

The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919 and Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020 in the Philippines: Some Historical Parallelisms

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The 1918 influenza pandemic was one of the most virulent epidemics ever to hit the American-occupied Philippines. The impact of the contagion was felt unevenly by the population of the islands, with some populations becoming more vulnerable to the disease compared to others.

The presentation analyzes the environmental and ecological dimensions of the spread of the disease, and the attempts by different sectors to contain the epidemic, or mitigate its impact for those already affected by the outbreak. Specifically, the paper will assess the influenza pandemic as experienced in prison populations, leper colonies, and military camps as examples of confined populations and rural ethnic communities, urban and suburban communities as examples of unconfined populations. The official government actions as well as the people's perception about the pandemic in these population types will also be analyzed in order to advance the evaluation on the social dimension in the history of this pandemic from the prism of medical and demographic history. Finally, the paper will present the Philippine experience during the influenza pandemic and attempt to reflect these to analyze the current efforts in the country to contain the Covid pandemic.



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