



ARCTIC BORDERS IN ASIA

JOINT WORKSHOP ON CHALLENGES FOR A SUSTAINABLE ARCTIC

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WHAT IS THIS PRESENTATION ON ARCTIC BORDERS NOT ABOUT?

- Not about the legal status or actually-existing disputes within the Arctic region (for this, see Byers, Michael: *International Law and the Arctic*, Cambridge 2013)
- Does not consider the Arctic as a laboratory that indicates possible solutions to global problems (as is done by projects such as IBRU and University of the Arctic's ICE LAW [the Project on Indeterminate and Changing Environment's: Law, the Anthropocene and the World], etc.)
- Is not interested in the Arctic as a potential zone of conflict (Expectations regarding Russia, etc.)
- Is not interested in the 'rump material reality' of Arctic territory, being instead concerned with the latter as a socially-constructed region

THE ARCTIC REGION

- The Arctic has achieved spatial designation through “a plethora of practices, discourses, relations and connections that can have wider origins in space and time but are assembled in historically contingent ways in cultural, economic and political contexts and struggles” (Paasi 2010: 2298)
- -> leading to territorial, symbolic and institutional shapes to the region
- Territorial shape of the Arctic is not definitive, unified or homogenous...and so we should not expect it to appear so within the symbolic or institutional spheres either

WHAT CONSTITUTES TERRITORY?

- Joe Painter (2010) – network and territory as “incommensurable forms of spatial organization” a mirage
- Like Elden (2010, 2013), too focused on ‘fixing’ meaning of territory, reproducing state understandings
- Sack (1986) - territoriality has functioned at different times and within different technological and social contexts, no absolute divide between fixity and mobility for the state, but that the two always exist in tandem.
- It is the effect of the state (Mitchell 1991) that is experienced through the efforts of its agents to fix, record (that is, render legible – Scott 1998) and channel this mobility
- Thus, rather than networks and territory being opposed, as is often assumed, or territory understood as the “product of networked socio-technical practices” (Painter), it is vital to understand the co-production of the two notions, of fixity and flows serving to define one another

WHAT IS ASIA'S ARCTIC

- May 2013 admittance of China, India, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea as observers to the Arctic Council (with Italy)
- Increasing institutionalization of Arctic Policy within these Asian states (eg. In Japan, March 2013 creation of an Arctic Ambassador, currently Kazuko Shiraishi; April 2013 inclusion of the Arctic in the government's Basic Plan on Ocean Policy; July 2013 establishment of the Liaison Committee among Ministries and Agencies on Various Issues Related to the Arctic; and the publication in October 2015 of an Arctic Policy brief by Japan's Headquarters for Ocean Policy)
- Growing body of literature that examines Asian conceptions of the Arctic from the outside [eg. Mia Bennet (UCLA), Rasmus Gjedssø Bertelsen (University of Tromsø and ISDP Stockholm), Marc Lanteigne (NUPI)]

EMERGENCE OF AN ASIAN ARCTIC REGION

- The notion of 'the Arctic' exists as a more cohesive territorial entity in 'cartographic imaginary' rather than in everyday life
- As with all definitions of space, notions of a region are open to being transformed by the changing character of what they are held to enclose
- This process has not been linear or unidirectional (e.g.. Earlier Japanese interest in Japan's Northern Sea Route Program (JANSROP I & II), etc.)
- Emergence of an Asian Arctic as a product of relations *between* these Asian states, rather than solely stemming from each state's relations with the Arctic (Japan's bid for observer status *in response to* China and South Korea's applications, etc.)

WHY ASIAN ARCTIC BORDERS?

- Interested in seeing if there is value in the notion of an 'Asian border' as a heuristic device
- With Iwashita (2015), developed an interpretation of borders in Asia utilizing an analytical typology of borders as being a) interstate; b) post-colonial spaces; or c) (re)discovered spaces
- Understand the Arctic for Asian states as serving as another 'discovered' space within which border demarcation is occurring

STATE BORDERS

- Contemporary national borders are “geocoded” upon layers and layers of paper (Pickles 2004)
- Never solely lines on the map or in the sand (Parker and Vaughn-Williams 2009, 2012), and their existence is not predicated on the map (Branch 2013)
- The space of the border extends both out beyond the state and deep within its interior (Rumford, 2006), forming a border zone or borderland rather than line
- National borders give rise to a particular “cartographic anxiety” (Krishna 1994) and border regions are thus exceptionally “sensitive spaces” (Cons 2015) for the state

A NUMBER OF ASIAN ARCTICS?

- Each of these states is constituting their own Arctic through their own perceptions of interests and national priorities

JAPAN'S ARCTIC

96-Page Report from JIIA in April 2013 (as Japan was about to receive observer status):

- Construct a win-win relationship with Arctic coastal states regarding resource exploration and development;
- Secure appropriate implementation of UNCLOS;
- Build a closer cooperation with the United States on Arctic issues;
- Play a leading role in environmental conservation, using Japan's knowledge and environmental technology;
- More active Arctic diplomacy;
- Strengthen the government system for Arctic policy, such as establishing an Arctic Headquarters within the Cabinet Office.

JAPAN'S ARCTIC POLICY

“Japan’s Arctic Policy” adopted 15 October 2015:

- Global Environmental Issues
- Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic
- Science and Technology
- Ensuring the Rule of Law and Promoting International Cooperation
- Arctic Sea Route
- Natural Resources Development
- National Security

SOUTH KOREA'S ARCTIC POLICY

“Arctic Policy Master Plan” of 10 December 2013:

- AIMS: -building Arctic partnerships to contribute to the international community
-enhancing scientific research to resolve common issues of mankind
-developing new industry in the Arctic
- CHALLENGES: -strengthen scientific cooperation
-enhance scientific survey and research activities
-develop Arctic-related business activities
-establishing an institutional basis
- Product of pan-governmental collaboration involving: Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning; Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport; and the Korea Meteorological Administration, together with the Korea Maritime Institute and Korea Polar Research Institute
- Drawn into President Park's 'Eurasia Initiative' (October 2013) –integrated, peaceful and cooperative

CHINA'S ARCTIC POLICY

- Two competing ideas: China as a “near-Arctic state” and the Arctic as a global space with China as an “Arctic Stakeholder”
- Potential incorporation of NSR into China’s wider OBOR as an “Ice Silk Road” (eg. 2013, celebrated 33-day voyage between Dalian and Rotterdam of the Yongsheng)
- Relation’s between the Arctic and China (the CCP’s) core interests: 1. continued stability of (party) rule [economy, food security, climate effects]; 2. territorial integrity and sovereignty [indigenous rights, UNCLOS]; 3. economic growth [shipping and energy security]
- Jones and Hamieri (2015) note “the crisis-ridden, incoherent policy outputs of China’s fragmented, decentralized and unevenly internationalized state”, involving over a dozen agencies more powerful than the foreign ministry...
- How does this play out in the Arctic? And how does it compare to other Asian states and their attempts to integrate Arctic policy?

JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA & CHINA'S ARCTIC REALITY

- Centrality of (potential) economic development [shipbuilding and shipping, hydrocarbons, science]
- Economic interests of all three countries advanced through bilateral relations, the most important of which is Russia (abundant natural resources, NSR, possibilities of participating in development projects [ports, natural resource extraction] in Russia)
- Japan and Russia's cooperation based upon 1. research; 2. NSR; 3. Yamal LNG Project
- January 2014 MOU between Korea's minister for oceans and fisheries and Russia's minister of transportation to develop five Russian ports
- China seeking 5% to 15% of trade via the Arctic by 2020 (Polar Research Institute of China, 2013)

RUSSO-JAPANESE RESEARCH COLLABORATION

- THEME 1: Climate impacts of **Black carbon and aerosols** in the Arctic (Spitsbergen, Baranov Cape, Tiksi)→ArCS
- THEME 2: Preliminary joint study in the frame of the **Polar Prediction Project**→ArCS
- THEME 3: Reliability and risk estimation for **Sea-ice navigation** along the Northern Sea Route→ArCS
- THEME 4: Comparative study **Carbon and water in the permafrost ecosystem** of Siberia→Belmont Forum (Hokkaido U)
- THEME 5: **Glacier research** in the Russian Arctic and sub-Arctic
- THEME 6: Contemporary changes of water, heat, and dissolved and suspended organic/inorganic matter fluxes from **Siberian rivers** into the Arctic Ocean
- THEME 7: Variability of **Snow cover** including blowing snow and snowmelt processes of the permafrost area under Arctic environment change
- THEME 8: Development of **Space remote sensing technologies** to monitor seasonal variations in temperature and moisture in the active topsoil of the Arctic tundra
- THEME 9: **Permafrost changes** in Siberia in the past and future based on projections of climate warming→Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (JAMSTEC, Nagoya U)
- THEME 10: **Ecosystems and biodiversity**→ArCS
- THEME 11: **Effects of global climate change** on commercial fishing and indigenous coastal cultures in Siberia and the North Pacific
- THEME 12: **Arctic and global climate change**: feedbacks and forecasting dynamics

A NUMBER OF ASIAN ARCTICS?

- Each of these states is constituting their own Arctic through their own perceptions of interests and national priorities
- Each of these states claims to resolve global challenges through bilateral relations

SINGAPORE'S ARCTIC

- 2013 speech of MP Sam Tan Chin Siong, noted that Singapore can affect: 1) Environmental protection; 2) The development of a safe Arctic region; 3) Sustainable economic development; and 4) The development of human capital
- Singapore as a “capacity builder”
- Exporting technologies to develop Arctic resources rather than importing the resources themselves
- Developing relations with the Arctic Council’s Permanent Participant’s, supporting governance and education among indigenous Arctic peoples
- Expertise in running major port facilities and in offshore and marine engineering as assets
- ...self-consciously contrasts itself with China, Japan and South Korea, as *uninterested* in shipping or energy security. Singapore as an Arctic facilitator.

INDIA'S ARCTIC POLICY

- Establishing bilateral dialogue mechanism with the Arctic littorals
- Appoint an Envoy for Arctic affairs who would represent India at the Arctic Council meetings
- Participation in international conferences Lead the Asian view of the Arctic
- Include Polar issues at multilateral forums such as BRICS and
- Incorporate Arctic issues in Track 1 discussions with Canada, China, Denmark, EU, Japan, Norway, RoK, Russia, US and others to share India's Arctic perspectives and explore potential areas for cooperation
- Polar scientific research could be an agenda for India-Pakistan dialogue since Arctic induced changes in the Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau affect socio-economic development in both countries
- Active participation in the development of the Polar Code is critical, given that India is a maritime nation, possesses a large pool of skilled and trained human resources for navigation and engineering duties onboard ships operating in the Arctic
- ...much Arctic interest in India is conceived of in terms of competing with a rising China

A NUMBER OF ASIAN ARCTICS?

- Each of these states is constituting their own Arctic through their own perceptions of interests and national priorities
- Each of these states claims to resolve global challenges through bilateral relations
- Future of each of these nation-states bound up with the Arctic
- The Arctic region becomes a laboratory of state development, open to manipulation by Asian governments

JOHN WILLIAMS, *THE ETHICS OF TERRITORIAL BORDERS* – *DRAWING LINES IN THE SHIFTING SAND* (2006)

- We must recognize that there is no fixed choice between a borderless world and the retention of current structures and understandings
- That specific borders are in no sense natural, but rather ‘enacted’ and ‘performed’
- That these performances are technologically and culturally dependent

DRAWING ASIAN LINES IN ICY WATERS?

- Notion of the Arctic as a global space incorporates states geographically removed from the Arctic within its governance and development
- Significance of borders is in how each of these states understand their relationship with this global space in relation to their fellow Asian states
- Understandings of the Arctic as a “sensitive space” for the world justify the bordering activities of Asian states within a region characterized by various flows: economic; technological; of governance; and of people