Climate Coloniality, Border Securitization and Climate Justice:

A Critique of Canada's Approach to Global Climate Displacement

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Abstract

This study traces Canada's contribution to the climate crisis, the impact of the climate crisis on communities and livelihoods globally in the form of displacement, and Canada's current response to climate displacement. A qualitative critical policy discourse analysis of government publications is conducted to inquire if Canada is pursuing a securitized approach to climate displacement. The results of the study are used to argue that Canada may risk upholding climate coloniality in the future through border securitization. Using these findings, the paper urges Canada to embody climate justice rather than pursuing a securitized approach to climate displacement by asserting that Canada has a responsibility to repay its climate debt to countries in the Majority World. The study concludes with recommendations on how Canada can uphold climate justice within the context of global climate displacement.

Key words: climate change, displacement, migration, mobility, refugees, securitization, climate coloniality, climate justice, Canada

Introduction

Climate change is the most pressing threat facing humanity today. From altering weather patterns in the form of more frequent and intense droughts, hurricanes, floods, storms and wildfires, to negative impacts on physical and mental health, to diminishing access to critical natural resources such as water and food supply, to the destruction of infrastructure, livelihoods and communities, the magnitude of the current and forthcoming effects of climate change should not be underestimated. In March 2023, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provided a final warning that urgent climate action is needed to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all. During what is more appropriately referred to as the "climate crisis," historically and systemically marginalized communities globally are more likely to suffer from the consequences of our economic and political systems (Islam & Winkel, 2017). From a global standpoint, the countries that contributed the least to the climate crisis are paying the highest price through destroyed communities, economies, and livelihoods (Althor et al., 2016). In fact, 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change, particularly in Small Island Developing States, South Asia, Latin America, and Africa (IPCC, 2022).

Human mobility is a major outcome and response to the climate crisis. Between 2008 and 2018, climate-related disasters triggered around 265 million internal displacements, more than three times the figure for displacements caused by conflict and violence (IDMC, 2019). In 2021, a record 32.6 million internal displacements were associated with disasters, making it not only the highest figure in a decade but also marking a 41% higher rate of internal displacements than the annual average of the past ten years (IDMC, 2023). Amidst this reality, there seems to be an emerging paradox of countries in the Minority World—an alternative term to "Global North," as conceptualized by Alam (2008)—advancing border securitization efforts as a means of "protection" from individuals moving due to the impacts of climate change in the Majority

World (an alternative term to "Global South"), despite being largely responsible for the climate crisis and the resulting impacts in the first place. This phenomenon follows the expansion of anti-migrant and anti-refugee sentiment, policies and practices in the past three decades, especially across Europe, North America and Australia. In what is known as the "securitization of migration" (Ibrahim, 2005), states are increasingly using a multitude of tools and policies at their disposal to prevent and deter people from accessing their territory, such as detention, visa requirements, third-country agreements, offshore processing, and surveillance technologies. As a result, more than 50,000 people have lost their lives since 2014 while undertaking perilous journeys to access protection, although this number is a significant underestimate of the real death toll caused by brutal border policies enacted by the Minority World (IOM, 2022).

To explore the interconnectedness of climate displacement, border securitization and climate justice in the Canadian context, I will first provide a brief explanation of the methodology and conceptual framework guiding my study. Following that, I will detail the Canadian context, both in terms of Canada's contribution to the climate crisis as well as the securitization of migration in the country to contextualize the discussion on Canada's role in global climate displacement. The paper then presents the results from my study and interprets these findings in the context of border securitization and climate justice. These findings are used to argue that Canada may pursue a securitized approach to climate displacement in the future. Ultimately, I conclude the paper with broad recommendations on how Canada pursue a justice-based approach to global climate displacement as I argue that Canada has an obligation to support individuals and countries who are disproportionately and unjustly impacted by the climate crisis. Rather than undertaking a securitized approach to climate displacement and

upholding climate coloniality, I urge Canada to play a leading role in facilitating climate mobility and repaying its climate debt to countries in the Majority World.

Methodology: Critical Policy Discourse Analysis

The following research question guides this paper: *Is Canada moving toward a securitized response to climate displacement?* To answer this question, I conducted a critical policy discourse analysis of Government of Canada publications on climate displacement. For context, Mulderrig et al. (2019) conceptualize the methodology of critical policy discourse analysis as "an analytical framework capable of capturing, and conceptualising in relation to their socially structuring potential, the fine details of text which are often overlooked in policy analysis, but which have effects on how policy is understood, developed, and implemented" (p. 1). In addition to integrating this understanding of critical policy discourse analysis, for my research, I conducted a thematic analysis by following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. Since Canada does not have a policy related to climate displacement, for the purpose of my study, the data used consists of five reports the Government of Canada has commissioned or published that covers the intersection of climate change and displacement.

Conceptual Framework: Climate Coloniality

In this paper, I use Sultana's (2022) framework of "climate coloniality" to explain Canada's responsibility toward contributing to climate change and its role in climate displacement. Quijano (2000) argued that the concept of "coloniality of power" explains the current state of the global economic system, as racial domination and hierarchical power relationships that were established during the period of active colonialism continue into the present day, with colonial hierarchies extending into modern global political and economic relations. Sultana (2022) builds on this conceptualization to argue that "climate coloniality occurs where Eurocentric hegemony, neocolonialism, racial capitalism, uneven consumption,

and military domination are co-constitutive of climate impacts experienced by variously racialized populations who are disproportionately made vulnerable and disposable" (p. 4). Sultana refers to how colonization and imperial control are sustained in the present day through various interconnected systems of power and control, such as unequal global trade, the continued extraction of natural resources from countries in the Majority World, and military invasions, all of which have a negative impact on the climate. The exploitation of power and resources, both historically and in the present, has not only contributed to climate change but has further marginalized communities by exposing them to climate-related disasters and displacement.

For my study, I conceptualize how the securitization of migration is one form of climate coloniality. Scholars such as Gonzalez (2021) have previously explored the relationship between climate coloniality and securitization: "The North increased the South's exposure to environmental hazards through its profligate emission of greenhouse gases…Instead of questioning the economic system that subordinates and dehumanizes large segments of the world's population, the national security response serves as a vehicle for further dehumanization" (p. 124). This national security response is prevalent today as countries in the Minority World are building migration regimes based on security, deterrence and enforcement, and these policies and practices are producing and amplifying the vulnerability and precarity of individuals who are moving because of climate change (Bates-Eamer, 2019). This relationship between climate coloniality and securitization is central to this study because it demonstrates how the Minority World created the climate crisis and how it may be upholding climate coloniality through border securitization policies and practices.

Canadian Context: Climate Crisis and Border Securitization

Before presenting the results of my study, it is worth briefly covering the relevant Canadian context on two fronts. First, it is important to highlight Canada's contributions to the

climate crisis to frame the discussion on Canada's obligation to protect those displaced by the effects of climate change. Second, it is worth providing a glimpse of Canada's efforts to securitize migration, which will contextualize if Canada is pursuing a similar securitized approach related to climate displacement. On the former, Canada has led the world in cumulative emissions between 1850 and 2021 when weighted by population, and Canada is also the second-highest country in cumulative per-capita emissions in the same period (Evans, 2021). Moreover, in 2019, Canada was the 10th highest emitter of greenhouse gases, contributing to 1.5% of total greenhouse gas emissions that year (Government of Canada, 2023). Despite these historical contributions to the climate crisis, Canada continues to be responsible for high levels of emissions, as recent growth in Canada's emissions is the highest of any G7 country (Hughes, 2021). In fact, Canada had the worst growth rate of emissions (3.3 percent) of all G7 nations since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2016 and is one of the two countries that have increased emissions since 2016, along with the United States (Hughes, 2021).

On the other hand, between 2013 and 2018, on average, Canada spent fifteen times more on border and immigration enforcement than on climate financing annually—approximately US $1.5 billion compared to US $100 million—measured by the Canada Border Services Agency budget during this period (Miller et al., 2021). These figures highlight how Canada, while portraying itself as a humanitarian country on the global stage, is not an exception to the securitized approach to migration. This was particularly evident following the arrival of 58,000 refugee claimants at unofficial ports of entry from the United States between 2017 and 2020 (Boyd & Ly, 2021). To address the increased number of refugee claimants who have "challenged the fairness and effectiveness of Canada's asylum system," the 2019 federal budget proposed the investment of $1.18 billion over five years in support of a new "Border Enforcement Strategy,"

which would "detect and intercept individuals who cross Canadian borders irregularly and who try to exploit Canada's immigration system" (Department of Finance Canada, 2019, p. 184).

Such securitizing discourse, budget allocations, policies and practices have tangible impacts on individuals seeking protection in Canada. For instance, following the increased irregular crossings in 2017 from the United States, the Budget Implementation Act (Bill C-97) amended the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to bar refugee claimants from seeking protection in Canada if they had previously applied for asylum in a country which has an information-sharing agreement with Canada (i.e., Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States), thereby exacerbating the risk of exploitation, detention and deportation, and limiting access to a fair refugee determination process (Atak et al., 2022). Canada has also used detention to normalize the perception of migration as a security threat; developed information sharing agreements with other states to detect and deter the arrival of refugee claimants; and trained and signed cooperation agreements with Southeast Asian states to detect and intercept irregular arrivals to Canada (Bourbeau, 2019; Atak & Crépeau, 2013; Atak et al., 2022). This securitized context is critical in understanding Canada's approach to climate displacement, which is analyzed next through the results of my study under three key themes.

Theme 1: Perceived Security Implications of Climate Displacement

One of the key themes emerging through my analysis was Canada's perception of the security implications of climate displacement. This perception was presented in various forms, such as by invoking fears of mass migration, coupling migration with conflict, and broadly emphasizing that climate displacement has implications for Canadian security. For instance, the introduction of *Climate Change and Forced Migration: Canada's Role* states, "Now, with the effects of climate change becoming increasingly apparent in some parts of the world, the fear of mass migration may escalate within the international community" (Library of Parliament, 2013,

p. 1). Through this statement in the introduction of the publication itself, there is automatically a framing of this issue as a potential for "mass migration" even though most climate-related movement is likely to occur internally or across neighbouring countries.

On the security framing, my inquiry showed numerous examples of Canada linking conflict with climate displacement across the publications. One example is found in the *From Impacts to Adaptation – Canada in a Changing Climate* publication, as the text contends that "resource conflicts, especially over water, will be exacerbated in some regions of the world, and sea-level rise and increasing natural disasters will force people to relocate both within countries and internationally, with implications for Canadian policies and activities related to aid, peace-keeping and immigration" (Government of Canada, 2008, p. 419). In this example, there is an underlying message that climate-related events may be destabilizing, which may consequently implicate Canadian aid, peacekeeping and immigration authorities. The same publication also asserts that climate change can cause higher temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, desertification, rise in sea levels and more intense weather events, which can threaten food production, reduce freshwater supplies, lead to loss of land and infrastructure, and increase the incidence of diseases. Using these examples, the text states that "such changes can induce migration, which may occur peacefully or may generate conflict" (Government of Canada, 2008, p. 401). By framing how migration may "generate conflict," the text warns that climate-related movement can cause disruption and create security risks.

Since it may be argued that these examples are only subtly portraying climate-related displacement as a security issue, other excerpts demonstrate a more direct connection between climate displacement and security. One example is found in *Canada's Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.* For context,

the Sendai Framework is an international agreement which is designed to reduce the risk of disasters and their negative economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental impacts. Canada's Midterm Review states that "displacement and migration caused by disasters and climate-related shocks are complex and cross-cutting issues, with significant implications for security, gender equality, human rights, and border management" (Public Safety Canada, 2022, p. 22). While Canada acknowledges the complexity of climate-related disasters and movement, in this instance, Public Safety Canada explicitly asserts that such movement can be a threat to Canada's security and border management, therefore securitizing climate-related displacement.

In *Climate Change – Its Impact and Policy Implications,* the text contends, "The factors that determine the safety and security of Canadians are interconnected, and weaknesses in policy areas…are intensified under climate stress, and can create direct and indirect challenges for the defence and security of Canada" (Library of Parliament, 2020, p. 22). An example of the "weaknesses in policy areas" is the absence of immigration pathways for those affected by climate change, as explained throughout the publication. However, through this statement, it appears Canada is arguing that with an absence of mobility pathways for those impacted by climate change, there is a direct or indirect defence or security risk for the country, therefore securitizing the issue of climate displacement. The publication also declares that "climate change makes an impact on security by contributing to the loss of livelihoods, reinforcing environmental pressures and disaster risks, causing displacement, and exacerbating the threat of societal and political unrest" (Library of Parliament, 2020, p. 21). Through this statement, there is once again an underlying assumption that climate-related displacement can become a security issue. Overall, the discourse analysis demonstrated how Canada perceives the supposed security risks of climate displacement by framing the potential for "mass migration," predicting that migration

related to climate change may cause conflict, and more broadly linking climate change and displacement with Canada's security interests. Such framings may predict how Canada may securitize climate displacement through policies and practices in the coming years.

Theme 2: Impact of Climate Displacement on Canadian Policies and Systems

The second theme that emerged through my inquiry demonstrated Canada's perception of the impact of climate displacement on Canada's immigration policies and systems. This theme also demonstrated how a "climate refugee" is currently not aligned with current Canadian laws or international legal frameworks. A few excerpts in my analysis revealed how Canada perceives pressure on its immigration system due to climate displacement. For example, the publication on Canada's role in the relationship between climate change and forced migration asserts, "Best estimates suggest that hundreds of millions of people could be on the move in the coming decades due to the impacts of climate change. Canada has an opportunity now to plan an orderly and effective response to the coming crisis" (Library of Parliament, 2013, p. 4). The same publication also asserts that "climate change will be the source of additional pressure on Canada's humanitarian immigration program to expand, perhaps substantially, in the coming decades" (Library of Parliament, 2013, p. 4). The *National Issues* report echoes this sentiment by asserting that "Canada will come under growing internal and external pressure to accept larger numbers of migrants from climate-disrupted regions" (Government of Canada, 2021, p. 685).

Furthermore, one publication asserts, "Considering the sheer number of climate migrants expected in the coming years, even a small fraction seeking to resettle in Canada could constitute a large number relative to Canada's current intake of new residents" (Library of Parliament, 2013). The language used in these texts may signal a securitized approach to climate displacement by Canada in the future. Specifically, using terms such as "crisis" and "pressure," as well as using a general framing of large numbers of people moving to Canada warrants further

scrutiny. While it is possible that a sizable number of people may seek to build a new livelihood in Canada due to climate risks in their home countries, the tone used in these publications suggests that there will be unorderly migration to Canada. Such a tone risks creating a securitized response to climate-induced movement instead of developing effective policy mechanisms to accept large numbers of people, which would be an adequate response from a climate justice perspective, as explained later. Furthermore, the tone and language used in these documents contradict the reality that most climate-related movement is likely to occur internally or regionally, due to both the lack of human capital of individuals seeking to move as well as their desire to stay within their own countries for a multitude of reasons, including social networks and connections to land and culture.

The *National Issues* publication also contends that climate-related movement to Canada can originate from current immigrant source countries that are highly exposed to climate risks (e.g., Philippines, China, India, Pakistan and Syria) and have family and social connections in Canada that can facilitate travel and settlement, but also countries that have historically few ties to Canada. To this point, the authors state, "Canada should expect increasing pressure in coming decades from the international community to accept the relocation of people displaced by climate change in countries that are not historically significant migration sources for Canada" (Government of Canada, 2021, p. 694). One example the authors provide is third-country nationals from Latin America and the Caribbean who may enter Canada from the United States to seek admission as refugees or under humanitarian and compassionate grounds (Government of Canada, 2021). While there is not an explicit reference to a securitized approach to climate displacement, these texts indicate how Canada predicts there to be large-scale migration to Canada, especially from non-traditional source countries of immigrants and refugees to Canada.

Another finding which fits into this theme is Canada's argument that people displaced by climate change do not currently fit into the country's legal framework as it relates to refugees. As the authors of the *National Issues* report explicitly write, "Canadian immigration and refugee programs currently do not take climate change into account when determining eligibility, and the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees does not apply to people moving for climate-related reasons" (Government of Canada, 2021, p. 694). In its 2020 publication, the authors also declare that "expanding the refugee definition under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) and its 1967 Optional Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (Optional Protocol) is not a recommended solution, as it could lead to the 'watering down of the existing protections'" (Library of Parliament, 2020, p. 12). While Canadian and international law do not currently provide legal protection to individuals displaced by climate change, there seems to be a reluctance and fear by Canadian authorities to consider expanding legal options to provide such protection.

Theme 3: Financial Support as a Migration Deterrence Mechanism

The previous themes explored the explicit references to climate change and displacement as a threat to Canadian security and implications for Canadian immigration policies and systems. A third key theme emerging through my study was Canada's focus on providing support to countries to prevent migration, primarily by focusing on adaptation and resilience efforts in countries in the Majority World. For example, in the international dimensions chapter of the *National Issues* report, the authors write that "international assistance to address the underlying causes of involuntary climate-related migration in the near term will help LDCs become more resilient in the long run and enhance their chances of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals" (Government of Canada, 2022, p. 694). Similarly, in Canada's midterm review on disaster risk reduction, it is stated that "Canada recognizes the need to increase coordination

between development, humanitarian and peace programming efforts to effectively reduce people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities while supporting prevention, anticipation and early recovery" (Public Safety Canada, 2022, p. 22). Although these examples may display Canada's humanitarianism, such statements also demonstrate how Canada is also invested in preventing migration to Canada by providing financial resources to countries in the Majority World.

Excerpts that fit into this theme primarily focus on supporting adaptation and resilience efforts of countries in the Majority World. In its midterm review on disaster risk reduction, Canada declares, "With the help of donors and investors including Canada's $340 million CAD contribution (2019-2021), the International Fund for Agricultural Development has been able to support smallholder farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change and become more resilient to economic and climate shocks" (Public Safety Canada, 2022, p. 25). This example demonstrates how Canada implies that those whose livelihoods are affected by the effects of climate change can be supported through climate adaptation funding and therefore become "more resilient to economic and climate shocks," rather than fundamentally challenging existing economic and political systems that are harming our planet, or even introducing mobility pathways for individuals affected by the climate crisis. While most individuals would prefer to stay within their own communities, the emphasis on adaptation and resilience without introducing mobility pathways for those who need or desire to move may signal a securitized approach to climate displacement.

Relevantly, it is suggested that "Canada and other countries could consider providing development assistance – to strengthen coastal defences or to resettle climate migrants in new areas within their own countries, for example – as an effective way to help some larger groups of climate migrants" (Library of Parliament, 2013, p. 4). In this example, Canada seems to argue

that providing international assistance would enable these communities to adapt to current conditions rather than introducing new pathways to facilitate the mobility of impacted individuals to come to Canada or even reducing emissions that are causing displacement in the first place. While this is not entirely surprising, the strong focus on providing international assistance in the absence of introducing new mobility pathways may be an indication of Canada's desire to keep those affected by the effects of climate change in the Majority World, without providing any protection for those who may wish to search for a new future in Canada. My analysis also revealed Canada's priority of investing financial resources to support climate adaptation, resilience and disaster risk reduction efforts around the world, such as through the African Risk Capacity Agency, the Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund, the National Adaptation Plan Global Network, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, and the Global Environmental Facility (Public Safety Canada, 2022).

Overall, this theme has demonstrated how Canada may be pursuing a subtle securitized approach to climate displacement. In contrast to explicit references to climate change and displacement being security risks, as covered in the previous two themes, the analysis demonstrates how Canada may be using various financial mechanisms, such as international assistance, to deter climate-induced movement. The point here is not to criticize Canada's financial contributions to adaptation and resilience efforts, as it is undeniable that Canada should be providing such support to countries who are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. However, this approach must be viewed through a critical lens as Canada may be using foreign aid and climate financing to limit climate-related movement, without introducing mobility pathways for those affected by climate change. This may indicate that Canada is prioritizing

keeping people far away from its borders rather than introducing mobility pathways for individuals affected climate change.

Securitization of Climate Displacement

Using the findings presented above, the remaining sections of this paper will first analyze the securitization of climate displacement before exploring how climate justice can be utilized as an alternative framework in relation to climate displacement by Canadian policymakers. Since the 1980s, as climate change was increasingly discussed and acknowledged in political, academic, and media spheres, environmental issues were also gradually integrated into national security and military concerns. As White (2011) explains, the initial preoccupation was primarily around the scarcity of natural resources and how issues related to fisheries, ozone depletion, and loss of agricultural land and forests were prompting conflict amongst different groups. This focus evolved in the mid-2000s as security officials were more explicitly examining connections between climate change and security, such as through the emphasis on climate change being a "threat multiplier." The problem with the securitized focus on climate change is that it risks ignoring the complex relationships between climate change, poverty, development, resource usage and conflict. As a result, this approach may narrowly conceptualize security by exclusively focusing on state and national security while ignoring the security of societal actors, which could be achieved through the emphasis on human security (White, 2011).

In parallel with the preoccupations of environmental security, the 1980s was also a period during which immigration was increasingly linked to security. For instance, as European countries worked towards establishing the free internal movement of citizens within the continent, third-country nationals—or non-Europeans—were increasingly perceived as security concerns (White, 2011). More broadly, while globalization has opened borders for trade, finance, communication, capital and culture, borders have simultaneously become tightly regulated and

closed to certain individuals. Consequently, migration governance has become increasingly fixated on security and enforcement rather than the protection of rights and the facilitation of movement as states establish increasingly selective migration categories, advance maritime border patrols and carrier sanctions to prevent people from reaching their borders, and fund migration and border controlling activities in regional states to deter onward movement to asylum states (Bates-Eamer, 2019). As a result, border and migration controls are exacerbating the precarity and vulnerability of people on the move as individuals are forced to take more clandestine routes and perilous journeys to avoid detection by state authorities and bypass border controls (Bates-Eamer, 2019).

Although environmental security concerns and immigration security concerns were advancing on parallel tracks, eventually, these two preoccupations converged. As White (2011) explains, in addition to immigration-related fears circulating around Islam, economic collapse and political instability, climate-induced movement was "stirred into broader security imperatives designed to thwart irregular migration and cast as a new, deeper threat" (p. 75). Numerous publications by governments and their counterparts illustrated this convergence by using alarmist language. For example, a report commissioned by the United States in 2003 asserts that "borders will be strengthened around the world to hold back unwanted starving immigrants from the Caribbean islands (an especially severe problem), Mexico, and South America" (Schwartz & Randall, 2003, p. 18). Former high-level United States officials (Campbell et al., 2007) argued that the possible movement of hundreds of millions of people due to climate change "could easily trigger major security concerns" (p. 8). In a 2007 publication, the German Advisory Council on Global Change warned that "Europe and North America must also expect substantially increased migratory pressure from regions most risk from climate change"

(p. 3). A paper by European Commission (2008) cautioned that "Europe must expect substantially increased migratory pressure" (p. 4) and that climate change can create "political and security risks that directly affect European interests" (p. 2). In 2014, the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence asserted climate change will "likely change patterns of migration, making border security an ongoing concern, especially in the developed world" (p. 15).

In short, as the environment has become securitized over the years, climate-induced movement merged with anti-immigration policies and climate change security, especially as building fences against irregular migration is viewed positively amongst certain electorates (White, 2011). Through this process, states prohibit the entry of those moving or displaced by climate change, primarily racialized individuals from countries in the Majority World who are unable to adapt or be "resilient" in their home countries (Bates-Eamer, 2019). These examples contextualize the findings of my study on Canada's views on climate displacement. The first theme emerging from my analysis demonstrated how Canada expresses fears of "mass migration" due to climate change or how movement related to the effects of climate change "may generate conflict" and therefore create a security risk for Canada. More explicitly, the publications indicated how Canada perceives the implications of climate displacement on border management and the safety and security of Canadians. The second theme of my analysis demonstrated how climate displacement may become a "crisis" in the future and subsequently create significant "pressure" on Canada's immigration and refugee systems, as there are predictions of how large numbers of people will move to Canada because of climate change.

Through such framings, there risks the possibility of upholding climate coloniality by creating tightly controlled border policies and practices to manage the "crisis" of climate displacement. As Warner and Boas (2019) explain, "Labelling situations as crises and

emergencies, using the rhetoric of calamity, lifts them out of the ordinary and signals the need for quick action, bypassing customary political avenues" (p. 1474). The tone used in these publications analyzed could indicate that Canada may in fact pursue a securitized approach to "manage" climate displacement in the future. However, such an approach in this context may emphasize military preparedness and could risk advancing vigorous border control measures, including in transit states to prevent climate-related movement altogether (White, 2011). As climate-related movement will primarily emerge from countries in the Majority World—due to the disproportionate impacts of climate change on economies, livelihoods and communities— individuals attempting to cross borders into the Minority World, such as Canada, may be subjected to these strict border controls (Bates-Eamer, 2019).

Beyond the explicit focus on the security threats of climate displacement, it is worth scrutinizing Canada's excessive emphasis on foreign aid, adaptation and resilience, which emerged as the third theme of my analysis. Throughout my analysis, there were many instances of Canada insisting on providing financial support to countries for international assistance, adaptation and resilience efforts to address the "root causes" of displacement and prevent movement. My analysis revealed that Canada has committed significant financial resources for disaster risk reduction, adaptation and resilience efforts and believes that continuing to provide international assistance will prevent the need for movement altogether. While Canada should provide adaptation and resilience funding to countries in the Majority World, the purpose here is to examine the subtle objectives of these commitments.

In fact, this approach of providing humanitarian, development, adaptation and resilience funding is popularized in various policy spheres as a method to prevent migration. For instance, the Global Forum on Migration and Development—a state-led, informal and non-binding

process which aims to shape global debates on migration and development—contends that "development solutions are supposed to reduce the root causes of unsafe and irregular migration and forced displacement, e.g., through resilience-building and the creation of livelihood opportunities (2018, p. 10). Although appearing benevolent, this approach of leveraging resilience, development and foreign aid is commonly incorporated into states' securitization process to keep people in place and deter migration altogether. For example, Mayer (2017) outlines how the fear of mass arrivals of climate refugees into the Minority World contributed to obtaining widespread support for the initiation of negotiations in the UNFCCC Workstream on Loss and Damage, as addressing loss and damage was connected to the interest of states to avoid large movement of migrants. However, research has repeatedly demonstrated that the effectiveness of donors' focus on addressing the "root causes" of migration through foreign aid, for example, is not backed by evidence (Clemens & Postel, 2018).

Nevertheless, as Santos and Mourato (2022) explain, "This misconception has persisted because colonization perspectives portray development strategies as a solution to hinder population movement. And it also alleviates migration responsibilities for migrant receiving countries" (p. 20). As such, while Canada should support adaptation and resilience efforts, using this approach to deter migration is not only unlikely to succeed but also downplays Canada's responsibility for introducing mobility pathways for a crisis that it had a significant role in creating. In short, the securitization of environmental issues and climate change more broadly has converged with the securitization of migration to establish a securitized view of climate displacement. Like other state actors, Canada is not an exception to this trend. My analysis revealed how Canada perceives the security implications of climate displacement, expresses concern on the pressure of this movement on its immigration and refugee systems in future, and

more subtly, advances the importance of adaptation, resilience and foreign aid to deter climate-induced movement.

Climate Justice as an Alternative to Securitization

While the previous section demonstrated how Canada may pursue a securitized approach to climate displacement and uphold climate coloniality, this section discusses the importance of pursuing a justice-based approach to climate displacement. Climate justice draws upon the environmental justice movement, which emerged in the 1980s in the United States as a response to the disproportionate impact of polluting industries on low-income and racialized communities (Gonzalez, 2019). At the global level, the climate justice movement was spearheaded by Indigenous, environmental justice, religious, policy and advocacy groups to critique the growth-based capitalist model of economic development which has created the climate crisis, as well as to demand the transfer of financial and non-financial resources, such as technology, from the historical responsibility-holders for climate change to the most impacted by its consequences (Gonzalez, 2019).

In this regard, scholars, activists and state representatives argue that the Minority World has incurred climate debt to countries in the Majority World through its historic and current contributions to climate change. In fact, the Minority World (e.g., the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan) is collectively responsible for 92% of excess carbon dioxide emissions between 1850 and 2015 (Hickel, 2020). At the same time, the countries that are not responsible for this crisis are paying the highest price, not only because of climate change, but also due to the historical and contemporary legacies of injustice in the form of colonial, neocolonial and neoliberal policies, such as economic underdevelopment, neoliberal structural adjustment programs, and disadvantageous trade agreements (Saad, 2017).

As Ahmed (2017) explains, countries that are more prone to climate-related disasters,

such as Bangladesh and Haiti, are not automatically vulnerable to these events. Rather, they are made socio-economically vulnerable and are not able to adequately prepare, respond and recover from these climate-related disasters due to historical and ongoing structural imbalances and systemic injustices, such as disproportionate carbon emissions by industrialized and powerful countries, colonial histories, imperial invasions, unwanted and imposed wars, geopolitics, and economic repression. These injustices are directly linked to the climate crisis we are facing today. For instance, Parkinson and Cottrell (2022) conservatively estimate that the total military carbon footprint is approximately 5.5% of global emissions, meaning that if the global military were a country, it would have the fourth largest national carbon footprint in the world. In this case, not only does military spending harm communities through imperial wars, but it is also contributing to the destruction and the negative impacts on the health of our planet.

As climate justice is concerned about the obligations of certain actors to take responsibility for their contributions to this crisis, the issue of climate displacement is exceptionally relevant. Scholars have highlighted the relationship between climate justice and movement, such as by asserting that "migration pressures should be seen as impositions that high polluters are responsible for having placed on others and for which they owe redress" (Saad, 2017, p. 99). This understanding is intertwined with Souter's (2013) conceptualization of "asylum as reparation," which refers to the "obligation on the part of states to provide asylum to refugees for whose lack of state protection they are responsible, whether through their military interventions, support for oppressive regimes or imposition of damaging economic policies" (p. 326). While such justice-based approaches should be pursued to remedy the injustices of climate change and displacement, current mobility policies are framed around exclusion, othering and securitization. The concept of "mobility justice" is therefore pertinent, which Sheller (2018)

explains as "how power and inequality inform the governance and control of movement, shaping the patterns of unequal mobility and immobility in the circulation of people, resources and information" (p. 14).

The right to move for those affected by climate change is governed by unequal global mobility regimes and policies which privilege certain types of people, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, class, education, economic status, gender, age, health and ability (Bates-Eamer, 2019; Rosignoli, 2022). As Rosignoli (2022) puts it, "Current restrictions on human mobility on certain categories of non-white, poor, or unfit persons result in a renovated form of environmental racism on a global scale" (p. 7). Even if individuals manage to move, they are likely to endure significant hardship in their new surroundings in the form of precarious jobs, lack of citizenship (and therefore no access to unemployment or government benefits), and challenges such as linguistic barriers and loss of livelihoods (Rosignoli, 2022). In this regard, it can also be argued that climate-related movement can be considered as a form of loss and damage due to the vulnerabilities imposed on affected individuals, including loss of security, livelihoods, health, social networks, culture, traditions, identity, knowledge, and relationships with ancestral lands (Mayer, 2017; Rosignoli, 2022).

From the point of view of mobility justice, immobility is also a key consideration as those impacted by climate change are likely to face barriers related to health, wealth and social capital, thereby keeping them trapped in unfavourable and dangerous climate conditions (Rosignoli, 2022). Furthermore, due to broader economic, political and social injustices, as well as restrictions and barriers to mobility, most individuals affected by climate change are thus forced to stay within their countries or regions. This adds another layer of complexity to the issue of climate justice since countries in the Majority World are not only overly burdened by the

climate crisis in terms of its disproportionate impact on economies, livelihoods and infrastructures, but they are also bearing additional responsibility for hosting individuals from neighbouring countries. Since low- and middle-income countries already host 76% of the world's refugees (UNHCR, 2023), countries in the Majority World are forced to endure the impacts of the climate crisis while shouldering additional responsibility in a currently inequitable system of responsibility-sharing for global displacement. This transpires even if these countries lack the resources to cope with such realities, due to the broader structural injustices explained above. One striking example is how currently, the UN-classified "Least Developed Countries" host 20% (7 million) of the world's refugees even though together they account for less than 1.3% of global gross domestic product (UNHCR, 2023), highlighting how climate justice and displacement are intertwined with broader political and economic injustices.

Within this context, countries in the Minority World are increasingly criminalizing migration and restricting the mobility of the global majority (Gonzalez, 2021). Miller et al. (2021) find that seven countries who are responsible for 48% of the world's historic greenhouse gas emissions (the United States, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada, France and Australia) collectively spent at least twice as much on border and immigration enforcement (over $33.1 billion) as on climate finance (approximately $14.4 billion) between 2013 and 2018. By pursuing this national security and militarized approach to mobility, countries in the Minority World are obscuring their responsibility for the current climate crisis. The actors who have contributed to this crisis have a responsibility to prevent displacement and compensate those individuals who are harmed by the negative consequences of their actions (Gonzalez, 2019).

There are certain policy actions countries in the Minority World can undertake to approach climate displacement from a climate justice lens. For example, Ahmed (2017)

developed a "climate refugee settlement model" by using four parameters: carbon emissions per capita, gross national income per capita, the human development index, and the planet's resource consumption per capita. This model calculated that countries such as the United States, Canada and Germany should primarily be responsible for resettling individuals displaced by climate change. Such a model demonstrates the relationship between the actions of the Minority World, their consequences on communities across the Majority World through disasters, loss of livelihoods, and displacement, and their obligation to remedy these negatives impacts without imposing additional responsibility-sharing obligations for displacement in these countries. The UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights and Climate Change echoed this relationship by stating: "Climate change is primarily caused by greenhouse gas emissions from major emitting countries. There is an important aspect of causality and international responsibility that must be considered when referring to climate change displaced persons" (United Nations, 2023, p. 4).

By using the common but differentiated responsibility framework (CBDR), countries in the Minority World should lead the way in mobilizing the required financial resources annually to support climate action efforts in the Majority World, which would contribute to supporting mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures to prevent displacement in the first place (Gonzalez, 2019). When mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction are insufficient to prevent displacement, countries in the Minority World should deliver financial compensation for losses and damages, provide relocation assistance, and develop a mechanism to finance and facilitate the safe and regular migration and resettlement of people impacted by climate change (Gonzalez, 2019). All these efforts should ensure that those affected by climate change are at the forefront of the development of these policies and practices to live up to principles of procedural justice in relation to climate justice (Gonzalez, 2021).

In the Canadian context, it is worth mentioning that in 2023, Canada allocated $39.3 billion for its military spending under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, while between 2013 and 2021, Canada spent an estimated $189.2 billion on military expenses (NATO, 2023; Akkerman et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Canada has only committed $2.65 billion (2015-2021) and $5.3 billion (2021-2026) as part of its international climate finance commitments (Global Affairs Canada, 2022). This is significantly below Canada's fair share of climate financing relative to its share of historical emissions. In fact, Canada only gave 37% of its fair share of international climate financing in 2020, falling $3.3 billion short of its target for the year from a climate justice point of view (Gabbatiss & Evans, 2022). To genuinely embody a justice-based approach to climate displacement, Canada should then reallocate its excessive spending on military interventions and border enforcement to provide adequate funding for countries in the Majority World for loss and damage, climate adaptation and resilience, and disaster risk reduction.

Conclusion

By taking into account Canada's uneven and disproportionate negative impacts on climate change, I ultimately argue that Canada may risk upholding climate coloniality in the future through border securitization in the context of global climate displacement. Canada currently does not have an explicit policy focused on climate displacement, and to date, the government has only introduced ad-hoc and temporary policy mechanisms to respond to sudden onset climate events, rather than developing permanent solutions for individuals affected by both the sudden and slow onset causes of climate-induced movement. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an in-depth explanation of the measures Canadian policymakers can undertake to embody a climate justice approach to climate displacement (see CARL, 2021; Galloway, 2022; Hynie et al., 2016; Omeziri & Gore, 2014), such measures include modifying the current guidelines for admission under humanitarian and compassionate grounds; utilizing

public policy class admissions to facilitate mobility; introducing resettlement and private

sponsorship pathways; and amending the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to provide

protection to individuals from climate-related risks. Furthermore, Canada should leverage

existing labour, family reunification and education pathways; support regional and global

initiatives to facilitate climate mobility; and significantly fund loss and damage, climate

adaptation and resilience and disaster reduction efforts. Ultimately, considering its historical and

ongoing impacts on the health of our planet, Canada has an obligation to support countries who

are disproportionately and negatively impacted by the climate crisis. Rather than undertaking a

securitized approach to climate displacement and upholding climate coloniality, Canada should

be a leader in facilitating climate mobility and repaying its climate debt to countries in the

Majority World. After all, climate justice is migrant justice.

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