

# READING REMITTANCES, READING LITERATURE

**Speaker** **Dr. Paul Nadal**  
Assistant Professor, Princeton University

2022 Tue  
**11.29** 15:00-17:00 (JST)

**Venue**

**Tonantei (Room 201), 2nd Floor, Inamori Memorial Building, CSEAS, Kyoto University**

ACCESS : <https://kyoto.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/access/>

## Abstract

Focusing on the Philippine labor diaspora, this paper proposes a framework for reading the mediation between literature and remittances, or the cash transfers that Filipino migrants send home. Whereas the World Bank defines “remittances” as “the portions of international migrant workers’ earnings that are sent back to family members in their countries of origin,” the literature produced in and about the Philippine labor diaspora extends the term to mean not just the economic instrumentalities by which migrants send cash, but also the historical determinations of labor, time, and value that enable these cross-border exchanges to take place. Through close readings of recent fiction, my paper excavates these historically meaningful dimensions of remittances and argues that “reading remittances, reading literature” elaborates the symbolic associations of obligation, reciprocity, and power of remittances that political economy does not theorize but that Philippine literature in English does.

## Bio

Paul Nadal is assistant professor of English and American studies at Princeton University. He is completing a book entitled *Remittances, Literary and Economic*, a study of the relation between novels and remittances in the Philippine labor diaspora and the role that English-language literary culture played in the remaking of the Philippines into a labor export economy. A chapter of the book project, “Cold War Remittance Economy: US Creative Writing and the Importation of New Criticism into the Philippines,” was published in *American Quarterly* and won the Best Essay Prize from the American Literature Association in 2021. He received his PhD in Rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley.

※ Language: English

