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MIGRANT DOMESTIC LABOR IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: THE PLIGHT

OF FILIPINA DOMESTIC WORKERS IN MOROCCO

by

SARA ASSELMAN

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

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by

Sara Asselman

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Migrant Domestic Labor in the Global South: The Plight of Filipina Domestic Workers in Morocco

by

Sara Asselman

Advisor: Karen A. Miller

In studying feminist theory, I discovered that domestic and care labor are often gendered and racialized. They are gendered because they are performed almost exclusively by women, and racialized because in western societies they are often relegated to women of color or migrant women. Feminist literature provides that migrant domestic labor often entails a migration flow between countries of the global north and countries of the global south and between countries that are economically disparate. Feminist theorists often criticize political economic and social structures reproduced by neoliberalism, globalization and neocolonialism for creating a global market for migrant domestic and care labor and exposing migrant domestic and care workers to oppressions that include but are not limited to, sexual and physical violence, low wages, few or no benefits, and long work hours. What my research has shown is that domestic and care labor migration flows can also occur within and between countries of the Global South and that the oppressions some of these women face are the result of locally pre-existing notions of gender, race and domestic labor, such as the fact that in Morocco domestic labor is viewed as dishonorable work, that only women should be responsible for this kind of labor, and that somehow, Filipina women's ethnic and racial identities make them better at it. I suggest that because of the history of slavery, and it being a prevalent phenomenon in Moroccan society as late as the 20th century, the collective imaginary of the Moroccan society continues to hold ideals and principles of domestic and care labor having low value in society, and that it should therefore be relegated to marginalized groups. I also argue that domestic and care work are not simply viewed as women's work because of the role that women play in procreation but also because there is an apparent devaluation of womanhood and female bodies. I use my research to prove that the oppressions faced by migrant domestic workers across the globe are the result of deeply held local and traditional notions on race gender and labor, working in conjunction with the other factors feminist theorist suggest including neoliberalism and globalization.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	**1**
Chapter 1: Neoliberalism, Globalization and Domestic Labor – A Literature Review	**9**
Domestic Labor in the Public Discourse	**10**
The Migration Flow: North-South or Bust	**16**
Domestic Work is Work is Work is Work	**18**
Divisions, Divisions	**22**
Chapter 2: The Plight of Philippine Domestic Workers in Morocco	**29**
Morocco's Obsession with Filipinas	**36**
The Over-valorization of the English Language	**38**
The Filipina Prestige	**39**
The Normalization of the Philippine Domestic Worker	**40**
Chapter 3: Questioning the Status of Domestic Workers in Morocco	**43**
Normalizing Domestic Labor in Morocco	**44**
The Devaluation of Domestic Labor	**48**
Women's Status in Morocco	**50**
Authority and Physical Violence Against Domestic Workers	**54**
The Moroccan Slave Institution and the French Protectorate	**55**
Gender Identity Politics and the French Protectorate	**58**
Conclusion	**62**
Works Cited	**65**

Introduction

On March 13 2019, the U.S Department of Justice published a press release in which it announced that the ex-wife of Moroccan Ambassador Abdeslam Jaidi who served on the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the U.S., was arrested for "involvement in a conspiracy to commit visa fraud, making materially false statements, and inducing aliens to illegally come to, enter, and reside in the United States" ("Two Charged In White Plains Federal Court"). The woman in question, Maria Luisa Estrella Jaidi, a Philippine national, conspired with her brother Ramon Singson Estrella, to falsify documents and visas for 7 Filipino domestic workers. While married to the Moroccan Ambassador, she and her brother provided false work permits and visas to 7 Philippine nationals, proclaiming that they would serve as technicians, administrators and administrative assistants at the Moroccan Consulate General office in New York. Instead, the seven workers were forced to work on the couple's properties in the Hudson Valley ("Two Charged In White Plains Federal Court"). The domestic workers had been instructed by the Estrella siblings to submit false information in their job and visa applications and were provided with fraudulent work contracts. These contracts severely overstated the benefits that the employees would receive once they had arrived in the United States. For example, they were promised a monthly salary of $2000 USD, the workers only received $500. In addition, the contracts in question fully understated working hours, most of the 7 domestic workers had worked at the Jaidi and Estrella's properties 7 days per week, with no time off or benefits(*Two Charged In White Plains Federal Court For Visa Fraud Conspiracy Involving Moroccan Consulate And Mission In New York*).

Not only does this case uncover a crime that takes advantage of the United States migration agencies and policies, which is what the Estrella siblings are being prosecuted for, but

they show an extreme violation of the agency and freedoms of domestic workers, and a trafficking in human labor for personal gain. This is one of many cases in which individuals lure domestic workers, from countries like the Philippines and make them false promises about work abroad. The workers are then deceived and taken advantage of, where they are faced with long work hours, low wages and few or no benefits.

Migrant Domestic labor has been addressed by feminist theorists in order to understand which power structures reproduce oppressions experienced by migrant domestic workers. They emphasize that migrant domestic labor is another way in which women of color and migrant women can be oppressed under the hands of political and economic global power structures like globalization and neoliberalism. The intervention that this paper provides is one that supports feminist discourse in asserting that care labor is not recognized as real work, that it is gendered in the sense that it is mostly viewed as women's work and is racialized in the sense that the national and ethnic identity of migrant care workers affects their subject positions as laborers. However, Feminist discourse often tends to focus on domestic labor flows as they occur among countries of the Global North and countries of the Global South, or among countries with large economic disparities. Feminist literature has thus far ignored domestic labor migration flows between developing countries. This literature also provides that the high demand for migrant domestic workers is a result of more and more women entering the global labor market. I contend that this claim is incomplete because many affluent families in developing nations who elect to hire foreign domestic workers tend to have non-working mothers.

In Morocco for example, although women are entering the labor market in larger numbers, most of the families that employ Filipina or other foreign workers are upper middle class with non-working mothers("Demand for Filipina Domestics Rising in Morocco"). I am

arguing that the large flow of South to South migrant labor is not always the result of neoliberalism or capitalism or globalization, it is in fact also the result of some pre-existing historical or traditional notions surrounding gender and race. As is the case in Morocco, the demand for Filipina workers is almost purely a result of the fact that some of the families who hire them believe that their ethnic and racial identity makes them better suited to perform the type of labor they are hired for. In addition, the nature of the work they are performing is also undervalued, and this reflects the possibility of a racial prejudice against Philippine peoples or peoples of racial identities different that those who do the hiring.

The intervention of this thesis project is that the oppression facing Filipino workers in Morocco is the result of pre-existing notions and traditions surrounding domestic labor, gender and race. In terms of labor, I suggest that because of the history of slavery, and it being a prevalent phenomenon in Moroccan society as late as the 20th century (Goodman 101), the collective imaginary of the Moroccan society continues to hold ideals and principles of domestic and care labor having low value to society, that it isn't real work, work that should therefore be relegated to marginalized groups in this society. Because of the low value given to this work it is believed to be work that does not deserve fair compensation and respect. This low value of the work itself contributes to its own reproduction. The idea that the work is devalued in turn devalues the people who perform it, unless domestic and care labor begin to be viewed as respectable work, the people who perform it will continue to be viewed as less than, and the work itself will continue to be viewed as work that should only be performed by those who are less than.

In terms of gender, the divide between social groups was and continues to be determined by gender. Not only are the gender norms not questioned, they continue to be reproduced within

the society. As a child in Morocco, my father participated in house chores and cooking, and every time I had brought to school a lunch prepared by him, my classmates and teachers alike were amazed, baffled and simply in disbelief of the idea that the man in my household participated in this care work. Furthermore, the value of women as lesser human beings is evident when one considers the traditions and laws that protect them and their agency. The idea that a victim of rape or assault had it coming because of how she dressed, or that the victim is bringing shame to her family are all telling signs of the fact that in a society like the Moroccan society, being a woman is an automatic devaluation of the person.

In terms of race, having spent time conversing with Moroccan men and women and having lived there, has allowed me to see that racial bias penetrates the Moroccan imaginary at a much deeper level than previously conceptualized. It is possible therefore that the oppression faced by the Filipina women is due to the idea that they are inferior human beings due to their racial, ethnic and national identity. I have come to observe that, although whiteness is not the idolized identity, it does not prevent some members of the Moroccan society from viewing themselves as inherently superior to other racial and ethnic identities, particularly if these are combined with national identities of countries that have achieved a “lower” degree of development. I believe that some people in Morocco and other societies can view themselves as superior to people who hail from countries of sub-Saharan Africa, or South East Asia where in a worldwide perspective, the countries are considered as less successful, liberated and advanced or developed.

It is not uncommon then, for the employer of a Filipina domestic worker to treat her with less respect and more violence because of her identity. Racial bias can exist beyond the restrictions of skin color and is instead determined by the other’s national or cultural identity.

Whereas if a culture is seen as less developed, less successful, less liberated, educated or different, this view becomes a bias that is attached to ethnic and racial identity. The racism that reproduces oppressions against some Filipina women in Morocco is also made more complex because along with being viewed as inherently inferior, it is the qualities that they offer that are being sought after. Qualities that are only part of a distorted image of Asian women in general where they are believed to be more submissive, disciplined, soft spoken and easier to manipulate than women of other identities. To complicate this further, the status of Philippine women as migrants robs them of their agency as citizens. Being in a position of foreignness disempowers these women automatically and therefore exposes them to vulnerabilities, such as culture shock, alienation, and weak citizenship; vulnerabilities that make them ideal candidates to perform a labor that is demanding in its nature without being provided with the protections they deserve, protections that some employers view as obstacles to extracting the best services from their employees. Because the alienation of migrant women makes them less protected, it makes them more desirable to perform domestic labor as it increases their incentive to do so. The oppression therefore takes advantage of the weakened citizenship and subject position of migrant domestic workers, creating a cycle in which their weakened status increases the demand for them as domestic workers. Their positions as women, others, foreign migrants, and domestic workers, and presence in a society that continues to be violent, positions some Philippine domestic workers in Morocco at an intersection that reproduces, exposes and abuses their vulnerabilities.

In the first chapter, I address the works of various feminist theorists who have contributed to the conversation about domestic work. I first look at Alison Jaggar's "We Fight for Roses too: time-use and global gender justice", where she addresses gender injustice in time use, and identifies the global networks of trade, labor and politics, as products of neocolonial and

neoliberal institutions and posits them at the root of the injustices in labor, benefits and leisure time that are drawn along gender lines. I also address an article titled “Out of the Home, Into the House” by Sujatha Fernandes who critiques the use of victimizing narratives in activist rhetoric, in order to obtain rights for migrant domestic workers in the United States. Her critique offers that these narratives can erase the experiences of migrant domestic workers and over-valorize certain societies’ dependence on them, creating a narrative that proclaims that migrant domestic workers’ rights are only important because of the reliance of the white American Middle class on them.

Another feminist work I address in this first chapter is a book titled *The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism* by Catherine Rottenberg, in which she suggests that neoliberal feminism is a concept that positions migrant domestic workers in situations that expose them to new oppressions, considering the fact that neoliberal feminism idolizes the working mom image, which in turn relies deeply on the services of paid domestic workers. Eva Kittay’s “The Moral Harm of Migrant Care Work: realizing a global right to care” articulates the conditions of migrant domestic labor flows and the oppressions they reproduce. I address this work and critique some of the statements made by Kittay, particularly the notion that harmful migration flows are unique to Global North and Global South countries, with the former being the receiving countries and the latter being the sending countries. Another book I address in this literature review is *Servants of Globalization* by Rhacel Parreñas, in which she also identifies the global structures that reproduce oppressions against migrant domestic workers. Pei-Chia Lan is another feminist theorist I bring into this conversation, because her contribution is one that identifies disparities in the literature addressing the issues of domestic labor. Finally, I address a

chapter in Judith Lorber's *Paradoxes of Gender*, titled "Daily Bread: Gender and Domestic Labor", where she addresses the origins of the gendered divisions of domestic labor.

In the second chapter, I expose some of the experiences shared by Filipina domestic workers in Morocco. The purpose of this chapter is to reveal the extent to which Filipina domestic workers in and outside of Morocco suffer under the violent hands of some of their employers, I describe how they may become victims of human trafficking and have their freedoms and agency taken away from them causing them to find themselves in situations of weakened citizenship and devalued humanity. In this chapter I also posit that some of the reasons that may have led to the increase in demand for Filippina domestic workers in Morocco may include racial bias, an over-valorization of the English language and notions of prestige and luxury shared by the Moroccan elite.

In the Third and final chapter, I question the reasons that may be at the root of the oppressions and violations faced by Moroccan and Filipina domestic workers in Morocco. I First address the normalization of paid domestic labor in Morocco, and the prevalence of hired domestic work in the Moroccan society, followed by a study of the devaluation of domestic labor. I then address the status of women in Morocco and the gendered lines that define personal rights, the correlation between authority and violence in the Moroccan collective imaginary, and the effects that Morocco's dark history of slave institutions have on the modern perception of domestic labor. I further problematize these issues by looking at the roles played by the French Protectorate in reinforcing these same institutions. The purpose of this project is therefore to review the interventions provided by feminist theorists on the subject of migrant domestic labor, and to problematize some of their claims by showing that such institutions as traditional beliefs,

local views on gender, race, and labor can have an equally relevant role in the oppression of migrant domestic workers, within and between countries of the Global South.

Chapter 1: Neoliberalism, Globalization and Domestic Labor – A Literature Review

Foreign domestic and care workers compose a large network of migrant labor providing services and producing labor that many economies rely on. Countries of the Global North especially rely on foreign labor to fulfill care jobs in private homes, nursing homes, hospitals, day cares and other institutions. "Slightly more than 23 percent of home health, psychiatric and nursing aides were born outside the U.S., and almost nine percent were not citizens" (Reuters, 2018). Canada for example, has a Live-in Care worker Program that accepts up to 10,000 women to enter Canada and work as nannies. Filipina women represent about 90% of the women that enter Canada under this program (Parreñas 113). Other rich countries and cities like Singapore, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are also notorious for importing different forms of labor including care labor from other less affluent Asian countries like the Philippines and Thailand.

With this high demand for and reliance on migrant labor, the number of reported abuses and human rights violations against migrant domestic workers has risen as well. Feminist discourse focuses on such violations as they occur in the context of the Global North. Many feminists explain this by exploring and blaming a neoliberal feminist discourse which requires reliance on migrant care labor for western women to be "free". Feminist discourse also addresses the gendering and racialization of migrant care labor using Singapore, Dubai, Hong Kong and other wealthy nations as examples. In her analysis of the phenomenon, Rhacel Parreñas studies the migration of care workers from the Philippines to Italy and the United States (Parreñas 3). Catherine Rottenberg, in her discussion of the rise of neoliberal feminism in the United States, critiques white middle class and affluent women who identify as feminists but use migrant domestic workers as tools for their liberation, she accuses them for reproducing patriarchal and

neoliberal oppressions on the migrant women they hire to care for their children (Rottenberg 11). Eva Kittay in her analysis of migrant care work states that the flow of migrant care laborers occurs between nations with large economic disparities, whereas the labor exporting nations are exclusively nations of the Global South and importing nations are nations of the Global North (Kittay 54). The scholarship rarely if ever explores the issue of migrant labor and migration flows within and between nations of the Global South. The purpose of this chapter is to address feminist works that have taken on the questions of domestic and care labor, and to show how their analyses, although they provide insight into several issues surrounding the phenomenon, do not take into considerations other factors that play equally important roles in the creation and reproduction of gendered and racialized structures in domestic and care labor.

Domestic Labor in the Public Discourse:

In the case of Morocco, the gendering of domestic labor is not a new phenomenon. Historically, as with most societies, care labor is often carried out by women, from taking care of children and the elderly to cooking and performing domestic chores, this type of work is regarded as something exclusively female (Parreñas 113). Feminist scholarship provides many insights as to why care labor is feminized and why it is rarely considered real work. Scholars often claim that the gender disparities in care labor are to blame for many issues that women face such as the gender pay gap, the "mommy tax", and low wages and legal protections for domestic and care workers. Because care labor is not viewed as work that can and should also be done by men, societies heavily rely on local and migrant women to perform this work, which in turns allows these societies to continue establishing strong and successful economic structures.

In "We fight for roses too: time-use and global gender justice", Alison Jaggar assesses the findings and recommendations published in the World Development Report of 2012 (WDR

2012). Two of the main findings in this report were that "women across the world tend to perform different work from men who otherwise are situated similarly" and that they "work longer hours than similarly situated men" (Jaggar 115). With a focus on time use, Jaggar found that the report acknowledged gender injustice in time use on a worldwide scale but failed to provide solutions and guidelines that are directed at the core institutions whose actions and policies produce said injustice. According to Jaggar "[t]he recommendations for gender equality made by WDR 2012 also fail to address inequalities within and among countries that have both class and gender aspects" (Jaggar 125). Her critique of the report and its recommendations highlights the extents to which gender justice can often remain blind to the "coercive pressures" produced by some policies aimed at reducing the same gendered time-use injustices. WDR 2012 can therefore be praised for acknowledging economic and global injustices towards women, but can also be critiqued for providing recommendations that do not directly target the neoliberal and neocolonial structures and institutions that produce said injustices.

The global discourse on labor injustice recognizes the gendered and racialized nature of the systems that recreate oppressions related to labor. The WDR 2012 for example recognizes that because care labor is often left to women, it is often not recompensed, or recognized as actual work. So, when such labor becomes commodified in the sense where it is performed by hired help as opposed to the female members of the household, it does not shift into being acknowledged as real work, it remains a type of labor that is not seen as worthy and deserving of the same recognition, protections, benefits and pay as other professional or vocational forms of work. Jaggar in her analysis criticizes the WDR 2012 for turning a blind eye to global networks of trade, labor, exchange and politics that create the opportunity for the gendered leisure time disparities it has reported. Her approach is decolonial in the sense that it posits colonial, imperial,

neocolonial and neoliberal institutions as the main players in the political economies that recreate gendered labor injustice. One of the recommendations made by the report is that women begin moving into formal labor, Jaggar argues that this is not a simple solution, as most of the jobs available to women remain underpaid, such as teaching and healthcare (Jaggar 119). She also criticizes the report for suggesting that child care should become subsidized or community based in order to allow more women to enter the formal job market and gain more time for leisure (Jaggar 120). Her criticism is that the report in fact is oblivious to the fact that community-based child care will always end up being performed by women, which then becomes a solution that reproduces the very same time use disparities that it is attempting to resolve.

Jaggar in this analysis therefore does not consider institutions that recreate similar oppressions and that do not fall under neoliberalism or globalization. Moral institutions, gender and labor norms, along with different perceptions of violence and authority also play a role in the oppressions created by the increasing demand for migrant care labor and in the types of gender and racial disparities that exist in the global labor market. As care labor becomes more formal and commodified, it continues to uphold race and gender structures that do not acknowledge its value and reproduce oppressions against those who perform it. Public discourse about this issue as represented by the WDR 2012 does not problematize gendered labor injustice in a way that takes into consideration either neoliberalism and globalization or existing moral norms. In critiquing it, Jaggar recognizes socio-economic and political structures that stem from imperialist, globalizing and neoliberal ideals, but her work does not acknowledge that the gendered time use disparities that exist within the global labor market can result from several other factors such as local traditions, historical gender ideals and perspectives that do not fall in line with how the West views formal and informal labor.

Similarly, Sujatha Fernandes in "Out of the Home, Into the House", criticizes the Domestic Workers' Union (DWU) for using storytelling and "victimizing" tropes in their activist work that contributed to the effacement of the reality that injustice towards domestic workers is also a result of a neoliberal global market economy and instead framed the immigrant workers in a subject position that ignores their lived experiences as citizens of societies and nations that are also directly affected by neoliberalism and neocolonialism. Fernandes uses the example of a series of New York Times Op-Eds published during a campaign for domestic workers' rights (Fernandes 9). These published Op-Eds often carried a narrative addressing middle class New York residents, calling for their support toward the causes of the domestic workers who were seeking political change, and reminding them that their city would barely function without them. In targeting such a specific audience, the New York Times is guilty of glossing over the other issues that stem from care labor injustice (Fernandes 9). In her critique she cites some of the narratives shared in these stories for ignoring contexts in which domestic and care workers exist that are outside of the white upper middle-class employer's home. She claims "[t]he erasure of working- class parents of color points to the much bigger care crisis, one that could not be resolved by legislative reforms" (Fernandes 10). Fernandes also cites the use of the "American Dream" trope by the DWU's supporters in the New York State Senate as another culprit in the effacement of the true factors surrounding the situations of domestic or care workers, one caused directly by a "double neoliberal crisis that both impoverishes Third World nations like the Philippines and creates domestic economic hardships" (Fernandes 15).

Fernandes in her critique illuminates that public discourse on the gendered and unjust nature of care labor is often rarely correlated to neoliberal and globalizing economic and political institutions. Her intervention is that instead, when needing to rally support for the fight for their

rights, activist groups often place the oppressed care workers in a narrative that valorizes the benefits that the American upper middle class gains from their presence more than it does the lives, livelihoods, agency and time of women of color who are performing this kind of labor. It is a narrative that encourages the public to only care about the plight of migrant care workers because the public's own well-being and success relies on said workers' presence.

Fernandes raises a very similar point to Alison Jaggar, where public discourse tends to ignore the true underlying causes of gendered and racialized care worker oppression. Both these examples illustrate cases where activists or organizations recognize the oppressions faced by groups and individuals based on their gender and race and attempt to rectify the injustices caused by said oppressions. However, in both cases, the entities charged with rectifying these injustices fail to accurately do so by ignoring global neoliberal economic and political policies that generate these oppressions. Instead they may even reinforce and remobilize those very same neoliberal approaches. Actions and policies that begin with very promising agendas, end up losing the focus of their projects or achieving only symbolic victories that rarely ever contribute to the removal of oppressions faced by the groups they seek to liberate.

Both Jaggar and Fernandes call for the consideration of neoliberal globalizing political and economic structures that are at the root of the oppressions faced by migrant women who perform domestic labor. They address the issue as it manifests in a Global North context, whereas the Global South is the supplier of this labor and the Global North is the recipient? Both interventions call for a bigger consideration of this, however, neither of them addresses political, economic, and cultural structures that influence migrant care labor flows within and among Global South nations. The focus in the feminist discourse remains on the oppressions as they are caused by globalization, and ignore the presence of migration flows and oppressions that do not

rely on such a phenomenon to exist, and exist in different economic and social and political contexts, where they become reinforced not only by globalizing ideals but rather also through pre-existing, cultural and moral traditional perceptions of labor, gender and race.

Households that hired domestic workers or could afford to were often upper middle-class white households, in which the women had begun entering the workforce, therefore creating a gap where the domestic labor in their households had to be performed by an underpaid worker. In *The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism*, Catherine Rottenberg introduces the concept of the "neoliberal feminist", which is a form of feminism that posits a work life balance as the ultimate ideal (Rottenberg 55). In what she describes as a resurgence of mass liberal feminism, Rottenberg identifies neoliberal feminism as a form of pushback against liberation, because it is a form of feminism that does not challenge social and economic structures built on a patriarchal ideal, and commodifies care and reproduction in a way that places migrant care workers in vulnerable situations, and creates what Parreñas and other feminist scholars refer to as an imbalanced global care chain. In articulating her critique of neoliberal feminism, Rottenberg argues that one of its dangers is the positioning of migrant women care workers in vulnerable positions that expose them various forms of oppression. She argues that it is this resurgence of neoliberal ideals, and the idolization of the working mother who has it all that can cause and reproduce such oppressions. She therefore claims that the oppression of migrant care workers can be the direct result of white women entering the labor force or only the result of the representation of the successful woman as somebody who relies on migrant care labor. The issues of migrant care labor are however much greater than that. Because they are not simply bound by the neoliberalism of developed countries, oppressions faced by migrant domestic and care workers are also deeply rooted in the feminization of domestic labor, meaning how it is

understood as only women's work, as well as the racialization of domestic labor, where commonly held racial stereotypes can affect the creation of migrant domestic worker markets, creating the opportunity for sending countries to exploit the bodies of their citizens as exportable and exploitable commodities, and increasing the demand for specific racial and ethnic identities to fulfill the positions in said markets. I addition, these same oppressions tend to exist in contexts where the neoliberal feminist has not made as strong an appearance as she did in the United States. While Rottenberg's argument provides an explanation and analysis of the harmful ways in which migrant domestic labor is framed, it does not allow for the consideration of other factors, excluding neoliberalism and globalizations, that equally participate in the reproduction of the oppressions and vulnerabilities of the domestic and care worker.

The Migration Flow: North – South or Bust:

One of the prominent works on the harm caused by migrant domestic labor is Eva Kittay's analysis presented in "The Moral Harm of Migrant Care work: realizing a global right to care". In articulating the nature of the moral harm caused by the migration of women care workers from developing to developed nations, Eva Kittay posits that the locus of this harm is in the sacrifice of relationships and self-respect that migrant women must make in order for women in developed nation to maintain that same self-respect and those same relationships (Kittay 53). More than half of those who leave their home countries with the intent to send money back home are women (Kittay 54), most of whom work in the domestic sphere. In what Kittay refers to as a care crisis, wealthy nations need migrant care workers because women in those nations are less interested in care labor and are entering other professional job markets. Therefore no one is available to take care of the elderly, children, and house chores. Kittay uses the term global heart transplant to reimagine the conditions and effects of migrant care work (Kittay 53). She

identifies such a phenomenon as the transfer of something vital to an organism into a different organism. In her analysis she views that this global heart transplant requires the commodification of care work. Indeed, this commodification of care work is necessary for the creation of such a globalized care labor market.

Eva Kittay's contribution is also that harmful care labor migration occurs between third world nations and first world nations with the former being the sending countries and the latter being the receiving ones. In what she describes as a global heart transplant, harmful care labor migration is a phenomenon that is not only exclusive to economically disparate nations, and that there are several cases in which sending and receiving nations can be nations with similar economic or development standings. Kittay views that this transplant occurs only between nation that are economically disparate (Kittay 55), meaning that this migration is happening from poorer to wealthier nations. The presence of 3000 Filipina care workers in Morocco disproves the exclusivity of this condition (Saidi). Morocco's GDP per capita in 2017 was 3,007.24 USD, in the Philippines, it was 2,988.95 USD (The World Bank). The two nations are significantly close in economic development and therefore do not fit within Kittay's definitions and criteria. They in fact disprove the notion that transnational migration of care workers occurs only between countries of the Global North and countries of the Global South. Care migration and its harmful effects is therefore often described as the result of difference in economic standings, meaning that developed nations need people who can perform domestic and care labor which then creates the market for sending nations to fill with exported labor. The case of Philippine workers in Morocco provides that beyond these economic disparities creating a demand for care workers, there can be other identifiable factors that can cause such a phenomenon. Local

traditions, cultural perceptions of gender roles and racial stereotypes are all concepts that I believe can also influence care labor migration flows.

Domestic Work is Work is Work is Work:

Another issue faced by migrant domestic workers, in Morocco and in other destinations, is that the nations and societies they enter as domestic laborers do not recognize domestic labor as real work. According to Rhacel Parreñas, there are some hints that domestic work is starting to be recognized as "real work" namely the Domestic Workers Convention of 2011 (ILO Convention 189). She shows that in Italy for example, "domestic workers have the right to various benefits, including employer paid social security, an extra month's pay per year, and a weekly day off, among others" (Parreñas 20). In the United States, domestic workers are protected by the Fair Labor Standards Act, which gives them the right to a minimum wage. However, their legal protections in the United States are fewer, for example they are not given any benefits, the rights for collective bargaining or the right to overtime pay (Parreñas 119). Outside of a few countries, most destinations for migrant care workers, do not legally acknowledge domestic labor, this results in various instances of low standards of employment, including the lack of a minimum wage, the absence of benefits such as healthcare, time off, or overtime pay. Even countries with recruitment programs position migrant domestic workers in a situation that lacks physical and employment mobility programs and often do not allow migrant workers to freely participate in the labor market. Many policies, laws and reforms exclude domestic workers from their jurisdictions, for example in Kuwait a reform allowing migrant employees to change their employment excluded migrant domestic workers (Parreñas 115). And in the United States, "elder caregivers were historically exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act and are thus denied access to minimum wage and overtime pay" (Parreñas 119). Convention

189 provided some rights to migrant domestic workers. Its vagueness however does not provide strong enough laws and rules to protect the migrant workers in its member states, offering only provisions and suggestions that none of the member states are required to uphold.

Parreñas raises the point that studies done on the situations, experiences and oppressions facing migrant domestic workers often focus on one destination or on one sending nation. She views that this focus on one single locus of oppression distracts from the true issues underlying migrant domestic labor, or the "global care chain" where scholars are unable to focus on the true sources of the oppressions faced by these migrant workers. Migrant domestic labor is viewed as something that posits Global North countries as receiving countries and Global South countries as sending countries. Parreñas, like Eva Kittay, puts an emphasis on how this division of care labor is unequal between developed and developing nations (Parreñas 202). She argues that the flow of migrant labor from poor to rich nations speaks to the issues of "international division of reproductive labor" or "global care chains," where households in rich nations pay women from poorer nations to take care of their children, their sick and their elderly, with fewer resources, enabling them to avoid such issues as the "mommy tax". The mommy tax is the economic cost that women in the Global North must incur in order to be able have and raise children. When they can afford a migrant care worker, they are able to maintain their roles in the labor market and therefore are not "taxed" for having children. While Parreñas' argument addresses how global economic trends and social changes in developed countries can affect the global care chain and increase the demand for migrant domestic workers, she does not acknowledge that the flow of migrant care labor extends far beyond an exchange between rich and poor nations. Like Kittay, her intervention does not take into consideration care chains and migration flows that exist outside of the context of developed nation, that an analysis of the

global care chain is incomplete without addressing this phenomenon as it manifests itself among and within developing nations.

Rhacel Parreñas addresses entities that play an active role in the oppressions of migrant care workers. In order to find employment outside of the Philippines, women care workers often go through “recruitment agencies” that not only charge a fee to the potential employer but also charge a fee to potential employees. Some of them offer “fly now pay later” programs (Parreñas 14) where the job seeker is indebted to the “recruitment agency”, and usually must turn in all or most of their salary to pay off these agencies’ fees. Meaning that in some cases care workers are not earning much money in the first months or years of their employment. Parreñas states that this also occurs in nations like Singapore or Hong Kong, where the domestic workers are only given an allowance of $40 a month while the rest of their salary is paid directly to the “recruitment agency” in order to cover the fees spent by the agency to transport the employee to their work destinations (Parreñas 13). These key words such as “transport”, “recruitment”, “fees”, and such are terms reminiscent of a time where humans were being traded as a commodity. These agencies trade not in services, employment or recruitment, but they are agencies that trade in the commodity that is the human body.

Parreñas also argues that the lack of freedom that domestic workers can face can take up many forms, the lack of agency over their own space, their own time and their own body are only some examples of the ways that migrant domestic workers may face oppression in a different cultural setting. She claims that at the source of the indenture of domestic workers is racism and xenophobia (Parreñas 124). Where the same states that allow for programs for migrant care workers to enter the country exclude them from workers’ rights that would allow them to fully exercise their agency as free individuals. In most cases, domestic workers are only allowed to

work for one single employer or must fulfill many conditions in order to be able to work for someone else, including working for the same person for a predetermined minimum period. Parreñas argues that when migrant workers "are bound to work only for their sponsor, [their] status […] puts them in a relationship of unequal dependency on their employer-sponsor" (Parreñas 118). This relationship creates the possibility of making the employee a part of the household, a rhetoric that she argues can be used as a mechanism to solicit unpaid on uncompensated domestic work from them. What Parreñas argues is that the lack of freedom that domestic workers can face takes up many forms. The lack of agency over their own space, their own time and their own body are only some examples of the ways that migrant domestic workers may face oppression in different cultural settings. "For migrant domestic workers, gender shapes their liminal position of being legally at sea, as it is the view of domestic work as not real work that promotes their legal displacement from both sending and receiving states (Parreñas 125). The migrant care labor market therefore positions care workers in situations that limit their agency in both sending and receiving nations, due to fact that domestic and care labor continue to be given a much lower social and economic value than other more traditional types of paid work.

This disregard for domestic and care labor and its low value in the global socioeconomic context is, according to Parreñas, directly correlated to gender bias and discrimination. Because domestic and care labor continue to be considered as work done by the women in private households, as labor that does not belong in the public sphere and labor market or under the jurisdiction of the authorities of governments, the gender bias is transferred to this labor even after it becomes commodified and enters the public sphere. Meaning that because it remains

recognized as only women's work, domestic or care labor is imprinted with gendered oppressions that reproduce themselves even after the work switches from unpaid to paid labor.

Divisions, Divisions:

Another valuable contribution to feminist literature about domestic and care labor is by Pei-Chia Lan who in her article "Maid or Madam? Filipina Migrant Workers and the Continuity of Domestic Labor" points out that studies on domestic and care labor are divided into two distinct groups, "most studies of unpaid housework address only white, middle-class women, whereas the literature on domestic service is generally about women of color (Lan 187). Meaning that feminist literature has a severe distinction between which work deserves to be disputed for being unpaid, and which paid and migrant labor is the most prevalent. Her argument is that research on the issue has created a distinction that can be traced along racial lines. Her argument is that many feminist theorists when addressing domestic labor in its unpaid nature, often analyze social and economic contexts where this unpaid labor is performed by white middle-class women, and in advocating for social change that would acknowledge this unpaid labor, the focus is often kept on white women members of middle classes in developed nations. In contrast when feminist theorists address the racial and gendered nature of paid domestic labor and advocate for the removal of oppressions experienced by the women performing this labor, the focus is kept on migrant women of color performing paid domestic labor in counties of the Global North. She criticizes feminist theorists for not taking into consideration the extent to which these two are interconnected. Lan argues that unpaid domestic labor performed by women in private households, and paid domestic labor performed by migrant women or women of color are the result of the same social and economic structures that reproduce the oppressions of both

categories, “I view unpaid household labor and paid domestic work not as separate entities in an exclusive dichotomy but as structural continuities across the public/private divide” (Lan 188)

She distinguishes between the kind of labor that is most often done by female kin and is excused by cults of domesticity and womanhood, and the kind labor that is for hire, such as child care, cleaning or cooking and is valued solely by and through wages. Regarding the former, Lan addresses unpaid domestic labor performed by women in the private sphere and describes it as socially engrained as the duty, role and often pleasure of women. It is described as a static constant, in the collective imaginary in various societies that idolizes the status of “lady of the house”, a status often enjoyed and revered by white middle-class American families (Lan 188). In addressing the latter Lan describes domestic labor as the tool used by these societies to allow middle class women to negotiate which aspects of domestic labor are acceptable to relegate to the market without destroying that “lady of the house” status. “The transfer of mothering labor permits these socially privileged women to enjoy the emotional value of motherhood, elevated to the status of "mother-manager"”(Lan 188). Those women who contribute paid domestic service are, however, forced to neglect their own statuses as mothers and care givers in their own families. Lan’s work aims at understanding how the undervaluing of paid care and domestic labor not only allows middle class women to maintain a caregiver status without performing the hard labor, but also that the undervaluing itself is a result of the fact that care labor is viewed as something that brings those who perform it pleasure and satisfaction, and therefore does not deserve or require wages comparable to other non-domestic forms of labor.

This critique is valuable in considering the different values given to domestic labor based on the social status and ethnic identity of the individual performing it. When it is the labor of motherhood in white middle-class families it is a labor paid for by love and enjoyment. But when

it is a paid labor performed mostly by women of color and migrant women, it is a labor that is not viewed as valuable as other forms of labor. However, Lan does not acknowledge that these disparities in the valuation of domestic labor go far beyond the idolization of the white middle-class American mother. Her analysis fails to take into consideration the global racial and economic structures that recreate the same devaluation of domestic labor, outside of the context of the United states or the white middle-class American family. It does not acknowledge that the same dynamics she describes are at the roots of these oppressions and reproduced in non-white, non-middle class and non-Western contexts.

In the chapter titled "Daily Bread: Gender and Domestic Labor", of the 1994 book *Paradoxes of Gender,* Judith Lorber attempts to analyze and understand what historical, social political and economic changes occurred in society that created the structures which currently dictate domestic and care labor as gendered, she asks the question of how did care work become exclusively women's work. Lorber proposes that at some point in history a gendered division in unpaid domestic labor began to appear. In Modern societies, unpaid domestic labor had become disproportionately the responsibility of women. This structure of work in modern societies is familiar and normalized. Women's position as child bearers situates them in the position of caregiver, but men are responsible for providing financial support to their children and wives. In return, women should also be the caregivers of their husbands. This is a structure that relies heavily on the idealized image of a heteronormative nuclear family where the male wage earner earns enough to support the entire family. "The present gendered division of labor, where women do paid work but are primarily responsible for housework and child care, is considered a normal and natural outcome of women's procreative capabilities or feminine skills and personality" (Lorber 175). It is evident that families are more dynamic and do not always fall

under such criteria. The family structure is much more diverse than that. Lorber suggests that paid and unpaid work are not so neatly divided between men and women, but that there are gendered patterns that suggest women perform more domestic labor than men do. Additionally, Lorber suggests that this pattern is not the direct result of sex differences in procreation (Lorber 175), she states that women who do not have children still perform more domestic labor than men, as well as the fact that domestic labor entails far more than child care.

Lorber tries to find out exactly why such gendered patterns exist in domestic labor. She states that domestic labor has not always been strictly performed by women: in non-industrialized societies, survival was dependent on domestic labor and therefore it was performed by most or all members of the household regardless of their gender (Lorber 173). Additionally, she states that domestic labor did not always have the lowly status it does today. According to Lorber, the reasoning behind why women perform more domestic labor than men is based on the principle that in households where there are means to pay for domestic labor, fewer women perform it. She claims that the reason women perform most of the domestic labor in modern societies is that they simply have fewer means to buy paid domestic labor (Lorber 178). Lorber also claims that the lowly status of domestic labor in society is a result of the fact that even when households or women have the means to hire domestic laborers, these domestic workers are often members of some of the most disadvantaged groups in society. She introduces unpaid domestic labor as use-value work. Meaning work that is unpaid but is necessary for the subsistence of some or all members of the household (Lorber 181). Lorber argues that these gendered divisions in domestic labor are the result of not nature but rather historical developments and technological transformations and advances, as well as the production and control of wealth. Her point is that economic development relied heavily on allocating domestic

work to women. “[The glorification of] women’s place as the nurturing care giver is directly socially and financially beneficial to men in the society and exploitative of women’s time and energy” (Lorber 175).

The arrangement may seem natural, but it is the result of the systematic deprivation of married women's rights to control their own property, profits, and wages. At the beginning of the era of industrialization, men workers had the advantage of organizational skills and political power, which allowed them eventually to monopolize the better-paid jobs. “With greater control of economic resources, they could command the labor of other members of the family” (Lorber 177). Lorber argues that in European and Western societies, industrialization and the rise of capitalism lead to the demand by men for higher family wages, meaning a wage that is enough to not only support the individual, but his entire family or household. What this rise in men’s wages needs is an actual wage gap in order to be successful, although working men in households were the only wage earners, the regard for domestic labor continued to lessen, although it was the domestic labor performed by women that allowed men in capitalist societies to hold the jobs they held. This is only correct for middle class households. Working class and African American households continued to rely on women to provide domestic labor as well as earn wages through paid labor outside the home. Even after having children women continued to disproportionately provide domestic labor while also doing wage labor. “Although necessary and certainly work by any standards, housework by the end of the nineteenth century had been made invisible by not being counted as work in census or economic data in Europe, the United States, and Australia” (Lorber 179).

Lorber also argues that by the twentieth century, the widespread availability of readymade foods and clothing, the introduction of more appliances into households as well as the

spread of self-service shopping “supplemented or replaced servants” in Western middle-class households. What this led to is an increase of middle-class women’s use value work and giving an illusion of their autonomy (Lorber 179). Feminists at that time had already been calling for the communalization and higher valorization of domestic and care labor and higher paid real work, instead domestic labor had simply become rationalized, as the availability of appliances and clothes made it possible for domestic labor to be combined with work outside the home; meaning it alleviated housework just enough that women could still perform it while also performing paid work outside of the home. This did not of course apply to many marginalized minorities. Immigrant and African American women who had been restricted in their job opportunities, had to work for other households in order to be able to support their own. Karen Sacks has pointed out that "for white middle-class women, domestic labor may be subordinating to them as women, but if they hire others to do it (mostly Black, Latina, or Asian women), domestic labor becomes (low) paid work, thus gender subordination becomes gender, class, and race subordination" (Lorber 181).

Lorber eloquently summarizes the ways in which capitalist economies exploit and rely on unpaid domestic labor to survive and fill the gaps that may exist in their social services:

Their unwaged domestic work supplements their husband's low wages; their shopping, tutoring, and home nursing fill the gaps left by overworked and underpaid retail clerks, teachers, and nurses […]; and the money they earn buys the appliances and other household goods that keep the capitalist economy going and that make it possible for them to do domestic work. In all these ways, the domestic and paid work of women allows men to make jobs and careers their main commitment and capitalists to accumulate more profits. As a result, men, as workers,

managers, and business owners, command the greater economic resources, and thus they are able to claim women's unpaid domestic labor" (Lorber 183).

While Lorber provides an explanation for the current status of gender roles when it comes to domestic and care labor, one that is based on historical events and economic developments and phenomena that relied on this gendered division of labor, she is only considering the gendered division of domestic and care labor as it presents itself in Western societies. Most of the feminist literature on domestic and care labor focuses on historical patterns and sociological and economic explanations that only apply to Western societies. In Morocco however, gendered divisions of labor certainly followed completely different patterns in order to become what they are today. Colonization, non-western philosophy, different patterns of economic, industrial and economic development could all play different roles in why domestic labor in a society like the Moroccan society could have become relegated to only women or have garnered a lowly and dishonorable reputation.

Chapter 2: The Plight of Philippine Domestic Workers in Morocco

The culture of emigration is pervasive in the Philippines, it is a nation that relies heavily of migrant labor for its domestic economy. Many Filipinos migrate outside their home nation, often leaving behind children, spouses, parents and families to seek employment elsewhere in the world in order to earn money to send back home to their families (Parreñas 4). Many of these workers happen to be in the care sector, some of them are domestic workers, most of whom happen to be women. This is indicative of the fact that care labor, besides the fact that it is rarely ever considered work that deserves pay and other benefits, is generally viewed as “women’s work”, work that can only and should only be done exclusively by women. According to Parreñas, the number of domestic or care workers deployed in 2010 exceeded 105,000, 103,630 of them were women (Parreñas 3). “In the early 1970s, President Ferdinand Marcos institutionalized the export of labor as an economic strategy when he implemented the “manpower exchange program” (Parreñas 4), this policy was solidified by the establishment of Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). This is a policy that not only encouraged Philippine citizen to seek work outside of their nation, but also “by pursuing “marketing missions” and securing memoranda of understanding on the hiring of migrant workers with an array of labor-receiving countries” (Parreñas 4). In this chapter, I address some of the stories published in Moroccan press that reveal the depth of oppressions and violations Philippine domestic workers have experienced while working for affluent families in Morocco. By collecting these stories, I question why Morocco’s elite has recently become obsessed with hiring Filipina nannies and housekeepers. By addressing issues of race, language and prestige, I conclude that Filipina women fall at the crossroads of racial and gender discrimination, and the Moroccan elite’s stride towards ultimate luxury.

Currently, the migration of Filipina care workers spans about 160 countries, including Morocco (Parreñas 4). The phenomenon is a fairly recent one, where Moroccan affluent families began hiring Filipina women to render child care services. These domestic workers are often recruited in the Philippines by middlemen or agencies that promise them better jobs in the "Middle East". This is a similar method by which child domestic workers in Morocco are found and employed. Some "recruiters" require the domestic worker to pay him or her a fee, if she or her family cannot afford this fee, she is obligated to work off her "debt", therefore living in a borderline enslaved state. These commonalities between national and transnational migrant domestic laborers show that the domestic labor care chain is no longer limited in scope to an exchange between economically disparate nations. It shows that the issue goes much further than that and that domestic workers across the globe continue to be vulnerable to and victims of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Stories of abuse of Filipina nannies began to appear in Moroccan news media. In 2016, Lesiteinfo.com published a shocking testimonial video where an anonymous Filipina woman tells the story of how she ran away from the home of her employers who had starved her, verbally abused her and occasionally hit her. While crying, the woman describes her experience as dehumanizing and belittling, and shares her helpless situation where she is unable to seek the help of Philippine or Moroccan authorities, as the recruitment agency through which she had come to Morocco had confiscated her passport. She begins by sharing that as soon as she had arrived in Morocco, the agency that had secured her job in Morocco immediately took away her passport. The worker then states that prior to leaving the Philippines, authorities had warned her and many others to ensure that they never lose possession of their passports and other such important identification documents. The anonymous domestic worker then fights tears to

continue to tell her story. She said that prior to arriving in Morocco, she had signed a contract that promised her a $1000 USD pay per month. Once arrived, her employers did not respect this contract and never paid her in full. In her request to be moved, she claims to have been sold to another employer for 25,000 MAD, which is roughly $2,590 USD. The anonymous victim shared that when she requested from the Philippine consulate to have her passport returned so that she could return home, she was asked to pay a $2590 USD fee. She did not in her testimony clarify which entity required such payment. Other similar stories indicate that similar demands are made by the hiring agencies who secure Philippine domestic workers' jobs in Morocco and then take possession of their passports and paperwork, in exchange for the return of these documents to their rightful owners. This anonymous witness further explains that during her stay in Morocco she worked for five different families but did not enjoy a decent work environment. Due to this fact she selected to run away from the home of her last employers. After running away, the agency that had brought her to Morocco posted her photograph on multiple Facebook employment pages dedicated to Philippine women in Morocco and claimed that she was a criminal, making it hard for her to secure another job and save enough to retrieve her passport and return home (Lesiteinfo.com). This anonymous victim was at the time of publication of this testimony being assisted by a local domestic workers' association "L'instance de Solidarité avec les Immigrés Asiatiques" (ISIA), or the Organization for Solidarity with Asian Immigrants. The woman was stuck in Morocco unable to return home, with no income, relying solely on the help of fellow Filipino immigrants for food and accommodation. The anonymous woman's experience was not as prevalent, but it was not unique.

In 2008, a story was published in the local newspaper AL-Akhbar, describing the dreadful experience of Baybamot, another migrant Filipina nanny who had been occasionally

tortured by her employer. The anonymous woman shared that her employer had frequently beat her, burned her, scored her face with a knife and would often force her to sleep without blankets, and cover her head with a black plastic bag. This case is among the few extreme experiences shared by Filipina migrant care workers in Morocco.

Another Moroccan publication reported on the issue, sharing the case of Retchie, another Filipina child care worker in her 30s who had been occasionally verbally abused by her employers, was working 12-14 hours per day and received no days off (El Addaoui). Most Moroccan publications reporting on the abuses faced by Philippine care workers in Morocco ensure to conclude their articles and Op-Eds by ensuring their audience that these cases are rare, and that the majority of the 3000 Filipinas currently working in child care in Morocco are “enjoying fairly good” work lives. This insistence by the Moroccan media that cases of abuse and oppression against migrant care workers are rare is indicative of a collective shame that the Moroccan society shares, due to its dark history of mistreating and abusing domestic and care workers, Moroccan by nationality or otherwise.

Another shocking story that made its way to the Moroccan headlines was the story a Sarah, a Filipina domestic worker employer by a Moroccan housewife in the small city of Temara. Sarah was brought to Morocco by her employer’s husband who is an Emirati national. Having been victim to physical violence, Sarah’s case was taken by the ISIA to prosecutors, once police officers went to take her statement her employer refused to let her speak to the police and took away her cellphone and passport (H24info.ma). Her employer then promised to accompany her the following morning to the police station but had instead kidnapped her and taken her to an unknown location, according to ISIA president Hayat Barhou. The case was not addressed again by the Moroccan press.

At a press conference held by the Philippine Consul General in Casablanca Porto Joselito, two migrant domestic workers who had fallen victim to their employers' abuses shared their stories. Analissa, who had been confined to her employers' home and was not allowed any time off or the ability to leave the house, had her passport confiscated as well. The employers demanded that she pay them $4,000 in order to give it back. Analissa then said that she had been a victim of rape by her employer ("Filipina Maids maltreated in Morocco"). The second witness present at this press conference shared that she had been repeatedly beaten by her female employer.

The following is the story of two Filipina domestic workers in Morocco who, when attempting to flee their abusive employers, found themselves accused of theft and pursued by local authorities. Nikki and Kate who were sisters-in law had previously been employed as domestic workers in Singapore and Hong Kong, when the opportunity came for them to be employed at the same household in Morocco, they accepted. Nikki was in charge of domestic labor such as cleaning, cooking and laundry, while Kate was tasked with caring for the family's 3 children. They both worked long hard hours, often from 5:30 in the morning until 11 at night. Kate and Nikki never received a day off ("Morocco: Good Filipinas, Bad Employers"). They both also were only allowed to eat leftovers, often after the family had finished their meals, were only allowed to keep their belongings and bathe in the cold basement of their employers' house and had to sleep in the youngest child's room. They both say that they accepted these oppressive work conditions because their families back in the Philippines relied on the money they earned.

Nikki and Kate's employer, one week after their arrival in Casablanca had demanded that they hand in both of their passports, under the pretext that the employer would use their information to formulate legal employment documents and obtain work permits for them. Two

months had passed without receiving their salaries, Kate and Nikki decide to flee. While the employers' home was filled with security cameras, both domestic workers waited for the right moment to leave. They barely escaped. In order to recuperate their passports and return home, they ask the help of a well-known Filipino businessman who resides in Morocco. The man serves as an intermediary and contacts the two women's employers. The employers then proceed to threaten the business man and he is unable to reach an agreement with the Moroccan family, who had threatened to ruin his reputation because they had friends in the authorities.

Later, the employers filed a complaint with the local police, claiming that Kate and Nikki had stolen a cellphone and some of the wife's jewelry. Without any evidence, the affluent family's reach was strong enough to persuade local authorities to arrest the two domestic workers. Nikki and Kate spent two months in Moroccan jail before a local women's rights group was able to obtain their release ("Morocco: Good Filipinas, Bad Employers").

The abuses faced by Filipina domestic workers in Morocco are also faced by Moroccan domestic workers, particularly young girls. The parallels in these two marginalized groups' experiences show how deep Moroccan society's violence and disrespect toward women performing domestic labor can run. At age 13, a young girl named Aziza was working for a family in Casablanca reported that once, her employer's son, who was 20 years old, had gotten drunk and had attempted to rape her (Becker). Aziza was able to run outside of the house. Aziza was living in such isolation that she had no money for transportation and knew not where to find the nearest police station. She ran to a nearby bus stop where she told a bus driver what had happened. The bus driver then took Aziza to a police station where officers drove her to a shelter for women. Amal, at age 14 was not so lucky, in a similar situation, her employer's 22-year-old son forced her into a room, locked the door "did things to her" (Becker). Amal was unable to

describe what happened in the locked room, but she need not do so in detail to indicate that she had been a victim of rape. Victims of rape, violence, starvation and other forms of abuse these young women and girls are often left without any legal system fending for their justice, as the Moroccan government had not (until October 2018) implemented any protection laws for domestic workers. It is also all too common where cases of abuse of housekeepers reach the local news.

Another characteristic that the experiences of Filipina care workers and Moroccan child domestic workers share is that they are both often left uninformed about their employers. While the employers are often provided information on whom they are hiring such as skills, work history, and health information (Parreñas 13), future employees are not provided any relevant information about the families they are going to be joining. This prevents them from having any agency in making the choice to work for said families. Similarly, the young Moroccan girls interviewed for the Human Rights Watch report by Jo Becker informed the reporter that they had little to no information about their employers prior to moving into their households.

In many cases, migrant care workers are bound to one single employer, because they are only allowed to work for the person that sponsored their work in the receiving country. These women become occupationally segregated, unable to infiltrate different labor markets outside of the domestic sector. Parreñas dubs this situation as being bound in servitude, where these migrant workers lack in employer flexibility, frequently are unable to obtain permanent residency, unable to change the household they work in or the type of work they can get, and in most cases are prohibited from such migration policies as family reunification or citizenship.

Morocco's Obsession with Filipinas:

Because domestic labor is considered dirty work, it is often left to be performed by immigrants or racial and ethnic minorities. This section seeks to uncover and explain the relationship between race and ethnic identity, and the social and class positions that create a racial imbalance in the domestic labor market. Because domestic work is undervalued, it is often underpaid and does not come with rights and protections like other forms of work. domestic labor often does not guarantee paid time off, or a minimum wage and other benefits such as medical insurance, that other labor sectors traditionally offer. Domestic labor therefore is left to be performed by members of more marginalized groups, often low income, racial minorities. In modern societies, besides the fact that domestic labor is relegated to women, paid domestic labor is relegated to women of color or migrant women from lower income groups. The origin of this in a society like the United states can be traced back to times of slavery. Because domestic labor in the antebellum era was mainly produced by slaves, and in the post-civil war era by mainly black women, the work not only was identified as something that must be exclusively performed by women, but also as something that must be performed by women of color. To understand how race plays a role in South to South care labor migration flows, one must reposition the dynamics of race and gender and view them from a vantage point that is not sourced in the privilege of whiteness or being Western but rather is rooted in something else, a different perspective on race and gender that comes from traditions and norms or histories outside of colonialism, imperialism and Western idolization.

The stereotype in Morocco goes that Asian women are more submissive, more disciplined, less likely to speak up and generally better at tasks that construct domestic or care work. The stereotyping of the Philippine identity is at the heart of this new phenomenon of

migrant labor from one third world nation to another, which created room for new oppressions and new opportunities of human trafficking. It is not uncommon in the Moroccan imaginary to have a very specific view of the domestic worker. Often viewed as less than human, she is less deserving of care, basic decency and basic rights and respect. Some people tend to view their "kheddama" (housekeeper/maid – directly translates from Arabic to Laborer) as less than. She often does not get any days off, works much longer hours than is acceptable, is provided with small pay in relation to the amount of labor she produces, and is given solely the bare necessities to survive such as living quarters and food (in many cases leftovers).

The racial divide that this reflects is a racial divide that dictates that an individual's skills and traits are completely and fully dependent on their racial or ethnic identity. Many families who have selected to employ Filipina domestic workers argue that the simple fact that they are of Philippine descent makes them better care and domestic workers (Sidiguitiebe). In addition, my travels to Morocco revealed a slight feeling of superiority that was reflected by some of the individuals that I interacted with. This racial or national superiority can be traced beyond skin color to encompass national power as well. The racial divide in Morocco is not solely reliant on physical difference, it is a bias based on the national power of the country of the other. It is not uncommon for a Moroccan individual to view themselves as superior to South East Asian individuals or sub-Saharan Africans simply because they hail from countries that have less political and economic power than Morocco. The inferiority of the other is not defined by their physical differences alone, but rather also by their socioeconomic status. As domestic labor continues to be viewed in Morocco as labor performed by lesser beings, the correlation between the multilayered racial bias and the increase in demand for Philippine domestic workers becomes

clear. This reflects not only a commodification of the female body, but also a commodification of the ethnic and racial identity of thousands of Filipino nationals.

The Over-valorization of the English Language:

Another reason that Filipina domestic workers are highly sought after in Morocco is the fact that they are English speakers. Most students are taught English in public schools in the Philippines. As ex-colonies, some countries will often continue to teach, speak and communicate in the language of their colonizer. As with the Philippines and English, Moroccans are taught French in public schools. But because French is commonly taught and spoken, speaking it can no longer be used or viewed as a marker of social or economic superiority. English has become the language of high social and economic class, making many wealthy families seek house keepers and nannies that will teach their children English or communicate with them in English in order to hone their English language skills as they learn it in expensive private schools (Sidiguitiebe). If globalization is a phenomenon that is at the heart of the structures that make the oppression of Filipina migrant workers in Morocco possible, it does so in the form of language. Filipina women happen to be in high demand in Morocco because of their proficiency in the English language. The English language's value comes from the fact that it is widely spoken in the West and has become the language of international business and international relations. It is of high value in the global labor market and provides for higher demand for people and workers who speak it. Success on the international level requires that individuals be fluent in it regardless of what field or discipline they join. So, the world's reliance on this language has made it so parents in Morocco are more and more inclined to teach their children the language from a young age, in order to prepare them for a globalized labor market. Some children of affluent families speak French and English exclusively. Therefore, in a neocolonial fashion a Western language becomes

over-valorized and the native language risks erasure. It is this over-valorization, deeply engrained in movements of globalization, that attracts Moroccans to Filipina care workers. Filipina women are Moroccan families' best options for supplementing English classes while also providing care labor, it is not only the cheapest option, but it is the option that encourages the child to communicate in English daily as opposed to simply learning the language in a classroom.

The Filipina Prestige:

Filipina domestic workers are also highly sought after because they tend to "cost" more than local house keepers. The prestige of having a foreign house keeper and nanny is again a sign of affluence, a way for wealthy families to show in their community the extent of their financial reach, leading to the further commodification of the identities and bodies of an entire category. When asked about why they prefer to hire foreign domestic workers, some Moroccan employers will suggest the benefits of having an English-speaking domestic worker or someone who is rather discreet. However, there is an unspoken yet apparent insinuation that the ability to afford a foreign domestic worker, which would often cost significantly more than a Moroccan one, is yet another status symbol, a way for a rich Moroccan family to proclaim the extent of their wealth and show it off.

The prestige that comes with having a Filipina worker in Morocco is also influenced by the large number of Filipina domestic workers present in other Arab nations such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Being far richer countries, they often represent an ideal of wealth and prestige that other families, individuals or groups in neighboring less rich Arab countries may want to emulate. Morocco being one of them, one is not surprised if affluent Moroccan families would like to also have foreign workers, not because they are unable to

secure domestic workers from their own country, but simply because it is a symbol of wealth to have someone from outside of the country. Prestige and luxury are difficult to quantify, but they remain powers and structure that profit from the marginalization of Philippine and other migrant women in and outside of Morocco.

The Normalization of the Philippine Domestic Worker:

A distant family of mine was delighted to announce that he and his wife had had their first child. With two successful careers in Dubai, the Moroccan parents were eventually in the search for a child care taker for when they both returned to work. Residing in Dubai, this small family of 3 now relies on the services of a gentle and skilled Filipina nanny. The frequency at which Filipina domestic workers make an appearance in my personal experience and in popular culture had become more and more noticeable. Television shows and movies across the globe reflect the phenomenon. Netflix recently released a show titled "Working Moms". In the first episode, the main character, a working mom, first begins her journey by struggling to return to work because of her baby being young still. She is portrayed as a strong young mother who is comfortable financially and who goes on daily runs in the park while pushing her baby in a stroller. On the day of, she struggles to leave, but her husband says: "they will fire you" and immediately she begins to exit the house and leaves her infant son with a hired Filipina worker to take care of the child. At work, she first struggles with finding a room in which she can collect her breast milk. This causes her to miss a meeting with an important female client who happens to run a dairy farm. The meeting is being led by a male competitor who fails to sell their pitch to the client even though he took an approach that is supposed to empower women. After joining the meeting quite late, the working mom's position helps her convince the client to hire them, heroically saving the day with a breast milk stained shirt.

The working mother had made a promise to return home from work by “bath time”, but after her success at the meeting, she quickly learns that she will not be able to keep that promise. Later in the day, she receives a video of her son saying his first words. This causes her to have a short breakdown with her all male team. They suggest she heads home but she insists she wants to stay and work. The next day, on her run in the park with her son, the character encounters a real live bear. After a few seconds of hesitation, she stands in front of her baby and unleashes a primal scream, scaring the bear away.

This episode tastefully comments on the struggle that a working mom deals with. But furthermore it brings into light the small yet continuous forms of oppressions faced by the mother: frequent comments about her motherhood in the workplace, the fact that there is no accommodation for breast milk so she has to use the bathroom stall, and the fact that her job was taken over by another male colleague who says something along the lines of “I have nowhere to be I can dedicate my whole entire life to this job”. The main character here is always having to choose between being a mother and a successful worker, she has no opportunity to be both. This episode is a metaphor for the oppressive nature of capitalism. This episode shows how in a capitalist society, care labor is not considered real labor and is not given the literal and figurative room to be performed. Particularly for persons who must perform care labor while also performing work in its conventional sense. During the episode, the father of the child only shows up to remind the mother that she might get fired if she decides to stay home with her baby.

This working mom who prevails by the end of the episode was able to do so because she had the ability to hire a nanny to perform child care. In order to be productive at her own job and secure a significant deal for her firm, this working mother had to rely on the services of a foreign

domestic worker in order to be a “productive member of society”. The show comments on the extent to which capitalist societies today rely on migrant care labor.

This is however not the case in Morocco. Although it is an economy that allows for the development of capital and successful enterprise, it is not a society that particularly relies on foreign domestic labor to be able to do so. Most families that hire Filipina domestic workers in Morocco are affluent families that often do not rely on their matriarchs having successful careers. It is common that most of these household are headed by housewives. The reliance on foreign domestic labor is in this case not a direct economic benefit, it is a proclamation of one’s economic and political power; a declaration of wealth and a claim to a form of prestige and luxury that only few can afford.

Chapter 3: Questioning the Status of Domestic Workers in Morocco

In attempting to understand why Morocco has presented itself as the locus of new violence and oppressions facing Filipina domestic workers, I encouraged family members and acquaintances of mine to discuss their views on domestic labor, I particularly focused on individuals who had the financial decision-making positions in their households. In casual conversations I encountered many views about gender roles, particularly the roles of women, pertaining to domestic labor. The general idea that I got was that women should be the ones to perform domestic labor, and that men must fulfil the role of provider. The question of whether women should be the ones performing this kind of labor was not even raised. The idea that it is a gendered form of labor is so deeply engrained in the collective imaginary that it does not even come up. It is never doubted and in fact, the doubt seems to only arise when a man begins to participate in this form of labor. An acquaintance of mine had proposed that her husband loves to cook but that sometimes he also does the dishes, and then in a very amused tone, went on to ask if I could believe it. ‘A man doing the dishes? That is so silly’. What I understand is the reason behind this gendered view of the labor split, is that it is rooted in the deeply engrained idea that women are the caretakers, and that they are subordinate to men. In addition, I did notice that domestic labor is viewed as or given a very lowly status, that it is not real labor or labor that should be performed by those who have less social value. This chapter serves to question the social and political structures that normalize the prevalence and violence of domestic work in the Moroccan society, by analyzing and understanding roles played by government intervention and lack thereof, the devaluation of domestic labor, the social status of women in Morocco, the connection between authority and physical violence, and the roles played by the French Protectorate’s intervention in slavery and gender identity politics.

Normalizing Domestic Labor in Morocco:

The first thing one notices is that middle class families are more likely to have hired help. Be it daily, live in or once or twice a week, anyone with an income can hire someone to provide domestic labor. Having someone else who takes care of chores in one's home is normalized. One of my aunts hires a house keeper for 4 days a week. The house keeper usually works from 9 in the morning till 3 or 4 in the afternoon. Her tasks often include but are not limited to all that was listed above. Her house keeper is paid a good wage in comparison to other workers. She earns 500 Moroccan Dirhams (MAD) a week which will translate to a little over $60 U.S. dollars. Her wage does not include any benefits and is not taxed as income. The Minimum wage in Morocco is 3000 MAD per month, which adds up to about $312 USD.

In 2012, Human Rights Watch published a report claiming that up to 86,000 girls employed as domestic workers were under the age of 15 (Becker, 2). This is in direct violation of laws prohibiting the employment of children under 15. The report was based on interviews with girls who had been previously or during that time employed as domestic workers in private Moroccan households. The interviews, like many other news reports uncovered despicable abuses and oppressions facing young girls who are sent to work as maids in homes in order to help provide for their families. Such stories were those of girls like Fatima, who had begun working in a household with five children at the age of nine. Fatima's duties included waking up before dawn to prepare breakfast for the children, taking care of an infant baby, cleaning, laundry, shopping, preparing meals and serving guests, which continued until late hours at night. Not only were Fatima's work conditions abusive, as they would be for an adult, but she also suffered under the violent hand of her female employer. Fatima reported that she was frequently beaten by hand or using a plastic plumbing pipe. Her employer often beat her if she was

unsatisfied with the work she had done, or if she had broken something or gotten into an argument with one of the employer's children. In the two years that Fatima worked for that family, she received no days off.

While in Morocco I found that the idea of young girls being domestic workers is normalized, it is so common that it was rarely ever questioned. Although there are several campaigns against the employment of young girls, young girls continue to be hired as domestic workers in Moroccan households, where they are prohibited from attending school and from living full childhoods. Although the law in Morocco makes it illegal to not attend school at a certain age, it is still common to see young girls being taken out of school in order to help their families earn money. While in Casablanca I was approached by a young girl who could not have been older than 10, asking me to purchase a small pack of tissues to help her make some money. My first instinct was to give the girl money but immediately after, I found myself asking her why she was not in school, her response: 'we don't have school today'. Although it was a Tuesday and being familiar with the school system in Morocco, I was sure that there was no holiday that day. The disconnect between reality and law making is immense. Here we have a government that insists on teaching the masses about the importance of schooling and that makes it illegal for children to not attend school, but also a government that neglects enforcing such laws. Because enforcement is lacking, many children, especially girls are prevented from attending school and are forced to work. I don't find that this is the result of the devaluing of education itself, but it is rather a result of the devaluing of the female body and the female being. Because of the notion of women only serving in the roles of caregiver and mother, some families still believe that it is essentially a waste of time for young girls to be sent to school. Although schooling is essentially free, some families still are unable to afford the small fees that must be paid to schools at the

beginning of each year, an amount between $15 and $30. This is not because families believe that educating girls is unimportant, but because they believe that it will not serve any purpose, because of the strong ideology surrounding the position of women in Moroccan society. It is the position where one only exists to serve the needs of men and children, to provide care, food and domestic labor to ensure that boys and men can become providers.

These notions about gender roles in Moroccan society are not simply dictated by the patriarchy, but they are rather roles that are recreated and reproduced by a system of beliefs and traditions that are dictated by a patriarchal world view. With each generation that these ideals of gender are passed on, they are both equally reinforced and questioned. Although more and more women are questioning their assumed roles in the Moroccan society, individuals within that society continue to cling to outdated ideals under the pretext of preserving culture and tradition. These ideals continue to reconfirm power structures that profit from the marginalization of women.

According to the HRW 2012 report, girls who enter the domestic labor market come from law income families, most of which live in rural areas with few or limited resources and services (Becker). In some of the cases discussed in the report, the girls are forced by their parents to seek work in households in urban areas because their fathers either fall ill or pass away and are unable to earn enough income to support their entire families. Poverty plays an instrumental role in the number of girls who are employed in households performing domestic labor. This is a phenomenon that concerns child labor in general and is not solely correlated to child domestic labor. Although the reasons that each family chooses to introduce their child into the labor market is different, the fact remains that these families almost exclusively do so when they are faced with financial hardship and are unable to provide for themselves. The absence of

government programs and welfare support for low income families forces them to ask or force their children into employment, often under the legal age of 15 and often in dire conditions. Their financial situations make them vulnerable to injustices such as, allowing employers to dictate the low wages they earn, as well as prohibiting them from paid time off, family visits and in some cases virtually any contact with their families or the outside world. Poverty also makes these girls vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse, as the survival of their own families is bound to their servitude. The abundance of domestic labor in Morocco has made it so that employers are not forced to provide good incentives for their housekeepers, as they are easily replaceable, employers see that they only owe them the bare minimum in payment, respect and needs.

Lack of government intervention is also at the root of such a phenomenon in a different way. Because there are no contracts, these young women are unable to prove their abuse and seek justice. In Morocco, there are laws that prohibit the employment of children under the age of 15. However, up to recent years, such laws were not fully implemented. Families that hire domestic workers under the age of 15 are not faced with any legal repercussions, because the private sphere of the household is difficult to infiltrate and interfere in. Labor inspectors in Morocco rarely inspect private homes to ensure that no child is employed by the family. Additionally, child domestic workers are often uneducated and do not know that their rights are being violated. Even when they are abused, these young girls do not know where to seek help and are often unable to do so, either from fear of violence, or because they feel an obligation to continue earning a salary to help support their families. The notion of keeping private and public spheres so distinctly separate is another factor that contributes to the oppression of child domestic workers. Child domestic workers remain isolated from the outside world, bound to their employers and often suffer oppressions, abuses and violations that go unreported.

The Devaluation of Domestic Labor:

In morocco, domestic workers were also previously excluded from the Labor Code (Becker 2). While professional or industrial laborers were entitled to time off, maximum work hours, benefits and a minimum wage, the Moroccan labor code did not recognize domestic labor as work and therefore did not see fit to include domestic workers in its laws. It was not until October of 2018 that the Moroccan parliament put into effect new laws that protect domestic workers. Passed in 2016, the law "provides new worker protections including a requirement for a standard contract, limits on working hours, a weekly rest day, and a minimum wage" (HRW.org). In addition, the law also sets financial penalties for employers who violate domestic workers' rights, including the minimum age of 18. However, with this new law, domestic workers in Morocco are still not treated or protected as well as other professionals. Their maximum work hours are set at 48 hours per week, while the maximum hours for other professionals are 44. Additionally, their minimum wage is set 40% lower than those who work in other professions. This remains indicative of the fact that domestic labor in Morocco, just like in most other societies, is not viewed as real work and is therefore viewed as less deserving of equal pay or compensation.

Rhacel Parreñas states that some new policies and laws show promise that domestic labor is finally being recognized as real work, but the reality in the Moroccan society does not reflect this. A Moroccan acquaintance of mine, Hanaa, who is a 26-year-old woman, received a job offer to serve as an au pair in Germany, with decent pay, hours, benefits and working conditions, the opportunity is almost unmissable for someone who had been struggling to secure employment in Morocco. However, the culture surrounding domestic labor of any kind in Morocco has proven an obstacle for this opportunity. Hanaa's mother has shown extreme

opposition to this opportunity, arguing against this job because she views her daughter as someone who is far above performing the tasks that the job would entail. Hanaa's mother argues that the kind of labor her daughter would be performing is lowly and almost shameful, and that she would never agree or accept that her daughter brings herself down to such a low level. Hanaa's mother's reaction is indicative of how low the status of domestic and care labor is in the collective Moroccan imaginary. Although this opinion is not representative of the entire Moroccan society, it does show that some individuals can perceive domestic and care labor as work that does not earn or deserve respect, work that although can help with one's financial situation, should not be considered an opportunity for an educated woman like Hanaa.

While in Casablanca in February 2019, I had an encounter at a small neighborhood grocery store, where a man was in line to pay for his items. A malfunction at the cashier's computer had caused the process to slow down and cause him to have to wait a while longer. Frustrated that he had to wait, this man goes on to yell at the cashier asking him to hurry and complaining that he is causing him to wait in line "with all these maids". The woman standing behind the man in question was apparently a domestic worker, conducting one of her errands. The man proceeded to go on a rant about how as a man he should not have to wait to pay for his items so long because that is a female domestic worker's job. The cashier who had finished checking him out apologized, the woman standing in line had then gone ahead and asked "what is wrong with being a maid? It is honest work". By the time she was finished, the man had already exited the store, the cashier apologized again to the woman about the customer's behavior and said that domestic work is work and prompted her not to pay attention to the man's comments. While witnessing this small exchange, I was exposed to two opposing opinions about domestic work, but it had become evident to me which of the voices was the loudest. On the one

hand, the customer had exhibited the sentiment that certainly exist among members of the Moroccan society that a domestic worker is a lesser being. They are someone who is not worthy of valuation, respect or consideration, someone that we should be ashamed to be compared to. And it is someone who provides us with labor that no one with dignity should want to do. Reflecting on this man's sentiments, I had been reminded of how deep this notion was while growing up in Morocco. Children whose mothers were known for being domestic workers were mocked in school. I recall a classmate who had lied about what line of work her mother was in, because of the shame that was carried by that. Being a house maid or a domestic or care worker had gotten such a bad reputation in Morocco that it was an easy insult. People would use it to insult each other's appearance, but also to distinguish themselves from the kinds of labors that were honorable and the ones that were not. This lowly view of domestic labor is one of the factors that I am arguing are at the root of the oppressions faced by domestic workers in Morocco, including Filipina migrants. It is because the line of work they are in does not earn the respect of the society's collective imaginary that they eventually find themselves in abusive violent situations.

Women's Status in Morocco:

One of the stories that shook Morocco was the story of a young 15-year-old girl named Amina Filali. Amina had been a victim of rape who was then forced to marry her abuser, a 25-year-old man. After a year of abuse and violence, Amina ended her life by ingesting rat poison (Flock). Amina's case was not rare or unique. The culture of shame and impurity surrounding the bodies of sexually abused women seeped deeply into the collective imaginary. Debates with my own family members, women only a few years older than myself showed me that the female body is dangerously viewed as a free for all for violence abuse and shame. Rape victims were

sometimes forced to marry their abusers. The victims' families were afraid that their daughters were no longer pure and after being desecrated by the perpetrator of the sexual violence, they will no longer be desirable to men, and instead of being married these women would become burdens on their families. This was the story of Amina and many others like her.

This objectification and violation of female bodies was not only part of the collective culture of some families or groups in Morocco, it was legitimized by articles in the Family and Penal codes. One of the articles allowed judges to approve the marriage of minors (under 18 years of age) and the other authorized them to approve the marriage of a rape victim to her rapist (Salime 83). The existence of such laws in a country that prides itself on pioneering modernity in North Africa and the Middle East, is indicative of how deeply gender based violence is rooted in its society.

Conversations with family members and friends, most of whom are women in their 20s-30s have also indicated a different view about the female body and its place in society as a locus for violence, shame and punishment. When discussing a case of rape and physical abuse that had made the news with a cousin of mine (who was 28 years old at the time), I was surprised to hear her say that the victim had been dressed scantily, and was frequenting too many night clubs, and therefore deserved the violation and abuse, "she had it coming".

A friend had once confided in me that a boyfriend had hit her across the face, choked her and punched her in the nose; she described her blood splattering across his living room. She then showed me bruises on her arms from the many times he had hit her. When I asked her why she had not reported this abuse, she said that a police report would not help her and would only bring shame on her family. Because her relationship with her abuser had been illegitimate and included premarital sex, the victim had to renounce all her rights as a human being. The shame around

being a sexually active female body is strong enough to warrant violence against it. My friend then proceeded to share that it was her fault, because she had made the choices that put her in such a vulnerable situation. Even reporting this violence to the police will have no result as at the time there had been no laws protecting unmarried women against abuse from their boyfriends or sexual partners. Premarital sex is currently illegal in Morocco.

"After the suicide of Amina Filali, international press jumped on the opportunity to reiterate that Moroccan women's rights and Islam cannot coexist" (Salime 84). The normative orders through which women's lives are understood and regulated are many. That's a problem. What Amina's case did was trigger the voices of many marginalized groups, the women's rights movement triggered by this case was not unified. Some of them were anti-harassment, some of them were pro-secularization. The different voices that arose from these protests were indicative of the division among Moroccan society about women's status. The other side of the debate voiced concerns that Moroccan women had loose morals, raising even deeper concerns about the possibility of women's status in Morocco becoming more difficult.

Morocco is described by Jimia Boutouba as "a society that has always been structured in terms of gender complementarity, [where] the notion of gender equality was rather destabilizing, if not utterly frightening, and was necessarily met with stern resistance" (Boutouba 25). She claims that the new changes to Morocco's family code, the Moudawana was faced with concerns regarding destabilizing the institution of marriage, family stability and the country's religious identity. This angst stemmed from the belief that the changes in the Moudawana would give too much freedom to women and threaten the status of men in the society.

As with any other society, the status of women cannot be described in one collective manner. Oppressions, experiences, rights and liberties are experienced differently by Moroccan

women, depending on economic status, religious background, education, family culture, and a multitude of other factors. However, my travels to Morocco have indicated that some Moroccan women enjoy fewer rights than their male of female compatriots. To argue that some women in Morocco are more oppressed than others is to erase the multiplicities of Moroccan individuality. Such comparisons can run the risk of erasing the diversity that exists within non-western societies and to impose a westernized ideal of freedom and liberty. However, as I observed my own existence as a woman for several weeks in Morocco, I must acknowledge that certain aspects of women's daily lives in Morocco continue to be oppressive.

A case that had solidified the degree to which a female body is disrespected, disregarded and violated in the current shared imaginary in Morocco was the case of a popular Moroccan singer named Saad Lamjarred who was arrested in New York in 2010 for beating and raping a woman (Breeden). While he was out on bail, he fled the United States and has not returned since. He was arrested six years later for the same allegations in Paris and released on bail with an electronic tag while awaiting trial. Other allegations began surfacing with most notably a woman who made similar accusations to the two previous women, claiming that he physically abused and raped her in 2014 in Casablanca, Morocco. This woman had made a report to the police, but pressure from her family prompted her to retract it. To this day there have been no arrests or investigations made against Lamjarred in Morocco (Breeden). What is surprising, is that Saad Lamjarred support only grew as the allegations of sexual abuse against him began to surface. The nation became united in supporting him and defending him. The Moroccan King himself personally covered his legal fees while he was awaiting trial in France (Breeden). Personal acquaintances of mine were also part of the fan base that continued to support him. At first, his supporters claimed that his accusers were only after his fortune and sought to destroy his

reputation out of spite, propping Lamjarred up as the real victim. However, since the accusations are multiple and have been proven true by investigators in New York and in Paris, what the support of Lamjarred is indicative of again is the female body's position in Morocco, and the extent to which violence and abuse against it is normalized, justifiable and acceptable. Upon his return to Morocco from serving his jail sentence in France, Lamjarred received a hero's welcome, with fans waiting for his arrival applauding his bravery and patience through his hard times. He continues to successfully release music throughout the Arab world, recently achieving the title of highest viewed Arabic music video on YouTube. My Argument is that another explanation for why domestic workers are abused is simply the status of women in Morocco. These stories show just how little value is given to the female body and how its position as a recipient of violence provides an excuse for the employers and human traffickers and everyone involved in the oppression of domestic workers to commit violence against them. I believe that because the female body continues to be desecrated and disrespected, it is positioned in a status that warrants violence against it, excuses it and accepts it. This status of the female body is what I believe to be another factor in the large number reported aggressions against domestic workers.

Authority and Physical Violence Against Domestic Workers:

Based on my personal experience in Morocco, violence and authority in Morocco can be very closely tied, depending on the context. Having attended public elementary school, I saw that it was common for teachers to instill corporal punishment on students. This was viewed as a norm, nothing that needed to be questioned or debated. Another institution in which authority figures would instill corporal punishment is law enforcement. Police officers for a long time in Morocco had (some still do) the authority to physically beat suspects or people who were under their custody. Stories of men being arrested by the police, being taken to police stations, beaten

and then released were all too common. This was yet another practice that did not frequently come into question. In private households as well, some parents chose to include corporal punishment in their parenting and no laws are put in place to make this act illegal. Judging from the prevalence of violence in institutions harboring authority figures, it is no surprise that corporal punishment becomes a method of resolution, control, asserting authority, and punishment. Although violence of the mentioned sorts has been recorded in various cultures and societies, its prevalence in the Moroccan society suggests that one's position in authority is a license to be violent and that it is a normalized aspect of the Moroccan collective imaginary. Although there may well be a significant number of members of these institutions and society who reject the practice, it remains a phenomenon that does not spark outrage, opposition or debate as much as one would expect. Therefore, considering the fact that violence is normalized in some households and institutions, it is unsurprising that the practice seeped into employer-employee relationships in the domestic or care labor field. With the employer representing an authority figure, they often may feel entitled to discipline or punish their employee by being violent. This distinct correlation between violence and authority can therefore be considered as one of the factors that influence many employers to turn violent against their domestic workers, particularly if said domestic worker is a child or a woman.

The Moroccan Slave Institution and the French Protectorate:

Slavery in North Africa and Morocco did not end with a single identifiable event as it did in other contexts such as the United States, it was a prolonged process – unmarked by a specific event or law decree (Goodman, 2012) – most policies were rather gradualist and mostly implemented during the French rule (1912- 1956). New regulation introduced by the French Protectorate prohibited the public trade of slaves but rarely interfered in the private sphere,

mainly elite Moroccan households who continued to purchase and hold slaves. Most slaves in Morocco during the colonial period were domestic slaves, although there were some military slaves and others working in farms. It appears that most slaves were used as a status symbol, a way to impose the political and elite powers held by the affluent families of early 20th century Morocco (Goodman 101). The ownership of slaves and the prevalence of the practice did not serve an economic purpose as they did in the context of the United States for example. “By contrast, though there were "drudge" and military slaves in then independent Morocco, present research suggests the preponderance of slaves at this time worked within households, serving as more of a consummation of political and aristocratic power than as a material basis of economic power or state structures” (Goodman 102). The Occupation of Timbuktu in the late 19th century made it more difficult for Arab and Moroccan slave traders to traffic slaves from sub-Saharan Africa. Along with colonial warfare, this led to an increase in the capture of Moroccan rural slaves. Additionally, by reintroducing a state tax on all farmers, some families living in the rural regions of Morocco struggled to survive, forcing them to sell some of their own children to slave traders (Goodman 112). There is here a strong parallel between colonial era rural slavery in Morocco, and the more recent phenomenon where rural families in as recently as 2014 were forcing their young daughters to become domestic workers for their families to survive financially.

The presence of domestic slaves in Morocco was reinforced by the French Protectorate not only because warfare had led to the capture of rural slaves, but also because French administrators deliberately ignored the private trade of slaves and their ownership and were instructed not to interfere in slave affairs. “Local French administrators embarked upon what continued to be a remarkably vague anti-slavery program, based upon social continuity and

political interests. Officially the Protectorate opposed the slave trade, yet practical realities encouraged administrators to avoid involvements with and acknowledgements of slavery" (Goodman 105). This approach stood in stark contrast with French ideals of liberty under which their occupation of Morocco and many other African nations was justified. "The Protectorate's association with the Moroccan monarchy and slave owning elites entailed not only the suspension of the French ideal of liberty, but also the active management and manipulation of knowledge and representations of slavery" (Goodman 101).

By ignoring slave trade and presence in domestic contexts, the French occupation of Morocco played a role in reproducing and reinforcing slavery as an oppressive institution. Furthermore, the parallels between domestic slavery during the colonial era and the current situation for domestic workers in Morocco uncover a deeply rooted perception of domestic labor in the Moroccan imaginary that undervalues the work and workers that perform it and normalizes the entitlement to the prestige of having a domestic worker.

I argue that it is this recent history of slave ownership among Moroccan elites did not culminate in the full abolition of institutions of slavery, but rather these same institutions were transformed and reimagined to produce the current structures of domestic labor and human trafficking in Morocco. I believe that the subordination of the human body has been transferred and transformed through the generations. In some stark parallels, Moroccans to this day continue to participate in practices that are dangerously close to slave trade. While in the previous centuries open slave markets were common in main cities, particularly Meknes, cities to this day in Morocco have commonly known market places where domestic workers, potential employers and most importantly "traders" or "middlemen" conduct business. Such a market place is located in the neighborhood of Ain Chok in Casablanca (Kadiri). The term "Semsar" is used to describe

men who play the roles of intermediaries between job seekers and employers, for sizeable commission paid to them by both. Although the practice is far more voluntary than the slave trade of the previous century, the visual similarities between both market places translate into the continued commodification of women's labor and their bodies. The fact that women seeking domestic work must be paraded in a small park while the potential affluent employers pick their choice, is disturbingly close to what some historical reports have shown while describing slave trade in Morocco.

Morocco's dark history of slavery serves as an explanation for the current status of domestic workers in the Moroccan society. However, the French intervention during the protectorate period shows that beside local tradition, colonialism also played a role in reproducing the structures that were carried out through history. The French government purposefully turned a blind eye to the practice in order to maintain their relations with the Moroccan elite, and purposefully contradicted their own political agendas of spreading liberation and human rights. In this self-serving, contradicting maneuver, colonialist powers actively participated in the reproduction and propagation of social and political dynamics that reinforced Morocco's status as the locus of oppressions towards domestic workers.

Gender Identity Politics and the French Protectorate:

Personal rights and status were frequently gender based in traditional societies like in Morocco. But the Moroccan society itself was not the locus of one singular identity or tradition, it was split into three ethno-religious identities: Arab Muslims, Berbers (also Muslim), and Moroccan Jewish people (Wyrtzen 221). The case of Morocco can show how colonial states exploited pre-existing gender inequalities and gender-specific regulations in efforts to maintain social boundaries and divisions among occupied peoples. The Introduction of new ideals of

liberty was and continues to be one of the major pretexts under which occupying powers justify the colonialization of free nations. As Morocco became a French Protectorate, French administrators began to use the status of women in Morocco as a tool for both justifying their presence and appeasing the native patriarchal society. As its new state regulations began to affect some of the most intimate parts of Moroccan women's lives, including birth, marriage and death as new regulations on hygiene and child care were introduced, the French administration focused on reinforcing a patriarchal social order, out of fear of provoking unrest (Wyrtzen 221). It focused on the stabilization of a patriarchal political order instead of introducing emancipatory policies that would have transformed the lives of Moroccan women.

For example, the protectorate had set up two distinct court systems, one for French and European individuals, and another, split into three sub categories was distinguished by ethno-religious identity: Muslim, Berber and Jewish. Each of these three types of courts relied on gender as a primary criterion in delineation of personal status rights (Wyrtzen 223). Each court system had different provisions for men and women (regarding dowries, divorce, inheritance, and ownership etc.), all based on the distinct legal traditions of each group (Jewish, Muslim and Berber). "The distinct personal status provisions for women in the three legal traditions thereby served as primary classificatory mechanisms through which the colonial state enforced its logics of legibility" (Wyrtzen 222). These gender distinctions based on legal traditions were key mechanisms used by the colonial powers to reify divisions between the three major different Moroccan identities. For example, in a book written by a French education expert in Morocco, Berber women who, unlike Arab women, were not forced to wear the veil and "enjoyed much wider liberties" than Arab Muslim women, enabled the Berber populations to represent a society

"better suited for progress" as opposed to Arab Muslims who were shackled by Islam (Wyrtzen 222).

Presenting the Berber woman as a "liberated ideal" strongly reinforced some of the pre-existing oppressions that they faced. For example, they had no minimum marriage age, no right to divorce and few or no property rights. The positioning of the Berber woman as liberated prevented any new regulations from being introduced that could reinforce or protect their rights. So, the intervention of the colonial powers led to the further legitimization of preexisting traditional oppressions of women in Morocco. For both colonial and local actors, the "Moroccan woman" functioned as a critical and contested site for maintaining and reproducing social boundaries and collective identity in Moroccan society. During the colonial period, the Moroccan woman became a unified concept, that obscured the multiplicity of Moroccan identities and experiences.

What this means is that colonial powers used the status of women in the various cultural traditions existing within Morocco to create the image of the "ideal Moroccan society", and to reinforce political and cultural divisions among the different identity groups in Morocco. Therefore, the colonial powers used the different statuses of Moroccan women to not only legitimize their coloniality, but to contradict France's own ideals for liberation and justice. The colonialists' insistence on differentiating between ethno-religious groups in Morocco during the Protectorate period, allowed for there to be a multitude of different jurisdictions under which women would fall, each jurisdiction having its own legal traditions regarding the status and rights of women. What this did is that it prevented changes in women's legal status, as well as movement between these different identities. The Mudawana, Morocco's personal status code,

still relies on ethno-religious identity to differentiate between Moroccan individuals in matters of gender related codes and laws.

The French colonialists also used Moroccan girls' education as a mechanism to maintain the legality of their occupation as well as avoid unrest among the natives. By opening girls' schools that focused on teaching crafts that were traditionally made by women, the French protectorate provided the Moroccan society with a regulated way of preparing young girls to become perfect Moroccan housewives. French and European and Jewish Moroccan girls attended French schools that taught academic subjects such as math and science and languages. Although women's oppressed status in Morocco pre-dated the country's French occupation, it was structures built by this occupation that reinforced this oppressed status and prevented it from following a liberating path as it did in other non-colonized Western societies.

Conclusion

If you want to show off how rich you are, hire a Filipina nanny. This is the discourse that seems to have infiltrated Morocco's elite's imaginary. The bodies and identities of Filipina women are used as a commodity to show off one's wealth. In Morocco's most commonly used care and domestic work online platform babysitting.ma (A French language website), there is an entire page dedicated to Filipina nationals. The presence of Filipina care workers in Morocco, is indicative of what many feminists have claimed lies at the heart of the gendered nature of care work and the gendered oppressions faced by care workers. The fact that wealthy families of one Third World nation are importing and exploiting a large group of care workers from another Third World nation shows that the disparities in the flow of care work migration are not simply economic, they are the result of the fact that care work continues to be viewed and reinforced as work that can only be done by women. This phenomenon is also highly indicative of the fact that domestic labor is influenced by and influences the racialization of the bodies that perform it. Certain types of work become associated with certain types of bodies, ethnicities or identities which can directly lead to the development and reproduction of racial stereotypes.

There is an evident commodification of the Philippine identity by the Moroccan elite and other societies. While feminist discourse addresses some of the ways in which structures of globalization and neoliberalism contribute to this commodification of identities and migrant domestic labor, the discourse does not question power structures that contribute to this oppressive commodification that are products and results of local traditions and notions. This research project has revealed that although the oppressions faced by migrant domestic workers are indeed results of neoliberal and globalizing political and economic policies, these policies tend to often work in conjunction with local traditional views of gender, race and labor.

Additionally, feminist discourse only problematizes the imbalances in the care labor chain when it comes to wealthier nations being the receiving nations. The discourse completely ignores the fact that migrant care workers travel not only to wealthy nations, but also to other nations in the Global South to provide care labor to affluent households. The fact that the flow of care labor migration is not only from poor nations to wealthy nations but also between Third World nations, shows that the issue is not only one of economic disparity, but that it is also a race and gender issue, in a much wider sense than previously recognized.

As I have shown in the third chapter, an example of this is the fact that the English language is overvalued in the global labor market, and therefore drives some affluent families to rely on the labor and teaching of Filipina domestic workers due to their fluency in the language. What complicates this issue further is that colonial powers played a significant role in reinforcing and transferring some of the traditional notions on race and gender that I mention in the same chapter. The role played by the French colonization of Morocco in the continuation of the slavery institution as well as the further marginalization of the status of women and the reinforcement of the gender lines along which personal rights were determined in pre-colonial Moroccan society, is one that indicates that there are several power structures at work when it comes to the marginalization and oppression of migrant domestic workers. Furthermore, these structures tend to depend on one another in their creation, reproduction and continuation.

Part of feminist discourse also places the lack of government funded child care and health programs at the root of this imbalance. Because governments are not providing citizens with options for care for their children, are not providing new parents with adequate paid parental leaves, and do not provide affordable health care, parents, especially mothers, find themselves having to choose between maintaining careers or caring for their children. This discourse is only

somewhat accurate. Its focus on only households or families that can afford to hire migrant care workers in order for mothers to keep their jobs and be “liberated” leads to the complete effacement of child care and healthcare issues that marginalized families have to face. In addition, they do not problematize the feminization of care work and its positioning as women’s work. By showing that care labor is a political issue, it erases the fact that it is also a social and cultural issue, an issue of gender where the males of society are not held accountable for their lack of participation and involvement.

While reflecting on the causes that may create the opportunity for oppressions of migrant domestic worker, it is important to also reflect on the actions and policies that can be introduced into the global migrant domestic labor market to avoid such oppressions. The fact that some families rely of the work of migrant women is not problematic, what is problematic is the situations some of these women find themselves in due to various factors that I discuss in this thesis project. The mission that feminism must undertake in its analysis and problematization of domestic labor, is to identify the sources of this form of gendered and racialized oppression outside of the Western context, and outside of the neoliberal and globalized context. Feminists need to recognize and acknowledge that local norms about labor, genders, race, violence, authority and power can equally create opportunities of oppression. In doing so, feminism can further problematize and dismantle global networks of oppression.

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