The governance of “migration as adaptation”

(Dis)entangling power & politics with Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice

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Outline

- What is “migration as adaptation“?
- Concepts and methodology
- Analyses and discussion
  (1) The field
  (2) Value of capital
  (3) Practices
- Implications for policy
What is “migration as adaptation”?

Source: Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013
Governance inhabits “every bundle and constellation...inherent in how human lives hang together and how people are directed towards one another” that leads to “shaping, directing or influencing” (Schatzki 2014, 19)
Concepts: Theory of Practice

Habitus + Capital $\rightarrow$ Field $\rightarrow$ Practice
Methodology

- 22 semi-structured interviews
- Focus on ‘elites’ (Arnall & Kothari 2015), with snowballing for ‘key informants’
- Organizations related to climate-migration (IOM, UNHCR, Nansen Initiative, UNU-EHS, IDMC, ILO, UNDP, ICIMOD, IIED, UKCCMC)
- ATLAS.ti to identify patterns
The field of “migration as adaptation”

NELM & Livelihoods

Adaptation & Int’l Climate Negotiations
The field of “migration as adaptation”

“Migration as adaptation”

- Resettlement
- “Migration with dignity”
- Displacement
The value of capital

Economic Capital (+)

Economic Capital (-)

Cultural Capital (+)

Cultural Capital (-)

Key
- Core actors
- Relevant actors
- Periphery actors

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The value of capital

**Key**
- **Core actors**
- **Relevant actors**
- **Periphery actors**

## Cultural Capital (+)
- Nansen
- IOM
- UNU-EHS

## Cultural Capital (-)
- UNHCR
- UNDP
- ILO
- IDMC

## Economic Capital (+)
- UNU-EHS
- IOM

## Economic Capital (-)
- UNHCR
- UNDP
- ILO
- IDMC

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Economic Capital (+)

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Key:
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UNHCR
IOM
UNU-EHS
Nansen

UNDP
UNESCAP
PCC
ILO
IDMC
ICIMOD
UKCCMC
The value of capital

- Economic Capital (+)
- Economic Capital (-)
- Cultural Capital (+)
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Key:
- Core actors
- Relevant actors
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Institutions:
- IOM
- UNU-EHS
- Nansen
- UNHCR
- UNDP
- UNESCAP
- ILO
- IDMC
- ICIMOD
- IIED
- UKCCMC
- IDMC
- UNHCR
- UNDP
- UNESCAP
- ILO
Practice of publication making

- **Produce and reproduce organizational realities**

  (1) “The positive spin on migration as adaptation strategy...came to be through IOM's early work where the recommendation was always to move away through away from the security conceptualization and trying to look at migration as a positive”

  (2) “Since 1992, IOM has dedicated a number of publications to exploring and improving understanding of the links between migration, the environment and climate change”
Practice of publication making

- Legitimize expertise and experience
  
  (1) Compendium on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (2009), e.g. TCLM
  
  (2) “IOM started working in the field on quite a few projects that included an adaptation component and it wasn't necessarily conceptualized or framed in a migration and adaptation strategy way, but when you look closer to these projects you see that there is a strong adaptation component”
Practice of publication making

- *Internalize and flatten organizational aims*

  1. “circular migration schemes...seeking to offer people who live in a degrading environment or places the possibility maybe to migrate for a short period of time, but legally and through proper channels, to decrease pressure on the environment”

  2. “if you’re facilitating migration as an adaptation strategy and it could involve, as I said, into temporary circularly labour migration schemes”
Practices of/at “nodal points”

- “Smuggle in paragraphs” & make case for action
  (1) “Obviously beyond the COP, to be able, after that, to implement activities, to promote migration as an adaptation strategy. It would be a lot easier to do that if such references are made in the agreement”
  (2) “I think the next step for us, and something we are working on now is actually trying to...explode these references to mobility within the framework into more actionable, operational, and policy indications”
Practices of/at “nodal points”

- Create alliances & build complementary support
  
  (1) “[migration with dignity] is a good example of if a state really facilitates migration as a voluntary measure of coping with climate change, then it is the best achievement that you can look for”

  (2) “talking about migration as adaptation is a way of us as an organisation to signal to other institutions that we think about the issue in a certain way...it’s almost just like our way of saying to IOM or other organisations that think about climate change and migration in that way, hey, look we got this fairly nuanced understanding”
Implications for policy

- Practices can:
  1. Reinforce organizational know-how and beliefs
  2. Create spaces of dominant knowledge and learning exchange
  3. Limit baseline imaginaries of policymaking

- A call for introspection:
  1. Practices are geared toward playing rules of the game and positioning rather than truth or evidence
Thanks for listening!

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