The international politics of Antarctica


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Abstract

Antarctica is a potential source of international conflict. International interest in Antarctica has been increasing for a range of political, legal, economic, scientific and environmental reasons, and this has resulted in not only the emergence of Antarctica as a perceived problem but also the imposition of various strains upon the Antarctic Treaty System from both within and outside. At a time when the treaty regime is celebrating 25 years of operation, this book considers the nature of the Antarctic interests and positions of those involved. It looks at the significance of the historical dimension, the development of the treaty system, the management of marine and mineral resources, the emerging role of the United Nations under the inspiration of the Law of the Sea discussions and the common heritage principle, the impact of non-governmental organisations like Greenpeace International, and the South African issue. The Antarctic implications of the Falklands War of 1982 are also discussed, while the Soviet-American relationship proves a continuing theme throughout the study. Prominent Antarctic roles are pursued by Argentina, Australia, Britain, France, Japan and West Germany, while due attention is given to the contribution of 'new' Antarctic countries such as Brazil, China, India and Spain. The book concludes by discussing how the situation might develop in the immediate future.

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