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*Home Away from Home: Immigrant Narratives, Domesticity, and  
Coloniality in Contemporary Spanish Culture* by N. Michelle  
Murray (review)

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spread throughout the book, from Rancière and Derrida to Butler and Žižek, help to insert it in a more general debate, which Martin-Estudillo successfully inaugurates for Hispanism.

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Murray, N. Michelle. *Home Away from Home: Immigrant Narratives, Domesticity, and Coloniality in Contemporary Spanish Culture*. U of North Carolina P, 2018. 226 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4696-4746-3.

Headlines, debates and tensions surrounding worldwide immigration abound in most major European presses and political spheres. Spain is no different as evidenced in growing concern over the xenophobic political posturing of conservative party VOX and, at the same time, the plethora of images of overcrowded *pateras* filled with people seeking refuge on the shores of southern Europe. N. Michelle Murray takes all of this into account in her study of immigrant female domestic workers in Spain, *Home Away from Home*. She uses statistical information on immigration trends and recent labor laws as a backdrop to her detailed analyses of contemporary literature and film, assuring her reader that art provides unique insight through individual voices.

The introduction details the differences between domestic work and other forms of immigrant labor. Domestic workers are unique in that they are not considered “stealing” jobs from nationals, but rather they permeate the very heart of state and social identity formation. Murray defines “domestic labor not as mere work but as a special relationship guided by an ethic of care and a singular affective relationship between employers and employee that distinguishes it from other forms of labor” (14). She looks specifically at how literature can inform politics of inequality through “emotional positionalities entrenched in discourses of power” (17). The idea of difference as well as postcolonial hegemonies serve to further marginalize the domestic worker within the complex matrix of the immigrant work force in Spain. Murray comments on a variety of popular theories on aspects of postcolonial (Fanon) and postcolonial feminist studies (Mohanty Talpade) in order to articulate the layered and nuanced positionality and experience of immigrant women domestic workers in Spain. She moves effortlessly through these theories and others, including Freud and the uncanny, constructing a convincing framework in which she analyzes the texts at hand. Murray also includes sections of certain laws and official state bulletins as examples of the seemingly progressive nature of democratic Spanish legalese, but it is through her careful, illuminating analyses of the literary and filmic texts that she reveals how individual experience undermines the appearance of equality. It is through critical analyses that we can (try to) make sense of the inherent contradictions of social, racial, class, and gender hierarchies.

In Chapter 1, Murray explores the precarious situation of Filipina domestic workers in Juan Madrid’s short story “Metro Tirso de Molina” (1987) and José

Ángel Mañas's *Historias del Kronen* (1994). The female subject from a previously colonized territory is represented in the body of the domestic worker that is defined and defiled by the white patriarchy. The home is constructed as a temporary haven that promises economic stability but is ultimately a source of oppression and rejection for the immigrant worker.

Chapter 2 reveals how both oppression and opportunity define the experience of the domestic sphere in Ángeles Caso's *Contra el viento* (2009) and José Ovejero's *Nunca pasa nada* (2007). The home in these cases becomes both a retreat from society and a site of solidarity among women (91). A highlight of this chapter, and the entire study, is Murray's lucid, well-informed discussion of transnational feminism in relation to third wave feminism's shortfalls and postcolonial sites of engagement between migrant and national women.

Murray turns to film in Chapter 3 with her analysis of *Amador* directed by Fernando León de Aranoa (2010) and Sebastián Cordero's *Rabia* (2009). She reconsiders the Kristevian notion of the abject in *Amador*, where the maternal body becomes a site of progress and assimilation instead of the rejected abject horrific mother/other. Murray deftly analyzes the home as a site of death and decay of a patriarchal, xenophobic tradition that at the same time harbors hope through the character of the pregnant immigrant caregiver. The antithesis of the abject maternal body, the pregnant young women in these films bring the promise of a new transcultural generation. The link established in the chapter between the abject and the horror genre of *Rabia* is very convincing and could be fruitful for considering other horror films.

Chapter 4 develops the ideas of motherhood and migration as seen in the film *Beautiful* (2010) directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu and Carmen Jiménez's novel *Madre mía, que estás en los infiernos* (2008). The dichotomy of menial versus spiritual labor separates women within the home by race and class. The immigrant women cook, clean, and serve while the biological, national women teach, converse and entertain the children (Alfonso Cuarón's *Roma* comes to mind). However, immigrant mothers are fundamental to the future of Spanish society not only because they bear children but also because they care for Spanish children suffering the multidimensional crisis of the sick and broken family as seen in the texts at hand.

Murray's book is a delight to read as it provides useful and interesting data paired with beautifully written textual analyses. Perhaps the study could have included a work by an immigrant voice such as Najat El Hachmi's *Mare de llet i de mel* (2018) or her *La caçadora de cossos* (2011) and apart from some typos (*Historias del Kronen* is cited in Chapter 1 as published in 1992 and in the works cited in 1998. The novel was published in 1994) the book is nicely edited. Scholars of transnational theory, feminist and postcolonial studies and twentieth century narrative and film will find this book engaging and a very useful tool in navigating the difficult waters of nation and migration.

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