

Traveling Yellow Peril: Race, Gender, and Empire in Japan's English Teaching Industry

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Chris, a 42-year-old white man from the U.S. West Coast, had been living in Japan for eight years when I spoke with him. During our three-hour semistructured interview he described a long line of bad luck, marked most memorably by a rocky U.S.-based employment record and a history of run-ins with the Japanese police. Despite these setbacks, he had recently been offered a lucrative, direct-hire, English teaching position by a local public school district. When marveling about his stroke of good luck, Chris presented a vision that was to reappear throughout my fieldwork with U.S. citizens working in Japan's English teaching industry: the specter of Filipino labor threat. In his own words:

This job . . . two hundred people applied for and I got it, which is cool. But they confirmed for me also there's all these people from non-native English-speaking countries who have master's degrees, from the Philippines and stuff like that, and [they] have experience and they're willing, they're more than happy, to do it for chicken feed, because for them it's not chicken feed.¹

Chris's focus on job qualifications betrayed a concern about whether his own checkered past would undermine his competitiveness. The key factor that presumably gave him a competitive advantage was his ability to uncomplicatedly

inhabit the category of “native English speaker,” an identification that he denied to people from the Philippines. During my two years of fieldwork in Nagoya’s English-language expatriate venues (2009–11), the ambivalent status of Filipino English ability routinely took center stage when the U.S. men I met cast Filipinos, and specifically Filipinas, as yellow peril harbingers of an impending loss of transnational white male privilege.

Recurrent anxieties about increasing Filipina presence within Japan’s English teaching industry highlight the confluence of multiple discursive histories of postcolonial inequality. The exclusion of Filipina/os² from the native English teacher category aligns with the *longue durée* histories of colonialism and racism that have shaped who is imagined as a legitimate bearer of “western” knowledge and the worry about job competitiveness indexes rising concerns about neoliberal policies that have produced increasingly precarious living conditions for the majority of workers in Japan, a country that has been in an economic slump for more than two decades.³ On a demographic level, transnationally mobile Filipina migrants have become a potent sign of the flexibilization of the global labor market.⁴ The vast majority of Filipina/os living in Japan are women (79%), while the majority of U.S. citizens working long-term in the country are men (≤73%).⁵ Hence, fearful responses to neoliberal scarcity that echo much older “nativist” desires to protect white male labor power in the United States take on new gendered meanings, while also intersecting with the historical traces of U.S. civilizing missions across Asia.

Asian American studies scholars have demonstrated that since the nineteenth century both Asian geopolitical spaces and mobile Asian bodies have served as phantasmic screens for the projection of fears about the loss of masculine, white integrity within the domestic United States. Whether portrayed as a deceptive seductress, an emasculated coolie, or an inhuman or infectious horde, “Asia” has served as a flexible amalgamation of racialized, feminized menace.⁶ At the same time, Asia has also been a central geopolitical arena for U.S. civilizing missions, which have transitioned from first saving Asians from supposed barbarism to later saving the region from the deleterious effects of Soviet influence and, more recently, rescuing Asian leaders from potential skepticism about free market globalization. In this way, Asians have alternately served as objects of fear and peril and as objects of U.S. rescue and education. Histories of U.S. engagement in both Japan and the Philippines have alternated between these twinned poles of racialized paternalism and racialized panic.⁷ When Filipina and U.S. migrants meet within the triangulated space of contemporary Japan, these discursive histories come together to create a uniquely “threatening” position for Filipinas, who can be imagined as employing the cultural traces of U.S. “benevolent assimilation” efforts (i.e., fluency in English and familiarity with U.S.-style customs and institutions) to compete with their former colonizers in a global marketplace that has naturalized the devaluation of racialized and feminized labor.

This case highlights how the gendering of colonial racial dynamics bleeds into the gendering of contemporary neoliberal precarity. Within neoliberal

globalization, Asian women have been cast as the ideal “‘flexible,’ ‘casual,’ ‘docile’ workforce.”⁸ We must pay attention to this construction, which is key to understanding how U.S. American men experience Filipinas as threats. Especially for U.S. men working long term in Japan’s flexibilizing English language industry, desires to fulfill the role of heterosexual breadwinner underwrite fears of Filipina labor competition. Following Lisa Lowe in *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, I theorize “neoliberalism as imbricated in coloniality” and highlight the connections between different historical logics of feminized Asia.⁹ Race, nationality, and gender come together here to shape U.S. migrants’ concerns about economic opportunity in ways that both echo and update older versions of yellow peril, recasting racialized and gendered fears within a decidedly transnational frame of neoliberal scarcity and postcolonial encounter.¹⁰

This article demonstrates how, within the triangulated space of Japan, fears of endangered white male earning power are routed through 1) worried invocations of Filipinas’ liminal status as “colonial mimics” of the English language and 2) an implicit recognition of how Filipina labor has been unfairly devalued within the global economy. Despite these recognitions, it was often difficult for my informants to conceptualize the future outside of a white male victim narrative. If, as Homi Bhabha argues, “mimicry is at once resemblance and menace,”¹¹ then fear of Filipina English ability highlights again how colonial relations remain structuring forces within neoliberal globalization’s affective economies.

During U.S. colonization of the Philippines, “benevolent assimilation” policies positioned Filipino men as infantilized colonial mimics—“little brown brothers” in need of American tutelage.¹² However, as Bhabha argues, the “colonial authority” engendered within the call to mimicry is inherently unstable.¹³ In other words, *benevolent assimilation holds within it the seeds of yellow peril*. When imagined as a threat to contemporary “free” white male labor, the figure of the Filipina English teacher in Japan stands at the intersection of these two histories. As the feminized hybrid subject of “the yellow peril” and “the little brown brother,” Filipinas are positioned as beneficiaries of a U.S. paternalism that is in constant danger of losing its authority.

As bodies and ideas travel across time and space their meanings are simultaneously transformed and haunted by the past. The exclusionary logic of the “*native* English teacher” category echoes the anti-Asian “nativist” movements of the early-twentieth-century United States by transnationalizing visions of beleaguered American labor. At the same time, the specter of neoliberal postcolonial encounter allows for the transnational mobility of “white male victimhood” discourses that are a more recent phenomenon in the United States. As a form of backlash against the limited successes of the civil rights and feminist movements, these victimhood discourses often blame women and people of color for the effects of global economic restructuring.¹⁴ The “*native* English teacher” category, however, allows for the maintenance of U.S. white male privilege under the guise of supposedly race and gender-neutral market logics.

In tracing such continuities, this article takes seriously Edward Said's argument in "Travelling Theory" that, "no system or theory exhausts the situation out of which it emerges or to which it is transported."¹⁵ Methodologically, a focus on discursive mobility requires a cultural studies insistence on "radical contextualization," alongside close readings of interview and fieldwork evidence.¹⁶ I explore both the specificity of the situation in Japan and the historical and theoretical continuities that link U.S. migrants to social dynamics in North America and to U.S. colonial endeavors in the Philippines. This approach brings together literatures that are not often in conversation, including American studies scholarship on masculinity, race, and empire and Japan studies scholarship on gender, labor politics, and U.S. influence. The analysis aligns with recent scholarship in transnational American studies by exploring how U.S. empire and racial and gender hierarchies shape affective economies and discursive milieus in North America and beyond.¹⁷

While other scholars of Asian/American studies increasingly ask the important question "How do Yellow Peril fears survive in the political culture of the U.S., Great Britain, and 'the West'?"¹⁸ this article asks: How have yellow peril fears traveled, emerging in spaces outside of the United States, or "the West"? When made mobile, how do these fears intersect with and feed off the historical traces of U.S. cultural and economic imperialism? Given the realities of increased transnational mobility and triangulated postcolonial encounter, it is important that we consider cases like this one in Japan, where both the tenacity of yellow peril discourses and their adaptability to the neoliberal moment of postcolonial encounter become starkly visible. As white men from the United States try to make sense of what it means to "compete" with *or* work alongside former U.S.-colonial subjects while abroad, their anxieties index both the gender and race politics of neoliberal globalization, which relies so heavily on the systematically devalued labor of Asian women, *and* the discursive and material traces of U.S. colonial expansions.

In what follows I first present an overview of the race, nationality, gender, and labor politics of Japan's increasingly precarious English language employment field before exploring how (post-)colonial anxieties coalesce around the "native English speaker" category. My fieldwork across multiple venues in the city of Nagoya (labor union, expatriate business groups, and expat bars) introduced me to a variety of perspectives on the changing job field. Overall, I conducted in-depth, semistructured interviews with sixty-five U.S. migrants living in the region, forty-two of whom were white men.¹⁹ After introducing how informants' understood their own positions vis-à-vis Filipina competition, the article situates these anxieties historically and sociologically by considering how contemporary patterns of labor and migration connect to earlier colonial interventions in the Philippines. The article then examines how a multiplicity of "feminizations" haunt this case, instigating the transnational expansion of white male victimhood discourses. This analytical arc demonstrates how U.S. migrants in Japan can mobilize and make mobile the gendered and racialized

anxieties endemic to North American responses to neoliberalism, thus updating white nativist and backlash discourses for a new context.

Flexible Labor Regimes and Devalued Laborers

I was introduced to white U.S. migrants' concerns about Filipino competition during the first meeting of the local English teacher's labor union that I attended. While lamenting the regulatory loopholes that conversation schools and dispatch companies use to shortchange teachers of health care benefits, the white attendees twice cited Filipina/os as an ominous presence within the industry, a presence that could potentially contribute to decreased wages and lowered instructional standards for all. As documented in my field notes:

In response to the list of loopholes, union member Dan interjected on an optimistic note: "The contracts will become less lucrative and people will be less willing" to sign on. One unknown white guy across the table quickly averred, "Not native English speakers" but "Chinese, Filipinos," and others will take the jobs. David, another union member, then focused specifically on Filipinos, noting that while their English isn't "perfect," "they can speak English better than Japanese people" can, and that is often enough to get the job.²⁰

While the labor union itself aimed to organize and unite workers across race and nationality differences the vast majority of members and meeting attendees were white men from, the United States, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. These men, like Dan and David who were both from the United States, often harbored understandable fears about the proliferation of dispatch, outsourced, subcontracted, and other contingent hiring schemes within the industry, a pattern that has become increasingly visible since the early naughts. Concerns about Filipino presence in the industry's less prestigious, more feminized employment niches were shaped by this broader context of neoliberal restructuring and flexibilization of labor.

Devalued niches were visible in a diversity of English teaching employment sectors. Speaking about their specifically Filipina colleagues during both interviews and informal interactions, informants (union and nonunion members alike) subcontracted to teach in public schools noted that Filipinas were more often placed in elementary schools than in junior high and high schools. Some men implied that this was because Japanese employers considered "native speakers" better able to prepare junior high and high school students for their life-determining entrance exams. Although gender was not examined as a factor, this pattern also reflects the feminization and devaluation of early childhood education careers more broadly. When focusing on adult English schools, union members often noted that Filipina teachers were more likely

to be employed by companies that used indirect (subcontracted or dispatched) hiring schemes with lower salaries. Finally, some interviewees working within private preschools and cram schools noted that their Filipina colleagues were only ancillary teachers who oversaw playtime and warm-up exercises and had little input into curricular decisions and lesson planning. I did meet Filipina teachers who worked in more prestigious positions—at universities in Nagoya, for example—but my informants *did not* invoke these examples. Instead, Filipinas' marginal economic and linguistic positioning took center stage as presumably intertwined phenomena.

Over the last three decades, scholarship within the field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) has attempted to problematize the kind of exclusionary thinking that would (ideologically and economically) devalue Filipino English language abilities. Braj Kachru's influential "World Englishes" model, for example, categorizes English speakers into three groups: "the inner circle" (Britain and its former settler colonies), "the outer circle" (postcolonial India, Singapore, the Philippines, etc.), and "the expanding circle" (countries where English is learned as a foreign language, like Japan).²¹ Although this classification scheme attempts to recognize and validate the diversity of Englishes spoken in our postcolonial era, by separating out postcolonial spaces it reproduces the very hierarchies it attempts to question. The use of the "native English speaker" category in Japan further problematizes this center-periphery model. Two of my older interviewees, Gabe and Nick, pointed this out, explaining that because they "weren't considered native speakers,"²² Japanese employers would refuse to hire Filipinas unless their own U.S.-origin white male bodies stood in to vouch for and legitimate Filipina language ability. Nick even invoked Kachru's terms, asking "are we going to hire blonde, blue-eyed Americans, or is it okay to hire people who are from, you know, 'the expanding circle'?"²³

Nick's quick slippage from race ("blonde hair, blue eyed") to self-consciously air-quoted references to nationality represents a small-scale performance of the kinds of confluences endemic to discussions of inequality within Japan's English industry. Gabe provided a similarly dense set of merged categories:

They [Japanese employers] only want white English-speakers. And they can't say that. . . . Of course if you're a black person from the U.S., of course they'll hire you. I mean, they'll hire you because you're American, basically. . . . [But] there's lots of Filipino teachers looking for work because Japanese will not hire them. But if I go to a Japanese person to say, "Listen, I know you think most Filipinos can't speak English, and maybe you're right, but for some fluke *she's* very good and I recommend her." And then they take her. They will hire her.²⁴

Within Gabe's awkward attempts at explaining the categories of privilege in Japan's English teaching industry, we can hear echoes of the racialization of U.S. national belonging. In their reverberation across the Pacific these echoes continue to position African Americans as afterthoughts and white Americans as the normative center. Asian Americans and all other U.S. racial identities go completely unacknowledged, thus transplanting the black-white binary abroad. The normativity of U.S. American whiteness has been a constitutive part of hegemonic U.S.-Japan relations broadly conceived and, on a smaller scale, Japan's English teaching industry in particular.²⁵ While Britain and its western settler colonies are routinely constructed as racially distinct and linguistically homogenous (white and English-speaking) transnational labor pools, Jamaica, Singapore, India, and the Philippines, for instance, are implicitly written out of this labor pool, despite intersecting English-language traditions. Gabe's awkward wording, far from being the idiosyncratic phrasing of one individual, points to broader social dynamics and performs the kind of discursive exclusions that plague the categories "American" and "native English teacher."

Gabe's use of feminine pronouns to describe his hypothetical Filipina/o English teacher represents one of the few times my informants used overtly gendered language to describe the dynamics of Filipina employment in the industry. This pronoun choice mirrors the very real gender skew of migrant demographics—over the last three decades Filipina women have moved to Japan in large numbers as sex workers and brides.²⁶ While not overtly acknowledged by Gabe, his language choices index how gender, race, and nationality combine to construct him as a more desired and authoritative speaker of English. In describing how he worked as a *middleman*—subcontracting Filipinas out to Japanese employers who would otherwise not hire them—he also highlighted one of the routes through which some Filipinas come to inhabit more precarious and lower salaried employment niches in the first place.

While some white male U.S. migrants I interacted with feared that an influx of Filipinas into the industry might lead to a devaluation of the field overall, Gabe emphasized how nationality and race still create a privileged position for well-connected, older, white, U.S. American men like himself, even as flexible labor policies proliferate across the industry. After all, he was able to profit monetarily when placing Filipinas in teaching positions. Again, economic precarity is transnationally produced and stratified along lines of race, gender, nationality, sexuality, age, and class.²⁷ Likewise, concerns about *who* has to live with precarity are also unevenly distributed.²⁸ For most of my U.S. informants in Nagoya, the devaluation of racialized, feminized labor from the Global South was only worrying inasmuch as it threatened to downgrade their own market value. In this context, the "native English speaker" category provides a framework for legitimizing racial and imperial hierarchies by distinguishing between Filipina subjects and U.S. citizens. The "racial capitalism" at work within this iteration of U.S.-led globalization is haunted by traces of U.S. empire.²⁹

Native Speakers and Colonial Mimics

Homi Bhabha's theorizations of "colonial mimicry" are especially helpful for understanding how Filipinas' questionable ("non-native") mastery of English potentially threatens U.S. "colonial authority" in contemporary Japan. With an "almost the same but not quite" mastery of English, Filipina mimicry incites "a discourse at the crossroads of what is known and permissible and that which though known must be kept concealed."³⁰ We can see this play of concealment and disclosure within Gabe's narrative, as he provides no indication that he ever attempts to unilaterally address Japanese employers' racist ideas about Filipina English ability. Instead, his description individualizes the skills of his particular Filipina employees as "flukes" and thereby encourages Japanese interlocutors to persist in their beliefs. After all, if Japanese employers were successfully convinced to reconsider their disdain for Filipina English teachers more generally, Gabe's (colonial) *authority* within the employment hierarchy would be undermined—there would be little need for U.S. citizen gatekeepers to vouch for Filipina employability. As Japanese employers, in Gabe's words, "cannot say" that they want to hire white English teachers, the discursive structure of colonial mimicry also requires that *he* conceal any recognition of generalized Filipina similarity to shore up his own authority.

I witnessed a comparable dynamic when attending a conference for an organization dedicated to supporting the English teaching field in Japan. In response to the increase in contingent hiring practices, a subgroup of English teaching activists (all of whom appeared to be white men) devoted one conference session to developing a proposal that the organization "should not advertise dispatch or outsourced positions" for secondary and tertiary education, "to encourage quality in education."³¹ They also developed a proposal for excluding advertisements that stated race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, or age requirements for employment. The most well-known activist in the room, a white man originally from the United States, suggested that "native speaker" be added to this list, because, as he explained, "there are some places that won't accept people unless they're from white countries," and these employers use the "native speaker" category to justify their racial discrimination. While this clumsy reference to "white countries" emphasizes the racialization of postcolonial spaces and reproduces the common erasure of racial diversity within western countries, it does so in the service of antiracist solidarity. Even as many people in the room agreed that condemnation of the "native speaker" category might disrupt racist, imperial exclusions, a louder (and overlapping) constituency argued that the entire employment sector relies on this very category for legitimation.

As one attendee pointed out: "Being *native* English teachers is . . . our niche."³² Others in the room agreed: it is the category that ensures them jobs and defines the ineffable skill set that makes them desirable and different from *Japanese* teachers of English. Even when these white men ostensibly

wanted to stand in solidarity with Filipina/o and other postcolonial subjects, the structure of colonial mimicry extended out to construct English-fluent *Japanese* subjects also as menace. Such an expansion of the sphere of perceived threat indexes the temporal contradictions at the heart of the “*post-colonial*.”³³ While this terminology can simplistically relegate the colonial era to the *past* and define colonized spaces as those that were *once* objects of territorialized control, many scholars argue that the seemingly deterritorialized rubric of neoliberal globalization allows for colonialism of a different but structurally continuous variety.³⁴ If Japan “is still under the *colonial domination*” of the United States and global English-language dominance is characteristic of “linguistic imperialism,”³⁵ then English-fluent Japanese can also be imagined as a “*menace*” within the terms of colonial mimicry.

The proposal to add “native English speaker” to the list of unacceptable categories for job advertisements was shot down. Despite their stated desire to stand in solidarity with Filipina/o, Jamaicans, Indians, and other English speakers from racialized former colonies, the embeddedness of the English language industry within *continuing* imperial dynamics meant that standing in solidarity would undermine these white men’s authority in other, even more threatening ways. Japanese English teachers in Japan, after all, far outnumber potential job competitors from countries like the Philippines. Again, the sphere of the “say-able” is circumscribed by the very logic of colonial mimicry, which calls for Japanese subjects to be *students* of English, while fearing those who might master the language enough to themselves become *teachers*.

The limitations of these efforts to include Filipina/o—both at the level of individual gatekeepers like Gabe and at the level of institutional policy—highlight the racial contradictions at the heart of both “benevolent assimilation” policies and (neo)liberal aspirations to market neutrality and equality. The English-language education system established in the Philippines under U.S. colonial direction was meant to produce racialized mimic subjects who inhabited a clear racial hierarchy of “not quite/not white.”³⁶ Despite and because of this hierarchy, U.S. colonial efforts were envisioned as compassionate. As these white men in contemporary Japan attempt to (provisionally, haltingly) open up the English industry to postcolonial subjects, they are *still* positioned as “benevolent” patriarchs. The line where, out of economic self-interest, they partially back away from this stance of “benevolence” overtly marks the continuing importance of racial hierarchy within neoliberal relations. Indeed, in both attempts at postcolonial inclusiveness and invocations of Filipina threat we can see how the legacies of benevolent assimilation haunt contemporary neoliberal relations.

Rerouting the Return of the Colonial Oppressed

When Filipina English teachers are the focus of yellow peril discourses, their credentials—procured within the Philippines’ U.S.-model education system—serve as prime indicators of their mastery and potential threat. Chris,

in the quotation that opens this article, contradictorily assumes that the Filipinas with “master’s degrees” and “experience” who had applied for his well-paid elementary school job would actually be willing to work for so much less. I heard a similar invocation while attending an expatriate business meeting targeted at aspiring foreign entrepreneurs. In a pitch for the importance of self-employment, a white, U.S. owner of an international preschool warned the audience, which was mostly “native English teacher” men, about his changing applicant pool. Filipinas with master’s degrees in childhood education were now applying for the positions that he usually offered to inexperienced young people fresh out of undergraduate institutions in North America, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.³⁷ In these invocations of credentials and work experience, the historical feminization and devaluation of early childhood education careers intersects with Filipina postcolonial status to quietly amplify anxieties about decreased wages. Multiple feminizations, of postcolonial subjects and of care work, come together to naturalize the idea that Filipinas work for, in Chris’s words, “chickenfeed.”

Because it was omitted from his presentation for the aspiring businessmen, I learned only later in a one-on-one conversation with him that the preschool owner had never actually hired any of the Filipinas who applied for jobs at his school. He explained sheepishly that, despite their excellent credentials, he had not felt comfortable with the Filipina applicants because of difficulty understanding their accents and a concern with “cultural differences”—especially potential complications to his set curriculum around holidays and national celebrations. In this “partial representation/recognition of the colonial object,”³⁸ Filipinas are represented as threat (when described in front of an audience of mostly white English teachers) while in reality their presumed threat has not been allowed to come to fruition. Indeed, all the men I spoke with who invoked these discourses were themselves (still) gainfully employed. The constant deferral of peril into the (imagined) future indexes a key structural component of “race panic.”³⁹ The most perilous consequences foretold are constantly deferred, thus fueling the cyclical reproduction of the discourse.

With these invocations of educational background, Filipina English teachers in Japan are implicitly cast as (potentially) benefiting from colonial era “benevolent assimilation” policies. The entry of Filipinas into the English language industry figures as a potent “return of the colonial oppressed,” with Filipinas deploying the lessons of colonialism (i.e., English fluency) against their former masters.⁴⁰ This Freudian turn of phrase simultaneously evokes the affective (often fantastical) nature of yellow peril and the transnational mobility (the “return”) that spurs its contemporary invocations. As scholars within Filipino American studies have shown, the remainders of U.S. colonial policies are key to understanding the transnational mobility of Filipino workers within neoliberal globalization. Colonial education regimes not only “produced a kind of culture of migration among many Filipinos,”⁴¹ but Philippine government agencies actively market Filipino workers to migrant-receiving countries with

promises that “American colonial education adequately served its purpose and even exceeded it.”⁴² Such celebratory framings of U.S. intervention in the Philippines papers over both past imperial violence and continuing capitalist exploitation. Instead of focusing attention on how the “return” continues to hierarchically position Filipina migrants as exploitable labor, my informants’ invocations of credentials implicitly emphasize what Vicente Rafael calls “white love”—the myth of U.S. colonial benevolence—by framing the U.S.-model education system as a gift that supposedly keeps giving.⁴³

Within the broader context of Japan’s English industry, the traces of U.S. colonial policies and their unexpected reroutings and “returns” were perhaps most visible in what was by far the cheapest option for commercial English language instruction I encountered: lessons via Skype video conferencing. An Internet search in Japanese for “Learn English by Skype” brings up an array of businesses of this type, and the websites routinely emphasize that they hire “mostly current students and graduates of the University of the Philippines.”⁴⁴ During my fieldwork at an expatriate bar I met a middle-aged Japanese engineer who actually owned one of these offshore English schools, which charged Japanese students 137 yen (U.S. \$1.56) per 25-minute lesson with English-fluent Filipinas in Manila.⁴⁵ He described how he had bought the business without ever traveling to the Philippines and was still quite confused by the dynamics behind it: “All the women studied nursing, every application, nursing, nursing,” he explained while presenting exaggerated gestures for filling out and submitting paperwork. “I don’t understand!”⁴⁶

This moment of confusion highlights the kinds of misrecognitions that can happen when different postcolonial dynamics rub up against each other. These professions —nursing and in-home English instruction—seemed like odd bedfellows to the Japanese business owner. However, both are characterized by intimate encounters, as Filipinas service and care for the needs and desires of their English students *and* their patients, often at radically undervalued salaries. Indeed, the Skype English lesson provides an uncanny example of how “colonialism sustains relations of intimacy across great distances.”⁴⁷ Teaching English to Japanese students represents a geographic and professional rerouting of what Catherine Ceniza Choy calls an “empire of care.”⁴⁸ While Choy argues that U.S. colonial policies created the conditions for mass migration of Filipina nurses to the United States,⁴⁹ instead of moving to the United States some would-be nurses are filling outsourced positions in Japan’s diversifying English teaching industry and filling them at salaries far below what could fulfill even the most basic living standards in the Global North.⁵⁰ This rerouting of employment also maps onto the multiplicity of postcolonial relations at work within this triangulated relationship. While both the Philippines and Japan have been subject to paternalizing U.S. control (through colonization and Occupation, respectively), the World War II history of Japanese colonization of the Philippines and Japan’s continuing economic dominance across the region creates multiple colonial subject positions for Filipina English teachers.⁵¹

Feminizations and Fears of White Emasculation

Following the insights of both humanities and social science scholars, we can see how “feminization,” as a devaluation process, shapes these transnational labor economies in a variety of ways. Perhaps most obviously for this case, we should be reminded of the gendering of Euro-American colonial expansion, which cast (post)colonial spaces and peoples as feminine and, therefore, in need of white masculine intervention and authority.⁵² Sociologists would point us to theories of workforce “feminization”—the systematic process of economic devaluation that often accompanies the influx of women workers into male-dominated professions.⁵³ Finally, Asian American studies scholarship would remind us of how these two forms of “feminization,” within labor *and* colonial relations, come together in the history of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century yellow peril discourses in the United States, with Asian/American men cast as feminized threats to the work and livelihood of white men.⁵⁴ Together these various gender dynamics provide a thick discursive backdrop for the devaluation of Asian women’s work within the contemporary international division of labor.

Although it is true that with “the global expansion of the capitalist mode, the racial and gendered character of labor has been further exaggerated, refined, and built into the regime itself,”⁵⁵ paying attention to earlier iterations of yellow peril can helpfully render strange the more familiar contemporary dynamics. Notably, Asian/American men working on the U.S. mainland in the late 1800s and early 1900s were both feminized and imagined as not properly “American.” Nativist rhetoric, like that seen on an American Federation of Labor brochure from 1902, contrasted “American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism,” sensationally asking “Which Shall Survive?”⁵⁶ National union leaders at the time, like Samuel Gompers, argued that “Every incoming coolie means the displacement of an American, and the lowering of the American standard of living.”⁵⁷ The rhetorical structure of debates about who gets to count as a “native English teacher” in contemporary Japan relies on similar “nativist” logics and narratives of masculinized whiteness (“American manhood”) being overtaken by a feminized Asia. While nineteenth-century yellow peril aimed to “protect” the racial purity and livelihood of the white male working class within the borders of the United States, this instance within contemporary Japan updates the discourse for a neoliberal era of multidirectional transnational mobility.

Integral to this analysis is not only the mobility of U.S. and Filipina bodies relocating to Japan, but also the accompanying movement and recombinant mutability of masculinity discourses. Research within U.S. masculinity studies has illuminated how the socioeconomic changes wrought by the rise of neoliberal globalization have been central to the construction of white men as victims within the domestic U.S. cultural wars of the past forty years.⁵⁸ As Hamilton Carroll argues, in the wake of “erosions of masculinist privilege at both the global and the national levels,” many “white men [in the United

States] place responsibility for a broad series of shifts in labor opportunity at the feet of the women and people of color who have displaced them.”⁵⁹ While my informants in Japan rarely espoused the kind of blatantly antifeminist, anti-civil rights backlash common in the U.S. cultural wars, “the coloniality of Western liberalism” means that even left-leaning condemnations of injustice easily slip from a focus on economic systems to a concern with threats to white masculinity.⁶⁰

These slippages were especially potent among the population of men who imagined themselves as “long termers” in Japan. Most U.S. migrants teach English in Japan only for the short term—enjoying a few years of “adventure” living abroad before returning home—and therefore express less concern about the increasing flexibilization of labor there. It is the long-term male residents, on the other hand, who often envisioned neoliberal labor policies as threatening to undermine their successful performance of breadwinner masculinity. Hetero-centric gender expectations informed men’s anxieties about their ability to support current or imagined future families in Japan. For example, Dan, a soft-spoken white man from California who I first met at the aforementioned union meeting, explained during our interview that he joined the union because he questioned the legality of the privatization of public school English teachers, but he also quickly noted that gender expectations provided a more personalized motivator. His small salary as an outsourced employee had upset both his and his Japanese wife’s assumptions about gender roles and had caused friction within his marriage. Although he lamented that his wife sometimes openly resented how low his financial contributions to the household were, he also admitted his own discomfort: “It’s a little embarrassing to have your wife making so much more than you—almost three times as much.”⁶¹

Another advocate for direct hire similarly referenced gender norms when explaining his non-union-affiliated activism: “There’s a lot of people [native English teachers] who are living locally that have families. They’re—the majority of them are male—they have married Japanese women. They’re being expected to have jobs and sustain their family because of the cultural issues of, you know, ‘man has job’” and outsourced hiring schemes make this difficult for them.⁶² The “cultural issues” that Tom references here are, of course, much more complex than just “man has job,” a knowingly simplified phrase meant to index expectations that heterosexual *married* men have not just *any* job but a job that will provide a stable, household income, slotting the family into Japan’s “male-breadwinner type of reproductive bargain.”⁶³

Feminist scholars have pointed out that it is precisely this reproductive bargain that helped produce irregular, contingent employment as a feminized realm in Japan in the first place. Official government policies have encouraged these structures, in that tax exemptions and welfare benefits accrue to married households where the wife’s income does not exceed 1,000,000 yen a year.⁶⁴ In the wake of the introduction of regulated dispatch labor in the 1980s and then the bursting of the economic bubble in the early 1990s, Japanese women’s share

of the temporary agency workforce decreased from a staggering 95% to a still high 80% by the turn of the century.⁶⁵ As these hiring schemes have continued to expand and include more and more men, the most vulnerable are Japanese youth, ethnic minorities, and foreigners.

Possessive Investments in Transnational White Privilege

For white men who are critical of these broader changes in employment trends and ostensibly desiring of social justice, together structural positioning and personal investments in privilege produce contradictory political analyses. One informant who was not a union member but identified as “far Left,” provided a particularly ambivalent self-reflexive analysis of transnational white privilege. Kyle, a white Midwestern man in his mid-twenties, had been in Japan for only a few years when I interviewed him. Unlike most recent arrivals, however, he was already fluent in the language, married to a Japanese woman, and imagining a future that would be inextricably defined by his connections to the country. His analysis begins from an overt recognition of a racialized “unfair advantage” that white English speakers experience in Japan’s labor market and globally:

I think there is an unfair advantage to people who are white and speak English to . . . be able to find a job, some kind of job, whether it’s teaching English or whatever, almost anywhere in the world. . . . a lot of people, especially in Japan, . . . their job and their life is almost *based* on that weird unfair advantage, and that’s eventually going to change. . . . In thirty years, fifty years, it’s no longer going to be considered a social asset to be white and American.⁶⁶

As was usually true, Kyle found it difficult to tease out the difference between privileges granted based on race, linguistic ability, and nationality, but, unlike most informants, he posits these associations and their ability to amplify transnational employability as decidedly unnatural or, in his words, “weird.” By maintaining that for most English-speaking, white migrants in Japan, “their job and their life is almost *based* on that weird unfair advantage,” Kyle’s initial analysis foreshadows a repetitive discomfort about the moral grounds upon which his own livelihood is based. Though initially using third person, referring to migrants like himself in general, he later overtly includes himself as part of a group that, despite their lack of “specific marketable skills,” are *still* able to “get good jobs and make good money.”⁶⁷

By relying on a deferred temporality that places the loss of white privilege in the future, “thirty years, fifty years” from now, Kyle’s analysis reveals the racial limitations of his leftist critique. While he implies that his predicted changes would make for a “fairer” world, he also fears that this “fairer” world

will be his own undoing. In other words, he simultaneously frames his vision of imminent racial justice as a *menacing* future of lost white privilege. In his critique of neoliberal labor trends, for instance, he envisions people like himself as the biggest losers:

I just don't know where people are going to find jobs [twenty years from now]. I think it's really scary and I think that people who are going to . . . bear the brunt of that are people with the liberal arts education from western countries. Because, if you don't have a very specific thing that you can do very well, I don't know if there is really going to be a place for you in the labor market.⁶⁸

In this imagined future, old structures of inequality based on race and nationality fall apart. Stripped of social identifications and defined only in market terms, workers in Kyle's vision become what Foucault, in his analysis of neoliberal subjectivity, calls "abilities-machines."⁶⁹ Humanities education, with its failure to reduce students to mere "human capital," will not fail everyone equally in this scenario. As people like himself are pushed out of well-paying jobs, others will supposedly "happily" take their place at lower wages:

Kyle: There's no reason that. . . . I'm trying to think of another country where they speak pretty standard English, where most people aren't Caucasian . . .

Christina: Singapore?

Kyle: Yeah, like Singapore. There is no reason . . . [pause] I mean a lot of people in the Philippines speak perfect English too. There's no reason you couldn't have Filipino ALTs [native English teachers in Japan's public schools] and pay them half as much money. You know that they'd be happy to come here and work for that.⁷⁰

Despite my initial referencing of the financial powerhouse of Singapore, Kyle quickly changed his focus to the Philippines. This geographic rerouting highlights the important role that North-South economic inequality plays in this version of yellow peril—these divides shore up assumptions that "Other" English-speaking migrants would be willing to work for less than the current going rate. The stark socioeconomic inequalities between western English-speaking countries and the Philippines was necessary to validate Kyle's presumptuous predictions about what Filipina/os would be "happy" to do. In turn, this "happiness" or presumed willingness to be exploited excludes Filipina/os and other third world workers from the suffering scripted for

western-educated (white) workers. Insisting that it is mostly white workers who will “bear the brunt” of neoliberal economic changes positions white pain, suffering, and capitalist exploitation as more grievable.

With a stay-at-home wife and a small child, Kyle discussed his dire predictions with trepidation. Faced with the impossible decision of choosing between his and his family’s well-being *or* the elimination of what he knows to be an unjust social system, he responded with a combination of fatalism and bewilderment, repeating throughout his despairing narrative, “I don’t know . . . I don’t know.” This is the discomforting vision that results when aspirations to “far Left” self-reflexivity get filtered through the prism of neoliberal subjectivity and an unexamined “possessive investment in whiteness.”⁷¹ Ultimately, he found himself incapable of thinking outside of an analytical arc that posits neoliberal globalization as the leveling of the playing field. Such an analytical arc obscures how actually existing neoliberal globalization has in fact exacerbated global inequalities. While neoliberal ideology would have us believe that free markets promise economically determined equality—a world in which everyone competes on equal terms based on their marketable skills—the distribution and recognition of those skills continue to be intricately connected to oppressive structures of race, class, nationality, sexuality, and gender.⁷² Ultimately, Kyle’s analysis betrays a willingness to *recognize* how structures of inequality have produced unfair advantages for some, but an overwhelming fear of what material *redistribution* might entail.⁷³

Conclusion

In that racial and gender justice would by definition require a loss of white male privilege, some of my informants found the idea of working equally alongside Filipinas personally threatening. Instead of envisioning the possibility of transnational solidarity and mutual uplift, a world in which Filipinas and white U.S. men might share economic imaginaries that prioritize a living wage for all, they envisioned a race to the bottom. Within this context, the deceptively neutral-sounding “native English speaker” category provides a framework for legitimizing imperial race and gender hierarchies by distinguishing between postcolonial subjects and U.S. citizens. The overt “nativism” within the exclusionary framing of the category attempts to stabilize the ambivalence endemic to “colonial mimicry” and stave off fears of white male victimhood. The constant postponement of this victimhood into an imagined future also produces “a *syntax of deferral* . . . as a specific *colonial* temporality” by prioritizing the *potentially* impending pain and exploitation of white U.S. bodies over and above *actually* existing suffering and discrimination against racialized postcolonial subjects.⁷⁴

Following Said’s emphasis on the mobility and transmutability of discourse, this article has delineated how the menace of colonial mimicry in combination with the racialized and gendered structures of a neoliberal international division

of labor has animated a “travelling yellow peril.” This formation reaches across multiple borders, accompanying U.S. and Filipina migrants abroad. Inasmuch as Filipina “colonial mimicry” undermines the embodied, linguistic authority of white “native” English teachers it becomes a discursive conduit for the transplantation of the figure of the “white male victim” into Japan. In contemporary Japan, the discourse of yellow peril is “*almost the same but not quite*,” in that it echoes earlier iterations but updates them for a neoliberal era of multidirectional mobility.⁷⁵ Traveling yellow peril is mobilized and literally made mobile within a changing socioeconomic landscape in which U.S. white migrants attempt to negotiate a racialized market niche for themselves abroad while dealing with the imagined postraciality and gender neutrality of neoliberal logics and the specter of “the return of the colonial oppressed.”

While masculinity studies scholar Hamilton Carroll argues that U.S. white male victimhood discourses are “a local (i.e., nationally specific) response to a global phenomenon” of neoliberal economic transformation, this case in Japan makes it clear that crises of white masculinity are not limited to the domestic United States.⁷⁶ It may be true that “the national is still the level on which such transformations are *most commonly* felt, negotiated, and understood,”⁷⁷ but it is imperative that we understand how the gendered and racialized anxieties endemic to neoliberal globalization are produced and experienced *transnationally* as well. Similarly, most analyses of “the return of the colonial oppressed” focus on the geographic movement of former-colonial subjects to the metropole,⁷⁸ but the return can also be triangulated, rather than geographically direct. Hence, the colonial legacies of U.S. “benevolent assimilation” policies in the Philippines reappear within Japan’s neoliberal labor regimes to position Filipina migrants as a menace to the reproduction of U.S. white hetero-masculinities abroad. This case of yellow peril in Japan’s English teaching industry highlights the tenacity and geographic flexibility of yellow peril discourse. Whether the threat to white masculinity is experienced within the U.S. or by migrants within Asia itself, “The future is uncertain once again, always.”⁷⁹

Notes

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1. Interview with Chris (U.S. citizen, white man in his forties), Nagoya, February 27, 2010. All informants have been given pseudonyms.

2. Except when quoting other people, throughout the article I use the more gender-inclusive “Filipina/o” when referring broadly to people from the Philippines but revert to “Filipino” when using the adjective form and “Filipina” when referencing specific people and dynamics within Japan. These are imperfect practices and their limitations have been highlighted by recent student activists’ use of the term “Filipinx,” which is more inclusive of trans and non-binary identifications.

3. On the history of binarized knowledge fields, see Naoki Sakai, “‘You Asians’: On the Historical Role of the West and Asia Binary,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 99, no. 4 (2000), 789–817.

For ethnographic analysis of the cultural effects of neoliberalism in contemporary Japan, see Anne Allison, *Precarious Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

4. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

5. Sōmushō (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications), “Heisei 22nen Kokusei Chōsa Jinkō Nado Kihon Shūkei Kekka: Kekka no Gaiyō” (“2010 National Census Basic Population and Other Tally Results: An Outline of Results”), 26 Oct 2010, 23. When the National Census statistics are disaggregated by age, women make up only 27% of the U.S. citizens between the ages of 30 and 59 residing in the country, while men comprise 73% of this age and nationality grouping. The Japanese Census does not include questions about race or ethnicity, but my fieldwork confirms anecdotal evidence that there are far more U.S. white men than U.S. men of color. Focusing on employed U.S. migrants would further raise the male percentage because, in line with Japan’s gendered public-private divide, many long term U.S. women residents are not engaged in paid work. On contemporary gendered employment patterns in Japan see Heidi Gottfried, “Japan: The Reproductive Bargain and the Making of Precarious Employment,” in *Gender and the Contours of Precarious Employment*, eds. Leah F. Vosko, Martha Macdonald and Iain Campbell, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 76-91. Also see Karen Ma, *The Modern Madame Butterfly: Fantasy and Reality in Japanese Cross-Cultural Relationships* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1996). Ma touches on how the reproductive bargain manifests for U.S. women married to Japanese men in Japan.

6. See John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats, *Yellow Peril! An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear* (New York: Verso, 2014); and Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

7. See Martin F. Manalansan and Augusto Espiritu, eds., *Filipino Studies: Palimpsests of Nation and Diaspora* (New York: New York University Press, 2016). Manalansan and Espiritu’s collection helpfully frames such vacillations (e.g., between panic and paternalism) via the metaphor of the palimpsest. For an astute discussion of duality and contradiction in U.S.-Japan relations see Harry Harootunian, “America’s Japan/Japan’s Japan” in *Japan in the World*, ed. Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 196–221.

8. Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian-American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 158–60; See also Laura Hyun Yi Kang, *Compositional Subjects: Enfiguring Asian/American Women* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); and Geraldine Pratt, *Working Feminism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004).

9. Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 198. For a discussion of the neocoloniality of neoliberalism that focuses on the Philippines, see Nerfci Tadiar, *Fantasy Production: Sexual Economies and Other Philippine Consequences for the New World Order* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004).

10. Throughout the article I purposefully refer to U.S. citizens living and working as English teachers in Japan as “migrants.” This wording aligns with a growing field of research on contemporary forms of “privileged mobility” and is also informed by the fact that some of my English teacher informants rankled at the “expatriate” label, considering it more appropriate for corporate transferees. They argued that their position as flexibly employed, long-term residents with relatively low salaries should write them out of the pampered, transitory connotations of the “expat” category. For a broad view of scholarship on privileged mobility, see the edited volumes by Vered Amit, ed., *Going First Class? New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), and Lars Meier, ed., *Migrant Professionals in the City: Local Encounters, Identities and Inequalities* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

11. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 86.

12. See Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); and Vicente Rafael, *Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language and Wars of Translation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

13. The full quotation is illuminating: “The ambivalence of colonial authority repeatedly turns from *mimicry*—a difference that is almost nothing but not quite—to *menace*—a difference that is almost total but not quite. And in that other scene of colonial power, where history turns to farce and presence to ‘a part’ can be seen the twin figures of narcissism and paranoia that repeat furiously, uncontrollably”; Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 91. Bhabha’s concluding point about “narcissism and paranoia” also aligns with my analysis of the constant deferral of threat manifest and my point about whose suffering is deemed worthy of concern.

14. Hamilton Carroll, *Affirmative Reaction: New Formations of White Masculinity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era* (New York: Nation Books, 2013); David Savran, *Taking It like a Man: White Masculinity, Masochism, and Contemporary American Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

15. Edward Said, “Travelling Theory,” in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 242.

16. Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 20.
17. This literature includes Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); and Mimi Thi Nguyen, *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).
18. Tchen and Yeats, *Yellow Peril!* 15.
19. My 2009–11 fieldwork was generously funded by a Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology Scholarship. The semistructured interviews varied in length from one to three hours each. Of my sixty-five interviewees, fifteen were white women (23%) and eight were men of color (16%). My own positionality as a white woman from the U.S. allowed for relatively easy research access, but was also routinely marked as an outsider position given the scarcity of U.S. women working long term in the industry.
20. Pseudonyms are also used within field notes such as these. Field notes, November 2009.
21. Braj B. Kachru, "World Englishes and Applied Linguistics." *World Englishes* 9, no. 1 (1990), 3–20.
22. Interview with Gabe (U.S. citizen, white man in his 50s), Nagoya, February 7, 2011. TESOL scholars have also problematized how preferences for western (often imagined solely as white) "native speaker" English teachers works to legitimize both overt employment discrimination and essentialist visions of cultural difference. See Adrian Holliday, "Native-Speakerism," *ELT Journal* 60.4 (2006): 385–387; Ahmar Mahboob and Ruth Golden, "Looking for Native Speakers of English: Discrimination in English Language Teaching Job Advertisements," *Voices in Asia Journal* 1.1 (2013): 72–81; Todd Ruecker and Lindsey Ives, "White Native English Speakers Needed: The Rhetorical Construction of Privilege in Online Teacher Recruitment Spaces," *TESOL Quarterly* 49.4 (2014): 733–56.
23. Interview with Nick (U.S. citizen, white man in his fifties), suburb of Nagoya, December 6, 2010.
24. Interview with Gabe (U.S. citizen, white man in his fifties), Nagoya, February 7, 2011.
25. On the cultural politics and ideological hegemony of U.S. whiteness in Japan see Etsuko Fujimoto, "Japanese-Ness, Whiteness, and the 'Other' in Japan's Internationalization," in *Transforming Communication about Culture: Critical New Directions*, ed. Mary Jane Collier, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002), 1–24; Yukiko Koshiro, "Beyond an Alliance of Color: The African American Impact of Modern Japan," *positions* 11, no. 1 (2003): 183–215; and Lisa Yoneyama, "Habits of Knowing Cultural Differences: Chrysanthemum and the Sword in the U.S. Liberal Multiculturalism," *Topoi* 18 (1999): 71–80. On how whiteness has been prioritized within Japan's English teaching industry see Keiron Bailey, "Akogare, Ideology, and 'Charisma Man' Mythology: Reflections on Ethnographic Research in English Language Schools in Japan," *Gender, Place and Culture* 14, no. 5 (2007): 585–608; and David L. McConnell, *Importing Diversity: Inside Japan's Jet Program* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
26. See Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, *Illicit Flirtations: Labor, Migration, and Sex Trafficking in Tokyo* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011); and Lieba Faier, *Intimate Encounters: Filipina Women and the Remaking of Rural Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
27. Andrew Ross, *Nice Work if You Can Get It: Life and Labor in Precarious Times* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); and Guy Standing, "The Precariat: From Denizens to Citizens?" *Polity* 44, no. 4 (2012): 588–608.
28. Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
29. Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*, 2011.
30. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 89.
31. Field notes, November 2010.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Ella Shohat, "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial,'" *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 102–5; and Benita Parry, "The Institutionalization of Postcolonial Studies," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 66–67.
34. Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*; Neferti X. M. Tadiar, "Life Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism." *Social Text* 115/31, no. 2 (2013), 19–48; and Subhabrata Bobby Banerjee and Stephen Linstead, "Globalization, Multiculturalism and Other Fictions: Colonialism for the New Millennium?" *Organization* 8, no. 4 (2001), 683–722.
35. Harry Harootunian and Naoki Sakai, "Japan Studies and Cultural Studies," *positions* 7, no. 2 (1999), 598; Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).
36. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 131. See Rafael, *Motherless Tongues*, 43–69, for incisive analysis of Filipino resistance against linguistic domination within the colonial schooling system.

37. Field notes, February 2011.
38. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 88.
39. Meaghan Morris and Brett de Bary, "Introduction," in *"Race" Panic and the Memory of Migration*, ed. Meaghan Morris and Brett de Bary (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2001), 1–18.
40. Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, "Law and Disorder in the Postcolony: An Introduction," in *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*, ed. Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 32.
41. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, 5.
42. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, ix; see also Chester L. Hunt, and Thomas R. McHale, "Education and Philippine Economic Development," *Comparative Education Review* 9, no. 1 (1965): 63–73.
43. Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History*.
44. This example company, "Rare Job," offers one-on-one English instruction for a mere 129 yen per 25-minute lesson. Reajobu Eikaiwa, 2014, <http://www.rarejob.com/> (accessed May 11, 2014). Translations from Japanese are my own.
45. This conversion is based on the average 2010 exchange rate: 88 Japanese yen = 1 U.S. dollar. See U.S. Department of Commerce, "U.S.-Japan Annual Average Exchange Rate," <http://www.trade.gov/eastasia/statistics/exchange.htm> (accessed May 11, 2014).
46. Field notes, May 2010.
47. Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 199. Implicitly framing Skype English lessons as "intimate labor," the Japanese engineer described one perk of this business model: Japanese students do not even have to change out of their pajamas to attend these lessons. On the various forms of intimate labor see Eillen Boris and Rhacel Salazar Parnas, *Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies, and the Politics of Care* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 1–12.
48. Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
49. *Ibid.*, 11.
50. Anna Guevarra's work highlights another technological mode of transnational Filipino English teaching as devalued "care work" by examining the innovation of avatar-based English teaching robots in the Republic of Korea—robots that are controlled by Filipino/a call center workers located in the Philippines. Anna Romina Guevarra, "Techno-Modeling Care: Racial Branding, Dis/embodied Labor, and 'Cybraceros' in South Korea," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 36, no. 3 (2015): 139–59.
51. In many ways, the U.S. policies implemented in Japan during the postwar Occupation echoed and extended the "benevolent assimilation" logics deployed in the Philippines. On these dynamics see John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999). For discussions of triangulated dynamics between the three countries, see the edited volume by Fujiwara and Nagano, *The Philippines and Japan in America's Shadow*, eds. Kiichi Fujiwara and Yoshiko Nagano, (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2011).
52. See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) and Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995).
53. Monica Boyd, "Feminizing Paid Work," *Current Sociology* 45, no. 2 (1997): 49–73; and Teri L. Caraway, *Assembling Women: The Feminization of Global Manufacturing* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).
54. See David L. Eng, *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); and Tchen and Yeats, *Yellow Peril!*
55. Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 159. See also Pratt, *Working Feminism*.
56. Cited in Tchen and Yeats, *Yellow Peril!* 23.
57. Cited in Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (Farmington Hills, MI: Twayne, 1991), 87.
58. For a media studies analysis of this phenomenon see Carroll, *Affirmative Reaction*; for a sociological, interview-based study see Kimmel, *Angry White Men*; and for literary analysis see Savran, *Taking It Like a Man*.
59. Carroll, *Affirmative Reaction*, 3.
60. Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 196.
61. Interview with Dan (U.S. citizen, white man in his thirties), Nagoya, September 30, 2010.
62. Interview with Tom (U.S. citizen, white man in his thirties), suburb of Nagoya, July 13, 2011.
63. Gottfried, "Japan: The Reproductive Bargain and the Making of Precarious Employment," 88.
64. Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 187.

65. Gottfried, "Japan: The Reproductive Bargain and the Making of Precarious Employment," 83.
66. Interview with Kyle (U.S. citizen, white man in his twenties), Nagoya, May 28, 2010.
67. Ibid. This critique echoes heated debates within the TESOL field itself, with some scholars accusing others of unfair disdain for workers in the field (as having little pedagogical training, being culturally insensitive, etc.). For a summary of these debates see Yvonne Breckenridge and Elizabeth J. Erling, "The Native Speaker English Teacher and the Politics of Globalization in Japan," in *English in Japan in the Era of Globalization*, ed. Philip Seargeant (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 83-84.
68. Ibid.
69. Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College De France 1978-1979*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 229.
70. Interview with Kyle (U.S. citizen, white man in his twenties), Nagoya, May 28, 2010.
71. George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1995): 369-87.
72. For extensive analysis of how neoliberal economic value has been coded along race and gender lines see Melamed, *Represent and Destroy*.
73. Nancy Fraser, "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation," in *Redistribution or Recognition: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, ed. Nancy Fraser and Alex Honneth, trans. Joel Golb, James Ingram, and Christiane Wilke (London: Verso, 2003), 7-109.
74. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 135. Bhabha derives his theory of deferred colonial temporality from an analysis of how the written word of British colonial administrators constantly threatened to replace civility with authority. I fully recognize that my use of this theory stretches its original meaning by displacing it into a wholly new context. As such, I am also performing Said's argument within "Travelling Theory."
75. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 89, original emphasis.
76. Carroll, *Affirmative Reaction*, 3.
77. Ibid., my emphasis.
78. Comaroff and Comaroff, "Law and Disorder in the Postcolony," 32.
79. Tchen and Yeats, *Yellow Peril!* 15.