



Children and Work Research Series: Session 16

Mongolian Herders' Children: Work, Agency and the (Re)production of Community

29 March 2023 - 10am EST / 4pm CET - Zoom. Register [here](#).

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Abstract

Rural youth from Mongolian herding families spend most of the year in urban-based schools interspersed with substantial periods in the countryside. During school holidays, these young people develop their skills and further their knowledge of the herds, the land, and the way of life in the countryside by participating in household and communal work. In meeting their household responsibilities and communal obligations, Mongolian herders' children maintain their place among herders. Their different forms of participation (conforming, reworking, and negotiating) highlight the relational agency and negotiated interdependencies of young lives. In this seminar, I show how Mongolian youth's disrupted participation in rural household chores and pastoral work engenders a cultural measure against deskilling, which is crucial to the (re-)production of Mongolian herders as a community of practice.

Speaker Bio

Chi (Kim Chi Tran) is a PhD candidate from the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her PhD project explores ways in which learning practices from herding and formal education shape how children of Mongolian herders (youths in secondary education) relate to their social and natural landscapes, and how this straddling between different knowledges impacts their aspirations. Taking a relational and youth-centered approach, in this research project, she experiments with the combination of ethnography, visual participatory research methods, qualitative surveys, and semi-structured interviews.