Diaspora Diplomacy: Philippine Migration and its Soft Power Influences by Joaquin Jay Gonzalez III

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JOAQUIN JAY GONZALEZ III

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Minneapolis: Mill City Press, 2012. 277 pages.

Diaspora Diplomacy: Philippine Migration and Its Soft Power Influences argues that international migrants constitute the soft power of the Philippines and they are a resource that governments, NGOs, the corporate world, and international organizations can tap to enhance global cooperation and development. The book advances the concept of "diaspora diplomacy" as the "collective action" (19) that is "driven, directed, and sustained by the energy and charisma of a broad range of migrants" (239) who "influence another country's culture, politics, and economics" (20) in a manner that is "mutually beneficial for the old homeland and the new home base" (239). With stories from Filipina and Filipino migrants in San Francisco, London, Dubai, Dhaka, and Singapore, the book illustrates how this globally dispersed community performs numerous acts of public diplomacy that bridge the cultural and economic gap between the origin and the destination but also result in the "'Filipinization' of global cities" (24). Filipino migrants work, socialize, and worship in more than a thousand cities, associations, and churches, and have become the international face of Philippine spirituality, training, and culture; in a sense, they have even surpassed formal foreign policy initiatives of the Philippine state. Even as migrants boost the national and local economies of the homeland by sending back billions of dollars and millions of care boxes to their families and hometowns annually— more money and goods than what the Philippines receives in foreign aid and investments—overseas Filipinos promote the Philippines through the

universality of the Christian faiths they practice, the globalized work they perform, and the civic and social networks they establish.

MIRCA MADIANOU AND DANIEL MILLER

Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia

London and New York: Routledge, 2012. 183 pages.

Because overseas labor migration physically separates members of a family, often for an extended period, this book investigates how despite the distance mothers care for their children and the families they leave behind. Using ethnographic data from the Philippines, the authors illustrate how the emergence of new media has revolutionized transnational communication and the maintenance of relationships, but also how relationships have shaped media. Email, instant messaging, social networking sites, webcam, and texting, which "individuals tailor to their own interpersonal relationship needs" (122), have enabled migrants to "practice intensive mothering at a distance" and "maintain and negotiate a plurality of roles and identities" (83). Moreover, the book aims to make a wider theoretical contribution by developing a theory of polymedia as its response to the need for a "framework for understanding the rapidly developing and proliferating media environment and its appropriation by users" (3). It argues that, as more people are able to afford media, "the situation of polymedia amounts to a re-socialising of media itself, in which the responsibility for which medium is used is increasingly seen to depend on social and moral questions rather than technical or economic parameters" (3). Arguing that "communication technologies and relationships are mutually constitutive" (150), the authors build their case for a theory of mediated relationships based on the proposition that all relationships are intrinsically mediated, seen most acutely in the condition of prolonged separation in migrant families. Thus new media and relationships mediate each other, but "what is also mediated is the whole project of migration" (146).