

Philippine futures: myriad work, generative times, and creative descriptions

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Format: Panel, double session, 6 presenters and 1 discussant, papers to be pre-circulated ahead of the conference

This panel examines the work of the future in the contemporary Philippines. It focusses on the different forms of work that underpin diverse ideas of the future – how these forms of work nurture (or perhaps inhibit) notions of the future, their articulation in different registers, their realisation, as well as their subsequent recollection and narration. Work here is defined capaciously to include practices of care and other quotidian acts, storytelling, artistic endeavours, as well as data generation and associated practices, teaching and learning, policymaking, organising, and campaigning, among others. At the same time, this panel charts how the future (as an ideal or reality – either yet-to-come, in-the-making, or already-gone) performs its own work: how it produces or revitalises particular persons, relations, institutions, and communities, while weakening or precluding others; how it renders visible and desirable certain aspects and versions of the Philippines, while obscuring others or making them undesirable. It reflects on how the Philippines might enrich, and provide a distinctive perspective on, wider scholarship on the future. In particular, it considers how the country's complex layers of colonial and postcolonial history – marked by longstanding and deepening inequalities and forms of violence – generate milieus within which futures emerge and grow. It considers, too, how descriptions of the future can be sites of reflection, intervention, and experimentation – both analytical and ethical. Given the timing of the conference, papers that approach the future in relation to the Covid pandemic and the 2022 election are welcome, but not preferred. Indeed, papers on other contexts are most welcome. Contributions from early career academics and PhD students based in Europe, the Philippines, and elsewhere will be prioritised, especially those that approach the future from the vantage point of not-so-obvious sites, actors, institutions, registers, and consequences. Accepted papers will be pre-circulated ahead of the conference, and authors are encouraged to be creative in their approach – e.g. through a focus on a person's biography or a family's history; an extended meditation on an object, document, image, word, or turn of phrase; a list of songs and other popular media.