

Human Sciences Encounters in Phnom-Penh
Past Presentations

L'émancipation des galopins. Une ethnologie du développement de l'enfant dans un village de riziculteurs cambodgien (2007-2011)

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Based on an ethnography run during almost three years, the work that will be presented studies childhood's socializing experiences in a rice farmer's village located in South-east Cambodia. How does one become a child in Cheung Kok? How does the educational system function and how does it contribute to people's maturation process? What is the daily and seasonal schedule of a boy and a girl in this village? What do the children play at and how do they play? This ethnology of child development run in Cambodian rural society tries to account for the "childhood feeling" (Ariès, 1973) as it is conveyed there, and takes root at the same time in the theoretical and methodological base of anthropology of childhood as a research field.

Nevertheless, ethnography also allows us to observe that a liberal and democratic "childhood feeling" has recently started to establish itself in the rural society. This "feeling" can be identified on the basis of four phenomena: consumption society, the Convention on the rights of the child, the school play ground, the so-called "child-centered" pedagogy. This study shows a process of social change, provoked by the confrontation between those local and global "childhood feelings". We'll try to understand in what extent the implementation of the second one promotes the children's emancipation of the "younger status" (statut de cadet), and maybe leads to a stronger expression of childhood horizontality in contemporary local social organisation.