

IC - (21054) - THE DILEMMA OF PLACE AND MOBILITY IN THE EVERYDAY: IMPLICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP AND MIGRATION

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Background and objectives

The residency-by-investment law offers residency rights to non-nationals that invest in the country (e.g., in real estate), even if they only stay in the country for short periods of time (14 days every 2 years). This legal innovation (Castro, 2012) makes prominent the dilemma between particularistic (requiring place and community building) and universalistic (emphasizing mobility) views of citizenship (Billig, 1995). We will then explore how this dilemma is mobilized in everyday interactions to put forward representations of citizenship and migration in Portugal – where the law was implemented in 2012 - in relation to and by Chinese nationals, the largest group of beneficiaries.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

Performing a rhetorical analysis (Billig, et al., 1988) we explore how the dilemma of place and mobility in their relation with citizenship under the new law are (1) constructed by Chinese investment residents (total n= 11) and (2) presented to the public sphere by press articles (n=17; n=6 in a tabloid and n=11 in a quality newspaper) during the initial stage of law implementation (2012 – 2017).

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

Analysis suggests that investment residents try to solve the dilemma of place and mobility by defending the pursuit of international/cosmopolitan lifestyles. The analysis of the press articles shows how place and mobility are constructed in a dichotomous way - emphasizing how there is no expectation for long-term permanence - thus mitigating the potential threat of mobility/migration that could be associated with a new migration.

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

The combination of these analyses shows how the articulation of dilemmas of place and mobility sustain certain views of citizenship that can be more/less prone to the creation of multi-place attachments (Di Masso et al., 2019; Gustafson, 2001). This paper also highlights the importance of analyzing how citizenship is conceptualized and defended in relation to laws that regulate it, helping to put forward pro/against understandings of mobility and migration.

Palavras-chave : citizenship, place and mobility, residency-by-investment, migration, ideological dilemmas