Book Reviews

***Climate Change and Migration: Security and Borders in a Warming World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 192 pages. ISBN 9780199794836, $27.95 paperback. Gregory White. 2011.**

Amid the growing literature on climate change and migration, Gregory White's slim volume stands out as essential reading for students, scholars, and policy makers alike. Accessibly written, empirically rich, and theoretically informed, the book seeks nothing less than to change how we talk about, and respond to, climate-induced migration. White shows how the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Union have come to view climate-induced migration primarily as an external security threat. White argues this "securitization" of climate-induced migration produces inaccurate understandings of the scale and scope of the problem and provides politically appealing justifications for short-sighted, counterproductive state responses.

Using climate data and migration studies in Africa, White conclusively debunks the myth of hordes of climate refugees threatening the borders of Europe and the United States. White shows that for Africa, migration has long been primarily confined to local and subregional patterns of movement. Nevertheless, invoking the threat of climate-induced migration, North Atlantic states and regional organizations have sought over the past decade to further fortify their physical borders and extend the actual reach of their border controls by strengthening the coercive capacities of nearby "transit states," such as Mexico, Morocco, and Turkey, to interdict and control migrants.

The result, as White documents, is ever-deeper criminalization of migration flows, deepened transnational cooperation between unaccountable security forces in transit states, and the "thickening" of political borders, many of which are only recent historical creations and remain highly contested. These state policies, however, have little to do with addressing the causes or actual patterns of climate-induced migration. As White argues, politicians see building border fences and enhancing the security capacities of transit states as cheap, politically palatable measures, as these tap into widespread public anxieties in the United States and Europe about illegal migration, jobs, and terrorism. Yet such measures impose long-term human and economic costs, all the while obscuring the need for publics in wealthier countries to mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases at home and support adaptation in vulnerable regions and communities abroad.

The depth and originality of White's analysis reflects his deep knowledge of North African politics, particularly Morocco and Tunisia; his expertise in international relations; and what he calls his "retraining" in more recent years in environmental studies and climate science. This book is thus a rare treat—a truly interdisciplinary treatment of the political economy of migration that incorporates empirical studies of climatic change and migration, particularly for Africa, alongside

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a deep understanding of the political and economic dynamics in North African transit states.

White successfully fuses these diverse scholarly fields to produce an analysis that breaks conventional geographic and political boundaries to reshape our understanding of the dynamics between climate and migration. White reminds us that migration in Africa is a series of interconnected "circular migration" systems that include trans-Saharan, trans-Sahelian, East African, and southern African systems. Most African migration, including movement in response to climatic changes such as drought, thus takes place over short distances within subregions. In contrast, the Maghreb, or North Africa, exhibits long-standing patterns of migration to and from Europe. These dense linkages stem from the long years of colonialism; the creation of guest worker programs by several European states facing aging populations and labor shortages beginning in the 1960s; and the increased and often informal flows of people, capital, and goods associated with more recent trends in globalization. White reminds us that systematic European attempts to criminalize such flows and interdict informal migrants are of relatively recent origin, emerging primarily over the past two to three decades.

White demonstrates how the trans-Atlantic security community of the United States and Europe, well institutionalized through NATO and other joint endeavors, has led the way in viewing climate-induced migration as a security threat. Through a number of on-the-ground initiatives that seek to increase multilateral and regional cooperation around border controls, interdiction of migrants, and intelligence sharing, climate-induced migration is increasingly subsumed into the security sector. In both the United States and Europe, White notes, the fear of terrorism and rising anti-immigrant sentiment dovetailed well the framing of climate migration as another outside threat.

The securitization of climate-induced migration during the 2000s was aided and abetted by the governments of transit states themselves. As they did with Western fears of communism and of political Islam, regimes in North Africa and the Middle East selectively embraced the notion that climate-induced migration is a threat to Europe. White points out a fundamental irony at work: while North African countries like Morocco in effect promote emigration of their citizens to reduce employment pressures and secure foreign exchange, these regimes also embrace the notion of climate-induced migration from sub-Saharan Africa to attract foreign aid and enhance cooperation with European countries on other issues, such as the status of Moroccan emigrants in Europe. In doing so, the Moroccan monarchy burnishes its external image as a cooperative and legitimate partner with Europe, even as the regime faces domestic dissent and lack of confidence at home. Morocco is not alone, of course: Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, among other Middle Eastern states, have long positioned themselves as bulwarks against external threats facing the United States and Europe, winning themselves foreign assistance and a role in regional security arrangements as a result.

White situates the construction of climate-induced migration as a security threat in the 2000s with broader trends since the 1980s to "securitize" approaches to environmental problems and immigration alike. His trenchant critique highlights several adverse consequences for devising effective policy responses. Framing environmental issues and immigration as a security threat gives a greater role to security

apparatuses, interior ministries, and the defense sector in the formulation and conduct of policy responses. These responses are in turn focused on defending borders, extending security cooperation to transit states, and other measures that do little to address drivers of climate change or migration or promote long-term solutions such as reducing fossil fuel consumption. Worse, these institutional actors themselves typically lack public accountability and evade regulatory scrutiny on issues such as toxic waste, land use, and pollution, and cannot serve a leadership role in educating publics about the need for mitigation.

White refreshingly highlights the profound ethical problems that arise from viewing climate-induced migration through a security lens. He is acutely aware of the human costs of climate change, the increasing difficulties that migrants face as they encounter increasingly fortified and reified political borders and the social injustices unleashed by unmitigated global warming. As White argues, "'Getting tough'—responding in a militarized fashion—is an easy, cynical step in a warming world. . . . Building a fence is easier than changing lifestyles. Yet the injection of security imperatives into climate-induced migration is unethical and unworkable" (p. 7).

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***Comparative Environmental Politics: Theory, Practice, and Prospects*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 424 pages. ISBN 9780262693684, $28.00 paperback. Paul F. Steinberg and Stacy D. VanDeveer (Eds.). 2012.**

Comparative Environmental Politics edited by Paul F. Steinberg and Stacy D. VanDeveer aims to fill a niche within the international relations-heavy field by focusing on domestic politics and institutions, instead of global ones, and comparing problems and responses cross-nationally. The editors have compiled chapters by leading experts on topics ranging from nonstate actors, to different regime types, to different levels and institutions of governance. The editors have posed two very basic, but rich, questions: How do seemingly disparate groups and places end up with the same approaches to environmental issues? And how do similar countries or communities end up with radically different approaches to the same environmental problem?

The book is most suitable for classroom use, but chapters provide good summary and reference on topics even for more seasoned scholars with backgrounds in comparative politics but not environmental politics, or vice versa. Though the editors also claim that the book could be useful for policy makers, the layout of the chapters and density of information within them likely inhibits their use for that particular audience. The book is designed to help students learn how to make "meaningful comparisons across disparate societies" (p. 6). The book is divided into four substantive sections, bookended by an introductory section that