

## **A good provider is one who leaves / Jason DeParle**

Being a senior writer at The New York Times, a frequent contributor to The New York Times Magazine, and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize twice, Jason DeParle mostly writes about the welfare system. With his article *A Good Provider is One Who Leaves* he shows openly the hard cost many families have to pay in order to lead a decent life in poor countries by giving an example from the Philippines.

At the beginning of his article, he introduces the reader the story of a Filipino family... This is mainly the story of a father, striving to take care of his family with a salary of \$50 a month. After waiting helplessly for years, without even having a chance to pay for the treatment of one of his daughters who turns out to have a heart defect, the father realizes that he has no other chance other than flying abroad in order to take care of his family. After living abroad for many years, his children feel alienated from their fathers and they begin to see him as an outsider when he returns. In the end many of his children follow their father's path. (Mostly just because they have no other chance in order to survive with the low salaries in their home countries) This is a situation in which –as the author states- ‘the sun is doing battle with the rain’ (p. 53). The loss and the gain are intertwined deeply. On one side there is a family living comparably a better life than its fellow citizens, but on the other hand there is a great alienation of the father or the mother who goes away to earn money from the family atmosphere.

Families ‘become cyber’ for long years as children grow without being able to kiss their fathers goodnight. As economists see migrants and the money they send home as a part of the solution to global poverty, the psychology of these people leaving their homes and the ones left behind are mostly neglected. As the author states presidents wait at the airports to welcome their workers home, thinking they can heal their wounds by offering them ‘livelihood packages’ and karaoke machines (p. 53). They try hard not to see the real situation of these families and leave them to their fates without choosing to take some tangible measures.

Everyday more and more young people decide to “try their luck abroad” as they believe this is the only way which will lead them to a prosperous life. There is not anti migration camp in Filipino politics so politicians support these individuals’ plans with all their might. O.W.W.A, (Overseas Workers Welfare Administration) just to make the president look good holds nationwide “thank you” fiestas for the workers returning home (p.53) rather than protecting their rights.

When we turn back to the story of this poor family, we learn about the hardships both of the parents face until and after they get married. Not all of the children go on studying so they generally continue the family tradition by going to foreign countries like their fathers to search for a job. Children of many other families are sent to foreign countries under the name “overseas performing artists” and find themselves in the middle of a “sex trade” (p. 58). On the other hand most women staying behind live with the fear of losing their husbands to another woman. Many people think that all the problems will be solved once the families are united again but this time other conflicts occur as both parents grow accustomed to being the boss (p.59).

DeParle tells the true life stories of the migrant workers through the eyes of a family in an emotional tone and makes the reader empathize with these people. By supporting his criticisms with the current statistics, he makes his point more credible and convinces the reader that this subject matter is an important global issue. Shortly, he makes us see that there are many similar life stories in the world. With the indifferent attitude of the governments these people keep on suffering and the children, who are supposed to be the future of these countries face a great psychological impact at a very early age and these countries keep on paying the price high as these people grow up.