

Francisco-Menchavez poignantly asks how the transnational family negotiates care despite the challenges and the violence of separation of neoliberal economic and immigration policies. To answer this question, she relies on a multi-sited and longitudinal ethnographic method, which enables her access to the domestic space, arrangements, and intimate encounters (virtual and in-person) of both the migrant abroad and their family and kin. Drawing from the resourcefulness of this method and the sensibility embedded in Francisco-Menchavez's critical migrant feminist lens, *The Labor of Care* introduces us to "new types of familial adaptation and resilience" (4), highlighting the use of technology as part of an alternative practice of care for building intimacy and enhancing closeness among family members stretched across national boundaries. As research findings in Chapter 3 show, media technologies like Facebook and Skype prove to be a double-edged sword: they create possibilities for building intimacy and a feeling of presence for migrants and their families, but they also enable a register of emotional labor grounded on surveillance—migrant abroad digitally monitoring family members' activities and social media interactions. By delving into the complexities of virtual care circulation, Francisco-Menchavez sets the stage for future conversations on the role of technology as a visual and emotional register meant to maintain not only family bonds but also productivity levels among migrant domestic workers.

In combining feminist research methods, queer theories of kinship, and her activist-scholarly work with a domestic worker support network, Francisco-Menchavez formulates the concept of community of care. Herein, she observes that the exchange of care extends beyond biological kin and outside the vertical family structure of patriarchal lineage, into a system of collective and horizontal care in which migrants care for one another. Communities of care, as Francisco-Menchavez argues, are formed under the distressful conditions of vulnerability and precarity embedded in the political economy of labor migration. They emerge from disruptions and changes in the everyday life of migrant workers and their families, from experiences of displacement and isolation. For Filipina migrants, choosing their migrant family, their fictive kin, is not merely a matter of identification or membership, but rather a political choice. Fictive kinship in the transnational context embodies possibilities for building social networks that foster "creative responses of resilience" (114) and forms of cultural resistance against the precarization of the worker's social life under neoliberal globalization.

The Labor of Care focuses on the negotiation of care in the families of Filipina migrant domestic workers. Yet, it speaks to strategies and practices of care also seen in Mexican, African, Caribbean, and Central American transnational families. This book is an exemplary contribution to migration, gender, and labor scholarship, not just because of the depth and breadth of research methods—e.g., multi-sited ethnography and participatory action research—but more importantly, for the incorporation of theoretical frameworks from queer of color analysis and Black feminist thought in the analysis of

the reorganization of social reproduction. Francisco-Menchavez's work has opened new possibilities in the study of migrant domestic labor, from rethinking care beyond heteronormative frameworks and the constrictions of patriarchal vertical linearity to understanding that migrants, their families, and their fictive kinship engage in a circulation of care driven by creativity and reciprocity that remains unintelligible within the neoliberal logic and unmeasurable in financial terms.

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***Filipino Studies: Palimpsests of Nation and Diaspora*. Ed. by Martin F. Manalansan and Augusto F. Espiritu. New York: New York University Press, 2016. xii + 419 pp. Cloth, \$89.00. Paper, \$30.00. ISBN-13 978-1479884353**

As the name suggests, the intentional use of “palimpsests” denotes this text as a means of diversifying and complicating the growing field of Filipino Studies. Throughout the book, readers will find that most authors do not provide a fixed definition of the field, but pose questions or thoughts for future writers to explore. In the book's introduction, editors Martin Manalansan and Augusto Espiritu give reverence to the rich overview of the history of Filipino studies while also providing readers with the reminder that the field is never stagnant. Rather, because of ever-shifting realities and experiences, Filipino Studies continues to grow and transcend discourse beyond the notions of “identity” and “representation” while also emphasizing interdisciplinary and transnational frameworks. They organize the book in five parts: “Where From? Where to? Filipino Studies: Fields and Agendas,” “Colonial Layerings, Imperial Crossings,” “Nationalist Inscriptions: Blurrings and Erasures,” “The Filipino Body in Time and Space,” and “Philippine Cultures at Large: Homing in on Global Filipinos and Their Discontents.” Each part centers on different foci of the field yet interlock in terms of their singular focus of contributing to the larger Filipino Studies space. Although there is not enough space in this review to shine light on every piece presented in this text, here is a selection of some of its pieces.

Each piece is written as a standalone manuscript but interacts across similar overarching thematical ties across its different sections. For example, along the lines of colonialism and neoliberalism, Robyn Magalit Rodriguez's “Toward a Critical Filipino Studies Approach to Philippine Migration” broadens e/migration beyond notions of “opportunity” and labor. Tracing diasporic movement from the Philippines to the United States, she provides examples of how United States empire affects transnational labor and the neocolonial labor brokerage state. Kimberly Alido's “A Wondrous World of Small Places: Childhood Education, US Colonial Biopolitics, and the Global Filipino” discusses the entanglement between white supremacy, neoliberal globalization and settler colonial-