

**UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE**

**FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD**

**INSTITUT POLITOLOGICKÝCH STUDIÍ**

**ABSTRACT OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

**GLOBAL SPACE SECURITY**

**AND THE U.S. – CHINA – RUSSIA RIVALRY**

2016

JANA ROBINSON

## ABSTRACT

This study concentrates on whether the spacepower projection strategies of China and Russia, as communicated through their actions, key initiatives and public diplomacy positions, will, in the near future, undermine or advance global efforts to preserve the stability of the space environment and sustainability of outer space activities. In order to arrive at key findings, the analysis presented in this study is guided by two theories, the *Astropolitik*, a well-established spacepower theory of Everett C. Dolman, and the “preventive arms control in space” theory of Max Mutschler.

It was concluded that arms control in space will not advance space security and prevent systemic destabilization of the space domain, and formal top-down arms control does not effectively restrain counterspace activities<sup>1</sup>. It was likewise concluded that there exists a high probability (i.e. possibly greater than 75%) of near-term space ‘incident’ among the U.S., Russia and China.

To prevent an escalatory spiral leading to conflict in space, the U.S. should continue to engage China and Russia (including in multilateral venues) in an effort to adopt space transparency and confidence-building measures (space TCBMs). However, these measures on their own do not have sufficient authority or garner adequate compliance to serve as a decisive deterrent in all, or even most, geopolitical scenarios. Accordingly, TCBMs need to be accompanied by sound and robust space crisis management.<sup>2</sup> Together, they can enhance space security and contribute to the stability and sustainability of the space domain.

The key contribution of this study to the theoretical and practical discussions concerning space security is an in-depth analysis of two contrasting propositions for the near-future governance of space activities, and suggesting a realist path forward. Findings of this study should provide a solid basis for scholars to further refine the spacepower theory of Everett Dolman assisted by researched arguments about the shortcomings of arms control in space.

---

<sup>1</sup> Counterspace activities in this context are the multifaceted capabilities development of China and Russia that are aimed at disrupting or destroying U.S. space architecture.

<sup>2</sup> The main focus of space crisis management are efforts to identify those situations that are conducive to threats to space assets and related services with the goal to preserve a stable space environment (source: Jana Robinson, “Space Crisis Management: Europe’s Response,” *European Space Policy Institute* 44 (February 2013): 20, [http://www.espi.or.at/images/stories/dokumente/studies/ESPI\\_Report\\_44.pdf](http://www.espi.or.at/images/stories/dokumente/studies/ESPI_Report_44.pdf))