# Working Papers on Arctic Security No. 2

## Turtle Island Blues:
### Climate Change and Failed Indigenous Securitization in the Canadian Arctic

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The Emerging Arctic Security Environment

**TURTLE ISLAND BLUES: CLIMATE CHANGE AND FAILED INDIGENOUS SECURITIZATION IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC**

# Working Papers on Arctic Security

This series seeks to stimulate deeper academic dialogue on Arctic security issues in Canada. Papers fall into three categories. The first includes theoretically–and empirically–driven academic papers on subjects related to Arctic security broadly conceptualized. The second focuses on the impacts of defence and security practices on Arctic peoples, with a particular emphasis on the Canadian North during and after the Cold War. The third category of papers summarizes key Canadian and international policy documents related to Arctic security and sovereignty issues.

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# Turtle Island Blues:
## Climate Change and Failed Indigenous Securitization in the Canadian Arctic

*Wilfrid Greaves, M.A.*

The circumpolar Arctic is being radically transformed by the interaction between an altered physical environment due to anthropogenic climate change and various economic and political forces that have emerged in the post-Cold War period. The effects of climate change on the Arctic ecology, and the impacts of those changes for human life in the region, are eliciting intensified research attention. For some actors, the concept of 'Arctic security' encompasses the most pressing policy questions attending this comprehensive regional transformation. Yet not all actors – including governments, indigenous groups, NGOs, scholars, and private corporations – are responding in the same way to the security challenges and opportunities confronting the region and its people.

Even a brief examination of the competing narratives of security in and for the region suggests that there is no consensus about what constitutes 'Arctic security' and its attendant practices. Conventional analyses employ a militarized lens reminiscent of the Cold War, or an updated focus upon unconventional threats to state sovereignty transmitted through the Arctic, such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal migration. Other commentators view Arctic security as inherently linked to the environmental and human security implications of climate change for the people (particularly indigenous peoples) who inhabit the circumpolar North. Still others link Arctic security to domestic or continental energy security, and the development of large-scale hydrocarbon resources in the comparatively stable neighbourhood of the Euro-American Arctic region. In short, 'Arctic security' remains fundamentally contested.

These competing conceptualizations of security can be understood not as objective analyses of conditions of (in)security in the Arctic, but as efforts to *securitize* – to raise to the extra-political level of 'security threat' – issues that affect the interests of particular actors. Regardless of their accuracy or normativity, these representations of Arctic security constitute speech acts, or 'securitizing moves,' attempting to designate particular phenomena as threats requiring emergency measures and superordinate status within relevant policy discussions. Given the discursive power of security logic, and the extra-political authority that accrues to governments whenever states of emergency are invoked and issues successfully 'securitized,' the struggle to define (in)security in the Arctic is central to the region's future.

This paper investigates how Arctic security is understood by people who live in the region. How have indigenous actors conceptualized Arctic security in the Canadian North? What explains the failure of indigenous efforts to securitize Arctic climate change? It undertakes textual analysis of indigenous securitizing moves in the Arctic through the publicly available online documents of four actors: the three Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council representing Canadian indigenous peoples (Arctic Athabaskan Council, Gwich'in Council International, and the Inuit Circumpolar Council), and the national Inuit organization in Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). The paper a) lays out a revised securitization framework for understanding security claims; b) maps how Arctic security has been articulated by these indigenous actors in the Canadian North; and c) applies the revised securitization theory to partially explain the failure of indigenous efforts to securitize Arctic climate change. The findings suggests that the

traditional indigenous concern over 'cultural security' driven by modernization and Southern Canadian influence is giving way to a central *security* concern over climate change as the greatest threat to traditional indigenous ways of life. The paper further hypothesizes that indigenous securitization claims, especially as related to climate change, are particularly susceptible to failed or unsuccessful securitization because of the 'insecurity of non-dominance' that discursively and practically constructs indigenous Canadians outside the scope of acceptable securitizing actors in Canada. The findings provide some insight into securitization processes in Canada, including the security priorities of the federal government and indigenous groups; the nature of indigenous understandings of 'security' in the Canadian Arctic; and the effectiveness (i.e. policy influence) of indigenous securitizing moves.

# Constituting (In)Security

### The Copenhagen School's Securitization Theory

The logic of security is the logic of emergency; it invokes an existential challenge to a given referent object to justify extraordinary measures in the protection of that object. Security, however, is not an absolute property or fixed state, but rather an inter-subjective, aspirational condition characterized by effective response to the threat of danger to a given referent object's continued existence or wellbeing. The conceptualization of security as socially constructed has been most prominently developed by the Copenhagen School's (CS) securitization theory, particularly the work of Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan. In the School's original theorization, security is neither characterized by the absence of threat *per se*, nor is it a binary opposite to insecurity; instead, "insecurity is the situation when there is a threat and no defence against it; security is a situation with a threat *and* a defence against it."[1] Security is thus not constituted by the absence of threat, but by the identification of a threat *and* a suitable defence-response. The Copenhagen securitization theory, however, is explicitly *not* concerned with identifying 'real' security threats, but rather identifying the discursive and performative processes that transform a given issue *into* a security threat "requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure."[2] Thus, 'security threats' are not inherently so; rather "the performative speech act part – the securitising move – only evolves into a complete securitisation at the point when a designated 'audience' accepts the speech act."[3] The CS theory is "radically constructivist" in that 'security' is determined by the success of particular security speech acts, or 'securitizing moves,' in elevating an issue – in theory, any issue – to the fore of the audience's consciousness and the apex of political priority.[4] Spoken, written, and performed representations of (in)security can be considered tactical manoeuvring by actors seeking to securitize 'their' issue. The process of speaking and/or writing security and having those security claims accepted by the appropriate audience is the essence of securitization theory; "'security' is thus a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat."[5]

The radically constructed nature of security is the source of the CS theory's analytical strength and normative weakness. Analytically, examining the discursive and performative ways that security is constructed provides explanatory leverage over competing or contradictory representations of security within a particular context or for a particular referent object. Securitization theory offers a powerful framework for examining the success and failure of different securitizing moves, including the successful securitization of phenomena that bear little resemblance to

[1] Ole Wæver, "Securitisation: Taking Stock of a Research Programme in Security Studies," unpublished paper (2003). Quoted in Rita Floyd, *Security and Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 30-31. Italics in original.

[2] Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis.* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 24.

[3] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 1.

[4] Buzan *et al., Security,* 35.

[5] Buzan *et al., Security,* 24.

quantifiable security issues affecting observable or valued referent objects.[6] Indeed, it provides a theoretical lens for understanding how security is always contested, or at least is always susceptible to contestation.

This analytical strength is undermined by CS theory's normative weakness, since if nothing is inherently a security issue, and security is really just a form of intersubjective politics, then one securitization is as valid as any other. As Wæver illustrates, the School goes a step further and asserts the general normative undesirability of securitization: When there is no security problem, we do not conceptualize our situation in terms of security; instead, security is simply an irrelevant concern. The statement, then, that security is always relative, and one never lives in complete security, has the additional meaning that, if one has such complete security, one does not label it 'security.' It therefore never appears. Consequently, transcending a security problem by politicizing it cannot happen *through* thematization in security terms, only *away* from such terms.[7]

This preference for desecuritization is one of the central normative distinctions between the CS securitization theory and other schools of security thought. Rationalist theories emphasize the provision of as much security as possible for a specified referent object (usually the sovereign state and its vital national interests), while critical security theories emphasize the need to shift away from statist and military conceptions of security in order to achieve greater human emancipation. For the Copenhagen School, however, "desecuritization itself – as the absence of a world framed in terms of security – is the emancipatory ideal."[8]

The preference for desecuritization is derived from several assumptions challenged by recent critical contributions to securitization theory. Rita Floyd has observed that two conceptual problems attend the original formulation of securitization theory: a disinclination to study securitizing actors' intentions, and limited conceptual room to evaluate whether a particular phenomenon is a 'real' security threat, and thus whether it ought to be securitized.[9] The CS takes these limitations as inevitable because of its "radically constructivist approach regarding security . . .[in which] security is a quality actors inject into issues by securitizing them."[10] Together, the inability to theorize 'real' security threats and whether or not an issue *should* be viewed as a security threat weaken the analytical merits of securitization theory. These challenges necessitate revisions to certain conceptual elements of the Copenhagen School's approach in order to strengthen the normative basis of securitization theory.

### *Revised Securitization Theory*

Three theoretical critiques of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory are relevant to this paper: a critique of audience, a critique of securitizing actors, and a critique of radically constructed security threats. Taken together, these criticisms enable securitization theory to analyze 'brute' threats and their correspondence with successful instances of securitization. When brute threats match successful securitization we may call it 'felicitous' or normatively desirable securitization, defying the Copenhagen claim that securitization is necessarily undesirable because it impedes the rational, discursive, and democratic resolution of complex social problems. Revised securitization theory thus differentiates between 'good' and 'bad' deployments of security logic, and offers a

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[6] For examples see: Rita Abrahamsen, "Blair's Africa: The Politics of Securitization and Fear," *Alternatives*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2005); Wolfram Lacher, "Actually Existing Security: The Political Economy of the Saharan Threat," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (2008); and Juha A. Vuori, "A Timely Prophet? The Doomsday Clock as a Visualization of Securitization Moves with a Global Referent Object," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2010).

[7] Ole Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," in Ronnie D. Lipschutz, ed., *On Security.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 56.

[8] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 48-49.

[9] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 2.

[10] Buzan *et al., Security,* 204. Italics in original.

normatively improved alternative to the original Copenhagen conceptualization. The proceeding analysis synthesizes recent theoretical contributions into a parsimonious account of revised securitization theory.

The conception of audience is integral to understanding the CS's preference for desecuritization. Drawing on Austinian language theory, the School claims that, to succeed, a speech act must be accepted by the appropriate audience, which is not clearly theorized but is strongly implied to be a democratic public. Floyd notes that such an optimistic view of the audience's participatory role in accepting securitizing moves reveals that this audience "is not an analytical concept at all, but rather a normative concept in analytical disguise.... [Wæver] believes that politics *should* be done consensually and through dialogue and deliberation, as opposed to politics being a top-down process."[11] Thus, Wæver insists that whereas securitization forecloses 'normal' political opportunities for debate and discussion, desecuritization results in politicization, whereby issues can be resolved without the coercive and emergency connotations of labelling them 'security issues.' The CS presumption that issues will be tackled through normal political means if they are not securitized leads to the preference for desecuritization-qua-politicization, but suggests that "the concept of audience arises from [the School's] view of what politics *ought* to be, therefore not necessarily from how it actually *is*."[12]

Furthermore, Thierry Balzacq observes that the CS suffers from an inconsistency between its view of securitization as both an illocutionary speech act – whereby speaking security something is *done*, i.e. an issue is labelled a threat and transformed into a security issue – and as an intersubjective process wherein acceptance by the appropriate audience is necessary for success.[13] The result is confusion between illocutionary security that is self-referential but not intersubjective, and intersubjective security that is established between actor and audience but is not self-referential. Intersubjective security has a basis of meaning outside the grammar and language of security, because it draws from the "heuristic artefacts [which] a securitizing actor [must] use to create (or effectively resonate with) the circumstances that will facilitate the mobilization of the audience.... [The] outcome is to open up the politics and methods of creating security, since discourse involves practice and refers to variables that are *extra-linguistic*."[14] Illocutionary security is susceptible to the CS concern over non-democratic and non-rational responses to security issues, but is inconsistent with a democratic ideal-type because the audience's consent is not required for the success of an illocution, which succeeds simply by being.[15] Conversely, an audience-centric approach may conform to Wæver's democratic ideal, but such an audience cannot be taken for granted. Indeed, given the political and potentially existential implications of speaking security, the audience-actor relationship can never be presumed to be power-free, and so requires examination of the power dynamics between the securitizing actor and audience. Since the School does not clearly theorize *who* comprises the audience, but expends extensive effort establishing the self-referential and illocutionary natures of security speech acts, "the [CS] speech act view of security does not account for the relation between the persuasive power of an agent and a concomitant swing in the attitude of the target audience."[16] It omits serious discussion of the role of the audience in securitization, and the relevance of the identities of both audience and securitizing actor.

In addition to under-theorizing the audience, the CS downplays the role of securitizing analysts as actors. In its view, analysts are not actors because the former only examine the behaviours of the latter to determine whether they

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[11] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 50. Italics added.

[12] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 51. Italics in original.

[13] Thierry Balzacq, "The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context," *European Journal of International Relations,* Vol. 11, No. 2 (2005): 177.

[14] Balzacq, "The Three Faces of Securitization," 178-179. Italics added.

[15] See Juha A. Vuori, "Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitization: Applying the Theory of Securitization to the Study of Non-Democratic Political Orders," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2008).

[16] Balzacq, "The Three Faces of Securitization," 176.

correspond with the logic of security and thus constitute securitizing moves or successful securitization. Accordingly, "the security analyst and the securitising actor are 'functionally distinct' entities with the security analyst in no position to assume the role of the securitising actor at any point in the analysis."[17] Scholars and other analysts should not advocate for particular securitizations, but limit themselves to analyzing the securitizing moves of others. This view is inconsistent, however, with the School's own radically constructivist approach, since it minimizes "the role of the political (social) scientist in co-constituting political reality…. The securitisation analyst in writing (speaking) about a particular social reality is in part responsible for the co-constitution of this very reality, as by means of her own text this reality is (re)produced."[18] This conclusion is difficult to avoid within the School's own constructivist logic, but results in two related problems. First, it reduces security to an intertext, denying it meaning beyond that contained in the discursive interstice it occupies between different spoken and written articulations of 'security.'[19] This, in turn, perpetuates a discursive and practical distance between security scholarship and conditions in the 'real world.' It is more theoretically consistent to consider securitizing analysts *as* securitizing actors who help constitute security by contributing epistemological and theoretical innovations that have widened the field of security research, and by articulating particular threats that (to them) are worthy of or urgently require investigation and advocacy.[20] Denying the securitizing role of analysts only serves to obscure the interests that are *always* at stake when security language is invoked. Perhaps more importantly, recognizing the role of security analysts in 'co-constituting political reality' holds out the prospect of meaningful interaction between analyses of security and observable conditions in the material world.

Such a connection between the material and constructed aspects of security is generally absent from discussions of securitization; indeed, the Copenhagen School explicitly posits that it "want[s] to avoid a view of security that is given objectively and emphasize that security is determined by actors and in this respect is subjective."[21] The danger, however, is that a radically constructivist approach to security overlooks the physical world and material objects, including people, in which and upon which security logic operates. To deny the objective existence of *any* security threats because these issues have not been articulated using security grammar, accepted by an audience, or transformed into a defence-response imparts excessive ideational power to language while overlooking the material impacts of 'brute threats.' According to Balzacq:

In [the CS] scheme, there is no security problem except through the language game. Therefore, *how* problems are 'out there' is exclusively contingent upon how we linguistically depict them. This is not always true. For one, language does not construct reality; at best, it shapes our perception of it. Moreover, it is not theoretically useful nor is it empirically credible to hold that what we say about a problem would *determine* its essence…. Some security problems are the attribute of the development itself.[22]

While in need of further theorization, the existence of brute threats challenges analysts to critically interrogate security claims against observed reality. Although discursively constructed, security always has a referent object, the conditions of whose continued existence and wellbeing can be evaluated (as can the value of that referent object relative to others). Such evaluations may be subjective, but need not be arbitrary. Borrowing from Alexander Wendt's defence of 'rump materialism' in constructivist International Relations theory, while security acts must be

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[17] Buzan *et al., Security,* 33-34.

[18] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 47.

[19] See James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics*. (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1989).

[20] Johan Erikkson, "Observers or Advocates? On the Political Role of Security Analysts," *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1999).

[21] Buzan *et al., Security,* 31.

[22] Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitization," 181. Italics in original.

spoken, accepted by an audience, and implemented into policy to 'succeed,' security claims should also be evaluated, to the extent possible, based on their reflection of the physical realities and material forces that constrain the social world.[23]  Subjecting claims to such a rough 'correspondence test of truth' recognizes that just because security threats are constituted by actors and audiences does not mean they cannot be scientifically evaluated against relatively objective phenomena: "namely to rely on publicly available, albeit always theory-laden, evidence from the world, which critics of our theoretical claims can assess for relevance, accuracy, and so on."[24]  An emphasis on materiality greatly enhances the empirical rigour of securitization analysis, and strengthens the claim that "in the case of brute threats, securitisation may well be a more viable political strategy than desecuritization."[25] After all, desecuritizing a brute threat without effective politicization may result in disaster for the referent object in question.

There are many implications of these revisions to securitization theory, but three are central to the remainder of this paper. First, the identities of the securitizing audience and actors matter for securitization, because who the audience is determines the locus of decision-making for designating security threats, just as who the actor is matters for evaluating their intentionality in speaking security. In this context, *intentionality* helps to explain why failed securitizing moves were unsuccessful. Second is the basic insight, drawing from Balzacq, that securitization is both context-dependent and power-laden.[26]  In this respect, the 'value-neutral' linguistic rules which construct the securitization game must be considered in light of the pre-existing socio-political context in which securitization is undertaken, and in light of the unequal abilities of actors to effectively speak security on the basis of their situation within that context. Seen through the lens of power, that only some securitizing moves translate into changes to state behaviour invites us to consider failed securitizations "not as some inevitable occurrence but as a direct result of existing structures of power that determine who enjoys the entitlement to security and who does not."[27]  Third, securitizations can be evaluated, at least in part, on the basis of correspondence between brute threats and effective policy response. To consider only successful securitizations as representative of the range of society's security concerns, however, risks conflating the security preferences of dominant societal actors with the security concerns of all groups within the state. Failed securitizations must also be examined. Methodologically, when brute threats are not matched by policy securitization we have an entry point for critically analyzing the power relations operating in a given social context that render some security claims worthy of official consideration, while marginalizing others as undeserving of the emergency measures promised by successful invocation of security language.

# Identity, Power, and Security

### Indigeneity, Non-Dominance, and Securitization

Its emphasis on social construction makes securitization theory particularly applicable to issues of identity. The referent object in such cases is the nature of the community itself, including the identity(ies) that link its members. The construction of identity is central; some hazards might threaten a community or its members irrespective of the social relations that exist between them, but others can only be understood in terms of their impact upon the shared markers that constitute a particular identity group.[28]  Since communal identities are socially constructed, so too are

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[23] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 109-113.

[24] Alexander Wendt, "On Constitution and Causation in International Relations," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (1998): 106.

[25] Floyd, *Security and Environment,* 33.

[26] Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitization," 179.

[27] Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin eds., *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience.* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 3.

[28] See Buzan *et al., Security* and Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup, and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Order in Europe*. (London: Pinter, 1993).

the hazards by which identities are considered threatened. "Threats to identity are thus always a question of the *construction* of something as threatening some 'we' – and often thereby actually contributing to the construction or reproduction of 'us,'" the original CS theorists noted.[29] Accordingly, communities experience insecurity differently "depending upon how their identity is constructed."[30]

Whether threats to a particular identity are actually securitized, however, is a function of the power relations between the holders of that identity, other securitizing actors, and the audience that must accept the validity of the identity group's security claims. The question "that highlights the role of power in security policy is: who has been vested with the legitimacy and/or expertise to be able to perform the act of securitization within a given society?"[31] No actor is entirely excluded from securitization processes, but some have privileged access, usually on the basis of some prior legitimacy or social capital.[32] Socio-political and state elites, through their greater control of political and economic resources, mass media, and the instruments of government authority, therefore occupy a dominant position within securitization processes that privileges their conceptions of security (i.e. statist and elite) over those of non-dominant actors.[33] As such, identities that are shared by these elites or that are strongly linked with the state are privileged as more security-worthy than competing or marginal sub- and trans-state identities. Accordingly, beyond hazards to a particular identity, identities matter for security: "relations of dominance and non-dominance determine who defines norms and practices and who must follow them; who is important and who is not; who defines the parameters of the debate and who does not; who is valuable and who is not"[34]; and, by extension, who is to be secured and who is not.

Securitization non-dominance, understood as structural or systematic restrictions upon a group's ability to influence government policy regarding designation and defence against security threats to that group, is crucial to understanding security in modern liberal democratic states.[35] Insofar as CS securitization theory exhibits a 'democratic bias' towards the actor-audience relationship, but views the relationship as essentially non-hierarchical and open to rational decision-making, it "denies relations of dominance and non-dominance within the global north itself. People [who] are located in the north but that do not reap the benefits of the dominant group – such as, for example, indigenous peoples or marginalized communities – vanish within such a security approach."[36] The security and identities of dominant social groups are privileged within any 'power-free' analysis of (in)security; the concerns of the minority and marginalized are erased. Societal power relations form a crucial part of answering the base questions of securitization: what has been designated as a threat, by whom, and to what referent object?

### *Indigenous Non-Dominance in Canada*

The significance of power is nothing new to critical indigenous scholarship, and the non-dominance of indigenous peoples vis-à-vis the state and the majority society is the operative context for many discussions of Aboriginal politics in Canada. Joyce Green notes that whereas citizenship, constitutionalism, and human rights perform an emancipatory role for most Canadians, "Aboriginal peoples are likely to understand the state as an oppressor that

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[29] Buzan *et al., Security,* 120. Italics in original.

[30] Buzan *et al., Security,* 124.

[31] Kyle Grayson, *Chasing Dragons: Security, Identity, and Illicit Drugs in Canada.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 41.

[32] Buzan *et al., Security,* 33.

[33] Citing Pierre Bourdieu, Balzacq makes a similar point. See Balzacq, "Three Faces of Securitization," 190-191.

[34] Gunhild Hoogensen and Kirsti Stuvoy, "Gender, Resistance, and Human Security," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 2006): 219.

[35] Wilfrid Greaves, "Insecurities of Non-Dominance: Re-Theorizing Human Security and Environmental Change in Developed States," in Matthew A. Schnurr and Larry A. Swatuk, eds., *Environmental Change, Natural Resources and Social Conflict: Rethinking Environmental Security in Theory and Practice.* (Palgrave: forthcoming 2012).

[36] Hoogensen and Stuvoy, "Gender, Resistance, and Human Security," 216.

has become economically and politically strong at the direct expense of Aboriginal nations.... Canada rests on the foundation of indigenous immiseration through colonization."[37]   Indeed, Aboriginal non-dominance has been institutionalized in the architecture of the Canadian state. The capacity of indigenous groups to pursue their rights and assert their interests against federal and provincial governments is circumscribed by their inferior legal and constitutional status. The *Indian Act* and subsequent legislation establish a fiduciary relationship between the federal government and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples that has made so-called "Indians a special class of persons, legal dependents on the crown, [and] children in the eyes of the law."[38]  This legal regime informed over a century of racist, exclusionary, and assimilationist practices directed by the state against Aboriginal peoples, and its legacy persists in the substantially worse life conditions experienced by Aboriginal populations both on- and off-reserve. Such conditions include: on-reserve unemployment nearly four times the national average (27.7% to 7.3%); on-reserve levels of sub-secondary education more than twice the national average (48.6% to 22.5%); almost one quarter of on-reserve households below the national adequacy standard (meaning housing units do not require major repairs to be habitable); life expectancy at birth nearly eight years less than the national average; and higher levels of physical violence, suicide, drug and alcohol dependence, as well as communicable diseases such as tuberculosis (6 to 11 times higher than national average) and HIV (12.9% of total reported cases).[39]  Relative to the dominant society, meaningful "security remains an aspiration for too many First Nations people in Canada."[40]

The Canadian state's efforts to remedy some of these structural conditions of indigenous non-dominance have proven generally ineffective. For instance, the *Constitution Act, 1982* stipulates that Aboriginal peoples possess a set of unspecified rights vis-à-vis the state, of which 'self-government' has been the primary focus of government and indigenous rights efforts. Self-government, however, as a limited interpretation of 'self-determination,' essentially means limited self-administration on 'Indian' lands. This formulation applies to a minority of Canadian Aboriginal peoples, ignoring Métis, off-reserve, and non-status 'Indians,' heavily filtered through patrilineal determination of 'Indian' status until 1985 and only partly remedied thereafter.[41]  Most indigenous peoples are thus unable to access even the limited opportunities for self-determination offered by the Canadian state. The power imbalance between Aboriginal peoples and the state can be seen as one of the constitutive factors of indigeneity in Canada, since when it comes to the basis of claims to self-determination "Aboriginality is its own justification; prior occupation to the settler society and political non-dominance both define Aboriginality and underwrite its claim for justice against the imposed socio-political order."[42]  Since Aboriginal claims are being made against the architecture and technologies of colonial power, they cannot be legitimately adjudicated by the colonial state, giving rise to the politics of the 'Fourth World' in which Aboriginal populations are marginalized within their own colonized territories. As an expression of the self-determination of Aboriginal peoples, self-government has thus struggled to overcome "the very configurations of colonial power that Indigenous peoples' demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend."[43]

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[37] Joyce Green, "Canaries in the Coal Mines of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (2001): 716.

[38] Sidney L. Harring, *White Man's Law: Native People in Nineteenth-Century Canadian Jurisprudence*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 263.

[39] Health Canada, *A Statistical Profile on the Health of First Nations in Canada: Determinants of Health, 1999 to 2003.* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2009) and Health Canada, *Healthy Canadians: A Federal Report on Comparable Health Indicators 2006.* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2006).

[40] Heather Smith, "Diminishing Human Security: The Canadian Case," in Sandra J. MacLean, David R. Black, and Timothy M. Shaw, eds., *A Decade of Human Security: Global Governance and the New Multilateralisms.* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 80-81.

[41] Green, "Canaries in the Coal Mines," 723-727.

[42] Green, "Canaries in the Coal Mines," 720.

[43] Glen S. Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada," *Contemporary Political Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (2007), 439.

In the Canadian Arctic, Aboriginal non-dominance is partly structured by the constitutional status of the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. Unlike provinces, whose powers derive from the Constitution, territorial governments have no inherent jurisdiction. Instead, their mandates and powers are delegated by the federal government, and their governments nominally headed by a federally appointed commissioner. Though the territories have the highest per capita representation in Parliament, in absolute terms they are by far the least significant jurisdictions in the House of Commons and have the lowest regional representation in the Senate. The territories also have the highest proportional Aboriginal populations of any Canadian jurisdictions, with Nunavut and the Northwest Territories both possessing Aboriginal majorities. While progress has been made in the realization of Northern Aboriginal self-government, including the resolution of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and establishment of the Nunavut Territory in 1999, the jurisdictions with Aboriginal majorities continue to be denied full incorporation into Confederation. While some point to progress on Aboriginal recognition and rights realized through the judicial system as a sign of improving structural conditions for indigenous peoples in Canada,[44] others contend that "colonial powers will only recognize collective rights and identities of Indigenous peoples insofar as this recognition does not throw into question the background legal, political, and economic framework of the colonial relationship itself."[45] In light of the brute threat of climate change, the constraints imposed by this relationship and the attendant implications of indigenous non-dominance for the ability to effectively catalyze state action to address climate change raise serious concerns for the (in)security of indigenous and other peoples throughout Arctic Canada.

# Indigenous Securitizing Moves in the Canadian Arctic

### Changing Climate, Changing Security

Non-dominance is essential to understanding indigenous politics in contemporary Canada, in this case the failure of indigenous securitizing moves in the Arctic to be effectively transformed into official policy. Although the language and practice of security are Western and Euro-American-centric conceptions that may not map well onto traditional indigenous worldviews,[46] indigenous peoples and their supporters have nonetheless adopted them as a tactic for mobilizing public and political opinion on issues of importance to them. Significantly, however, the object of indigenous efforts at securitization has changed as a result of broader dynamics in global politics and the emergence of climate change. Prior to the last decade, the predominant security framing for Arctic indigenous peoples was on maintaining the integrity and survival of their languages and cultural identities. This emphasis on indigenous cultural security was a reaction against both the historical injustices perpetrated against indigenous peoples and concerns that economic modernization was undermining the resilience of Aboriginal culture and driving large numbers of Aboriginal peoples towards assimilation by the dominant society.[47] If the "heart and soul of indigenous nations [consists of]: a set of values that challenge the homogenizing force of Western liberalism and free-market capitalism; that honor the autonomy of individual conscience, non-coercive authority, and the deep interconnection between human beings and other elements of creation,"[48] then the threat posed by assimilation of indigenous peoples into the dominant social and economic systems clearly implicates the maintenance of a 'traditional' indigenous identity.

Culture and identity remain central to indigenous efforts at securitization, but in the North these have become subsumed within a security discourse that emphasizes the threat posed to these values not by modernization *per se*, but by climate change. That anthropogenic climate change is itself caused by the 'modernization' of the global

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[44] Stan Persky, *Delgamuukw: The Supreme Court of Canada Decision on Aboriginal Title.* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 1999).

[45] Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire," 451.

[46] For an historical account of security see Emma Rothschild, "What is Security?" *Dædalus*, Vol. 124, No. 3 (1995): 53-98.

[47] Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1996).

[48] Taiaiake Alfred, *Power, Peace, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1999), 60.

economy is one of many tragic ironies to attend this discussion. Nowhere does this irony have more direct impacts than in the Arctic, where indigenous peoples are at the fore of acute climate changes that implicate every aspect of human and community life. The Arctic is experiencing significant and worsening ecological changes due to increased lake temperatures, permafrost thawing, stress on plant and animal populations, melting glaciers and disappearing sea ice.[49] Researchers have identified at least nine ways in which climate change exacerbates hazards to human health in the Arctic,[50] and the warming environment is threatening the physical integrity of communities, facilities, and infrastructure located in vulnerable areas across the North.[51] Estimated rates of glacier melt "will raise global sea levels about four inches by the end of the twenty-first century ... [and] in some cases, communities and industrial facilities in coastal zones are already threatened or being forced to relocate."[52] Such hazards are already apparent in the damage to critical infrastructure such as roads, airstrips, pipelines, and sewage systems as a result of melting permafrost and the ensuing destabilization of the ground upon which Arctic communities are built.[53] The environmental changes occurring in the Arctic constitute both immediate and long-term threats to human security and wellbeing in the region, and have become the central object of indigenous efforts to securitize emergent hazards to their ways of life.

In addition to the physical hazards, however, climate change affects security for indigenous peoples in the Canadian North because of the connection between Arctic indigenous identities and cultural practices with the natural environment. Many indigenous peoples share a close relationship between their communal identities and traditional natural environments: "cultural survival, identity and the very existence of indigenous societies depend to a considerable degree on the maintenance of environmental quality. The degradation of the environment is therefore inseparable from a loss of culture and hence identity."[54] Physical changes to the land that alter the ways indigenous peoples subsist, and which undermine the accumulated multi-generational knowledge of weather and climate patterns, animal movements, and methods of hunting and gathering, can have wide-reaching implications for Aboriginal cultures and identities. Reduced quality and availability of country foods affect Northerners' food and physical security, but also contribute to the erosion of cultural practices because "to hunt, catch, and share these foods is the essence of Inuit culture. Thus, a decline in [country foods] ... threatens not only the dietary requirements of the Inuit, but also their very way of life."[55] Thus, research on food security in the North increasingly calls for recognition of the cultural importance of traditional foods for Aboriginal peoples.[56]

Similarly, phenomena such as high rates of youth suicide have widespread implications for community-level security, and are indirectly related to climate change. With approximately 135/100,000 Inuit per year taking their own lives, more than 10 times the rate for non-Inuit Canadians, the widespread suicide of indigenous young people is corrosive

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[49] ACIA, *Impacts of a Warming Climate: Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); AHDR, *Arctic Human Development Report* (Akureyri: Steffanson Arctic Institute, 2004); and IPCC, *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[50] Stephanie Meakin and Tiina Kurvits, *Assessing the Impacts of Climate Change on Food Security in the Canadian Arctic.* (Ottawa: GRID-Arendal, March 2009), 20.

[51] Heather Auld, Don MacIver, and Joan Klaassen, *Adaptation Options for Infrastructure under Changing Climate Conditions*. (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 2007). Accessed at www.hazards.ca on January 18, 2011.

[52] Christine K. Durbak and Claudia M. Strauss, "Securing a Healthier World," in Felix Dodds and Tim Pippard, eds., *Human and Environmental Security: An Agenda for Change*. (London: Earthscan Publications, 2005), 134.

[53] Auld *et al.*, *Adaptation Options for Infrastructure,* 2007.

[54] Chris Cocklin, "Water and 'Cultural Security'," in Edward A. Page and Michael Redclift, eds., *Human Security and the Environment: International Comparisons.* (Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2002), 159.

[55] ACIA, *Impacts of a Warming Climate,* 94.

[56] See Jill Lambden, Olivier Receveur, and Harriet V. Kuhnlein, "Traditional Food Attributes Must be Included in Studies of Food Security in the Canadian Arctic," *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, Vol. 66, No. 4 (2007): 308-319 and Elaine M. Power, "Conceptualizing Food Security for Aboriginal People in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (2008): 95-97.

for the wellbeing of families and communities.[57]  Since suicide rates are "associated with a view of young males not seeing a future for themselves as hunters and contributors to their community and at the same time not fitting into the cash employment structures that are becoming the dominant lifestyle,"[58] the further instability that climate change promises to traditional subsistence ways of life are likely to aggravate the Aboriginal suicide epidemic. At levels ranging from the individual to families, communities, territories, and the region as a whole, climate change is driving the ways in which 'Arctic security' is changing.

That Canadian indigenous peoples have principally operationalized 'Arctic security' in terms of the impacts of climate change is clear. For instance, textual analysis of the publicly accessible online documents – including declarations, press releases, speeches, journal articles and other publications – of four organizations representing Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples indicates that securitizing moves between 2001 and 2011 are reserved for discussions of climate change. The three Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council representing Canadian indigenous peoples – the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), Gwich'in Council International (GCI), and Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) – and the Canadian national Inuit organization, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), have a combined 538 documents available online covering all manner of advocacy, awareness-raising, and public relations topics. As identified in Appendix 1, 25 of these documents constitute securitizing moves, as they employ the grammar of securitization (invocation of 'security,' 'insecurity,' or 'threat') in order to identify an urgent threat to the survival or functional wellbeing of a specified referent object. Of these 25 securitizing moves, the referent objects invoked included: general environmental insecurity (19); food security (11), especially the welfare of caribou herds (4); culture, language, or traditional ways of life (9); indigenous health (5); and indigenous peoples' human rights (4). None of the 538 documents makes securitizing moves without identifying the direct or indirect impacts of climate change as the source of the threat, including non-securitized discussion of the same referent object in non-climate change related contexts, for instance language policy and indigenous language education. In effect, 'security' was reserved for discussions of climate change, and the multiple ways in which it is affecting, and will affect in future, the material and cultural wellbeing of indigenous peoples in the Canadian Arctic.

The claim that indigenous conceptions of Arctic security are increasingly, if not quite exclusively, framed in terms of climate change is supported by the results of the first *Arctic Security Public Opinion Survey*, commissioned by the Munk-Gordon Arctic security program in 2010. The survey findings also highlight the ongoing contestation over 'Arctic security' between indigenous groups and actors such as the federal government, though a full discussion of these competing securitizations is beyond the scope of this paper.[59]  When unprompted as to the meaning of security, a plurality of 27% of Northerners (including indigenous and non-indigenous respondents) indicated the most pressing Arctic security issue to be "protecting Canada's borders from international threats."[60]  When explicit reference to 'security' was omitted, however, and respondents were asked to simply list the most pressing Arctic issues, one third (33%) of Northerners listed the environment first, followed by housing and community infrastructure (9%) and the economy, jobs and employment (7%).[61]  Thus, by a ratio of 3:1 Northerners consider the environment to be the most important Arctic issue. Moreover, when prompted with a list of various dimensions of security, large majorities of all Canadians ranked environmental security as most important, followed by social, economic, and cultural/linguistic security, with national security falling at the very bottom of the list, considered

[57] Laurence J. Kirmayer, Gregory M. Brass, Tara Holton, Ken Paul, Cori Simpson, and Caroline Tait, *Suicide Among Aboriginal People in Canada* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2007).

[58] Kirmayer *et al*, *Suicide Among Aboriginal People*, 157.

[59] See Wilfrid Greaves, "For Whom, From What? Canada's Arctic Policy and the Narrowing of Human Security," *International Journal*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (2012): 219-240.

[60] EKOS, *Rethinking the Top of the World: Arctic Security Public Opinion Survey.* Submitted to The Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation and The Canada Centre for Global Security Studies at the Munk School of Global Affairs. (Toronto: EKOS Research Associates, 2011), 13.

[61] *Rethinking the Top of the World,* 13*.*

important by only half of Northern respondents (56%).[62] Indicative of the shift that has taken place in indigenous security thinking from culture and language to the environment and climate change, 91% of Northerners considered environmental security to be important to their definition of 'Arctic security,' compared to only 66% who felt the same for cultural and language security.[63] It seems clear that insofar as Northern Canadians, and particularly Aboriginal Canadians, think in terms of 'Arctic security,' they do so with respect to the social, economic, and cultural impacts of climate change.

### *Failure to Launch: Explaining Unsuccessful Securitization in the Arctic*

All human activity in the Arctic has been built upon a unique ecological reality, a physical environment that has underpinned our understandings of and interactions with the region. But transformational climate change is underway in the circumpolar Arctic: governments acknowledge this, have devised policies to address it, and purport to recognize the security and other policy challenges are already unfolding or predicted to arise.[64] Many scholars are critically examining how security conditions, in the Arctic and globally, are being undermined by climate change and other human-made environmental hazards, such as pollution, ecological degradation, and resource depletion.[65] Specific to securitization theory, Buzan and Wæver - both of whom are sceptics of securitizing the environment - have identified climate change as an emergent discourse of 'macrosecuritization' (securitization with a global referent object).[66] Efforts to securitize climate change and initiate the kinds of sweeping behavioural and systemic transformations needed to avoid the worst predicted impacts of excessive atmospheric greenhouse gas (GHG) concentration are growing in pitch and in tempo.

Nonetheless, global politics have not effectively securitized climate change, nor has Canada effectively securitized climate change. Canada's current Arctic policy is derived from three documents outlining the domestic and foreign, civilian and military dimensions of the Government's approach towards the North. The Conservative government released the *Canada First Defence Strategy*, *Canada's Northern Strategy*, and *Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy* between 2008 and 2010, which together form the guiding framework for federal economic, military, political, and environmental policy in the region. These documents clearly situate the juridico-legal sovereignty of the Canadian state over the Arctic as the referent object of government policy.[67] Indigenous peoples and climate change are categorically not securitized. There is a clear gap between official articulations of Arctic security-as-sovereignty and

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[62] *Rethinking the Top of the World,*14.

[63] *Rethinking the Top of the World,* 14*.*

[64] Barack H. Obama, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010); Canada, *Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2009); Canada, *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy: Exercising Sovereignty and Promoting Canada's Northern Strategy Abroad* (Ottawa: DFAIT, 2010); Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, *Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2012*. (Copenhagen: Government of Denmark, 2011); and Norway, *The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy.* (Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006). See also James Kraska, ed., *Arctic Security in an Age of Climate Change.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[65] ACIA, *Impacts of a Warming Climate*. See also The CNA Corporation, *National Security and the Threat of Climate Change* (Alexandria: The CNA Corporation, 2007); Commission on Arctic Climate Change, *The Shared Future: A Report of the Aspen Institute Commission on Arctic Climate Change.* (Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 2011); Felix Dodds and Tim Pippard, eds., *Human and Environmental Security: An Agenda for Change.* (Sterling: Earthscan Publications, 2005); Gunhild Hoogensen and Dawn Bazely, eds., *Environmental Change and Human Security in the Arctic.* (Earthscan: forthcoming 2012); Margaret Purdy and Leanne Smythe, "From Obscurity to Action: Why Canada Must Tackle the Security Dimensions of Climate Change," *International Journal*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (2010)**:** 411-433; Christian Webersik, *Climate Change and Security: A Gathering Storm of Global Challenges.* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010); and Kenneth S. Yalowitz, James F. Collins, and Ross A. Virginia, *The Arctic Climate Change and Security Policy Conference: Final Report and Findings.* (Hanover: Dartmouth College, 2008).

[66] Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, "Macrosecuritisation and Security Constellations: Reconsidering Scale in Securitisation Theory," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009)**:** 253-276.

[67] Greaves, "For Whom, From What?"

indigenous understandings of security-as-climate change. Mary Simon, president of ITK and past president of the ICC, explicitly challenges the statist conception of sovereignty as an "outdated model" unable to justly or effectively address the complex issues confronting Northern peoples.[68] The gap is further evident in indigenous reactions to the Conservative government maxim that Canada must 'use it or lose it' when it comes to sovereignty, because "the strategic importance of Canada's Arctic is heightened as never before."[69] The implication that Canadian Arctic sovereignty could be denied if it fails to actively assert its claims is met by Arctic indigenous peoples "with a certain level of irony," Simon observes. "Inuit have been living in ... and using ... the Arctic for millennia, and [they] have no intention of 'losing it.'"[70] The Government's view of Arctic security takes little account of the indigenous peoples who have lived there since time immemorial, and who are most affected by the impacts of global climate change. Moreover, the Government's preference for understanding Arctic security exclusively in terms of Arctic *sovereignty* serves to further marginalize the views, values, and rights of Arctic indigenous peoples by subordinating their locally experienced security concerns to the security priorities of the colonial Canadian state.

The rhetorical importance of climate change – undisputed by all Arctic states, including Canada – is not evident in actual practice or in state-based articulations of Arctic security. There is no single or totalizing reason why this is so, yet a partial explanation can be gleaned by applying the three insights of revised securitization theory to the realm of Arctic security: that identities of audience and securitizing actors matter; these identities are constrained by power and context; and even if some 'threats' are constructed, brute threats matter for the security of referent objects.

The identities of securitizing actors and audience matter for the success of any given securitization, but, as discussed above, this is complicated by the imprecise understanding of to whom 'the audience' refers. In this case, the securitizing actors are Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples, as represented by the AAC, GCI, ICC, and ITK. But the identity of the audience is open to question. A traditional analysis might suggest the audience is the Canadian public, and that indigenous securitizing moves are intended to generate public sympathy for the effects of climate change in the North. This may be accurate, but several scholars have noted the analytical limitations of such a view, even applied to liberal democratic societies.[71] In some cases, the legislature itself may be the real audience; after all, legislators must actually be convinced of a security claim, since they control public spending, pass legislation, and possess the authority to institute the types of emergency measures warranted by situations of acknowledged insecurity. In the case of the Canadian Arctic, the suggestion that the securitizing audience is actually the Parliament of Canada is strengthened by the constitutional subordination of the territories to the federal government, and the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government for indigenous Canadians. In both cases, the ultimate locus of political authority is the federal government in Ottawa; more specifically, given the centralized concentration of power in the Canadian parliamentary system, especially under majority governments, it lies in the office of the prime minister. If correct, this power structure has significant implications for the likely success of security claims advanced by indigenous Canadians, particularly those that contradict the established or preferred security narrative of the colonial Canadian state.

The reason for this, of course, is that the relationship between indigenous peoples (securitizing actor) and the federal government (securitizing audience) is power-laden and contextual. Though thorough discussion of this relationship is beyond the scope of this paper, it is significant that security for the colonial state has been constructed against Aboriginal Canadians, who in turn often perceive the federal government as the chief threat to their security as self-

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[68] Mary Simon, "Inuit and the Canadian Arctic: Sovereignty Begins at Home," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Spring 2009): 258.

[69] CBC News, "Arctic of 'strategic importance' to Canada: PM" (August 19, 2009).

[70] Simon, "Inuit and the Canadian Arctic," 252.

[71] Floyd, *Security and Environment*; Paul Roe, "Actor, Audience(s) and Emergency Measures: Securitization and the UK's Decision to Invade Iraq," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 39, No. 6 (2008) : 615-635; and Vuori, "A Timely Prophet?"

determining indigenous peoples. Note, for instance, regular instances of Aboriginal resistance to the state, including significant and widely publicized "flashpoint events,"[72] and the fact that indigenous groups are identified as appropriate subjects for surveillance and investigation by the state on the grounds of counterterrorism.[73] Insofar as security has traditionally been framed using a military lens, Canadian security imperatives have been articulated and implemented at the expense of traditional Aboriginal lands and treaty rights.[74] Although there is certainly agency that the Government could exercise in the determination of security claims, security threats "are often chosen and framed by discourses of security. In most, if not all, cases, a state's history, culture, and identity determine the discourse of security that will be most consistent with security conceptions, objectives, and policy."[75] Thus, the historical, tense, and unresolved relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state contributes to a socio-political context which marginalizes or dismisses indigenous security claims. Indigenous non-dominance in Canada is part cause and part consequence of this historical relationship.

The difficulty of having indigenous security claims accepted by an audience comprised of the colonial legislature from which past and contemporary security threats *to* indigenous peoples have been derived is compounded when the claim is related to climate change. This is because of the clear policy preference of the state to encourage and enable the very activities (i.e. hydrocarbon extraction and consumption) which cause the threat in question, even though these activities are only made possible in the Arctic *as a result of climate change*. Were Canada to securitize climate change in the Arctic it would render untenable a wide range of existent corporate, state, and societal practices in the Arctic region and across the country. Behaviours impossible to maintain would include greenhouse gas emission-related policies such as federal inaction towards reducing GHGs, failing to price carbon emissions, obstructing multilateral climate negotiations, permitting expansion of the Alberta tar sands, authorizing further offshore drilling on all three maritime coasts, geo-mapping the Arctic for further hydrocarbon resources, and discursively minimizing the future implications of climate change for Canadians. The Government is unlikely to implement such sweeping changes on a political issue to which it has been so consistently opposed, even if this includes ignoring or impeding the efforts of indigenous peoples to register the threat posed by climate change to their lives and ways of life. In this sense, efforts to securitize climate change in the Arctic fall prey to the long-standing reality that "mainstream national security discourse marginalises consideration of domestic sources of insecurity.... The responsibility for the threat ... is attributed to the distanced Other on the outside; in this way 'our complicity in evil is erased.'"[76] In this vein, Heather Smith has noted:

The unfortunate reality is that when we consider the political discourses crafted by the Conservative government of Stephen Harper on the Arctic, we are encouraged to regard Canada as an Arctic power, to focus on sovereignty and security, and to consider the melting Arctic as an opportunity for economic development. In spite of claims of stewardship, these encourage us to be blind to the realities of climate change, to disregard the problematic nature of sovereignty in an era of global environmental change, and to turn a blind eye to our contribution to the looming environmental tragedy.[77]

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[72] Peter Russell, "Oka to Ipperwash: The Necessity of Flashpoint Events," in L. Simpson and K. Ladner, eds., *This is an Honour Song: Twenty Years Since the Blockades.* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Press, 2010): 29-46.

[73] Steven Chase, "Military Intelligence Unit Spies on Native Groups," *The Globe and Mail* (October 12, 2011).

[74] See P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *Battle Grounds: The Canadian Military and Aboriginal Lands.* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

[75] Matt McDonald, "Human Security and the Construction of Security," *Global Society*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (2002): 285.

[76] Jon Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security: Ecological Politics and Policy in the New Security Area.* (New York: Zed, 2001), 5.

[77] Heather A. Smith, "Choosing Not to See: Canada, Climate Change, and the Arctic," *International Journal*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (2010): 931-932.

By any reasonable calculus, it seems undeniable that Arctic indigenous peoples' non-dominance consigns them to a position wherein they experience insecurity from climate change most acutely, yet are unable to effect a policy response commensurate to the hazards they face.

That indigenous peoples in the Arctic, as well as people elsewhere in Canada and around the globe, will experience the insecurities wrought by climate change irrespective of whether it is effectively securitized is the painful reality of a brute security threat. In this regard, a growing chorus of scholarly voices are examining different facets of the non-securitization of the climate and the implications in the Arctic and elsewhere.[78] These contributions are analytical and scholarly, yet can be interpreted as self-consciously securitizing moves on the part of individual scholars who are engaging as securitizing actors through their work and the (re)productions of (in)security to which they contribute. In this sense, scholars (and others) are engaged in a normative project of securitizing the 'real' threat posed by climate change. In so doing, they are also demonstrating a theoretical belief in both the socially constructed and intersubjective nature of (in)security, rather than a view of security as illocution. Arctic security as illocution would look more or less exactly as it is currently articulated by the federal government: elite-driven, militarized, focused on sovereignty, and perpetuating the subordination, at best, and exclusion, at worst, of local Northern and indigenous concerns from the national security agenda.[79] The widespread resistance to this conception of Arctic security – by the indigenous groups and scholars discussed in this paper, and in other material and ideational objections to Canadian policies on climate change and the Arctic – suggests there are robust and widely held alternative conceptions within the public realm. Each securitizing move is an effort to elevate that conception of Arctic security within the realm of political praxis and actual policymaking. Given the scope of anthropogenic climate change, and the role of the Arctic in moderating and communicating the health of the global biosphere, it is no exaggeration to state that the stakes in the competition over 'Arctic security' are as high as for any security discourse in human history.

## *Conclusion*

This paper has attempted to weave together a series of disparate theoretical and empirical pieces. First, it outlines a revised securitization theory more cognizant of actor and audience identities, more sensitive to the importance of power for effective securitization, and more respectful of brute threats to material conditions of security. It then maps efforts by four indigenous groups to securitize Arctic climate change, and suggests that the traditional indigenous concern over cultural security threatened by modernization has given way to a central security concern over climate change as the greatest threat to indigenous ways of life. Finally, on the basis of the failed efforts to securitize Arctic climate change, this paper applies the revised securitization theory to the case of indigenous groups in the Canadian Arctic to hypothesize why the state might be resistant to this particular indigenous security claim. It concludes that the failure to do so is reflective of the 'insecurity of non-dominance' that impedes the securitization capacities of particular societal groups within political and social contexts that render their claims as threatening to the state (or dominant society) itself. If "to 'securitize' an issue ... [is] to challenge society to promote it higher in its scales of values and to commit greater resources to solving the related problems,"[80] as Michael Sheehan suggests, then the findings raise troubling conclusions about the state of values and priorities within contemporary Canada. Though it may take more than changes to security discourse to shift these priorities, the threat of climate change will remain unabated until the state accepts securitizing moves such as those undertaken by indigenous Canadians in the

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[78] John Erik Fossum and Stéphane Roussel, eds., "The Arctic is Hot: Part I," *International Journal*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Autumn 2010); John Erik Fossum and Stéphane Roussel, eds., "The Arctic is Hot: Part II," *International Journal*, Vol. 66, No. 4 (Autumn 2011); Greaves, "For Whom, From What?"; Hoogensen and Bazely, *Environmental Change and Human Security*; Purdy and Smythe, "From Obscurity to Action"; and Smith, "Choosing Not to See."

[79] Greaves, "For Whom, From What?" and Smith, "Choosing Not to See."

[80] Michael Sheehan, *International Security: An Analytical Survey* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005), 52.

Arctic, and implements a coherent policy to address climate change and the growing insecurity of its citizens in the North.

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