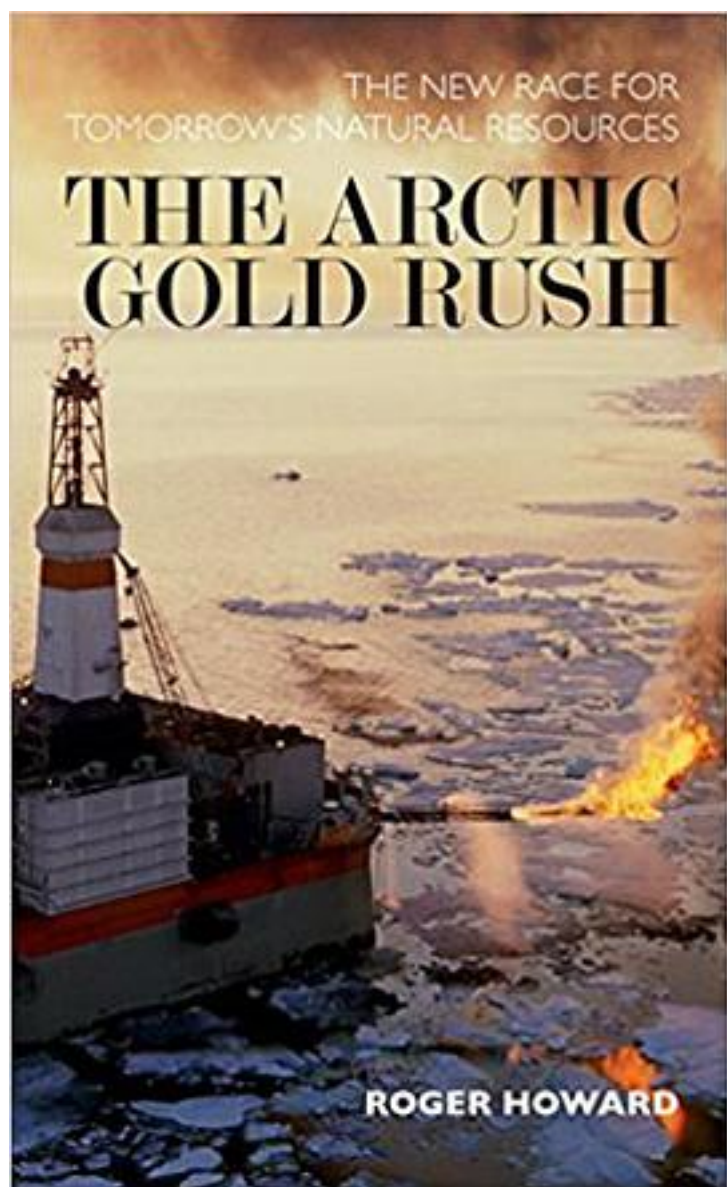


The Arctic Gold Rush



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出版者:Bloomsbury Academic

出版时间:2009-11-3

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9781441181107

An exploration of the political significance of the Arctic's vast untapped wealth of natural resources, and a gripping account of the race to exploit them

On August 2, 2007, a Russian submarine captured world headlines by making a dangerous journey to the bottom of the Arctic seabed and planting a metal, rustfree national flag more than 14,000 feet beneath the North Pole. The aim was to assert Russia's legal sovereignty over a region whose importance had only recently started to become apparent as its melting ice had made, or was expected to make, vast natural resources open to exploitation.

The latest estimates are that the region holds around 13% of the world's undiscovered oil and as much as 30% of undiscovered natural gas reserves that would be hugely profitable for any country that managed to secure control over them. Gold, platinum, copper, and other precious metals have also been found along the coast. Neighboring countries — Russia, the United States, Canada, Denmark, and Norway — are already doing everything they can to mark out new borders. The ensuing political disagreements over the issue are already rife. In particular, games of political intrigue between Moscow and Washington are being played out in the region. But as the world's resources become increasingly scarce and valuable, could the scramble for Arctic resources become violent? Could a "War for the Arctic" be fought?

Editorial Reviews

From Publishers Weekly

In this dense but rewarding read, journalist and international relations specialist Howard (The Oil Hunters) looks at the strategic implications of climate change in the Arctic region. Dismissing the "much discussed" scenario of "brutal, bitter and bloody confrontation" over the region's rich resources, (Howard believes that as resources run low worldwide, market-driven economies will recognize cooperation as their best strategy), he sees the "real risk of future confrontation" in the Arctic's "strategic location. As ice melts and borders shift, disputes may arise over which countries—the U.S., Russia, Canada, Greenland—own the Arctic, creating a cascade of problems logistical, economic and military. If, for example, "Chinese or Russian energy companies could establish a presence in a petroleum-rich place like Greenland," then the U.S. might feel threatened. Other industries like international shipping will certainly be affected: "sailing between London and Tokyo would be reduced by 3,500 miles." Howard goes into grim detail regarding every aspect of the complex situation, but is guardedly optimistic that treaties can resolve these issues. Environmentalists and political buffs should find this an interesting and unexpected analysis.

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Review

'Meticulous detail ... This is an excellent book of reference with a wealth of factual information.' - Morning Star

Reviewed in Literary Review, April 2010.

'Howard's book stands out as a model of objectivity and dispassionate analysis in a publishing world where there is far too much sensationalism on such subjects.' - The Tablet

"A journalist and author specializing in defense and energy-related issues, Howard describes conflict over resources at the north pole as improving exploration and extraction technology, and declining ice narrow in on the cross-over point of profitability. He profiles the contenders: Russia, the US, Canada, Norway, and Denmark—obviously some heavier hitters than others—and consider such other topics as whether a resource war looms, the great explorers, black gold, sea lanes and strategy, the environmental challenge." -Eithne O'Leyne, BOOK NEWS, Inc.

作者介绍:

Roger Howard is a writer and broadcaster specialising in international relations. His most recent publications are The Oil Hunters (2008) and Iran Oil: The New Middle East Challenge to America (2006).

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