



31st Colloquium of the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems “Contested rural spaces / Territorios rurales en disputa” Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina (First call for papers)

Date

September 16-21, 2024

- Conference in Mendoza city: September 16 and 17
- Field study: September 18, 19 and 20

Host Institution

Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Departamento e Instituto de Geografía. Mendoza, Argentina.

Conference

The key organizing theme for the Colloquium is “**Contested rural spaces / Territorios rurales en disputa**”. We invite you to discuss different perspectives on developments in rural systems allowing divergences between concepts as ‘territory’ that are used differently in Latin America. We argue in line with Sandoval et al. (2017:43) that focusing on such conceptual shifts “rais[e] questions over the possibility of a multiple construction of key geographical concepts” (see also Martín 2023 on this topic). Integrating this complexity, we aim to contribute to a mutual and diverse understanding of these concepts which have real-world implications on the sustainable transformation of rural systems.

At the same time, this transformation doesn’t happen ‘out there’ and some scholars are increasingly searching to enrich the academy with different ways of knowledge and worldviews. As Ives et al. (2020:208) pose it: “We argue that preoccupation with external phenomena and collective social structures has led to the neglect of people’s ‘inner worlds’—their emotions, thoughts, identities and beliefs. These lie at the heart of actions for sustainability, and have powerful transformative capacity for system change”. These perspectives are in line with the framing of the Anthropocene which asks to renew approaches in human and non-human collectives. Debaise et al. (2015) among others claim that nature should not be a simply backdrop of our human projects.

The concept of territory is also entangled with the soil. Being a body who gives the gift of life in the view of some communities, soil has also become a commodity which “has led to a focus on soil fertility as the principal mode of engaging with soils” (Salazar et al. 2020:21). But several studies in environmental anthropology, science and technology studies, as well as indigenous studies, and history are engaged to renew and recover more holistic and deeper understandings of soil for the academy.

Furthermore, territory is intimately linked to place attachment and subsistence (Steinhäuser 2020). Bruno Latour has always tried to remind us ‘moderns’ of our belonging to the earth (see Latour 2018). Here, also hybrid imaginary of territories, especially in young peoples are relevant (de la Vega Leinert

et al. 2021). At the same time, some examples of resistance of communities all over the world will be valuable contributions to this conference (e.g. Rico and Volmer 2023). Meeting in Mendoza, Argentina, could be a chance to reflect as well as to go deeper into different worldwide conceptualizations of territory, rural spaces, and their sustainable development.

Thematic sessions

The thematic sessions will be organized but not limited to four key sub-themes:

1. **Regional productions/ecologies.** Agroecology and alternative food networks have recently expanded in the face of the crisis of conventional agriculture. A diversity of experiences of resistance and transition towards agroecology and food sovereignty persist but face many difficulties and processes of conventionalisation. To what extent do these alternatives challenge the primacy of mainstream agribusiness? What role does agroecology play in international policies and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
2. **Rural-urban disputes.** The boundaries and borders between cities and rural spaces have been transformed, becoming less obvious and more hybrid. New uses and activities in cities as well as processes of rural gentrification emerge. In addition, new and old land users lead to territorial tensions and disputes. The post-pandemic also implied a revalorisation of rural spaces. Youth and neo-ruralities linked to migration, tourism and the use of new technologies are challenging classical understandings of "the rural".
3. **Socio-environmental inequalities and environmental conflicts.** As a result of increased pressure on natural resource extraction, there has been an increase in socio-environmental inequalities and territorial conflict. Processes of soil, water and forest degradation and pollution, including desertification, are coupled with changes in rural labor. To what extent can new case studies provide not only critiques of the existing reality but also prefigure more sustainable alternatives?
4. **Land ownership, tenure and planning.** After a certain academic impasse in attention to the "land question", interest in processes of land appropriation, use and management has returned. Issues related to transhumance, natural protected areas, the subdivision of properties and the territorial demands of indigenous peoples are just some of the topics on the current agenda. In addition, policy responses to land and territorial planning, management and development, incorporating renewed perspectives of participation, gender and environment, also deserve to be analysed.

Field Study

For the field study we propose to explore the south of the province of Mendoza, passing first through the **Uco Valley**. There, it will be possible to observe the territorialization and impacts of the globalization of viticulture, the expansion of crops towards the mountains and the use of water, as well as peasant resistance and alternative food networks. Then we will continue to **Malargüe**, of a 'North-Patagonian' character, where we will observe livestock systems typical of arid/semiarid areas, with transhumant goat herders, as well as socio-environmental conflicts related to mining and fracking, conflicts over access to water and problems of access to land for small shepherds and the native population. We will also visit local initiatives on sustainable rural tourism.

Location and venue

The city of Mendoza, headquarters of the Colloquium, developed dynamically since the end of the 19th century as a wine region, today it becomes the reference city of Western Argentina with a privileged location at the foot of the Andes mountain range and in the Pacific-Atlantic bioceanic corridor. It is a metropolis of more than a million inhabitants where its checkerboard layout and urban forest stand out in a context of fragmentation between irrigated oases and desert areas. The province has almost 150,000 km² but less than 4% is irrigated and economic activity and the population are concentrated there. Mendoza was recently designated as one of the "world's wine capitals" and its tourist and gastronomic offer and influx has expanded significantly. In particular, the Uco Valley and Malargüe stand out as emerging territories, which will be visited during the field trips.

The colloquium will be held at the facilities of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras of the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, located in the west of the city (10 min taxi). This is one of the founding faculties of the University, established in May 1939. The field trips will explore different areas, problems and rural initiatives in the region.

Accommodation

Lodging during the Conference in Mendoza City is at the expense of each participant. In future communications and on the web site we will provide information on accommodation alternatives. Lodging during the field trip is included in the fee and it is not necessary for each participant to make lodging reservations.

The return of the field trip to the City of Mendoza is on the afternoon of the 20th, so we suggest that you book accommodation for that night and organize the return to your place of origin on the 21st.

Program at a glance

Conference in Mendoza city

- September 16: Opening, Keynote Conference & Thematic Sessions & Free City Tour guiding
- September 17: Thematic Sessions, Keynote Conference & Closing Dinner

Field study

- September 18: Valle de Uco field trip (Agroecology & Wineland), Trip to Malargüe
- September 19: Transhumancy and native people territorial demands
- September 20: Return from Malargüe to Mendoza City in the afternoon

Fees (in U\$D)	Early bird registration Conference only *	Early bird registration Conference and Field Trip**	Regular registration Conference only *	Regular registration Conference and Field Trip**
Regular fee	180	480	220	520
Accompanying person	60	360	80	380
Participants from Latin America	60	360	80	380
Participants from Argentina	25	325	25	325
Undergraduate students from Argentina	10	310	10	310

*includes lunch

** includes lunch during the Conference, as well as lunch, dinner and accommodation during the field trip (places for the field trip are limited)

Note: Due to the economic and exchange rate instability in Argentina, these rates may be modified in order to comply with the normal development of the event.

Payment details

There will be two forms of payment

1) Credit Card

It is necessary to create a username and password in the web of self-management of the Faculty (<https://autogestion.ffyl.uncu.edu.ar>) in order to proceed with the payment via Pay Pal.

To access the registration and enrollment instructions, click on <https://ffyl.uncuyo.edu.ar/upload/instructivo-registro-e-inscripcion.pdf>

To access the payment instructions, click on the following link <https://ffyl.uncuyo.edu.ar/upload/instructivo-boton-de-pago.pdf>

2) Payment in cash (at the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras) in AR\$ (Money exchange is available at different location in the city)

Important! Please wait for the registration and payment until early bird registration opens (April 15th, 2024).

For any requirement please contact us directly at 31Colloquium-IGU-CSRS@ffyl.uncu.edu.ar

Scholarship

For this Colloquium, the Ana Firmino Grants will cover Argentinean, Latin American or Global South (UN definition) pre-doctoral students, depending on the quality of the abstracts submitted. Conference fee, accommodation and if possible also travel will be covered. For eligible PhD candidates, when submitting your paper abstract (before March 1st, 2024), please express your wish to be considered for one of these scholarships. The Organising and Scientific Committees will assess who is granted the scholarship depending on the quality of their submitted abstract.

Abstract submission

Authors are invited to submit abstracts (for paper or poster) under the themes given above but are not limited to these themes. Abstracts of no more than 300 words in length should be submitted by March 1st, 2024 through this Form: <https://forms.office.com/e/RRr0QiARLJ>

Abstracts must include information about the following aspects of the research: introduction (clearly stating the problem/objective of the paper), theoretical insights, methodology, findings/results, discussion/conclusion.

Abstracts will be sent for review and participants will be informed by April 14th whether an abstract has been accepted.

Before you begin, please prepare the following information:

- Abstract title
- Keywords
- Abstract Topic
- Author and co-authors' details
- Abstract text is limited to 300 words (figures and tables should not be included; references are not obligatory; once in the submission portal, copy and paste your abstract text into the Abstract text box in the Submission form)
- Specify if you will submit a Paper or Poster
- Abstracts can be submitted in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Contact us at 31Colloquium-IGU-CSRS@ffyl.uncu.edu.ar if you have any questions about abstracts or encounter any issues.

Important dates & deadlines

- 4 December 2023: First call for paper and poster abstracts
- 15 January 2024: Second call for paper and poster abstracts
- 1 March 2024: Abstracts submission deadline
- 14 April 2024: Notification of abstract acceptance
- 15 April 2024: Conference Early-bird registration opens
- 15 May 2024: Early-bird registration closes
- 16 May 2024: Late registration opens
- 25 July 2024: Late registration for field study closes; registration for the conference will be kept open

Organizing committee

Dr. Cornelia Steinhäuser, University of Münster, Germany.
Dr. Facundo Martín, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo / CONICET, Argentina
Dr. Fernando Ruiz Peyré, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

Scientific committee (IGU)

Prof. Serge SCHMITZ, Université de Liège
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Prof. Marcin WÓJCIK, University of Lodz
Dr. Facundo Martín, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo / CONICET, Argentina
Dr. Fernando Ruiz Peyré, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

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Prof. Nélica Berón	Est. Gabriel Greco
Dra. Silvia Quiroga	Est. Soledad Díaz
	Est. Natalí Sandoval

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