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**Collecting Filipiniana: H. Otley Beyer and the Ethnological Specimens of  
Philippine Nationality, 1900s-1930s**

**Jonathan Victor Baldoza**

Ph.D. Candidate, Dept. of History, Princeton University;  
Collaborative Fellow, IAAMES, Sophia University

**Abstract:**

In the presentation, I will discuss the career of H. Otley Beyer, a pioneer anthropologist in the Philippines, employed by American colonial institutions—the Bureau of Science, the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, and the University of the Philippines. Beyer’s knowledge-making projects constituted the material aspect of making Filipiniana, the systematic creation and building of a scientific corpus of knowledge about the Philippine archipelago and its inhabitants. Placing Beyer’s ideas and practices in the milieu of Asia-based anthropologists of the early 20th century, I will explore how “ethnological specimens” provided an empirical basis to colonial administration. Such practices of classification, cataloguing, and staging of objects informed the ways in which colonial administrators addressed problems of governance in the so-called non-Christian domains. These objects, placed in juxtaposition with each other, shaped scientific conceptions of Filipino nationality, drawn from racialist ideas of Malayness, and linked to theories of the prehistoric “Far East” which, as anthropologists like Beyer argued, made both Christians and non-Christians in the archipelago a unified race.