

The Thatcher effect in climate migration: contemporary studies and a corrective proposal based on historical transatlantic migration lessons

O efeito Thatcher na migração climática: estudos contemporâneos e uma proposta corretiva baseada nas lições da migração histórica transatlântica

*Aline Bertolin**

1 INTRODUCTION

This text is a research proposal for the systematization of preliminary results gathered from broader research on historical migration. Presented here in the format of research notes that outline the investigation in progress of induced migration as a result of policy and legal designs, it confronts

* Aline Bertolin is a Senior Fellow affiliated with the Institute of International Economic Law (IIEL) at Georgetown University, in the United States, and a Collaborating Professor at the School of Applied Social Sciences at the State University of Campinas (Unicamp), in Brazil. She holds a Ph.D. in Law and Political Sciences from Université Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne, France, with exchange programs in Columbia Law School, in the United States, and the University of São Paulo, in Brazil. She was a visitor at the University of Damascus, in Syria, the University Saint Joseph, in Lebanon, and at the Institute of Politics (IOP) and the Center on International Development (CID) at Harvard Kennedy School. The author thanks Mission Peace (Missão Paz), in São Paulo, Brazil for the immersive work it made and interviews it performed, specially Father Paolo Parisi, and Elisa Donda, allowing to this research; as well as the Research Group in Protect Areas (Grupo de Pesquisa em Areas Protegidas), at the Federal Institut (IF), in Barbacena, Brazil, particularly the exchanges with Raquel Estefano Rodrigues, and Yngryd de Sá Netto Machado, for insightful and provoking ideas on environmental protection. The author acknowledges the use of Grammarly to correct orthographic and grammatical typos, as well as the use of other AI tools to scan through flaws in the text argumentation and a more comprehensive literature review.

two different migratory movements: on the one side, the mass migration between the years 1860 and 1899 to the Americas, originated from Europe and other areas in the east side of the Atlantic, known as transatlantic migration, which are the main subject of the ongoing comprehensive study from which this reflection derives; and, on the other side, the contemporary migratory movement related to climate change from and to different regions in the globe. Its scope is a brief reflection, summarizing partial outcomes that will be later detailed in a scholarly piece, submitted to a peer-reviewed publication.

Laws, in a broad sense, meaning strict legislative norms, regulations, judicial decisions, contracts, and any other formal agreements, have a two-fold nature: to deter unwanted behavior, while fostering a social environment in which desirable conduct is the norm. It is not an exact science; on the contrary, it is an art in which trial-and-error may lead to a spectrum of outcomes that are not predicted by the actors who design such rules, although new technologies have been trying to change that status.¹ Law may also be considered a science that studies the very nature of human ruling, reserving to Sociology, Political Science, Economics, Psychology, and other fields of knowledge the reasoning behind the conduct of social actors, groups, and institutions.

The subset of outcomes this proposal is currently analysing within the larger research described above affords certain conclusions that may be relevant to other scholars studying current climate migration. The larger framework in which this subset is inserted is of historical research fixed over two axis of examination: (i) social actors' clustering in associations and societies over interests to advance industrialization and development through migration, namely in called migrantist societies, similar to the abolitionist societies, in the late XIX century; (ii) the legal designs, in which law is defined in its broad sense, that resulted from the advocacy of those ideas to State authorities.

The first axis finds its fulcrum in two lines of investigation. The first line captures the scholarly thought of that time through evidence found in sources such as the archives of Europe, historical news of the reception and commendation of those societies and their advocates in cities and countries, principally in England and France, e.g., the reception of the title of *Chevalier d'honneur* by certain advocates of migration to the Americas, among other sources, thus relying on the History of Political Economic Thought. The second line examines international arrangements made to bring migrants to the Americas, such as headhunting by agents hired by industries in the United States, Canada, Argentina and Brazil, that happened in Italy, the constituency of multi-national companies to the transportation of migrants in the Middle

East to the Americas and Europe, and other evidences of joint ventures to bring migrants from the east side of the Atlantic to the Americas during this period of global history, thus relying on historical sources of International Relations in the late XIX century.

The second axis, in turn, is also grounded on two distinct research points. One point focuses on the History of Law of this period, which allows for the analysis of concrete evidence, such as legislation, contracts, and regulations, among other formal sources. They reveal how historical thought and social arrangements in the late 19th century were transliterated into policies, practices, and agreements, through lobbying and advocacy, or by the actuation of the State in view of several crises that led to transatlantic migration. Another point over which the studies of legal mechanisms enabling this phenomenon are naturally felt attached to is the Sociology of Migration Law of this time in history, which denounces an astounding stratification created by human design. Concerning this specific point, results display a high correlation with what has been happening to contemporary migration law in regard to human mobility, as a consequence of environmental disasters, namely those related to areas that will be most affected by climate change and global warming.

Upon this discovery, it was consequential to notice a distortion in how scholars have been treating climate-induced migration in current times. Contemporary climate migration has been portrayed by even better scholarship through simplifications that often reduce the phenomenon to a casualty of human greed, inverting the sense of causality of those migratory movements, thus causing what we call “the Thatcher effect” on contemporary climate-induced migration. The latter is not, as scholars have been portraying, a mere result of individuals and groups spontaneously escaping tragedies. If migration is inherently part of human behaviour, and most of historical human mobility, particularly since the agrarian period, can be attributed to poor climate conditions or environmental disasters, current climate migration has been longingly predicted and induced by the work of men, particularly governments, and not nature.

In theoretical terms, scholarship looking to positively or normatively impact this phenomenon is predominantly influenced by the *gravity model of migration*, which is a derivation of the *gravity model of trade*.² This is because *Economics of Migration*, from the seminal work of Julius Isaac in 1947 to Klaus F. Zimmermann and Thomas K. Bauer, have applied certain differences to this model to predict human mobility since early works of Ravenstein.³ Whereas accurate to rural-urban movements of people, the gravitational model of migration applied to climate migration explains this phenomenon, showing that individuals and groups leave their devastated homelands behind and seek better lives in gravitational poles of development.

Nevertheless, criticism among economic thought itself has deemed this model limited, even when comparing the flux of migrants between two countries, which allows a more detailed analysis and the identification of more granular factors determining migration. Recent scholars go further, saying this models lacks a “good connection with the underlying micro-foundations” of fluxes between countries, which is aligned with recent literature on trade.⁴

This research finds in the legal designs that incentivize human mobility in contemporary times, i.e., current migration law, mainly law derived from the EU Migration Pact of 2015, traits of inducement of migration to certain areas, and abandonment of others, by design. It briefly presents ideas that will be further developed into a scientific paper and starts by concisely describing the “Thatcher Effect”, which is noticeable in current studies on climate migration, to then briefly describe the overall scenario of the extensively studied massive migration of the late 19th century that allows the discernment of such elusive distortion.

Once this widespread conception is created, the notes here presented will briefly discuss the government’s responsibility in massive migration in the late XIX Century, highlighting the role of Migrantist Societies in imparting global stratification through legal designs. Finally, it will tackle those designs’ inducement of individuals and populations to migrate in contemporary climate-induced migration, to then summarize a few past lessons that may serve as corrective lenses to approaching such migratory movements for the formation of a well-defined picture.

2 THE THATCHER EFFECT IN SCHOLARLY WORK ON CONTEMPORARY CLIMATE MIGRATION

Ongoing debates on climate-induced migration have criticized most of scholarly work for being fraught with a lack of complexity and issues with definitions.⁵ Critics not only of the gravitational model of migration, but also of broader works in the ample field of humanities, have been arguing that contemporary research often oversimplifies migration with causes related to climate change or global warming. Most of these critical works’ evidence that recent literature in human mobility caused by those factors fails to recognize that climate change, from a mild to critical degree, and environmental catastrophes, not only act as a threat multiplier, intensifying existing socioeconomic inequalities, but are a result of those inequalities. In sum, most of this literature attributes migration to the place of an action that has been causing changes in law and policies to accommodate population displacement due to random factors. They also reduce the causes of migration

to simplistic behavioural factors that the overall picture, even if one were to shift the picture created by those scholars to its right position, placing human behavior and law as the true root causes of migration related to climate change, creates a 'bizarre' effect.

According to IOM, 200 million people per year may require humanitarian assistance due to (i) the compounded effects of climate-related disasters and (ii) the socio-economic impact of climate change. Those effects are not anecdotal or illustrative. Data from the gravity model of migration, consolidated over years of study, particularly now with the use of technology, allows for models to be built and concepts to be construed much faster. This requires more critical thinking to be produced about the adherence of these models' methodologies to the reality of subjects investigated, the reliability of their results vis-à-vis movements of migrants, etc. The contribution of the paper that will be written is to introduce a provocation on this gray area of conceptualization. These advances will help to establish a real causality direction, where human behaviour, normalized through national and international law, has been causing people to leave their houses in light of climate change.

Were governments, private actors, and international organizations to act on mitigating these effects, through compensatory policies - e.g., international taxation on companies that are over-polluters in countries like China, Taiwan, and the US, to be distributed among populations mostly affected by their actions - migration would not occur.⁶ In this sense, this proposal presents a plan for a paper that aims to provoke a necessary debate around the implications and validity of the gravity model of migration, which has been the golden rule to explain the flow of people to certain attractive countries and economies due to global warming and climate change.

In a more ambitious sense, the ongoing work of analysing this subset of results has the goal to leverage the criticism over the flaws in this widespread interpretation of migration causes, applied to climate-induced migration, and to introduce solutions, or rather, lessons in the misinterpretation of human mobility from the transatlantic migration of the late 19th century. The nature of the called "Thatcher effect" is not purely subjective or individual. It is an illusion rather than an objective and universal experience, as a perceptual phenomenon in humans and even some primates: their way of thinking that something inverted is to fill the gaps and overlook flaws in the picture.

The partial results pertaining to the role of actors over laws and policies collected in the research of the transatlantic model allow the reinterpretation of the current application of the migration general gravitational theoretical framework to climate-induced migration. The effect highlights a fundamental aspect of human perception where our brains process familiar visual

patterns —like an upright face— holistically, making it difficult to spot subtle distortions. This is different from how we process inverted images, where we focus on individual features instead of the whole configuration. It is precisely this universal “blind spot” or cognitive bias that the paper will leverage, adding to the critique of environmental migration studies concerning global warming or climate change. Note that the differences in those two definitions of global warming and climate change, are patent and will be further explored in the paper.

In sum, this new perspective has the potential to aid scholars who also note that:

- This limitation is widespread, not individualized to one school of thought: the research argues that flaws in current environmental migration studies are not isolated mistakes, but a widespread issue resulting from a cognitive bias caused by the ingrained influence of the gravitational model of migration, and misconstrued optics of behavioural economics.
- Systematic distortion: The objective illusion of the Thatcher Effect suggests a systematic, rather than a random or subjective misperception in current climate-induced migration research. The distorted image is not just wrongfully construed but stems from a predictable and systematic way our brains are wired: when a familiar image is inverted, our brains work to see it as whole and perfect. In the same manner, when familiar theories that are true are inverted, distorted, or have traits oversimplified, our thinking will interpret it as consistent with the true theory.
- Need for a new perspective: Just as the Thatcher Effect requires rotating the image to see the distortion, this research argues that understanding the true picture of climate-induced migration is very much necessary for the correct understanding of this critical challenge of our times.

3 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF MASSIVE MIGRATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY: DIFFERENCES FROM THE CURRENT SCENARIO

These research notes that present the proposal for a paper in an ongoing research project, present, as aforementioned, a brief analysis of a subset of results obtained from an investigation on historical legal frameworks concerning broader causes of transatlantic migration in the late

19th century. The research aimed at this specific historical period seeks to cast light on legal instruments designed to promote economic development from a global perspective. It assumes that those legal tools answered for and enabled the movement of entire populations across the Atlantic from older to young economies, as those groups of individuals were perceived as economic assets. Legal documents refer to a variety of causes for individuals to depart their homeland and venture into the then-called 'Eldorado'. Still, very little is studied about the environmental and, more specifically, climate-change related reasons for their displacement. By analysing these results, this research found enlightening perspectives on reasons behind climate-induced movements at that time that may help scholars better understand current population displacement due to global warming and climate change.

The Americas in the late XIX and early XX centuries were destinations for populations not only through the Atlantic, from European and Middle East countries, such as Syria and Lebanon, but also the Pacific, mainly from China, Japan, and the Philippines, in what was called the transoceanic movement. Recent studies on the motivations for those movements, mainly focusing on the analysis of policy and legislation through historical sources concerning migration at that time, show the formation of new markets as an intended outcome sought by groups with in the countries implicated in those migratory movements, acting in a concerted way.⁷

Albeit tainted by racial and ethnic stereotypes, the laws and policies of that time in history show a high density of human capital, including intellectual capital, as a determinant for any country to become an economic power. This intuitive assertion begs the question: why did certain countries surrender their most important asset to other countries? For the last seven years, the research has been examining legislative statutes, regulations, and private law instruments, such as contracts and international private agreements, that created incentives and disincentives to populational movements that used the Atlantic routes, known as the transatlantic movement, linking several regions to the Americas, South and North.

Known as the transoceanic movement, it defined modern democracies contributed to the wealth of countries and the social and economic challenges entailed. Historical records of the establishment of economic ventures subsidized by governments on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as in the Middle East and other focal areas, to exploit the market of migration are well catalogued by the specialized literature.

They stand as proof of the international competition and headhunting over certain groups of people deemed critical to the new markets. In a broad perspective, the transoceanic migratory movement opened the

way for the globalization of business, recruitment and transportation of arms, the creation of shipping markets, the modeling of politics of subsidy to main sectors of national economies, and labor markets, becoming the groundwork of a global society. Experts estimate that at that time, about fifty million people left their continents in the direction of the Americas, or the “new world”.

The vast majority of them were Europeans, but there was also a substantive number of Syrian, Lebanese, Turkish, and other populations on the run from the Great Eastern crisis, as well as Chinese and Japanese populations. The United States, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina were the preferred destinations, and received initially only those whose language and habits were closer to those of the natives. How this representation relates to the diametrically opposed picture of the so-called current migratory crisis is still relatively unknown.

While a large part of social literature on the matter focuses on exploiting the conundrum faced by migrants who seek a fairer life in different countries, but face all but fair conditions of livelihood, few are the scholars who have tried to discern the role of promoters of the *migrantism movement*. Contrary to common belief, most trade companies of that time had founders who fought to implement tangible fairness in the treatment of the new people, undoubtedly believing in creating a solid base for a multicultural society.

The “golden life” waiting for migrants that defined the transoceanic movement of the late XIX and beginning of XX century was not a spontaneous ordeal. It stemmed from well-crafted policies and propaganda jointly manufactured by different nations interested in export or import expertise in a time when information was all but within range. The knowledge carried by specific populations, as much as the potential for ideas that could flourish from the powerful combination of them, was of utmost value. Human beings and their intrinsic cultural diversity were, in modern terminology, coded by lawmakers as crucial assets.

Assailable, however, was not the word to describe the new markets, nor the societal grounds waiting for those populations encouraged by social designers to leave their homelands. Expectations regarding the “immigrants’ place” at the bottom of American society lay heavy on those who landed in North and South American soil between 1870 and 1920. The newest events, then, particularly the abolition of slavery, a major shift in the largest American economies, notably the United States and Brazil, put the task of reframing the labor arrangements in those social systems on the shoulders of immigrants.

4 CORRECTING THE THATCHER EFFECT: DEPARTING FROM THOSE LESSONS

The research intends to introduce a provocative framework that provides new tools for examining current climate-induced migration in new ways, by, for instance:

1. De-emphasizing climate as the driver of mobility: The historical transatlantic migration was driven by a complex interplay of political, economic, and also environmental factors, not just one single cause, much less by the free will of people to migrate to unknown lands. Wars and political crises in the late 19th century, such as the dissolution of the Turk-Otoman Empire, are largely studied, but only disingenuous theories would argue that such a mass migration could occur solely based on the free will of individuals, without the involvement of potent agents, public and private, that established a secure path for migrants to move across oceans. By studying these historical drivers in detail, scholars could argue that contemporary climate migration studies place too much emphasis on climate change and 'location utility' alone, rather than examining how it interacts with other drivers like club effect, inequality, legal constraints, and lack of mitigating strategies against the impact of climate change and global warming from governments.
2. Re-contextualizing the status of environmental or climate 'refugee': The EU Migration Pact of 2015 advanced much on several fronts but still lacks an adequate treatment of environmental causes to migration. Historical legal precedent of transatlantic migration challenges the notion of a climate refugee, even when the reason for migration was climate change, such as in the case of Northern Germans. Settlers in the Americas moved for complex reasons, some being forcibly displaced. A better analysis of what government liability could look like in current times, in the face of consequences of climate change to displaced populations, may provide a framework for criticizing current terminology and pushing for a more nuanced understanding of migrants and refugee seekers who may face different drivers and motivations, consequently being entitled to diverse legal protections.⁸
4. Analyzing new-colonial, rather than gravitational dynamics: A provocative study might examine how historical power structures from the transatlantic migration era, particularly colonialism, continue to influence climate migration patterns. Research shows that countries in

the Global South, often former colonies, are most vulnerable to climate change despite contributing the least to greenhouse gas emissions. This historical contextualization of causality relations could assist scholars by providing new lenses that enable seeing the current picture in terms of law and policy, inducing climate migration, and not climate migration causing law and policy to address issues from climate change, along with migration as a mere collateral effect.

4. Challenging forecasts of a crisis: By focusing on the complexities of contemporary climate-related migration, and the inversion in current studies on its causality, the critical debate this research intends to introduce also disputes forecasts of a new “migration crisis”. Reputable scholars have been challenging the notion of the 2015 crisis in migration, for being “inherently flawed,” arguing they oversimplify the issue and neglect crucial factors such as adaptive strategies governments could have adopted. This new reinterpretation captures a valid line of inquiry and debate in the field of migration studies, where historians, sociologists, and climate scientists grapple with complex historical and contemporary dynamics of migration, including climate-related migration.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The notes here presented summarize points in a larger study on the movement known as transatlantic migration. Rather than finding parallels in environmental causes to this migratory movement, which is placed in the late 19th century, and in nowadays climate-induced migration, this brief study notes sees in a subset of results related to how laws and policies determined the behavior of entire populations that crossed the Atlantic a more fitting reason for the contemporary movements of people attributed to climate change or global warming.

Calling for a change in how studies analyze this phenomenon and attributing it to the creation of a “Thatcher Effect” on the perception of climate-related migration, it does not intend to cast doubt on climate-induced migration, but to contribute by questioning whether scholars are studying it correctly. The appropriateness of tools investigations have been using, the precision of definitions that have been created around this phenomenon, how to explain the compounded effects of global warming or climate-related disasters, and the accurate impact of those on population displacement, are concerns scholars have to address in better terms than applying a limited and dated model useful when referring to the trade of goods and services, and not people.

The abatement of incentives to migration and the so-called migratory crisis of 2015 exposed a relevant and complex structural deficiency in the current *migratory regulatory model*. This study sees in the epistemic divides in society, i.e., communities of individuals who share the same values and interests, a similar movement noted in the late 19th century, and in the lack of a support net to compensate populations for the effects of climate change the true cause of displacement. To be further developed in a scholarly paper, it notes preliminarily that legal tools were pivotal to conflate the political motives in the so-called transatlantic migration. In effect, and in spite of research already largely developed on this topic, including those that examine social control and the enlargement of the democratic discourse, this is a subject on which scholarship is still evolving.

In this elan, scholars may find resourceful lenses to correct this distortion and be more critical about legal and political tools, advocating for platforms that enable citizens' participation in a debate on a transnational level, on the study of the transatlantic migrations of the late 19th century. This outstanding migratory movement, as better scholarship has been exposing, was not the result of a spontaneous ideal of a new world of opportunities that flourished in the heart of poor communities, which moved in mass to the Americas.

It stemmed from well-crafted policies and propaganda jointly manufactured by different nations interested in this bulk population displacement. The paper aims to address this concert of conduct and will assist in proposing how lessons from the past can provide for an effective correction of the elusive distortion in contemporary studies.

NOTES

¹ See Fatima Dakalbab, Manar Abu Talib, Omnia Abu Waraga, Ali Bou Nassif, Sohail Abbas, Qassim Nasir, "Artificial intelligence & crime prediction: A systematic literature review", In: Social Sciences & Humanities Open, Volume 6, Issue 1, 2022.

² See Ravenstein, E.G. "The Laws of Migration." In: Journal of the Statistical Society of London, Vol. 48, No. 2. London: oxford Press, Jun. 1885

³ See Isaac, Julius. *Economics of Migration*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1947. Zimmermann, Klaus & Bauer, Thomas. *The Economics of Migration*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. 2002. Ravenstein, supra-cited.

⁴ See Beine, M., Bertoli, S. and Fernández-Huertas, J. (2016). "A Practitioners' Guide to Gravity Models of International Migration." In: *The World Economy*, v. 39, n. 4. Also cf. Bertoli, S., H. Brucker, and J. Fernandez Huertas Moraga), "The European Crisis and Migration to Germany: Expectations and the Diversion of Migration Flows." Working

Paper No. 2013/21. Clermont Ferrand: CERDI, University of Auvergne, 2013. And Clark, X., T. Hatton, and J. Williamson, "Explaining US Immigration, 1971-1998," In: *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 89, 2, 2007.

⁵ Chandra Ghosh, Rajan, Orchiston, Caroline. "A systematic review of climate migration research: gaps in existing literature." In: *SN Social Sciences* 2:47, 2022.

⁶ See Chancel, Lucas Chancel, Piketty, Thomas. *Carbon and inequality: from Kyoto to Paris Trends in the global inequality of carbon emissions (1998-2013) & prospects for an equitable adaptation fund*. Manuscript. Paris: Paris School of Economics, 3rd November, 2015.

⁷ See Le Galès, Patrick. "The Rise and Fall of the Sociology of the Global City." In: *Annual Review of Sociology*, Volume 50, 2024.

⁸ See Bhabha, Jacqueline. *Can We Solve the Migration Crisis?* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BHABHA, J. **Can We solve the migration crisis?** Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

BEINE, M.; BERTOLI, S.; FERNÁNDEZ-HUERTAS, J. "A practitioners' guide to gravity models of international migration." **The World Economy**, v. 39, n. 4. 2016.

BERTOLI, S.; BRUCKER, H.; FERNANDEZ, J. H. M. **The European crisis and migration to Germany: expectations and the diversion of migration flows**. Working Paper Nº. 2013/21. Clermont Ferrand: CERDI, University of Auvergne, 2013.

CLARK, X.; HATTON, T.; WILLIAMSON, J. "Explaining US immigration, 1971-1998," **Review of Economics and Statistics**, 89, 2, 2007.

CHANDRA GHOSH, R.; ORCHISTON, C. A systematic review of climate migration research: gaps in existing literature. **SN Social Sciences**, v. 2: 47, 2022.

CHANCEL, L.; PIKETTY, T. **Carbon and inequality: from Kyoto to Paris Trends in the global inequality of carbon emissions (1998-2013) & prospects for an equitable adaptation fund**. Manuscript. Paris: Paris School of Economics, 3rd November, 2015.

DAKALBAB, F.; TALIB, M. A.; WARAGA, O. A. NASSIF, A. B.; ABBAS, S.; NASIR, Q. Artificial intelligence & crime prediction: a systematic literature review. **Social Sciences & Humanities Open**, Volume 6, Issue 1, 2022.

ISAAC, J. **Economics of migration**. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1947.

LE GALÈS, P. The rise and fall of the sociology of the global city. **Annual Review of Sociology**, Volume 50, 2024.

RAVENSTEIN, E.G. The laws of migration. **Journal of the Statistical Society of London**, Vol. 48, No. 2. London: oxford Press, Jun. 1885

ZIMMERMANN, K.; BAUER, T. **The economics of migration**. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. 2002.

ABSTRACT

This research proposal is derived from a preliminary collection of results stemming from a larger investigation into the historical transoceanic migration of the late 19th century. While examining a research subset of outcomes concerning historical migration to the Americas from Europe and other areas on the eastern side of the Atlantic, parallels emerged between contemporary migration induced by climate change or global warming and the massive migration that marked this period. Although quite different from each other, those two types of migratory movements have certain points in common that make them peculiarly distinct by man-made determining factors. If it is certain that climate change was also a determining factor of transatlantic migration at the end of the 19th century, it is also accurate that it was not the principal one. The main reason for these intense fluxes of human mobility was incentives and disincentives created by States and groups of individuals interested in prompting migrants to cross the Atlantic. In the study of those inducement schemes lies important lessons about how unequal access to power and resources leads certain groups in societies to impose upon others, not only decisions that shape the global future, but truths and narratives that create epistemic divides. How current climate-induced migration is perceived by scholars showcases this phenomenon. The inversion of causes and the oversimplification of factors create an illusion of a migration of crisis. Studies in contemporary climate migration have been largely criticized for providing a distorted picture of such human mobility for a variety of reasons. This proposal looks back at historical transatlantic migration from a perspective of the History of International Economic Law, with a politico-economic caveat, aiming to provide scholarship with better tools to appraise this phenomenon.

Keywords: Historical transoceanic migration; Europe; The Americas; Contemporary migration; Climate change.

RESUMO

Esta proposta de pesquisa deriva de uma coleta preliminar de resultados provenientes de uma investigação mais ampla sobre a **migração transoceânica histórica** do final do século XIX. Ao examinar um subconjunto de resultados relativos à migração histórica para as **Américas**, oriunda da **Europa** e de outras regiões do lado oriental do Atlântico, emergiram paralelos entre a **migração contemporânea** induzida pelas mudanças climáticas ou pelo aquecimento global e a migração em massa que caracterizou aquele período. Embora bastante distintas entre si, esses dois tipos de movimentos migratórios possuem certos pontos em comum que os tornam curiosamente distintos por fatores determinantes de origem humana. Se é certo que as **mudanças climáticas** também foram um fator determinante da migração transatlântica no final do século XIX, também é correto afirmar que não foram o principal. A principal razão para esses intensos fluxos de mobilidade humana foram os incentivos e desincentivos criados pelos Estados e por grupos de indivíduos interessados em estimular os migrantes a cruzarem o Atlântico. No estudo desses esquemas de indução residem importantes lições sobre como o acesso desigual ao poder e aos recursos leva certos grupos dentro das sociedades a impor a outros não apenas decisões que moldam o futuro global, mas também verdades e narrativas que criam divisões epistêmicas. A forma como a migração contemporânea induzida pelo clima é percebida pelos estudiosos evidencia esse fenômeno. A inversão de causas e a simplificação excessiva dos fatores criam uma ilusão de uma migração de crise. Os estudos sobre migração climática contemporânea têm sido amplamente criticados por fornecerem uma imagem distorcida desse tipo de mobilidade humana por uma variedade de razões. Esta proposta revisita a migração transatlântica histórica sob a perspectiva da História do Direito Econômico Internacional, com um viés político-econômico, visando oferecer à produção acadêmica melhores ferramentas para avaliar esse fenômeno.

Palavras-chave: Migração transoceânica histórica; Europa; Américas; Migração contemporânea; Mudanças climáticas.