

PINZON, MARY JANNETTE

Associate Professor, University of the Philippines Diliman, Department of Speech
Communication and Theatre Arts, PHILIPPINES

Panel 4.4: Negotiating Differences

**Of Ethnoscapes, Gazes and the Struggle of the Split Self: OFW Inter-cultural Encounters
in the Middle East**

This paper interrogates how the OFW phenomenon, as an ethnoscape, provides unique inter-cultural encounters to OFWs as they move from their local cultures to the cultures of their destination countries. The study connects the various expressions of racial discrimination OFWs experience in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and United Arab Emirates and how the OFWs deal with these experiences to Appadurai's concept of ethnoscape and Mackie's issues of tourist gaze as they adjust to socially constructed inter-cultural spaces. The paper points to a new identity borne out of a holistic sense of self where the OFW persona is empowered by their cultural energy, an interior dimension of harmony (loob) as a way of suturing the split self.