

Call for Papers GEOCARREFOUR

«Gender, Spatial Mobility Systems and Rural Development in the Global South»

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Through systems of spatial mobility, the societies, economies and rural territories of developing countries are increasingly engaged in a geography of movement. Historically, spatial mobility has been a means of adapting to local hardships; local rootedness and circularity are two interrelated rationales at work. Rural areas are experiencing both an increase and a growing diversity of types of mobility (national/international, rural-rural, rural-urban, commuting) inscribed in complex temporalities and geographies, depending on social organisation and factors of age, gender, class, caste, collective organisation, production systems and the spatial relations between cities and countryside. Today these mobility systems are undergoing changes which question gender dynamics.

Research questions and hypotheses

- Social logics of family and multi-site productive territories

The analysis of the functioning of rural family units allows a glimpse of the complexity of production systems deployed across a multiplicity of sites. The study of increasingly complex professional and life trajectories between rural and urban spaces allows us to map, for instance, the social and spatial aspects of increasingly polymorphous family organisation. We are particularly interested in questioning the gender logics that determinant/condition the place that women and men occupy. Such analyses can reveal a certain level of discrepancy between established gender norms and current practices wherein certain rural-based women step outside domestic space (the house and nearby workspaces) and mobilize new spatial and monetary resources, which can upset socially constructed gender identities. This special issue also questions the local economic impacts of mobility, and the differential impacts linked to gender.

- Issues of Youth Migration

Through various patterns (education, training, remunerated or non-remunerated work), a large number of children and young people of rural origin have an experience of migration. Of variable timeframes, these migratory patterns are also very diverse from the point of view of their destination: migration within the country towards cities or other areas, across regional or international borders. Paper proposals could examine gender effects as a cause of mobility (a combination of economic and socio-cultural factors). They might also study how gender affects concrete modalities of departure and the social and economic impacts on the territories that export migrants, as well as the impacts on the itineraries of young people who have become adults, especially marriage choices but also life projects which take into consideration (or not) the migration experience.

- Global production systems and gender

It has been observed over the last few decades that the proportion of women among migrants has increased, at various scales including international migration. New modes of organisation of work, especially in agriculture, have mainly mobilised women from rural backgrounds. This is the case of women agricultural labour coming from Africa or Latin America to work in large farming operations in Southern Europe. Proposals will highlight the economic foundations of such choices, from the point of view of the employers, the system of representations that underly such choices as well as the economic effects of remittances in the home region. Of interest also are studies that examine how families adapt when mothers migrate, and the new forms of family organization that emerge.