Managing climate insecurity by ensuring continuous capital accumulation: "climate refugees" and "climate migrants"

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Abstract

Numerous recent reports by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics and international organisations have focussed on so-called climate refugees or migrants. This paper examines the turn from a discourse of "climate refugees", in which organisations perceive migration as a failure of both mitigation and adaptation to climate change, to one of "climate migration", in which organisations promote migration as a strategy of adaptation. Its focus is the *International Organization for Migration*'s (IOM) promotion of climate migration management, and it explores the trend of migration through two sections. First, it provides an empirical account of the two discourses, emphasizing the differentiation between them. It then focuses on the discourse of climate migration, its origins, extent and content and the associated practices of "migration management". The second part argues that the IOM's turn to the promotion of "climate migration" should be understood as its way to manage the insecurity created by climate change. However, IOM enacts this management within the forms of neoliberal capitalism, including the framework of governance. Therefore, the promotion of "climate migration" as a strategy of adaptation to climate change is located within the tendencies of neoliberalism and the reconfiguration of Southern states' sovereignties through governance.

INTRODUCTION

The grim picture of millions of climate refugees fleeing their destroyed habitats and flowing into northern havens has been all too present over the last few years as the "human face" of climate change. Numerous reports by academics, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the media and international organisations have created the image of an impending menace that will explode if economies do not take a radical and new decarbonised path (e.g., Christian Aid 2007; Environmental Justice Foundation 2009; Global Humanitarian Forum 2009). Proponents for change have constituted and used climate migrants/refugees to draw attention to the human consequences of climate change, with the aim to foster political action.

To be sure, scholars of critical geographical, developmental and migration literature have launched hefty critiques on the concepts of "environmental migration" or "environmental refugees", etc. (Black 2001; Farbotko 2005, 2010; Oels 2008, 2010; Gill 2010; Hartmann 2010). During the first stage of these concepts, scholars criticized them for being too deterministic and for reducing a complex set of migration causes to a unilateral environmental "push" factor. But, when the "environmental migration" models grew more sophisticated as scholars incorporated differentiated views on the causality of migration, distinguishing between types of "environmentally induced migration" and advocating a different set of policies, the critique of the environmental migrant/refugee concept followed these changes with an argument that critiques less the epistemological nature of the model and critiques more the broader cultural representations and political implications of the environmental/climate migrants/refugees literature (Gill 2010). This critique has spilled into larger arenas. For example, the popular science journal *New Scientist* found no sound basis for the widely circulated numbers of "climate refugees" (Pearce 2011).

Karen McNamara (2006, 2007) has produced pioneering work in this regard by analysing in detail the discourse of environmental refugees, especially the discourse taking place in the United Nations. She has shown how the UN has constructed "environmental refugees" as helpless victims of climate change who are in urgent need of foreign assistance. This discourse on environmental refugees has sidelined the questions of adaptation to climate change. Further researches on potential "sinking" islands have shown that the inhabitants of these territories did not represent themselves as

potential “climate” refugees. Instead, they articulated demands for economic development and adaptation to the effects of climate change (Farbotko 2005; McNamara and Gibson 2009; Mortreux and Barnett 2009; Oels 2010). There is no denying, however, that climate change will add further insecurity on populations, mainly in the South, which are already experiencing the conjugated effects of food, energy and economic crises (McMichael 2009; Taylor 2009).

This paper will not focus on the usefulness of the concept of climate refugees or climate migration to understand contemporary processes of migration.[1] The present critique’s focus will not be on academic literature either, but rather on the production of an expert and bureaucratic discourse on climate migration and associated practices. I want to develop further the assessment of the climate migrant/refugee literature by underlining an important and recent shift in the discourse produced by specific academics and international organisations that have focused on this topic. Discursive practices constitute a part of political practices and even more so a part of developmental practices (Mitchell 2002), and it is therefore important to register the transformations that they undergo as well as the reasons for these transformations. Whereas the previous discourse of climate refugees constructed climate migration as a *failure* of both mitigation and adaptation to climate change, the new “climate migration” discourse now presents it as a *strategy* of adaptation. In the meantime, the meaning of adaptation to climate change itself has changed from a collective transformation of the environment to a transformation of the individual.

I will be using a Marxist political economy perspective to argue that this shift is related to broader transformations in climate, migration and development policies and follows the nature of neoliberal capitalism in that it produces and reproduces “primitive accumulation” (Harvey 2005a; Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005; Radice 2008; Taylor 2009). In the first section, I will schematically reconstruct the institutional stages that have led to the production of the discourse on migration as an adaptation to climate change by focusing on the case of the *International Organization for Migration* (IOM). I will define and underline this discourse’s central points, chiefly by comparing it with the discourse of climate refugees. In the second part, I will discuss the reasons behind the discursive shift by placing it within the context of the capitalist relations of production and their political forms.

This article is original in its treatment of "climate migration", a topic that has received only little critical interest so far, least of all from a historical materialist perspective. It also seeks to contribute to the current debate on the nature of state power and international organisations in the contradictory processes neoliberalisation. Although much valuable work has already been done on the chief proponents of neoliberal capitalism, such as the World Bank (Williams 1999; Cammack 2002; Taylor 2004; Charnock 2008; Wilson 2011), this article focuses on a seemingly secondary multilateral institution, not overtly responsible for "economic" management. It thus reinforces the understanding of national and regional policies of migration promotion as elements of "primitive accumulation" (Phillips 2009) by demonstrating that similar processes are also enacted through international institutions. Furthermore, this article contributes to the study of IOM practices from a political economy perspective, thus complementing and correcting the post-structuralist approaches used thus far (Düvell 2003; Andrijasevic and Walters 2010; Ashutosh and Mountz 2011) by locating the argument within a broader analysis of capitalist social relations.

THE SHIFTING LANGUAGE OF ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Scholars have thoroughly documented the emergence of the environmental refugee discourse amongst international organisations, notably in the above-mentioned works of Karen McNamara. I am not going to rehearse the whole argument about its evolution, because my aim is more limited. I hope to identify a recent discursive shift that will help us to renew our understanding of climate migration. Although this discourse is internally differentiated and has evolved over the years in response to new constraints and opportunities, it seems to me that some common features stretch over its evolution. Furthermore, it is possible to identify a shift in the discourse from the construal of the populations considered as "climate refugees" to their construal as "climate migrants". [2]

Widespread manifestos have used "climate refugees" as a means to underline the social and human consequences of anthropogenic climate change from a rather catastrophist perspective (e.g., Christian Aid 2007; Environmental Justice Foundation 2009; Global Humanitarian Forum 2009). They have been painted as the helpless victims of a climate change that they have not produced. Specifically, the image that has been constructed is one of innocent southern people (mainly islanders

living on a "sinking island") suffering the consequences of northern emissions of greenhouse gases that have been fuelling an unsustainable way of life (Farbotko 2010). In this conception, the consequences of climate change, such as a rising sea level or increased natural catastrophe and desertification, are reckoned to "induce" migration, both internal and international. This argument claims that climate refugees, almost biologically, respond to an externally imposed transformation of their livelihood. For instance, Friends of the Earth – Australia, an environmental NGO, wrote about these climate refugees in a way that directly reflects this conception: "Do we believe they will stay where they are and quietly starve? No, they will do what any of us would: move and seek refuge elsewhere" (Friends of the Earth 2005: 8).

The revelation of the very existence of climate refugees was meant to signal the failure of climate change *mitigation* policies, and subsequently the failure to adopt measures of *adaptation* to climate change. Most of the literature, however, pointed to the potential future creation of climate refugees (rather than their contemporary existence, which remained contested) in the absence of a strong action on climate change, both regarding mitigation and adaptation.

This view was shared by environmental NGOs, academics (especially from a natural science background), and some international organisations. Yet one difference remained relating to the label "refugee". Whereas NGOs and some academics used it as a way to underline the *forced* character of climate induced migration, international organisations, especially the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), were strongly opposed to such a label, which had no foundations in international law, refugees being a specific legal category that implied persecution and the crossing of national borders (Piguet 2008).

Those who believed that "climate refugees" were not a mere menace devised solutions within the realm of international law. Over the last few years, scholars and activists have developed numerous blueprint conventions for the protection of "climate refugees" or "environmental refugees" (Biermann and Boas 2008; Williams 2008; Docherty and Giannini 2009; Westra 2009; for a critique, Oels 2010).

An example of this was the declaration of the Greens / European Free Alliance (EFA) Group at the European parliament, adopted on June 11th 2008, which asked European and international institutions to "organize legal protection for the victims of climate disruptions and of possible

displaced persons (current or future) who do not benefit today from any recognition" (quoted in Sgro 2008). More detailed documents have been produced, such as the draft convention by Harvard jurists Bonnie Docherty and Tyler Giannini, stating that a "new legal instrument carefully crafted to deal with the problem of climate change refugees is the best way forward. It should guarantee human rights protections and humanitarian aid for those whom climate change compels to leave their countries" (2009: 402).

As earlier said, these elements have already gained critical scrutiny by various researchers. What is more recent, and has been less noticed, is the parallel development of a renewed understanding of the question through the category of "climate migration" especially (but not exclusively) by the IOM. As a first approximation, "climate migration" can be defined as a discourse that emphasises migration as an *adaptation strategy* to climate change and refuses to signal a failure of climate mitigation and adaptation policies. But it also changes the meaning of "adaptation", and it guides practices of "migration management", especially at the IOM level. In the remainder of this section, I will try to characterize the specificities of this discourse. Let us first reflect briefly on its origins.

The Origins and Extent of a Concept

From the perspective of the IOM (2009a: 5-6)**,** the link between migration and environment has been a policy subject for over two decades. Karen McNamara indeed has shown how, in parallel to the climate refugee discourse discussed above, environmental refugees have been constructed as "adaptable subjects" to environmental degradation since 1996, especially by the IOM and the UNHCR, thus shifting the burden of adaptation onto them. But adaptation in this sense still amounted to nothing more than finding "local coping mechanisms" (McNamara 2006: 165). Furthermore, as McNamara underlined: "This construction of 'environmental refugees' as subjects 'forced to adapt' suggests that those affected must 'deal with it'. This consequently relieves the United Nations of its duty to develop an international mechanism to protect those affected" (McNamara 2006: 184).

The constitution, within the IOM, of climate migrations as adaptation strategies that should be actively encouraged and managed is much more recent. Institutionally, it can be traced back to the 94th Session of the IOM Council, during a high-level panel on Migration and the Environment in

November 2007 (IOM 2007), as well as to the publication of a research note in February 2008 (Brown 2008). Since then, it has been frequently repeated in conferences, seminars, press releases, reports, etc. At the same time, and in collaboration, a (practice-oriented) academic expertise was developed, especially by researchers clustered at the United Nations University's Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU EHS) (e.g.: Renaud *et al.* 2007). Another important area of development for this expertise was the project named "Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios" (EACH-FOR), a co-financed research project within the Sixth Framework Program of the European Commission. [3]

In April 2008, the IOM, in association with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UNU, and the Munich Re Foundation, set up the "Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance" (CCEMA). Its initiators described it as:

> "[…] a multi-stakeholder global partnership bringing together key international organisations, groups of interested state parties, the private sector, the scientific and professional communities, and representatives of civil society. Its main objective is to mainstream environmental and climate change considerations into migration management policies and practices, and to bring migration issues into global environmental and climate change discourse." (Morton, Boncour and Laczko 2008: 7)

Note in this description the will to influence both policies and discourses, drawing attention to the fact that a paradigmatic shift is needed in order to implement this new conception. The promotion of climate migration by the IOM has consequently become a defining feature of this institution. Climate migration is one of the eight themes advertised on its homepage (along with e.g.: "migration and development", "facilitating migration" or "regulating migration".) [4] It has been the subject of a special issue of the IOM's magazine "Migration" (Autumn 2009 on "Adapting to Climate Change"), and of numerous publications, including a "policy brief" (IOM 2009a) and the 320 pages "Compendium of IOM's Activities in Migration, Climate Change and the Environment" (IOM 2009b) which is an extended collection of case studies of migration management practices ("programmatic responses and lessons learned") by the IOM in the context of environmental degradation. The IOM, in collaboration with the UNEP, has produced a special issue of the authoritative "Forced Migration Review" (no. 31,

October 2008, on "Climate change and displacement") published by the Refugee studies Centre of the University of Oxford, in which senior staff members of the IOM and the UNEP wrote together the lead article (Morton, Boncour and Laczko 2008). The IOM organized or took part in various international conferences (some more academic[5], others more policy oriented[6]), as well as in seminars for international organization's staff dedicated to this question.[7]

The IOM is one of the actors which have developed the climate migration paradigm within the international negotiations on climate change. It has organized, jointly with other institutions such as the UNHCR, side-events during the latest Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)[8] and submitted various policy documents. This activity has ultimately led to the inclusion of paragraph 14(f) in the Cancun Adaptation Framework adopted at COP 16, which states that countries parties to the UNFCCC should undertake:

> " Measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation, where appropriate, at the national, regional and international levels" (quoted in Warner 2011: 12)

The final wording of this paragraph specifically replaces an earlier version which featured the concept of "climate refugees". This move had openly been criticised by the Head of the US delegation during a session in June 2009, and further references to "climate refugees" were avoided in the subsequent meetings, leading to the introduction of the notion of "climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation" (Warner 2011: p. 9).

Finally, beyond international organisations, it should be noted that the concept of "climate migration" is being increasingly used in the Anglophone press, and is proportionally growing much faster than the one of "climate refugees."[9]

Specifying "Climate Migration"

<Table 1. About here.>

Table 1 summarizes, in an ideal-typical manner, the differences between the discourse on climate refugees and on climate migration. The most important point in this latter discourse is the insistence on understanding climate migration as a *strategy* of adaptation rather than as a *failure* of mitigation and adaptation. However, not only are climate migrations promoted as a solution to climate change, but they appear as a valid strategy, from the standpoint of the IOM, only inasmuch as they can be *managed*:

> " […] migration can also be understood as an adaptation strategy to the impact of climate change under some circumstances, particularly in the early stages of environmental degradation. Yet, for migration to become a viable alternative – an adaptation strategy that increases the resilience of vulnerable populations – environmental migration needs to be managed, in particular with a view to enhancing positive and sustainable developmental outcomes." (IOM 2009b: 24)

This management entails a very sophisticated set of rules, practices and norms that encompass all the identified aspects of migrations, especially as they relate to the migrant as a (potential) worker. The IOM refers to this complex set of normative guidelines as the "migration management cycle"(IOM 2009b: 40ss.).

The move from the recognition of climate refugees to the management of climate migration entails a transformation in the forms of the actions undertaken by international organisations. Not any more should the environmental migrant be conceptually located within the realm of international law and legal categories, as he comes to be surrounded by an ensemble of deformalized norms and practices, such as "soft laws", advices, capacity-building practices, etc.

For instance, the UNHCR refused the label environmental or climate "refugee" on the grounds that the current legal category defining a refugee is linked to a notion of persecution and the crossing of an international border (Piguet 2008). Furthermore, this refusal was underpinned by fears that an opening up of the legal category of asylum would prove detrimental to current refugees and asylum seekers, which are populations that are already under intense pressure. The IOM is thus compelled to

argue against this legal reasoning and does so by displacing the focus on the individual and by promoting a deformalized intervention:

> "A clear distinction between "forced" and "voluntary" instances of migration related to environmental factors is difficult to make, except in cases of imminent and acute disaster. Instead, it is possible to imagine a continuum from clear cases of forced migration to clear cases of voluntary migration, with a large grey zone in between. A holistic, human security-oriented approach to environmental migration is needed to address all forms of movement comprehensively, putting the migrant at the centre of concern rather than focussing on formal legal categories." (IOM 2009a: 5)

This understanding, as it formally promotes the individual (through the concept of "human security") as the foundation of (global) intervention, is thus much more radical than the (international) legal propositions referred to above, which still speak the language of international law. This has been even more precisely explained in an experts workshop organised by the IOM, the UNEP and the UNU EHS:

> "Hence, there is a growing interest in researching soft laws and non binding agreements that comprise the environment-migration nexus, as it is unlikely to implement a global convention to respond to the specific problems environmentally induced migration poses to those affected, governments and the international community. Operational and policy experts commented, however, that a prescriptive approach which imposed ideal legal, institutional, or governance frameworks upon nation states would likely be ineffective." (Stal and Warner 2009: 10)

It should also be noted that whereas the specific focus of the language of climate migration is on the promotion and the management of migration, it also entails the prevention of migration :

> "there are a number of strategies and tools that can help to prevent forced migration, including those within the DRR [Disaster risk reduction] and CCA [Climate change adaptation] frameworks. The aim of these programmes is to reduce people's exposure to risk, increase their resilience and help them adapt to a changing environment." (IOM 2009b: 51).

This last quotation, again, makes clear the new meaning of adaptation, in the context of IOM's interventions, which is the production of individuals able to adapt.

MANAGING CLIMATE INSECURITY

Recent scholarly works on the IOM have drawn on a foucauldian framework in order to understand the complex set of discourses and practices that are used by this institution. Whereas there is no denying that the IOM is indeed central to the "international government of borders" (Andrijasevic and Walters 2010), I would like to argue that a political economy perspective helps us to understand the purpose of such a "government" (and not only its functioning). Focussing on climate migration, the ways in which this discourse is enacted, and what it entails, leads us to recast the argument around the ideas put forward by Marcus Taylor (2009) in his article on "displacing insecurity in a divided world". According to Taylor, due to the contradictory nature of capitalist social relations, capital's accumulation is predicated on the insecurity of labour on a global scale. This is true in the sphere of production, but also in the sphere of consumption where:

> "the reproduction of Western mass consumption necessarily involves the displacement of the ecological burden on those whose social existence is already precarious. This is most evident in the spatial and temporal displacements of the costs of CO_2 emissions, whereby global warming threatens to rupture the socio-ecological foundations of rural livelihood across much of the global South. To securitise capitalist world order, therefore, is a continuous and contradictory process of displacing and managing insecurity through a combination of institution building, social engineering and the deployment of coercive power." (Taylor 2009: 149-150).

I will argue in this second part that the promotion of the agenda of climate migration by the IOM, is indeed such a case of insecurity management and displacement. Moreover, the forms in which it takes place, are themselves, I hope to show, conducive to further capital accumulation. In order to make these points, I will first briefly assess the contradictory nature of international organizations, such as the IOM, in a Marxist perspective. Second, building on more empirical material, I will give

examples of how the promotion of climate migration, are indeed elements of a policy of insecurity management which takes place within capitalist social forms.

International Organisations, State Building and "Primitive Accumulation"

According to "open Marxist" scholars, under capitalist relations of production, the state, and by extension the system of states, is not external, nor reducible, to class relations; rather, the state is a moment of these relations and a part of the global circuit of capital (Clarke 1991; Burnham 2002; Bonefeld 2008). It needs to be understood as a particular form of social relations, not a neutral actor nor a simple apparatus for bourgeois domination. States both inform (give "form" to) social struggles (and for that matter, class struggle) and respond to them, often by pre-empting the grounds for contestation. One key element of the global circuit of capital that is responding to such social demands and contestations are the international organisations (Burnham 2002; Taylor 2004; ten Brink 2007; Tsolakis 2010). According to philosopher Tony Smith, globalisation is characterised by two contradictory tendencies. He notes the simultaneous affirmation and negation of national sovereignties by the tendency towards the constitution of global political structures (Smith 2009: 221-55; cf. Radice 2008: 1159). Whereas the constitution of global legal relations, and of international organizations, parallels global-scale development of the circuit of capital (the so called "world market"), the grounding of capital always takes place within territorialised political spaces, leading to competition between these polities. The concurrence between national states to attract and retain a share of (global) capital within their boundaries (Holloway 1994), simultaneously reinforces inter-state cooperation. International organisations, can be understood as attempts by states to manage the contradictions (and the sources of theses contradictions) constituting the global/international space of capitalism. This management, however, is not a straightforward one, as it internalizes all sorts of contradictions (between national sovereignties and global governance, for instance) and responds to social struggles and demands.

One of the forms that this contradiction has assumed recently is that of "governance". In developmental policies, the neoliberalisation of capitalism has led to the abandonment of ambitious

developmental schemes that rely on infrastructural developments, technical expertise and monetary transfer to Southern countries. This apparent retreat of the state has been accompanied by a form of governance through which the state policies of Southern countries are reorganized from above, notably through international organisations such as the World Bank, in order to extend the reach of the capitalist relations of production, and become more competitive in the endless accumulation of capital (Williams 1999; Cammack 2002; Taylor 2004; Charnock 2008; Wilson 2011). With regards to institutions, according to David Chandler,

> "while government presupposes a liberal rights-based framing of political legitimacy in terms of autonomy and self-determining state authority, the discourse of governance focuses on technical and administrative capacity, or the way of rule, rather than the representative legitimacy of policy making or its derivational authority." (2010b: 70)[10]

Governance, in this sense, makes sovereignty conditional to the state's capacity to follow the formal requirements of governance, rather than conditional to the expression of its citizens political will (Chandler 2010a). A state's "failure" to achieve the standards of governance opens the opportunity for foreign interventions, including those by international organisations in the form of "state building". These interventions relate to the reorganisation of Southern polities through a form of externally recognized sovereignty, which at the same time sidelines internal sovereignty understood as the political self-determination of its citizens. Andrijasevic and Walters (2010: 980), in their insightful analysis of the IOM, have described it as "a complex of schemes which govern through the elicitation of state agency and the regulated enhancement and deployment of state capacity." Governance therefore amounts to a process of depoliticization to which the development of "expertise" and expert interventions is crucial.

International organisations generally apply state building to "failed" or "failing" states, which, unsurprisingly, turn out to be Southern countries (for a critique, see Jones 2008). The supposed failure of these states is first interpreted as a security concern, as it is through failed sovereignties that disturbing elements in world politics, such as unwanted migrations, supposedly take place. Secondly, this failure is what triggers and legitimise an external intervention within the sovereignty of these

states (Chandler 2010a; Bratsis 2011). The purpose of these interventions relates notably to the further integration of the populations of these countries within the realm of capitalist social relations (Taylor 2009: 151). These interventions however, are generally not anymore understood as a direct, colonial or imperial subordination. “State building” takes the subtler forms of “capacity building”, technical expertise or “benchmarking” (Chandler 2010a).

The purpose of state building in this sense is the inclusion of populations within capitalist relations, a process that Marxists refer to as “primitive accumulation”. Primitive accumulation is not a simple process of dispossession (although dispossession is an integral part of it: Harvey 2005b), but it is an on-going process within capitalist relations of production whose nature is to constantly produce and reproduce the labourer as a labourer (de Angelis 2010), and for which the state is primarily responsible, notably through the enactment and guarantee of private property. In other words, primitive accumulation keeps the labourer as a dispossessed individual, separated from the means of production (land, physical capital, etc.), who must constantly reproduce himself through the market by selling his labour power in exchange for a wage, thus making him productive for capital accumulation (McNally 1993). Essential to this process, is the “decomposition” of labour power through which workers are reproduced as individuals and not as a collective actor: divisions among the working class through the lines of nationality, occupation, gender, employment status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. are all elements which contribute to this weakening of the power of labour. This decomposition has been a defining (and contested) element of the processes of neoliberalisation experienced over the last 30 years. Furthermore, policymakers in the “roll-out” phase of neoliberalism have increasingly focussed on “the challenges of reproducing regimes of precarious work and mobilizing the poor for low-wage employment” (Peck and Tickell 2002: 392). In Southern countries, such processes of primitive accumulation often amount to “tearing people from their ties to pre-capitalist tenure, their work relations and modes of authority” (Moore 2004: 90).

These divisions amongst the working class, and its disciplining through the imposition of insecure employment relations, are testimony to the continuous presence of labour in capitalism and its potential threat to the reproduction of capitalist social relations. “Primitive accumulation”, therefore,

is a very contemporary phenomenon, whose disciplining effects have been most prominent under neoliberalism. State-building in this regard is constitutive of capitalist social relations. It is a form through which capital's accumulation and expansion is secured, and through which the insecurity, produced by this very expansion, is managed or displaced. Summarizing these processes allows Justin Rosenberg (1994: 161), to write that "state building is an integral part of primitive accumulation".

Climate Migration Management as State Building and Primitive Accumulation

Within this framework of state building and primitive accumulation can we make sense of the IOM's practices of "migration management" and of the promotion of climate migration. References, mostly implicit, to these processes, infuse the IOM's policy documents. Whereas climate refugees were depicted as (potential) helpless victims of climate change induced *forced* migration, the language of climate migration as adaptation radically transforms the location of social agency, and, consequently, the responsibility for climate change consequences. Climate migration becomes a *strategy* of adaptation to climate change, albeit a strategy which requires constant monitoring and management. In this last part of my paper, I will argue that in order to make sense of the meaning of these practices, we need to recast them within the two trends alluded to above which are both elements of the management of climate insecurity, namely, first the advent of a neoliberalised policy of adaptation to climate change, and second the implementation of practices of migration management.

The promotion of "climate migration" appears at a moment when international climate negotiations stall, and when one can notice a shift from mitigation to adaptation in international climate policies (Adger 2010). Indeed, quite to the contrary to Vlassopoulos's (2010: 23) argument that "in a context where adaptation becomes the key strategy for climate policy, environmental migrants become a non-issue", it is precisely the shift towards adaptation that makes climate migration so relevant.

But the form taken by this adaptation is, in the case of "climate migration", itself of a neoliberal nature. Not any more does adaptation refer to a collective, political and social transformation of the external conditions (as in the project of "development" for instance); rather, it is a transformation of the individuals themselves in order for them to become more suitable to adaptation (Chandler 2010a: ch. 7). Whereas in the previous period, adaptation to climate change would have been mainly framed as a process of financial and technical transfer from Northern to Southern countries, such a political understanding is now sidelined in favour of an individual-strategic framing. Obviously the disappearance of ambitious development goals has to do with the fiscal crisis of the states, but more profoundly, is it linked to the individualistic and depoliticized results of neoliberalisation processes.[11] These transformations are similar (and linked) to those found in the field of international poverty management, as summarized by Jamie Peck (2011: 171-172):

> "First, rationales for anti-poverty intervention are now constructed in market-centric terms, implying a principled rejections of Keynesian, developmentalist, or redistributive alternatives. Second, debates around poverty alleviation have been progressively depoliticized by way of an increasingly widespread embrace of technocratic, 'best-practice' approaches, couched in the language of evaluation science."

Such a vision can be found in the concept of "vulnerability", which lies at the core of the IOM's understanding of what provokes climate migration. The IOM defines it as: "a function of people's exposure […] and their capacity to adapt" (IOM 2011: 2). Consequently, the solution to the insecurities provoked by climate change is the enhancement of the individual's capacity to adapt ("an adaptation strategy that increases the *resilience* of vulnerable populations" IOM, 2009b: 24). It amounts to the production of a new form of neoliberal subjectivity: strategic adaptation to climate change is coupled with entrepreneurial migratory ethos and practices which are to be fostered, as well as *limited*, by institutions.

Legal free movements of people (which would imply a policy of open borders) challenge capital accumulation as they produce important possibilities for labourers to escape from their subordination to capital's rule and destroy legal barriers between workers. Therefore, the territorialisation of labour

power, and its legal and spatial segregation, has always been a major objective of states as an important part of the primitive accumulation of capital. This territorialisation, however, does not amount to the fixity of labour power. Quite to the contrary, it can translate into mass migrations, both internal and international (Marfleet 2006). But, from the perspective of capital, these migrations of labour power must be controlled to some degree and ultimately managed. International organisations have a long history of attempts at organizing and producing labour migration, notably in order to resolve labour market imbalances. Whereas the International Labour Office (ILO) had a pioneering role in the management of labour migrations (Rosental 2006), this function was devolved, after WW II to a multilateral agency created for this purpose, the IOM (then, named the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration).

The organisation of these migrations, however, normally takes a form which is more in line with employer's interest than with workers' needs and projects. In order to fulfil the continuous demands of the labour markets located in Northern countries, the migration of labour power is organised in ways which are as little threatening to capital's accumulation as possible. Migrant workers are generally stripped of most of their rights and their existence is made as precarious as possible. Nicola Phillips has argued that the promotion of migration is central to contemporary primitive accumulation in the sense that, under current capitalist conditions, it may be used to put pressure both on migrant workers and on the national labour force (Phillips 2009: 238-239). Organized migration disciplines both categories of workers, including by pitting them against each other, while integrating them within value making processes.

A recent justification for the implementation of such precariousness is to be found in the concept of "temporary" and "circular" migrations (Boucher 2008; Wickramasekera 2011) which refers to an extreme flexibilisation of migrant labour. Indeed, under such schemes, migrants are generally deprived of the most basic rights. Due to their temporary nature, temporary and circular labour schemes produce workers who do not have political (citizenship) rights. This in itself produces a form of insecurity, which makes it more difficult for these migrant workers to organize within unions and generally exempts them from institutionalized social security schemes (who generally are, to some

degree, linked with permanent residency or citizenship). Furthermore, migrant workers often are attached to a given employer and cannot seek another workplace, thus reinforcing their subordination to management (Chang 2009: 175). Consequently, trade unions, all over the world, have repeatedly denounced the promotion of such migration schemes. Public Service International, for instance, declared in 2010 that "We are deeply alarmed and concerned at the increasing proliferation of temporary/circular labor migration programmes as they have already proven and continue to prove to be detrimental to the rights of workers, their families and communities" (quoted in Wickramasekera 2011:79). And a member of the International Labor Organisation's Bureau for Workers'Activities writes that "problems associated with temporary and circular migration programmes range from: denial of freedom of association and the right to organize; ill-treatment by unscrupulous recruitment agencies; exploitation; and poor and often dangerous working conditions, to discrimination in various forms including reduced access to social security" (Luc Demaret in Wickramasekera 2011:70).

Temporary and circular migration schemes provide the structure to a regime of precarious work. The production of vulnerability and "insecurity" for the labour force is therefore not accidental, but at the very heart of contemporary capitalism in its quest for endless accumulation (Taylor 2009: 149-150). Such a decomposition of labour is directly functional to management's rule and more effective surplus extraction.

It is precisely these practices of "migration management", focussing on temporary migrations, that are prominently advocated within the "climate migration" paradigm. For instance a CCEMA document states that climate migration management implies:

> " […] developing temporary and circular labour migration schemes for environmentally vulnerable communities, including measures to strengthen the developmental benefits of such migration for areas of origin (e.g. through the provision of information, strengthening of remittance channels and reduction of the costs for transactions, protection against human security risks and longer-term skills development in environmentally vulnerable areas)." (CCEMA 2010)

Another example is the following excerpt of an IOM "policy brief" that includes a goal capitalizing on these effects:

> "Minimize forced displacement and facilitate the role of migration as an adaptation strategy to climate change by, for instance, developing temporary and circular labour migration schemes with environmentally-vulnerable communities, where appropriate, particularly at less advanced stages of environmental degradation, and seeking to strengthen the developmental benefits of such migration for areas of origin." (IOM 2009a: 7)

Note that this adaptation policy takes advantage of arguments found in a related discourse, that of the "migration-development nexus". Indeed, the IOM argues that climate migrations are not simply a coping strategy but they may, under proper conditions (that is, under proper *management*), produce developmental effects, especially by means of the acquisition of "know-how" and sending home remittances. This "developmental" effect of temporary/circular labour migration – itself an element of the supposed "triple win" associated with such schemes (win for the migrant, for the receiving country, and for the country or origin) – have never been proved, quite to the contrary. According to a research conducted for the ILO, these schemes rather amount to a "dead end" (Wickramasekera 2011; for a critique of the migration-development nexus see: Silvey 2008; Raghuram 2009; Phillips 2009; Kunz 2011).

The promotion of climate migration, therefore, should not be confused with a freedom to migrate or circulate around the globe. Neither should it be confused with the development of human-rights based legal migration channels, such as the ones requested by institutional organized labour (Wickramasekera 2011). It certainly is not equivalent to the "autonomy of migration" claimed by defenders of migrant's rights (Oels 2008) or a policy of "open borders". Quite to the contrary, the IOM is at pain to stress the negative consequences of an *unmanaged* migration, such as environmental degradation, conflicts with receiving communities, pressure on scarce resources, etc. This is expressed by the IOM Director General, drawing on a neo-Malthusian rhetoric:

> " Unforeseen and inadequately managed migration can hinder development in several ways, by increasing pressure on urban infrastructure and services; increasing the risk of conflict; and

> degrading health, educational and social conditions among migrants and receiving communities". (McKinley 2008)

And, in another statement, the IOM claims that:

> "If left unmanaged, environmentally induced migration can have disastrous consequences, primarily for individuals and their communities. When a certain critical mass is reached, unmanaged migration can also have security implications for concerned countries with the potential to spill over across borders to neighbouring territories." (IOM 2009b: 39)

The extent to which autonomous ("unmanaged") migration appear as threatening in the eyes of the IOM and, in turn, trigger the necessity of management is now apparent (Düvell 2003; Andrijasevic and Walters 2010: 981; Ashutosh and Mountz 2011). Climate migration, as promoted by the IOM, should therefore be understood as a practice, whose form is given and managed by external institutions, although its agency is apparently located within individuals. The promotion migration management by the IOM is a way to manage the insecurity created by climate change, which additionally turns these migrations into an activity productive for capital's accumulation. Climate change is thus harnessed towards the reconfiguration of social relations in a capitalist form. Displaced individuals are to be integrated within waged labour, but of an informal nature (although this "informality" is itself managed), which drags the individual into the global capitalist cycle or (re)production.

This production of market subjectivity through the reorganisation of institutions is the crux of state building. Andrijasevic and Walter (2010) have already underlined the ways in which the IOM participates in the reorganisation of governance. The question of climate migration, therefore, is only one of the ways in which this institution intervenes in "failing" sovereignties. Interestingly enough, climate change has become an essential justification for these interventions. The IOM's understanding of what constitutes a "complex" situation that would justify intervention is not limited to a small number of "failed states" but is dramatically extended through climate change. About half the countries in the world fall or could fall within this category:

> "While there are currently around 50 countries that fall into the complex situation category, including failed states, another 50 countries are at risk, partly because of the expected impact of climate change." (IOM 2009b: 46)

As we have seen, the form of intervention required by the paradigm of governance, are not justified through formal international law and legal categories, but rather are enacted through soft laws, expertise or "best practices", and other deformalized normative injunctions, such as "human security" (for instance Morton *et al.* 2008; McKinley 2008; IOM 2009b), whose liberal foundations remain unexamined (Taylor 2009: 149), or, in the case of the UNHCR, the doctrine of the "responsibility to protect" (for instance Guterres 2008). An IOM "background paper" on migration and climate change acknowledges the relevancy of soft laws by defining "capacity building" as "the process of strengthening the knowledge, abilities, skills, resources, structures and processes that States and institutions need in order to achieve their goals effectively and sustainably, and to adapt to change" (IOM 2011: 3). [12] The same understanding can also be found in the above-mentioned expert workshop on climate change and migration:

> "Experts suggested that, rather than proposing solutions for nation-states, it would be helpful to assist states in understanding the institutional implications of climate change and human mobility. […]. The focus would remain for some time on helping national governments design their own institutional approaches. Research could help identify areas where governments have the institutional capacity to manage potential future environmental migration, and potential gaps in capacity and frameworks." (Stal and Warner 2009: 11)

The IOM Compendium and its 200 pages of "programmatic responses and lessons learned", as well as the numerous conferences, reports, seminars and other expert workshops produced by the IOM over a short period of time, are typical of these processes and really amount to what Jamie Peck describes as follows:

> "Deference to best-practice models, to evaluation science, and to pragmatic lessons is occurring within the ideological envelope of rolling neoliberalization, where it assumes the form of a reproductive technology for government-assisted market rule. […] In doing so,

> [these practices] decisively pre-empt what would otherwise be variegated, locally specific debates around the causes and cures of poverty [or, for our topic, of environmental transformations], further depoliticizing the policymaking processes through the circulation of prefabricated solutions, travelling in the disarming, apparently 'neutral' and post-ideological form of evaluation technoscience and best-practice pragmatism." (Peck 2011: 176 and 178)

There is more to the use of the notion of "human security" than the mere deformalisation of the law. The discursive paradigm shift from "state security" to "human security" replaces political action with a form of humanitarianism predicated on the well-being of the most vulnerable (for instance Adger, 2010), and is actually a powerful tool for the depoliticization of issues surrounding climate change.[13] It is depoliticizing in the sense that Southern states are not seen anymore as vehicles for collective political actions aiming at the transformation of external conditions. The discourse of "human security" somehow relegates population in the South to a non political existence, one in which States are not anymore sites of political struggles and action, but mere subordinated mechanisms within a global apparatus of governance. Note that in this sense national states (as forms of social relations) remain crucial moments of global social relations. We are not witnessing the retreat of the state, but merely the depoliticization of the content of the state form. The effect of such state building is to reform Southern States in order to turn them into proper managers of their own population, whereby their population's movements can be controlled and harnessed into value producing activities

CONCLUSIONS

The IOM justifies its promotion of climate migration management as an adaptation strategy to climate change. This response to climate insecurity needs to be understood in relation with the competing discourse of "climate refugees". To be sure, climate *refugees* could still be construed as being part of the "climate debt" that northern countries are said to have contracted vis-à-vis southern countries (Friends of the Earth 2005). The taking in of climate refugees was presented as a form of

"compensation" for the production of climate change. Alternatively, the moral burden created by the production of climate change, and subsequently of climate refugees, could be used to justify monetary transfer (in the form of "adaptation" funds) from industrialized to developing countries in order to help them to cope with climate change. In this regard, the discourse of "climate refugees", mostly unwittingly, still operated within a loose class perspective, although this class perspective was mediated by state relations.[14] Climate *migrants*, to the contrary, provide an alternative narrative in which migration is naturalized and responsibilities for the creation of climate change blur or disappear altogether. The discourse of climate migration, as it abstracts from social (and indeed class) relations, obscures the questions of dispossession, responsibility or compensation and replaces them with a mixture of humanitarianism and entrepreneurialism. Social conflicts or contradictions, even mediated through climate change, have disappeared from such a discourse in which all human beings are thought to share the same fundamental interests and ethos.

The recent use by international organisations, especially by the IOM, of practices of "climate migration" needs to be replaced within the continuous accumulation of capital. The deleterious effects of climate change, as well as the persistence of poverty and exploitation in contemporary capitalism, continue to increase throughout the world, especially in Southern countries. The responses to these challenges implemented by international organisations, although they are themselves informed by social struggles, are directed towards the reproduction of capitalist social relations and the imposition of coercive market forces. Sovereignty is made conditional, and the state form is more directly geared towards the goal of capital accumulation by assuming the governance appearance described above. Primitive accumulation, understood as the development of capitalist social relations, is at the very heart of the discourse on climate migration, which seeks to produce individuals who not only should individually "adapt" to the effects of climate change (instead of contesting these effects by waging collective demands), but who also, ultimately, should be integrated within capitalist social relations, albeit in a mostly informal and degraded form of waged labour. The IOM, in this regard does not act very differently than other contemporary international organisations, such as the World Bank, although it differs significantly in its means and techniques.

This research has raised at least two questions in need of further investigation. The first relates to the depoliticization induced by the governance framework. The discourse of climate migration is fuelling this depoliticized vision of political relations, which has important implications. A deeper study of the social forms, especially the *legal* forms involved in this transformation, would be needed.

The second is the actual actions undertaken by so-called climate refugees/migrants, including their discursive production. This indeed is a limitation of the present study, which has almost exclusively focussed on the discourse of the IOM "from above". Although some empirical studies have been devoted to this question, very few have adopted a political economy perspective on climate dispossession by trying to relate climate "migration" systematically to broader trends of the contemporary capitalist dynamic of society and its contestations.

Table 1: Two competing discourses

	« Climate Refugees »	**« Climate migrations»**
Climate Policy	Mitigation	Adaptation
View of migration	Failure	Adaptation strategy
Nature of migration	Forced	• Voluntary/ distinction not useful/ continuum/ « grey zone» • Environmental migration is part of human History • Manageable/to be managed
Responsibility	Climate change, produced by Northern Countries	Vulnerability (individualization of the responsibility or displacement on the "victims" or its territory)
Consequences of responsibility assignation	• Climate Change mitigation • Reparation (funding for adaptation to climate change, taking in of "climate refugees",…)	"Capacity" building of vulnerable countries
Consequences of migration	Environmental degradation in the receiving territory	• If properly managed: new resources, remittances, knowledge transfer. • If left unmanaged: disruptions, degradations, violence.
Institutional level	• States • International Security • International Law	• Individuals/communities • Human Security • Human Rights
Form of the law	New International Convention or Treaty	Soft laws, internalization in domestic policies, model diffusion
Storylines	"Sinking Island", "Barbarian Invasions"	"Humanity on the move"
Uses of "climate refugees/migrants"	• To underline the human consequences of climate change • To underline the responsibilities of Northern Countries	• Replacement of mitigation policy by adaptation policy • Promoting the "migration management" and the institutional reform agenda.

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[1] My opinion is that we should rather try to understand what NGOs and academics subsume under the concept of "climate refugees/migrants" as being part of broader processes of dispossession that are linked to the development of capitalist relations of productions. In this understanding, climate change does not directly "produce" (forced) migration, but is a set of phenomena which are experienced through highly complex and differentiated social mediations (including social forms such as property, money, state, law, etc.). This view is essential to avoiding the pervasive "climate washing" discourse identified by Neil Smith, which actually totally externalises agency on a socially modified nature under the guise of accepting the socially created nature of climate change. Climate change thus becomes an all powerful agent of social change, independently of social, political or economic mediations (Smith 2008: 245). For a similar view on environmental refugees, especially regarding the social production of nature, see Gill (2010).

[2] Note that yet another discourse, which is beyond the scope of the present article, has concomitantly developed another (related) view: that of climate refugees as producing a security threat. For a critique, see Hartmann (2010) and Oels (2010).

[3] See the (now defunct) website http://www.each-for.eu/index.php?module=main

[4] See http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/activities/by-theme/lang/en

[5] For instance, a "Research Workshop on Migration and the Environment: Developing a global research agenda" on 16-18 April 2008 in Munich, Germany, organized by the OIM, the UNU-EHS, the MunichRe Foundation, the UNEP, and the Rockefeller Foundation; an "International Conference on Environment, Forced Migration and Social Vulnerability" organized in Bonn, Germany, on the 9-11 October 2008 by the UNU-EHS; a second "Expert Workshop on Climate Change, Environment, and Migration" in Munich, on the 23-24 July 2009.

[6] For instance: a "Conference on Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Migration : Addressing Vulnerabilities and Harnessing Opportunities", on 19 February 2008 in Geneva, organized by the Human Security Network , the OIM and the Greek Government; a "Climate Change

and Forced Migration Conference" at the Institute for Public Policy Research, in London, on 28 March 2008; a CCEMA Expert Panel on "Emerging Policy Perspectives on Human Mobility in a Changing Climate" in New York at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, on 24 September 2009.

[7] For instance a seminar on "Climate change, environmental degradation and migration: Preparing for the Future" organized jointly with the IOM, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the MacArthur Foundation, at the United Nations Headquarters, in New York, on 9 May 2008 by the UNITAR (UN Institute for training and research); or a seminar on "Environmentally Induced Migration and Climate Change" also organized at the UNITAR on the 20 April 2010.

[8] For instance: a side-event intituled "Climate change, migration and forced displacement: the new humanitarian frontier?" at the COP 14 in Poznan, on 8 December 2008 with contributions from the UNHCR, the UNU-EHS, the UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, etc.; a side-event on "Climate Adaptation Continuum, Migration and Displacement : Copenhagen and Beyond" organized by the OIM, the UNHCR, and the UNU-EHS, at the COP 15 in Copenhagen on the 16 December 2009; and an intervention by William Lacy Swing, the Director General of the IOM, during a Joint High-level segment of the Sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) and of the Sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 6), in Cancun on the 10 December 2010.

[9] A search (made on the 22 of July 2011) in the LexisNexis Database of international press in English found 164 occurrences for the keywords "climate migration", "climate migrants" or "climate migrant" for the period 2001-2009, 162 for 2009, and 105 for 2010-2011. The same search for "climate refugees" or "climate refugee" returned respectively 810, 582, and 263 occurrences. Whereas "climate refugees" still appears as the concept commonly used in the press, its use is decreasing relatively to that of "climate migration". It was likely to be used about five times more often in the years 2001-2009, whereas it "only" is used two and a half time more often in 2010-2011.

[10] Note that I am not convinced by Chandler's use of the concept of "post-*liberal*" governance to name these phenomena. It is my understanding that this *post*-liberal framework is actually a tendency of *neo*liberalisation processes (for a similar position see Roberts 2010) . This is due to the fact that

Chandler writes from a non-Marxist perspective and understands *liberalism* as a form of rights-based government (thus implicitly accepting the split between the "political" and the "economy") and not a form of capitalist social relations.

[11] Let us also mention the fact that international organisations are undergoing neoliberal constraints, such as the structural reduction of their financial allocation through national States. This forces them to engage in various forms of fund-raising, competing with each other to ensure their financial basis. In this regard, it seems that climate change, and even climate migration, are lucrative fields (Hall 2010). The discursive production of knowledge and normative perspectives on climate migration is itself produced through more or less formal groupings, organisations or coalitions, capturing the neoliberal institutional mood. The CCEMA referred to above, is exemplar of these public-private expert partnership involving, NGOs, international organisations and the private sector.

[12] Note that these interventions can take advantage of disastrous conditions in Southern countries, as is made clear by this statement from the IOM: "Capacity building often requires long-term engagement vis-à-vis beneficiaries to develop a relationship of trust and effectively reform institutions. It is worth noting that a window of opportunity usually opens after a disaster, when authorities and communities are both more receptive to investment in disaster preparedness, DRM [Disaster risk management] and CBDRM [Community-based disaster risk management]." (IOM 2009b: 59).

[13] This move is also founded on a contestable social ontology associated with the concept of social capital (e.g.: Adger 2010: 285-286). For a critique, see Fine (2010).

[14] It is a loose class perspective, in the sense that it recognizes conflicting interests broadly related to relations of production within contemporary society, and takes side with one of these interests. This class perspective, however, does not appear directly, but is deflected in an opposition between northern and southern states.