

of the ethnic Buddhism practiced by Burmese immigrants of Chinese descent adds an ethnic dimension to our understanding of religious practices.

It is clear that the authors are aware of each other's research; yet a comparative debate on any of the issues would have added more depth to the anthology. The occasional overlapping in research and study in some of the essays is indicative of the autonomous pursuit of individual projects with little communication among the authors. The notable lack of comparative debates underscores the urgent need for sustained dialogue among contributors and a theoretical framework for this emerging sector of Asian America. This informative anthology is a leap in that direction.

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***Pinoy Capital: The Filipino Nation in Daly City.*** By Benito M. Vergara Jr.

Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009. vi + 232 pp. Tables, index, and bibliography. \$74.50 (cloth); \$25.95 (paper).

In an attempt to amend studies on transnational political-economic structures and rational decision making, Benito Vergara Jr. examines the subjective effect of Filipino transnational identity. The title of his ethnographic study refers to Daly City, a Filipino ethnic enclave of strip malls and single-family housing in suburban San Francisco. Comprising one-third of Daly City's population of one hundred thousand, Filipino immigrants arrived after the Immigration Act of 1965 facilitated the entry of trained professionals and family reunification. Daly City's reputation as the capital of Filipino America extends to the Philippines, where it is seen as a destination for potential emigrants. In addition to its demographic significance, Daly City hosts the headquarters of three national Filipino American media outlets: the satellite television station, the Filipino Channel; *The Philippine News*; and *Filipinas* magazine. The heavily middle-class and foreign-born character of Daly City Filipinos facilitates the exchange and consumption of goods, media, and money across national borders. Vergara perceptively observes the everyday practices of transnationalism in Filipino ethnic businesses, including the ethnic media's reprinting of Philippine news items on its front page.

Employing discourse analysis of interviews and media, Vergara argues that Filipinos in Daly City express an ambivalent relationship to both the Philippines and the United States. He posits "immigrant belonging as an emotional, subjective state" characterized by anxiety (p. 16). He organizes his argument into chapters on nostalgia in Daly City's built environment; the politics of identity in the 1993 city council election race between two Filipino candidates; the transnational production and content of the Daly City-based *Philippine News*; the call of diasporic

responsibility raised by U.S.-based opponents of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship; Philippine national media representations of the diasporic community in the U.S. as middle-class; and U.S. citizenship, consumption, and ethnic festivals. Vergara contrasts the Filipino transnational predicament with well-known notions of transnationalism as sentimental nostalgia and Aihwa Ong's "flexible citizenship." He contends that Filipinos in Daly City do not construct a coherent alternative to national identity. He finds that older immigration theories developed by Robert Park and Oscar Handlin are more useful for analyzing transnational dilemmas.

Vergara emphasizes how Filipino immigrants define their identities through nation-based ideologies of obligation and loyalty. Even transnational media aimed at the Filipino middle-class in the Philippines and abroad perpetuate Philippine nationalism by arguing that emigration amounts to abandoning the nation to satisfy personal and materialistic interests. The discourse of belonging relies on making distinctions between those born in the Philippines and those born in the U.S., and also manifests in meanings attached to socioeconomic status. Most importantly, Filipino immigrants maintain a nostalgic connection to the Philippines and yet do not perceive the possibility of relocating there. While people, goods, and information continue to flow into Daly City from the Philippines and Filipino immigrants send currency and commodities to the homeland, transnationalism remains fraught with conflict, both social and psychological.

The study is most effective when it juxtaposes nationalist ideologies with interviewees' varied definitions and categories. The discursive slippage between the terms "Filipino" and "Filipino American" is a telling moment of identity construction. While most of the book labors to describe the predicament of transnationalism, the interviewees note how they continue to live among competing loyalties. *Pinoy Capital* is significant for its attention to such nuances of contemporary immigration.

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***Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora.*** By Sarah Gualtieri. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. xv + 270 pp. Photos, illustrations, notes, index, and bibliography. \$55 (cloth); \$21.95 (paper).

Sarah Gualtieri's study of the first major wave of Syrian immigrants (around 1880–1920) is a welcome complement to the growing body of scholarship on Arab Americans. Situating them within the context of late Ottoman politics, she adds depth and complexity to the discussion of identity by locating it in a transnational context. Their experiences help illustrate the importance of diasporic nationalism to Middle Eastern and Arab American studies, bringing the two fields in conversation with each