

Post-National Citizenship in the Portuguese Immigratory Context: fundamental variables of a Political Debate

Isabel Maria Estrada Carvalhais
Universidade do Minho (Portugal)/University of Warwick (UK)
imestrada@eeg.uminho.pt
syrgh@warwick.ac.uk
isabelcarvalhais@yahoo.com

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Abstract

My research is one close to the centre of current political and sociological concerns: the compatibility between citizenship as a concept central to the Democratic Theory, and the need for more democratic and human-inclusive forms of political and social participation. I argue that post-national regimes are not to be achieved outside the state through transnational experiences only, but must start being accomplished within the state. A true post-national citizenship implies thus the abandonment of a cynicism still held by states and made obvious in their various legal and political devices to limit the access of long-term residents to political rights.

In the light of this, I look at Portugal and try to understand its dynamics as far as the political inclusion of its long-term non-national residents is concerned. I have for this matter looked at the perceptions held by political actors directly involved in the decision making process, in order to understand their sensitivity as far as the stimulation of a post-national attitude is concerned. I did so, guided by the assumptions that a) whatever the political elite's perceptions are they will have an obvious impact upon the future of this sensitive issue and b) the more we understand the internal and interdependent functioning of such perceptions (what motivates them, what separates or gathers them, what is that they fear or yearn for) the more efficient will be any of our contributions for the production of viable post-national strategies.