

BREAKING THROUGH: UNDERSTANDING SOVEREIGNTY AND SECURITY IN THE CIRCUMPOLAR ARCTIC. Edited by WILFRID GREAVES and P. WHITNEY LACKENBAUER. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. ISBN 978-1-4875-0486-1. 271 p., bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$32.95. Also available as an e-book and in PDF formats.

Arctic security and sovereignty have drawn significant attention from the academic, media, and policy communities of states with Arctic territories in recent years. The general spirit of the Arctic's transformation is rendered through the region's geopolitical relationships, climatic change, and the effects of those entwined changes on the largely Indigenous communities who call the Arctic home. In turn, security and sovereignty are implicated as core analytical and policy considerations given that these changes present threats to and opportunities for Arctic states and communities. However, as *Breaking Through* effectively demonstrates, neither the meaning of security nor sovereignty are static. Rather, whereas states typically consider Arctic security and sovereignty in terms of resources, transport routes, territorial integrity, and national defence, Arctic communities often hold different sets of priorities. These priorities include self-governance, community well-being, traditional livelihoods, and cultural survival. In short, security and sovereignty are "inherently political and contested" (Greaves and Lackenbauer, p. 4), especially in the Arctic.

Breaking Through and its contributing authors represent something of a who's who among Arctic security scholars in the Canadian and European contexts. As the title indicates, the book's contributors examine several issues related to security and sovereignty from a spectrum of theoretical approaches. The book consists of twelve chapters bounded by an introduction by the editors, Wilfred Greaves and Whitney Lackenbauer, and an afterword by Greaves. Individual contributions are based on discussions and priorities drawn from a 2016 workshop at the University of Toronto. Opening chapters build on research within the more traditional understandings of security and sovereignty, namely those prioritizing the state and territory. In contrast, the book's later contributions are centered around human-based security and critically oriented analysis.

For readers that are already familiar with the field of Arctic security, the chapters exist quite firmly within each author's respective trajectory of research and publication. Each chapter builds on an existing body of research and familiar themes within the Arctic security genre while making a timely contribution. While there are too many individual chapters to detail individually, several examples are merited.

Peter Kikkert and Adam Lajeunesse's chapters interrogate sovereignty in its legal and political capacities. Their chapters point to sovereignty's long-standing importance in the Arctic, the current limits of international law in Arctic governance, and the degree to which domestic

considerations shape foreign policy behaviour. These initial chapters challenge some of the assumptions that are often held by academics and commentators on the Arctic's enduring stability as a governance theatre characterized by well-developed institutionalism and how Arctic politics are practiced.

Rob Huebert stakes a defence of traditional security (or 'strategic' security) against the waves of critiques by critical scholars that have challenged strategic security's normative and analytical validity, particularly following the end of the Cold War. Huebert's chapter is an excellent starting point for those unfamiliar with the security landscape as a discipline and field as he offers a well-argued and concise overview. Huebert's defence of traditional analysis seems even more important given that the conventional threats to Arctic security are tangible and material, even if the international system and security are socially determined constructs. Geopolitical relations, national security, and strategic defence will remain, if not become more important, trends affecting the Arctic as certain trends accelerate.

Those interested in the human dimension of security are encouraged to read Gunhild Hoogensen Gjørsv's chapter, which makes an excellent counterpart and contrast to Huebert's take on traditional security. Gjørsv's analysis concerns the Arctic and Norway's purported "exceptionalism" in the international realm. Gjørsv argues that a gendered and intersectional lens exposes the contradictions and undermines this exceptionalism. Specifically, she contrasts Norway's treatment of refugees through its high rates of refusal, its foreign policy and material support for the war in Afghanistan, and its legacy of violent colonialism to its identity as a peace-seeking country. Importantly, Gjørsv's analysis challenges the assumption that human security naturally results (or 'trickles down') from state security. The contradictions demonstrated by Gjørsv point to the potential conflict between different securities as they are mobilized (in this case, state security versus human security). The importance of the human dimension of security is amplified through Loukacheva and Sejersen's chapters, which examine issues related to food security and climate change for Arctic communities and are notable for beginning to tease out the importance of Indigenous sovereignty.

Breaking Through is a fine contribution to the Arctic security literature that is especially valuable for junior scholars and students with little background in the subject. Those that are well-versed will also undoubtedly find interesting chapters and arguments to engage with. However, the book is also not without its weaknesses. One of the book's biggest oversights is that the theme of sovereignty is not particularly well represented relative to its focus on security. While the later chapters tease out some critical issues related to Indigenous sovereignty, like food security and self-determination, they do not discuss the differences between Indigenous and state sovereignty nor investigate how they might align or conflict. Also,

Canada and Norway are overrepresented in the chapters and by the locations of the contributors themselves. This Canadian-Norwegian emphasis is not surprising given that the who's who club of Arctic security is largely based within these countries. Nonetheless, more extensive representation by other Arctic states and actors with Arctic interests could have offered more diversity in the case studies and positionalities. Lastly, given that this book is drawn from a 2016 workshop, some of these debates feel like they are treading well-worn ground despite making some contemporary arguments.

Despite these issues, *Breaking Through* invites us to seriously consider the Arctic's transformation under a broader and at times more critical lens. As Greaves states in his afterward, citing Sejersen's contribution, the Arctic represents a "'future bad' that is rapidly becoming 'bad'" (p. 259). How that 'future bad' relates to the state and human beings is another question, one that is sure to inform Arctic scholarship for some time to come.

Benjamin T. Johnson
Department of Politics
York University
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3
Bjohn050@yorku.ca