

Governing Arctic change: global perspectives. Kathrin Keil and Sebastian Knecht (eds). 2017. London, Palgrave Macmillan. 319 p, hardback. ISBN 978-1-137-50883-6. USD 68.

Viewing the Arctic as a locally embedded region is not a new concept. In a region experiencing new developments every year—from urbanisation and melting ice to increased shipping—*Governing Arctic Change* provides a comprehensive and interdisciplinary overview of the key challenges and actors in this evolving region.

Sparked by the 20th anniversary of the Arctic Council, which coincided with concerns about the irreversibility of the Far North's environmental changes, *Governing Arctic Change* intends to expand the dialogue and broaden perspectives on Arctic governance and its implications. The book contains contributions from 21 authors, including the book's editors, Kathrin Keil and Sebastian Knecht, whose names are immediately recognisable to Arctic scholars. An initial overview of the book confirms its lofty endeavour, and the chapters encompass sustainable development, the global and local nature of the Arctic, political spaces, geoengineering, and institutions.

While accessible to an interdisciplinary audience, the authors assume a strong international relations background in their references to international relations theory, discussing the theoretical limitation of international relations and the need to address indigenous diplomacies as early as the second chapter. A prior knowledge of regional actors, events, and treaties is also assumed, as evidenced by the four-page table of abbreviations prefacing the introduction. The book is an excellent guide to the complexity of the Arctic for graduate students and early-career scholars, while exploring the behaviours of a variety of actors in a way that informs even established politics and policy scholars.

The book's chapters are organised according to four main themes: envisioning the Arctic in a global context, institutional organisation of the Arctic, participants in Arctic governance, and key Arctic issues. These themes capture the 'four I's' of the Arctic: imaginaries, institutional politics, involvement, and issues. Of the four themes, Arctic imaginaries is spearheaded as the most important, presenting the Arctic as a globalised space in its infancy. How the Far North is framed affects its future policies and possibilities, shaping the development of the other 'I's'. The introduction emphasises the importance of Arctic imaginaries by placing it as a globally embedded space, thus impacting the international community.

In Part One, *Imaginaries*, the contributing chapters address how scholars and policymakers envision the Arctic in a global context, rather than on the periphery. The region is "inextricably linked with climate, environmental and socio-economic processes that originate or are determined by places far beyond what anyone would still define as 'Arctic'" (p. 2). Of the many ways the Arctic relates to the global system at large, the authors follow a theme of portraying the Far North as a 'messenger' of climate change (Stone, 2015). Yet, while the Arctic signals the state of global environmental health, it cannot be measured by the same global theories. One of the most dangerous fallacies committed in Arctic politics is looking at it from a Westphalian perspective. The traditional state-sovereignty model cannot define a region of diverse indigenous peoples, maritime identities, or environmental degradation, as the paradigm is inconsistent with the Arctic framework.

Political imaginaries link to norms, values and identity, all of which must be addressed to create a shared vision of governance. Sustainability itself requires an examination of norms and values (including rethinking concepts of fairness and equality), but at its root recognises needs and limitations. All state and non-state actors in the North are constrained by biophysical realities, including the resource frontier. Additionally, non-state actors, such as indigenous groups, use nationhood imaginaries to impose limitations on economic and extraction imaginaries held by states.

Indigenous issues and self-determination themes run through each of the book's four parts, a relevant recognition of the multifaceted challenges faced by non-state actors while asserting political sovereignty. The third chapter focuses on possibilities and challenges of political gains, specifically the implications of shifting international discourse on climate change and the legal status of indigenous nations in international organisations (particularly the Arctic Council). Indigenous peoples, through decolonising mobilisation and membership in international forums, have expanded the parameters of what is and is not considered international relations. In analysing Inuit and circumpolar policy in Chapter Three, Shadian details the emergence of indigenous concepts of stewardship in international law. Addressing collective rights has been

lacking in international law, shaped in part by the Western orientation of human rights (Parrish, 2007).

Arctic imaginaries are shaped by grand narratives defining actor existence and parameters of when actors may speak. Indigenous communities are at a disadvantage in speaking globally today given their past victimisation. These constraints not only harm modern indigenous movements but limit the international community's ability to further sustainability discourse and enact proactive environmental policy (p. 51). When narratives of climate change dominate sustainable development narratives, this challenges the resource rights that indigenous peoples have acquired and further incapacitates their ability to address climate change. This would diminish the international status gains circumpolar indigenous peoples have made since the Rovaniemi Declaration in 1991 (p. 53).

Finally, geoengineering is positioned as an influence in the Arctic's future. Corry argues that international relations is traditionally subject-centric, under-addressing how objects of governance transform with different structuring effects. He presents an alternative approach on geoengineering to analyse the policies that coalesce around this technology, to argue that the Arctic climate is becoming an object of governance. Technology shapes the Arctic imagination by creating policy possibilities and divisions.

Part Two, *Institutions*, addresses the question of how to organise a global Arctic. The chapters look at multilateral organisations and agreements that address issues of environmental cooperation, human health, and research and development. Although the Cold War delayed the creation of meaningful circumpolar institutions, since the 1980s there have been significant state–non-state collaborations to address issues of circumpolar importance (p. 102).

Chapter Five discusses developments that shaped international environmental cooperation: an unprecedented increase in global environmental agreements, the evolution of environmental interest on a regional level, and growing attention to Arctic issues. Despite these developments, questions remain about Arctic governance. Particularly, interest in the niche region does not explain why the Arctic Council became the preeminent institution for Arctic governance, nor does it explain the track record of circumpolar states to preexisting norms.

Whereas Humrich focuses on marine environmental protection to explain compliance management in the Arctic Council, Selin examines the influence of the Arctic Council on Persistent Organic Pollutants and mercury pollution. In both cases, the authors highlight the need to integrate issues and levels of cooperation to avoid costly trade-offs among Arctic states, while recognising that the Arctic Council has borrowed from previous conventions to enhance the legitimacy of compliance. Chapter Six introduces the increasing number of non-Arctic states seeking to join the Arctic Council as observers. This phenomenon is influential to the future of the Arctic and its institutions, and it would be worth examining biases member states may have towards potential players.

Currently, Arctic Council members are developing a process through which potential observers would demonstrate their interest, expertise and support. Despite indicators that observer admission is a contentious issue among members, new applicants have not been dissuaded (p. 128). Drawing from Checkel's work on socialisation, Chapter Seven identifies the Arctic Council as a knowledge community, as well as an active socialiser, reminiscent of the European Union (Schimmelfennig, 2001). As Depledge and Dodds assert in Chapter Eight, it is important to remember that international stakeholders also play a role in the creation and

consumption of knowledge (p. 167). Although the Arctic Council is the largest of the North's institutions, we must still honour the legitimacy of other regional institutions.

In Part Three, *Involvement*, contributors question who participates in governance. Starting with non-Arctic observer states in the Arctic Council, Knecht looks at the causes and consequences of governance engagement to illustrate that participation is far from uniform. Although participation is not linear, non-state and non-Arctic actors play crucial roles, including that of influencers (p. 189). Wehrmann addresses the role of non-state actors further, focusing on NGOs and IGOs and their advocacy for change. Here an interesting proposition is made regarding sovereignty: the inclusion of more state or non-state actors in the Arctic Council further legitimises and increases the relevance of the institution (pp. 201–204). Elaborating on increasing relevance would be worthwhile, as the influence of non-state actors is crucial and may lessen the dominance of traditional power politics in the region.

The desire of non-Arctic states to play a role in Arctic politics is not surprising, although we must not overstate their interest in the region (Lackenbauer, Lajeunesse, Manicom, & Lasserre, 2018). Non-state involvement in the Arctic, as others have pointed out, is not uniform, apart from the expression of increasing concern. Arctic and non-Arctic actors have different, yet overlapping, priorities in the region. While overlapping priorities provide opportunities for engagement, varying interests require constant management. The Arctic's environmental challenges, to a large degree, originate outside the region. This requires further attention and reduces institutional effectiveness. By drawing on a planetary politics approach, the authors recognise that regional problems can be reversed only with a global response. This earth systems approach sets the stage for the fourth part of the book, *Issues: what is the global Arctic all about?*

This part leans towards the technical aspects of the Arctic more than the previous sections, addressing black carbon emissions, shipping, and oil and gas development. A common theme of these issues is the compliance-compelling effects of intergovernmental organisations, even in cases in which agreements are not politically binding. To compel political commitment, agreements had to draw on pre-existing norms and shift the burden of proof to laggards and non-compliant states. The case for decisive political action is most strongly made in Chapter 12: *fiddling while the Arctic melts is not an option* (p. 249). This chapter gives the most weight to the role of voluntary efforts by state, private sector, and NGO partners.

Chapters 13 and 14 address two issues at the forefront of policy-makers' minds: shipping and natural resource extraction. These industries have lucrative near-futures and are rooted deep in the Arctic states' historical narratives and identities. How each issue addresses the Russian imaginary harmoniously fits with current political theory trends. The past year has seen a proliferation of conferences examining the Russian imagination, hinterland narratives, and Siberian policy. Furthermore, Chapter 13's reference to Asian interests in the northern sea route is timely, given recent advancements in icebreaker and naval development. This further illustrates that "what happens in the Arctic doesn't stay in the Arctic" (p. 280). Likewise, what happens outside the Arctic still concerns the Arctic.

The last chapter leaves us with a strong message. Our imaginary of Arctic opportunity is being challenged by a lack of access for regional and local development. While the Arctic faces its own challenges, ongoing international events continue to shape its future in the areas of market developments, geopolitical tensions, and decolonising processes.

Ultimately, the contributors did an excellent job at balancing the involvement of non-Arctic Council members (encompassing permanent participants, observers, and would-be observers) with the influence of member states. However, more commentary could have addressed the roles of NGO and IGO observers. Additionally, the timeliness of many chapters is notable, given current discussions on Arctic Council observer admittance, East Asian maritime developments, and indigenous discourses. There is consistent and strong recognition that the Arctic Council is the primary organisation of the region and manager of its many processes and resources, particularly those that have spillover effects.

Given the emphasis on a global perspective, most of the discussions on changes affecting the international community focus on nations and peoples. Although the authors discuss how changes play out for traditional and nontraditional actors, a discussion about the impact of the Arctic as part of our Anthropocene would be beneficial. It is important to remember the distinction between global politics and planetary politics. Additionally, the socialisation discussion in Chapter Seven could have more strongly addressed epistemic communities. Overall, the book leans constructivist, which makes sense given the general trends of Arctic research.

The Arctic has many imaginaries, and which imaginaries are dominant is determined by global processes. Without a thorough understanding of relevant actors and their own imaginaries, we cannot determine the meaning of the issues for the Arctic and the world. (Ellen Ahlness, University of Washington. 26 Gowen Hall, Seattle WA 98195, USA (eahlness@uw.edu))

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