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**Workshop Children and Rites. Subjects, actors or objects?**

**IV. Children in rites in Mesoamerica and elsewhere**

**9 of december 2022**

The “Children and Rites” workshop aims to promote a field of research exploring rites, religious facts and social worlds at the intersection of the anthropology of childhood and children and general anthropology. The children’s involvment in rituals is approached from an exploratory questioning: are children the subjects, the actors or the objects of the rites in which they take part?

We thus seek to highlight the interest of studying the roles and statuses of children in ritual and religious activities, to shed new light on modes of children’s “agency” (Honwana & De Boeck 2005; Evers, Notermans & Van Ommering 2011; Pache Huber & Ossipow 2012; Delalande 2014) and on the place of childhood and children in different forms of social organization, but also more globally to contribute to a renewal in the anthropological approach to religions and rites (Daugey, Razy & Campigotto, 2020). The first three editions of the workshop took place in 2017, 2018, and 2021. A fourth meeting, focused on Mesoamerica but open to contributions from other fieldworks, will be held on December 9, 2022. It will be co-organized by the University of Liège (IRSS-FASS, LASC), El Colegio de San Luis (COLSAN) and the PALOC laboratory (IRD-MNHN), and will be held jointly in Liège and San Luis Potosí, on-site and online.

In Mesoamerica, anthropologists’ interest in the “rites of childhood” in contemporary Indian populations and in the so-called Gypsy, Mestizo and Afro-descendant populations, as well as in the pre-Hispanic period, has recently taken off. In Mexico, following the work of Alfredo López Austin (1990, 1994), some works address the use of indigenous medicine to treat children’s ailments (Lorente, 2015), the links between children’s games and rituals (Alvarado, 2018; Muñoz, 2020; San Juan, 2021), children’s relationship to holy images (Casas, 2021) or to Niño Dios statuettes (Razy and Suremain, 2020). The intervention of children in rituals related to death (Alvarado, [2004] 2022; Díaz Barriga, 2009; Pérez, 2019; Katz, 2021) is also a cross-cutting theme in Mesoamerica (birth, wake, burial, Day of the Dead).

In other disciplines, 19th century school rituals have been studied from a historical perspective (Padilla, 1999) and the pedagogical aspects of the spring parade in Tecate, Baja California, have been highlighted (Aguilar, 2005).

Considering that rites are part of a certain continuity with the acts of daily life (Williams, 2003; Razy, 2019), the interventions of this 4th edition will be able to address, for example, the following questions: what are the transformative and creative elements that children introduce into the rituals of birth and the life cycle? What is the reception of the new-born by those around him/her? What is the role of children in the aetiology of so-called “children's diseases”? In what ways do children intervene in the rituals associated with death and what care for the youngest makes it possible to cope with loss, in the different temporalities linked to death? Does considering the games played by children allow us to understand other modalities of rites when they are considered from the children’s point of view? Given the existence of childlike deities and the participation of children in their care in ceremonies and daily practices, do children introduce a specific ritual efficacy? How do children participate in institutional rituals, and in particular at school?

Papers dealing with these issues from outside Mesoamerica will be welcome in order to broaden the comparative dimension of the discussions.

Presentations may take place in the language chosen by the speakers (Spanish, French, English), but they must be accompanied by a Power Point in English, in order to promote mutual understanding.

Proposals expected by November 10 at the latest must include: a summary of no more than 200 words, 5 keywords, your position or status, and your home institution. They should be sent to:

[mdaugey@uliege.be](mailto:mdaugey@uliege.be)

[neyra.alvarado@colsan.edu.mx](mailto:neyra.alvarado@colsan.edu.mx)

[elodie.razy@uliege.be](mailto:elodie.razy@uliege.be)

[suremain@ird.fr](mailto:suremain@ird.fr)

Organisation : Neyra Alvarado Solís, (PEA, El Colegio de San Luis A.C), Marie Daugey (Chargée de recherche FRS/FNRS, IRSS-LASC, ULiège), Olivia Fierro (Egresada/Diplomée MAS, El Colegio de San Luis A.C.), Mayra Muñoz (Egresada/Diplomée MAS, El Colegio de San Luis A.C), Élodie Razy (IRSS-LASC, ULiège), Charles-Édouard de Suremain (UMR 208 Paloc, IRD-MNHN), Lorena Ulloa (IRSS-LASC, ULiège)

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