

BOOK REVIEW/ COMPTE RENDU

Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. *Servants of Globalization: Migration and Domestic Work*, 2nd Edition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015. 256 pp., \$22.95 paper (9780804796149)

In 2001, Rhacel Salazar Parreñas published a groundbreaking book in the field of migration: *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work*. This comparative study on the experiences of Filipina domestic workers in Italy and the United States explored the trajectories through which, in a global market, Filipina women entered the international labor force with dreams and aspirations of a better life. In her work, Rhacel Salazar Parreñas captured the contradictory class mobility that many of these women experienced: while their economic situation improved, their social status in the receiving country decreased. In the first edition, the case of Filipina domestic workers provided the ground for one of the first academic accounts on the racial and gendered components of globalization, including their impact upon family structure, such as the traditional roles of mothers as nurturers.

For this new edition, Salazar Parreñas adds 25 in-depth interviews to the previous stories of 71 Filipino paid house workers in Rome and Los Angeles. This edition also includes the use of additional ethnographic strategies for data collection, such as follow-up interviews with three of the original participants, two focus groups, a survey with 100 participants, and a new set of interviews with Filipina domestic workers living in Denmark and the United Arab Emirates. This significant update of the data allows the author to expand her comparative study cross-sectionally. Even more significant is the incorporation of a longitudinal dimension which allows for a new historical and critical perspective. In the light of all of these innovations, this second edition should be considered almost as a new book rather than a reviewed print.

The Filipina diaspora has changed to some degree, but most of the ideas from the first edition of “Servants of Globalization” seem to endure the flow of time. As Salazar Parreñas clearly reiterates, international domestic work continues to parallel larger economic and racial inequalities. The international division of reproductive labor is still dominated by legal paradoxes that limit the freedom and agency of domestic workers. The authorized limbo in which many Filipina laborers are pushed rel-

egates them to the status of “partial citizens” and intentionally prevents their full immersion into the receiving culture. This is a convenient strategy that favors the everlasting western dream of a young and healthy immigrant population that comes to work, only when needed, and quietly leaves when their services are not necessary anymore. These no-strings-attached pretenses, however, do not parallel the reality of most migration flows. In fact, the continuous human movement across borders still shapes receiving and sending societies at a deep level.

Throughout the book, Salazar Parreñas cleverly demonstrates the above oxymoron between expectations and reality. In the second edition, she aptly enriches this discussion by adding an element that tends to be missing from most literature of migration: aging. What happens when the workforce ages? What are the services and rights available to them? The author approaches the topic of aging at two different levels: the first considers the economic precariousness of retirement and the limitations that most migrant domestic workers face when it comes to receive social and health services that are adequate to their age. The second level of analysis examines the ways in which persistent class difference are accentuated by the international reproductive labor in 1st world countries, such as Italy and the United States, whose aging immigrant population often takes care of native children and elders, but has to ignore the needs of the “other” (their own) aging population.

Another contribution of this book is the consideration of family reunification and intergenerational relations. Although transnational families (i.e., “a family whose members are located in at least two countries” (53)) are still the norm, many Filipina domestic workers have been able to bring their children with them. This is particularly true in the case of Italy as this country offers more opportunities for permanent residency and, therefore, family reunification. Salazar Parreñas also explores the increase of the immigrant teenage population and the challenges they face as “reluctant migrants” (82). Joining their parents overseas was for many young Filipinos a controversial process, since economic gain and family proximity could not always account for the social isolation, cultural shock, and lack of agency they experienced.

Perhaps the most substantial change of the book, noticeable also in the title, is the extension of the analysis of the Filipino diaspora to men. While in the 2001 edition Salazar Parreñas concentrated solely on Filipinas, the 2015 edition echoes the masculinization of migrant reproductive work, especially in Italy. As men enter the market of paid housework to perform the same tasks as women, their masculinity is re-negotiated for two main reasons. First, they experience higher job insecurity than wom-

en, losing in this way the status of the main breadwinner of the household. Second, they work on what has been traditionally a feminine task.

Salazar Parreñas' writing style is approachable and clear, without losing sight of the complexity of the subject and humanity of her participants. This new edition of "Servants of Globalization" represents a brilliant dialogue between the macro structures of international domestic work and the intimate stories of its actors. Transnational migration is one of the main instruments feeding the global market, and it is not just a momentary phenomenon. Even if at different times the human flow might apparently decrease, depending on the economic and political stability of sending and receiving countries, the circulation of human labor is fast growing and intrinsically global. The new wave of mass migration that is currently taking place in Europe should renew our interest in the human aspects of this situation. Rhacel Salazar Parreñas gives a face to the stories of what has become the reality of the 21st century: international labor migration. This is a milestone book in the field of international migration: it should be a mandatory reading for scholars, professionals, students, researchers, and even politicians interested in the dynamics involved in international workforce exchange.

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