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***Contested Spatialities of Lifestyle Migration
Public policies, local democracy and global market forces***

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ABSTRACT

***Mobilities, lifestyles and imagined worlds: Towards understanding
conflicts in paradise***

Based on the work of Urry (2000), Giddens, (1991) and Appadurai (1996; 2003), this paper seeks to explore how the concepts of mobilities, lifestyle and imagination might inform the development of a theoretical framework for amenity migration in general and enhance understanding of conflicts in amenity destinations more specifically. The term ‘mobilities’ was introduced by Urry to initiate discussion on the social consequences of the diverse movements of people, capital, information and images that are increasingly altering the fabric of the modern world. Amenity migration research has focused principally on the movements of people and has failed to recognise the implications of this broader concept of ‘mobilities’ for understanding this phenomenon (McIntyre, 2009). Giddens (1991) described lifestyle as: “a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity” (p. 81). On this basis, ‘lifestyle’ focuses not only on the amenity or objects of attraction but also on the ultimate goals of relocation, namely, enhancing or changing lifestyle and potentially re-defining self which fits well with qualitative assessments of the migration process provided by participants (e.g., Chaplin, 1999; Huber & O’Reilly, 2004; O’Reilly, 2007). Appadurai, similarly to Urry, has emphasised the role of global flows of people, technology, finances and images in re-creating the modern world. A key tenet of his argument is that the ‘imagination’ and particularly individual and collective ‘imagined worlds’ embodying both memory and desire and history and hope have become powerful forces impelling migratory movements generally and, I would argue, lifestyle migration in particular. The emphasis on the macro-drivers of amenity migration (i.e., environment and culture) has neglected the importance of the imagination and, in particular, lifestyle images as guiding narratives in this largely hedonic driven migratory process. As a means of illustrating this conceptualisation, I will introduce two guiding narratives commonly associated with lifestyle migration, namely ‘escape’ and ‘entrepreneurship’ and explore the consequences of their interaction in amenity destinations. In such contexts, a

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fragile co-existence of plural narratives of place often prevails among locals, indigenous peoples, tourists and lifestyle migrants. I would argue that these narratives are similar to the *ideoscapes* of Appadurai (1996) in that they are political and ideological embodying differentials of power and influence and conflicting ideologies of place. Change, particularly exogenous or internally induced developments can de-stabilise this co-existence, creating open conflict and sometimes unexpected alliances as proponents coalesce around the political and ideological tenets of their narrativised worlds.

Key References

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- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
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