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A Nation on the Line

Padios, Jan M.

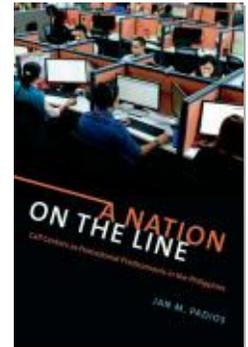
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I wrote this book over many seasons and semesters; in half a dozen offices and apartments; in a few countries and time zones; and during significant life events. Although my solitary working style led me to isolation for most of that time, I was never alone.

From start to finish, the call center employees who generously agreed to take part in my research ensured that I would have no shortage of voices in my audio recorder during fieldwork or in my head later, when sitting down to write. While I hope *A Nation on the Line* can be read as one big acknowledgment of the lives and labor of these workers, I would be remiss to not explicitly express my boundless gratitude to each and every person who shared with me the stories and insights that became the basis of this project. They are a reminder that ethnographic knowledge production is a relation built on reciprocity between people and that it thus takes many forms, not simply those bound together in a book.

As an American studies master's and doctoral student at New York University (NYU), I had the great fortune of being taught, mentored, and advised by an exceptional group of scholars. Arlene Dávila, Lisa Duggan, Radha Hegde, and Andrew Ross—together with Robyn Rodriguez from Rutgers and later the University of California, Davis—were a remarkable dissertation committee for whom I am and always will be immensely appreciative. Arlene Dávila was an especially devoted dissertation committee chair and overall mentor whose invaluable support over a total of nine years meant the difference between surviving academia and thriving in it. Graduate school also gave me the privilege of taking seminars or doing qualifying exams with Adam Green, Philip Harper, Walter Johnson,

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