
1. Introduction: the politics of Antarctica

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‘WINDS OF CHANGE’? POLITICS AND ANTARCTICA

Many people assume that the Antarctic represents a complete escape from politics – a realm of pure natural spectacle, trammled only by a small band of altruistic scientists.¹

For a continent that is often regarded as essentially separate from the global political and economic system, Antarctica has a complex and interesting political history. The Antarctic Treaty (adopted in 1959, and entering into force in 1961)² is the best-known but by no means the only political agreement to impact the continent. At the same time, many of the currents that washed against and across lands around the rest of the globe also reached the Antarctic. The aim of this book is to show some of the myriad ways in which the continent for science and peace is also a continent created by politics, maintained by politics – and indeed, *generating* politics.

In 1948, the American explorer and scientist Laurence Gould could write in an essay entitled ‘Strategy and politics in the polar areas’ that, ‘Politics in the polar regions are still largely concerned with political claims and their maintenance’.³ While his article was mainly concerned with Antarctica, it drew attention to the wider nature of claim making in areas considered too remote and too under-populated for the kinds of colonial settlement that was common to regions such as southern Argentina and Chile, the Falklands/Malvinas, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. In these more northerly latitudes, land was appropriated, settled and administered. Where there was ‘maintenance’, it came largely in the form of importing practices already pioneered elsewhere – of disempowering indigenous communities, establishing property regimes, building fences and hedges and managing new environments. For territories that lacked indigenous populations and held little prospect of permanent settlement, resource harvesting and territorial claiming were ends as well as means.

By the time Gould penned his article, the politics of the Antarctic was a very different affair to one say of 1908 let alone 1808. The burst of sealing around the Antarctic Peninsula during the early nineteenth century made it rare to see even a single fur seal in South Georgia by the turn of the twentieth century. Yet few (quite possibly none) of these sealers regarded themselves as pioneers after whom others would follow. Claiming and regulating Antarctic space came first in the early twentieth century, when a new resource boom – this time in whaling – led Britain to claim the Falkland Islands Dependencies (now known as the British Antarctic Territory and the separate South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands) in 1908. By 1946 six other states had registered claims (Australia, Argentina, Chile, France, New Zealand and Norway). Like his mentor Richard E. Byrd, Gould was a passionate advocate of an American Antarctic claim, owing to the country’s extensive involvement in exploration, exploitation and science, but the United States and its fellow post-war superpower, the Soviet Union, resisted such

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apparent temptation to lay claim to the world's only uninhabited continent (at least in terms of human beings).

Gould's America nevertheless left its mark on Antarctica. Shortly after his article appeared, the United States circulated a proposal for a condominium of eight states (the United States and the seven claimants) that would collectively govern the Antarctic.⁴ It seems remarkable now that, even at the time, such a restrictive community could be seen as providing a plausible basis for managing Antarctica – without the Soviet Union in particular, and with Germany and Japan sidelined as a consequence of World War II. Although that particular proposal came to naught, the subsequent Eisenhower government played a decisive role first in organizing the 1957–58 International Geophysical Year (IGY) – which included an Antarctic program involving twelve states – and then in bringing together those same twelve states to create the Antarctic Treaty.⁵ Remarkably, there was very little challenge to the decision of the United States to invite only eleven other participants to determine the political framework for an entire continent. Such a proposition would be unthinkable today.

Despite its well-earned status as a decisive event in Antarctic political history, the Treaty did not render previous political issues moot. Nor did it close the door to a range of subsequent political developments that have both reflected and challenged the Treaty.

In this volume we have adopted a very broad interpretation of 'politics', both in relation to the subjects covered and the disciplinary orientation of our multiple contributors. This handbook is not in any sense restricted to the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)⁶ and its formal governance *per se*. The contributors do not treat the Antarctic as 'a pole apart'; rather, they explore how the politics of Antarctica works through and across a range of scales from the everyday, the local, the national, the circumpolar and the global. The Antarctic is, in our estimation, unavoidably a political arena in relation to all activities on and off the ice, rock, air and waters that are assumed to materially compose Antarctica. We are also suspicious of over-determining the notion that the Antarctic continent and surrounding islands south of latitude 60° South (the area of application for the Antarctic Treaty) constitute a unique and privileged reference point. While the Antarctic Treaty Area (ATA) is clearly significant, it is so because under contemporary international law no part of Antarctica is generally recognized as the territory of any state. This reality has required that both contracting parties to the Antarctic Treaty (including the claimant states) and other states with an interest in the region treat the ATA as an important and distinct field of operation.⁷ The negotiators of the Antarctic Treaty created a system that has since demonstrated the flexibility to adopt a range of administrative and management tools – notably regarding environmental regulation – that affect the ATA and beyond, and have often been products of political concerns originating far from the poles.

Our approach as editors supports our earlier works addressing the Antarctic, on the one hand resisting the appeals of the exceptional and on the other hand not reproducing a particular (invariably uncritical) political–scientific story of Antarctic politics grounded in the geopolitical and institutional circumstances of the IGY, Antarctic Treaty and the Cold War.⁸ We hope that the juxtaposition of analyses by scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds introduces vitality into the debates around Antarctic politics. Since the 'continent for science' rubric became established in the 1950s, there has been a degree of intellectual capture of the idea of Antarctica's governance as necessarily a 'scientific' question, or at least of the idea that scientists are peculiarly well positioned to offer insight

into both what kind of place Antarctica is and how it ought to be administered. Scientists were clearly essential in helping to expand knowledge regarding, *inter alia*, marine biodiversity, what lay beneath the polar ice cap, and how the air and water currents of the Antarctic related to planetary systems as a whole. Such knowledge was useful politically as well, as sponsoring institutions and their paymasters (usually states) were able to earn intellectual, economic and political capital from those achievements and ambitions. Prestige, money and influence were produced through this scientific labour. The ATS entrenched science as the dominant currency within the political economy of Antarctica, and political practice itself could (and did) place a further premium on acquiring ever more knowledge about the region and its non-human inhabitants.

The intellectual and political dominance of science and scientists was written into the DNA of the ATS. Initially this arrangement met with very little contestation and considerable praise. This was to change, dramatically so, during the 1970s and 1980s. There are a number of vectors we could identify as significant. As the Antarctic attracted ever-greater attention from international observers, including non-governmental organizations Greenpeace and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, questions began to be asked about the *modus operandi* of the ATS. It was, for critics, too secretive, too insulated and too isolated from mainstream scrutiny.⁹ As future Antarctic mining became an increasingly acute question during the 1980s, a range of actors from states to NGOs and concerned individuals worried that the imprimatur of a technical–scientific elite would serve to justify preserving a status quo that restricted access to the continent’s resources to the states that dominated within the ATS.

The most significant of these developments came from a group of states that articulated a form of post-colonial opposition to both the appropriation of Antarctica and the secretive workings of the ATS. Led by a former British colony, Malaysia, members of the global South urged the UN Secretary-General to consider the ‘Question of Antarctica’. As Peter Beck has recorded over the decades, this challenge provided a fascinating insight into how the politics of Antarctica was framed, negotiated and managed. The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties appointed Australia (itself a settler-colonial state) to co-ordinate its UN relationship with a growing number of states that were unhappy with the political management of Antarctica, or at least unhappy with a lack of transparency regarding the ATS. It would be no exaggeration to say that the 1980s represented a ‘crisis of legitimacy’ for the ATS – to use the term earlier coined by the German academic Jürgen Habermas in 1973.¹⁰ The governance regime endured, but it was seen by many in the wider international community to have lost its legitimacy. With prominent members such as apartheid South Africa and a club-like status that seemed to privilege states from the golden age of European imperialism (or their settler-colonial offspring), the ATS could easily appear indifferent to the ‘wind of change’ that British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan had in 1960 famously described as swirling through the colonized world.¹¹

Antarctic politics was becoming more complicated in other ways that did not so obviously reflect the processes of exercising state power. Within the academy, historians of science and political scientists were increasingly sceptical of the claims made by those who wished to preserve the framing of Antarctica as a ‘continent by and for science’.¹² Scholars such as Aant Elzinga made the important observation that science in Antarctica was a product of (as much as an exception to) geopolitical considerations and rivalries. The ATS made science an instrument of politics rather than an alternative to it. Politics

was to be found everywhere in Antarctica and beyond, ranging from the decision to build a research station to the chairing of a scientific committee far removed from the polar continent and surrounding seas.

From the 1990s feminist scholars such as Lisa Bloom, Christy Collis, Elena Glasberg and Victoria Rosner published a series of powerful counter-punctual interventions, which called into question how the politics of Antarctica was shot through with gendered, racialized, nationalized and sexualized imaginaries and practices.¹³ Bloom's *Gender on the Ice*, published in 1993, first brought to the fore quite how dominant white men hailing from Euro-American/Anglophonic worlds had been in shaping the political and ethical possibilities for Antarctica.¹⁴ This scholarship and praxis was particularly critical of the maintenance and consolidation of imperial masculinities, and the manner in which women, people of colour and communities hailing from the Global South in particular have been marginalized, excluded or simply forgotten about in favour of narratives and ideologies that privilege a particular minority and their world-views.

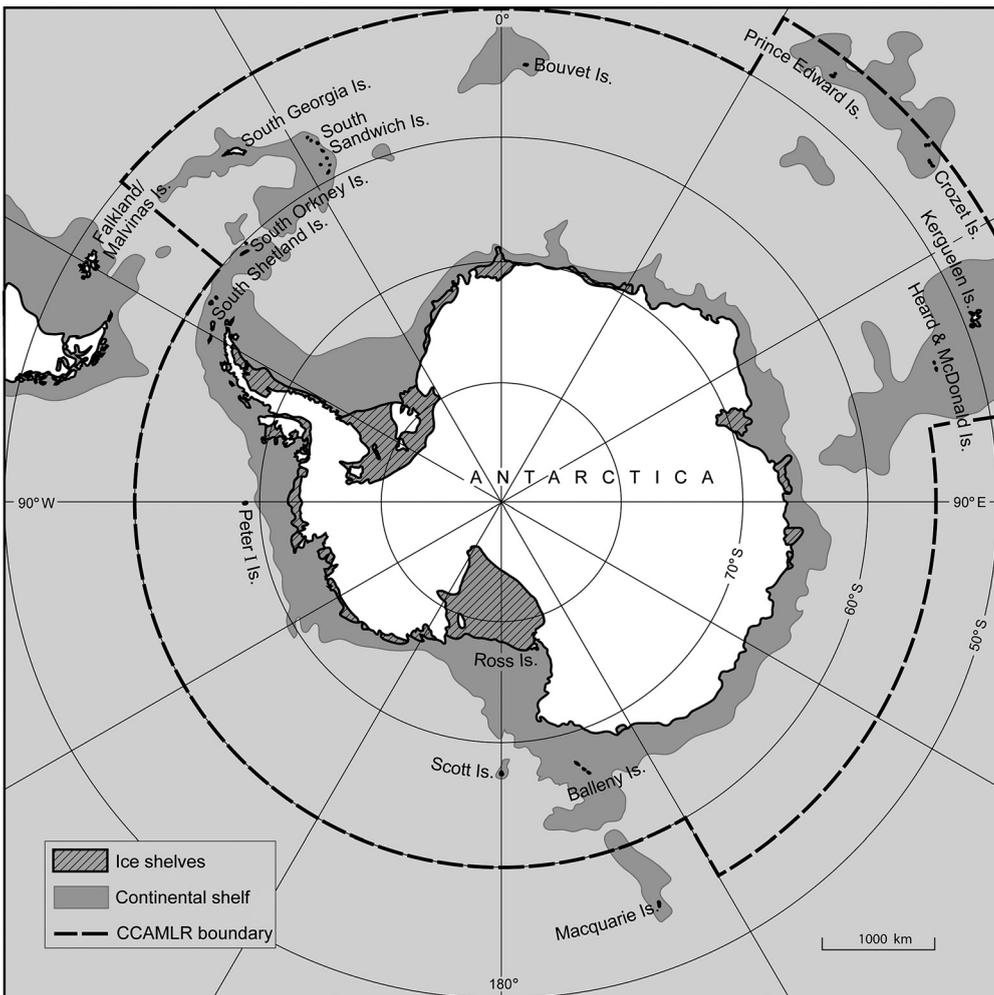
Elzinga, Bloom and many others have laid the foundations for a flourishing new body of critical scholarship on Antarctic politics. Drawing inspiration from critical human geography/critical geopolitics, intellectual history, environmental history, history of science and critical public international law, this body of work has revisited pivotal moments in the ATS story such as the IGY and Antarctic Treaty negotiations, and unsettled dominant narratives that tended to coalesce around national achievement, rational enlightenment and scientific curiosity. The Antarctic Treaty should be seen for what it was and is; an attempt by a privileged group of nation-states to create a system of governance informed by their interests and wishes, and empowered by a belief and investment in Western science and modernity more generally. Environmental historians such as Adrian Howkins have done important work in pointing out the paradoxical role of the polar regions in global imaginaries – both as some of the most protected parts of the planet (through legal instruments such as the 1992 Protocol on Environment Protection to the Antarctic Treaty – the Madrid Protocol)¹⁵ and as places heavily exploited, polluted and degraded by human actions in the ground, over the ice and under the water.¹⁶ Nowhere is this clearer than in the possible collapse of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet (WAIS) in the face of anthropogenic climate change – an event that will have significant repercussions for the globe as a whole.¹⁷

BOUNDING AND UNBOUNDING ANTARCTICA

With Antarctica, as with most other places, we think it is unhelpful to be too prescriptive in setting geographical, intellectual and political boundaries. Taking inspiration from the late Doreen Massey, it is more productive to think about how places are made and remade.¹⁸ Indeed, the dominant Antarctic political regime, while plainly a regional regime, has participants (and consequences) distributed globally. The ATS has a dual identity as a regional and global construct – just one of its many peculiarities. But geographically, if we accept the Treaty Area as a dominant framing, we are encouraged to think, act and talk about the region comprising the Antarctic continent, peri-Antarctic islands and waters south of 60° South latitude (S.) – this whole area being the area of application of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, the 1972 Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals,¹⁹ and the

1991 Madrid Protocol –plus the waters between 60° S. and the Antarctic Convergence or Polar Front: the area of application of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).²⁰ An approximation to the position of the Polar Front (the actual position of which may now be affected by climate change) is offered by the northern boundary defined for CCAMLR, with a boundary set at 60° S. in the South Pacific sector, 50° S. in the South Atlantic and eastern South Pacific sectors, and 45° S. in the western South Pacific sector (see Figure 1.1).

The map itself is worth a second glance. For polar scholars it is so often reproduced that we simply take it for granted, and implicitly we have played a part in reinforcing as a central achievement of the ATS its construction of space below a particular line of



Source: Alan D. Hemmings.

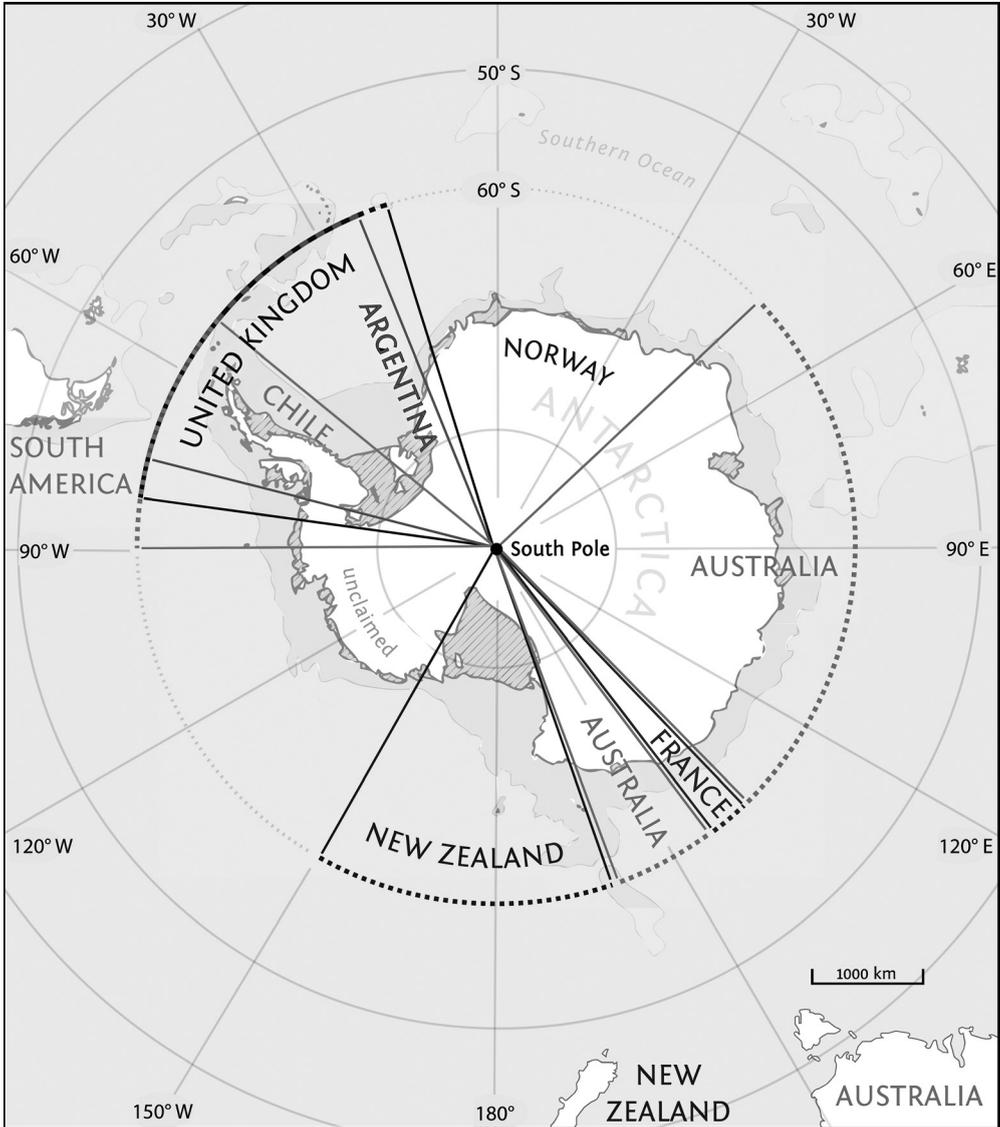
Figure 1.1 Antarctica defined by the CCAMLR boundary

latitude. The map is central to how we imagine and practise Antarctic space. It ensures that the dynamism, instability – indeed, the very *aliveness* – of Antarctica is flattened for the purpose of representation and by extension, of control. Something that was not unique to the southern latitudes, as historians of tropical and temperate imperial territories and empires have noted elsewhere.²¹ In her classic work *For Space*, Massey asks readers to think about space as three things: as something composed through interactions ranging from the molecular to the global; as something defined by multiple possibilities; and finally as something always in the process of being made and remade.²² The importance of the last point rests in its pointing to a more hopeful politics of space, one attuned to the possibility of openness and alternative configurations.

What the map cannot help us with are Massey's other major points about spatial politics – the thrown-togetherness of place and the power-geometries of place. In the first instance, Massey's point about objects such as maps is that they fail to capture the way in which places are intensely material, bringing together the social-political with the physical. The movements of pathogens, pollutants and people alongside the migratory cycles of whales and birds provide powerful reminders that the boundaries used to define 'Antarctica' are not hard, but both flexible and stretchable. There are limits to the scale and extent of human (and indeed humane) governance, as states argue with one another about the rights and wrongs of 'scientific whaling', marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, tourism, and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

Massey's point about power-geometries highlighted an important aspect of processes such as globalization in terms of inequality and division. Put in a polar context, we might talk about power-geometries, which appear rooted in history and territory as well as mobility and flow. States such as Australia, France, Norway, New Zealand and the UK retain significant influence within the ATS thanks in part to their colonial-era annexations, including continued sovereignty over sub-Antarctic islands. Located throughout the Southern Ocean, these islands provide a further complication to the dominant geopolitical architecture of the region through their status as national outposts proximate to a nominally international space. Included within the CCAMLR area, they differ significantly in their status from land and ice shelves south of 60° South,²³ which is subject to the Antarctic Treaty and whose territorial status is reserved under its Article IV. The space south of the Polar Front is, for the overwhelming majority of the world's states (if plainly not for claimant states – see Figure 1.2) an area beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). It is this peculiar and huge global space that forms the conception of 'Antarctica' used in this volume, but it is one that we should not assume is fixed by ice, water and rock and thus incapable of being imagined in other ways.

Indeed, simply to imagine this space as ABNJ is to make a certain set of assumptions rooted in existing concepts of law, politics and community. The regional system of the ATS is far from the only body of applicable international law. Global instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)²⁴ and the Convention on Biological Diversity;²⁵ global institutions such as the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, the International Seabed Authority, the ever-controversial International Whaling Commission, among others; all these and more are significant (or potentially significant) players in this Antarctica. So too are the domestic legal codes and practices of the now more than 50 states that actually operate in the Antarctic under one or more of its instruments – and those of other states active there which are not parties to any of the



Source: Alan D. Hemmings.

Figure 1.2 Territorial claims

instruments. But it is the ATS that has provided (and to a considerable extent still provides) the central ‘glue’ for international governance of the 10 per cent of the planet that is the Antarctic. Necessarily then, the ATS is a regular feature across the chapters of this volume, permeating the human and non-human (as it does both the concrete and the imagined), but the consistency of its presence ought not to be confused with a monolithic power to shape Antarctic politics.

The regional structure provided by the ATS remains anchored in the 1959 Antarctic Treaty. We can see that the foundational politics of the Antarctic Treaty are with us still. This presents both strengths (continuity perhaps; strong buy-in from particular states) and challenges (accommodating newer participants and different interests; consistency with the emerging global order; responding to climate change, among others). At the same time, it has its roots in a Cold War world that looks and feels rather different to our present one. Though often considered emblematic of progressive concerns for environmental protection and limiting human impact upon nature, the Antarctic Treaty was agreed within a context where Antarctica's economic potential appeared poor for financial rather than moral reasons, and in which climate change was entirely separated from the realm of human agency. Nor did the ambitions and anxieties embodied in the Treaty's text necessarily correspond to global concerns. When the Treaty declared the Antarctic a nuclear-free zone, its exceptionality stood in pointed contrast to other parts of the world (many still under European colonial rule) where nuclear testing, dumping and storage was routine and long-lasting in terms of shaping the environmental geographies and histories of the Cold War.²⁶

We are writing about the politics of Antarctica in a very different period of human engagement. Separated by only five and a half decades, the scale and pace of change is remarkable in one sense. Climate change is capable of rendering Antarctica unrecognizable to those who sat down to negotiate its future in the late 1950s. Scientists warn that the WAIS could be literally undermined above and below sea level by warming air and ocean currents. A 2016 press release accompanying climate modelling research on the WAIS noted that 'Choices that the world makes this century could determine the fate of the massive Antarctic ice sheet. A study published in *Nature* finds that continued growth in greenhouse-gas emissions over the next several decades could trigger an unstoppable collapse of Antarctica's ice – raising sea levels by more than a metre by 2100 and more than 15 metres by 2500'.²⁷

Climate change was an important polar research field even before the Treaty's signature: indeed, it constituted the emblematic scientific objective of the path-breaking Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition of 1949–52.²⁸ Yet in the 1950s the prospect of warming polar regions was widely recognized as a good thing, produced by natural rather than human actions. Among the first voices to link polar warming with deleterious global consequences was the British geographer and glaciologist John Mercer, who in 1968 warned that the WAIS was capable of collapse precisely because much of it was grounded below sea level and thus capable of being eroded by any sea level rise or ocean warming. The object being subjected to a new governance regime might not be as stable or bounded as was first thought – and human actions far further north could be the agent of that change. Ten years later, Mercer was even more pessimistic about the future endurance of the WAIS:

If the CO₂ greenhouse effect is magnified at high latitudes, as now seems likely, de-glaciation of West Antarctica would probably be the first disastrous result of continued fossil fuel consumption. A disquieting thought is that if the present highly simplified climatic models are even approximately correct, this de-glaciation may be part of the price that must be paid in order to buy enough industrial civilisation to make the changeover from fossil fuels to other sources of energy. If so, major dislocation in coastal cities, and submergence of low-lying areas like Florida and the Netherlands, lies ahead. More sophisticated climatic modelling may show that the outlook is less alarming than this, but on the other hand, it may show that the situation is even more threatening. The urgent need for this sophisticated modelling is evident.²⁹

Mercer's call for further research in order to understand the global ramifications of Antarctic geophysical change is as important today as it was then. As social scientists, moreover, we might ponder whether we also need new forms of imaginaries and language attuned to words like collapse, disaster and melting that reflect diminished confidence in the stability of objects and processes associated with the resource-based structures of capitalism. While we have become accustomed to thinking of earlier Antarctic expeditions as heroic and glorious while nevertheless being flawed and even disastrous, we are less comfortable with thinking of the governance system of the modern Antarctic as a structure the ideals of which might be lauded without precluding rigorous analysis of myths of stability and inevitable progress.³⁰

ANTARCTICA'S HOT POLITICAL ISSUES

One of the best examples of how Antarctic and global politics have meshed in the past (and may do so again in the future) concerns mining and mineral extraction. During the 1980s a series of negotiations led to the proposed Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities (CRAMRA),³¹ a document that was intimately linked to the concerns of Malaysia and other states discussed above. Yet CRAMRA was never adopted. In its place emerged the Madrid Protocol with its specific prohibition on mineral resource activities,³² thanks largely to pressure from Australia and France to inscribe the emerging environmental norms of the mid- to late 1980s upon Antarctica. But interest in these resources, like rust and taxes, even global warming, never sleeps. While formally there is no inevitability about the ending of the prohibition, the complex procedure and timeline around modification or amendment of the Madrid Protocol does allow for the possibility that the prohibition could be lifted some time after 2048. The current prohibition itself has not stopped speculation that it might be lifted or simply ignored. Novelists such as Kim Stanley Robinson and L.A. Larkin have imagined a future Antarctica marked by both resource extraction and conflict.³³ Whether or not the prohibition on mining is eventually lifted, the possibility is an enticingly twinkling light for those who think it might be a good idea – or who look to other places such as the Arctic and the deep seabed and question how exceptional a space the Antarctic really ought to be.

As a result, decades out from the timeline for calling a review, states and commercial entities are, according to some reports, already positioning themselves in relation to what they imagine may be one of history's greatest resource opportunities.³⁴ This means that the resources question is already exercising an affective political force within and on the ATS. From the vantage point of the second decade of the twenty-first century, hydrocarbons seem the more immediate focus of interest – and may be preceded (and potentially encouraged) by oil and gas activity around the sub-Antarctic islands that lie beyond the ATS. There are many factors operating in the mineral resource issue, including: the seemingly insatiable global appetite for hydrocarbons (thus far not significantly hindered by the outcome of the 2015 Paris Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, COP),³⁵ the enabling role of technology; and commercial interests in exploitation and national strategic interests (including on the part of claimant states – the claims of which become more attractive to them precisely because of the supposed resources benefits).

This addition to the possibility of further resource exploitation, regardless of whether it might be environmentally sustainable or conducive to species survival, is further connected to another exercise in Antarctic boundary-making that relates to but is not determined by the ATS – the delimitation of outer continental shelves (OCS) by states with pre-1959 claims to Antarctic coasts. In March 2016 international media were quick to seize upon a short press release from the UN Commission on the Limits on the Continental Shelf regarding an Argentine submission. The government of Argentina was quick to publicize the view of the Commission that it had made a supportive recommendation on its submitted materials regarding the OCS off the Argentine coastline. While the Commission excluded from its recommendation any reference to the disputed South Atlantic islands of the Falklands/Malvinas, South Georgia and any Antarctic territories, media reporting was less careful in its assessment. Some headlines appeared to suggest that Argentina had acquired sovereign rights over vast areas of the South Atlantic and Antarctic.³⁶ While the reporting was often careless, it goes to the heart of what we have alluded to above: a pervasive sense that the question of owning and exploiting the Antarctic remains a live one.

Whether either Antarctic or global ecosystems could sustain a massive Antarctic hydrocarbon ‘bonanza’ is not a matter for open debate, especially within the ATS. Meanwhile, marine living resource harvesting continues to expand and ATS parties argue over the scale and extent of marine protected areas around the Southern Ocean.³⁷ In the face of interest in both future hydrocarbon extraction and current and near-term fishing activity, the increasingly serious and compelling evidence of the effects of anthropogenic climate change on the Antarctic ice sheets and marine environments appears to be having no impact in policy terms.³⁸ Viewed objectively, this presents a first-order failure of the imagination of the current Antarctic policy system. If climate change really ‘Changes Everything’,³⁹ then the lack of change in attitudes and actions toward Antarctica is particularly notable. While a great deal of the critical baseline data on climate change comes out of Antarctic research – and recall that in formal terms science is a central pillar of the Antarctic system, and often claimed as its *raison d’être* – this is not reflected in the behaviour and positioning of individual states, let alone in the functioning of the regional regime itself, which asserts no particular role in relation to responding to the problem of climate change. Perhaps the interested parties concerned are just not capable at present at grasping an inconvenient truth – that the future facing Antarctica is shocking.

Not solely related to the resource issues, although clearly coupled to some degree or another, is the issue of control over access to, and the modalities of human activity in, Antarctica. Various established Antarctic interests are evident here. For the United States – the *deus ex machina* at the creation of the ATS – a preference for a status quo Antarctica with only minimal development of the ATS and the maintenance of its dominant position was indicative of a wider preference for open access (an ‘open door’ in earlier parlance) and integration into Western-led governance projects around the world including East Asia.⁴⁰ For the claimant states – and the semi-claimant states of Russia and the United States – continued dominance of the quasi-green room where Antarctic decision-making is made remains essential,⁴¹ while the original signatories (and the now wider group of decision making Antarctic parties) also have privileged positions to protect.

We might identify an ideological and material struggle between a *de facto* Western bloc (variously reflecting US, original signatory, claimant and Anglosphere interests) and ‘rising Asia’ (particularly China). All five of the Permanent Members (the P5) of the most

powerful global grouping, the UN Security Council, are already decision-making parties across all the ATS instruments. Changing the present Antarctic power arrangements would be no easy task. Insecurity about national strength seems to be resurgent around the world – not least among the states that have most apparent power and influence – leading to what Dodds and Hemmings have described elsewhere as a form of ‘frontier vigilantism’ and ‘polar Orientalism’ on the part of claimant states.⁴² The position that any investment or activity undertaken in the Antarctic by Asian actors is infused with ulterior motives such as resource interest or strategic consolidation echoes concerns about Asian interest in the activities of the Arctic Council, with a similar underlying presumption regarding who does and does not naturally belong. Officially, it should be noted that Australia and China inaugurated a Joint Committee on Antarctic and Southern Ocean Collaboration in March 2016 while Australian media and political commentators worry about China’s growing presence on the ice. As one commentator noted in the journal of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute a month earlier:

As Australia has claimed 42% of Antarctica since 1933 – an area equal to three quarters of the size of mainland Australia – there’s no doubt that we should be more aware of Chinese interests and aspirations. Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty provides that no Antarctic claim (there are seven) are either disputed nor recognised, and further states that ‘no new claim shall be asserted while the present (Antarctic) Treaty is in force’, effectively protecting Australia from other states making overt or public claims to our external territory.⁴³

What this means for the internally collegial approach of the ATS (whatever prerogatives it may have believed it had in relation to non-parties) and the cohesiveness and functionality of the ATS is not yet clear. But if, as some seem to be seeking, some form of the ‘containment of China’ policy is tried in Antarctica too, the prognosis cannot be encouraging. Australia’s decision to promote co-operation with China in the Southern Ocean is perhaps indicative of a certain kind of political realism on its part.

At the same time, neither of these groupings (or other key ATS decision-making states from the Global South)⁴⁴ have clear interest in advancing ideas such as Global Commons, or in accommodating the interests of states that cannot meet the present entry standards for decision-making status within the ATS ‘by conducting substantial scientific research activity there, such as the establishment of a scientific station or the dispatch of a scientific expedition’.⁴⁵ There appears to be an increasing mismatch between the nature and capacity of the present ATS and global realities, including in relation to the process and consequences of globalization. Among the challenges here are the risks of a hollowing out of the ATS as new activities fall outside its explicit remit, being left either unregulated or subject to generic global approaches.⁴⁶

Environmental protection is again a contentious issue in Antarctica, and perhaps needs to be put into perspective given the fears registered about the long-term fate of the WAIS. One consequence of the collapse of CRAMRA and the adoption of the resource-restrictive Madrid Protocol instead was a decade and a half of framing Antarctica in terms of rigorous environmental protection as the hegemonic norm. That phase has passed. As the possibility of re-opening the minerals question gets closer, and as the capacity to exploit Antarctica gets greater, reaching consensus around environmental issues has become rather harder. The on-going question of marine protected areas (MPAs) is illustrative. On the pro-MPA side is an argument, supported by fisheries science

informed by a conservationist ethos, that additional protections are required in the face of human activity levels (particularly in fishing) and climate change effects and uncertainties. On the critical side are states with a significant interest in fishing, and non-Western states that dispute the fisheries science, suspect the motives (and point to the close correlation between areas proposed for MPAs and their proponent's territorial claims in Antarctica), and do not necessarily share the historic commitment to the forms of environmental management embedded in Antarctica. The first MPA (designated in 2009) has so far been the only one. Broader issues are surely at play here – geopolitics and the struggle for mastery over a preferred Antarctic future; fundamental differences (perhaps political, but also cultural and historic) over *what* to value, *where* and *how* to protect and *who* to decide; and whether the moral value of consensus still provides capital for and within the ATS. As this handbook suggests, the politics of Antarctica is contested and contestable, and where co-operation and consent prevail then the reasons for that agreement ought to be scrutinised rather than simply lionised. Polar science and scientists are no longer the magic bullets for political dispute they were once assumed to be.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE VOLUME

The coverage in this handbook is structured around four sections: *Conceptualizing Antarctica*, *Acting in and Beyond Antarctica*, *Regulating Antarctica* and *Futures in Antarctica*. The rationale for this structuring is to ensure that the reader can get a good sense of how the Antarctic has been imagined as place; how Antarctica has been invested with qualities that are not fixed by geographical co-ordinates and location; how Antarctica has been governed and regulated; and finally how Antarctica has been enrolled in a series of future-orientated projects that reveal something about how this continent and surrounding ocean is increasingly at the front line of planetary debates. Antarctica has been, and will continue to be, transformed by forces beyond its control – but it will also increasingly make its presence felt on other areas of the planet.

Conceptualizing Antarctica opens with 'Fictionalizing Antarctica', in which Elizabeth Leane considers how politics and Antarctica come together in English-language literature about the region. Shirley Scott, in 'Three waves of Antarctic imperialism', reflects on how framings, from colonialism through imperialism, anti-imperialism and post-imperialism have structured thinking about the continent and its legal structure. Klaus Dodds and Christy Collis (in 'Post-colonial Antarctica'), and Nicoletta Brazzelli (in 'Heroic and post-colonial Antarctic narratives issues') remind us how the heroic figure played an important role in cementing and consolidating a particular Euro-American engagement with the frozen continent. Lisa Bloom considers how creative engagements with Antarctica can challenge a range of issues related to representations of gender in 'Antarctica: feminist art practices and disappearing polar landscapes in the age of the anthropocene'. The best-known framing of Antarctica since the IGY is examined by Aant Elzinga in 'The Continent for Science', before Juan Salazar takes us into the digital present in 'Mediating Antarctica in digital culture: politics of representation and visualisation in art and science'. The place of important global legal principles, 'Common interest and common heritage in Antarctica', is explored by Rüdiger Wolfrum. In 'Modern explorers', Peder Roberts considers how even in recent years feats of exploration have

continued to reveal political dynamics within and beyond Antarctica, and Alessandro Antonello looks at the ways in which actors in Antarctica now view and use that space in 'Life, ice and ocean: contemporary Antarctic spaces'. As anyone with a television will know, Antarctic images and wildlife are now deployed in advertising, as Hanne Nielsen shows in 'Selling the south: commercialisation and marketing of Antarctica'. The section ends with Klaus Dodds' overview of 'Antarctic geopolitics', which explores and interrogates how geopolitical imaginaries and practices have been pivotal in shaping the politics of Antarctica.

In *Acting in and Beyond Antarctica* the coverage turns to what one might see as the 'performance' of Antarctic politics in Antarctica, through a series of snapshots of key events and players. Roger Launius enquires into the Cold War grounding of the Antarctic dispensation in 'Establishing open rights in the Antarctic and outer space: Cold War rivalries and geopolitics in the 1950s and 1960s'. Marcus Howard looks at the continued role of the twelve states that participated in the IGY in Antarctica and how they went on to adopt the Antarctic Treaty in 'The originals: the role and influence of the original signatories to the Antarctic treaty', before Patrizia Vigni and Francesco Francioni consider the claimant positions in 'Territorial claims and coastal states'. The most acute challenge to both the hegemony of the ATS and Antarctic territorial claims was that mounted by the 'Group of 77' developing nations in the 1980s through the annual Question of Antarctica, and this is the focus for Peter Beck in 'Antarctica and the United Nations'. While the ATS remains a largely states-based system, in relation to marine living resources (and increasingly in relation to other European Antarctic projects) the European Union is a major player, and Nils Vanstappen and Jan Wouters develop this in 'The EU and the Antarctic: strange bedfellows?' The emerging superpower China is examined by Anne-Marie Brady in 'The past in the present: Antarctica in China's national narrative', while Brazil is examined by Daniela Sampaio, Adriana Abdenur and Ignacio Cardone in 'A modest but intensifying power? Brazil, the Antarctic Treaty System and Antarctica'. Peder Roberts takes us full circle, concluding the section with a chapter on 'The politics of early exploration'.

Regulating Antarctica continues the focus on performance in Antarctica, but at a finer scale of resolution in the operation of politics through regulation of particular activities. Adrian Howkins opens the section with 'Politics and environmental regulation in Antarctica: a historical perspective'. The operationalization (perhaps often the failure) of environmental duties at the most crowded location in all Antarctica is documented by Christina Braun, Fritz Hertel and Hans-Ulrich Peter in 'Environmental management: the Fildes Peninsula Paradigm'. Tourism, the dominant commercial activity on the continent itself, is considered in 'The changing face of political engagement in Antarctic tourism' by Daniela Liggett and Emma Stewart; and the challenges of responding to misadventure involving tourists, national Antarctic programmes and fishing operators are examined by Julia Jabour in 'Southern Ocean search and rescue: politics and platforms'. The waters around Antarctica are the sites of a substantial global fishery regulated by the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), and this is the subject of two chapters. The first, by Henrik Österblom and Olof Olsson, provides an overview of the fisheries regime in 'CCAMLR: An ecosystem approach to the Southern Ocean in the anthropocene'. Cassandra M. Brooks and David G. Ainley look at the realities of ecosystem-based-management and discuss the present difficulties around designating marine protected areas (MPAs) in Antarctic waters in 'Fishing

the bottom of the Earth: the political challenges of ecosystem-based management'. The relationship between the regional regime (the ATS) and a global instrument (the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) is unpicked by Tim Stephens in 'An icy reception or a warm embrace? The Antarctic Treaty System and the International Law of the Sea'. If Antarctica is compared, it is invariably with the Arctic; and if the 1959 Antarctic Treaty is compared to anything, it is the 1920 Spitsbergen Treaty. The Spitsbergen (now Svalbard) model is examined by Stuart Kaye in 'Svalbard and Antarctica: problems and solutions'. Concluding this section are considerations of Antarctica's built environment. Ricardo Roura focuses on the mechanisms for designating and managing Antarctic heritage sites in 'Antarctic cultural heritage: and geopolitics and management', while Dag Avango explores the legacies of industry in Antarctica in 'Working geopolitics: sealing, whaling, and industrialized Antarctica'.

With the fourth and concluding section of the book, *Futures in Antarctica*, we look forward. Alan D. Hemmings explores the implications for Antarctica, and its system of governance, of the manifestly changing global order in 'Antarctic politics in a transforming global geopolitics'. With the impacts of anthropogenic climate change transforming the region, if not yet our political response to it in the ATS or elsewhere, Steven L. Chown examines 'Antarctic environmental challenges in a global context'. Nationalism is on the rise in relation to Antarctica, as elsewhere. Matt Benwell looks at one sub-regional manifestation of this in 'Argentine territorial nationalism in the South Atlantic and Antarctica'. In 'Global legal norms in the Antarctic' Ruth Davis considers the values that the ATS has enshrined and examines the extent to which it has reflected or incorporated emerging principles of international law. The Antarctic Treaty has at its core various provisions to remove or contain traditional security concerns. Elizabeth Nyman considers the continuing salience of these concerns and responses, and looks at the broadening conception of security in 'Contemporary security concerns'. The section, and the volume, concludes with Lize-Marié van der Watt investigating the emergence of environmental discourse as a privileged space in Antarctic politics, in 'Contemporary environmental politics and discourse analysis in Antarctica'.

We have no concluding statement per se, and nor do we offer a fully-fledged manifesto for future research. What we have instead offered is a scholarly audit of the politics of Antarctica and something of an academic *appeler aux armes*. Our contributors explore widely over challenging and frequently slippery terrain, suggesting that Antarctica is rather less stable and static than often imagined. Where appropriate, therefore, they avoid appeals to solidity and fixity when discussing the politics of Antarctica. We, as authors and editors, can admire the ATS without worshipping it, and acknowledge its impact without attributing to it a post-millenarian quality of structural hegemony and eternal vision. Indeed, such resistance is crucial if we are to imagine different political languages, practices and imaginaries for a space infused with uncertainty and at times conflict and tension about how best to manage the resources of the continent.

We can think about human contact with Antarctica as so modest that on a geological timescale it would barely register. And yet within 200 years, humans have proven capable of hunting and killing millions of seals and whales, plundering the Southern Ocean for fish and krill, staking claims to unpopulated territories, and capable of inflicting severe damage to the structural integrity of the polar continent itself through anthropogenic climate change. This may not be a story that those working inside governance structures

such as the ATS wish to tell; this may not be something scientists and tourists living, working and visiting the Antarctic wish to contemplate; and this may not be evident in discussions about the political management of the continent at the annual Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings or meetings of CCAMLR's Commission. But these kinds of stories do need to be told and shared (and contested) perhaps more than ever as earth scientists and climate modellers imagine and write about a world without ice.⁴⁷ It seems an enduring paradox that an object such as ice, which has been so critical in shaping the history of the Earth itself, including vast landscapes and seascapes, is now looking increasingly fragile and vulnerable.

NOTES

1. Leane 2016, 137.
2. 1 December 1959, 402 UNTS 71.
3. Gould 1948, 105.
4. Glennon 1991, 488–90.
5. Spiller 2015.
6. The Antarctic Treaty System is defined in Article 1 of the Madrid Protocol as 'the Antarctic Treaty, the measures in effect under that Treaty, its associated separate international instruments in force [identified separately below] and the measures in effect under those instruments'.
7. The disputed territorial situation in the Antarctic contrasts strongly with the Arctic, where only tiny Hans Island is disputed, and then merely between two claimant states, Canada and Denmark (on behalf of Greenland).
8. See for instance Roberts 2011; Hemmings, Rothwell and Scott 2012; Powell and Dodds 2014; Dodds and Nuttall 2016; Roberts, van der Watt and Howkins 2017.
9. The charge of secrecy was made a number of times by representatives from the global South in the 'Question of Antarctica' debates in the UN General Assembly as noted in Beck (1984) in one of his earliest articles on the subject for *Polar Record*.
10. Habermas 1973.
11. Butler and Stockwell 2013.
12. Elzinga 1992.
13. For example, Bloom 1993, Collis 2009 and Glasberg 2012.
14. Bloom 1993.
15. 4 October 1991, 30 ILM 1461.
16. Howkins 2015.
17. Macfarlane 2016.
18. Massey 2005.
19. 29 December 1972, 1046 UNTS 120.
20. 20 May 1980, 1329 UNTS 48.
21. See, for example, Edney 1997.
22. Massey 2005.
23. Not least in relation to the Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zones attaching to them.
24. 10 December 1982, 1833 UNTS 397.
25. 29 December 1993, 1760 UNTS 79.
26. As noted in the essays contained in McNeill and Unger 2010.
27. Tollefson 2016.
28. Friedman 2004; Roberts 2011.
29. Mercer 1978, 325.
30. Kolbert 2014.
31. 2 June 1988, 30 ILM 1455.
32. Article 7: Prohibition of Mineral Resource Activities: 'Any activity relating to mineral resources, other than scientific research, shall be prohibited.'
33. Robinson 1997; Larkin 2012.
34. For example, ABC News 2015.
35. 9 May 1992, 31 ILM 849.
36. BBC News 2016.

37. Dodds 2016.
38. Among recent alarming reports see for instance Golledge et al 2015; Winkelmann et al 2015; Hansen et al 2016; DeConto and Pollard 2016.
39. Klein 2014.
40. Barney 2015.
41. Some claimants also co-ordinate on operational matters supportive of their territorial positions. The historically linked United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australian territorial interests were a factor in the visits of HMS *Protector* to the Australian and New Zealand claimed sectors in the 2015–2016 season, and agreements between the UK and each state. See: United Kingdom and Australia 2015; New Zealand and United Kingdom 2016.
42. Dodds and Hemmings 2009; Dodds and Hemmings 2013, 1429–1430.
43. Slevison 2016.
44. Which include Brazil, China, India, South Africa.
45. Antarctic Treaty, Article IX(2).
46. Hemmings 2016.
47. Pollack 2010.

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