

Rethinking Migration Securitization: The Divide between South-North and South-South Migration Responses within the International System

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Abstract

How is migration securitization different in the Global South v. the Global North? We contend there is a tendency in International Relations to homogenize how border security manifests worldwide. We depart from the idea that, due to colonial and racial capitalist histories and structures, Global South states are positioned, overall, within the international system to have more “porous” borders vis-a-vis Global North states. This “porosity” is not accidental, but necessary for racial capitalism’s full articulation, allowing for neo-imperial dynamics of extraction, while forcing the Global South to absorb the externalities generated by racial capitalism. We argue this process often leads to different dynamics of migration securitization in the Global South, with states more often unable to replicate the fantasy of “impenetrability” that underpins Global North bordering practices. We then offer a comparative analysis of migration securitization within “Fortress Europe,” in Ceuta, Spain, and conversely within “Operation Welcome,” in Roraima, Brazil. We explore two main dimensions: *the role of the military and state security apparatus* and *access to the national territory and surveillance practices*, to delineate how Ceuta functions to preserve sovereignty through anti-migrant violence, while Roraima preserves sovereignty by granting access to legal paperwork and public services.

Key words: Security, Migration, Securitization, Racial Capitalism, Fortress Europe, *Operação Acolhida*

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INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, the United States (U.S.) has increased its border patrol spending about five-fold from approximately \$1.5 billion to \$5.5 billion by 2023.³ Concurrently, European Union (E.U.) states have created a vast militarized web of ships, radar systems, planes, and databases to stymie the movement of people across the Mediterranean Sea, and implement a securitized notion of “Fortress Europe.”⁴ Australia has invested heavily in offshore prisons in Papua New Guinea to hold asylum seekers, and the United Kingdom (U.K.) has recently launched the “Bibby Stockholm,” a floating sea prison that can hold up to 500 refugees.⁵ Global South States have also invested heavily in heightened border control and security measures, some even via international cooperation and assistance programs. For instance, Niger has implemented biometric control technologies along its 6,000 kilometers of international borders with seven other states, with the help of the E.U. Trust Fund for Africa.⁶ Thailand has worked to increase its state-capacity and transform Burmese migrants’ access to healthcare into a human security issue that expands government control over their bodies.⁷ Pakistan recently announced it would deport all Afghan citizens in its national territory without official papers. And Mexico has imported considerable

³ American Immigration Council, ‘The Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Border Security,’ 2001. Available at: https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/the_cost_of_immigration_enforcement_and_border_security.pdf Accessed on: Mar 12 2024; and U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Budget-in-Brief, FY 2018-FY2025, Available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-budget> Access on: Mar 12 2024

⁴ Andrew Geddes, *Immigration and European Integration. Towards fortress Europe?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Jef Huysmans, ‘The European Union and the Securitization of Migration,’ *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38.5 (2000): 751-77; and Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁵ Saskia O’Donoghue, ‘Dead body on UK ‘floating prison’ lay undiscovered for 12 hours, claims roommate,’ *Euronews* Jan 10 2024 Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/2024/01/10/dead-body-on-uk-floating-prison-lay-undiscovered-for-12-hours-claims-roommate#:~:text=What%20is%20Bibby%20Stockholm%3F,and%20%22inhumane%22%20by%20critics.> Accessed on: Feb 24 2024.

⁶ Alizée Dauchy, ‘Dreaming biometrics in Niger: The security techniques of migration control in West Africa,’ *Security Dialogue* 54.3 (2023): 213-230.

⁷ Nadine Voelkner, ‘Managing pathogenic circulation: Human security and the migrant health assemblage in Thailand,’ *Security Dialogue* 42.3 (2011): 239-259.

amounts of technology and policing techniques from the U.S. to intensify border control efforts along its own Southern border with Central American states.⁸

Thus, over the past few decades, the international system has undergone a robust, expensive, and globalized effort to control borders, primarily targeted towards impeding the movement of bodies across states and boundaries. The field of International Relations (IR) has also seen a growth in scholarly publications and theoretical contributions on migration governance and the securitization of migration.⁹ However, despite growing scholarly attention towards these phenomena, and efforts to build a theory and empirical analysis of migration governance and its securitization, the field has failed to fully scrutinize the contrasts between the Global North and Global South within these processes. Specifically, the question remains: How are migration influxes responded to *differently* in the Global South versus the Global North? How does the Global South securitize migration *differently*, if at all, in comparison to the Global North?

In this article, we argue the migration security literature within IR often homogenizes and universalizes the relationship between borders and state security worldwide, overlooking the role of broader colonial and racial capitalist structures in shaping securitized responses to migration. We contend the drive towards border “impenetrability,” which underlies migration securitization efforts in the Global North vis-à-vis Global South migrants, is less intense and comprehensive within Global South migration securitization efforts. Principally, we claim this process is not

⁸ Fernanda Martínez Flores, ‘The effects of enhanced enforcement at Mexico’s southern border: Evidence from Central American deportees,’ *Demography* 57.5 (2020): 1597-1623.

⁹ Claudia Aradau and Martina Tazzioli, ‘Biopolitics Multiple: Migration, Extraction, Subtraction,’ *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 48.2 (2020): 198-220; Philippe Bourbeau, *The Securitization of Migration: A Study of Movement and Order* (Taylor & Francis, 2011); Nicholas De Genova, *The borders of ‘Europe’: autonomy of migration, tactics of bordering* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (London: Routledge, 2006); Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert, *Refugees, security and the European Union* (London: Routledge, 2019); Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics: The Limits of Sovereign Power* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012); and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Europe’s Border Crisis: Biopolitical Security and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

accidental or mere coincidence. Rather, our argument is that while the current racial capitalist international order requires fierce border impenetrability in the Global North to uphold white supremacy and reproduce racial inequalities, it also demands Global South borders be more “porous” and “less secure” for its full articulation. On the one hand, the “porosity” of Global South borders is necessary insofar as it allows for global dynamics of dispossession, land grabbing, and looting that are central to racial capitalist and colonial accumulation. On the other hand, Global South borders need to be “permeable,” so these states then also “absorb” the influx of dispossessed and displaced people that emanate from these racial capitalist and colonial dynamics of exploitation. These structural pressures, we show, tend to produce dynamics of migration securitization in the Global South that are significantly different in nature when compared to Global North states, despite the aforementioned recent growth in surveillance, border control methods, and border technology transfers from the Global North to the Global South.

To substantiate these claims, we employ “Fortress Europe,” and “Operation Welcome,” (or *Operação Acolhida* in Portuguese) in the E.U. and Brazil, respectively, as contrasting case studies of these two processes of migration securitization. To that end, we examine and contrast recent occurrences, policies and procedures for migrants and refugees, and border practices at Ceuta (for our E.U. case study) and Roraima (for our Brazilian case study). We structure our discussion around two specific areas of difference within migration governance and securitization in these two case studies: *the role of the military and state security apparatus* and *access to the national territory and surveillance practices* to elucidate the contrast between South→North and South→South migration reception and securitization. Our discussion of the role of the military and state security apparatus showcases how securitization and militarization in Ceuta lead to expulsion and violence against asylum seekers in the name of national sovereignty, while in

Roraima there is securitization without militarization in efforts that orderly control and allow migrants in, ironically enough, to preserve national sovereignty. Our discussion of access to the national territory and surveillance practices showcases how Spain operates in Ceuta via *pushbacks* and *abandonment* of migrants to prevent their entry. Conversely, Brazil operates in Roraima via a logic of granting access that expands surveillance and reach over migrant bodies, while facilitating migrants' insertion into racial capitalist structures of economic exploitation.

In effect, we conclude that, broadly, Global South states are positioned to let in migrants, while only partially or temporarily halting transnational mobility, leading to a securitization that is oftentimes only theoretical, contingent, fragmented, and incomplete. Importantly, our aim here is *not* to suggest that these cases represent the entirety of Global North and Global South experiences vis-à-vis migration securitization, nor to affirm that these divergent approaches to border security in times of “crises” will always occur. Rather, we aim to theorize the *effects* of a postcolonial and racial capitalist global order on the different ways global migration is securitized at the local or regional level. The comparative case studies presented in the article, therefore, play an illustrative role by allowing us to demonstrate what we consider to be broad and systematic dynamics of migration security, operating as a basis for theory-building.

SECURITIZING MIGRATION?

Securitization Theory has become a central analytical framework for understanding practices of migration and border security within critical security studies over the past few decades. The Securitization approach to security foregrounds the “intersubjective establishment of an

existential threat”¹⁰ to a referent object – often the state – and how this process animates and legitimates *exceptional* security responses. Challenging previous mainstream conceptions of security that obscured how an issue “becomes” a security concern for the state, securitization scholars have proposed a thorough investigation of how security threats are “produced” by securitizing actors, oftentimes political elites, state actors, or security community bureaucracies. The central purpose of securitization theory, then, is to analyze how certain phenomena leave the realm of “normal politics” to become the target of concerted and, not infrequently, “exceptional” security policies, following the conceptualization of Carl Schmitt.¹¹ As Ulrik Pram Gad and Karen Lund Petersen explain, “[I]n securitization theory, a differentiation between normal politics and security politics is fundamental.”¹² The former often signifies the routine political procedures within an institutional arrangement and the latter is often referred to as an “emergency” or “extraordinary” politics, which Buzan et al. conceptualize, “as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics.”¹³ Although “Securitization Theory” was, in its beginnings, mostly concerned with linguistic processes of securitization,¹⁴ that is, the constitution of “threats” through speech-acts that invoke security (or a lack thereof),¹⁵ this scenario has changed over time, with scholars moving to include practices, habits, and other instruments as vehicles for securitization.¹⁶

¹⁰ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 25.

¹¹ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology. Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985); Richard Ek, (2006); Nancy Ettliger, ‘Unbounding ‘states of exception’, reconceptualizing precarity,’ *Space and Polity* 24.3 (2020): 401-407.

¹² Ulrik Pram Gad and Karen Lund Petersen, ‘Concepts of Politics in Securitization Studies’, *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 4/5 (2011): 319.

¹³ Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde, *Security*, 29.

¹⁴ Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde, *Security*.

¹⁵ Jef Huysmans, ‘What’s in an act? On security speech acts and little security nothings,’ *Security dialogue* 42.4-5 (2011): 371-383.

¹⁶ Didier Bigo, ‘Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease’, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 27, no. 1_suppl (February 2002): 63–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03043754020270S105>; Sarah Léonard and Christian Kaunert, ‘The Securitisation of Migration in the European Union: FRONTEX and Its Evolving Security Practices’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48, no. 6 (26 April 2022): 1417–29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1851469>.

In border and migration studies, securitization theory approaches have often been employed as an analytical framework to investigate the entanglements between migration and security.¹⁷ As scholars explain, “migrant crises” are often the product of securitizing narratives that not only operate by associating the coming of (certain) migrants as a threat to the state, but also by legitimizing militarization schemes that increase violence, surveillance, and policing at the border.¹⁸ The application of securitization theory to migration, however, has often led to a homogenization of how the “securitization” of migration occurs worldwide. This, in turn, obscures structural dynamics, in particular, persistent colonial and racial hierarchies among states, which lead to spatial and temporal differences in how migration security is enacted. This issue is not incidental, but rather a direct result of securitization theory’s attempt to universalize its analytical model for understanding security practices, which takes the divide between normal and exceptional politics as not only given, but also as monolithic.¹⁹ Thus, the assumption of a universal, homogenous, and ahistorical normal/exception divide often leads to a portrayal of migration securitization as a phenomenon that appears almost singularly across time and space. In this framework, “irregular migration/mobility” is taken as a phenomenon/cause that challenges state

¹⁷ See, for instance Léonard and Kaunert, ‘The Securitisation of Migration in the European Union’; Didier Bigo, ‘The (in)Securitization Practices of the Three Universes of EU Border Control: Military/Navy – Border Guards/Police – Database Analysts’, *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 3 (June 2014): 209–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010614530459>; Rebecca B. Galemba, “‘He Used to Be a Pollero’ the Securitisation of Migration and the Smuggler/Migrant Nexus at the Mexico-Guatemala Border”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 5 (4 April 2018): 870–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1327803>; Maartje van der Woude, ‘Securitizing Mobility: Profiling “Non-Core” Europeans’, *Security Dialogue*, 19 January 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106221125041>; Jef Huysmans, ‘The European Union and the Securitization of Migration’, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 38, no. 5 (2000): 751–77, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00263>.

¹⁸ Philippe Bourbeau, *The Securitization of Migration*; Léonard and Kaunert, ‘The Securitisation of Migration in the European Union’.

¹⁹ Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit, ‘Is Securitization Theory Racist? Civilizationism, Methodological Whiteness, and Antiracist Thought in the Copenhagen School’, *Security Dialogue* 51, no. 1 (February 2020): 3–22, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619862921>; David Moffette and Shaira Vadasaria, ‘Uninhibited Violence: Race and the Securitization of Immigration’, *Critical Studies on Security* 4, no. 3 (1 September 2016): 291–305, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21624887.2016.1256365>.

sovereignty and, consequently, gives rise to the construction of a “migration crisis” that authorizes or calls for securitizing practices on the part of the state.²⁰ Notice though how state sovereignty, crisis, impeding mobility, and militarization of the border are all baked into this analytical mode as predetermined facets of migration securitization without due contemplation of how global, historical hierarchies across the Global North/South divide complicate this narrative.

Thus, it is vital to bring into the conversation that colonial and imperial forces have shaped an international system permeated by material and power hierarchies, where states possess unequal military resources and technologies to “secure” their borders in times of purported security crises.²¹ This essentially means Global South states – which have historically suffered more from colonial processes of extraction, dispossession, and coloniality – are frequently unable to “securitize” migration in the same ways as Global North countries.²² This holds true even when migration is constructed as a security threat to the Global South state and its population. Not considering such hierarchies risks reproducing a common fiction within IR theorizations that the international system is primarily defined by anarchy and equality among sovereign states, a view that continually erases previous and reminiscent imperial and colonial hierarchies.²³

²⁰ Eamonn McConnon, ‘People as security risks: the framing of migration in the UK security-development nexus,’ *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48.6 (2022): 1381-1397.

²¹ Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); José O. Pérez, ‘Brazil’s Foreign Policy and Security under Lula and Bolsonaro: Hierarchy, Racialization, and Diplomacy,’ *Security Studies* 32.4-5 (2023): 653-679; Vicki Squire, Nina Perkowski, Dallal Stevens and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Reclaiming migration: voices from Europe’s ‘migrant crisis’* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021).

²² Diego Acosta and Luisa Feline Freier, ‘Expanding the reflexive turn in migration studies: Refugee protection, regularization, and naturalization in Latin America,’ *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 21.4 (2023): 597-610.

²³ Sankaran Krishna, ‘Race, Amnesia, and the Education of International Relations,’ *Alternatives* 26, no. 4 (1 October 2001): 401–24, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437540102600403>. Alexander Barder, *Global race war: International politics and racial hierarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021); Owen Brown, ‘The Underside of Order: Race in the Constitution of International Order,’ *International Organization* (2024): 1-29.

Furthermore, the literature on migration securitization, in its state-centrism, often either erases race from the analysis or treats race as something secondary, a mere epiphenomenon of processes of migration securitization. The problem here, as the next section elucidates, is this understanding of race overlooks uninterrupted colonial and racialized global structures that impact and limit dynamics of mobility.²⁴ As postcolonial scholarship explains, it is not a coincidence that racialized migrants are more frequently framed as a “threat” to the state.²⁵ This phenomenon follows colonial rationales of mobility that still inform, “who can move,” and, “where to,” which are essentially entwined with our current international system of states.²⁶ As Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit argue, by focusing on episodes of securitization of racialized migrants, “what then tends to fall out of view is how the control of the movement of racialized people has been and continues to be constitutive of the ‘normal’ liberal order.”²⁷

Lastly, and relatedly, the focus on moments of exceptional and urgent security politics, when a grammar of “crisis” is crystallized within the state, also tends to miss when securitization does not, cannot, or fails to occur.²⁸ This is particularly true of the Global South, where “irregular mobility” does not (or cannot) necessarily translate into exceptional discourses of security “crises,” or lengthy processes of intensified border securitization. That said, although the concern with border security appears to be a somewhat “universal issue,” borders in the Global North – due to economic and political discrepancies – have been incomparably more sealed, policed, and secured

²⁴ See for instance Ida Danewid’s critique of the erasure of the centrality of race in processes of ‘othering’ in migration security in Ida Danewid, ‘White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the Erasure of History’, *Third World Quarterly* 38, no. 7 (3 July 2017): 1679, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2017.1331123>.

²⁵ Amitav Acharya, ‘Race and racism in the founding of the modern world order,’ *International Affairs* 98.1, (2022): 23–43, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaab198>; Zoltán Búzás, ‘The color of threat: Race, threat perception, and the demise of the Anglo-Japanese alliance (1902–1923),’ *Security Studies* 22.4 (2013): 573–606.

²⁶ Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner, *Migration Studies and Colonialism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2021).

²⁷ Howell and Richter-Montpetit, ‘Is Securitization Theory Racist?’, 7.

²⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

than Global South borders. Global South states, often unable to significantly or comparatively “securitize” their borders on the same scale as Global North states, end up disproportionately shouldering the impacts of mass human displacement. To make sense of this theoretically, however, we need to more closely examine the racial capitalist and colonial foundations of our current state-system, which positions Global South states to have weaker claims of “strong borders,” “sovereignty,” and “national security,” as detailed in the next section.

Racial Capitalism, Global Mobility, and Border Security

Over the past decade, a body of scholarship within border and migration studies has been interested in assessing the colonial and racial origins, underpinnings, and effects of contemporary practices of border security.²⁹ This literature has challenged IR’s stark reliance on sovereignty as a key structure for making sense of border security, pointing instead to the persistent roles of race and coloniality in shaping historical and contemporary dynamics of border security. On the one hand, it is argued that borders did not simply come about as byproducts of emerging sovereign state in the Global South. Rather, as Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner explain, borders were fundamentally manufactured by colonial powers as tools to control racialized populations’ mobility and ensure their continual exploitation.³⁰ Furthermore, it is argued that current structures

²⁹ Danewid, ‘White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean’; Mayblin and Turner, *Migration Studies and Colonialism*; Arshad Isakjee et al., ‘Liberal Violence and the Racial Borders of the European Union’, *Antipode* 52, no. 6 (November 2020): 1751–73, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12670>; Radhika Viyas Mongia, *Indian Migration and Empire: A Colonial Genealogy of the Modern State* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); Gurminder K. Bhambra, ‘The Current Crisis of Europe: Refugees, Colonialism, and the Limits of Cosmopolitanism’, *European Law Journal* 23, no. 5 (September 2017): 395–405, <https://doi.org/10.1111/eulj.12234>; Tarsis Brito, ‘Between Race and Animality: European Borders, “Colonial Dogs”, and the Policing of Humanity’, *Review of International Studies* Published Online (2024): 1–18; Nicholas De Genova, ‘The “Migrant Crisis” as Racial Crisis: Do *Black Lives Matter* in Europe?’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41, no. 10 (9 August 2018): 1765–82, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1361543>.

³⁰ Mayblin and Turner, *Migration Studies and Colonialism*, 70.

of global mobility and border security continually re-inscribe racial hierarchies and reinforce racial-colonial dynamics of dispossession and inequality.³¹

Within this postcolonial rereading of borders, scholars have also been increasingly attentive to the role of racial capitalism as a driving force in global dynamics of migration security and mobility. The concept of racial capitalism is particularly associated with the Black Radical Tradition and, more centrally, with the work of W.E.B. DuBois, Cedric Robinson, and scholars who struggled against Apartheid in South Africa.³² Critical of Marxism's (lack of) engagement with colonialism and racism, Robinson reassesses the history and mechanics of capitalism, positing it is symbiotically or coterminously interwoven with racialization and racism.³³ Robinson defines racial capitalism as a political undertaking and social structure with historical agency in which, "the development, organization, and expansion of capitalist society pursued essentially racial directions,"³⁴ and was supported by racialized political ideologies. This symbiotic intertwining between racialization and modern capitalism leads to the stark realization that, "capitalism *is* racial capitalism."³⁵ Stated differently, one cannot separate an understanding of capital from race, or vice-versa, without obfuscating knowledge and insights about *both*. Consequently, capitalism's central processes and binaries of "accumulation/dispossession, credit/debt, production/surplus, capitalist/worker, developed/underdeveloped, contract/coercion, and others – become articulated through race."³⁶ In other words, practices of racialization are not

³¹ Tarsis Brito, '(Dis)Possessive Borders, (Dis)Possessed Bodies: Race and Property at the Postcolonial European Borders', *International Political Sociology* 17, no. 2 (2023)

³² Destin Jenkins and Justin Leroy, 'Introduction', in *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, ed. Justin Leroy and Destin Jenkins (Columbia University Press, 2021), 1–26; Robin D. G. Kelley, 'Why Black Marxism? Why Now?', in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (London: Penguin Modern Classics, 2021), 22.

³³ Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 27.

³⁴ Robinson, 37.

³⁵ Jodi Melamed, 'Racial Capitalism', *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 77, <https://doi.org/10.5749/jcritethnstud.1.1.0076>. (emphasis in the original)

³⁶ Jenkins and Leroy, 'Introduction', 3.

exogenous or parallel to capitalism. Instead, they are centrally embedded within capitalism: commodifying both labor and human bodies, naturalizing social inequalities, and reproducing the dominance of whiteness.³⁷

Engagements with racial capitalism have often highlighted the central role of borders within IR in reproducing and deepening colonial-racial dynamics of dispossession and inequality.³⁸ Borders, as Nivi Manchanda and Sharri Plonski explain, are meant to operate as, “a boundary that cannot, and must not, be crossed—except by some goods, peoples and finance in highly regulated ways (meant to serve and secure imperial and capitalist relations).”³⁹ According to the authors, borders generate a certain, “fantasy of security,” that continually “requires the capacity to police, contain and control (racialized) others.”⁴⁰ It is this purported ability to stop and regulate movement, which relies on continual violence, along with a racialized process of, “categorization, distinction, and separation,”⁴¹ of people that explains the centrality and necessity of borders within racial capitalism. Furthermore, the entanglement between security and state borders allows Global North states to both deny racialized people access to the spaces that have historically benefited most from racial-colonial accumulation,⁴² and to establish the exploitative terms in which racialized migrants can be allowed or incorporated into Global North states, if at all.⁴³

³⁷ Nancy Leong, ‘Racial Capitalism’, *Harvard Law Review* 126, no. 8 (2013): 2151–2226; Ida Danewid, *Resisting Racial Capitalism: An Antipolitical Theory of Refusal*, LSE International Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 6.

³⁸ Brito, ‘(Dis)Possessive Borders, (Dis)Possessed Bodies: Race and Property at the Postcolonial European Borders’; Danewid, *Resisting Racial Capitalism: An Antipolitical Theory of Refusal*.

³⁹ Nivi Manchanda and Sharri Plonski, ‘Between Mobile Corridors and Immobilizing Borders: Race, Fixity and Friction in Palestine/Israel’, *International Affairs* 98, no. 1 (10 January 2022): 189, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab206>.

⁴⁰ Manchanda and Plonski, 189.

⁴¹ Manchanda and Plonski, 189.

⁴² Walia, *Undoing Border Imperialism*.

⁴³ Nicholas De Genova, ‘A Racial Theory of Labour: Racial Capitalism from Colonial Slavery to Postcolonial Migration’, *Historical Materialism* 31, no. 3 (5 October 2023): 244, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206x-bja10018>; and Inés Valdez, ‘Reconceiving immigration politics: Walter Benjamin, violence, and labor,’ *American Political Science Review* 114.1 (2020): 95-108.

The contemporary expansion – both inwards and outwards – of the *bordering* apparatus of state governance, policing, and violence across the Global North, thus, is not solely a physical manifestation of state-level anxieties surrounding sovereignty, but also an essential aspect of the working and institutionalization of contemporary racial capitalism. The European “migrant crisis”, continuous militarization of US borders, and increased violence of Australia’s border regime can all be interpreted as manifestations of a racial capitalist order that requires fierce control and policing of racialized people’s movement for its full realization.⁴⁴ Robust and expensive efforts to secure borders,⁴⁵ with the unachievable end goal of “impenetrability,” consequently appear as a means for perpetuating colonial-racial inequalities *and* reaffirming racial hierarchies. Bordering, after all, usually serves to establish limits, “between those who access certain rights and those who do not,” even within allegedly more humanistic or humanitarian liberal legal orders, such as the EU.⁴⁶ In doing so, borders operate by producing (racialized) categories of bodies that are in an increased position of economic vulnerability internally, being often the targets of economic exploitation. This dynamic has exacerbated with the continuous expansion of the digital reach and disciplinary impact of their borders through biometric technologies that create, “a form of surveillance centered on the body,” aiming for an infallible form of border securitization.⁴⁷

If this entanglement between racial capitalism and colonialism can help us explain the present obsession with security and impenetrability in the Global North,⁴⁸ it also helps us rethink

⁴⁴ Claudia Aradau and Lucrezia Canzutti, ‘Asylum, borders, and the politics of violence: from suspicion to cruelty,’ *Global Studies Quarterly* 2.2 (2022): 1-11

⁴⁵ Beste Isleyen, ‘Technology and Territorial Change in Conflict Settings: Migration Control in the Aegean Sea,’ *International Studies Quarterly* 65(2021): 1087-1096.

⁴⁶ Enrico Fassi, Michela Ceccorulli, and Sonia Lucarelli, ‘An illiberal power? EU bordering practices and the liberal international order,’ *International Affairs* 99.6 (2023): 2261-2279; Helene Sjørnsen, ‘Rethinking liberal order: the EU and the quest for global justice,’ *International Affairs*, 99.6 (2023): 2203–2220.

⁴⁷ Charlotte Epstein, ‘Guilty Bodies, Productive Bodies, Destructive Bodies: Crossing the Biometric Borders,’ *International Political Sociology* 1.2 (2007), 153.

⁴⁸ Adrian A. Smith, ‘Migration, development and security within racialised global capitalism: refusing the balance game,’ *Third World Quarterly* 37:11 (2016): 2119-2138.

mobility and border security more globally. Being a system of racialized primitive accumulation, racial capitalism's modus operandi is necessarily predicated on the making, maintenance, and deepening of colonial-racial inequalities.⁴⁹ That takes us, once again, to our previous question regarding the nature of border security in the Global South. The differential positioning⁵⁰ of the Global South within a racial capitalist and (post)colonial order means, essentially, that Global South states tend to have weaker claims of “strong borders,” “sovereignty,” and “national security,” than Global North states. The obsessive and continual “fantasy of security” that pushes states in the Global North to endlessly expand their apparatus of border security cannot be replicated in the Global South. By and large, Global South borders are positioned as significantly more exposed to the influx of vulnerable peoples, especially during exceptional moments. Ironically then, although mass displacements are often the result of colonial and racial capitalist dynamics of dispossession, invasion, war-making, and settler colonialism, Global South spaces become “responsible” for absorbing such populations and, to a certain extent, “solving” racial capitalism's crises and negative externalities. Moreover, as Timor Landherr argues, migrants can even become “fixed” or “trapped” in Global South “transit states” between Global South and North, leading to the intensification of their racialization and economic exploitation.⁵¹ Tsourapas, in turn, coins the term “migration interdependence,” to refer to the relationship between labor

⁴⁹ Andrew Rosenberg, ‘Measuring racial bias in international migration flows,’ *International Studies Quarterly* 63.4 (2019): 837-845; and Andrew Rosenberg, ‘Agents, structures, and the moral basis of deportability,’ *Security Dialogue* 54.6 (2023): 602-619.

⁵⁰ Inés Valdez, ‘Empire, Popular Sovereignty, and the Problem of Self-and-Other Determination,’ *Perspectives on Politics* 21.1 (2023): 109-125.

⁵¹ Timor Landherr, ‘The Transit Fix—Border Externalization and the Interplay of Capital and Race in the Transit “Migration” State’, *International Studies Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (14 March 2024): sqae068, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqae068>.

migrant sending and receiving states, whereby receiving states can use policies of entry denial or deportation as leverage against migrant bodies and sending states.⁵²

What we argue here, ergo, is that the difference in “penetrability” between both spaces is consequently not accidental. The fantasy of security and firmness that underpins borders in the Global North cannot be replicated *universally* for the sake of the racial capitalist system itself. If racial capitalism requires strong control of racialized people’s mobility towards/within the Global North to uphold white supremacy and perpetuate global racial inequalities, it also necessitates Global South borders be more “porous” and “less secured”⁵³ for its full articulation. Firstly, the “porosity” of state borders in the Global South is necessary insofar as it maintains such spaces in a position of vulnerability, facilitating processes of (dis)possession, land grabbing, and displacement that are essential for capital accumulation.⁵⁴ Secondly, and fundamental here, the permeability of Global South borders predisposes these states to “absorb” the continual flux of dispossessed and displaced people generated by racial capitalism, as presented in the following sections.⁵⁵

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

⁵² Gerasimos Tsourapas, ‘Labor Migrants as Political Leverage: Migration Interdependence and Coercion in the Mediterranean,’ *International Studies Quarterly* 62(2018): 383-395.

⁵³ Seyla Benhabib, *The rights of others: aliens, residents, and citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁵⁴ Robert Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020); Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); Jodi Melamed, ‘Racial Capitalism’.

⁵⁵ Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest: Race and Class in the Southwest* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979); Inés Valdez, *Democracy and Empire: Labor, Nature, and the Reproduction of Capitalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023)

We selected two diverging case studies via what we envision as a spectrum or continuum of contemporary migration securitization processes. On one end of the spectrum, we could have a full closer of borders and complete denial of access to the national territory for potential migrants and refugees, whereas the other end of the spectrum could represent a state with completely open borders and easy pathways to legal stays for potential migrants and refugees. We envision our EU case study in Ceuta, Spain as closer to the former, while our Brazilian case study in Roraima as closer to the latter. However, we do not portend these two case studies are representative of *all* Global North or Global South migration securitization experiences and realize even within these two cases there are nuances and exceptions. For instance, despite its border securitization efforts, the EU has been rather receptive and welcoming of Ukrainian refugees fleeing conflict, bringing to the fore the racist nature of the EU's migration architecture. And Brazil, despite its liberal refugee policies, has had greater difficulty responding to Afghan and Haitian refugee claims than Venezuelan ones. Thus, what we present below are non-universalizing examples of how Global North and Global South states securitize migration, which is not to say this is all they *always* securitize migration.

Methodologically, we part from the notion, proposed by previous scholars of migration and securitization, that these processes are better understood by examining discourses, narratives, and power as multi-dimensional processes, by centering the experiences of migrants and refugees, and rejecting tendencies within the academic literature, “to treat every borderzone and all ‘irregular’ migrants as the same, rather than appreciating how the contested politics of mobility and struggles around border control play out differently across multiple sites.”⁵⁶ Thus, we employ a *comparative case study* approach below that is *plural* in how it examines two different settings

⁵⁶ Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Europe's Border Crisis*, 55.

and accompanying practices of securitization, considering case study approaches have proven useful for purposefully understanding the state-security nexus and building theory.⁵⁷

More importantly, one of the co-authors ([omitted]) is Cuban and an immigrant to the U.S, and has conducted extensive fieldwork throughout Brazil, and in Roraima, during 2018, 2022, and 2023 to understand Venezuelan and Cuban migration policies and integration in Brazil. His research has included over 300 semi-structured interviews, 100 informal conversation, and 60 participant observations on intra-Global South migration experiences within Brazil with: politicians, public servants, military officers, civil society leaders, and migrants/refugees themselves. The other co-author ([omitted]) is Brazilian and has spent considerable time living as an immigrant in the U.K., and the E.U., pursuing graduate studies and conducting fieldwork in France and the U.K. during 2022 to understand Europe's border security processes and apparatus. His research has included an analysis of discourses and practices surrounding: Calais' zero-anchor point policy, naval and coast guard patrolling in the Mediterranean Sea, and the violent usage of police attack dogs against migrants/refugees in the Balkans.

Therefore, our research design combined two different case studies that are examined by comparing numerous sources of data, each independently gathered and then analyzed together, or a *convergent* or *parallel* data collection and triangulation approach.⁵⁸ Moreover, both authors' positionality and relationships to the objects of study, as well as theoretical conversations and reflections with each other, were instrumental parts of theory-building and the epistemological production of this article, or what Lahoma Thomas calls, "relational reflexivity,"⁵⁹ where the

⁵⁷ Laura Shepard, ed., *Critical Approaches to Security: An Introduction to Theories and Methods* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

⁵⁸ Phillip Ayoub, Sophia Wallace, and Chris Zepeda-Millan, 'Triangulation in social movement research,' In: Donatella Della Porta (ed.), *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 67–96.

⁵⁹ Lahoma Thomas, "The Researcher's Gaze: Positionality and Reflexivity," in *Doing Good Qualitative Research*, Jennifer Cyr and Sara Wallace Goodman, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024, pp. 23-36.

researcher(s) take their own lived experiences and position of power into account vis-à-vis the research. Thus, we employ an observational, ethnographical, and personalized mixed-methods approach, ranging from “hanging out” in field sites, to qualitative semi-structured interviews, which collectively produced a unique manner to gauge the experiences of migrant/refugees vis-à-vis the state and migration securitization efforts.⁶⁰

GLOBAL NORTH V. GLOBAL SOUTH MIGRATION SECURITIZATION

In this section, we conduct a comparative analysis of the contemporary processes of border securitization in Ceuta, Spain and Roraima, Brazil. The rationale behind this choice lies in the fact that, despite similar scenarios and contexts, the dynamics of securitization that have evolved in these two border zones are particularly divergent. On the one hand, both border zones appear as small and remote enclaves, vis-à-vis the greater national territory, where migrants have amassed in recent years due to political and economic crises in other states. The two cases have also been framed at some point via the narrative of “migrant crisis,” against an outsider, “Other,” that threatens national security and stability. And, finally, both border zones have been marked by the deployment of the national military as a border security actor, and by the increasing attempt to manage the influx of people through strategies of governance and control. On the other hand, despite these similitudes, a closer look at the dynamics of migration securitization in the two settings shows important distinctions and, specifically, a distinct approach to the fantasy of security and impenetrability of borders. By comparing these two cases, we can obtain a better grasp not only on how dynamics of migration securitization are differently operationalized worldwide, but

⁶⁰ Alison Gerard, *The Securitization of Migration and Refugee Women* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

also on broader features underlying the migration-security nexus within the Global North and Global South. In light of that, the following subsections contrast how the process of securitization of migration is enacted at Ceuta and Roraima, analyzing both the role of the military and state security apparatus and dynamics of migration governance and surveillance within both sites. First, we present more background and context on each case study.

Ceuta is a small enclave, belonging to Spain, located in North Africa and sharing borders with Morocco. This makes Ceuta (and Melilla, another Spanish enclave) the only territories in Africa that belong to an EU Member state (excluding the Canary Islands). Ceuta has become a key stage for the broader process of securitizing Europe's external borders against Global South migrants. Appearing as one of the first cases of extensive walling and fencing in the EU during the 1990s,⁶¹ Ceuta's borders have been extensively fortified and militarized over the past decade, a process accompanied by the accentuation of episodes of border violence against "illegal" migrants. The intensification of border violence became particularly visible in February 2014, when the *Guardia Civil* (Spanish Gendarmerie) carried out a brutal intervention with the use of rubber bullets, tear gas, and other anti-riot material on migrants attempting to swim towards Ceuta's shores.⁶² The attack led to the killing of 15 people, who drowned "from the contusion caused by the anti-riot ammunition and the poisoning produced by the gas boats."⁶³ The episode quickly became a mark of Europe's continuous fortification of its outer borders against the coming of racialized migrants from the Global South and a symbol of the brutality underlying "Fortress Europe."

⁶¹ Jaume Castan Pinos, 'Ceuta and Melilla: Pioneers of Post-Cold War Border Fortification', *E-International Relations* (blog), 28 February 2022, <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/02/28/ceuta-and-melilla-pioneers-of-post-cold-war-border-fortification/>.

⁶² Juan Pablo Aris Escarcena, 'Ceuta: The Humanitarian and the Fortress EUrope', *Antipode* 54, no. 1 (2022): 71–72, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12758>.

⁶³ Aris Escarcena, 72.

Meanwhile, beginning around 2017, Brazilian officials noticed an increase in Venezuelan migration and a build-up of migrants in the border state of Roraima. Roraima is almost an enclave within Brazil, because it is only connected by highway to Manaus, which itself is not connected to the rest of Brazil by any highways, due to the impenetrable Amazon rainforest, and air travel in and out of this region of Brazil is rather expensive. Roraima is Brazil's most underdeveloped state, making a bottleneck of migrants/refugees in that region particularly worrisome. In 2018, there were episodes of political violence where groups of Brazilians chased Venezuelans back across the border and burned their makeshift housing and belongings, while chanting the national anthem. This prompted the federal government to create "Operation Welcome" and station federal troops at the border to: maintain order, build housing "shelters" or "*abrigos*" for the migrants, assist migrants in filling out paperwork for refugee status or permanent residency, and coordinate an "interiorization," or "*interiorização*," resettlement program for Venezuelans to be taken out of Roraima and flown further inland to other parts of the country. In the shelters, which one could compare to a refugee camp, Venezuelans were given access to healthcare, all federal services, three or four meals a day, and leisure activities. Venezuela is currently the world's largest migrant/refugee sending state at over 7.7 million individuals, surpassing Syria, Afghanistan, or Ukraine, and Latin America currently hosts about 6.4 million Venezuelans. This migration is due to inflation, mismanagement of the economy, international sanctions, dependency on oil revenues, and other crises in Venezuela. Operation Welcome in Brazil, specifically, has responded to over 430,000 Venezuelans since April 2018, and resettled over 125,000 of them, to over 1,000 different municipalities across Brazil.

Role of the military and state security apparatus in Spain

The European so-called “migrant crisis” is one of the most studied examples of border securitization over the past decade.⁶⁴ EU states have consistently promoted and consolidated a concerted discourse of a “migrant crisis” on the continent after the surge in the number of Global South migrants from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, mostly due to conflicts and political crises in those regions, many of them effects of contemporary and historical imperial and racial capitalist dynamics.⁶⁵ Centrally, although Europe has received far fewer migrants than neighboring states in those areas of conflict, the idea of a “security crisis” has been indubitably more pronounced in Europe.⁶⁶ Countries like Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, for instance, have received far more Syrian refugees since the escalation of the political crisis in Syria in 2011 than the EU or the U.S.⁶⁷ The same is true for Afghan refugees, the third-largest displaced population in the world according to the UNHCR, with the vast majority of them being housed in neighboring countries.⁶⁸ The securitizing drive for impenetrability, as a response to the displacement caused by the afterlives and present dynamics of colonial and racial capitalist structures, in itself reveals Europe’s attempt to evade its responsibility and outsource such externalities to Global South states.

As current literature has extensively analyzed, Europe’s continual fortification of its external borders has been marked by the increasing use of border violence against “undesired” racialized migrants. This process has been frequently accompanied by the deployment of military

⁶⁴ See for instance van der Woude, ‘Securitizing Mobility’; Léonard and Kaunert, ‘The Securitisation of Migration in the European Union’; Foteini Asderaki and Eleftheria Markozani, ‘The Securitization of Migration and the 2015 Refugee Crisis: From Words to Actions’, in *The New Eastern Mediterranean Transformed: Emerging Issues and New Actors*, ed. Aristotle Tziampiris and Foteini Asderaki (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 179–98, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70554-1_9; Monica Colombo, ‘The Representation of the “European Refugee Crisis” in Italy: Domopolitics, Securitization, and Humanitarian Communication in Political and Media Discourses’, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (3 April 2018): 161–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1317896>.

⁶⁵ Danewid, ‘White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean’, 1680.

⁶⁶ Vicki Squire et al., *Reclaiming Migration*, 34.

⁶⁷ UNHCR, ‘Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response: Durable Solutions’, Operational Data Portal, 2023, https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions.

⁶⁸ UNHCR, ‘Afghanistan Situation’, Operational Data Portal, 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/afghanistan>.

forces to protect the borders, in addition to other policing and security forces from both states and the EU. The use of the military in Europe has been particularly common at times of “heightened” securitization, that is, when migratory episodes are constructed as “exceptional crises” that require urgent security measures. That said, the continual prolonging of the purported “migrant crisis” has continually blurred this exceptional/normal divide, crystallizing the role of military forces as a central actor in Europe’s complex border landscape.⁶⁹ As Müge Kinacioglu explains, although “these operations are mainly mandated to deal either directly or indirectly with migration by focusing on ‘crimes related to migration,’” they have in actuality been conducted as a pathway for increasing border security by, “carrying out surveillance, deterrence, prevention, capture and return of migrants.”⁷⁰ Military forces in Europe, thus, have become a central securitizing actor at Europe’s outer borders, actively participating in the “restoring” and “ensuring” of Europe’s fantasy of (border) control and, consequently, sealing Europe from the externalities of colonial and racialized dynamics of exploitation and dispossession.

This dynamic is particularly noticeable in Ceuta, where the presence of Spanish military forces—alongside Spain’s *Guardia Civil*, FRONTEX and Moroccan security forces—has become particularly prominent and normalized, following a concerted effort to protect the enclave against the “menace” of racialized migration. A central episode of effective militarization of Ceuta’s borders took place in May 2021, when approximately 8,000 migrants entered Ceuta over the course of two days either by climbing over the fence or swimming in.⁷¹ As reports indicate, most of the migrants came from Sub-Saharan states and around 1500 of them were minors. The decision to

⁶⁹ Müge Kinacioglu, ‘Militarized Governance of Migration in the Mediterranean’, *International Affairs* 99, no. 6 (6 November 2023): 2423–41, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iad232>.

⁷⁰ Kinacioglu, 2434.

⁷¹ ‘Spain Vows to Restore Order after Thousands Swim into Ceuta from Morocco’, *Reuters*, 18 May 2021, sec. Europe, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/spain-deploys-army-ceuta-patrol-border-with-morocco-after-migrants-break-2021-05-18/>.

deploy soldiers to handle the situation in Ceuta was accompanied by a strong narrative in Spain that equated the coming of migrants with an exceptional moment of “invasion” and “sovereignty crisis” that required an urgent response. This is quintessentially reflected in Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez’s speech, which treated the episode as, “a serious crisis for Spain and for Europe,” while vowing to “restore order” through the use of military support.⁷² The episode also reignited diplomatic tensions between Spain and Morocco, with Sanchez openly criticizing Morocco’s “lack of border control,” regarded as “not (only) a show of disrespect of Spain, but rather for the European Union.”⁷³ The purported (and constructed) “exceptionality” of the episode, thus, became a central justification for the swift deployment of soldiers, who were tasked with patrolling the border through the use or threat of violence.

Thus, the quick deployment of military troops by the Spanish government stemmed from a desire on the part of Spanish authorities to “seal the border” through a purposeful increase of violence, containing what became labeled as an “invasion” by the Spanish government.⁷⁴ As reported by the “Border Violence Monitoring” (BVMN), the Spanish Army sent tanks to Ceuta in May 2021, which, by circulating around the city, reinforced the idea that there was a real “war” or “invasion” underway.⁷⁵ Hundreds of soldiers, including three regiments and three battalions, were sent to Ceuta during this time, where they were involved in the systematic land and maritime pushbacks of at least 6,000 people in Ceuta during this “crisis,”⁷⁶ including hundreds of

⁷² Ashifa Kassam, ‘Spanish PM Vows to “Restore Order” after 8,000 Migrants Reach Ceuta’, *The Guardian*, 18 May 2021, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/18/spanish-pm-vows-restore-order-migrants-reach-ceuta>.

⁷³ ‘As Migrants Continue to Reach Ceuta, Spanish Pushback Hardens’, *Al Jazeera*, 19 May 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/19/spain-moves-to-head-off-ceuta-migrant-and-refugee-crisis>.

⁷⁴ ‘As Migrants Continue to Reach Ceuta, Spanish Pushback Hardens’.

⁷⁵ Aurelio Ruiz Enebral, ‘Defensa, obligada a revelar informes sobre el despliegue militar en Ceuta que se activó ante la avalancha de extranjeros’, *El Confidencial Digital*, 31 March 2022, <https://www.elconfidencialdigital.com/articulo/defensa/defensa-obligada-revelar-informes-despliegue-militar-ceuta-que-activo-avalancha-extranjeros/20220330173656373811.html>.

⁷⁶ These types of events have occurred in Ceuta and Melilla on numerous occasions, some even leading to dozens of fatalities, over the past decade.

unaccompanied minors.⁷⁷ This, in effect, peremptorily denied these individuals' right to request asylum in Europe and violated both EU and international humanitarian legal norms.⁷⁸ The pushbacks were further marked by scenes of violence, including the use of tear gas canisters and rubber bullets against crowds, as well as coercion and intimidation techniques by heavily armed soldiers. All in all, Spain's armed forces in Ceuta have a clear role: to *seal* the border through the overt use of violence, and/or threat thereof, against those who sought to cross the Spain-Morocco border and seek asylum. The underpinning rationale, thus, is to *push* racialized migrants back to Morocco or to simply "contain" them there. Alongside other security forces, ergo, the military force in Ceuta operates as a violent tool designed not only to "protect" Europe's territorial borders but also to seal Europe against the racialized displaced population that emerges as consequence of colonial-racial capitalist dynamics of invasion, dispossession, and exploitation.

Role of the military and state security apparatus in Brazil

In stark contrast to the previous example, the role and posture of Brazil's armed forces are rather striking within Operation Welcome. Or as a high-ranking military officer, whom we shall call Lorenzo, who participated in the operation explained:

We needed to build temporary structures and refugee shelters, and to do it fast...Also, the army has operating principles, and it serves other purposes too, via its presence in an area it acts as a force of dissuasion, it impedes bad things from happening and worse things would have happened without the presence of soldiers at the border line [in Roraima]. Worse things would have occurred, in terms of our national sovereignty, drug traffickers, human trafficking rings, etc. So, over there, we [soldiers] functioned to dissuade all of that from happening. And for me that's very clear when you look at the difference in how Venezuelans looked at Brazilian soldiers and military personnel, in comparison to Venezuela's soldiers and military officers. All of them quickly realized we were there at the border to help and provide assistance and not to impede their entry, or ask for bribes, or use violence against them. So over there [at the border] we had the Federal Police, and other government agencies and ministries there working, but we [soldiers] were also there and we were

⁷⁷ 'A España despliega tanques del Ejército para controlar Ceuta – DW – 18/05/2021', DW, 18 May 2021, <https://www.dw.com/es/espa%C3%B1a-despliega-tanques-del-ej%C3%A9rcito-para-controlar-ceuta-tras-la-entrada-de-cerca-de-6000-inmigrantes/a-57571567>.

⁷⁸ Mosa'ab Elshamy, 'Spain, Morocco Turn Focus to Young Migrants Stuck at Border', *AP News*, 20 May 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/europe-spain-africa-morocco-migration-165be08477ff2ee1fdce30ef80671fb7>.

totally unarmed. We weren't wearing helmets, or fire arms, or any protective equipment, and so forth at the border, we were there doing humanitarian labor [*trabalho humanitário*]. – Lorenzo

From Lorenzo's retelling of events in the early days of the operation at the border with Venezuela, we can gauge how the Brazilian Armed Forces' purpose at the border was not to deter or impede access to the national territory, but rather to carry out bureaucratic and technocratic labor to ease the flow of migrants and refugees into the country. In other words, these soldiers were giving their labor, as they built temporary housing shelters that hold 1000s, established order at the border, dissuaded anti-migrant political violence, and helped other federal bureaucrats (Federal Police employees) provide official paperwork for Venezuelan individuals. The Brazilian army's participation represents more the utilization of dormant labor power, in the form of drafted/enlisted soldiers, than the creation of specialized military and police units focused solely on border patrol and migration control, as we saw in the above example. As Lorenzo himself says, their participation was more akin to "humanitarian labor," or labor similar to United Nations Peacekeepers, than to FRONTEX and other securitization forces that patrol Europe's Mediterranean borders. Nevertheless, this illustrates the increasing role of Global South militaries in humanitarian and other domestic response efforts since the end of the Cold War, as their role has shifted away from international warfare preparedness or domestic surveillance with the return of democracy.⁷⁹

Moreover, as Lorenzo states, "...we were totally unarmed. We weren't wearing helmets, or firearms, or any protective equipment, and so forth at the border." The presence of unarmed military personnel sends a specific message of non-militarization, presenting them more as federal *employees* or *workers* who happen to be soldiers as well, and who despite their military uniforms

⁷⁹ This also coincides with the expansion of the "security" agenda to cover other public policy areas. See David Pion-Berlin, *Military Missions in Democratic Latin America* (New York: Springer, 2016).

are not there to fight any battles or conduct any violence. The point here is that Brazil decided to *securitize* its border with Venezuela in the remote Amazonian state of Roraima as a response to a migrant crisis – and by that we mean, very specifically, to employ the speech act of calling for security, elevating the issue to high politics, declaring by executive fiat the creation of Operation Welcome, and employing the armed forces in its response. However, despite these securitization moves – the federal government did not *militarize*, meaning the deployment of military-grade weaponry, such as arms, tanks, and fighter jets to stem the flow of migrants into the country. In other words, Brazil here *securitized* migration without necessarily resorting to *militarizing* its response, showing how the two are not coterminous. Moreover, by not arming or equipping its soldiers for “battle,” the Brazilian federal government sent the message that migrants would not be “trapped” or “contained,” or placed in legal limbo at the border. Rather, that the labor being performed by these soldiers was in fact geared towards helping speed up their legal entry and subsequent resettlement to other parts of the country. In fact, the Brazilian officials interviewed here were very careful to point out Operation Welcome is an operation conducted by the military, and not a military operation – referring purposefully to it instead as a “*Força-Tarefa Logística Humanitária*,” or “Humanitarian Logistical Taskforce,” a rather euphemistic or jargon-laced manner of discursively signaling the process’ humanitarian non-militarized character.⁸⁰

In this process, as Lorenzo also points out, the role of the armed forces within Operation Welcome was partially to protect Brazil’s national sovereignty and prevent “worse things,” from occurring. Ironically enough, though, protecting Brazil’s national sovereignty in this scenario meant its soldiers actively working to help Venezuelan foreigners enter the country, which in other spaces would be seen as a violation of national sovereignty and the rule of law over one’s borders.

⁸⁰ Carlos Daróz and Sabrina Celestino. *Operação Acolhida: A Força-Tarefa Logística Humanitária e O Apoio aos Migrantes Venezuelanos*. Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca do Exército Editora, 2022.

Maintaining or protecting national sovereignty, in this context, meant responding to and preventing a “migration crisis” from becoming exacerbated and leading to more episodes of political violence internally. This runs contra to the tendency in the Global North of using “migration crises” and influxes as rationales to create states of exceptions and close borders, freeze asylum application windows and transmittal rates, and further increase the militarization and violence of their migration securitization efforts.⁸¹ This is not to suggest that the Brazilian military’s participation in Operation Welcome is somehow innocuous, benign, or unproblematic, considering their overall history with human rights, but instead to highlight how in this situation they purposefully acted to position themselves as “humanitarian workers” and not “border guards” or “soldiers.”

This process, we contend, reflects a broader trend within international politics, whereby, Global South states are often unable to fully partake in the fantasy of security and impenetrability that systematically shapes practices of migration securitization in the Global North. It is not rare to find examples in the Global South where despite the existence of securitizing dynamics and narratives, states actively allow non-citizens to enter the national territory as a counter-intuitive way to preserve domestic stability and national sovereignty, as is the case here in Brazil. As we have argued, this essentially leads to a situation in which Global South states are positioned to “absorb” the influx of displaced people produced by broader and historical (racial capitalist and colonial) dynamics of displacement, dispossession, and invasion. At the same time, this allows the Global North to continually distance itself from, and indeed “seal” itself against, the haunting and lively consequences of colonialism and racialized capital accumulation.

⁸¹ See also Oguzhan Turkoglu and Sigrid Weber, ‘When to Go? A Conjoint Experiment on Social Networks, Violence, and Force Migration Decisions in Eastern and Southeastern Turkey,’ *International Studies Quarterly* 2023(67): sqad033

Access to the national territory and surveillance practices in Spain

Tantamount to the role exercised by security and indeed military forces in the region, the whole border security landscape and (minimal and inhospitable) reception infrastructure in Ceuta are designed to both violently deter migrant crossings (impenetrability) and render access to the mainland in Spain an arduous and challenging process for those who manage to cross the border. This desire for border impenetrability is reflected in the increasing investments in border fortification in Ceuta over the past 5 years, rendering the migrants' passage not only more difficult, but also deadlier. The infamous fence in Ceuta, one of the first of its kind in Europe, for instance, is now not only topped with razor wire but also exhibits expensive and sophisticated surveillance tools. This surveillance assemblage consists of, inter alia, noise and movement sensors, video cameras, guard ships and patrol boats, aerial patrol, and *Guardia Civil* and police officer coordination.⁸² Investments in border infrastructure, however, only constitute one dimension of a border landscape designed to curb racialized migration, in a process that aims to fixate migrants on the Moroccan side of the border. To fully understand how this border landscape has materialized in Ceuta and the ways in which it strives to govern access to the national territory, however, it is paramount to bear in mind two of its central dimensions.

First, along with the infrastructure of surveillance and harm at the border zone, there is an active effort to *push* migrants away from the border, led by security efforts on both the Spanish and Moroccan sides of the border. This process involves, on the one hand, the participation of Moroccan security authorities, which have been working as an E.U. “partner” in preventing

⁸² Daniel X.O. Fisher, ‘Situating Border Control: Unpacking Spain’s SIVE Border Surveillance Assemblage’, *Political Geography* 65 (July 2018): 67–76, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2018.04.005>.

“illegal” migration towards Ceuta.⁸³ In 2018 alone, Spain announced that Morocco would receive an additional €140 million from the E.U. Trust Fund for Africa in exchange for a more “combative” posture against the presence of irregular migrants on the Spain-Morocco border zone.⁸⁴ On the other hand, this process involves the systematic use of pushbacks by Spanish police and, as mentioned above, military personnel to prevent migrants from accessing Ceuta’s territory. The centrality of pushbacks can be further attested by its “officialization” and “legalization” as a border policy in Spain in 2015, when Spain’s government introduced two amendments to Spain’s Aliens Law. According to the new legislation:

Foreigners who are detected on the borderline of the territorial demarcation of Ceuta or Melilla while trying to overcome the border containment elements to irregularly cross the border may be rejected so as to prevent their illegal entry into Spain.⁸⁵

The legalization of automatic and collective expulsions in Ceuta – an overt breach of the international principle of non-refoulement⁸⁶ – has created a scenario in which security forces are now entitled, “to reject people who have arrived in Ceuta and Melilla without applying a case-by-case examination of their situation.”⁸⁷ This leads to a situation in which already vulnerable migrants remain trapped around the borderzone, with instances of the same migrant being pushed back to the Moroccan side of the border more than six times. Furthermore, although children are

⁸³ Lorena Gazzotti, Mercedes G. Jiménez Álvarez, and Keina Espiñeira, ‘A “European” Externalisation Strategy? A Transnational Perspective on Aid, Border Regimes, and the EU Trust Fund for Africa in Morocco’, in *Migration Control Logics and Strategies in Europe: A North-South Comparison*, ed. Claudia Finotelli and Irene Ponzio (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023), 69–89, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-26002-5_4.

⁸⁴ Ana García Valdivia, ‘The Externalization Of European Borders: Morocco Becomes A Key EU Partner In Migration Control’, *Forbes*, 26 December 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/anagarciavaldivia/2018/12/26/the-externalization-of-european-borders-morocco-becomes-a-key-partner-for-the-eu/?sh=7e56a5db2657>.

⁸⁵ Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social. Accessed 29 March 2024, <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2020-16819> (own translation)

⁸⁶ ‘Spain: New Law Giving Legal Cover to Pushbacks in Ceuta and Melilla Threats the Right to Asylum- Op-Ed by Estrella Galán, CEAR | European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)’, 27 March 2015, <https://ecre.org/approval-of-new-law-on-public-security-poses-a-serious-threat-to-right-of-asylum-op-ed-by-estrella-galan-cear/>.

⁸⁷ ‘Statewatch | Fort Vert: Nature Conservation as Border Regime in Calais’, accessed 27 September 2022, <https://www.statewatch.org/analyses/2020/fort-vert-nature-conservation-as-border-regime-in-calais/>.

theoretically protected from pushbacks by law, they are often the targets of authorities who lack official procedures to identify them.⁸⁸

The second dimension of this process takes place when migrants manage to evade the infrastructure of violence at the border zone and access Spain's territory. When in Ceuta, migrants are then faced with a complex infrastructure of *abandonment*. Migrants are initially transported to the *Centros de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes* (CETI) or "Temporary Stay Centers for Migrants," the only legal route to asylum offered by the Spanish state. Those spaces operate as a temporary reception center, where migrants are accommodated while their asylum requests are analyzed. The CETI in Ceuta, however, has been persistently critiqued by local NGOs due to extreme overcrowding, poor accommodation standards, and the haunting presence of police violence, issues only exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸⁹ These problems are a direct consequence of Spain's continual restriction of migrants' access to asylum-seeking services, which leaves many asylum-seekers homeless in the streets and waiting for weeks and sometimes months for an opening in the CETI. Often targets of police violence in the streets, such migrants are routinely abandoned by local authorities, in a process that culminates with many migrants "voluntarily" returning to Morocco.⁹⁰

Furthermore, the few who succeed in accessing the territory and applying for asylum at Ceuta's CETI can only access Spain's mainland *if* authorities decide to consider their asylum applications. When this takes place, migrants are given a Foreigners Identity Card (TIE) and then

⁸⁸ 'Push-Backs Rejected: D.D. v. Spain and the Rights of Minors at EU Borders – EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy', accessed 28 March 2024, <https://eumigrationlawblog.eu/push-backs-rejected-d-d-v-spain-and-the-rights-of-minors-at-eu-borders/>.

⁸⁹ 'Conditions in Reception Facilities', *Asylum Information Database | European Council on Refugees and Exiles* (blog), 22 May 2023, <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/spain/reception-conditions/housing/conditions-reception-facilities/>.

⁹⁰ 'Border Violence, Pushbacks and Containment in Ceuta and Melilla' (Border Violence Monitoring Network, 2021), <https://borderviolence.eu/app/uploads/special-report-on-ceuta-and-melilla.pdf>.

have the right to access medical help, social and housing services, and work after six months have elapsed since the application interview. This comes with the obligation of continual cooperation with Spanish authorities, which includes allowing themselves to be fingerprinted and photographed and reporting any change of address. Stated differently, surveillance here works to keep track of migrants, but also to slow down their entry and access, as allowing oneself to be surveilled becomes a *prerequisite* for admission to the national territory. Likewise, surveillance allows the Spanish state to selectively choose *who* is granted access to its national territory and its public services and *how*. This overview of the asylum process in Ceuta illustrates that, after the increasingly securitized barriers at the border are crossed on both the Spanish and Moroccan sides and an architecture of abandonment, what is left is a regime of surveillance and control that keeps migrants continually submissible and vulnerable to state power.⁹¹

Access to the national territory and surveillance practices in Brazil

Turning towards Operation Welcome, it illustrates, conversely, how Global South states are oftentimes positioned, by sharing a border with states in crises, to take in and accommodate large influxes of migrants and refugees. Considering the historic nature of borders – in particular those of the Global South – as tenuous, arbitrary, and porous it is difficult for Global South states to impede the mass movement of bodies across them, despite technological changes in border control and patrolling. Contra on-going border closure and fixation moves in the Global North, like those visible in the Mediterranean and at the Southern U.S. border, borders in the Global South

⁹¹ ‘Rights and Obligations’, UNHCR Spain, accessed 28 March 2024, <https://help.unhcr.org/spain/en/solicitar-asilo-en-espana/solicitantes-de-asilo/https%3A%2F%2Fhelp.unhcr.org%2Fspain%2Fen%2Fsolicitar-asilo-en-espana%2Fsolicitantes-de-asilo%2F>.

more often function as zones of exchange that read more like “discourses” of division, than fully articulated “limits.”⁹² Secondly, Global South borders, like those of the Amazon that separate Brazil and Venezuela, have habitually been molded to suit humans’ needs for movement to escape insecurity, or, following a racial capitalist logic, as malleable structures that foster a perennial escape value for the flow of bodies, commerce, and resources.

Thus, Venezuelan migrants – despite temporary border closures due to the Covid-19 global health pandemic and the instances of political violence at the border explained earlier – have largely been granted legal access to Brazil’s national territory. This is partially due to Brazil’s 2017 *Lei de Migração*, or “Migration Law,” which replaced the previous 1980 *Estatuto do Estrangeiro*, or “Foreigner Statute,” that created two main pathways for Venezuelan, and other migrants and refugees, to enter the country legally and apply either for refugee status or permanent residency. Both refugee status and permanent residency in Brazil allow for access to legal documents, the right to work legally, access to all public services, as well as human rights protections against deportation or incarceration due to legal status. Contra increasingly more restrictive immigration laws in the face of growing global migratory pressure, which is the common tendency in the Global North, many Global South states, in particular those in Latin America,⁹³ have adopted more progressive immigration laws in past decades. These laws aim to correct for the human rights violations of the military regimes that ruled the region during the Cold War, and are a product of “Pink Tide” governments’ commitment to human rights. Therefore, what we see in Brazil, and elsewhere in the Global South, is a legal move to ease migration restrictions and solve migrant and

⁹² José O. Pérez, ‘Venezuela and its Neighbors: The Discursive Struggle for Latin America,’ *Relaciones Internacionales* 57 (2019): 53-69; Beste Isleyen, ‘Technology and Territorial Change in Conflict Settings.’

⁹³ Omar Hammoud-Gallego and Luisa Feline Freier, ‘Symbolic refugee protection: Explaining Latin America’s liberal refugee laws,’ *American Political Science Review* 117.2 (2023): 454-473.

refugee crises by including those individuals within labor, documental, and other legal regimes, even when migration is securitized at the border.

Venezuelan migrants and refugees that enter Brazil via Roraima are legally allowed into the national territory and then can apply for either permanent residency or refugee status. This application is carried out in a securitized context, where the bureaucrat conducting this labor is actually a soldier, as discussed above, and then the individual awaits resettlement to other parts of Brazil on Air Force or commercial airline planes in a coordinated effort led by the federal government. However, their contact with the state and its surveillance practices does not end at the border. Instead, both permanent residents and refugee status applicants are immediately given official IDs – but these do not look like the IDs that Brazilian citizens possess. These IDs are purposefully identifiably different, called RNM *Registro Nacional Migratório*, or National Migrant Registry, cards that allow for the quick identification of the holder as a non-citizen. Moreover, these IDs expire every 12 months, meaning the holder must schedule an appointment and go to their nearest Federal Police station every year to renew their RNM ID card, which includes showing proof of residency and employment, having their picture and fingerprints taken, and presenting numerous other documents. A valid RNM ID is necessary to maintain employment and access public services, which generally guarantees compliance with this measure on the part of migrants and refugees, and allows the state to come into direct contact with these groups at least once a year and further surveil their physical bodies.

Moreover, all Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Brazil are given a CPF, or *Cadastro de Pessoa Física*, or Physical Person Registry, a number which is necessary to buy a phone chip, open a bank account, rent an apartment, apply for lines of credit, purchase electronics and many household goods, set up online accounts, and so forth. Giving CPF numbers to Venezuelan

migrants and refugees facilitates their lives in Brazil by giving them legal access to the consumer markets that citizens enjoy, but it also facilitates the state's tracking of their location and behavior. This is not to imply the Brazilian state is habitually tracking all migrant and refugee activities, but rather to highlight how the RNM and CPF processes give the state that potential surveillance power, if it chooses to use it at any moment. In other words, Venezuelan migrants and refugees are allowed access to the national territory when they enter Brazil via the border state of Roraima, but this lack of militarized migratory response should not be taken as representing a lack of control over migration.

Quite the contrary, by granting Venezuelans legal access to the national territory and providing them with legal paperwork, the state also guarantees its biopolitical and disciplinary control over these individuals. For example, Venezuelan migrants are also given immediate access to the country's public services, including healthcare, something many of them are in dire need of, opening them up to the biopolitical surveillance of the state. Or as a Venezuelan migrant, whom we shall call Natasha, shared:

In this small town, the local government did everything to cure me, I had profound anemia. At first, we did not know what I had, because my platelets were all crazy and I had a lack of iron. At first, they thought it was something else, but thank God no, it was an iron deficiency, and I got better quickly. I arrived here weighing 45 kg and now I am happily weighing 75 kg. So, the truth is I have been given an opportunity, by the people here in Brazil, and now I have already started working in a school.

Brazil has opened its entire public health system to Venezuelan and migrant groups for both emergency and long-term care needs, such as cancer treatments, HIV retroviral medication, surgeries, psychological assistance, physical therapy, and so forth, all free of charge. However, as these individuals seek out public health resources, the state is simultaneously able to expand its biopolitical control over these bodies and build specific relationships to these communities. Stated differently, neo-colonialism, racial capitalism and on-going issues, such as sanctions, inequality, and corruption in Venezuela, have degraded the nation's healthcare system, thereby propelling

these individuals to migrate as their bodies bare the growing burden of racial capitalism. In Brazil, Venezuelans are then able to obtain care for short and long-term medical needs that they had been deprived of at home. As a result, migrants' bodies are essentially prepared or "healed" so that they can be more easily integrated into Brazil's labor market.

Once again, and this is fundamental, this is not to say that Brazil's integration of Venezuelan migrants is a benign or innocuous process. Not only is Brazil's "migration crisis" constructed around narratives of a Venezuelan "other," that allows Brazil to showcase its humanitarian potentialities, but also Brazil's integration plans are themselves predicated on mechanisms that can convert migrants into an exploitable and cheap workforce for the Brazilian labor market. Operation Welcome functions simultaneously as a vehicle for humanitarian assistance and rescue of Venezuelans trapped in the enclave region of Roraima, and likewise as a system that moves expendable bodies to other parts of the country where their labor can subsequently be harnessed. This becomes particularly noticeable in the operation's partnership with Brazilian and multinational corporations that have been employing Venezuelan migrants in the construction, industrial, meatpacking, and agriculture sectors, where labor rights violations have been routine. As reports suggest, cases of economic abuse and even modern slavery against Venezuelan migrants who have been resettled as part of Operation Welcome have occurred routinely across the country.⁹⁴ This reveals the degree to which migrants' securitization at, and resettlement from, Brazil's borders – despite operating under different rationales vis-à-vis Ceuta – have also been shaped by broader racial capitalist dynamics of exploitation and extraction.

CAN THE GLOBAL SOUTH SECURITIZE MIGRATION?

⁹⁴ Fabio Teixeira and Emily Costa. Operação Acolhida? Venezuelanos sofrem abusos em programa federal. Thomson Reuters Foundation, accessed 3 June 2024, <https://longreads.trust.org/item/Venezuela-Brasil-Abuso>.

To conclude, it is important to reiterate that the point here is not to suggest that one of these case studies presents “better” or more “benign” securitization practices, because drawing upon Césaire – no one securitizes innocently.⁹⁵ Rather, the point here is to delineate how (migration) securitization is, on average, different in the Global North and Global South due to the different relationships these regions have historically had with empire, borders, racial capitalism, and systems of (dis)possession and oppression. Moreover, Global North and Global South securitization moves do not exist in a vacuum – but instead are inherently connected and tied to each other as one securitization move impacts security in other locals, as technologies and techniques for securitization circulate, and as bodies move to escape the ravages of crisis and precarity. Similarly, the point here should not be taken as saying *all* Global North or *all* Global South securitization is alike. Examples exist of less violent and more “welcoming” migratory responses in the Global North in the same that more violent and less “welcoming” migratory responses exist in the Global South, than the case studies presented above. Migration securitization exists on a spectrum of responses that is a product of many factors, but nevertheless, Global South states are typically positioned closer to global crises vis-à-vis Global North states and frequently have to bear their consequences. Global South states are also typically positioned to receive and host more migrants and refugees, and the historic way in which their sovereignty and relationship vis-à-vis “migrant crises” have been framed preclude certain policy reactions or measures.

Understanding how racial capitalism and colonialism structure and underpin our current state system is, thus, paramount, insofar as it takes us to a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the intimate links between migration and security globally. First, it allows us to have a more nuanced grasp of migration “crises” that not only *contextualizes* their emergences

⁹⁵ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, Joan Pinkham, translator (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000[1972])

within wider and persistent structures of racial dispossession and colonialism, but also *explains* why it is that such episodes are more recurrent in some spaces than others. Second, and central here, by interrogating IR's elision of colonial and racial capitalist dynamics, our contribution here has been a more situated understanding of contemporary security responses to migration "crises" by states in the Global North v. South. In particular, both cases showed military officers at the border, construction of shelters for migrants, emission of migrant ID cards, usage of surveillance techniques, and so forth. However, what our close comparison and examination brings to light is how these processes are employed differently in each setting, and impact migrants in diametrically opposed manners. Looking further into the intimacies between security, migration, and racial capitalism, ergo, is an urgent and necessary task as the world continues to respond to growing numbers of migrants and refugees over the coming decades and overt episodes of border violence multiply worldwide.