

WHAT HOLDS THE ARCTIC TOGETHER?

Cécile Pelaudeix, Alain Faure and Robert Griffith (Editors). 2012. Paris: L'Harmattan. 189 p. soft cover. ISBN 978-2-296-99219-1, 20€.

What holds the Arctic together? This is certainly a question that bears great significance in the dealings with the Arctic. One thing is obvious: it is ice, both on land and sea, which holds the Arctic together – geologically, but also culturally and economically. And this is changing. The interesting title suggests findings beyond the obvious and the reader is certainly not disappointed, as state-of-the-art research is presented in it. The book is a compilation of different articles dealing with natural, social and political issues of the Arctic, written by international experts on these topics. This 2012 publication is a follow-up to the 2008 French publication of the Grenoble Centre for Canadian Studies *La Société Canadienne en Débats: What holds Canada together?* (Faure and Griffiths 2008) and is based on a 2010 conference at the Centre. Yet, as the Preface suggests, it is not to be considered the proceedings of the conference.

All articles deal with certain elements of ecological, political and anthropological Arctic transformation. It is therefore appropriate that in the opening article Jérôme Weiss sets the scene with an account of recent data on sea ice loss in the Arctic and concludes that even in spite of a high degree of uncertainty the perennial ice-cover of the Arctic Ocean will have disappeared by the end of this century. This article constitutes the only one dealing with elements of the natural sciences. Five of the following articles up to about half of the book take a closer look at the role and the importance of indigenous peoples, in particular the Inuit, in national and international governance of the Arctic. While the majority are written in a scientific manner, it is Hensley's very personal account of the changes that his people, Alaskan Inuit, had to undergo due to westernisation that stands out and makes these changes understandable for the reader. They are not just abstract and a matter of scientific research embedded in a scientific publication but directly affect people and peoples living in the north.

Two of the articles deal with indigenous peoples as political actors, namely Pelaudeix's account on the emergence of the Inuit movement *vis-à-vis* state development and Novik's very interesting analysis of the history and legal environment of Russia's indigenous peoples as political actors. Here it pays off that the editors have decided to publish this book in English contrary to its predecessor which was published in French, because to this reviewer's knowledge, English publications on Russia's indigenous peoples as political actors are still rather scarce and the insights into political and legal processes the reader gains from this article are very valuable.

The second half of the *What holds the Arctic together?* delves into legal and geopolitical elements of the Arctic. Three articles deal with legal elements dealing with the Arctic Ocean. Lasserre, for example, explores the law of the sea and the continental shelf implications and clarifies that a new cold war, as often depicted by the media, is highly unlikely to occur and the perceived 'race' for resources based on claims for the continental shelf does not exist, since other equivalent divergences in the past have all been resolved peacefully. This article is followed by Choquet's analysis of the importance of

a mandatory polar code in which she puts a great emphasis on the Antarctic, enabling the reader to gain insight into Antarctic policy-making processes and the importance of the International Maritime Organization. Vylegzhanin provides a very valuable analysis of the applicability of regional and national legislation in comparison with international law for economic activity in the Arctic Ocean. Of particular interest is the applicability of historical conventions, both national and international, in the Arctic, such as the 1825 UK-Russia Convention that established the first Arctic delimitation.

Heininen and Archer deal with geopolitical implications and their transformation over the years. While Heininen depicts the Arctic as a sphere of different knowledge(s) with much relevance for the global scene, Archer opens up the debate on non-Arctic Ocean actors as stakeholders in Arctic governance, exemplified by the European Union. The two articles thus constitute the closing discussion on the Arctic as an international region which attracts the interest of a multitude of stakeholders.

Although the scientific value of the articles is very high, the book has several deficiencies that impair the reading of it and learning from it. However, these are primarily of an editorial nature in some, though not all, articles. First and foremost, the size of the book itself and the print are small, making it tiring to read over a longer period of time. A larger typeset would have benefitted the book. The black and white prints of the maps which support Lasserre's article in combination with the small typeset make an interpretation of the maps difficult and separate pages for the maps would be beneficial.

It is also typos or misspellings of names that can be found throughout the book. For example, Lackenbauer becomes Lakenbauer and Nilsson turns to Nilssen or Nillsen respectively throughout Nicol's article. It is also this article which regardless of its brilliant content is particularly difficult to read as it lacks any sub-headings but is a continuous article.

Throughout the book there is an inconsistency in the referencing, particularly of internet sources: either they are underlined or not, some do have a date of access, others do not, while some are listed amongst non-internet sources, while others are not. A streamlining of the style would have made the book more coherent and would enable a smooth tracking of the sources. Also the reference style of authors is incoherent, as some are mentioned with their full name, others merely with the first letter of their first name. More importantly, however, is the lack of some sources, although direct citations can be found in the text, for example in Halley's and Mercier's article on page 98, or some claims are not backed up by sources such as in Nicol's article on page 58. Similarly, some quoted sources cannot be found in the reference list. Two of several examples are Pelaudeix's article which refers to articles by Diatchkova and Koivurova or Lasserre's article referring to Weber and Weese respectively all of which are not listed in the references.

Lastly, the list of acronyms at the beginning of the book is not coherent with those acronyms used throughout the articles. In cases such as UNEP (Novik page 90) this may not be absolutely necessary for the informed reader, while acronyms such as IRIPP (Novik page 88) or CLPC (Lasserre page 114) do indeed demand for clarification.

While these errors are not major ones individually, taken together with several others of a similar kind the quality of the

book is affected as they are numerous and not isolated incidents. Therefore, all in all, in regard to its content, the book is of high academic value and the authors have provided very insightful and state-of-the-art research. Many of the articles would also be of interest to the media and political representatives making *What holds the Arctic together?* an essential work. If the various editorial errors were to be removed the book's quality would

improve significantly (Nikolas Sellheim, University of Lapland, PO Box 122, 96100 Rovaniemi, Finland).

Reference

Faure, A. and R. Griffiths. 2008. *La société Canadienne en débats. What holds Canada together?*, Paris, L'Harmattan.