



Plenary Session 3 Transnationalism: Australia and Region Napier 102 Friday 8th December, 2-3.30pm

Waltzing with Transnationalism: International Migration in the Philippines' Destiny

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The year 2006 commemorates the 100th year of Filipino immigration to Hawaii, when a small group of Filipino recruits arrived on the islands to work in the plantations. This migration was a precursor of larger and more diverse international migrations that took place decades later. Immigration reforms in the United States in 1965 and similar changes in other settlement countries paved the way for Filipino immigration to settlement countries. But it was the country's foray in international labor migration from the 1970s that linked the Philippines to the global labor market, opening up many other "promised lands" for Filipinos seeking a better life, and connecting the destiny of the Philippines with global processes. The magnitude and spread of the Filipino diaspora (about 8 million or close to 10 percent of the country's population work and reside in more than 100 countries/territories) and inflows of remittances (US\$10.5 billion in 2005) are among the more evident aspects of the transnational dimension of Philippine society now and in the likely future. This paper aims to discuss how the international migration of Filipinos and their transnational practices are transforming the economic, social, cultural and political aspects of Philippine society. A special section will be devoted to Filipino immigration to Australia and examples of transnational connections that forge a special link between the two countries.