

Introduction

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Amenity migration

Amenity migration is a highly complex and dynamic societal movement. It may be succinctly defined as people moving to places they perceive as having higher quality of natural environment and/or distinctive culture, with an expectation that their quality of life will be enhanced. The individuals and households migrating are called *amenity migrants*. Others who move primarily for economic opportunities (often associated with an amenity-based economy) can be referred to as *economic migrants*, and together may be considered *amenity-led migrants* (Moss, 2006). The anticipated opportunities of the geographer Philippe Bourdeau's (2009) "post-tourism age" for residing where not long ago one mainly visited, is a considerable societal force. The focus of amenity migration has been on places considered to be principally "rural", countryside of outstanding natural environmental features, such as mountains, lakes, forests, and distinctive human life ways and built environments. It is the subject of this book.

This movement has become an important global force, transforming rural culture, economy, and landscape. It is occurring not only in wealthy countries, such as Australia, France, Norway, and the USA, but also in economically less well-off ones, including among others, Argentina, Czech Republic, Morocco, and Vietnam. The information bank of the International Amenity Migration Centre presently contains publications and primary information about amenity migration in 44 countries. The contributions to this volume, along with other publications referenced by its authors here, confirm its worldwide presence and significance.

Public media has played an important role in drawing attention to and interpreting amenity migration, with the Internet a significant vehicle. Google entries, while including duplications, give an indication of the magnitude of information electronically available about it. Searching for *amenity migration* and *amenity migrants* in early May 2002 showed "about 7,090 results", and in early May 2014, "about 1,666,000 results".

A brief overview

The valuing of amenities has had a much longer history than *amenity migration*. The word *amenity* comes from the Latin *amoenus*, meaning *pleasant*. In the 19th century we find amenity valuing being included in modernizing German forest management, for recreation, aesthetic pleasure, and spiritual pursuit. Forest managers Eric Schindler and Linda Godbe, writing

about the history of German forestry, quote from H.C. Buckhardt's 1854 work, *Sewing and Planting*: "Slowly trees and forest became once again something to be revered. Not religiously as centuries before but ...*for their beauty and values that go beyond turning them into money, for the peace and inspiration found among ancient forest trees that offer more meaning than the works of human art*" (Schindler & Godbe, 1993: 43). Sylvie Nail (2008), in her history of forest policy and social change in England, notes that dating back to the Royal Forests, as well as for timber, there has long been an aesthetic and leisure amenity value attached to British woodlands. She further notes that such views likely first appear in public planning valuing in the British *Housing, Town Planning Act* of 1909. Then, in 1951, the UK Ministry of Local Government & Planning defined "*amenity* as that element in the appearance and layout of town and country which makes for a comfortable and pleasant life rather than mere existence". Nail follows this quote with "hence it referred to quality, often visual quality, in the living environment" (2008: 70). The economist Thomas Power (1988: 142) defined *amenities* as "the qualities of a region that make it an attractive place to live and work". We suggest this remains essentially the case today, but with a greater emphasis on living than working. As a number of the contributions to this volume indicate, further study of the meaning and use of *amenity* in other cultural traditions would enrich our understanding of amenity migration.

The term *migration* has been used particularly in demography, and has had the common meaning of moving residence with the intent of permanence. Here we use a more inclusive ecological definition of migration. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 25, along with many other species, human migration includes dwelling or residing permanently and intermittently. Others, including some of our authors, use the term more exclusively, such as to reside in only one location "full time". As this anthology demonstrates, there are also related terms in use that refer to particular aspects of location and behaviour, such as residential tourism, second home owners, multi-local dwelling, amenity tourists, etc.

Amenity migration became notable in the USA from the late 1960s, with a growing turn-around in migration from mainly metropolitan to rural areas. The regional planners Edward Ullman (1954), and Harvey Perloff and Lowdon Wingo (1964) identified the attractiveness of physical environmental conditions, "amenity resources", as beginning to influence the distribution of economic activity as they were increasingly attracting non-job oriented, as well as the job seeking migrant. Rural sociologists Andrew Sofranko and James Williams (e.g. 1980), focusing on the north-central lake country of the USA, also identified the quality of the natural environment as attracting in-migrants. But in addition, they noted the attraction of rural life ways, going on to posit the likely social and cultural change that rural communities would experience from "amenity movers"/"amenity migrants".

The natural, or environmental focus has since prevailed in amenity migration analysis and prescription, perhaps particularly in North America, with comparatively little attention given to cultural amenities, especially living culture, or rural life ways. We were among the first to emphasize the significance of cultural amenities and the socio-cultural effects of amenity migration. This volume gives particular attention to these aspects, with the intention of

reducing a weakness and explaining how they are integral to the opportunities and issues that accompany amenity migration.

Amenity-led migration decreased during the 1980s and picked up again in the 1990s in North America, accompanied by an initial lag more globally. Its growth continued through most of the first decade of this century, with a slowing or cessation in some high amenity areas with the Global Recession. The present general condition is unclear, but from the limited research now available and our reading of global realty and investment information, there appears to be some recovery in the purchase of high amenity “rural” properties worldwide. The wealthy in particular continue to acquire them, and are being addressed by the real estate industry in terms of their “portfolio” of personal-use real estate. In July 2013 an online European network of cultural journals (www.eurozine.com), quoted the chief economist at the *Financial Times* as saying, “one of the paradoxes of the recession is that luxury markets are booming”. Real property in amenity-rich places is one of these markets, and the associated impacts and implications are identified and addressed in this volume by many of the authors.

Considerable information has been developed about amenity migration over the past quarter century or so, especially during the past decade. Readers are referred to the reviews of, in particular, Adams, *et al.* (2012), Gosnell & Adams (2009), Moss (2006, *Chapter 1*), and Stewart (2002). As with other complex societal forces, identification and the understanding of amenity migration crosses and integrates academic disciplines and professional practices, involving especially:

- rural sociology, demography and gerontology, and anthropology
- cultural and economic geography
- natural resources economics, ecology and management
- tourism analysis and planning
- regional, rural and urban analysis, planning and development

Movement for quality of life is therefore focused on in research and planning from a number of perspectives in addition to amenity migration *per se*, as a rural renaissance, exurbanization, counterurbanization, residential tourism, lifestyle migration, etc. It is also the subject of greater specificity, in part or whole using an amenity migration paradigm, such as parks, protected areas and wilderness; ageing, retirement, and Baby Boomers; economic growth and development; change in mountain areas; and second homes, or multi-dwellings. Further, these are also brought together in various ways. The reader will find the use and reference to these perspectives and rubrics, and others, in this volume.

Amenity migration models have emphasized its spatial aspect or form, both when amenity migration is addressed *per se* or treated contextually, as with exurbanization and counterurbanization. The construct developed by Glorioso and Moss is suggested as more holistic (see especially *Chapters 1, 8 & 25, this volume*). While it centres on an understanding of a societal movement and system, it was also formulated with the particular intent of planning and managing amenity migration to take advantage of its positive effects and avoid or

mitigate its negative ones. Between 1986 and 2000, the model focused on amenity migration in mountainous areas, however the latest version of the construct represents its more general pattern (*Chapters 1 & 25, this volume*). Allied constructs are proposed by authors in this publication, such as Bartoš *et al.*, Chapter 17; Hidalgo *et al.*, Chapter 19; Perlik, Chapter 6; Steinicke & Löffler, Chapter 14; and Webster *et al.*, Chapter 24.

The Banff 2008 international conference

Increasingly in the past decade or so amenity migration has become a subject of sessions in academic conferences, and to a lesser extent in professional planning ones. The first international conference solely on the subject took place at the Banff Centre in western Canada, in the spring of 2008. The conference focused on amenity-led migration in mountainous areas of the world, and brought together for four days 82 scholars, practitioners, concerned citizens, and elected representatives. In their papers, panels, break-out sessions, and considerable discussion, they assessed current knowledge, identified future research needs, and shared existing and possible strategies, policies and tools to plan for and manage amenity migration for sustaining natural ecological systems and their symbiotic human communities. During the conference proceedings, over meals and in Banff's pubs, both the specifics of mountain amenity migration and the more general subject were explored with intensity, and often humour.

The gathering was successful in presenting and relating the considerable range and depth of knowledge, as well as the many unknowns about the subject. The present state of prescription for obtaining amenity migration's benefits while ameliorating its threats, was an important concern of the participants, but one that led to few satisfactory conclusions. While there were valuable exchanges, and some advances made, prescription was identified as a key factor needing much more attention, and especially innovation.

The proceedings of the conference (papers, extended abstracts, and transcriptions of panel and closing sessions, including question-and-answer periods) were published the following year as *Understanding and Managing Amenity-led Migration in Mountain Areas* (Moss *et al.*, 2009). This book draws heavily on the Banff conference – indeed, the first versions of 12 of the chapters herein were presented at the conference. Given that five years have passed since the proceedings were published, the authors of these papers have updated and expanded them for this book. Another 13 original contributions have also been written for inclusion here.

Intention, structure and content of the book

This book is written for researchers, decision-makers, professional planners and managers, as well as for concerned citizens who are residents or are contemplating residing in high amenity places. It seeks to be of value to the specialist as well as the more general reader; not an easy objective, but hopefully one we have reasonably achieved.

Our approach to this complex subject is inclusive. While emphasizing socio-cultural aspects of movement for more amenities, the biophysical and political-economic are also here, with an eye toward systemically linking them. The authors come from a broad range of disciplines and experiences, with a capacity to draw from and integrate these, as is very much needed for this important subject. Their writing is descriptive and prescriptive, occasionally forcefully didactic. They have used research methods that are qualitative, quantitative, and an integration of the two. Some treat their subject in considerable breadth, yet there is also depth.

It is a catholic anthology, as is important for a field of scholarly inquiry and praxis that is only some four decades old, and one with a growing global presence. There are weaknesses, and again, not unexpected for a collection of articles about this subject, along with this publication's size constraint. There is little attention specifically given to the spiritual and aesthetic aspects of amenity migration. Not typically the topics of "social science", we were unsuccessful in obtaining such contributions.

We would also note that this may be considered the second volume in a series, following *The Amenity Migrants: Seeking and Sustaining Mountain and Their Cultures* (Moss, 2006). Similar to this volume, it treated amenity migration globally, but focused on mountainous areas. Here we follow the rivers down from the mountains to include other places of biophysical, ecological and cultural attraction being sought by people in their quest for greater quality of life.

The book is divided into three parts: *Strategic Concepts & Conditions, Learning from Local & Regional Experiences, and Planning for Sustainability*. Part 1 includes six chapters that explicate overarching concepts and characteristics of amenity migration. They identify and offer insights into the patterns of amenity-led change that are transforming rurality, including examples and comprehensive reviews of relevant literature.

In the first chapter, Laurence Moss uses his revised amenity migration construct for framing a discussion of four strategic elements transforming rurality, likely globally, that he identifies as important for managing this in-migration for more equitable sustainability. He also suggests means of improving prescription, and concludes with global driving forces likely to impact amenity migration's future. In Chapter Two, Linda Kruger, Steve Selin, and Kathryn Thompson discuss amenity-based development and its literature in four groupings: using aggregate data to explore amenity attributes, analysis of the effects of amenity migration on communities and long-time residents, use of the gentrification construct for understanding the commodification of rurality, and exurbanization studies of the effects of amenity growth

on ecological systems. In Chapter Three, Gundars Rudzitis, Philip Graves, and Laurence Moss analyze the effects of amenity-led development on public goods, using Santa Fe, New Mexico as an archetype of how these benefits are shrinking, particularly because of commodification and individualized consumption. Next, David Matarrita-Cascante reviews knowledge about community participation and attachment in amenity-rich communities of the Global North. He then examines his subject in Nuevo Arenal, Costa Rica, and makes initial comparisons with the northern experience. Nick Osbaldiston and Felicity Picken next take us into the realm of “slow living”, and explore this dimension of time and place and its complexity for amenity seekers. Further, they propose the slow narrative has strong potential for more positive engagements of in-comers in community and place. Manfred Perlik’s contribution completes this part of the volume. He makes the case for the continuing attraction of metropolitan regions, drawing especially on the experience of the European Alps, and that high amenity mountain places are an extension of the metropolis, principally for the recreation of its citizens.

Part 2 of the book focuses on regional and local case studies and the effects and implications of amenity migration within their own societal milieu, and the larger, global dynamic. The amenity migration condition is approached within two contexts: deepening knowledge about it in wealthy societies of North America and Europe, and the growth and distribution of this societal movement in poorer societies of the world.

The ten chapters in Part 2 about “the haves” begin with Gundar Rudzitis’ offering of a radical theory of development, centred on the quest for quality of life in the American West, the fallacy of the economic theoretical base of our consumption, and its degrading effects on high amenity areas. Romella Glorioso then discusses the main findings of a study and follow-on, realistic sustainability strategy for the Similkameen Valley in western Canada. The knowledge set obtained from the survey is one of the most complete to date on the regional effects of amenity migration and residents’ response. Next, Linda McMillan returns (2006) to the Sierra Nevada of California, to show more explicitly how amenity migrants in mountain regions can become their stewards by being resource co-managers, developing collaborative networks of stakeholder groups. Kim Sorvig then explains why exurban development and wildfire are increasingly in conflict, and deconstructs the U.S. Forest Service’s FireWise approach, along with proposing building techniques that better address an increasingly critical problem.

Shifting to Europe, the next two chapters are about the French amenity migration experience. Jean-Christophe Dissart analyzes the France’s population shift to higher-amenity coastal and mountain areas. In this he discusses the local development and spatial planning issues that amenity migration entails and strategic research needs. Then Françoise Cognard, focusing on her research in three upland rural areas of France, describes the characteristics of poor in-migrants and their relationships to amenities, amenity migration, and local authorities. The next set of paired chapters focuses on the European Alps. Lars Keller reports on the first comprehensive scientific study to measure quality of life in all regions of the Alps, a territory well-known to amenity migrants. His chapter emphasizes the socio-cultural dimension of the

modeling. Ernst Steinicke and Roland Löffler follow with an analysis of the impacts of current in-migration, including amenity-driven, on the ethno-cultural structures and processes of the Italian Alps. These are followed by two investigations of an amenity-rich Norwegian region. Tor Arnesen first outlines the unfolding national political and economic condition resulting from the continuing growth of second homes in Norway, including associated public policy and planning, and gives examples from the Lillehammer region. Kjell Overvåg & Terje Skjeggedal follow with a case study that presents and discusses the challenges for land use planning and management arising from the major second home developments of Ringeby municipality. They also propose improvements to the ways public authorities manage this amenity migration.

The second section of Part 2 of the book adds to the very limited knowledge about amenity migration in the larger part of the world, countries and societies with significantly less resources to realize the benefits or deal with the problems of amenity migration. Many of the issues and opportunities these nations face result from the presence of North American and European amenity seekers. The section begins with Michael Bartoš, Drahomíra Kušová, Jan Těšitel, and Laurence Moss describing the development of amenity migration in three regions of the Czech Republic, from historical roots to the present, focusing on examining the motivations and impacts of Czech amenity seekers. In the next chapter Barbara Lampič and Irena Mrak outline the Slovenian amenity-based experience, and then concentrate on the socio-cultural and economic implications of foreign amenity migrants in the Pomurje region of that country.

The next three chapters give us considerable insight into the growing significance of amenity migration in Latin America. Rodrigo Hidalgo, Hugo Zunino, Oliver Bender, and Axel Borsdorf analyze its distribution and spatial structure, economic and social consequences in Chile, focusing on one lakeside and two metro-peripheral case studies. In Chapter 20, Rodrigo González and Adriana Otero identify and assess contradictions in amenity-led change and development in four Argentine destinations, emphasizing amenity migration as a shadow of tourism, one masking major socio-cultural and environmental issues. Then, in the context of Mexico's considerable experience with amenity migrants, especially from northern America, Daniel Hiernaux-Nicolas focuses on the former silver mining village of Mineral de Pozos. He examines the processes that have led to significant social, cultural, and heritage changes, and the numerous contradictions they entail.

There is very little knowledge about Africa's amenity migration experience. In Chapter 22, Dennis Fricken and Ernst Steinicke contribute one of the few scientific studies, and likely the first about the Maghreb region of North Africa. They describe socio-cultural and economic consequences of the early stage of in-migration, principally multi-dwelling residents, in the Berber village of Oukaïmeden. While there is more knowledge about our subject in Asia, it also remains scant. We have two contributions here, likely the first publications about rural amenity migration in their respective countries. Asia's hill stations were the refuge of European colonists, and Vu Nam and Makoto Sato describe the development of Sapa, Viet Nam from this origin to that of a contemporary resort town. They analyze

the relationship between tourism and early stage amenity migration, focusing on the role of domestic stakeholders in the area's development. Next, Douglas Webster, Cai Jianming, Larissa Muller, and Wen Ting inform us, in global context, about China's amenity-led development that is accompanying its expanding middle and upper urban classes. They then use the rapidly emerging Yunnan Amenity Corridor as a prism to better understand amenity dynamics in contemporary China.

In Part 3 and the last chapter of the book, Romella Glorioso, drawing on the previous chapters of this volume, formulates a strategic framework that should help in planning for the sustainability of high amenity communities in changing rural places in a time of unprecedented climate change. She concludes by identifying four interrelated key issues that require unconventional and innovative strategy and tactics, not the usual local and regional planning, and especially not conventional land use planning and zoning. Solving them demands improving the use of knowledge, and making difficult changes to existing policies and practices, including using the amenity migration strategic framework she proposes.

We end this introduction aware that there is more to know about this complex, dynamic global change agent, especially given the little knowledge available about amenity migration in much of the world. However, there is adequate knowledge now to far better manage amenity migration than we have. This is essential to both the people and the natural ecological systems upon which they depend for comfort and survival. It is especially the case today as critical approaches to rapidly changing climate and its systemic impacts on food, water, and energy security will seriously affect the search for a better life in our transforming rural places.

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