

**Climate Debt, Race Debt, Climate Colonialism: Forging a Just Future**  
**Cynthia Moe-Lobeda**

While climate change is caused overwhelmingly by the world's high-consuming people, it is wreaking death and destruction first and foremost on impoverished peoples, who are disproportionately people of color, especially (but not only) people of the Global South. This project examines moral implications and public policy implications of climate change as a compelling moral matter of race-based climate debt and climate debt owed by the Global North to the Global South. The project has two related objectives. One is to further my own research into this ethical issue and to bring it into the discourse in my discipline, theological ethics. A second is to launch an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary initiative in public scholarship that unearths moral implications of climate change understood in these terms, and examines the implications for social change at levels of individual life style, business, institutions of civil society, public policy, and consciousness. The initiative will involve environmental law, theology, ethics, behavioral sciences, climate sciences, fine arts, environmental journalism, the NGO community, and the activist community.

**Progress to Date**

Regarding the first objective

- 1) A chapter in an edited volume forthcoming in 2015 from Fordham University Press.
- 2) An endowed lecture delivered at University of Regina, Canada Sept. 2014.
- 3) A plenary address given at Pacific Lutheran University's 2014 Lutheran Studies Conference on Justice in Society.
- 4) A juried paper presented at the 2015 annual meeting of the Society of Christian ethics (San Diego) in January 2015. The paper is under review for publication in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Christian Ethics*.
- 5) A paper co-written with Professor of Law Carmen Gonzalez, presented at the 2014 summer conference of Seattle University's Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability. The paper has been accepted for publication pending revision in peer-reviewed journal.

Regarding the second objective

- 1) Initiated and completed the interdisciplinary paper noted in number 5 above.
- 2) Constructed the core of the steering committee (four members) with four members to be contacted, and gathered a group of about 30 affiliated scholars.
- 3) Outlined the initiative's objectives and timeline. (Intent is to impact disciplinary discourses as well as the broader public discourse.)
- 4) Organized and served on an interdisciplinary panel at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) (Chicago). The panel brought together scholars in international law, race and theology, reparations theory, and climate justice.
- 5) Coordinated a meeting of interested scholars at the Annual Meeting of the AAR.

**Work for Remainder of the Fellowship Period**

Regarding the first objective

- 1) Finish writing and deliver an academic paper at an international conference in Claremont, and a plenary address at an ecclesial conference in Santa Barbara (June and Feb, 2015 respectively).

Regarding the second objective

- 1) Finish constructing steering committee, and finalize funding and dates for its initial meeting.