

## **Introductory note: African and Latin American migration dynamics in a comparative perspective**

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**Centre on Migration, Policy and Society**

**Special Working Paper No. MFO LAC I.1  
University of Oxford, 2020**

**Migrations in Latin America and the  
Mediterranean compared:  
Violence, state cruelty and (un-)institutional  
resistance**

Maison Française d'Oxford / Latin American Centre  
Oxford, 12-13 Nov. 2019

**Introductory note: African and Latin American migration  
dynamics in a comparative perspective**

Veronique Benei and Thomas Lacroix

WP-20-MFO LAC I.1

COMPAS does not have a centre view and does not aim to present one. The views expressed in this document are only those of its independent author

## **Introductory note: African and Latin American migration dynamics in a comparative perspective**

The idea of the conference jointly held in November 2019 at the Latin American Centre (LAC) and the Maison Française d'Oxford (MFO) with the support of the Institut Interdisciplinaire d'Anthropologie du Contemporain (IIAC) and the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie des Institutions et des Organisations Sociales (LAIOS), Paris initially stemmed from an international exchange programme conducted under the aegis of ECOS French-Latin American cooperation. This 3-year programme currently headed by Prof. Benei in France and Prof. Tijoux in Chile involves a team of about six researchers on either side of the Atlantic and focuses on *Migrants and National Construction: Embodiment / Incorporation, Reproduction and Deconstruction of the Legacies and Historical Traumas of Coloniality at the levels of the State, the Individual and the Nation* (Ecos-Sud project C17H01 – 2018-2021). Throughout 2018, Ecos-Sud researchers had been investigating and reflecting on issues of categorisation, representation and (de)politicisation of and around migrants with special reference to the displacement of representations seen through the management of bodies and the attendant use of categories involved therein. This approach led to a colloquium held at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris in September 2018. It was followed two months later with an international seminar on migrations and interculturality held in Santiago, Chile.

These Franco-Chilean collaborative endeavours were further enriched by serendipitous conversations and exchanges on issues of migration and borders initiated over roughly the same period with the Maison Française in Oxford, especially through the research programme on *Politics, International Relations and Migration Studies* headed by Prof. Thomas Lacroix, as well as the Latin American Centre run by Prof. Eduardo Posada-Carbó, and the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. This conference therefore drew on all these exchanges and interests to jointly interrogate the variegated ways in which, following a world increase in population movement across territories and nation states in recent years migration and migrants have become an object of renewed institutional attention with resulting (un)intended effects. In particular, we were interested in how the legacies and historical traumas of coloniality may manifest themselves as the State delegates -and even subcontracts to a glut of non-governmental outfits- the procedures of symbolic and practical violence inherent to its prerogatives and yet at the same time seeks to retain control over the selection, identification, integration and/or rejection of migrants within/outside of its borders. We also aimed to investigate the various registers of cruelty towards migrants that some of these processes carry with them and asked the extent to which such cruelty is structural. Conversely, we sought to document the niches wherein all kinds of institutional actors, state, non-governmental and belonging to civil society at large may collaborate to build and provide migrants with spaces of resistance towards such violence and cruelty.

Although the main geographical focus was Latin America, research pertaining to the Mediterranean did furnish insightful comparative perspectives.

In sum, this event was aimed at promoting interdisciplinary exchange and discussion on the part of researchers involved in migration studies. Although the main geographical focus was Latin America, research pertaining to other parts of the world, especially the Mediterranean did furnish insightful comparative perspectives. Indeed, both areas have undergone similar trends in recent years. In Latin America and Africa, intra-continental migration is on the rise. According to the 2020 IOM World Migration Report, there were 21 million Africans living in another African country in 2019, against 18,5 in 2015. Similarly, the numbers of intraregional migrants in Latin America rose by 11% over the same period. And perhaps even more significantly, this rise is more important than the growth of emigration towards Northern destinations, Europe on the one hand, the US and Canada on the other. More restrictive immigration policies in the latter countries, but also better infrastructure and regional integration in new destination areas account for this shift. Furthermore, in both regions, the surge of internal movements has been brought to scholarly and media attention by the outbreak of a series of “migration crises” leading to a reconfiguration of both migratory spaces. These outbreaks have been triggered by a variety of reasons: environmental crises (Ethiopia, Haiti), failing state institutions (Venezuela, Eritrea), political conflicts (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali, Libya), economic downturn and protracted poverty (Western Africa, Central America), the conjunction of which generated mixed flows of people often forced to walk to their destinations.

While promoting interdisciplinary exchange and discussion among researchers involved in migration studies, the papers included in the collection illustrate different aspects of these latest migratory trends. Consequently, these papers are all in varying stages of research. Filippo Furri and Yasha Maccanico (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.2) present the latest edition of the Atlas of Migrants published by the NGO Migreurop, accounting for the surge of encampment practises along migratory routes, but also of mobilisations and struggles. Likewise, Caroline Chappart (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.3) documents the formation of migrant caravans in Mexico on their way to the US, and Esteban Devis-Amaya of Venezuelans to Colombia (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.4). Claudia Carillo-Sánchez (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.5), on the one hand, and Charlotte Grégoreski (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.7) on the other analyse how Chile rediscovers itself as a country of immigration with the arrival of Haitians, while at the same time forgetting its past as a country of European immigration, as evoked by Maria Kokkinou in her research on Greek immigrants (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.6). Marie Mallet’s paper on the ‘DACA’ reform in the US (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.8) and Carolina Kobelinsky and Filippo Furri’s on migrants’ dead bodies in Sicilian cemeteries (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.9) move back to Northern destination countries focusing on current exclusive forms of migration management. Finally, the last two papers of this series explore the bearing of policies of forced immobility and return on migrant populations. Veronique Benei, in her description of internal displaced people in Colombia (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.10) reflects on the methodological tools of shared humanity that allow us to enquire into the aftermath and the continuation through other means of structural violence and cruelty. This in turn resonates with Clara Lecadet’s account of associative mobilisations triggered by the distress of former African emigrants forcibly expelled from Europe (WP 20 MFO LAC 1.11).

**Veronique Benei and Thomas Lacroix**

## **Annex – Conference programme**

### **Migrations in Latin America and the Mediterranean compared:**

#### **Violence, State cruelty and (Un-)Institutional Resistance**

Convened by Veronique Benei, Thomas Lacroix and Eduardo Posada-Carbó

12th & 13th of November 2019

Maison Française d'Oxford (MFO), Latin American Centre (LAC), Oxford,

Institut International d'Anthropologie du Contemporain (IIAC/LAIOS) & ECOS-SUD Programme, Paris

### **12th November 2019**

3.00pm-3.30pm: *Welcome*

- Véronique Bénéï (CNRS), Thomas Lacroix (MFO) and Eduardo Posada-Carbo (LAC)

3.30pm-5pm: *Migratory trends and critical shifts in the Mediterranean*

- 'Presentation of the English version of the *Atlas of Migrations 2019*, coordinated by the European and African Migreurop network', by Filippo Furri (University of Montreal, Canada, Ecos-Sud member) and Yasha Maccanico (The Transnational Institute, Bristol University).

Chair: Benoît Hazard (IIAC, CNRS)

5.00pm-7.00pm *Round table – Latin American perspectives on migration*

- 'The Central American migrants caravans: contesting borders and their governmentalities', by Pascaline Chappart (URMIS/IRD, Paris):
- The Impact of Haitian Migration in Brazil by Carlos Vargas-Silva (COMPAS, Oxford University)
- 'The Venezuelan Migration in Context: Barriers to movement and integration', by Esteban Devis-Amaya (Oxford Brookes)

Chair: Andreza de Souza Santos (LAC, Oxford University)

Followed by inauguration at LAC

## 13th of November 2019

9.30am-11.00am: *Of State's violence: between waiting and silencing*

- 'Migration and education: Voices and silencing of Haitian immigration in Chile', by Claudia Carrillo (Universidad de Chile, Ecos-Sud member)
- 'A migration of no return? Reflections on Greek migrants in Chile', by Maria Kokkinou (EHESS-IIAC, Ecos-Sud member)

Chair: Véronique Bénéï (CNRS, IIAC/LAIOS, Paris, Ecos-Sud member)

11.15am-12.45pm: *From the local to the global: Institutional scales and stakes*

- 'The story of a municipal migrants' and refugees' office in a Santiago de Chile's suburb', by Charlotte Gregoreski (EHESS-IIAC/Universidad de Chile, Ecos-Sud member)
- 'The State Control of Identity: Ramifications for DACA recipients', by Marie Mallet (COMPAS, Oxford University)

Chair: Juan Luis Ossa (LAC, Oxford University)

2pm-3.30pm: *At the borders of humanity: Bodies and moralities.*

- 'Hosting the dead by migration. The treatment of lifeless bodies in Catania (Sicily)', by Carolina Kobelinsky (CNRS-LESC, Université de Nanterre, Ecos-Sud member) & Filippo Furri (Université de Montréal, Ecos-Sud member)
- 'Representations of displacement in Colombia: Humanity, bodies, moralities', by Véronique Benei (IIAC/LAIOS, CNRS-EHESS, Ecos-Sud)
- 'The political self-organisation of deportees in the shadow of State politics', Clara Lecadet (IIAC, CNRS-EHESS)

Chair: Juanita Leon (St Antony's College, Oxford)

3.30pm-4.30pm: *Conclusions and assessment: Thomas Lacroix, Véronique Benei, Carlos Varga*

## Contributors

**Véronique Benei** is a political anthropologist and research director at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). She currently teaches at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris and is a statutory member of the Interdisciplinary Institute of Contemporary Anthropology (IIAC)/ Laboratory of Anthropology of Institutions and Social Organizations (LAIOS). Having completed her doctorate on the social issue of dowry in India amid the rise of Hindu fascism (1996), she was exposed to the importance of political objects in the 'world's greatest democracy' very early on. In the following decade, she led several projects anchored in the space of school and knowledge production (LSE, Princeton, Yale) and conducted a theoretical reflection on nationalism, citizenship and secularism based on ethnographic material intersecting with the anthropology of language, body, senses and emotions ([2000](#), [2005](#), [2008](#), [2009](#)), thus clearing the then new ground of emotion studies in the field of political anthropology.

Her Habilitation marked the renewal of her theoretical interests along with a geographical redeployment in Latin America where she reinvested the notion of violence as a structuring modality of historical relations, social, economic and symbolic. This has led her to conduct several projects in Colombia, especially around the anthropology of 'displacement', forced migration and 'resilience' and a historical anthropology of the social memory of slavery, together with processes of forgetting and remembering. Since 2018 Véronique has been co-hosting and leading, with Chilean partners, an ECOS-SUD/CONICYT(ANID) programme on *National Construction and/of 'Otherness': Incarnation/ Incorporation, Reproduction and Deconstruction of Historical Legacies and Traumas of Colonialism, at the levels of the State, Individuals and the Nation* (2018-2021).

Furthermore, her long-standing concerns with issues of transmission have in recent years prompted her to explore aspects of co-creation and restitution in multiple forms and for various audiences. Thus, she has produced a film (2017, 2018 English, Spanish and French) as well as a poetic-political anthropology (in French [2016], translated into Spanish [2019]) and a collective volume on artistic and anthropological practices (2019). Currently, she is working on a historio-ethnographic opera project. Finally, Véronique is also a certified practitioner of a modality of movement meditation and somatic intelligence. Since January 2016 she has introduced and developed movement-specific tools into her academic practice, whether in her seminars and workshops or in her supervision of Ph.D. students.

**Claudia Carrillo** holds a Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the Universidad de Chile, and a Master in Education, mention in Curriculum and Educational Community, also from the Universidad de Chile. She was a scholarship holder of the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research, CONICYT/ANID (Chile) and has been sponsored by the Center for the Study of Conflict and Social Cohesion, COES. She is also a member of the above-mentioned ECOS/ CONICYT programme.

Her lines of research concern: migration; sociology of the body and emotions; racism; socio-educational inclusion/exclusion; inequalities; initial and in-service teacher training; curricular and didactic dissemination. Claudia actively participated in the exchange project of the scientific cooperation programme ECOS-

CONICYT *Spatial Mobilities and Transformations in the Former Urban Peripheries of Latin American Metropolises: Santiago, Bogotá and Buenos Aires* (2016) between the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, University of Chile and Laboratoire Migrinter, Université de Poitiers, France; in the Nucleus of Research *Sociology of the Body and the Emotions*, as researcher in charge of the *Migrant Bodies Unit* (2014-2015) and researcher in the REM Unit: *Racism, Foreigners and Migrations* (2011-2013) at the Department of Sociology of the FACSO of the University of Chile; in the Fondecyt Regular research project '*Black' immigrants in Chile; in Daily practices of racialisation/sexualisation* funded by CONICYT, as a researcher and doctoral thesis candidate (2013-2015); also as a researcher in the Latin American Network of Studies on Teaching Work (2012-2013) and as a research assistant in the *University School Dropout Project* of the Department of Psychopedagogy of the Universidad Surcolombiana, USCO, Colombia (2005-2007).

**Pascaline Chappart**, Ph.D. in sociology, is a research fellow at Urmis Paris. Her postdoctoral research deals with the processes of bordering and the reconfiguration of contemporary migrations they produce in Niger and in Mexico. Labelled as “countries of transit” by political and academic spheres, Niger and Mexico are situated at the crossroads of migration regimes that appear to be antagonistic if not contradictory. Due to their specific geographical location, these countries are ideal spaces for research on the process of bordering and its socio-political and anthropological impacts. Based on localised case studies in Niger and in Mexico, this crossed perspective questions the current dynamics of outsourcing policies. It also investigates the mapping of migration management as a policy assemblage shaped by the multilateral and local interactions at stake and analyse their effects on the reterritorialization of politics.

**Esteban Devis-Amaya** is a Senior Lecturer in Spanish and Latin American Studies, Department of English and Modern Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Oxford Brookes University.

His research interests focus on migration, identity and diasporas: the way communities perform, produce and reproduce belonging, and the spaces they create and recreate. His main areas of study cover Latin America and the Middle East, and the links between the two regions. In addition, Esteban is interested in the experiences and senses of belonging of students during and after their year abroad, including issues around identity and integration.

His Ph.D. thesis research focused on the active Colombian-Lebanese community in Bogotá, focusing on their identity and the importance of social class and religion for their belonging. It followed an ethnographic approach researching the community's organisations and the divisions that social class and religion caused within it.

**Filippo Furri** is a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology (Université de Montréal). His research focuses on 'Migration, Local Hospitality and the notion of Asylum/Sanctuary City'. Filippo is also associated researcher in the MECMI project (*Death in migration context*, UQAM University/Paris Nanterre). Last but not least, Filippo is also a member of the international network Migreurop and is engaged in the *Boats4people* coalition, working to defend the rights of migrants at sea. Filippo is a member of the ECOS SUD Franco-Chilean programme on *National Construction and/of 'Otherness'* (see above).

**Charlotte Gregoreski** is a doctoral student at the EHESS, Paris and at the Universidad de Chile, Santiago. She has conducted work on 'The making of otherness and state in Chile and France compared: Immigration, race, and national construction'. Charlotte is also a member of the ECOS SUD programme.

**Carolina Kobelinsky**: after having worked on the treatment of asylum seekers in France, based on an ethnography of waiting in asylum reception centres and a study on judgement practises at the National Court for Right of Asylum, Dr. Carolina Kobelinsky's current research concerns deaths at the borders of Europe. She investigates the future of these "foreign" deaths, often "unknown", as well as the imaginations of death of those who cross the border. Using an ethnographic approach, Carolina Kobelinsky studies the management of bodies found at the Southern borders of Europe (Spain, Italy) and explores accounts of death at the border from migrants preparing or having already succeeded in crossing the border. In doing so, the study proposes a reflection on the violence of the contemporary regime of borders and rethinks the meaning of migration as a death risk.

**Maria Kokkinou** holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from EHESS and is a member of the *Institut Interdisciplinaire d'Anthropologie du Contemporain* (IIAC), in Paris. She holds an MA in Social Science, with a specialisation in History of Migration from EHESS and a BA in Social Anthropology and History from the University of Aegean. Her Ph.D. field research was supported with a mobility grant by EHESS, « aide à la recherche du terrain », the A.G. Leventis Foundation and a mobility grant from École Française d'Athènes. She coordinates *Atelier Balkans* – an interdisciplinary workshop for doctoral students and young researchers. In her dissertation she examined the role of a specific political and cultural institution (DOME) and its impact on the life of exiled refugees of the Greek civil war (1946-1949) who lived in Bulgaria during socialism. Her research analysed the terms under which the subjects are subordinate to power and the varied content of national identity through the different generations of refugees 'when exile is ended'. Her main research interests embrace, but are not limited to, migration, the Balkans and anthropological theory.

More recently, through the ECOS SUD Franco-Chilean programme that she is also a member of, she has started work on the Greeks of Chile's histories and imaginaries of migration.

**Thomas Lacroix** is CNRS research fellow in geography. He works on the relationships between immigrant transnationalism and the state. His work initially focused on Indian and North African transnationalism, with a specific interest in their effects on development and integration. His research now focuses on city networks and the building of a local governance of international migrations. He holds a Ph.D. in geography and political sciences (University of Poitiers, 2003). He was awarded a doctoral Marie Curie fellowship at the Centre for the Study of Migrations and Ethnicity (University of Liège, 2002-2003), a postdoctoral Lavoisier fellowship at the Centre Jacques Berque (Rabat, 2004-2005), a postdoctoral Marie Curie fellowship at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (University of Warwick, 2005-2007) and a research fellowship funded by the Volkswagen Foundation the International Migration Institute (University of Oxford, 2008-2011). Thomas

Lacroix is former Migrinter deputy director. He is currently associate editor of [Migration Studies](#) and research associate at [CERI](#) and [Migrinter](#). He is a fellow at the [Institut Convergence Migrations](#).

**Clara Lecadet** holds a Ph.D. in social anthropology and ethnology on the forms of grouping and collective mobilisation of migrants expelled to Mali (EHESS, 2011). She is an anthropologist and CNRS research fellow. Her research focuses on the emergence of a protest movement specific to expellees in Africa and on the forms that their organisation takes in the post-expulsion period. More generally, the history of expulsion policies and practices vis-à-vis foreigners should be considered, as the radical instrument of the distinction between citizens and foreigners in Western countries, but also as factors of social and political transformation in the countries from which immigrants are expelled. Clara is a member of the *Air Deportation Project* (2017-2022), supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), led by W. Walters (Carleton University).

Her work also addresses the issue of the politicisation of refugees within the camps and how this tends to be overshadowed in the history of refugee camps administered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). A research project on the UNHCR archives in Geneva supports this reflection.

**Yasha Maccanico** is completing a Ph.D. at the University of Bristol's School for Policy Studies on 'European Immigration Policies as a Problem: state power and authoritarianism. The development of immigration policy as a means of asserting state power in the EU and its member states'. He has been a journalist and researcher monitoring and reporting on EU justice and home affairs policy and the link between EU policies and those enacted in member states with Statewatch since 1998, including the externalisation of migration policies, and co-authored the report *The shrinking space for solidarity with migrants and refugees: How the European Union and Member States target and criminalise defenders of the rights of people on the move* with the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam in September 2018.

**Marie L. Mallet** is currently a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Researcher at COMPAS. Marie earned her doctorate at Paris Sorbonne in 2013. Her dissertation qualitatively and comparatively analysed Latino political participation in Boston, Los Angeles, and Miami.

Marie spent three years in residence at Harvard University as a Fulbright Scholar and a postdoctoral researcher. She has won funding from the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship.

Her research interests include Latin American immigrants in the United States and the European Union, as well as racial and ethnic inequality and discrimination in the United States, especially as it pertains to the Latin American diaspora.