

American Indian Studies – Ayer Collection – Philippine and Hawaiian History



Bust of Filipino patriot, Dr. Jose Rizal. On display in the Special Collections Reading Room.

Attempting to include all phases of the discovery, westward movement, and settlement of the Americas, the Ayer Collection has an abundance of materials regarding the history of the aboriginal peoples under the jurisdiction of the US in the Philippine Islands and Hawaii.

When word came of Admiral Dewey's victory in Manila Bay in 1898, Ayer understood the United States' new role in the Far East, and expanded the scope of his collection westward.

In the range of its holdings, the depth of its coverage, and the presence of some very unusual items, the Newberry's Philippine collection provides a wealth of materials with which to explore both Philippine and American history. The collection is particularly strong in these areas:

- **Late Spanish Period:** The Newberry has a large number of manuscripts and publications from the Spanish period in the Philippines, in particular chronicles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There is also a great deal of material on the nineteenth century relationship between Spain and the Philippines.
- **Filipino Nationalism and Revolution:** The Newberry also contains important material treating the origins of Filipino nationalism (for instance, the José Rizal papers). Likewise, materials documenting the Philippine Revolution against Spain are held in abundance.
- **Philippine-American War and US Government:** The collection is rich in materials that emerged from what was commonly referred to as the “Philippine insurrection.” The vast majority of printed source materials on the colonial government in the Philippines take the form of reports, bulletins, and circulars from American Civil Government.
 - Over 8,000 ethnological photographs.
 - Philippine linguistics.
 - Travel literature and maps of the Islands.

Other notable strengths of the collection are works on Filipino immigrants to the United States and political commentaries from the 1920s and 1930s over the pace of independence.

The Hawaiian material within the Ayer Collection concerns the history of the missionary period and the ethnology and linguistics of the native peoples.

Call our reference desk at (312) 255-3512 with questions on our holdings, or [contact a librarian](#) with research questions.