The Evolution of Ideas in South America's Immigration Policy in the Past Century Mayra Feddersen and Felipe A. Castro.

Abstract: Ideas or paradigms fulfill a fundamental role in immigration. They operate as strategic tools and as structures of meaning. When legislators engage in naming and labeling, through creating legal categories, this is usually not a mere semantic exercise, but it is in the selection of each of those words that these policies materialize dominating ideas. In other words, legal texts express prevalent policy paradigms. Building on this observation, and through the analysis of legal corporea (i.e. legislations and regulations that have administered the entry, stay and exit of foreigners), we describe the evolution of the ideas that drove South America's immigration policy in the past century. Applying techniques developed in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and using Pécoud's (2020) comprehensive theory about governance philosophies, we classify all the articles of immigration laws and regulations dictated since 1900 until 2018 of Argentina, Chile and Peru. Preliminary results show that managerial/developmental governance philosophy has been an underlying paradigm that has pervaded the history of immigration governance in Argentina, Chile and Peru. The national/sovereignty and the anti-immigrant governance philosophy appeared only in second place. Our contribution is twofold. First, we provide the first comprehensive account on the evolution of ideas that have dominated immigration policy for a selected group of South American countries. Second, we show how recent advances in AI, specifically, in the sub field of Natural Language Processing, can be leveraged to considerably reduce the use of resources in the analysis of legislations.

Keywords: ideas, philosophies in immigration governance, South America immigration policies, natural language processing.