

Book review

Cosmopolitics – Public Policy of Outer Space
by P. Arnopoulos, Guernica Editions Inc., Toronto
(Canada), Buffalo (NY, USA), Lancaster (UK), 1998,
290 pp., ISBN 1-55071-046-X, CA\$ 20, US\$ 18

This book, originated from a series of nine studies and lecture topics by the author, outlines a number of aspects and consequences of the exploration and exploitation of outer space and its resources. It does so in the context of a philosophical analysis based upon the principle of thesis–antithesis–synthesis. Thus, all topics and their aspects are treated in three parts, as can be seen both from the global Table of Contents, and the detailed arrangement on pages 267–273. Accordingly, the main topics of the book, i.e., the Geostationary Orbit and the Electromagnetic Spectrum (GOES), and the military use of outer space, are embedded in a systematic analysis proceeding from both fundamental natural laws, and human endeavour.

Part One (Sociopolitical Systems Theory) contains three chapters: I (Natural Laws and Spatial Acts), II (Technologies and Cosmopolitics), and III (The Cosmopolitical System). The author concludes that the cosmopolitical system (COSY) is, in many respects, becoming increasingly co-ordinated, as a condition for the orderly operation of the system.

In Part Two (The Orbit/Spectrum Controversy), the principles outlined in Part One are applied to the problem of the orbit-spectrum controversy of GOES. Here a detailed analysis is given of the problem of its limited resources and the increasing demands for them, the dichotomy between more and less developed nations, and the structural environment in which efforts are being made to resolve these problems. The author

proposes a policy planning model, and notes that actual decisions taken in the relevant international bodies correspond quite well to this model (p. 185).

The last part of the book (Military Strategy and Security Policy) is devoted to the question of peace and war, and in particular the involvement of outer space. In Chapter 7 the author analyses the methodology of preventing war and preparing for peace. He points out the potentially destructive character of space technology, and ends with a cautiously optimistic view of the future of mankind. On page 265 he predicts that in the next century the world will be dominated by three superpower centres, Europe, Japan, and North America, who will form the nascent World Government sketched on page 239.

The book offers insight into the often confusing structure of past, present and, possibly, future world systems. It indicates where and how problems could arise, and what kind of steps could be taken and by whom in order to try and solve them. The examples of communication through the GOES and the dangers of Space Wars are very illustrative in this respect. A minor problem is that the abundant use of acronyms forces readers not well familiar with them to consult frequently the Acronym Index.

It is a thought-provoking study, which can certainly be recommended to anyone interested in the organisation of world space politics and its outlook for the future.

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