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Negotiation strategies and social interactions at the local level. The Case of Villa La Angostura. Neuquén. Argentina.

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is to understand the field of residential migration or lifestyle migration in the town of Villa la Angostura in Neuquén province, Argentina through the characterization of the social agents and their negotiation strategies and

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interest in the local space. For this, it is important to research the forces and interests that operate around the property valuation of the land in this town as a post tourism destination. It also interest to know the changes between the public and private land to assess the loss of public space because of mobility and changes of meaning originating in the territory because of the residential and lifestyle migrants.

The concept of field of Pierre Bourdieu (1996), was taken as a starting point to analyze the objective positions (defined as relations), which constitute the social space of the town. They are defined in the current scenario of Post Tourism, which is understood as a process of transition and conversion of residential tourism in tourism destinations. This approach includes new residential strategies of the labor force and withdrawal in the form of amenity migrants or lifestyle migrants, are scattered in mountain resorts. "This phenomenon shows the generalization of their representatives seeking an environment, quality of life and vacation sociability imagined life as an integral part of everyday life" (Bourdeau, P, 2008).

Through mechanisms for citizen participation has been questioned since the end of 2009 in Villa La Angostura the approval of the preliminary feasibility of "Cerro Bayo Tourist Corridor" project. However, council members decided to sanction Villa La Angostura ordinance unanimously to approve the preliminary feasibility of the project supported by a group of tourism operators, and since then started a controversy in the town about this case. Environmentalists believe the rule adopted by the Council responds to the interests of the business community linked to the field of construction and real estate. Also speculate that the project has a high

impact not only by the project itself, but for the precedent that it would generate and, eventually, to adopt similar projects with impact on the forest, despite there is an urban ordinance that expressly prohibited. The council in turn defended the approval of the project because they hold it will bring an economic boom and generate local workforce.

Then, this case study allows to analyze the role of space in the process of creating social interactions, since "space is an object of negotiation but not explicit, but consistent among the subjects of interaction" (Turner, J. 1987 / 1990:234-239).

Submission of the utilization of space, and therefore the mobility of people, specific guidelines is what Turner calls "regionalization of the interaction." The process of "regionalization" is decisively influenced by the different interpretations of social actors involved in a situation arising over which for them means the physical elements of space, ie its material forms. The primary function that takes a particular space is a result of the consolidation of a number of routines accepted by the social whole, a matter which no longer is subject to negotiations and power plays that may turn in issues. When social groups who share a space produce very different interpretations about what they mean, then it is on the verge of conflict.

The methods used include an analysis of stakeholders through in-depth interviews with key informants and other participatory techniques that enable the realization of a social actors mapping stage of the residential tourism as a social space of conflict.

Introduction

In the becoming of the construction of ideas, thoughts and knowledge of residential and lifestyle migration in Villa La Angostura for this chapter, a natural disaster happened: the Puyehue – Cordon Caulle eruption in Chile, in June 2011, which has had a transcendental impact in both the natural and social life of Villa La Angostura and its environment. As a consequence of that, the original inquiry plan has been crossed by this problematic that affects and will continue to affect this community for a long time.

Every and everyone of the interviewees have referred to the time of eruption as a turning point in the realization of their projects and the projecting of their future life. So this document includes not only the original objectives, the comprehension of residential or lifestyle migration's field in Villa La Angostura located in Neuquén province, but also the interpretations regarding the migrants' perception about the meaning that this natural disaster has had for their lives.

Objectives

General

- Understand the field of residential and lifestyle migration in Villa La Angostura town in Neuquén Province, Argentina, by characterizing the social agents and their trading strategies and interest in the local space.

Specifics

- To analyze the instances of participation in the approval of the Draft “Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo” (Bayo Tourist Corridor) project as the axis of social agents’ negotiations that operate in the village as a tourism destination.
- To explore social agents’ perceptions in relation to the production of space, according to their *spatial practices*, the *representations of the space* and the *spaces of representation*.

Methodology

The approach of this study was qualitative and exploratory research design. The aim has been focused on the generation of new analysis categories during the process of the research. The analysis categories defined were: 1) the residential and lifestyle migrants, that is to say, people that weren’t born in the village but arrived seeking a different lifestyle from their previous place of residence and now live permanently or seasonally in the village for more than two months per year; 2) the “Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo” (Bayo Tourist Corridor) Draft project and its approbation process.

In order to select the analysis categories it was applied an intentional theoretical sampling, beginning from a snowball sampling and the selection of those cases considered relevant in relation to the validity given to the research process. The techniques employed for the migrants’ analysis were semi-structured interviews (10) and in-depth interviews (15) that were carried out during the month of August 2011, at Neuquén city and Villa La Angostura village. The technique employed for the analysis of the “Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo” (Bayo Tourist Corridor)

preliminary project was the documental analysis and the study of regional press notices from the moment of its launch to June 2012.

The information collected was analyzed using content analysis techniques and analysis of stakeholders in order to understand the social space of residential and lifestyle migrants, from identifying players and assessing their respective interests around the “Draft Bayo Tourist Corridor” and their implications in relation to the production of space.

Theoretical considerations

The research has a focus on cultural geography approach posed as important to consider the interplay of actors (residential and lifestyle migrants), their practices and imaginaries, all articulated in relation to their new “place or living space”; in this case the town of Villa La Angostura in Neuquén, Argentina. Also interest their positions in relation to the care of this space and their answers in relation to the ways of conserving it as a community heritage of which they are part. This focus from *geography of everyday life* tries to nearer so more to the individuals, their perceptions, their practices and the spaces of these practices. (Hiernaux-Nicolas, D., 2008:182).

As basic analytic framework to interpret the objectives positions, which constitute the social space of residential and lifestyle migrants it has used the notion of social space of Bourdieu. “...it’s a multidimensional space, an open set of relatively autonomous fields, ie more or less strong and directly subordinate its operation and in their transformations, to the field of the economic production...” (Bourdieu,

P., 1985: 31, in Gutierrez, A., 1997: 60). Also Bourdieu defines the *field* as consisting of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), ie a network of objective relations (of domination and subordination, complementarity or antagonism, etc.). between positions. "(Bourdieu, 1995), while *habitus* refers to a set of historic relations "deposited" in the individual bodies in the form of mindset and body schemes of perception, appreciation and action.

Thus the habitus is acquired as a result of the prolonged occupation of a position within the social world (Bourdieu et Wacquant (1995).As a system of disposition to act, perceive, feel and think in some way, internalized and incorporated by individuals along their history. The habitus is manifested through the practice sense, namely, by the ability to move and orient themselves in the situation in which it is involved and that without appeal to a conscious reflection, acquired through provisions that function as automatic. So that the ability of individuals to make effective use of their resources is a function of adapting their habitus to the field in question. Man, in all its activities, seeks power (economic, political, religious, cultural, etc) through specific objects; thus establishing the various sub-regions of social space, ie the various fields. Each field prescribes its particular values and has its own regulatory principles. These principles define the limits of a socially structured space in which agents struggle in terms of their position in that space, either to modify or to maintain their borders and configuration.

Since the city is a projection on the ground of the social agent's relations that maintaining the social agents that coexist, the transformations that adopts are the

result of a dynamic trading between these agents. In other words are always provisional outcome of the dispute between the will for political power expressed in normative references and the citizen appropriation of the social space (Lefebvre, H. cited by Lagarza, R. 2009:19). In this sense it have been used the theory of stakeholders to provide an overview of the interaction from a social perspective. Freeman (1984:25) uses the term "stakeholder" (interested party) to refer to "any group or individual who can affect or be affected by the achievement of the purpose of a corporation." Grimble (1998:1) defines a stakeholder analysis as "a method for understanding a system from the identification of stakeholders and assessing their respective interests." In this sense, the theory is useful to identify the interests of various sectors whose performance can lead to conflict or joints with a decisive impact on development processes.

La Angostura Village as a case study, is a paradigmatic mountain tourism destination in the current post-tourism scene. Post-tourism in a broad sense implies a shift in the status of the areas and the tourism practices in the context of globalization and postmodernism. It is interpreted as a process of residential transition and reconversion of tourism destination, that involves new residential strategies of active and retiree population who as amenity or lifestyle migrants spread among the mountain centers. Multiple dwelling phenomenon, where the individual lives in two or more places, has experimented in the recent years an important growth around the world, facilitated principally by a greater mobility due to the improvements in the transport system and the technological advances that made possible the use of multiple dwelling spatially distant, more flexible and

diverse labor conditions that allow the combination of work, leisure and amenities (Mc Intyre, N.; 2008). “This phenomenon shows in the generalization of its representatives the search of an environment, an imagined quality of life, and a sociability of the holiday life as an integral part of everyday life” (Bourdeau, P, 2008 cited by Otero, A. & González, R., 2009:11).

It was used the concept of imaginary in order to conceptualize the migrants' images when they decided to move permanently o seasonally to the village. Hiernaux, D defines imaginary as “the set of beliefs, images and valuations defined around an activity, a space, a period, a person (or society) at any given time. The representation that the imaginary creates about a process is built from real or poetic images (immerse in the field of fantasy).” (Hiernaux, Cordero, Montjin, 2002). The imaginary creates performing images, led-images, images which not only represent material or subjective realities but also drive processes.

They are temporal constructions, or social constructions of limited duration. It was used the four basic occidental ideologies related to tourism proposed by Hiernaux as preliminary analytical categories in order to analyze migrants' images before their arrival. They are: 1) the conquest of the happiness; 2) the wish of breakout (from the pressures that their previous life was generating); 3) the discovery of the otherness; 4) the return to nature.

Imaginaries, ideologies and representations are key aspects to understand the strategies of spatial appropriation, their conservation and use priorities: because

they are manifested in the actions, joining the subject with the collective and individual player, that is to say the human as inhabitant and citizen.

Then the space is not a scientific objective separated from the ideology or politics; it has always been political and strategic (Lefevre, 1976). The space is a place of constant interaction and struggle between dominance and resistance. These struggles are frequently articulated by social movements which have been identified as privileged spaces to study the mediated processes in the field of democracies' construction (Jelin 1987). Citizenship is a status that recognizes the same rights and duties for all the people that live and inhabit in a same territory characterized by a strong physic and relational continuity, and with a wide diversity of activities and functions." (Borja y Muxi, 2000). An active citizenship is based on the creation or generation of social spaces to claim for participation and questioning of the hegemonic paradigm. It is through the symbolic fights where subjects are transformed into citizens creating spaces of citizenship defined as "the scope created by the citizen appropriation of their public space" (Tamayo, 2006). It is necessary to think about the circumstances in which it is possible to maintain and develop urban social movements, both inclusive and challenging, with cooperative organization and in pursuit of gaining new citizen rights. (Janoschka, 2011)

The work of Lefebvre (1991) on the production of space provides a theoretical framework in which we can try to approach to approach this project spatialize resistances. Lefebvre identifies three interconnected "moments" in the production

of space: 1) ***spatial practices***, 2) ***representations of space***, and 3) ***spaces of representation***.

The ***spatial practices*** refer to the ways in which we generate, use and perceive space. On the other hand these spatial practices are associated with everyday life experiences and collective memories of different lifestyles, more personal and intimate. So they also have the potential to resist the colonization of specific spaces.

Representations of space refer to the conceived and derived spaces from a particular logic and technical and rational knowledge, "a conceptualized space, the space of scientists, city planners, technocrats and social engineers" (Lefebvre 1991:38). This knowledge is linked with the institutions of dominant power and with standards representations generated by a hegemonic "visual logic". They are represented as "legible spaces", such as maps, statistics, etc. Produce visions and standardized representations present in the state structures, economics, and civil society. This effectively produces a simplification legibility of space, as if it were a transparent surface. In this way, it is produced a particular vision that ignores the struggles, ambiguities, and other ways of seeing, perceiving and imagining the world. What makes this conceptualization of representations of space very important today is the growing importance of the dominant forms of display logic and the relations of power / knowledge that reproduce and are reproduced by it. The increasing use of information technologies and new ways of modeling dynamically social life is another indicator of the increasing dominance of representations of space. Its effect is the abstraction and decorporealización of

space, always supported by scientific arguments that appeal to a "true" representation.

Thus emerged an "abstract space" in which "things, events and situations are always replaced by representations" (Lefebvre 1991:311). This abstract space is precisely "the space of contemporary capitalism" (Gregory 1994:360), in which the law of exchange of commodities as dominant economic rationale of modern capitalism has led to a growing commodification of social life. However, rather than being a homogeneous and closed space, the abstract space is itself a site of struggle and resistance in which socio-political contradictions are articulated (Lefebvre 1991:365). Lefebvre says that these contradictions will finally result in a new space, a "differential space" (Lefebvre 1991:52). Arguably, this is precisely what we are seeing today, a proliferation of differential spaces as a result of the contradictions of abstract space (Oslender, U. 2002).

Lefebvre **posits these resistances in the *spaces of representation***. These are the lived spaces that represent ways of local knowledge and less formal ways; there are dynamic, symbolic, and full of meaning, built and modified along the time by the social actors. The spaces of representation do not need to obey to consistent or cohesive rules. Full of imagined and symbolic elements, they have its origin in the history – in the history of the town and in the history of each individual belonging to this town. (Lefebvre 1991:41)

The space of representation is also the *dominated space*. It is both subject to domination and source of resistance, the scene of relationships between

domination and resistance. Evidently the three moments identified by Lefebvre in the production of the space need to be considered as interconnected and interdependent. There is a dialectic relationship among *the perceived, the conceived and the lived* which cannot be considered as independent elements. Due to the fact that social practice is attached to the place “place-bound”, the political organization requires place organization. [...] At the same time, the place is more than everyday lived life. It is the “moment” where the **conceived**, the **perceived** and the **lived** acquire a kind of “structured coherence”. (Merrifield 1993:525)

In this way Lefebvre (1991) distinguishes between “the representation of the space” in the cities, which is implied in the practice of planners and cartographers, and the “representations of symbolic spaces” outlined by the shared experiences and the interpretations of “spatial practices of people” where the production of space is a good manner of building meanings.

Urban post-modernism is aware of the power of discourse production over representative urban spaces where “people not only live their spaces through their images and associated symbols” (Lefebvre, 1991) but also build their meaning by hermeneutic and cognitive processes. Discourses express human ontology – beliefs, fantasies, values and a desire of they wish the world to be.

Global capitalism does not have the industrial sector as its principal axis of growth and speculation, having shifted the emphasis to real estate business which constitute a fundamental dynamic of growth, restructuring and/or reproduction of

spaces and societies in the contemporary world. (Xavier Pereira, Paulo C. e Hidalgo, R, 2008:8). Real estate industry, which used to operate at the local scale in past years, now it became a global scale, so that major investors have an international approach to property investment, which has impacts on the strategies, values and markets. (De Mattos, C; 2008:28 cited by Otero, A. & González, R., 2009: 17).

In this regard, we can considered three involved aspects into the economic dynamic which have been imposed since the fordism crisis, and that appear as the main cause of a deepen process of commoditization of urban development. (De Mattos, C; 2008:24 cited by Otero, A. y González, R., 2009:18)

1. The financial globalization of the world economy which, under the stimulus of the policies of deregulation, privatization and liberalization, manifests itself in an uncontrollable intensification and acceleration of international capital mobility (Chesnais, 1994; Palazuelos, 1998) and results in a rapid and significant increase in the supply of capital, where a major part seeks to gain value through real estate investment. In this sense, Fernández Durán (2006:6) ensures that real estate operations are specially concentrated in the principal metropolis and within them they are just located into highly central, symbolic and profitable enclaves.
2. The imposition of a public management approach supported by neutral and subsidiary criteria, which has contributed on the one hand to strength much more favorable conditions for real estate business and on the other hand to

allow a greater autonomy and freedom to the decisions and actions of the business and the families regarding to the real estate industry.

3. The spread of urban competitive strategies and city marketing strategies in the context of this new public management approach through which the authorities of an increasing number of cities are looking for foreign capitals in an explicit and deliberated manner, which leads to an increase of the importance given to the private real estate investment in urban and metropolitan transformation.

This has a strong relationship with Foucault's **productive** and **creative vision of power**. Power positively produces subjects, discourses, knowledge, truth, realities that permeate every social links, reason why it is not located, but in fact it is immersed in a multiplicity of power's nets in constant transformation (Foucault, M.,1979:182).

Results

Process of approval of the "Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo" (Bayo Hill Tourist Corridor) Draft project

The "Modernization of Bayo Ski Center and Ranch" venture was proposed by Villa La Angostura Town Hall, Neuquén province, in 2008 by Cerro Bayo S.A. Company and Chacras del Bayo Trust. Later on, this project was named "Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo" (Bayo Hill Tourist Corridor) basing this name change on the link between the village and the hill urbanization that the company Chacras del Bayo

would lead and vocation for tourist development of the whole project, with the intention of detaching it from the negative criticism received by some sectors of the population of Villa La Angostura, who considered the project “a real estate business” from the very beginning.

The project consists of two parts, one of them addresses the modernization of the Winter/Ski Center Cerro Bayo, and the other proposes the urbanization of the Uboldi plot.

Regarding the opinion of the social actors involved in the project, it is important to highlight that the Town Hall Executive has supported and promoted the project, arguing the need to encourage an economic reactivation in the village, even though the Secretary of Environment manifested technical objections in relation to the urbanization density proposed in the plot mentioned before.

In turn, the local NGOs have a critical position, which they have manifested in several occasions, regarding the village development model and the risk of negative environmental impact of the project.

Moreover, during December 2009, the Villa La Angostura Citizen Assembly presented 260 citizens' signatures to the City Council that made the following request (quote): “In defense of our native forest, our watercourses, the respect of laws and the regulations in force (*National Forest Law 26.331, Ordinance 1414*), the below signatories request the abolition of Ordinance of feasibility N° 2264/09 of the preliminary project “Corredor Turístico Cerro Bayo.”

This is carried out under Article 313 of the new Villa La Angostura Constitution, which requires a minimum 3% of the electoral register to request the abolition of an Ordinance. This request constitutes, therefore, the first act of participatory democracy considered in it was ignored by the City Council up to that moment". <http://alertaangostura.blogspot.com/> (accessed March, 30 2011).

The principal conflict generated by the project is based on the alleged damage and risks that affect the area considered environmentally sensitive and located in the called "forest band". The lot Uboldi includes almost the totally of the Bonito River basin, mostly covered by dense and high *Coihues* forests. Some sectors of the lot present steep slopes, where the soil is particularly fragile.

In this sense, the Forest Belt creation (By-law 1414/03, Environmental and Urban Planning Code of Villa La Angostura) has been directed to protect sectors of the Bayo Forest slope with ecosystems formed with high sensitive native forests. For this reason, from the Provincial Executing Unit during 2009 is questioning the authorization from the municipality to the company for opening temporary tracks because "these are areas that according to their status of protection, allow only productive or touristic activities proposal through management plans to ensure sustainability, to ensure persistence and perpetuity of the forest mass". As this category not admit changing land use, ie. that must be ensure environmental services that the forest provided in perpetuity and only accepted low impacts interventions. (<http://alertaangostura.blogspot.com/>)(accessed March, 30 2011).

(include Figure 1 near here)

The subdivision of Uboldi aims to provide second or third homes to sectors of the population foreign to the Villa, which will be use during short periods along the year. Thus, the representatives of the El Mallin and Margaritas neighborhoods expressed their specific concerns about the real effect on their quality of life, genuine jobs creation and improvements because of this project. They are not opposed to the modernization of the winter resort, but they do not understand why the Municipality gives priority to the real estate development which does not change the status of the slums inhabitants rather than promoting housing and providing basic services. They are also particularly concerned about the potential risk of environmental degradation derived from deforestation.

Some of the information displayed here comes from the Asssesment Report conducted by the Comahue National University (through the Bariloche Regional University Center) about the Environmental Impact Assesment carried out by the enterprise in charge of the project. In this study, emerges as main result that *"The information gathered so far is partial, incomplete and unclear, (...) and will not allow, in principle, to consider the project feasible."*

In addition, and after the eruption of Puyehue Volcano in the neighboring Republic of Chile, located about 40 km away from Villa La Angostura in June 2011, the situation of the town was completely modified. From that moment, with the aim of boosting local economy, in August 2011, the City Council sanctioned an ordinance

authorizing the Municipal Executive to expedite the outstanding public and private works' projects. The package of private projects includes the modernization of Cerro Bayo, the Tourist Corridor that Cerro Bayo promotes, which encompass the urbanization of Uboldi plot, the "Inacayal Pueblo-Cumbre" golf course, the industrial zone, Tres Cerros connectivity project, "Complejo Patagonia" and "Correntoso- Nueva Costanera".

In response, members of the NGO "Alerta Angostura" questioned the support of Councillors to this local normative. Moreover, the 1.366/11 Decree of Neuquén Province Governor, declares of *"provincial interest the private investment projects that were prioritized by resolutions of the Municipal Executive of Villa La Angostura, in pursuit of ensuring economic recovery ..."* .

This statement of interest can be interpreted from many perspectives, as indeed it was perceived by the local community. However, taking into account the consequences of the volcano eruption, the government's initiative emerges as an attempt to relieve the town's social situation by prioritizing the investments that the authorities should have done long before, *and excepting private investments for the compliance of rules* in order to allow the arrival of investments that promise giving new labor alternatives to the town in the short time. Thus it is interpreted that the provincial government employs its territorial sovereignty using the power of exemption for the construction and protection of social order, rather than legislate for the protection and control of natural resources, in this case the forest and sources of water. The challenge is to work to empower and encourage the development of social movements in the community who are able to express what

they feel and think about the construction of spaces of representation at the local level, without being stigmatized by the power. They could be alternative expressions to the logic of global capitalism. It is through these symbolic struggles for the value assigned to the landscape and the place that another type of space is created: citizenship, which constitute collective expressions of major political force in the local level.

However, beyond these benefits to the project, still continue the conflicts to determine the allowed limits for building developments in forests, conflicts that took the approval of the Forest Law as the most controversial fight in Villa La Angostura. While environmental NGOs claim that part of the project as about 40 acres of Correntoso Lake it is within category I (red:high conservation area) and 70% of Golf Bayo Hill project it is within category II (yellow: meaning that changes on land use are not allowed), Bayo Hill Company continue promoting on the Internet (through Eidico Inc real estate) the sale of plots in different real estate projects, operation that has been promoting since some years. (Rio Negro Newspaper, 06/08/2012)

Although the Forest Law was approved unanimously in the provincial Legislature but it wasn't yet enact, representatives of private enterprises which have economic interests in town have advanced with the signing of agreements that involve the execution of works. These real estate developers "as compensation" should carry out public works in benefit of the city due to the exceptions that allow them to realize the projects which are outside local regulations. This point was strongly questioned by local NGOs because it sets an important precedent for any

developer who despite having a project which does not conform the existent ordinances, can "compensate" it with public works rather than adjusting to the established. (Andino Newspaper, 11/20/2011)

(Rio Negro Newspaper, 06/07/2012)

Social agents' perceptions about the production of space.

Residential an Lifestyle Migrants' social space.

In order to understand the objective positions which constitute the social space of the residential and lifestyle migrants is important to consider their time of permanency in the village, the thickness of that history generates a set of historical objective relationships that ascribe certain achievements and generate power to hold certain rights. Time operates as a second instance of stratification beyond the social and economic. Diverse habitus (understood as the set of historical relationships "placed" on the individual bodies by the manner of mental and corporeal outlines of perception, appreciation and action that generate certain affinities among migrants) co-exist not only if they arrived 30 years ago but also 20, 10 years ago or if they did it recently. This reality implies difficulties to achieve and merge a communicational identity among them in order to build the community.

Due to the fact that the city is a projection on the ground of the relationships kept by the social agents that inhabit it, the transformations adopted are a consequence of the dynamic negotiation among them. Considering the stakeholders theory as a method to understand a system from the identification of actors and the evaluation of their respective interests, it is analyzed the opinion of the interviewers about the

by-law that authorizes the development of the mentioned investments. In this sense, the theory is useful in order to identify the interests of the diverse sectors whose operation can lead to conflicts or joints with decisive consequences in the development processes. In general terms, the town reflects a division between those who “don’t mind” about the development of the projects associated with Cerro Bayo because they believe that it’s not serious; those who declare being “desperate” because they think about the negative implications in the long term; and those who “are in the business” and think about the profits derived from the development project in the short term.

These positions are perceived as very polarized, where some interviewers talk about the lack of maturity to face the development and “buscar los grises⁶” to search a balance development in the long term. The polarization of the positions is understood as a product of the fears: 1) **fears to the lack of State controlling private investment** that generates a careful and precautionary attitude, 2) **fears to the lack of investment** and as a consequence of that the lack of opportunities to the economic growth of the community, and 3) **fears to be stigmatized due to having taken public stances** in a close sphere where social disapprovals may stay along the time.

Residential and Lifestyle Migrants’ Imaginaries.

Societies build imaginaries mixing the external with its internal context, that is to say, their knowledge background. Asking interviewees about their representations of the village before taking the decision of migrate and how those original ideas

⁶ “buscar los grises” It is an expresión in spanish that means to balance

were recreated in their daily life in the village, it stands out the **forest** as a strong natural element of identification and attachment to the place, and the **tranquility and more sociability** as an added-value of the community life. Among the responses it also appears the **necessity of a change of life**, where beyond the landscape people sought **“to run away from the previous place in order to achieve a greater well-being”** what implies that they carried with themselves a big amount of unsolved complaints related to their previous life situation. So, the basic occidental imaginaries characterized by Hiernaux, D. (2002) are present in the imaginaries of the residential and lifestyle migrants related to the touristic: 1) the conquest of the happiness; 2) the wish of breakout (from the pressures that their previous life was generating); 3) the discovery of the otherness; 4) the return to nature.

Spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation.

The imaginary creates operating images, guide images, images that drive processes and not only represent material or subjective realities. The imaginaries, the ideologies and representations are key for understanding the spatial appropriation strategies, their use and conservation priorities, because they are manifested in the actions, joining the subject and the individual and collective actor, namely the man as inhabitant and citizen. In this sense the *spatial practices* that give sense and make possible to continue living in the village in a crisis moment like nowadays are associated with the possibility of doing activities strongly associated with the nature as walking, riding the bicycle in the forest, skiing in the

mountain, kayaking, fishing in the lakes, or playing golf in an environment of high quality landscape.

However, some contradictions are perceived in the *representations of the space*, namely those spaces conceptualized by the local power, provincial power, and the one of the “developers”. They promote urban projects for a real estate market of high disposable income that pretends to build a new urbanization at the heart of the natural heritage that distinguish this town from their neighborhoods: **the forest**. So how to explain that in this mountain tourism destination which its lodging capacity operates just with a 30 per cent annual average of occupation, and that also has only a 30 per cent of its plots occupied in the urban plant, and where still exists a wide margin to continue building, the provincial and local power is promoting the possibility for investors to invade the common heritage by all valued. This has a strong relation with the Foucault’s productive and creative vision of power (1979), where the power produces discourses, knowledge, truths, realities that penetrate all the social links producing things, in this case a representation of how to live the space.

This abstract space is precisely “the space of the contemporary capitalism” (Gregory, 1994: 360), where the commodities exchange law as the dominant economic reason of the modern capitalism has lead to an increasing commoditization of the social life. However, the space does not constitute an homogeneous and closed unity. In fact, the abstract space is a fight and resistance site where the socio-politic contradictions are articulated. The time will give evidence if the resistances in the *representation spaces* prevail, and how they will

be solved considering the power plays and the dialectic relation among **the perceived, the conceived**, and the **lived**, where the imaginaries and the symbolic will be struggling for the construction of meanings in this mountain community.

So it is clear how the process that make possible the new urban management approach proposed by De Mattos C. (2008) is reproduced. The public management sustained by neutrality and subsidiary criteria, on purpose seeks to attract investments as city marketing and urban competitiveness' strategies, consolidating much more favorable conditions for real estate businesses. In this context, the real estate investment plays an increasingly important role in the "development" of tourism destinations in posttourism scenario. These phases of local development have place in the framework of the financial globalization of the worldwide economy that, due to the encouragement of deregulation, privatization and liberalization politics, is manifested by an increasing mobility of international capitals, where part of them go into the real estate market seeking greater profitability, and tourism is seen as an excellent excuse in order to promote landings with large possibilities of success.

Conclusions

The present research has dealt with the social perceptions of residential and lifestyle migrants about Villa La Angostura as their new space of life. Although the social space of Villa La Angostura shows deep social differences and differences about their own development, the Puyehue volcano's eruption which covered the

town with ashes didn't make differences of any kind. It generated a stage of shared difficulties that invites to reflect about the next future becoming and offering a great opportunity for new collective learnings.

The first reflection is to take consciousness about the environmental fragility that impose the landscape where this mountain destination is located and second is the social and economic fragility that sets up the development of tourism as a "single crop". Many people that arrived at the town recently attracted by their amenities, or by the opportunities that those amenities offered in terms of labor alternatives, started to think about the possibility of leaving the town in seek of new horizons. The massive exodus of Villa La Angostura people after the volcano's eruption can be also understood as a lack of territorial commitment of those who perceived the village as "disneyland", as an interviewee mentioned, and in the annoyance caused by any solution's proposal to common problems. The hopes and dreams have left to other places; the values of strength, durability, and sedentary mindset of modernity have fallen into disuse to give place to liquid *modernity* where individual dreams predominate over the social ones.

Other question that the volcano's eruption has shown up is the precariousness of the public services' provision. This problem, which has been evident since the overflow of the septic tanks right in the downtown during some days of high summer season due to the lack of sewage system, was extended to the electricity service vulnerability and the water sources precariousness. These considerations show that local government fails in its role of promotion of local development.

People claim for the necessity of honesty, competence and pertinence in the public management issues, people also claim for imagination to the resolution of conflicts. A community as this, that have proved to be participative choosing in the past the kind of development they wish has opportunities to generate good practices of governance. Understanding by *good practices of governance the approach to the decision making process and for the tourism development regulation based on democratic principles which seek to maximize efficiency in the decision making process in the public issues*” (Moscardo, G., 2011)

The discussion about governance has important implications for social leaders, both public and private. Governance is specially relevant in relation to the management topics about the natural and cultural common heritage, corporate social responsibility, and the inclusion of the community to decide how the stakeholders place objectives and goals about management development for a sustainable competitiveness in the long term. As long as these practices become daily into civic participation processes, increasingly people who work in the public scene will be obliged to show up the objective basis and criteria that sustain their government decisions in the creation of public policies in a transparent way. Therefore, responsible participation is an open window to a society not only more plural but also more fair.

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Figure 1



Source: *Rio Negro* Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.rionegro.com.ar/diario/cerro-bayo-892996-9546-nota.aspx> (accessed June, 11 1012)