

example, that the rise of Antarctic seal hunting was determinant for the loss of interest of Russia over its American territories in the nineteenth century, and that the development of international whaling in the second half of the twentieth century was tightly intertwined with the power play of cold war actors.

To be sure, in a condensed book like this that spans through so many different topics, one will always find omissions. Particularly noticeable to this reader were the absence of any allusions to the role played by Nazi Germany in Antarctic politics during the 1930s and 1940s; and the ways in which parties with sovereign claims over the Antarctic have sought to exercise that sovereignty in spite of the existence of the AT, not only through scientific research (the power of knowledge), but also through actual human settlements (the power of effective occupation).

In concluding, Howkins presents the polar regions as places where what he calls 'geographies of despair' co-exist with

'geographies of hope' (page 180). On the one hand, even for moderate environmentalists, the ruthless over-exploitation of resources, pollution, and climate change give reason to tell declensionist narratives of the north and south. On the other hand, some of the most stringent environmental protection measures on earth and the predominance of science give reason to think that humans might choose to do things in a more enlightened spirit in the poles. For those wishing to make up their minds in the matter, this book is a must-read. By offering a broad panorama of the many topics of environmental history to be developed around the poles and by complementing the chapters with a thorough bibliography and index, it is a welcome addition to the literature. (Alejandra Mancilla, Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature (CSMN), Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo, PO Box 1020, Blindern 0315, Oslo, Norway / Chilean Antarctic Institute, Punta Arenas ([alejandra.mancilla@ifikk.uio.no](mailto:alejandra.mancilla@ifikk.uio.no))).

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**Hakapik.** Yoanis Menge. 2016. *L'Étang-du-nord: Les édition la Morue verte*. 168 p, illustrated, hardcover. ISBN 978-2-924564-02-8. CA\$ 59.95.  
doi:[10.1017/S0032247416000450](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247416000450)

This book review starts with a question: what do readers associate with the terms 'Canada' and 'seal hunt'? I would assume that two different sets of images now appear before the inner eye: the blood-lust commercial seal hunt on the one hand, and the solemn Inuit seal hunt on the other. If this is the case, it would not be surprising as indeed the seal hunt has been subject to successful and highly effective image campaigns that have shaped the public's view on the matter.

It does equally not come as a surprise that life is slightly more complex than simple imagery and narratives and also the seal hunt cannot be depicted in a black and white manner. Which, of course, in the context of this book is a slightly ironic statement since this collection of images from different locations of the Canadian seal hunt by Québécois photographer Yoanis Menge is held completely in black and white, from Nunavut, Newfoundland, Nunavik and the Magdalen Islands.

And the images Menge has created and eternalised in this book do not correspond to the seal hunt as depicted in the global discourse. Instead, Menge focuses on the people conducting it, on the circumstances under which the hunt takes place and the socio-environmental conditions that, at least so it seems, necessitate the hunt for seals. The outcome is a book which does not need any explanatory texts for the pictures – they speak for themselves. Merely the very last pages of the book briefly in French present some basic facts of the seal hunt as well as Menge's approach towards photography, his home in the Magdalen Islands and, naturally, the seal hunt.

It is almost impossible to single out a particular picture and since I have been having this book in my possession, I have been looking in it almost every day, just to find new details which had been gone unnoticed before. This may also stem from the fact that during my own fieldwork in the Canadian seal hunt I had the pleasure to spend some time with Menge and to see him conduct his work. His approach is respectful towards the people and the customs of the locality which he captures in his photographs. His friendly personality make his subjects gladly be taken pictures of and appear, although some photographs are 'arranged', to be fully in their natural elements.

And this is probably the greatest strength of this impressive work: Menge has not only documented the different facets of all aspects of Canadian seal hunting, but he has created a powerful insight into the realities of these hunts. None of the photographs appears to be staged and no agenda – be it positive or negative towards seal hunting – is conveyed. Instead, Menge shows the harsh realities of seal hunting in all their varieties, making this book an extremely important contribution to the hunt's better understanding beyond the narratives of cruelty or lack of necessity.

I can therefore highly recommend this work! Not only in order to better understand the seal hunt, but simply because Menge's talent as a photographer of vivid, moving, and somewhat emotional images rises to the surface in *Hakapik*. To gain insight into this young man's work, which also contains contributions to *Hakapik*, a visit to Menge's website is recommendable: <http://yoanis.squarespace.com>.

With this I leave the reader of this short review and indulge once again in Menge's captivating photographs. (Nikolas Sellheim, Faculty of Law, University of Lapland, PO Box 101, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland. ([nikolas.sellheim@ulapland.fi](mailto:nikolas.sellheim@ulapland.fi))).

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**Handbook of the politics of the Arctic.** Leif Christian Jensen and Geir Hønneland (editors). 2015. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. xiii + 617 p, illustrated, hardcover. ISBN 978-0-85793-473-4. £189.00  
doi:[10.1017/S0032247416000498](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247416000498)

The present volume is the first compilation of articles dealing with the Arctic which this reviewer has seen under the banner of a 'handbook'. The title, which frames the book's content as dealing with the 'politics' of the Arctic, opens up an impressive, and somewhat daunting, work which contains contributions of