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

Rodrigo Hidalgo & Hugo Marcelo Zunino
Universidad Católica de Chile & Universidad de la Frontera
E-Mail: [hidalgo\[at\]geo.puc.cl](mailto:hidalgo[at]geo.puc.cl)

ABSTRACT

**EXISTENTIAL AMENITY MIGRANTS IN PUCÓN COUNTY, REGION IX, LA
ARAUCANÍA, CHILE: REINVENTING THE SELF AND INNOVATING SOCIAL
LIFE**

In this communication we tackle mobility based on the framework proposed by the literature on amenity migration, whose terminology is the most used in the southern cone of Latin America (principally Chile and Argentina). On the theoretical realm, we discuss the limitations of the “amenity migrants” perspective. It is argued that this theoretical corpus is too rigid to depict the complexity of the phenomenon and its inability to read and capture the variety of reason why people migrate. In fact, data collected by the authors show that there are a diversity of amenity migrants, each one aiming towards reaching different ends and deploying a variety of territorial and socio-cultural strategies. In particular, two focus group conducted on mid June and July 2010 showed that a significant proportion of the people that have settled in the Area of Pucón during the last ten years do so to reinvent themselves and challenge – at least at the discursive level – the way of life and costumes prevalent in a late-capitalist society. Based on twenty in-depth interviews and extensive field work, we point out that several cultural innovations are – to an extent – changing the socio-cultural landscape and groups of amenity migrants are organizing and gaining the capacity to exert power at the level the local government. We end up our discussion, reflecting on the new territorialities and the extent to which the particular migrants can be a factor to make local democracy stronger and affect deeper cultural and social structures.

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*Centre of Human and Social Sciences, Spanish National Research Council
Department of Political Science & International Relations, Autonomous University of Madrid*