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From the outset the book *International relations in the Arctic* raises the impression of filling a gap in the Arctic research literature as it is to the knowledge of this reviewer the first comprehensive discourse analysis on the Arctic within an Arctic state – Norway. Jensen thus has embarked on an impressive journey and has analysed 3,043 articles in four different Norwegian newspapers in order to flesh out different narratives and discourses pertaining to the Arctic in Norway. He has structured the book around, what Jensen terms, ‘four of the weightiest foreign policy issues: security; Russia; the environment; and natural resources’ (page 1).

Nicely enough, the author not only presents this challenging findings, but in Chapter 1 delves into the more theoretical elements of discourse analysis. What is actually meant by that term? And who applies it how? In this regard Jensen presents a short but poignant overview of key literature and approaches towards ‘discourse analysis’ and the way he applies it in his book. This reviewer would however disagree with Jensen’s statement that ‘ulterior motives and hidden agendas’ (page 16) behind politically relevant discourses can never be observed. After all, the disciplines of political or legal anthropology try to achieve exactly that (see for example Sarfaty 2012). In how far this is successful of course remains a matter of academic debate.

This notwithstanding, the reader gains deep insight into discourse analysis as a theory and method. Especially Jensen’s detailed description and discussion of his methodology enables the reader keen on her or his own discourse analysis to take Jensen’s methodology as a starting point. This makes moreover also those unfamiliar with the concept gain an understanding of what ‘discourse analysis’ entails in practice.

Before presenting the findings of his analysis, in Chapter 2 Jensen presents a brief overview of the empirical background of Norway’s ‘high north’ and outlines different security concerns in the Barents Sea as well as around Svalbard. Not surprisingly, ‘Norway’s relationship with Russia ranks above most other concerns’ (page 54) and is guided by developments such as the the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) established in 1992, the delimitation agreement in the Barents Sea of 2010 or the exploitation of hydrocarbons. A wealth of literature exists on these issues, but Jensen appeared to not deem it necessary to cite much of this, and rightfully so, as the empirical backdrop does not constitute the author’s thematic focus.

Chapter 3 is more or less the core of the present volume and presents the author’s findings of his extensive discourse analysis of four Norwegian newspapers – conservative, business-oriented, northern local and leftist – regarding the ‘high north’ between 2000 and 2006. By dividing the time period into three distinct discursive episodes with different dynamics Jensen convincingly shows how in the early 2000s little regard is paid to the north in the Norwegian media and it is rather dealt with under non-coherent narratives similar to those of the 1990s. Yet, from 2004 onwards the ‘high north’ peaks in the media due to an atmosphere of hope and opportunity, especially with regard to the potential of cooperation with Russia concerning the Barents Sea hydrocarbon reserves. Yet, when Russian cooperation did not take place as expected, since 2006 the ‘high north’ discourse gave way to collective feelings of disappointment and disillusionment. Interestingly, Jensen further points to individuals countering the respective prevailing discourse, uttering more critical voices or simply contradicting narratives. Unfortunately without going much into detail, the reactions to these voices in the press appear to have been rather strong. To this reviewer, Jensen could have further emphasised this issue in order to make the continuance and change of discourses better explainable.

Moving from the press to political documents, Jensen presents another core part of his research in the fourth chapter when he analyses how ‘the approaches to the European Arctic [are] framed through the foreign policy discourses in Norway and Russia, and what […] the discursive nodal points [are that] these discourses evolve around’ (page 79). And it is with great satisfaction to this reviewer that Jensen also covers Russian political discourse on the Arctic with as much thoroughness as he does with the Norwegian one. Of course, one could have hoped for a Russian media analysis as well, but as Jensen states: ‘The Russian alternative to Norway’s intense discursive mobilisation is only conspicuous by its absence’ (page 89). Since Jensen covers only the time period 2000–2006, this reviewer would assume, however, that media discourse on the Arctic in Russia has changed since the infamous 2007 flag planting under the North Pole. This cannot be backed up by empirical data though. Notwithstanding, the difference in the political perception of the north between Norway and Russia becomes very clear in this chapter: while for Norway it appears to be the benefit of cooperation between Russia and Norway, for Russia one country’s gain is the loss of the other. This is not surprising, however, given Russia’s ‘securitised’ approach towards the energy-rich Arctic.

In the fifth chapter Jensen lays out the different discourses pertaining to the question of ‘to drill or not to drill’ in the Barents Sea. An interesting utilisation of narratives has taken place in Jensen’s analysis: the pro-drilling side has used environmental arguments to further press for quick development of

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or the other typo has found its way into the book – for example, I dare say that the editors refer to ‘indigeneity’ instead of ‘indignity’ (page vii) that the book deals with – but this does not impair the articles’ high quality. *The new Arctic* is thus highly recommendable for those aiming to get a broader picture of Arctic change. But the book goes beyond the notion of ‘Arctic change’ as it provides the reader with insight into the different approaches towards the global north, making it a diverse region with diverse cultures and discourses. (Nikolas Selleheim, Faculty of Law, University of Lapland, PO Box 122, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland (nikolas.selleheim@ulapland.fi)).

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the Barents hydrocarbon fields. This has occurred by framing the argument based on the assumption that without Norwegian technological and environmental standards Russian production would surely have much more adverse environmental impacts. Russia, in other words, is considered an ‘environmental laggard’, a narrative also utilised by the anti-production side, which aims to strengthen civil society in Russia in order to provide environmental issues with more prominence in the Russian discourse.

In chapter 6, the ‘high north’ is placed within a context of security and (de-)securitisation. Touching of course on the Copenhagen School of security, Jensen furthermore also includes linguistic elements into his analysis, such as the difficulties of framing the concept of ‘security’ vis-à-vis ‘safety’ in the Norwegian language. The absence of the Norwegian word for ‘security’ notwithstanding, Jensen shows how it is observable how state-centred security in the context of resource development in the Barents Sea especially after 2005 is quickly broadened to include other, ‘soft’, security means into consideration.

Throughout the different chapters, and most prominently so in chapter 7, Jensen inserts theoretical excursions to underpin his empirical data with a theoretical background. Or turned on its head one might say that with the vast empirical data Jensen presents he contributes nicely to different theories and schools of thought. By doing so he theorises his earlier arguments in this chapter and develops them further, particularly how the ‘drilling for the environment’ narrative has been used and further pushed by different actors in the discourse.

In the last chapter the discourses under analysis are screened against the backdrop of Norwegian identity and the othering of Russia. Here, Jensen argues, it is especially the ‘high north’ which provides the bridge between identity, domestic and foreign policy with Russia being exactly what Norway is not. This is an interesting case in point and to the knowledge of this reviewer little research has been done on the link between identity and foreign policy in Arctic affairs.

With a concluding chapter this enjoyable, insightful and important book ends. Apart from the sophisticated theoretical discussions and the vast empirical material presented, this book furthermore stands out because of Jensen’s personal style of writing, making it very easy to read and understand. As explained in the opening of the book, the author makes clear that his preference lies with the personalised writing style instead of the ‘neutral’ scientific way of writing down research results. And the reader of International relations in the Arctic can quickly see how this benefits the content of the book: after all, Jensen is Norwegian, analysing Norwegian sources while writing from a Norwegian perspective. It is thus from the outset very personal research which is difficult to draw universal conclusions from. Nevertheless, the student of Arctic governance will find this book highly insightful and it should serve as a source of inspiration for scholars and students to conduct similar studies in their respective countries. Or maybe even a circum-Arctic research project…? (Nikolas Sellheim, Faculty of Law, University of Lapland, PO Box 122, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland (nikolas.sellheim@ulapland.fi)).

References


This book edited by professor Heininen is an extremely valuable contribution to understanding the present situation and dynamic in the Arctic region. By gathering texts written by researchers and experts from various disciplines coming all over the Arctic region, professor Heininen offers us an engaging volume which provides multidisciplinary insight into the future perspectives of security in the Arctic region.

In the introductory part of the volume, Heininen argues that the Arctic region, characterised by high stability and intensive international cooperation, could be left out from the long list of global hot spots and considered as a human made asset. He sees no direct connections between any ongoing regional conflicts in the world and the situation in the Arctic region, only reflections and indirect impacts. The situation in the Arctic is described as one of ‘high political stability’, although the author identifies the growing and legitimate concern that it may be jeopardized as a consequence of the situations in other regions.

The second chapter of the book discusses different stages, special features and specific shift in understanding Arctic security. Heininen stresses the demystification of security issues in the Arctic – even though nuclear weaponry is present in the region, security is broadened and therefore breaks mystified national security and brings individuals and peoples to become the subjects of security. He also highlights the security dimensions of climate changes which put state sovereignty in danger but concludes that there is still no paradigmatic shift in the understanding of the concept of security due to the climate change. Author’s list of major stages and special features of Arctic security is very illustrative and it helps to understand how and why the region came to have the position where it is now. In the part dealing with state policies and national strategies, Heininen introduces geopolitical issues in the discussion and identifies differences in the perception of the Arctic security between two main groups of the Arctic states. From one side, Arctic Ocean states emphasise state sovereignty and national security. From another side, non-littoral Arctic states are characterised by a more comprehensive perception of security and emphasise the importance of international cooperation as security factor in the region. He summarizes that the Arctic, although characterised by high political stability in the maintaining of which all the Arctic states are interested, is also a politically and military fragmented region regarding security issues and cannot be considered as security community. Furthermore, the shift from a traditional towards a comprehensive understanding of security has been considerably influenced by local and regional non-state actors.