In the mid-2000s, the Arctic started to receive greater international attention given its growing importance in environmental, scientific, economic and political affairs. The acceptance of five Asian states – China, India, Japan, Singapore and South Korea – as Observers in the Arctic Council, the region's preeminent intergovernmental forum, in 2013, became both representative of this trend and a consequence of it. This is the premise of *Arctic: Commerce, Governance and Policy*, which describes the interest and engagement of Asian states in Arctic affairs, and stems from papers presented at a conference on the topic of Arctic geopolitics held at New Delhi's Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses in September 2013.

A volume of this nature is very timely. However, it has several shortcomings, the first of which is the title. All of the chapters focus in some way on Asian roles and ambitions in the Arctic region; it is odd that this is not explicit in the title. We are far from the day when a book on Arctic commerce, governance and policy can be implicitly understood to mean Asian interests in Arctic commerce, governance and policy, and to that extent it is misleading.

A further problem is the repetitiveness of the book, which reads more like a collection of papers than an edited volume with a strategic and complementary division of chapters. Almost every chapter reiterates, with varying sophistication, the acceptance of the five Arctic states as Observers into the Arctic Council in 2013, and treat this development as an end rather than as a means i.e. it is stated as fact, not as implication. Other topics that are described reiteratively include the continental delimitation process under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); the prospects for shipping, especially along Russia's Northern Sea Route, and oil and gas extraction; the potential for militarisation and conflict; and statistics on melting ice. Any reader familiar with Arctic politics will already have a firm grasp on these details, which have become perfunctory in Arctic studies. The volume at hand does little to push our understanding of those topics further.

The book does have bright spots. The chapters written by Nordic authors are well done, in particular Olav's application of the concept of stakeholder salience, which has useful application in the context of the Arctic Council; and Moe's paper on the Northern Sea

Route, which is pragmatic and restrained in its conjecture, as well as informed. In addition, the handful of short commentaries at the end are insightful. H.P Rajan, the former Deputy Director of the UN's Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and Secretary of the Commission on the Limitations of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) offers the insight that even during negotiations of UNCLOS in the 1970s, there was anticipation that the Arctic would become commercially navigable and exploitable in the future; and that Russia's infamous flag planting at the North Pole in the Summer of 2007 was a "direct reaction" to the disappointing recommendations by the CLCS to its 2001 Arctic shelf claim.

Similarly, Jong Deog Kim, of the Korea Maritime Institution, shares some of the findings of the 2013 North Pacific Arctic Conference, a gathering of experts, researchers, local "communities" and policymakers. These are more sophisticated than one might have expected, and interesting for it, such as its prognostications on fisheries management in the Central Arctic Ocean; description of the Arctic Council's accomplishments and implicit limitations; and the reference to "Arctic peoples", rather than just Arctic indigenous peoples, and the need for their consent in any commercial developments.

The perspectives of Asian scholars on Arctic commerce, governance and policy do have value, and are palpably different from those of "traditional" Arctic policy scholars originating from the eight Arctic states themselves, for example in the promotion and consensus on the idea of the central Arctic as a global commons; and in viewing Arctic regional governance primarily within a context of global governance processes. This book is also useful inasmuch as the accepted history and progression of Asian state interest in the Arctic is well documented and comprehensively articulated within – casual readers interested in the topic will not have to go any further. However, this volume mainly serves to confirm observations that Asian states' engagement in the Arctic is still quite superficial, politically and economically, and there simply isn't that much, new or otherwise, to say about it.