Shifting Boundaries of Control: The Quebec and Vermont-New York Border in the Trump Era and Beyond

Cambio en las fronteras de control: la frontera Quebec con Vermont-Nueva York a partir de la era de Trump

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Abstract

This article reviews the shifting practices of control along the border New York–Vermont border in the United States and Quebec in Canada during and since the election of the Trump administration in the United States. The authors argue that this period saw an increase in detention, deportation and securitization on both sides of the border, despite the differences in the political orientations of the Canadian and U.S. governments. Drawing on recent developments in border theory, the article explores the ways in which the northern U.S. border has become increasingly politicized and securitized. The Trump administration's anti-migrant policies led to a rapid increase in the numbers of asylum seekers crossing the Canada-U.S. border into Quebec in an irregular fashion at Roxham Road in northern New York state. The intense political response to this situation in Canada and especially Quebec eventually resulted in the renegotiation of the Safe Third Country Agreement between the two countries. In the same period, in the northern United States, there was an increase in surveillance and targeting of migrants through the enforcement of international checkpoints 100 miles south of the territorial border. The article demonstrates how both states attempted to contain the movements of "undesirables," thus restricting the mobility of certain individuals.

Key words: border control, securitization, detention and deportation, Trump administration, Safe Third Country Agreement, Canada-U.S. Border.

Resumen

Este artículo expone las prácticas por las que ha habido un cambio de control a lo largo de la frontera entre los estados de Nueva York y Vermont, en Estados Unidos, y Quebec en Canadá

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durante y a partir de la elección de la administración de Donald Trump. Los autores afirman que durante ese periodo se dio un incremento en la detención, deportación y medidas de seguridad a ambos lados de la frontera, a pesar de las diferencias en las orientaciones políticas de los gobiernos canadiense y estadounidense. Se hace un recuento del desarrollo reciente de la teoría de la frontera, a partir del cual el artículo explora las maneras en que la frontera norte de Estados Unidos cada vez está más politizada y con mayores controles de seguridad. Las políticas antimigrantes de la administración de Trump llevaron a un rápido incremento en las cifras de quienes buscan asilo cruzando la frontera Canadá-Estados Unidos hacia Quebec de manera irregular por Roxham Road, al norte del estado de Nueva York. La intensa respuesta política a esta situación en Canadá y especialmente en Quebec ha tenido como resultado la renegociación del Acuerdo sobre Tercer País Seguro entre ambas naciones. Durante el mismo periodo, al norte de Estados Unidos hubo un aumento de vigilancia y persecución de migrantes mediante el reforzamiento de los puntos de revision internacionales cien millas al sur de la frontera territorial. El artículo demuestra cómo ambos Estados aspiran a contener los movimientos de los "indeseables", aunque se restrinja la movilidad de determinados individuos.

Palabras clave: control de la frontera, securitización, detención y deportación, administración de Trump, Acuerdo de Tercer País Seguro, frontera Canadá-Estados Unidos.

Introduction

> The only time I remember feeling hope in recent years was when we made the decision to come to Canada. We would seek safety there, since we could not do so in the U.S. We were hopeful about the future. But Canada turned us away and delivered us to our jailers. Now, there is no hope.
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> —A man in immigration detention in the U.S. after being rejected by Canada under the Safe Third Country Agreement. He is separated from his wife who is also detained. (Canadian Council for Refugees —CCR—, 2018)

On Monday, November 20, 2017, only days before the celebration of Thanksgiving in the United States, the Trump administration announced that it was ending Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians, a humanitarian program that had allowed nearly 60,000 Haitians to live and work in the United States since a devastating earthquake hit Haiti in 2010. Scholarly and policy literature has largely focused on the implications of the Trump administration's rhetoric, executive orders, arrests, detentions and deportations on the southern U.S. border with Mexico. However, decisions affecting TPS status of individuals in the United States had an unexpected result: a

dramatic surge of tens of thousands of people seeking to leave the United States and crossing the border into Canada in between official border crossings, especially along the New York–Vermont and Quebec border, and filing for asylum in Canada. The increased policing and securitization along this stretch of the northern border, along with heightened media coverage and public sensitivity to illegal border crossings, is just one aspect of the changing nature of the Canada-U.S. border. Over the past few years, especially during the Trump administration, the northern U.S. border has become a space for contentious politics, claims-making and militarized responses, with state agencies clashing with refugee and immigrant rights group. Border policing has also expanded well beyond the international legal boundary, and irregular migrant crossings both to and from Canada into the United States are on the increase.

This article reviews what is herein referred to as shifting practices of control along the political dividing line between New York–Vermont and Quebec. It begins with the Trump administration (2016-2020) in the United States, and continues onto the Biden administration (2020-2024), alongside the three governments of the Justin Trudeau Liberals in Canada (elected with a majority in 2015, and two minority governments in 2019 and 2021). We draw upon a variety of primary and secondary sources, including government announcements and statistics, legal cases and media reports. We argue that this period saw changing patterns of detention, deportation and securitization on both sides of the border that fit a much more widespread international pattern of the disaggregation and delocalization of borders.

The first section provides a brief discussion of current research that focuses in particular on borders as processes of securitization that demarcate, differentiate and exclude, whereby border policies serve specific political projects that are often about who does and doesn't belong in a country. The second section provides a brief history of bordering practices in North America, with a focus on the period following the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) of 1994 and the attacks of September 11, 2001. In this period, policies were adopted that sought to accelerate the movement of goods and services and certain categories of people to enhance commercial transactions across the continent, while at the same time purportedly protecting national territory by identifying, sorting and excluding certain individuals and groups of people from crossing the border. The third section reviews recent border policies in both Canada and the United States between 2016 and 2023. We show how bordering and rebordering trends along the border between New York–Vermont and Quebec are reflective of larger political projects and political goals in Canada and the United States, with a particular focus on the impact of the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) of 2001. As this policy displays, the politics of immigration and border control differ on each side of the border, reflecting different political rationales.

Nonetheless, policies in this microregion display how governments on both sides of the border have attempted to contain the movements of "undesirables," thus restricting the mobility of certain individuals and stoking reactionary politics and xenophobic populism.

Theorizing Shifting Boundaries of Control

Scholarship on borders has been shaped by particular world orders, widely shared international narratives, and specific political-historical moments. During the Cold War (1945–1990), borders were problematized as a means of separation and territorial control, serving to demarcate legal international boundaries, separating regions from each other. In Europe especially, borderlines were reconstructed to delimit spaces and territories after the devastation of the two world wars, while at the same time, regional blocs were developed to "surpass the territorial rigidity of nation-state" and promote cross-border trade and investment (Mattiuzi de Souza, 2018: 249). In the post-Cold War era, borders and regions became sites of filtering and sorting of people, goods and services, as borders became intertwined with political economy of neoliberal globalization, the post-Cold War unipolar moment-shaped "Washington consensus," and widespread and uncritical acceptance of TINA—There Is No Alternative to the market and capital (Widdis, 2021). Widdis has argued that "under current dialectical conditions of globalization and increased demands for security, borders are no longer just symbols of sovereignty and national histories; they are evolving into new forms and as such are taking on new functions" (2019: 573). The increased acceptance and awareness of global interconnectedness shaped by innovations in communications technology and transportation that accelerated transnational exchanges encouraged the emergence of a multiplicity of state and non-state actors, issues and discourses relevant to the purported erosion of borders. For Mattiuzi de Souza, borders became "strategic poles in the public-private rush to attract capital" as they became "assets to expand markets and acquire a relevant role in the global economy," (2018: 252) filtering and sorting capital, products, information and people.

More recently, border studies have been evolving in a time of destabilization in the world order, characterized by a wide variety of global vicissitudes, including deepening inequalities that have given rise to populism, xenophobia, racism, and nativism, which are all shaping border politics. Mattiuzi de Souza argues that "the return of borders as important boundaries to protect national territories" coincides with these proliferating "global occurrences," reflecting as well growing demands for multiscale governance and the agency of multiple actors, and marking the "return of borders

as important boundaries to protect national territories" (2018: 255). Bordering practices are often reactions to the accumulation of unresolved crises at the global level, which play out regionally within border spaces through a political logic that demands greater securitization and control, policing and militarization. Research on border securitization has highlighted the ways in which borders create societies characterized by exclusion and insecurity, with clear messaging through border security policies of who does and does not belong (Garry, 2013). Cross-border cooperation agreements that have emerged in the post-Cold War era in both Europe and North America, for example, have been disrupted by securitization imperatives that reflect power struggles between federal and sub-federal units as well as political, electoral and ideological competition (Dupeyron et al., 2023). As argued by Konrad and Correa-Cabrera (2020), the ongoing processes of rebordering and deterritorialization of control illustrate changing border policy, with competing processes of globalization and securitization redefining membership for example in the border regions of Canada, the United States and Mexico (Correa-Cabrera and Konrad, 2020). Borders increasingly serve a multiplicity of functions of control and exclusivity—from security functions, to societal sorting, to identifying and excluding people—and this logic of control is delocalizing and disaggregating away from the original legal international boundaries that demarcated the territorial separation between sovereign states (Brennan, 2018; Cooper and Perkins, 2014; Gulzau et al., 2021). It is through border practices and policies either removed from or still at the border, that "key decisions are made about who is 'legitimate' and who is 'illegitimate,' who is 'trusted' and who is 'risky,' who can be allowed to cross freely and who is excluded" (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 2010).

Walters has referred to this disaggregation of the border today as a form of "remote control" that both excludes and decongests: capturing and relocating people to keep them from reaching or crossing legal territorial borders before they are able to make asylum claims, and at the same time clearing out border spaces to accelerate the movement of approved people and goods (Walters, 2006; Lahov and Guiraudon, 2000). The disaggregation of security and control along borders illustrates what Smith and Banerjee have characterized as "states behaving badly"—marked by changes in state policies and activities from "liberal to illiberal practices"—the cumulative activity of which undermines the peremptory norms of the International Refugee Regime (Smith and Banerjee, 2014). Hyndman and Mountz (2008) refer to this as *neo-refoulement*, referring "to a geographically based strategy of preventing the possibility of asylum through a new policy of forced reform," thus restricting access to jurisdictions that, in principle, provide protection to refugees. As Walters writes, borders "are becoming more and more important not as military or economic practices but as spaces

and instruments for the policing of a variety of actors, objects and processes whose common denominator is their 'mobility,' or more specifically, the forms of social and political insecurity that have come to be discursively attached to these mobilities" (Walters, 2006: 188). The changing practices of border control at the Quebec-New York–Vermont border illustrates these tensions between control and mobility, as well as increased efforts to control the movement of individuals viewed as undesirable or threatening to traditional conceptions of political community membership.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:
BORDERING AT THE CANADA-U.S. DIVIDE

In the early 20th century, borders in northern North America had a dual character as a result of the specific character of U.S. dominance and exceptionalism and various Canadian responses to U.S. hegemony. On the one hand, the trope that characterized the Canada-U.S. border as "the world's longest undefended border" (Nicol, 2012: 139) was endlessly repeated. Border crossing was relatively fluid for most travellers (no passport was required for citizens of either country at the land borders), and there was widespread cooperation between the two countries on trade, defense, the environment, and other issues. At the same time, argues Nicol, the meaning of the Canada-U.S. border was discursively reinforced on the Canadian side: that border "has always been rationalized by nationalistic, securitized and hegemonic discourses, even at the same time that cooperation and partnership discourses gloss diplomatic conversations" (2012: 142).

On the southern side of the border, as time went on, the American state has become "more nationally defined, more cloistered by borders," while on the northern side, the Canadian imaginary portrayed the border as a wall to protect the nation from potential incursions—whether military, economic or cultural. Canadians had less reason to fear military incursions than Mexicans, who had lost half of their national territory in the early 19th century to the expansionist logic of Manifest Destiny. Still, despite the veneer of partnership, many Canadians advocated the entrenchment of the 49th parallel as a form of protection of nationhood. Daniel Drache, from an economic nationalist perspective, captures this perspective in his warning, "Canadians need to reflect long and hard about the border as a moat for security and as a boundary marker for identity and citizenship" (2004: 12). And these discursive representations resulted in the implementation of a range of economic nationalist policies, particularly under the governments of Pierre Elliot Trudeau. Of course, discursive

constructions of the border were never homogenous, and diverse opinions prevailed on both sides of the border and particularly between English and French Canada.

This construction of the border as serving to protect and separate was partially replaced toward the end of the 20th century with the rise of the parallel and intersecting forces of globalization and regionalization. The Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, followed shortly by NAFTA, which liberated transnational flows of money, goods and ideas, gave rise to new approaches to borders. Triumphalist neoliberal accounts heralded globalization as being about breaking down borders, as the spread of commerce gave rise to a "borderless world" (Andreas, 2003: 1). At the same time, regional economic blocs heightened the "filtering character of borders—opened to capital, products and information; closed for individuals of peripheral regions" (Mattiuzi de Souza, 2018: 253). The closure role was much more prevalent at the southern U.S. border, as the 1990s saw several efforts to crack down on the entry of Mexicans in response to an anti-immigration backlash. Thus, somewhat paradoxically, NAFTA, designed to reduce barriers to the flow of trade, hardened the border to the passage of migrants (Gilbert, 2012: 203).

Up to 9/11, the quiet 813-kilometer-long stretch of the border which separates Quebec from the states of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, was long virtually invisible in geopolitical terms, acting as an "invisible line" in some places, and has received less academic analysis than many other parts of the border (Phaneuf, 2013:112). This region has been marked historically by frequent migratory flows. Early on, African Americans fled slavery through the Underground Railroad, part of which passed through the border in this area (many of whom later returned to the United States after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1862) (Bourgeon et al., 2017: 142-46). This northward form of mobility was subsequently replaced by a southward flow of Québécois migrants seeking employment. In 1900, French Canadians represented 30 percent of the textile workers in Massachusetts, and 60 percent in New Hampshire and Maine (Wade: 41, cited in Bourgeon et al., 2017: 145). Southward movement of Quebecers was thus shaped by economic conditions on both sides of the border: high levels of unemployment in Quebec and labor demand in the booming northeastern economy of the United States (Bourgeon et al., 2017). Phaneuf notes that in the 1930s, the communities on the two sides of the border were more integrated than today (2013: 115). For most of the 20th century, however, the two nation states' bordering practices have increasingly obstructed borderlanders' mobility and interrupted narratives of shared identities.

The increase of cross-border trade that resulted from NAFTA elevated strain on the Canada-U.S. border. U.S.-Canada trade grew from US$174 billion in 1988 to US$447 billion in 1999, mostly transported by 18,000 trucks that crossed the border

every day, concentrated in a few major crossings, such as the Champlain, New York/ St Bernard-de-Lacolle Quebec crossing along highway 87 south of Montreal. In the Canada United States Partnership (CUSP) process, launched by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and President Bill Clinton in 1999, local communities along the border and industry stakeholders expressed frustration with the inadequate infrastructure and staffing compared to the increased demands. Big business pushed for the seamless movement of goods and (selected) people across the border and viewed the border as a "nuisance" impeding the fast movement of parts necessary for just-in-time delivery systems (Clarkson, 2008: 373-5). The Canadian border was viewed with complacency, and "barely policed" by U.S. officials focused on what was constructed as migration threat from Mexico (Andreas, 2003: 8). As of 2003, Andreas reports, only 334 agents policed the much longer northern border, compared to more than 9,000 agents at the southern border.

This phase ended abruptly with the 9/11 attacks, and the U.S. response, which led to the "rebordering" of North America (Coleman, 2003; 2007), and the partial "Mexicanization" of the U.S.-Canada border (Andreas, 2003). Suddenly, the northern border was portrayed as the major source of threat to the United States' security because of the alleged laxity of Canadian immigration and refugee policies, even though none of the al Qaeda militants who were involved in the 9/11 attacks had entered the United States from Canada.[1] The Canadian government responded swiftly to the economic threat posed to Canadian interests by increased U.S. border control measures. Within weeks of the attacks, the Canadian government negotiated a "Smart Border Accord" with their American counterparts, which in addition to commitments to pursue increased information sharing, preclearance, shared border facilities, common standards, etc., also included measures to share information on asylum seekers to "identify potential security and criminality threats and expose 'forum shoppers' who seek asylum in both systems" (USDOS, 2002). In addition, the Smart Border Accord includes a reference to the "Safe Third Country Agreement" (STCA) also signed by the two countries in 2002 to manage the flow of asylum claimants at official land border ports of entry, which came into effect in December 2004.

Article 4(1) of the STCA states: "[t]he Party of the country of last presence shall examine, in accordance with its refugee status determination system, the refugee status claim of any person who arrives at a land border port of entry . . . and makes a refugee status claim" (Government of Canada, 2002). Even though the Smart Border

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[1] The scare about the northern border was partly fueled by the isolated case of Ahmed Ressam, who was captured in December 1999 by U.S. Customs officials while driving from British Columbia to the state of Washington. Explosives were found in the truck of his car that he planned to use for an attack on the Los Angeles airport (Clarkson, 2008: 374).

Accord was negotiated as a response to the perceived security needs of the United States, Canada had attempted unsuccessfully in the 1990s to convince the United States to enter into such an agreement (Macklin, 2003: 2). While the agreement applies to both countries, it effectively limits the number of people making refugee claims in Canada, since would-be claimants are far more likely to travel by land through the United States to Canada to make a claim than in the opposite direction. The United States agreed to this request, despite the fact that it increases the numbers of individuals making refugee claims in the United States, in exchange for Canada's cooperation with other security measures (Cooper, 2018).

In 2000, one-third of Canadian refugee claimants were filed from the United States (Clarkson, 2008: 378). The STCA meant that Canada could turn away any individual who arrived at an official point of entry from the United States, preventing them from making a refugee claim in Canada, since the United States was considered a "safe country" to make such a claim. The Canadian government defended this measure based on the argument the United States had similar policies to Canada regarding refugee rights (even though Canada had historically been considerably more generous in accepting such claims).

The agreement had a dramatic impact on the number of refugee claims filed in Canada: In 2005, Canada received just over 4,000 claims at border points of entry, down from approximately 8,900 claims filed in 2004. According to the Canadian Council for Refugees, Colombians were most strongly affected, since the number of claims submitted by asylum-seekers from that country declined by more than half between January and November 2005. Most Colombians had entered the United States first before travelling to the Canadian border to apply for asylum (Cowger, 2017).

The dramatic changes in North American border policies after 9/11 had important repercussions in all three countries. The crisis intensified the notion of border as filter: open to the movement of "legitimate" goods and people but impermeable to those deemed "illegitimate" or "risky." The deployment of the discourse of smart borders and rhetorical references to openness masks the processes of securitization of the border that occurred in this period (Gilbert, 2012: 202). These changes had the effect of shifting the gaze of the American public to some extent away from perceived risks coming from the wave of Mexican migrants crossing the southern border and towards possible terrorists entering the U.S. through Canada as a result of the latter's so-called "lax" immigration laws.

These changes in the broader border control regime had specific impacts on the bordering practices in the formerly sleepy, somewhat peripheral Quebec-Vermont–New York subregion. The old practice of dragging an orange cone across the road in the evenings at some of the smaller border entry points to signal the closure of that

border passageway was discontinued as a result of alarmist depictions of this practice in the U.S. Congress (Andreas, 2005: 455). Larger numbers of guards were deployed to this area, even if the numbers were still much smaller than at the U.S.-Mexico border. Victoria Phaneuf describes "borderlanders" in northeastern Vermont as refraining from crossing the border in the post-9/11 period, and as expressing alienation from the behavior of border officials: border guards and regulations were described as being "from the Mexican border." Northern U.S. borderland dwellers thus associated the southern border with dangerous conditions and strict regulation, and resented the transformation of what they viewed as their distinctive border culture (2013: 119).

SHIFTING PRACTICES AT THE QUEBEC-VERMONT–NEW YORK BORDER

Bordering practices in the Quebec-Vermont–New York state region have shifted again in a dramatic fashion over the last decade. As we highlight in this section, while U.S. concerns about security threats associated with the movement of people southward from Canada may not have entirely abated,[2] we also see shifting practices of control along the northern U.S. border that reflect the prioritization of different political projects in Canada and the United States (Boyce, 2018; Boyce and Miller, 2021; Coskan, 2013; Ayres, 2022). In Canada, citizens, politicians and media have grappled with different reactions and policies and ways of framing responses to the flow of migrants northward in response to Donald Trump's anti-migrant policies. At stake are not just the human lives, dignity and futures of the tens of thousands of people who have been crossing the border to request asylum in Canada, but a carefully constructed political image of the Liberal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that is globally inclusive, multiculturally sensitive and welcoming to refugees fleeing persecution, warfare and seeking a better life. In the United States, on the other hand, a quite different political project was unfolding, one shaped by the pronouncements and policies of a Trump administration crafting a racist and xenophobic image of a United States under siege. While the anti-migrant, explicitly racist discourses abated after the election of President Joe Biden (2020-2024), the Biden administration maintained many of the policies of his predecessor, which limited the ability of asylum-seekers to make claims in the United States. The Trudeau government's emphasis on openness and inclusion also came under stress with the rapid increase of asylum claimants

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[2] Lybecker et al. show that there was a spike in *New York Times* coverage of policy issues related to the U.S.-Canada border for about a year after September 11, 2001, and a steady decrease in coverage of these issues from 2003 to May 2013 (2018: 540). The border thus regained its pre-9/11 invisibility in the eyes of most members of the American public in the years following the attack.

beginning in 2017, an increase that was heavily concentrated in one specific rural location, Roxham Road, a dead-end road in New York state that leads up to the Quebec border, near Hemingford, Quebec. The microregion of the New York–Vermont-Quebec border thus represents a contact point, and point of tension between two very different political systems, which themselves were reacting to changing flows of migrants.[3]

Evolution of Canadian Border Policies:
Challenges to Safe Third Country

Tensions around asylum-seekers at the Canada-U.S. border was not an entirely new phenomenon. In October 2012, a *Globe and Mail* headline reported on "chaos at Quebec-Vermont crossing" with migrants hopping over unguarded entry points or driving through guarded crossings on outbound lanes as migrants, mostly from Roma communities in Europe, attempted to make refugee claims from inside Canada. As of October 26, there were 260 "illegal entries" and subsequent refugee claims at the Stanstead border station in Quebec (Leblanc, 2012). Following Trump's election in 2016, however, increased numbers of migrants from diverse countries of origin began crossing overland into Canada in order to seek refugee protection. These refugee claimants were able to take advantage of a loophole in the STCA. Based on the wording of that agreement, border crossers who entered via a designated border crossing between Canada and the U.S. were returned by officials to the country they were traveling from, normally the United States. Those who crossed at other spots along the border between designated ports of entry, however, were not immediately sent back but apprehended by RCMP officers and taken to official entry points to process a claim legally.

This phenomenon became the subject of widespread debate in late 2016 when a slight increase in the number of refugee claims being filed in Manitoba occurred, mostly from individuals originally from Ghana and Somalia. The media covered dramatic stories of people risking their lives to cross the border between official checkpoints near Emerson, Manitoba, in the cold Canadian winter, through farmers' fields. Notably, the impact of these irregular movements was highly localized but also shifting. By 2017, the main point of entry for irregular crossing by asylum seekers became Roxham Road in northern New York state.

The number of claims spiked in August 2017 when 5,712 people entered Canada irregularly to file asylum claims, mainly in Quebec. The province responded by opening Montreal's Olympic Stadium to provide temporary housing. By 2018, Quebec

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[3] Thanks to William Walters for this suggestion.

crossings accounted for 18,518 of the total of 19,419 interceptions of irregular bor-der-crossers by RCMP officials at the Canadian land border. New Brunswick, Ontario and Saskatchewan had zero migrants intercepted this way, Manitoba had 410 and British Columbia had 479. Irregular border crossing appears to have declined in the beginning of 2019, with 871 interceptions in Quebec in January compared to 1454 in January of 2018, and 800 in February compared with 1,486 in February of 2018. There were only 25 interceptions in the rest of the country in the first two months of 2019 (Government of Canada, 2018; 2019). The rate of acceptance of such refugee claimants also declined, Reuters reported, from 53 percent in 2017 to 40 percent in the first three months of 2018 (Samuel, 2018).

The rapid increase in claims at the Quebec-New York border was an unexpected outcome of the signing of the STCA in 2002 (Cooper, 2018). While this migrant flow was frequently characterised in the media and by politicians as illegal, migrants were in fact not breaking the law given that the 1951 Convention related to the Status of Refugees Status stipulates that refugees cannot be punished for entering a country with an irregular status, as long as they present themselves to authorities without delay in order to file their claim (Bourgeon et al., 2017: 148; Macklin, 2003). The rea-son why Roxham Road became the preferred site for border crossing was related to its proximity to airports in the northeastern U.S. states, and the relative ease of crossing the border at that spot, compared to the rigors of sites like Emerson, Manitoba. Social networks provided would-be refugee claimants with information about the route (Bourgeon et al., 2017: 151), just as songs and stories informed slaves about how to access the Underground Railroad in the 19th century. Critics also blamed Justin Trudeau for his public stance welcoming Syrian refugees with his famous 2017 Tweet, "to those fleeing persecution, terror & war…#WelcomeToCanada". The shifting prac-tices of STCA have signalled a rapid reversal in this welcoming stance.

The so-called loophole in the STCA became a political football in Canada. Former federal Conservative immigration critic Michelle Rempel called on the Liberal gov-ernment to close the loophole and extend STCA to the whole border. Rempel discursive-ly constructed refugee claimants as illegitimate and law-breakers: "Persons coming from a safe country and not directly fleeing persecution should not be able to ignore our laws and enter Canada illegally," she wrote. "If they do, they should be charged" (Maloney, 2017). In the Tory leadership campaign in 2017, Kellie Leitch won ap-plause from Conservative Party of Canada members for saying that those who cross the Canada-U.S. border illegally should be "detained, questioned, and sent back to the United States immediately" (Maloney, 2017). Another leadership hopeful, Maxim Bernier (who went on to form his own farther-right anti-immigration political party) further argued that if police and border guards failed to stop the flow of migrants,

"I would look at additional temporary measures, including deploying Canadian forces in troubled border areas" (Freeman, 2017).

Partly as a result of this fear mongering, which was amplified by media coverage, an August 2018 Angus Reid poll showed that two-thirds of Canadian believed that the arrival of people asylum in Canada had become a "crisis" (Shantz, 2019). Alarmingly, Quebec alt-right groups Storm Alliance and La Meute argued that the situation represented an "invasion" of Quebec by "illegals" at the border, and periodically held protests at Roxham Road holding the sovereigntist Patriote flag. Controversial far-right political activist Faith Goldy opposed the entry of migrants over land because she believed Canada was undergoing a "demographic and spiritual replacement that will see white people become a minority in the country within 25 years . . . And I believe that the Canadian populace should at the very least be asked who we want coming into our country—if for no other reason than we see what's happening across Europe . . . It's the emboldening of a new type of immigrant who seeks to change and indeed erase our history. And I, for one, won't stand for that" (Samuel, 2018).

Provincial politicians also reacted to the increase in refugee claimants with alarm. In 2017 Parti Québécois leader Jean-François Lisée called for the construction of a fence at Roxham Road, but also called on the federal government to rip up the STCA. When asked who would pay for the fence, Lisée joked, "the Mexicans." He later clarified that he was calling for the planting of a cedar fence, not a Trump-like wall (Canadian Press, 2018). In 2018, Ontario Premier Doug Ford, then-Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard and then-Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister issued a joint statement that called on the federal government to provide compensation to the provinces to their increased costs stemming from irregular migrants, and to speed up the adjudication process for claimant hearings.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a "state of exception" that allowed the Trudeau government to temporarily halt asylum claims at the Canada-U.S. border (Abu Alrob and Shields, 2022). Among the border control measures announced by the Trudeau government in response to the pandemic on March 16, 2020 was the policy of returning asylum seekers arriving to Canada in an irregular fashion to the United States. As a result, the number of asylum claimants intercepted by the RCMP at the Quebec land border declined from 16,660 in 2019 to 3,189 in 2020, almost all of whom (2,992) crossed before April 2020, i.e. before the ban was put in place (Government of Canada, 2019; 2020).

After the ban on the entrance of asylum claimants to Canada was lifted in December 2021, however, refugee claimants again began entering Quebec from New York in even greater numbers. From January to December 2022, there were 39,915 people intercepted by the RCMP at the Quebec land border (Government of Canada,

2022), a situation which raised new alarms among Canadian politicians and the media, especially in Quebec.

In response, on May 11, 2022, the Quebec government of François Legault asked the federal government to close the Roxham Road unofficial entry point, arguing that the province couldn't afford the services it provides to asylum seekers who cross the border in an irregular fashion. Legault's statement came during the Quebec provincial election campaign, in which immigration was a leading issue. The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) executive director Janet Dench noted, in response, that many of the migrants who had earlier crossed the border at Roxham Road had subsequently provided an essential labor force in the long-term care homes in Quebec (Serebrin, 2022). In February 2023, Quebec politicians expressed surprise after New York City mayor Eric Adams told the media that the city was providing free bus tickets to migrants heading toward the Quebec border to claim asylum there (Lawrie and Martel, 2023). New federal Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre also called on Trudeau to close the border: "If we are a real country, we have borders. And if this is a real prime minister, he is responsible for those borders," Poilievre said. "He's had six years since the influx began. It is his job to close the border and we're calling him to do it" (CTV News, 2023).

As a result of the political pressure it was experiencing, the Canadian government moved toward increased securitization of the border and entered into negotiations with the United States to address the situation. Trudeau appointed a new minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Bill Blair, in August 2018, and in March 2019 Blair stated that he was in negotiations to close the "loophole" in the STCA. A new deal was secretly reached and signed by Canadian Immigration Minister Sean Fraser on March 29, 2022 and by U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on April 15, 2022. The deal permitted Canadian authorities to turn back all refugee claimants to the United States (and vice versa), whether they arrived at an official port of entry or an irregular crossing. The deal was kept under wraps, however, and officials continued to tell the media and provincial authorities that no deal had been reached yet. In May 2022, after the deal was already signed, Prime Minister Trudeau said that "If we close Roxham Road, people will cross elsewhere. We have an enormous border, and we're not going to start arming or putting fences on it" (Bergeron, 2022). The secrecy was apparently justified by the length of time it would take for U.S. officials to consult with multiple U.S. agencies, which, they told the Canadians, would normally take 18 to 36 months, and could result in a "stampede" of people trying to reach the border if it was openly announced earlier. The implementation was eventually speeded up in order to be able to announce the agreement during Biden's planned March 2023 visit to Ottawa. In return for U.S. compliance around the timing,

Canada agreed to accept 15,000 more refugee claimants from the Western Hemisphere (Panetta and Ling, 2023). The negotiations resulted in an additional protocol to the original STCA, which states: "the provisions of the Agreement shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, except Article 10 of the Agreement, to this Additional Protocol in respect of persons who, on or after the date this Additional Protocol enters into force, enter the territory of the receiving Party by crossing the land border between the ports of entry and make a refugee status claim within 14 days after such crossing" (Government of Canada, 2023).

Canadian Civil Society Responses

In contrast to the calls from government and opposition parties to "close the loophole" in the STCA, civil society groups at the federal, provincial and local levels have for years rejected the stigmatization of migrants and have called for an end to the policy. Amnesty International (AI) Canada and the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) have engaged in a protracted legal campaign to have STCA rescinded. First in 2007 and again in 2017, the CCR, AI Canada, and the Canadian Council of Churches challenged the legality of the *STCA* before the Federal Court of Canada. Both cases were successful but were later overturned on technical grounds by the Federal Court of Appeal. In these cases, CCR and AI Canada sought a declaration that the agreement was unlawful and represented a breach of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and international human rights and refugee law (Arbel, 2013). In a brief submitted to Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen in May 2017, they argued that the application of the agreement "poses a significant threat to refugees in North America, by returning asylum-seekers to U.S. authorities despite well-documented failings in the U.S. refugee protection system. In so doing, Canadian practice currently violates both international and domestic norms." They argued that the U.S. asylum system has long suffered significant problems, but that this situation was exacerbated under the Trump administration (Mazreku, 2019). Based on interviews with refugee claimants who had irregularly crossed the border into Canada, the organizations argued that most of these claimants left the United States because of perceived failings in the U.S. asylum system, xenophobic treatment, and fear that the human rights situation in the U.S. might deteriorate under the Trump administration (AIC / CCR, 2017).

In 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed to hear the case regarding the constitutionality of the STCA. At the hearing in October 2022, the three organizations argued that the STCA violates refugee claimants' rights under Sections 7 and 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They submitted thousands of pages of

evidence "showing that the U.S. is not safe for all refugees," including affidavits from academics, migration policy practitioners, and from people who have been sent back under the Safe Third Country Agreement to detention in the United States. According to a backgrounder prepared by CCR, the evidence filed "reveals the abusive nature of detention throughout the US. Detention is arbitrary and politically motivated, families are separated, conditions are appalling, medical care is inadequate and detainees are subject to sexual abuse" (CCR, 2018). The court has not yet delivered its judgement in on this case.

Civil society actors also vehemently denounced the expansion of the STCA with the additional protocol as violating international human rights law. CCR stated, for example, "Applying the Safe Third Country Agreement between Ports of Entry will not stop irregular crossings—it will simply make them more irregular, dangerous, and underground. We can expect to see an increased number of people hurt or even dying as they attempt risky routes across the border, including in deep winter. Unscrupulous smugglers will take advantage of the opportunity to make money out of people's desperation" (CCR, 2023). CCR also questioned the wisdom and ethics of reaching such an agreement while the supreme court decision on the constitutionality of the STCA was pending.

U.S. Policies toward its Northern Border: Trump and Beyond

As these debates around border control were playing out on the Canadian side of the border, on the U.S. side, fear, control, power and insecurity shaped bordering processes with a clear agenda: to demarcate those who "belonged" from those who should be excluded from the coalescing political project under the Trump administration. While the U.S.-Mexico border has been for years a more visible site of the contradictions of post-NAFTA debordering and rebordering, the Canada-U.S. border has increasingly shown the strains and tensions associated with competing narratives (Muller, 2016), which "emphasize the openness and/or the transcendability of borders as a feature of globalization and accounts which draw attention to massive processes of securitized rebordering" (Rumford, 2006: 157). In particular, the New York–Vermont and Quebec border has thus evolved much more into a shifting space of policing and control, and has been affected by what Walters has described as "discourses about organized crime, global terrorism, undocumented migration and other dangerous mobilities that legitimate and organize this shift" (2006: 199).

As is well known, the discourses that signified the Trump administration's plan to embrace a more outwardly nativist and ethnic and racially exclusionary political

project began well before the controversial policy pronouncements on immigration during Trump's first week in office. Appropriately, discourses focusing on fear and danger in the American homeland began on the day in June 2015 when Trump officially announced his candidacy for the presidency, declaring, "when Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best . . . they're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people."[4]

From the moment of declaring in New York City his candidacy for president throughout what became a victorious presidential campaign during which time Trump popularized—although did not invent—the "Make America Great Again" slogan and the "Build That Wall" chant that usually accompanied his boisterous campaign rallies, to some of his later pronouncements such as "our country is full" designed to deter migrants from seeking asylum (Irwin and Badger, 2019), fearful discourse played a key role in shaping policy (Abrego et al., 2017). The dangerous and fear mongering characterization of undocumented immigrants—including presumably anyone from a predominantly Muslim country since Trump during his campaign called for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States," presaged the issuing of executive orders within the first week of his new administration, connected to U.S. immigration, deportation and enforcement policies. All of these executive orders drew links between undocumented immigration and threats to the American people—from crime, terrorism and job loss—yet provided little to no specificity on the actual problems with existing policies and how these orders would improve policy-making and immigration and refugee policy (Alboim and Aiken, 2017). These orders included: 1) Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States; 2) Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements; and 3) Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.

All three executive orders were issued in January 2017 immediately following Trump's inauguration, and built upon the exclusionary campaign rhetoric to shape policies at the core of the Trump administration's nativist political project. Notably, these orders had the fingerprints all over them of Stephen Miller, senior policy advisor to the president. Miller had evolved from a little-known congressional policy staffer to someone who, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, should be credited with "shaping the racist and draconian immigration policies of President Trump," including the family separation policy, the Muslim ban and ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program (SPLC, 2023). The first two orders had significant implications for securitized bordering and rebordering along the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canadian borders. The first ordered law enforcement agencies in

[4] Quoted from the full text of Donald Trump announcing his presidential bid (Trump, 2015).

the United States to aggressively act to remove all undocumented migrants, even those not previously convicted of a crime, which was a notable change from the emphasis on removal during the Obama administration. The second, focused on fulfilling Trump's central campaign promise of building a wall between the United States and Mexico, limiting due process rights of asylum seekers, and broadening and expediting the detention of immigrants and removal with limited rights of appeal. While the third executive order went through several changes and was ultimately upheld in revised form by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2018, all three orders significantly enhanced the deportation powers of key agencies within the Department of Homeland Security, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and its key agency empowered with making arrests—Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO)—and the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) (Center for Migration Studies, 2017). Over 100,000 people a year are arrested by the ERO—more arrests annually than are carried out combined by the FBI, U.S. Marshalls and the Secret Service, with arrests skyrocketing by over 40 percent with the issuing of these executive orders (Ford, 2018; U.S. ICE, 2018). The expanded arrests and deportations under the Trump administration, while clearly nativist in a new way, were in fact part of a much larger expansion of a U.S. border control-security-industrial complex over the past several decades. Broadly, the budget to securitize the border increased over 24 times since 1986, with the number of individual agents increasing by over 600 percent (Massey, 2014), creating what Staudt has referred to as a "extraordinarily more complicated and dangerous" border control bureaucracy, the effects of which "have spilled over into the entire country" (2018: 67).

In particular, the last two years of the nativist political project of the Trump administration, shaped heavily by the multiplicity of global transformations, played out in the dislocation and disaggregation of the border and border policies along the New York and Vermont borders with Quebec in several controversial ways: 1) through the discourse and contested policy pronouncements threatening an end to Temporary Protective Status for migrants of certain countries; 2) through the increased visibility of the 100-mile internal checkpoint enforced by the CBP, and 3) through more aggressive detentions and arrests of undocumented immigrants by the CBP and ICE in Vermont. Together these examples highlight the way in which the northern border has continued to unfold as a contested site for economic integration yet social exclusion (Hellman, 2018), an expanding space for the battle for a specific kind of American identity, framed around race and ethnicity (Scott, 2019), and has "trumped" earlier liberal concerns with opening up the border. Much as Canada's Liberal government's decision to expand the Safe Third Country Agreement represents a different kind of border wall across the entire Canada-U.S. border (Mackler, 2019), the following examples from the United States further illustrate shifting boundaries of

border control and a disaggregation of border securitization remotely from the international legal border.

The Trump administration's move to reduce the number of foreigners eligible to remain in the U.S. under temporary protection status is one example of the shifting boundaries of control that reflected not only the increasingly nativist political project at the center of the administration, but also a policy shift inexorably tied to the exponentially growing impacts of global climate change. At the start of the Trump presidency, individuals from ten affected countries living in the United States were covered by TPS status—El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan—and months into his presidency, Trump's secretary of Homeland Security announced plans to terminate TPS for six countries—El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan—and extend TPS for Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. Of these ten countries, seven have been affected by environmental disruptions and degradation, major reasons for the TPS designation, which certainly, for an administration doubtful of the effects of climate change, set a dangerous precedent (Klein, 2017).

Moreover, for many of the tens of thousands potentially affected by the elimination of TPS—and for others interpreting the Trump administration's move as part of a broader set of immigration policies designed to raise questions about whether the United States remained committed to being a destination for the world's dispossessed (Ring, 2017)—this shifting stance on TPS provoked the upsurge in irregular border crossings into Canada especially along the New York–Vermont and Quebec border. While the former administration's posture on TPS was challenged by politicians and immigrant and human rights groups, an April 2019 court ruling seemed to support critics' charges that the administration was motivated more by nativist politics than the conditions on the ground of the affected countries. The ruling by a federal judge of the Eastern District of New York created a temporary injunction preventing the Department of Homeland Security from eliminating TPS status for Haitians, arguing that "a TPS termination should not be a political decision made to carry out political motivations," with the plaintiff's alleging that the decision to end TPS designation for Haitians was linked to the president's "racially discriminatory attitude toward all brown and black people" (Charles, 2019).

Enforcement of Internal Checkpoints 100 Miles from the Canadian Border

Practices of "remote control" disaggregated from the international legal boundary between Canada and the United States have been illustrated through enforcement of

international checkpoints 100 miles into the United States. Agents of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) routinely make decisions regarding the legitimacy or illegitimacy, or trustworthiness or riskiness of individuals, implementing bordering processes that filter, sort and exclude. Agents currently are legally empowered to stop vehicles within 100 miles of the border, and search private land within 25 miles of the border (Goldbaum, 2019; U.S. CBP, 2019). Such practices illustrate exceptionally well the operationalization of "remote control"—where the expanded securitization functions of the border are increasingly delocalized and focused on policing, detaining and relocating "mobilities" not in immediate proximity to the international legal border (Walters, 2006; Maddux, 2017).

CBP officers have been known to board Greyhound busses without a warrant in Vermont, and have stood outside bus doorways inquiring about citizenship status in Burlington, Vermont (a distance of less than 50 miles) prior to allowing passengers to board (Hewitt, 2018; Page, 2018). The American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont (ACLU-VT), submitted a series of Freedom of Information requests in 2012 to federal agencies, discovering that DHS had drawn up plans for creating eight-acre permanent border control checkpoints, many as much as 100 miles from the Canadian border, along the north-south interstates in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine (ACLU-VT, 2013a). Later the same year, ACLU-VT released a new study titled "Surveillance on the Northern Border," which detailed the extensive way the newest surveillance technologies are being implemented to track the movements of citizens of Vermont (ACLU-VT, 2013b). The ACLU report noted that because over 90 percent of Vermonters live within the 100-mile possible interior checkpoint zone, Vermont has become a "perverse Ground Zero in the accelerating surveillance society" (Picard, 2013).

While there is no evidence linking plans to expand interior checkpoints including in Vermont's so-called "sanctuary status," but in 2017 the U.S. Department of Justice identified Vermont and its largest city of Burlington as possible "sanctuary" jurisdictions, warning that the failure to comply with any immigration laws could result in lost federal funding (Page, 2018). After growing citizen complaints and continued remote checkpoints set up especially in Vermont and New Hampshire on Interstate 91, Vermont U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy co-sponsored with Washington U.S. Senator Patty Murray legislation called the Border Zone Reasonableness Restoration Act of 2018 to limit the CBP remote control and securitization abilities. Shortly after introducing this legislation, Leahy was joined by Vermont's other two congressional representatives—U.S. Senator Bernard Sanders and Congressman Peter Welch—criticizing CBP plans to continue to set up interior checkpoints and releasing a joint statement that read in part:

We are concerned these interior checkpoints may result in warrantless searches that violate the constitutionally protected Fourth Amendment right to privacy for everyone in our country and will instill fear in our immigrant communities—regardless of an individual's immigration status. We believe that inside our country the phrase "show me your papers" does not belong in the United States of America (Ring, 2018).

Actions by ICE and CBP agents have enacted border securitization policies that overtly single out certain groups, thereby creating a parallel social space of insecurity and precarity for those viewed worthy of scrutiny and exclusion. Over the past several years there has been a significant increase in the targeting, arrest and detention of undocumented immigrants in the New York–Vermont border region by ICE and CBP agents, as reported by the Swanton Border Control Sector, an area from the eastern border of New York, across all of Vermont, to the New Hampshire–Maine border. Importantly, the total number of undocumented people caught crossing from Canada to the U.S. in the Swanton sector reached its highest level in fiscal year 2018 since 2011: the CBP apprehended 736 people in fiscal year 2018, up from 449 in fiscal year 2017, including 142 families attempting to cross into the United States from Canada in fiscal year 2018 (Norton and Rodrigues, 2019). Yet, in addition to this increase in the capture and detention of illegal border crossing attempts from Canada to the United States, there has also been an increase in CBP and ICE arrests of undocumented immigrants in Vermont, with an increase in the Swanton sector from 291 to 449 for an increase of 54 percent in fiscal year 2017 (Dilawar, 2018). This increase in arrests of undocumented immigrants seems consistent with the Trump administration's 2017 executive order, Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States, which eliminated the Obama-era focus on arresting undocumented immigrants with criminal convictions.

Perhaps again connected circumstantially to Vermont's status as a "sanctuary state," but more directly to recent political campaigns in Vermont designed to promote the human rights of undocumented immigrants, ICE and the CBP have appeared to target especially the state's population of immigrant dairy farm laborers (Flores, 2017; Mares, 2019; Thompson, 2020). Workers and activists from the Vermont-based immigrant human rights group Migrant Justice have been detained, intimidated, harassed and arrested conspicuously coinciding with three recent campaigns to improve the well-being of undocumented laborers in Vermont. In 2013, Migrant Justice campaigned to pass the Vermont Driver's Privilege card, which allowed state residents the opportunity to drive legally regardless of immigration status. In 2016, Migrant Justice collaborated in the drafting and passing of the Vermont Fair and Impartial Policing Policy, which prohibits discriminatory policing and law enforcement at the local and state level. And in 2018, Migrant Justice played a key role through its "Milk with

Dignity" campaign in lobbying Ben and Jerry's ice cream business to improve the working conditions, wages and benefits of laborers in Vermont's dairy industry (Dilawar, 2018; CIAS, 2019). A lawsuit was filed in November 2018 by ACLU-VT, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the National Center for Law and Economic Justice and the National Immigration Law Center on behalf of the plaintiffs Migrant Justice. According to the deposition, ICE and CBP agents of the Department of Homeland Security exhibited a pattern of retaliation against immigration activists with Migrant Justice and collaborated with the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to obtain information on people with "South of the Border" names applying for driving privilege cards but profiled as undocumented immigrants (Holpuch, 2018; Mukpo, 2018). In October 2020, ICE settled with Migrant Justice, agreeing not to deport the activists who sued the agency after experiencing retaliation and arrest, and to inform ICE officers not to target migrants for "exercising First Amendment rights (Rathke, 2020).

Some anti-migrant measures have been rolled back under the Biden administration, but others have continued, sustaining a system of exclusion and insecurity for many migrants and asylum seekers (Chotiner, 2023; Narea, 2023). Capturing the sense of continuity in exclusionary immigration policy from one administration to the other, one asylum officer remarked, "At this point, I can't tell the difference between the Biden immigration policy and Trump immigration policy" (Alvarez, 2023). Most notably, the Biden administration has maintained Title 42, the pandemic-era health policy adopted by the Trump administration in March 2020, which allows migrants and asylum seekers who cross the U.S.-Canada or U.S.-Mexico border to be expelled quickly. However, some of the more extreme anti-migrant measures adopted under Trump have been rolled back. The Biden administration added Myanmar and Venezuela to the list of those who may be able to apply for TPS, while extending benefits beyond 2022 for immigrants from nine other countries, and expanding eligibility for Haitians in light of the ongoing violence and unrest in that country.

CONCLUSION

This analysis has reviewed changing border and immigration policies on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border, which have been shaped by politicized security concerns whose origins reside in unresolved and growing global challenges of refugee resettlement and cross-border migration. Recent contributions to border theory have highlighted the ways in which borders have increasingly become sites of filtering and control. As we argue in this article, the border policies outlined above serve multiple, sometimes contradictory functions: to reinforce culturally and politically-constructed

conceptions of nationhood and belonging; to welcome certain groups designated as desired; to promote economic integration, and to reinforce security objectives against perceived threats from alien actors. As Leary has argued, while the international legal borders that separate the United States from Mexico and Canada are located in specific geographic places, the importance of the border and shifting border policies of control have become increasingly symbolic: people inside the borders and walls "share a pure American nationality, uncontaminated by anyone perceived to be 'Latin American' or otherwise 'foreign' . . . the wall in other words, is as much about who it keeps in as who it supposedly keeps out" (Leary, 2017: 146). Evolving border policies of control and securitization under the Trump administration and afterwards may not successfully deter migrants from seeking refuge and asylum, but these policies do, according to Andreas, "reinforce territorial identities, symbolize and project an image of state authority, and relegitimize the boundaries of the 'imagined community'" (Andreas, 2018: 325).

In short, like the southern border, the northern U.S. border has also become contested site for the nativist, anti-immigration political project, where increased policing efforts at border control by the CBP and "remote control" by CBP and ICE are symptomatic of a broader disequilibrium in the current world order and the particular political-historical moment characterized by a global rise in xenophobia, right-wing populism, economic protectionism, deepening inequality and cross-border panic over mass migrations of people fueled by asymmetrical war and climate change.

While nativist rhetoric was flourishing in the United States under Trump, the Canadian government of Justin Trudeau initially engaged in a concerted effort to distance itself from the policies of the Trump administration and to portray itself as a kinder, gentler, more welcoming site for asylum seekers and other migrants. Nonetheless, as we have seen in this article, the Trudeau government continues to engage in policies that exclude would-be migrants crossing the northern U.S. border into Canada, resulting in the agreement between the U.S. and Canada that was announced in 2023 to extend the STCA to the entire land border. These converging border politics show that power struggles and ideological debates over securitization within both the United States and Canada between the federal and state/provincial governments and political parties are trumping human rights and international legal concerns about migrant safety and refugee resettlement.

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