“Spatial Planning and Social Justice: the paradox of regional decentralization and its impact on the region of Aysén (Chilean Patagonia)”

ABSTRACT

The following research focuses on the problem of the spatial planning model implemented in Chile –through top-down strategies– during the last forty years, where decentralization has become an almost unreachable task. The concentration of decision-making processes in the central government, and the increasing social and economic inequalities between the fourteen regions and the metropolis of Santiago, have led to a wave of social movements from north to south of the country. The specific case of the social movement of Aysén represented a wake-up call for society, where citizens achieved to organize themselves and demand the integration of their own opinions in decision-making processes in what concerns the territory they inhabit. This movement claimed for the vindication of Aysén as a historically forgotten region by the central government. In other words, the latter calls for spatial justice and recognition of its particularities as a peripheral region.

Key words: spatial planning, regionalisation, decentralisation, spatial justice, social movement, Chilean Patagonia.