

Cudmore's chapter on Phillip Pullman's *The golden compass* in which the 1996 book and its sequel *Upon a time in the north* are analysed as regards narratives of the supernatural as well as nature/environmentalism, unveiling differences in the way Pullman presents the north literally. Much to my delight, also subcultures are tackled in this engaging volume. The reader thus learns of the influence of northern mythology on the 'Otherkin' community, an esoteric movement not identifying itself as fully human (Johnston), as well as in extreme heavy metal subcultures (Leichsenring), an issue which I have also tackled in *Polar Record* (Sellheim, 2016). The last chapter (Hill) discusses the emergence and role of shamanism in Arctic indigenous societies. It shows how the supernatural has played an integral part of the worldview and cultural expression of northern peoples. I wonder, however, if this chapter is best situated in Part IV as I personally miss the link to contemporary Arctic societies. After all, Hill refers to shamanistic practices and expressions in the past tense.

This is somewhat minor though. Because in conclusion, this book is not only diverse and engaging, it also sheds light on the normative role of 'the north' in time and space as well as within different cultural contexts. There are many issues the volume does not cover – how could it? – but it certainly inspires for more research in past and present understandings, as well as reflections of these understandings, of northernness and Arcticness (Kelman, forthcoming). I therefore applaud the editors for having compiled a captivating volume of northern research which I wholeheartedly recommend for scholars of Scandinavian and Arctic studies, literary studies or cultural studies in general. And of course, I encourage also others

to read this book in order to better understand what 'the north' is (not)! (Nikolas Sellheim, Polar Cooperation Research Centre, Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Kobe University, 2-1 Rokkodai-cho, Kobe 657-8501, Japan (nikolas.sellheim@people.kobe-u.ac.jp)).

References

- Barraclough, E. R. (2016). *Beyond the northlands: Viking voyages and the old Norse sagas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Craciun, A. (2016). *Writing Arctic disaster. Authorship and exploration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hálfðanarson, G. (2014). Iceland perceived: Nordic, European or a colonial other? In L. -A. Körber & E. Volquardsen (Eds.), *The postcolonial North Atlantic* (pp. 39–66). Berlin: Nordeuropa Institut.
- Hecker-Stampehl, J. & Kliemann-Geisinger, H. (Eds.). (2009). *Facetten des nordens. Räume - Konstruktionen - Identitäten*. Berlin: Nordeuropa Institut.
- Henningsen, B. (1993). *Der Norden: eine Erfindung. Das europäische Projekt einer regionalen Identität*. Berlin: Nordeuropa Institut. Retrieved from <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/humboldt-vl/henningsen-bernd/PDF/Henningsen.pdf>
- Kelman, I. (Ed.). (Forthcoming). *Arcticness. Power and voice from the north*. London: UCL Press.
- Sellheim, N. (2016). Black and Viking metal: how two extreme music genres depict, construct and transfigure the (sub-)Arctic. *Polar Record*, 52(266), 509–517.
- Simek, R. (1991). Skandinavische Mappae Mundi in der europäischen Tradition. In H. Kugler (Ed.). *Ein Weltbild vor Columbus. Die Ebsterker Weltkarte* (pp. 167–184). Weinheim: Wiley-VCH.

The scramble for the poles. The geopolitics of the Arctic and Antarctic. Klaus Dodds and Mark Nuttall. 2016. Cambridge: Polity Press. xv + 212 p, illustrated, softcover. ISBN 978-0-7456-5245-0. \$24.95.
doi:[10.1017/S0032247417000420](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247417000420)

Upon having first laid eyes on this book, I thought I would deal with a book somewhere along the lines of a BBC documentary rather than a scholarly volume. After all, the title is quite lurid. But it becomes clear already in the *Preface* that the authors do not wish to produce a volume of provocative content. Rather, they analyse how indeed scrambles are an ongoing feature in the polar regions, but they 'use these terms guardedly but do so because they are commonplace in media, academic and political literatures, and reportage' (p. xiii). And it becomes clear that they do not use the term as equal to sabre rattling and a rush for polar resources. Instead, the authors wish to 'reflect somewhat critically on the nature of this discourse and what lies behind it and in front of it' (p. 21).

In the first chapter of the book, *Scrambling for the extraordinary*, the authors thus set the stage for the more theoretical analyses to come. Here they set out more clearly their concepts of 'scramble' and 'scrambling' and present how differently the (Ant)Arctic, its boundaries, resources and peoples can be perceived. For the trained Arctic (or polar) scholar there is not too much new information in this chapter as it essentially reproduces findings that have been produced elsewhere over recent years. This being said, it is always good to revisit these different perspectives as a means to be able to understand the different interests, scrambles, in and of the polar regions.

But the book is not an account to revisit already existing literature. Instead, the authors have produced a study on power-

geometries, in which the polar regions are perceived through six different lenses or, as the authors call them, drivers for scrambles and scrambling: globalisation, securitisation, polarisation, legalisation, perturbation and amplification. In the second chapter, *Making and remaking the polar regions*, the reader is taken through a rather broad analysis of how these drivers define and redefine our understandings of the Arctic and Antarctic. The critical approach, particularly as regards the notion of perturbation, is something which I find surprisingly little considered in the literature on the polar regions and I therefore applaud the authors for having included this criteria for their purposes. Indeed, I would like to see more research done in this regard.

Chapter 3, *Under snow and ice*, is a particularly intriguing one. For here the authors approach geopolitics not through a horizontal lens, but through a vertical, a volumetric one. They explore the relevance of what is indeed under the ice for the advancement of science, on the one hand, but on the other to demonstrate the inherent importance of the depths of polar regions during the Cold War as well as in contemporary times. The authors remind us of how the depth or the volume of the polar regions has always contributed to the reason why human presence exists there in the first place. After all, '[s]now, ice and rock encourages, facilitates, prevents and frustrates human projects, including those eager to colonize, exploit and nationalize the Polar Regions' (p. 86).

Governing the Arctic and the Antarctic constitutes the fourth chapter of this volume. The scholar of the Arctic and the Antarctic that has focused on governance issues throughout his or her career will not find too much new information in this chapter. The authors link different elements of governance in the polar regions with the way they have been 'globalised', a process which is of tremendous relevance for current and future

governance of the polar regions. This being said, this chapter is probably the most disappointing as many of the issues that are presented are not necessarily new (see for example, Heininen & Southcott, 2010) nor is the discussion particularly engaging. This is unfortunate and I would have hope to see some other elements of polar governance that further advance the discussion on globalisation in, for and of the polar regions.

With *New resource frontiers* we enter the fifth chapter of the book. Here the authors challenge the assertion which has emerged over the last 10 years or so of the polar regions being 'new resource frontiers'. They convincingly show, using pinpointed examples from the Arctic and the Antarctic, that resources have stood at the fore of polar exploration for centuries. But they go even further. While, inevitably, indigenous livelihoods have undergone significant and detrimental changes due to resource exploitation, also indigenous voices are supportive of oil and gas exploitation, for example in the context of Greenlandic independence. The 'new resource frontiers' are therefore not 'new' at all, but part of a long-standing narrative of the polar regions, which now also includes its indigenous populations as active and vocal stakeholders.

The sixth chapter, *Opening up the poles*, I found to be the most intriguing in this book. For it approaches the discourse on non-polar, and particularly Asian, involvement in polar affairs. Mainly focusing on the Arctic and Chinese involvement in Arctic affairs, the authors show that there is an underlying polar Orientalism which shapes the narratives of China as an Arctic stakeholder. In other words, there appears to be a fear of Chinese presence in the north (and south) despite (1) China having had century-old dealings with the 'North Asian Arctic' (p. 145) and (2) China and other states following the example of other self-proclaimed polar states, such as the UK. Indeed, this chapter is a strong reminder that often discursive portrayal is not as bad as it may look and, writing from a European's perspective currently residing in Asia, it is imperative to bring together all different stakeholders in polar affairs irrespective of their 'geographical legitimacy'.

The seventh and last chapter holds the title *Polar demands and demanding polar regions* and critically examines the role of the way polar change is perceived. The authors conclude that in the overarching discourse on particularly the Arctic, it is first and foremost environmental changes that underlie the call for

the 'protection' of the Arctic. Little regard is paid to the fact that there are significant other drivers of change, such as political and managerial, that affect life in the north. The inclusion of celebrities that utter their demands for specific actions to be taken inevitably negate the role of the local population in the process of dealing with multifaceted change(s). As one of the final sentences of this book, the authors note that 'we need to challenge those forms of polar geopolitics that reproduce uncritical 'scramble' discourses, while resisting the temptation to exaggerate, to simplify and to marginalize' (p. 188). I could not agree more.

The scramble for the poles is indeed a thought-provoking book that deconstructs and reconstructs prevailing discourses on the polar regions. Using pinpointed examples from the Arctic and the Antarctic, Klaus Dodds and Mark Nuttall substantiate their arguments for a discursive shift in the geopolitical perceptions of the circumpolar north and south. Drawing from a rich source of media and scholarly literature, the authors have produced rather an argumentative book than a scholarly one. It appears that their goal is not to fill a gap in knowledge, but to trigger a debate that advances our understanding of how the Arctic and the Antarctic are perceived. This is indeed itself a very laudable endeavour and these two distinguished scholars, not surprisingly, succeed in doing so. I would argue that it is with this in mind that this book should be read. If the reader is looking for new information, that is, new research results, s/he might be disappointed, as I was when reading chapter 4. This inevitably leads to the question of the target audience of the book, which is not easy to determine. From this reviewer's perspective, this book would be best suited for media outlets, policy-makers as well as those with specific demands for and of the polar regions. But also for scholars who wish to enter heated debates on the often highly emotional aspects of polar governance, this book is highly recommended (Nikolas Sellheim, Polar Cooperation Research Centre, Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Kobe University, 2-1 Rokkodai-cho, Kobe 657-8501, Japan (nikolas.sellheim@people.kobe-u.ac.jp)).

Reference

Heininen, L. & Southcott, C. (Eds.). (2010). *Globalization and the circumpolar north*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.

Handbook on the politics of Antarctica. K. Dodds, A.D. Hemmings and P. Roberts (editors). 2017. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. xx + 610 p, illustrated, hardcover. ISBN 978-1-78471-767-4. £189.00.
doi:10.1017/S0032247417000432

An expected complement to the *Handbook of the politics of the Arctic* (Jensen & Hønneland, 2015) by the same publisher, the common thread through the 37 chapters of this large and impressive volume is to show how Antarctica has been shaped by global politics and has helped to shape global politics since the 1950s. In spite of the different disciplinary backgrounds of the 44 contributors, some core ideas confirming this general thesis appear time and again through the book – ideas purportedly characterising a new era of Antarctic studies and scholars. One is that Antarctic exceptionalism is *démodé* as an analytical tool to make sense of Antarctic politics, past and present. On the contrary, the only way to understand political processes in Antarctica is to

see them as part of larger scale power plays. This can be found all the way back from what Shirley V. Scott characterises as the 'first wave of Antarctic imperialism' (with Spain commissioning explorers to conquer territory not yet charted during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries) to what Klaus Dodds and Alan Hemmings call the contemporary 'frontier vigilantism' of claimant states in the face of new Antarctic actors, especially Asian countries. A second idea is that, as much as unashamed European imperialism is over, Antarctica remains a resource frontier. Seal hunting and whaling have been replaced by tourism and commercial fishing. More worryingly, who knows about the future, when improved technologies allow easier and cheaper access to hydrocarbons both on land and the continental shelf of the Southern Ocean.

In the introduction, the editors set the tone of the rest of the book, which may well be defined as one of salutary intellectual resistance. Assuming that Antarctic politics are contested and contestable, even where peaceful cooperation and apparent consent prevail the reasons underlying them ought to be