swims in the very excesses she finds thematized in precisely those things that "fall away." The author is thus faithful to her promise of what her work is to be about. As she writes in the introduction, "This (book) is a tale of dispossession and lost potential, told like many other tales of dispossession and loss with some measure of anger, some measure of sadness, and some measure of hope" (1).

Vicente L. Rafael
Department of History
University of Washington
<vrafael@uw.edu>

JAMES A. TYNER

The Philippines: Mobilities, Identities, Globalization

New York and London: Routledge, 2009. 223 pages.

Every once in a while, a book comes out that is able to weave together vague and looming macroprocesses, capture the necessary context and fundamental concepts of theories, and show how they operate in the typical and everyday life of individuals. These are the books that are able to tease out and reconfigure—in a pleasantly engaging, analytical, and informative way—how matters of agency and structure come together in the reality that is experienced and lived through by people. These texts are written in such a way that readers every so often pause and, from their own memories and experiences, validate the words they read. James Tyner's *The Philippines: Mobilities, Identities, Globalization* is one such book. It is written with brevity without compromising sufficient theoretical or empirical ground and in a language that is accessible and straightforward, making for an engaging and satisfying read. Given the author's academic background and intimate knowledge of Philippine reality, the book offers a simple, but not simplistic, discussion of the complexities of how globalization and state intervention find their way into the daily lives of Filipinos. There is no pretentious use of highfaluting words or convoluted conceptualizations that confuse rather than clarify. More importantly, in the discussion of metaprocesses and structures, the negotiations and centrality of individuals as they understand, navigate, and give meaning to the globalization experience is not lost.

Tyner sets out to "understand how the Philippines has become the world's largest exporter of government-sponsored temporary contract labor and, in the process, has dramatically reshaped both the process of globalization and also our understanding of globalization as concept" (xiii). To achieve this goal, the book is divided into six chapters that provide the background and discussion of the Philippines and labor migration; the theoretical underpinnings and implications of the processes and structures as they play out in the country and in Manila; and a story of a Filipina and her sojourn outside of the Philippines as a case to illustrate how the previous themes are actualized in a person's life.

The first chapter entitled "Local Contexts, Distant Horizons" shows the current situation of the Philippines and the socioeconomic challenges with which its peoples contend. It includes a concise and informative account of Philippine history (with emphasis on the colonial period), as well as the groundwork for and outline of the book. The second chapter provides a thorough discussion of the establishment and evolution of the Philippines's migration agencies and labor regime, which is underpinned by neoliberal precepts. It traces the policies and programs of what is now the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) from the Marcos regime in the 1970s to the recently-ended Macapagal-Arroyo administration. The book provides an update on migration policies and programs of the Philippines, with a corollary discussion of the implications of government actions on the domestic and international arena. The third chapter draws from urbanization and globalization theories in analyzing Metropolitan Manila and how it has become a site for "global city formation" (117). Tyner draws attention to Manila's emergence as a "global city" and its theorization. This chapter also includes a useful discussion of the unintended consequences brought about by Manila becoming the focal point for transactions and the center for the myriad administrative offices and processes, along with the countless private businesses, which aspiring and returning overseas workers have to deal with.

The fourth chapter, with its catchy title of "Global-Philippines.Com," investigates how government, recruitment and employment agencies, and Filipino overseas workers have appropriated technological developments, especially the Internet, in pursuit of their respective agenda. On the one hand, national governments and private businesses seeking optimum efficiency in transactions have used technology to facilitate the international flow of

labor. On the other hand, this same technology, in the hands of overseas workers, is used to create a cyber community, which is the venue for the (re)creation of identities and social networks. The fifth chapter focuses on the experience of Lisa, a former entertainer in Japan. Although the method can be criticized for using only one case study to show the "performance of globalization," the nuance and detail as well as the insight and openness of her narrative is able to convey the fact that the Filipina entertainer is not always the stereotyped victim who is tossed around by the waves of government policies and social forces; rather, she can and is a subject who is able to assert her own individuality and identity as she moves within and beyond the parameters provided by the state, society, and her social locus. Her negotiations are informed and contingent upon various social factors upon which she pragmatically, not pathetically, acts.

In the sixth and final chapter, Tyner sums up and concludes by emphasizing the major points he has raised in this book. There is the reiteration of globalization as both real and imagined. Its real-ness is shown by the quantitatively measurable millions of Filipino migrants who move to countries from A to Z; the technology that produces what Manuel Castells calls a network society and facilitates what David Harvey refers to as the flexible accumulation of capital; and a labor market that operates across countries and engages numerous governments, not least of which is that of the Philippines. Tyner explains globalization as imagined insofar as, quoting Manfred B. Steger (*Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 12; Oxford University Press, 2003), "reinforced on a daily basis, these persistent experiences of global interdependence gradually change people's individual and collective identities, and thus dramatically impact the way they act in the world" (183).

All in all, this book is a must reading for students, scholars, and those interested in contemporary Philippine society, politics, and economy. Even as Tyner focuses on migration, urbanization, and globalization issues, he also provides fresh and current information and discussions on Philippine society and government. Tyner presents theoretical grounding and interconnections drawn from several bodies of literature, i.e., globalization, migration, urbanization, as well as information and communication technology (ICT); poses questions that need to be answered; and argues for the rethinking of concepts and theories based on empirical evidence from the Philippines. He deftly builds on the work of important theorists, such as David Harvey

and Saskia Sassen, to craft together a book that is a valuable contribution to studies on the Philippines and the global processes and issues that Filipinos face today.

Dina Marie B. Delias
Department of Sociology
National University of Singapore
<dina_delias@nus.edu.sg>