

Governance | Individual communication

IC - (21043) - RESIDENTS' INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE NARRATIVES OF PLACE CHANGE AND THE PSYCHO-POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE RIGHT TO STAY PUT

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Background and objectives

The transformations of urban neighbourhoods brought about by gentrification and touristification are reshaping the ways people relate with places and are becoming a source of conflicts over place-relevant rights and responsibilities. From a psycho-socio-political perspective, it is thus important to understand how place changes affect the construction, enactment, and legitimisation of place-related citizenship claims at a local level. Drawing from constructionist approaches in environmental social psychology and adopting a narrative approach, this study explores how residents make sense of changes and advance place-related rights claims. Specifically, it investigates 1) how and from which perspective (individual, collective) are residents' place narratives constructed and 2) how Self and others' rights to belong and remain in place are advanced or questioned.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

Interviews with long-term and new residents (n=30) from two Lisbon neighbourhoods - more (Alfama) or less (Ajuda) - affected by changes were conducted. The analysis looked at four aspects of narratives: temporal form (regressive/ progressive/ tragic); sharedness in the community (unified/fragmented); perspective (individual/collective); and roles (hero/victim/villain).

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Findings show the emergence of three narratives. One is the unified, collective, and regressive narrative of long-term residents presenting the "born and bred" community as the sole victim and the sole hero able to preserve place continuity. New residents present two different and more fragmented narratives: a tragic one presents the Self as a committed and attached hero defending the place; a progressive one presents the Self as capable of coping with changes enjoying divergent places. The three narratives depict the right to stay put respectively as 1) a violated and collective time/place entitlement or an individual right granted by 2) commitment and 3) agency in place.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

Providing innovative insights into how this right is psychologically constructed and legitimised, the study contributes to the micro-politics of place and citizenship, with implications for more just city's governances.

Palavras-chave : touristification, people-place relations, citizenship, narrative