

Experiencing Metro Manila's public spaces: Leisure, alterity, and the hyper-conditioned environment

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Abstract:

The physical environment of Metro Manila, with its tropical heat and humidity, and unattractive streetscape, has undoubtedly contributed to the appeal of hyper-conditioned environments in this megacity of about 11.7 million people. This paper examines public parks as alterity constituted by Metro Manila's most ubiquitous leisure consumption space, the shopping mall. Using ethnographic data, it argues that leisure practices in open public spaces, while privileging aspects marginal to the hegemonic shopping mall, do not manifest a break in space usage consumption in ways that change the consequential materiality of hyper-conditioned environments. Instead, the marginalization and augmented reality prevalent in hyper-conditioned environments are reproduced in the highly differentiated experiences of other public spaces, and vice versa.

About the Lecturer:

Dr. Czarina Saloma-Akpedonu is Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the Ateneo de Manila University, and Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at Universitaet Bielefeld. Her work examines questions about knowledge mobilization in relation to the built environment, social development, and sustainable consumption and production. Her publications include *Possible Worlds in Impossible Spaces: Knowledge, Gender, and Information Technology in the Philippines* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2006); *Casa Boholana: Vintage Houses of Bohol* (with E. Akpedonu, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2011); *Many Journeys, Many Voices: Filipina Overseas Workers, 1960-2010* (with E. Manlapaz and Y. Buencamino, Anvil Publishing, 2015); and *Food Consumption in the City: Practices and Patterns in Urban Asia and the Pacific* (with M. Sahakian and S. Erkman, Routledge, 2016).