

ARCTIC YEARBOOK 2012. Lassi Heininen, Heather Exner-Pirot and Joël Plouffe (editors). 2012. Akureyri: Northern Research Forum. xiii + 328 p, softcover. ISSN 2298-2418. Free of Charge.

The *Arctic Yearbook* 2012 constitutes the first collaborative volume on Arctic geopolitics, international relations and security by the Northern Research Forum and the University of the Arctic's Thematic Network on Geopolitics and Security. The *Arctic Yearbook* is a high-level peer-reviewed, open-access publication with an Editorial Board consisting of academics and politicians, such as the President of Iceland Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson or former Swedish SAO Gustaf Lind. And, indeed, what a pleasure it is to read this book.

It is divided into four broad sections: 'Arctic Politics' holds nine research articles and two commentaries; 'Critical Geopolitics' has three articles and one commentary; 'Circumpolar Relations' with four articles and one commentary; and finally 'Update on the UArctic and NRF Thematic Network on Geopolitics and Security' includes one commentary.

The book is a very up-to-date appraisal of the current status of Arctic politics and geopolitics. Heininen therefore opens with a highly insightful comparative analysis of the Arctic eight's national strategies on the Arctic. He shows that the nature of these differs in scopes and priorities. While for example all put great emphasis on the sustainable development of Arctic indigenous peoples, the U.S. does not elaborate on this. Heininen shows that with their strategies, traditional Arctic states like Canada, Russia or Norway even more emphasise their 'Arcticness' and it becomes apparent that the national interest in all strategies prevails over global dimensions. Yet, all strategies highlight the Arctic as a peaceful region.

The section then turns away from the Arctic states and focuses on some states that either have observer status in the Arctic Council, or were applying for it at the time of writing of the book. To this end, France's, Scotland's, the UK's and Poland's Arctic dimensions are examined. The articles generally show 1). the states' engagement in the Arctic both from a historical and current perspective; 2). Why these states engage in Arctic and polar affairs; and 3). how a future engagement of these states could look like, for example with their own national Arctic strategy. And here it becomes utterly interesting, as also Asian states are considered. China's and Japan's roles as Arctic actors are analysed in Alexeeva and Lasserre's as well as Tonami and Watter's respective, albeit rather short, articles. The articles, in combination with Jian's comment on China, highlight that neither state is disputing sovereignty or Arctic states' interests, but that they can contribute to research and environmental understanding. Unfortunately, no mention is being made of the experiences of Chinese and Japanese provinces that are engaged in the Northern Forum, a regional circumpolar forum for the improvement of living conditions in shared northern environments, from which also the Arctic Council members might be able to learn. Indeed, also Singapore's experiences as a maritime nation, as stated in a second article by Tonami and Watter, may benefit Arctic governance.

The book then leaves Arctic states politics in Section 2 and turns to geopolitics. The section begins with Fabbi's account

of Inuit engagement fostering change in Arctic politics. The article sketches a picture of the political power that indigenous groups have exerted in international affairs via the Arctic Council and what normative impact other political moves have had. For example, the Inuit Circumpolar Council's (ICC) petition against the U.S. climate change policies contributed to a human rights dimension within a climate change discourse (see also Heinämäki 2010). Fabbi also introduces foreign policy into an indigenous peoples context, as for example the ICC's 'Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic' (ICC 2009) holds such notions. The article, supported by a subsequent commentary by the Executive Director of Gwich'in Council International, shows beautifully how in the Arctic traditional state-oriented geopolitics evolve to a beyond-Westphalia political environment.

Nilsson's article on how the Arctic environment has become of fundamental significance for states stands in contrast to this. She argues that the shift of the environment from a rather low to a high priority is predominantly driven by states' national interests and the Arctic as a resource base, while sustainable development is embedded in an economic context. This therefore eloquently identifies the nation states as the main actors and the article puts little emphasis on the role of indigenous people's organisations. Yet, this is done by Finger-Stich and Finger who analyse the changing Arctic environmental political landscape and the different actors involved *vis-à-vis* the still unsolved problems identified in Gorbachev's famous Murmansk speech in 1987.

Section 3 delves into international relations and Exner-Pirot examines different possibilities for a future direction of Arctic governance. She singles out five possibilities: 1). a focus on the current legal framework such as the LOS or Climate Change Conventions; 2). an approach that aims to develop further uni/bilateral agreements; 3). a piecemeal approach that calls for more issue-specific agreements; 4). a regional sea for the Arctic Ocean approach based on UNEP's regional seas; and 5). an unlikely Arctic Treaty that establishes a legally-binding, comprehensive and predominantly conservationist treaty. By taking into consideration *inter alia* fisheries or shipping she concludes that Arctic governance is likely to proceed towards a piecemeal governance structure due to increasingly emerging issue-specific agreements.

Østreng's as well as Humpert's and Raspotnik's contributions look at Arctic shipping. Østreng provides a comparative analysis with regard to the political, legal and environmental conditions for the northern sea route, the northwest passage and the transpolar passage (TPP) in combination with different marine corridors linking them to more southerly areas. Humpert and Raspotnik focus on the TPP and the likelihood of its future use. They claim that with an increasing shift of the world economy towards Asia, even given the climatic challenges on the TPP, an increase in maritime traffic on the TPP is likely. Stephenson concludes this section and focuses on characteristics of Arctic infrastructure, serving both as an indicator for advanced Arctic sovereignty due to infrastructural maintenance, as well as for Arctic cooperation when several states benefit from its establishment and maintenance.

Section 4 provides a short summary of the main points of the Calotte Academy 2012, a travel symposium for young researchers.

This is a great book! Not only does it provide the reader with new and innovative approaches concerning analyses of Arctic governance and politics, the editors also have shown great skill in selecting the articles and commentaries. This is because almost no significant redundancy can be found while the articles appear to build on and complement each other and therefore draw a diverse, yet comprehensive picture of the intriguing facets of Arctic (geo)politics and security. And, indeed, it is *freely* accessible at www.arcticyearbook.com. I can truly recommend this publication to scholars and students of IR or political and legal sciences and can only emphasise its value to understanding past, present and future Arctic political processes. The *Arctic Yearbook 2012* makes you look forward to the 2013 volume. (Nikolas Sellheim, Faculty of Law, University

of Lapland, P.O. Box 122, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland (nikolas.sellheim@ulapland.fi)).

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