

EUROSEAS CONFERENCE 7-10 SEPTEMBER 2021

PALAKY UNIVERSITY, OLOMOC, CZECH REPUBLIC

Between Heritage and Colonial Representations: Early Photography in Borneo.

Panel proposed by Antonio J. GUERREIRO

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The panel will showcase the salient aspects of early photography in Borneo, in the former British (Sarawak, Sabah), and Dutch colonial areas (Kalimantan), c. 1870s – 1920s. A first step will be identifying the individuals active in the field and their practice of photography. Charles Hose (1863-1929) as a cadet, then Resident, was the most notable administrative officer in the Brooke Raj who was involved in pioneering ethnographic studies and photography. Between 1884 and 1907, he was posted in out-stations, in the Baram and the Rejang. The panel will outline the different uses of photography and more generally, illustration, in Charles Hose's main publications, including the style of the captions. The relation between photography and ethnographic and natural history collecting, will be stressed. Besides *cultural heritage* (tangible, i.e. material culture, and its intangible dimensions), the *exotic* as expressed in landscapes, animal life and portraits, features prominently in the images from this period. Dayak/Punan/Penan/Murut indigenous peoples and fauna and flora have been the most popular subjects of photographers. A mapping of the categories of representations in order to focus on the colonial gaze in Borneo will be provided. The panel will address as well the historical context at the time: the colonial presence and 'ethnographic expeditions' taking place in central Borneo, a region spread between Sarawak and Kalimantan, Indonesia (known then as 'Dutch Borneo'). Another famous photographer, Jean Demmeni (1866-1939), participated in A. W. Nieuwenhuis' three expeditions taking place across West and East Borneo, between 1896 and 1900. Hose intensively practiced photography during his postings in the Baram and the Rejang areas (*circa* 1895 – 1907,1920). Besides Charles Hose and Jean Demmeni, other photographers were active in Borneo during this period (*inter alia* Evans, Funk, Furness, Grubauer, Haddon, Harrisson-Smith, Martin and Osa Johnson, Mjöberg, Tillema, Woolley). Besides so-called 'scientific photography', used to support academic texts and explorations, another photographic type which has been overlooked, *i.e.* postcards with exotic and romantic connotations, will be considered. In short, early photography besides engravings or drawings – actually the former often made after photographs – had a significant role in the shaping of Borneo's 'culturescape' during the 20th century.

Panel Participants (to be confirmed ; the titles of papers will be precised).

Charles Hose's Borneo: A Pioneer photographer in Sarawak (Antonio J.Guerreiro, IrAsia)

Early Photography in North Borneo – Sabah, Malaysia (Rosalie C. Corpuz, Independent researcher)

Jean Demmeni: Expeditions and photography in Kalimantan (Bernard Sellato, CASE)

Combining historical and morphological approaches to reconstruct Dutch military excursions in the Interior of Borneo (Nicolas Césard, MNHN, Raphaël Cornette, MNHN & Bernard Sellato)