## UNLV r1

### 1

#### Interpretation – the aff may not defend that the appropriation of outer space by a certain set of private entities is unjust.

#### Entities is a generic bare plural

Nebel 20 [Jake Nebel is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California and executive director of Victory Briefs. He writes a lot of this stuff lol – duh.] “Indefinite Singular Generics in Debate” Victory Briefs, 19 August 2020. no url AG

I agree that if “a democracy” in the resolution just meant “one or more democracy,” then a country-specific affirmative could be topical. But, as I will explain in this topic analysis, that isn’t what “a democracy” means in the resolution. To see why, we first need to back up a bit and review (or learn) the idea of generic generalizations.

The most common way of expressing a generic in English is through a *bare plural*. A bare plural is a plural noun phrase, like “dogs” and “cats,” that lacks an overt determiner. (A determiner is a word that tells us which or how many: determiners include quantifier words like “all,” “some,” and “most,” demonstratives like “this” and “those,” posses- sives like “mine” and “its,” and so on.) LD resolutions often contain bare plurals, and that is the most common clue to their genericity.

We have already seen some examples of generics that are not bare plurals: “A whale is a mammal,” “A beaver builds dams,” and “The woolly mammoth is extinct.” The first two examples use indefinite singulars—singular nouns preceded by the indefinite article “a”—and the third is a definite singular since it is preceded by the definite article “the.” Generics can also be expressed with bare singulars (“Syrup is viscous”) and even verbs (as we’ll see later on). The resolution’s “a democracy” is an indefinite singular, and so it very well might be—and, as we’ll soon see, is—generic.

But it is also important to keep in mind that, just as not all generics are bare plurals, not all bare plurals are generic. “Dogs are barking” is true as long as some dogs are barking. Bare plurals can be used in particular ways to express existential statements. The key question for any given debate resolution that contains a bare plural is whether that occurrence of the bare plural is generic or existential.

The same is true of indefinite singulars. As debaters will be quick to point out, some uses of the indefinite singular really do mean “some” or “one or more”: “A cat is on the mat” is clearly not a generic generalization about cats; it’s true as long as some cat is on the mat. The question is whether the indefinite singular “a democracy” is existential or generic in the resolution.

Now, my own view is that, if we understand the difference between existential and generic statements, and if we approach the question impartially, without any invest- ment in one side of the debate, we can almost always just tell which reading is correct just by thinking about it. It is clear that “In a democracy, voting ought to be compul- sory” doesn’t mean “There is one or more democracy in which voting ought to be com- pulsory.” I don’t think a fancy argument should be required to show this any more than a fancy argument should be required to show that “A duck doesn’t lay eggs” is a generic—a false one because ducks do lay eggs, even though some ducks (namely males) don’t. And if a debater contests this by insisting that “a democracy” is existen- tial, the judge should be willing to resolve competing claims by, well, judging—that is, by using her judgment. Contesting a claim by insisting on its negation or demanding justification doesn’t put any obligation on the judge to be neutral about it. (Otherwise the negative could make every debate irresolvable by just insisting on the negation of every statement in the affirmative speeches.) Even if the insistence is backed by some sort of argument, we can reasonably reject an argument if we know its conclusion to be false, even if we are not in a position to know exactly where the argument goes wrong. Particularly in matters of logic and language, speakers have more direct knowledge of particular cases (e.g., that some specific inference is invalid or some specific sentence is infelicitious) than of the underlying explanations.

But that is just my view, and not every judge agrees with me, so it will be helpful to consider some arguments for the conclusion that we already know to be true: that, even if the United States is a democracy and ought to have compulsory voting, that doesn’t suffice to show that, in a democracy, voting ought to be compulsory—in other words, that “a democracy” in the resolution is generic, not existential.

Second, existential uses of the indefinite, such as “A cat is on the mat,” are upward- entailing.3 This means that if you replace the noun with a more general one, such as “An animal is on the mat,” the sentence will still be true. So let’s do that with “a democracy.” Does the resolution entail “In a society, voting ought to be compulsory”? Intuitively not, because you could think that voting ought to be compulsory in democracies but not in other sorts of societies. This suggests that “a democracy” in the resolution is not existential.

#### It applies to this topic – a] entities is an existential bare plural bc it has no determiner b] The sentence “The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust” does not imply “the appropriation of outer space by private and public entities is unjust”

#### Violation – they spec []

#### Standards

#### 1] Limits – they can spec infinite different entities like spaceX, etc.. - that’s supercharged by the ability to spec combinations of types of entities. This takes out functional limits – it’s impossible for me to research every possible combination of entities, governments, and appropriation.

#### 2] TVA solves – just read your aff as an advantage to a whole rez aff – we don’t stop them from reading new FWs, mechanisms or advantages. PICs aren’t aff offense – a] it’s ridiculous to say that neg potential abuse justifies the aff being non-T b] There’s only a small number of pics on this topic c] PICs incentivize them to write better affs that can generate solvency deficits to PICs

CI, DTD, No RVI, F, E

### 2

#### Xi’s regime is stable now, but its success depends on strong growth and private sector development.

**Mitter and Johnson 21** [Rana Mitter and Elsbeth Johnson, [Rana Mitter](https://hbr.org/search?term=rana%20mitter&search_type=search-all) is a professor of the history and politics of modern China at Oxford. [Elsbeth Johnson](https://hbr.org/search?term=elsbeth%20johnson&search_type=search-all), formerly the strategy director for Prudential PLC’s Asian business, is a senior lecturer at MIT’s Sloan School of Management and the founder of SystemShift, a consulting firm. May-June 2021, "What the West Gets Wrong About China," Harvard Business Review, [https://hbr.org/2021/05/what-the-west-gets-wrong-about-china accessed 12/14/21](https://hbr.org/2021/05/what-the-west-gets-wrong-about-china%20accessed%2012/14/21)] Adam

In China, however, growth has come in the context of stable communist rule, suggesting that democracy and growth are not inevitably mutually dependent. In fact, many Chinese believe that the country’s recent economic achievements—large-scale poverty reduction, huge infrastructure investment, and development as a world-class tech innovator—have come about because of, not despite, China’s authoritarian form of government. Its aggressive handling of Covid-19—in sharp contrast to that of many Western countries with higher death rates and later, less-stringent lockdowns—has, if anything, reinforced that view.

China has also defied predictions that its authoritarianism would inhibit its capacity to [innovate](https://hbr.org/2011/06/what-the-west-doesnt-get-about-china). It is a global leader in AI, biotech, and space exploration. Some of its technological successes have been driven by market forces: People wanted to buy goods or communicate more easily, and the likes of Alibaba and Tencent have helped them do just that. But much of the technological progress has come from a highly innovative and well-funded military that has invested heavily in China’s burgeoning new industries. This, of course, mirrors the role of U.S. defense and intelligence spending in the development of Silicon Valley. But in China the consumer applications have come faster, making more obvious the link between government investment and products and services that benefit individuals. That’s why ordinary Chinese people see Chinese companies such as Alibaba, Huawei, and TikTok as sources of national pride—international vanguards of Chinese success—rather than simply sources of jobs or GDP, as they might be viewed in the West.

Thus July 2020 polling data from the Ash Center at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government revealed 95% satisfaction with the Beijing government among Chinese citizens. Our own experiences on the ground in China confirm this. Most ordinary people we meet don’t feel that the authoritarian state is solely oppressive, although it can be that; for them it also provides opportunity. A cleaner in Chongqing now owns several apartments because the CCP reformed property laws. A Shanghai journalist is paid by her state-controlled magazine to fly around the world for stories on global lifestyle trends. A young student in Nanjing can study propulsion physics at Beijing’s Tsinghua University thanks to social mobility and the party’s significant investment in scientific research.

#### Xi has committed to the commercial space industry as the linchpin of China’s rise – the plan is seen as a complete 180

**Patel 21** [Neel V. Patel, Neel is a space reporter for MIT Technology Review. 1-21-2021, "China’s surging private space industry is out to challenge the US," MIT Technology Review, <https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/01/21/1016513/china-private-commercial-space-industry-dominance/> accessed 12/14/21] Adam

Until recently, China’s space activity has been overwhelmingly dominated by two state-owned enterprises: the China Aerospace Science & Industry Corporation Limited (CASIC) and the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC). A few private space firms have been allowed to operate in the country for a while: for example, there’s the China Great Wall Industry Corporation Limited (in reality a subsidiary of CASC), which has provided commercial launches since it was established in 1980. But for the most part, China’s commercial space industry has been nonexistent. Satellites were expensive to build and launch, and they were too heavy and large for anything but the biggest rockets to actually deliver to orbit. The costs involved were too much for anything but national budgets to handle.

That all changed this past decade as the costs of making satellites and launching rockets plunged. In 2014, a year after Xi Jinping took over as the new leader of China, the Chinese government decided to treat civil space development as a key area of innovation, as it had already begun doing with AI and solar power. It issued a policy directive called [Document 60](https://archive.md/o/bc9l4/www.cpppc.org/en/zy/994006.jhtml) that year to enable large private investment in companies interested in participating in the space industry.

“Xi’s goal was that if China has to become a critical player in technology, including in civil space and aerospace, it was critical to develop a space ecosystem that includes the private sector,” says Namrata Goswami, a geopolitics expert based in Montgomery, Alabama, who’s been studying China’s space program for many years. “He was taking a cue from the American private sector to encourage innovation from a talent pool that extended beyond state-funded organizations.”

As a result, there are now 78 commercial space companies operating in China, according to a[2019 report by the Institute for Defense Analyses](https://archive.md/o/bc9l4/https:/www.ida.org/-/media/feature/publications/e/ev/evaluation-of-chinas-commercial-space-sector/d-10873.ashx). More than half have been founded since 2014, and the vast majority focus on satellite manufacturing and launch services.

For example, Galactic Energy, founded in February 2018, is building its Ceres rocket to offer rapid launch service for single payloads, while its Pallas rocket is being built to deploy entire constellations. Rival company i-Space, formed in 2016, became the first commercial Chinese company to make it to space with its Hyperbola-1 in July 2019. It wants to pursue reusable first-stage boosters that can land vertically, like those from SpaceX. So does LinkSpace (founded in 2014), although it also hopes to use rockets to deliver packages from one terrestrial location to another.

Spacety, founded in 2016, wants to turn around customer orders to build and launch its small satellites in just six months. In December it launched a miniaturized version of a satellite that uses 2D radar images to build 3D reconstructions of terrestrial landscapes. Weeks later, it [released the first images taken by the satellite](https://archive.md/o/bc9l4/https:/spacenews.com/spacety-releases-first-sar-images/), Hisea-1, featuring three-meter resolution. Spacety wants to launch a constellation of these satellites to offer high-quality imaging at low cost.

To a large extent, China is following the same blueprint drawn up by the US: using government contracts and subsidies to give these companies a foot up. US firms like SpaceX benefited greatly from NASA contracts that paid out millions to build and test rockets and space vehicles for delivering cargo to the International Space Station. With that experience under its belt, SpaceX was able to attract more customers with greater confidence.

Venture capital is another tried-and-true route. The IDA report estimates that VC funding for Chinese space companies was up to $516 million in 2018—far shy of the $2.2 billion American companies raised, but nothing to scoff at for an industry that really only began seven years ago. At least 42 companies had no known government funding.

And much of the government support these companies do receive doesn’t have a federal origin, but a provincial one. “[These companies] are drawing high-tech development to these local communities,” says Hines. “And in return, they’re given more autonomy by the local government.” While most have headquarters in Beijing, many keep facilities in Shenzhen, Chongqing, and other areas that might draw talent from local universities.

There’s also one advantage specific to China: manufacturing. “What is the best country to trust for manufacturing needs?” asks James Zheng, the CEO of Spacety’s Luxembourg headquarters. “It’s China. It’s the manufacturing center of the world.” Zheng believes the country is in a better position than any other to take advantage of the space industry’s new need for mass production of satellites and rockets alike.

Making friends

The most critical strategic reason to encourage a private space sector is to create opportunities for international collaboration—particularly to attract customers wary of being seen to mix with the Chinese government. (US agencies and government contractors, for example, are barred from working with any groups the regime funds.) Document 60 and others issued by China’s National Development and Reform Commission were aimed not just at promoting technological innovation, but also at drawing in foreign investment and maximizing a customer base beyond Chinese borders.

“China realizes there are certain things they cannot get on their own,” says Frans von der Dunk, a space policy expert at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Chinese companies like LandSpace and MinoSpace have worked to accrue funding through foreign investment, escaping dependence on state subsidies. And by avoiding state funding, a company can also avoid an array of restrictions on what it can and can’t do (such as constraints on talking with the media). Foreign investment also makes it easier to compete on a global scale: you’re taking on clients around the world, launching from other countries, and bringing talent from outside China.

Although China is taking inspiration from the US in building out its private industry, the nature of the Chinese state also means these new companies face obstacles that their rivals in the West don’t have to worry about. While Chinese companies may look private on paper, they must still submit to government guidance and control, and accept some level of interference. It may be difficult for them to make a case to potential overseas customers that they are independent. The distinction between companies that are truly private and those that are more or less state actors is still quite fuzzy, especially if the government is a frequent customer. “That could still lead to a lack of trust from other partners,” says Goswami. It doesn’t help that the government itself is often [very cagey about what its national program is even up to](https://archive.md/o/bc9l4/https:/www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-54076895).

And Hines adds that it’s not always clear exactly how separate these companies are from, say, the People’s Liberation Army, given the historical ties between the space and defense sectors. “Some of these things will pose significant hurdles for the commercial space sector as it tries to expand,” he says.

#### Shifts in regime perception threatens CCP’s legitimacy from nationalist hardliners

Weiss 19 Jessica Weiss 1-29-2019 “Authoritarian Audiences, Rhetoric, and Propaganda in International Crises: Evidence from China” <http://www.jessicachenweiss.com/uploads/3/0/6/3/30636001/19-01-24-elite-statements-isq-ca.pdf> (Associate Professor of Government at Cornell University)//Elmer

Public support—or the appearance of it—matters to many autocracies. As Ithiel de Sola Pool writes, modern dictatorships are “highly conscious of public opinion and make major efforts to affect it.”6 Mao Zedong told his comrades: “When you make revolution, you must first manage public opinion.”7 Because autocracies often rely on **nationalist mythmaking**,8 success or failure in defending the national honor in international crises could burnish the leadership’s patriotic credentials or spark opposition. **Shared outrage at the regime’s foreign policy failures could galvanize street protests or elite fissures, creating intraparty upheaval** or inviting military officers to step in to restore order. Fearing a domestic backlash, authoritarian leaders may feel compelled to take a tough international stance. Although authoritarian leaders are rarely held accountable to public opinion through free and fair elections, fears of popular unrest and irregular ouster often weigh heavily on autocrats seeking to maximize their tenure in office. Considering the harsh consequences that authoritarian elites face if pushed out of office, even a small increase in the probability of ouster could alter authoritarian incentives in international crises.9 A history of nationalist uprisings make Chinese citizens and leaders especially aware of the linkage between international disputes and domestic unrest. The weakness of the PRC’s predecessor in defending Chinese sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 galvanized protests and a general strike, forcing the government to sack three officials and reject the Treaty of Versailles, which awarded territories in China to Japan. These precedents have made Chinese officials particularly sensitive to the appearance of hewing to public opinion. As the People’s Daily chief editor wrote: “History and reality have shown us that public opinion and regime safety are inseparable.”10 One Chinese scholar even claimed: “the Chinese government probably knows the public’s opinion better and reacts to it more directly than even the U.S. government.”11

#### Xi will launch diversionary war to domestic backlash – escalates in multiple hotspots

Norris 17, William J. Geostrategic Implications of China’s Twin Economic Challenges. CFR Discussion Paper, 2017. (Associate professor of Chinese foreign and security policy at Texas A&M University’s Bush School of Government and Public Service)//Elmer

Populist pressures might tempt the **party leadership** to encourage **diversionary nationalism**. The logic of this concern is straightforward: the Communist Party might seek to **distract a restless domestic population** with **adventurism abroad**.19 The **Xi** administration wants to **appear tough** in its **defense of foreign encroachments** against China’s interests. This need stems from a long-running narrative about how a weak Qing dynasty was unable to defend China in the face of European imperial expansion, epitomized by the Opium Wars and the subsequent treaties imposed on China in the nineteenth century. The party is **particularly sensitive** to **perceptions of weakness** because much of its **claim to legitimacy**—manifested in **Xi’s Chinese Dream** campaign today—stems from the party’s claims of leading the **restoration of Chinese greatness**. For example, the May Fourth Movement, a popular protest in 1919 that helped catalyze the CPC, called into question the legitimacy of the Republic of China government running the country at that time because the regime was seen as not having effectively defended China’s territorial and sovereignty interests at the Versailles Peace Conference. **Diversionary nationalist frictions** would likely occur if the Chinese leadership portrayed a foreign adversary as having made the first move, thus forcing Xi to stand up for China’s interests. An example is the 2012 attempt by the nationalist governor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, to buy the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands from a private owner.20 Although the Japanese central government sought to avert a crisis by stepping in to purchase the islands—having them bought and administered by Ishihara’s Tokyo metropolitan government would have dragged Japan into a confrontation with China—China saw this move as part of a deliberate orchestration by Japan to nationalize the islands. Xi seemingly had no choice but to defend China’s claims against an attempt by Japan to consolidate its position on the dispute.21 This issue touched off a period of heated tensions between China and Japan, lasting more than two years.22 Such dynamics are not limited to Japan. Other possible areas of conflict include, but are not necessarily limited to, **Taiwan**, **India**, and the **South China Sea** (especially with the **Philippines** and **Vietnam**). The Chinese government will use such tactics if it believes that the costs are relatively low. Ideally, China would like to appear tough while avoiding material repercussions or a serious diplomatic breakdown. Standing up against foreign encroachment—without facing much blowback—could provide Xi’s administration with a tempting source of noneconomic legitimacy. However, over the next few years, Xi will probably not be actively looking to get embroiled abroad. Cushioning the fallout from slower growth while managing a structural economic transition will be difficult enough. Courting potential international crises that distract the central leadership would make this task even more daunting. Even if the top leadership did not wish to provoke conflict, a smaller budgetary allotment for security could cause **military interests** in China to **deliberately instigate trouble** to **justify** their **claims over increasingly scarce resources**. For example, an air force interested in ensuring its funding for a midair tanker program might find the existence of far-flung territorial disputes to be useful in making its case. Such a case would be made even stronger by a pattern of recent frictions that highlights the necessity of greater air power projection. Budgetary pressures may be partly behind a recent People’s Liberation Army reorganization and headcount reduction. A slowing economy might cause a further deceleration in China’s military spending, thus increasing such pressures as budgetary belts tighten. Challenges to Xi’s Leadership Xi Jinping’s efforts to address economic challenges could fail, unleashing consequences that extend well beyond China’s economic health. For example, an **economic collapse** could give rise to a Vladimir **Putin–like redemption figure** in China. Xi’s approach of centralizing authority over a diverse, complex, and massive social, political, and economic system is a **recipe for brittleness**. Rather than designing a resilient, decentralized governance structure that can gracefully cope with localized failures at particular nodes in a network, a highly centralized architecture **risks catastrophic**, **system-level failure**. Although centralized authority offers the tantalizing chimera of stronger control from the center, it also puts all the responsibility squarely on Xi’s shoulders. With China’s ascension to great power status, the consequences of internecine domestic political battles are increasingly playing out on the world stage. The international significance of China’s domestic politics is a new paradigm for the Chinese leadership, and one can expect an adjustment period during which the outcome of what had previously been relatively insulated domestic political frictions will likely generate **unintended international repercussions**. Such dynamics will influence Chinese foreign policy and security behavior. Domestic arguments over ideology, bureaucratic power struggles, and strategic direction could all have **ripple effects abroad**. Many of China’s party heavyweights still employ a narrow and exclusively domestic political calculus. Such behavior increases the possibility of international implications that are not fully anticipated, **raising the risks** of **strategic miscalculation** on the world stage. For example, the factional power struggles that animated the Cultural Revolution were largely driven by domestic concerns, yet manifested themselves in Chinese foreign policy for more than a decade. During this period, China was not the world’s second largest economy and, for much of this time, did not even have formal representation at the United Nations. If today’s globally interconnected China became engulfed in similar domestic chaos, the effects would be felt worldwide.23 Weakened Fetters of Economic Interdependence If China successfully transitioned away from its export-driven growth model toward a consumption-driven economic engine over the next four or five years, it could no longer feel as constrained by economic interdependence. To the extent that such constraints are loosened, the U.S.-China relationship will be more prone to conflict and friction.24 While China has never been the archetypal liberal economic power bent on benign integration with the global economy, its export-driven growth model produced a strong strategic preference for stability. Although past behavior is not necessarily indicative of future strategic calculus, China’s “economic circuit breaker” logic seems to have held its most aggressive nationalism below the threshold of war since 1979. A China that is both comparatively strong and less dependent on the global economy would be a novel development in modern geopolitics. As China changes the composition of its international economic linkages, global integration could place fewer constraints on it. Whereas China has been highly reliant on the import of raw materials and semifinished goods for reexport, a consumption-driven China could have a different international trade profile. China could still rely on imported goods, but their centrality to the country’s overall economic growth would be altered. Imports of luxury goods, consumer products, international brands, and services may not exert a significant constraining influence, since loss of access to such items may not be seen as strategically vital. If these flows were interrupted or jeopardized, the result would be more akin to an inconvenience than a strategic setback for China’s rise. That said, China is likely to continue to highly depend on imported oil even if the economic end to which that energy resource is directed shifts away from industrial and export production toward domestic consumption.

#### **US–China war goes nuclear – crisis mis-management ensures conventional escalation - extinction**

Kulacki 20 [Dr. Gregory Kulacki focuses on cross-cultural communication between the United States and China on nuclear and space arms control and is the China Project Manager for the Global Security Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists, 2020. Would China Use Nuclear Weapons First In A War With The United States?, Thediplomat.com, https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/would-china-use-nuclear-weapons-first-in-a-war-with-the-united-states/] srey

Admiral Charles A. Richard, the head of the U.S. Strategic Command, recently told the Senate Armed Service Committee he “could drive a truck” through the holes in China’s no first use policy. But when Senator John Hawley (R-MO) asked him why he said that, Commander Richard backtracked, described China’s policy as “very opaque” and said his assessment was based on “very little” information. That’s surprising. **China** has been exceptionally **clear** **about** its **intentions** **on** the possible **first** **use** **of** **nuclear** **weapons**. On the day of its first nuclear test on October 16, 1964, China declared it “will never at any time or under any circumstances be the first to use nuclear weapons.” That **unambiguous** **statement** **has** **been** a **cornerstone** **of** **Chinese** **nuclear** **weapons** policy for 56 years and has been repeated frequently in authoritative Chinese publications for domestic and international audiences, including a highly classified training manual for the operators of China’s nuclear forces. Richard should know about those publications, particularly the training manual. A U.S. Department of Defense translation has been circulating within the U.S. nuclear weapons policy community for more than a decade. The commander’s comments to the committee indicate a familiarity with the most controversial section of the manual, which, in the eyes of some U.S. analysts, indicates there may be some circumstances where **China** **would** **use** **nuclear** **weapons** **first** **in** a **war** **with** **the** **U**nited **S**tates. This U.S. misperception is understandable, especially given the difficulties the Defense Department encountered translating the text into English. The language, carefully considered in the context of the entire book, articulates a strong reaffirmation of China’s no first use policy. But it also reveals **Chinese** military planners are **struggling** **with** **crisis** **management** **and** **considering** **steps** **that** could **create** **ambiguity** **with** **disastrous** **consequences**. Towards the end of the 405-page text on the operations of China’s strategic rocket forces, in a chapter entitled, “Second Artillery Deterrence Operations,” the authors explain what China’s nuclear forces train to do if **“**a strong military power possessing nuclear‐armed missiles and an absolute advantage in high‐tech conventional weapons is carrying out intense and continuous attacks against our major strategic targets and we have no good military strategy to resist the enemy.**”** The military power they’re talking about is the United States. The authors indicate China’s nuclear missile forces train to take specific steps, including increasing readiness and conducting launch exercises, to “dissuade the continuation of the strong enemy’s conventional attacks.” The manual refers to these steps as an “adjustment” to China’s nuclear policy and a “lowering” of China’s threshold for brandishing its nuclear forces. Chinese leaders would only take these steps in extreme circumstances. The text highlights several triggers such as U.S. conventional bombing of China’s nuclear and hydroelectric power plants, heavy conventional bombing of large cities like Beijing and Shanghai, or other acts of **conventional** **warfare** **that** “**seriously** **threatened**” the “safety and **survival**” of the nation. U.S. Misunderstanding Richard seems to believe this planned adjustment in China’s nuclear posture means China is **preparing** **to** **use** **nuclear** **weapons** first under these circumstances. He told Hawley that there are a “number of situations where they may conclude that first use has occurred that do not meet our definition of first use.” The head of the U.S. Strategic Command appears to assume, as do other U.S. analysts, that the **Chinese** would **interpret** **these** types of U.S. conventional **attacks** **as** **equivalent** **to** a **U.S. first use** **of** **nuclear** **weapons** against China. But that’s not what the text says. “Lowering the threshold” refers to China putting its nuclear weapons on alert — it does not indicate Chinese leaders might lower their threshold for deciding to use nuclear weapons in a crisis. Nor does the text indicate Chinese nuclear forces are training to launch nuclear weapons first in a war with the United States. China, unlike the United States, keeps its nuclear forces off-alert. Its warheads are not mated to its missiles. China’s nuclear-armed submarines are not continuously at sea on armed patrols. The manual describes how China’s nuclear warheads and the missiles that deliver them are controlled by two separate chains of command. Chinese missileers train to bring them together and launch them after China has been attacked with nuclear weapons. All of these behaviors are consistent with a no first use policy. The “adjustment” Chinese nuclear forces are preparing to make if the United States is bombing China with impunity is to place China’s nuclear forces in a state of readiness similar to the state the nuclear forces of the United States are in all the time. This step is intended not only to end the bombing, but also to convince U.S. decision-makers they cannot expect to destroy China’s nuclear retaliatory capability if the crisis escalates. Chinese Miscalculation Unfortunately, alerting Chinese nuclear forces at such a moment could have terrifying consequences. Given the relatively small size of China’s nuclear force, a U.S. president might be tempted to try to limit the possible damage from a Chinese nuclear attack by destroying as many of China’s nuclear weapons as possible before they’re launched, especially if the head of the U.S. Strategic Command told the president China was preparing to strike first. One study concluded that if the United States used nuclear weapons to attempt to knock out a small fraction of the Chinese ICBMs that could reach the United States it may kill tens of millions of Chinese civilians. The authors of the text assume alerting China’s nuclear forces would “create a great shock in the enemy’s psyche.” That’s a fair assumption. But they also assume this shock could “dissuade the continuation of the strong enemy’s conventional attacks against our major strategic targets.” That’s highly questionable. There is a **substantial** **risk** **the** **U**nited **S**tates **would** **respond** **to** this implicit **Chinese** **threat** **to** **use** **nuclear** **weapons** **by** **escalating**, rather than halting, its **conventional** **attacks**. If China’s nuclear forces were targeted, it would put even greater strain on the operators of China’s nuclear forces. A **slippery** **slope** **to** **nuclear** **war** Chinese military planners are aware that attempting to coerce the United States into halting conventional bombardment by alerting their nuclear forces could fail. They also know it might trigger a nuclear war. But if it does, they are equally clear China won’t be the one to start it. Nuclear attack is often preceded by nuclear coercion. Because of this, in the midst of the process of a high, strong degree of nuclear coercion we should prepare well for a nuclear retaliatory attack. The more complete the preparation, the higher the credibility of nuclear coercion, the easier it is to accomplish the objective of nuclear coercion, and the lower the possibility that the nuclear missile forces will be used in actual fighting. They assume if China demonstrates it is well prepared to retaliate the United States would not risk a damage limitation strike using nuclear weapons. And even if the United States were to attack China’s nuclear forces with conventional weapons, China still would not strike first. In the opening section of the next chapter on “nuclear retaliatory attack operations” the manual instructs, as it does on numerous occasions throughout the entire text: According to our country’s principle, its stand of no first use of nuclear weapons, the Second Artillery will carry out a nuclear missile attack against the enemy’s important strategic targets, according to the combat orders of the Supreme Command, only after the enemy has carried out a nuclear attack against our country. Richard is wrong. There are no holes in China’s no first use policy. But the worse-case planning articulated in this highly classified military text is a significant and deeply troubling departure from China’s traditional thinking about the role of nuclear weapons. Mao Zedong famously called nuclear weapons “a paper tiger.” Many assumed he was being cavalier about the consequences of nuclear war. But what he meant is that they would not be used to fight and win wars. U.S. nuclear threats during the Korean War and the Taiwan Strait Crisis in the 1950s – threats not followed by an actual nuclear attack – validated Mao’s intuition that nuclear weapons were primarily psychological weapons. Chinese leaders decided to acquire nuclear weapons to free their minds from what Mao’s generation called “**nuclear** **blackmail**.” A former director of China’s nuclear weapons laboratories told me China developed them so its leaders could “sit up with a straight spine.” Countering nuclear blackmail – along with compelling other nuclear weapons states to negotiate their elimination – were the only two purposes Chinese nuclear weapons were meant to serve. Contemporary Chinese military planners appear to have added a new purpose: compelling the United States to halt a conventional attack. Even though it only applies in extreme circumstances, it **increases** the **risk** **that** a **war** between the United States and China **will** **end** **in** a nuclear exchange with unpredictable and **catastrophic** **consequences**. Adding this new purpose could also be the first step on a slippery slope to an incremental broadening the role of nuclear weapons in Chinese national security policy. Americans would be a lot safer if we could avoid that. The United States government should applaud China’s no first use policy instead of repeatedly calling it into question. And it would be wise to adopt the same policy for the United States. If both countries declared they would never use nuclear weapons first it may not guarantee they can avoid a nuclear exchange during a military crisis, but it would make one far less likely.

### 3

#### We’ll win that the case straight-turns itself and has no impact. Conceptualize our offense thru the following frame, which will demonstrate that we are the only team with an external impact.

#### The aff persists in a Sinophobic techno-Orientalist imaginary.

Siu and Chun 20 [(Lok, is a cultural anthropologist and Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley; Claire, is a Ph.D. student at the University of California, Berkeley in the Department of Ethnic Studies) “Yellow Peril and Techno-orientalism in the Time of Covid-19: Racialized Contagion, Scientific Espionage, and Techno-Economic Warfare,” October 2020, pg. 425-427] julian

The term yellow peril emerged in the late nineteenth century in response to Japan’s arrival to the geopolitical stage as a formidable military and industrial contender to the Western powers of Europe and the United States.9 The concept was further elaborated and given a tangible racial form through Sax Rohmer’s series of novels and films that provided the early content for the social imaginary of “yellow peril” along with its personification in the character of Dr. Fu Manchu, the iconic supervillain archetype of the Asian “evil criminal genius,” and his cast of minions.10 Strikingly, Dr. Fu Manchu’s characterization as evil, criminal, and genius continues to inform the racial trope of the Asian scientist spy; and more recently, we may add to the list the bioengineer, the CFO, the international graduate student, to name just a few. Moreover, the notion of the non-differentiable “yellow” masses continues to function as a homogenizing and dehumanizing device of Asian racialization, which makes possible the transference of Sinophobia to Asian xenophobia.

In its inherent attempt to construct a racial other, “yellow peril” is more a projection of Western fear than a representation of an Asian object/subject, and in this sense, it may be better understood as a repository of racial affect that can animate a myriad of representational figures, images, and discourses, depending on context. Indeed, the images and discourses of yellow peril have surfaced multiple times throughout the twentieth century, capturing a multitude of ever-shifting perceived threats that range from the danger of military intrusion (i.e., Japanese Americans during WWII), economic competition (i.e., Chinese laborers in the late nineteenth century, Japan in the 1980s), Asian moral and cultural depravity (i.e., non-Christian heathens, Chinese prostitutes, opium smokers), to biological inferiority (i.e., effeminacy, disease carriers). As Colleen Lye observes, “the incipient ‘yellow peril’ refers to a particular combinatory kind of anticolonial [and anti-West] nationalism, in which the union of Japanese technological advance and Chinese numerical mass confronts Western civilization with a potentially unbeatable force.”11 Arguably, the yellow peril of today represents heightened Western anxieties around China’s combined forces of population size, global economic growth, and rapid technological-scientific innovation—all of which emerge from a political system that is considered ideologically oppositional to ours. The current context, we suggest, is best understood through the lens of techno-Orientalism.

When the idea of techno-Orientalism first appeared in David Morley and Kevin Robins’s analysis of why Japan occupied such a threatening position in Western imagination in the late 1980s, techno-Orientalism offered a framework to make sense of the technologically imbued racist stereotypes of Japan/the Japanese that were emerging within the context of Western fears and anxieties around Japan’s ascendancy as a technological global power. They proposed that if technological advancement has been crucial to Western civilizational progress, then Japan’s technological superiority over the West also signals a critical challenge to Western hegemony, including its cultural authority to control representations of the West and its “others.” They claimed that the shifting balance in global power—the West’s loss of technological preeminence—has induced an identity crisis in the West. In response, techno-Orientalism, in which “[idioms of technology] become structured into the discourse of Orientalism,” is produced in large part to discipline Japan and its rise to techno-economic power.12 The United States, for instance, externalized its anxiety into xenophobic projections of Japan as a “culture that is cold, impersonal, and machine-like” in which its people are “sub-human” and “unfeeling aliens.”13 Techno-Orientalism, born from the “Japan Panic,” was effectively consolidated through and around political-economic concerns that frame Japanese and, by extension, Asian techno-capitalist progress as dangerous and dystopian.

Extending Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism,14 techno-Orientalism marks a geo-historical shift where the West no longer has control over the terms that define the East—the “Orient”—as weak, inferior, and subordinate to the West. It marks a shift not only in political-economic power but also in cultural authority. Techno-Orientalism, then, is the expressive vehicle (cultural productions and visual representations) by which Western and Eastern nations articulate their fears, desires, and anxieties that are produced in their competitive struggle to gain technological hegemony through economic trade and scientific innovation.15

Analogous to Japan’s position in the late 1980s, China currently figures into the techno-Orientalist imaginary as a powerful competitor in mass production, a global financial giant, and an aggressive investor in technological, infrastructural, and scientific developments. At the same time, the increasing purchasing power of China provokes American fear of a future global market that is economically driven by Chinese consumptive desires and practices. It is this duality—the domination of both production and consumption across different sectors of the techno-capitalist global economy—that undergirds American anxieties of a sinicized future.16

Further amplifying these anxieties around Chinese techno-economic domination is our imagination of China/the Chinese as the ultimate yellow peril, whose state ideology is oppositional to that of the United States and whose unmatched population size combined with its economic expansion and technological advancements may actually pose a real challenge to U.S. global hegemony. We turn now to examine how the ideology of yellow peril is manifesting in the current context of techno-Orientalism, beginning first with an analysis of the racial trope of “Chinese as contagion” and its connection to anti-Asian aggression.

#### This *falsifies* their surveillance and hegemony impacts.

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Imagine a scenario where a senior American business executive is suddenly detained overseas, at the behest of the Chinese government, which accuses him or her of violating its national security. American and Western media would undoubtedly express outrage and have a field day bashing China.

Yet when the equivalent happened last week with Canada’s detention of Huawei’s chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, on behalf of the United States, questions about the arrest’s legitimacy, or the presence of political motives behind it, were largely absent.

This is not to argue that Meng is completely innocent of breaking American law. But it is important to note that the right to this extraterritorial behavior is asymmetric: only the United States is allowed to wield it “legitimately.” No other country, such as Malaysia, which is trying to recover 1MDB-related money from Goldman Sachs, can dare to act in this way. If other nations tired of U.S. judicial bullying – and there are many – start to retaliate by detaining Americans and citizens of its Western allies, things could become very messy, very quickly.

But Meng’s arrest leads to a different question. Despite protests to the contrary, the United States made a choice to escalate tensions by taking this action. Why?

Some have connected Meng’s arrest to the wider trade tensions between China and the United States. Huawei had already been accused by Western politicians of being a front for the Chinese government, and it has been denied access to Western markets. Given that technology is one of the few areas where the West is still clearly dominant, people have viewed this pressure as strategic economic leverage.

But this misses a more fundamental cause for the worries about China, which now spread beyond trade and economics. Articles about China’s technology and surveillance, such as its “social credit system,” worry about a techno-dystopia, despite similar surveillance being done in Western countries (and by their own tech companies). The United States has expressed concern about the activities of university students from China, while Australian politicians have spent months debating “foreign influence” in their domestic politics: a rather poorly veiled reference to China.

A good case study is Google’s cancelled re-entry into China with a Chinese-compliant version of Google search. This was met with controversy both by Western media and Google’s own employees. This is partly the company’s own fault, due to its loud and public withdrawal from China almost 10 years ago. But similar concessions by Google in smaller countries have not sparked such controversy; only China has. Interestingly, a Chinese version of Google might actually be of value to Chinese people, as local search engines like Baidu have been plagued with scandal, hoaxes, and frauds. But the fear that Western observers have about China means that this benefit could be denied them.

One could argue that this is part and parcel of the usual geopolitical conflict between an incumbent power and a rising one, or that they are merely representations of how the economic relationship between China and the West continues to change.

But the source of suspicion is deeper and often not spoken about. For a long time, “American exceptionalism” (and “Western exceptionalism” in general) has been based on the idea that the American or Western culture, way of life, and values are superior. One could perhaps see racial supremacist undertones in these beliefs as well. After all, these were the same sentiments that permeated the colonial era and were used to explain away or justify the shameful excesses of colonialism.

It is clear that neither the United States nor Europe is mentally prepared for the prospect of another country, especially a non-Western one, being successful, let alone overtaking the West. This is particularly true for China: a country long viewed as backward but which has now succeeded while following its own political, economic, and cultural model. For the first time in two centuries a non-Western nation with a wholly different political system is challenging the West, and this is causing great anguish.

“American exceptionalism” is threatened when a country with different values does well. We first saw this in the 1980s: anti-Japan sentiment was sparked when Japanese companies started to buy American cultural symbols. This worry was reflected in American popular culture, best shown in any depiction of an American future dominated by Japanese companies. But this sentiment was nowhere near the level we can see today regarding China. Even the most liberal of Western media outlets have found it near impossible to portray China in a balanced way, finding it difficult to remove their inherent comfort with deep-rooted Western ideas and framings, and to confront their own prejudices.

The United States and the West by extension cannot accept China’s success on its own terms and this permeates almost all segments of society. This is one issue on which there is bipartisan support in the United States. The fear of China and the rest is real. They cannot just accept that China’s success says nothing about how Western countries should govern themselves. Instead, China’s model must be proven incorrect, by ignoring its successes in poverty reduction, education, and economic development and focusing on other issues.

There are hard lessons and warnings for here for developing countries, especially large ones finding their rightful place in the community of nations. People assume that the rise of other large developing nations, such as India, Indonesia, or Nigeria, will not be as disruptive as China’s, perhaps due to the belief that they would “balance” China or would not threaten to disrupt the international order. But this betrays a Western need to oppose China at all costs. Other countries need to be aware that they might be next if they begin to demand a say in world affairs. A rising India could be next.

If the roots of American-Chinese tensions come from something other than just geopolitics or economics, then the ascent of these large developing countries may not be as smooth as they hope. This would be due to the Western, U.S.-led opposition to the “rise of the others,” something the world has not seen in over two centuries. It is this that could well define and shape geopolitics in the 21st century. Denying that this sentiment exists and drives foreign policy would be to play into the hands of those who wish to preserve a Western world order at all costs.

One question many Americans asked themselves in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks was “Why do they hate us?” One wonders if people in China are asking themselves the same thing. They may not like the answer they get back.

#### The alternative is assemblage thinking.

Acuto and Curtis 14 – Michele Acuto is Senior Lecturer in Global Networks and Diplomacy in the Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy (STEaPP) at University College London, and Fellow in the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society at the University of Oxford, Simon Curtis is Lecturer in International Politics at the University of East Anglia, 2014 (*Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, pgs. 6-15, Accessed via USC Libraries)

Assemblage theory is driven in large part by dissatisfaction with the dominant ontologies that have characterized social theory, including international theory. One of the defining characteristics of mainstream approaches to IR has been state-centrism. Assemblage theory’s most obvious promise is that it rules out such reification: it seeks to replace such abstractions with concrete histories of the processes by which entities are formed and made to endure. Something like ‘the state’ can only be talked about in terms of the heterogeneous elements that comprise specific historically situated states, and the processes and mechanisms that provide it with the emergent properties and capacities of state- hood. The same holds true for ‘capitalism’ the ‘city’ or ‘society’ – these categories are too blunt to offer the fine-grained analysis of concrete historical processes and entities that assemblage thinking forces us to focus on. Traditional thinking in IR has, building from the reification of states as units, tended to emphasize simple and relatively closed systems, leading to the familiar assumptions about equilibrium, cyclicality and predictability that we find in the rationalist IR paradigm. In such theories, systems are commonly seen as no more than the sum of their parts – thus ruling out emergent properties. Shifting to the type of complex-systems paradigm that assemblages offer opens up a new theoretical vista, and engages fully with concepts such as emergence, non-linearity, openness, adaptation, feedback and path-dependency (Bousquet and Curtis 2011). Although predictability in complex systems is tightly constrained, the possibilities for analysis of the system’s historical development offer a much richer resource for understanding transitions from one systemic configuration to another. One of the useful results of thinking this way about parts and wholes is that we are left with a ‘flat ontology’ of individuals (Latour 2005). Any assemblage, as a concrete historical individual, has the same ontological status as any other assemblage, regardless of size or scale. Given that IR has moved in the general direction of pluralist conceptions of the international system, this ontology can provide a valuable starting point for the analysis of various social actors, including transnational corporations, institutional networks, epistemic communities, nation-states, cities and terrorist networks, which are often kept separate in theories founded on ontologies that make them incommensurable. In DeLanda’s sketch of the nested formation of different assemblages, larger wholes always emerge from the interaction of heterogeneous parts at a lower level of scale. This process of assemblage takes place repeatedly at various scales, as larger entities emerge from arrays of smaller components: individual persons emerge from a range of sub-personal components, communities emerge from the interaction of individuals, institutions and networks emerge from the interaction of communities, cities emerge from these networks and institutions, and states emerge from networks of cities as well as other networks and institutions. In this way, assemblages become the component parts of other assemblages, and the previously reified notion of society may be viewed as a historically specific assemblage of assemblages, open to transformation. The upward movement of processes of assemblage through these various (always provisional) wholes should not lead us to discount the causal power of ‘structures’. Although assemblage theory offers a bottom-up perspective, it also contains an account of emergent top-down causality – the ability of entities at larger scales to react back on the parts that comprise them. As DeLanda (2010: 12) makes clear, ‘once a larger scale assemblage is in place, it immediately starts acting as a source of limitations and resources for its components’. This bears similarity to the conception of structuration in Anthony Giddens’s work (1984) or morphogenesis in Margaret Archer’s work (1995), but here it is the concept of emergent capabilities that explains the structuring capacities of heterogeneous social entities. Sequence and temporality become vital: assemblages are born into a pre-existing configuration of other assemblages – so although theoretically we are asked to follow the upward movement of processes of assemblage, social reality is actually inherently non-linear. Assemblage thinking is thus comfortable with modelling structures while seeking to undermine structuralism. It is also important to note that an assemblage approach to agency asks important questions about where agency is to be found. When we talk about the agency of an assemblage of heterogeneous social and material elements we deal with a form of agency that is both emergent and distributed across the entire assemblage (Dittmer 2013). As Nick Srnicek argues here, in his consideration of the cognitive assemblages developing around climate science or financial markets, it is the entire assemblage that acts – and these are assemblages that include in their components not just individual persons and groups and their knowledge, but also the technological tools and measuring instruments that have been developed to allow modelling and intervention in the market and the climate: data collection tools, computer models, software and data sets. This concept of distributed agency, with its attendant decentring of the human subject of modern liberal thought, and as part of the wider turn to post-anthropocentrism or post-humanism (Cudworth and Hobden 2011), makes some scholars distinctly uncomfortable with the implications of assemblage thought, a view reflected here in the chapter by David Chandler. Analytical tactic Importing the figure of the assemblage into IR can therefore help to further destabilize reified meaning and anthropocentric rationalities, while prompting a reassessment of the ontologies of the discipline. Thinking with assemblages is, however, not just an exercise in developing new theoretical stances on the nature of being. These ontological considerations are foreshadowed, in much assemblage theory, by a variety of applied methods that make this ‘new philosophy of society’ (DeLanda 2010) into a complex of empirical stances too. Assemblage, to put it simply, is as much a toolkit of analytical tactics as it is a set of ontological assumptions. If assemblage views tend to depict a more heterogeneous (i.e. contingently socio-technical, where ‘things’ can act too) and indeed ‘messier’ picture of how global affairs unravel, these views also come with several methods on how to unpack this intricate picture of society. As Bueger points out in his contribution to this volume, invoking assemblages does not only require us to acquaint ourselves with the ontological stances described above, but it also demands a recognition of a series of empiricist projects that see these worldviews being applied to in-depth analyses. Assemblage is in this sense a method. As noted above, the very genesis of ‘assemblage thinking’ as a modus operandi for the social sciences brings evidence of this way of operating, being itself a composite of complex and diverse ideas coming from political philosophy, sociology and STS, making up for a theory of assemblages that is itself an assemblage of views and methods. Yet, how can we then understand the empirical challenge of thinking with assemblages? For many of those that could be deemed ‘assemblage theorists’ this approach has as much to do with rethinking as it does with unpacking and unveiling. Sassen for instance, as she notes in the following chapter, sees assemblages as ‘an analytic tactic to deal with the abstract and the unseen’. Assemblage, as an empirical approach, calls upon us to confront unproblematic categories such as those of ‘the state’ or ‘the city’ or routinized realities like those of global finance, and pull them apart into the components of their assembled wholes. In human geography, where a similar debate on the value of thinking with assemblages has occupied the pages of key journals, this approach has mostly emerged as a ‘mode of response’ to perceived limitations of current ways of geographical thinking, both in the sense of assemblage as ‘critique’ and of assemblage as ‘orientation’ (McFarlane and Anderson 2011; Acuto 2011). Assemblage thinking, several contemporary human geographers argue, is a response to tensions within relational thought itself (Anderson et al. 2012; Dittmer 2013). It allows us to think through processes of composition and decomposition, and as such is attractive to critical geographers precisely because it allows us to see how different spatial forms, processes and orders hold together. Drawing on the heritage of Deleuzian and Foucauldian thinking, assemblage thinking tends to push for the problematization of the ordinary and the deconstruction of wholes and totalities, such as the ‘global’ into contingent realities where society is, even if temporarily, stabilized in networks, institutions and routines. Assemblage becomes a way of investigating the social, not just a philosophical stance on it. For instance, by depicting assemblage thinking as a ‘style of structuration’, Jane Bennett demanded greater attention to how ‘throbbing confederations’ of humans and ‘vibrant materials’ are ‘able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within’ (2010: 23). Representing both the descriptor of the relation between the parts of ‘a volatile but somewhat functional whole’ and at the same time the analytical principle by which we can make sense of such a ‘confederated’ complex, assemblages are in Bennett’s case mobilized to tell the story of how socio-technical networks come together, persist and fail. Somewhat similarly to Latour and Callon’s version of Actor-Network Theory, and somewhat more systematically than DeLanda’s more philosophical ruminations on society, assembling and disassembling is what the social theorist does to convey the stabilities and fluidities of the world one is trying to describe. In this sense, the analytics of assemblage are embedded in an account of immanence and change. As a modus operandi for the social scientist, assemblage thinking demands substantial tolerance for the fluidity of society. Yet, as a challenge to many existing accounts of social processes, assemblage thinking is not free from methodological critiques. Many see inherent analytical dangers of thinking with assemblages. As a method for unpacking categories, this approach can easily fall prey of a self-reinforcing process of endless deconstruction, never reaching what is from the start an impossible end: assemblages like ‘the state’, once opened, bear the risk of unveiling other ‘smaller’ totalities which, in their turn, might also hold internal realities in need of disentanglement, eventually resulting in the question of where to stop assembling and disassembling, and how. This kind of critique embodies a number of dissatisfactions with assemblage thinking’s inherent risk of privileging description over prescription, undisciplined narrative versus theoretical research aimed at highlighting predictable realities, or even, as Chandler suggests in his chapter in this volume, risks the ‘erasure’ of human aspirations in a quintessentially assembled world. Actor-Network-Theory has often been criticized for these potential shortcomings, and other assemblage strands are equally vulnerable to such critiques. Yet, rather than acknowledging these as unsolvable confrontations, or providing some overarching solutions to such quandaries, we have decided to allow for the variety of approaches represented in these pages to find their own voice amidst the limits of theorizing with assemblages. Here we seek to turn these contrasts into a signifier of an important and yet often overlooked element of this line of thinking: the politics of assembling. The politics of assembly Assemblage thinking emerges then as a potentially very productive tool for unpacking and recasting the boundaries of the ‘political’ and the ‘international’. Nevertheless, as noted above, assemblage as a theoretical orientation has been raising more than a few proverbial eyebrows in social theory. This criticism, however, is not simply a mirror of academic quarrels: along with methodological underpinnings of ‘thinking with assemblages’ also comes normative stances and political orientations. What does assemblage mean politically? It seems crucial to us here, and to many authors later, to point out how assembling and reassembling politics also implies a politics of assembling, and a politics of the assemblies that this worldview convenes in its tales. For instance, in his contribution to the volume, Mark Salter reminds us that theorists working from this particular worldview tend to become ‘partisan[s] for assemblage theory’ while potentially forgetting that the manner of intervention the intellectual deploys to make sense of the world is after all a ‘deeply political’ affair in itself – a view espoused by many of the contributors, as in Mike Williams and Rita Abrahamsen’s case. There are indeed, as Guillaume notes in his chapter, deep conceptual politics behind the choices of assemblage thinking. As the chapters in Part 1 of the volume highlight, normative choices abound in the variety of ontological takes towards assemblages. Some threads persist across the landscape of ‘assemblages’, but analytical and theoretical differences also remain an indisputable feature of this mode of thinking. Not least, then, assemblage thinking is by default characterized by an internal confrontation amongst ways of assembling and, as we would like to suggest here, potentially diverse political orientations that reverberate through the various ‘generations’ of assemblage theorists. Working in the shadow of Deleuze and Guattari, as for instance in DeLanda’s case, bears not just diverse empirical connotations but also normative flavours: from those entrenched in the mix of Foucauldian precepts such as Stephen Collier and Aihwa Ong to the Bourdieusian solution to the challenges of grounding assemblage typical of Williams and Abrahamsen. So, then, can we even speak of an ‘assemblage theory’ as a coherent system of ideas intended to explain specific realities? The jury on this matter is still very much out. DeLanda’s contributions have gone a long way in terms of elaborating a philosophical position for assemblage thinking, but, as noted in the previous two sections, ontologies and epistemologies of this lineage only bear similarities, not conformity. If anything, many chapters in this volume seem to hint at the opposite, painting a view of assemblages as tactics, sensibilities, ontological stances or metanarrative tools rather than pointing at assemblage as an -ism in an IR sense. Amidst this variety, where some consistency persists, politics are certainly not tempered down. For example, assemblages, in their heterogeneity and flattening tendencies, necessarily push towards further pluralism in the accounts and critiques of the international. Additionally, the commitment to critique found in assemblage work is itself a political orientation. Sassen’s project of ‘making visible’ that which has been obscured by the master categories of modern thought seems to be driven by a desire to know the origins of dominant assemblages (‘city’, ‘state’ and ‘finance’), and what holds them in place, so that we might have a firmer basis for critique of those forms. In this sense it is certainly worth noting that Deleuze held political commitments to anti-hierarchical forms of political and social assemblage, a stance catalysed by the events of May 1968 in France, and the social movements that they gave birth to. We have already described how Deleuze opposed his ‘rhizomatic’ philosophy to the traditional Western cannon. Deleuzian thought developed, as all philosophical systems must, within a particular political context, and he himself had political commitments to which his radical philosophy was a contribution. Deleuze and Guattari wrote, then, in the context of leftist struggles, while, at the same time, seeking to break with the dialectical elements of the philosophical system that inspired Marx. This commitment is even more apparent in the biography of his sometimes collaborator Felix Guattari, who was a militant member of the leftist movement, with an interest in novel forms of communist practice. Both were attracted to the autonomist Marxism of which Italy was a hotbed in the 1960s (Anderson et al. 2012: 178). The bottom-up self-organizing dynamics of Autonomism finds its scientific echo in the complexity concepts that Deleuze was influenced by. Yet, does this mean that thinking with assemblages levels the playing field for more egalitarian political stances? Does it help us deconstruct and advocate against established socio-political hierarchies and economic injustice as well as it might do with macro-categories and established notions? It seems to us that, for all its limits and loose boundaries, assemblage is charged with critical and political possibilities. For example, the question of agency within and of assemblages might inevitably raise new questions about the nature of power, but this does not mean that the inner analytical quandaries of assembling disappear. The materialist ontology (or at least an ontology including a form of materialism) that foregrounds many assemblage stances, and the distributive notions of agency that, from Latour to DeLanda, chart influence and mutual constitution in the heterogeneous world depicted by assemblage thinkers, necessarily leads to key metatheoretical challenges. As Jane Bennett has observed in her work, analytical challenges might ultimately also be a matter of prior ‘political judgments’ by the intellectual: should we acknowledge the distributed quality of agency in order to address the power of human-nonhuman assemblages and to resist a politics of blame? Or should we persist with a strategic understatement of material agency in the hope of enhancing the accountability of specific humans? (Bennett, 2010: 38) Different normative propensities on this matter, even in the presence of similar (and by all means not always equal) ontological and empirical stances, do eventually lead to a diversification in the genus of assemblage theorists and assemblages accounts. If this is true of social theory, a normatively charged realm such as that of IR theory is no less prone to look into the political underpinnings of what it means, practically not just theoretically, to think with assemblages. As with the challenge of analytics, the recent experience of human geography might be instructive here. Discussing the implications of assemblages on socio-spatial analysis, Anderson et al. (2012) have stumbled upon the very same challenges raised by Bennett’s concerns. As they note, the intellectual’s ethical or political obligations to the world under scrutiny, whether in the ‘contained’ assemblages of a suburban neighbourhood or in the diffused realities of global finance, do eventually demand that ‘we cut and specify causality within assemblages in order to attribute responsibility and blame’ (Ibid.: 186). Bennett (2010: ix), herself, sees the normative implications of assemblage thinking, with its recovery of the dignity of material objects, as pushing towards a more ecological sensibility, and away from ‘the image of dead or thoroughly instrumentalized matter [which] feeds human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption’.

## Case

### 1NC – Case Toplevel

#### Chinese space industry is overwhelmingly dominated by the government—private enterprises cannot exist independently under domestic law

Nie 12-24 (Mingyan Nie, JD; Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics Department of Law; 12-24-2021; "The Growth of China’s Non-governmental Space Sector in the Context of Government Support for Public-Private Partnerships: An Assessment of Major Legal Challenges";S*pace Policy* (2021) https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spacepol.2021.101461., accessed 1-14-2022; JPark)

* PPPs = public-private partnerships
* Strict and opaque governmental regulation basically makes it impossible for private entities to act independently and are subsumed by the state
* Laws are deliberately unclear to maximize state control – e.g., classifying launch vehicles as weapons

In light of China’s recent policies and other measures, it is evident that decision-makers in the space industry intend to privatize space activities to meet urgent market demands and social goals, including promoting PPPs.19 However, the military dominates the Chinese space industry, and the government controls nearly all civil space activities, while state-owned companies conduct programs related to space exploration. These dynamics have led to an unclear administration of space activities that has created an unstable environment for the growth of private enterprises. In addition, the reality of military-dominated space activities has engendered harsh regulations for all non-governmental affairs related to space exploration. 3.1. Complex administration of space activities and the non-governmental participation The role of the military and the government in the space field has resulted in a complicated framework for governing space activities in China. SASTIND, which was established under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the PRC (MIIT), is the main administrative body under the State Council tasked with coordinating and managing the country’s space activities20. The impact of China’s military on space activities is extremely relevant. The role of the Equipment Development Department (EDD), which belongs to the People’s Republic of China Central Military Commission,21 is also notable. The EDD is qualified to conduct space projects directly. For instance, the human spaceflight program and the launching infrastructure, including launching sites and the hub of China’s telemetry, tracking, and control network, are mainly operated by the EDD. Furthermore, the EDD collaborates with SASTIND to establish regulations, monitor their implementation, allocate research funds, and determine the qualification of private entities to enter the space industry [[17], p.13]. This complicated and opaque organizational structure is detrimental to the participation of private actors in space-related activities in China. Space facilities, including launching sites, are controlled by the military that does not distinguish the nature of space activities. Thus, private enterprises with a sole focus on developing commercial space activities will have to fulfill the same high-level military requirements as the government. Additionally, the co-existence of more than one administrative body with similar supervision functions impedes non-governmental enterprises’ involvement in space activities [[31], pp. 4–5]. 3.2. Strict supervision of non-governmental entry into the space field: focusing on launch activities and satellite development In contrast to the United States, which promotes private entities to comprehensively participate in numerous space areas through PPPs [5], existing Chinese PPP policies related to space activities stress the domains of space science research, the launching of commercial satellites, the manufacture and operation of satellites, space infrastructure construction, and so on.22 The newly defined scope of the new type of infrastructure in China contains satellite internet, which motivates the creation of PPPs in space programs, and demands the growth of private participants to succeed in doing so. The fields of most relevance to this are launching activities and satellite development (including micro-satellite). Furthermore, emerging non-governmental space corporations are mainly interested in developing their launching and satellite manufacturing capacities (including micro-satellites) [32]. This is consistent with the policy requirements and constitutes a good starting point for conducting space PPPs and will, in turn, contribute to the growth of the commercial space industry. However, the administration of the rules of these areas is unfavorable for the non-governmental sector. Concerning launch activities, in June 2019, SASTIND and EDD announced the ‘Notice on Promoting the Orderly Development of Commercial Launch Vehicles’ (2019 Notice) [33]. Commercial launch activities are divided into phases of research and development, manufacturing, and launching. For non-governmental entities that intend to get involved in any of these phases, authorization is required. However, conditions and other requirements for obtaining such permissions are unfavorable. For example, launch vehicles are identified as a weapon. Given that SASTIND provides authorization for the research, development, and manufacture of weapons, any related technology must comply with the ‘Regulation on the Administration of Licenses for Scientific Research and Production of Weapons and Equipment’23 and the ‘Measures for the Implementation of the License for Scientific Research and Production of Weapons and Equipment’.24 Furthermore, the 2019 Notice states that every applicant must receive support from the provincial government where its enterprise is registered. The involved provincial government must inform SASTIND by issuing a letter to express their support and elaborate supervision measures to ensure that relevant enterprises have conducted the authorized space activities in compliance with confidentiality, safety, security, and quality standards. Thus, before conducting authorized operations, a notification to SASTIND and the EDD is required. The requirements stipulated in the 2019 Notice are unfavorable to private entities starting space activities for many reasons. First, the 2019 Notice refers the notification process to the EDD. However, no further details are available on this procedure. Moreover, the specific functions of the EDD in this process are not explained. Second, the relevant provincial government’s letter is a prerequisite for applying to receive authorization. Also, the provincial government’s supervision measures are the primary basis for conducting permitted activities. However, how the applicants obtain the provincial government’s approval letter is unclear. Third, whether the supervision measures elaborated by the relevant provincial government are only applicable to the specific applicant or equally applicable to similar subsequent applicants is not addressed [[31], pp. 5–6]. In the context of conducting PPPs, provincial governments can act as the ‘public’ party, so if no specifics are clarified, it is difficult to ensure a fair legal environment for establishing PPPs in space, which may breed corruption. The launching phase is also strictly administrated. This phase mandates that the application of launching permits should generally be consistent with the ‘Interim Measures on the Administration of Permits for Civil Space Launch Project’, which was released in2002.25 However, an extra review process by the EDD has been added as the pre-condition for approving the permit. Furthermore, any launching activity should be carried out on officially authorized launching sites or testing grounds, administrated and controlled by the military department, and the rules thereof should be observed. When referring to the development of satellites, no regulations have been adopted thus far. Non-governmental enterprises that intend to invest in this field have to meet the requirements of national security safeguards. Accordingly, licenses are necessary. Since the government and military have historically been responsible for the research and manufacture of satellites, no specific rules applicable to the private sector can be found in this field. In 2008, the Aerospace Dongfanghong Development Ltd., Shenzhen (ADD Ltd.), a state-owned corporation, was established.26 This corporation focuses on micro-satellite development. It is the first Chinese company that received authorization to research and develop micro-satellites [35]. Before initiating micro-satellite development programs, this corporation established the ‘certified weapon and equipment quality management system’. Therefore, the corporation was qualified ‘as a weapon and equipment bearer’ and obtained permission to conduct weapon and equipment research and product and met the requirements of acting as a so-called ‘national secondary class confidential qualified corporation’.27 As a result, the ADD Ltd. example offers valuable insights into non-governmental entities that want to get involved in satellite development, especially micro-satellites, as part of the recent interest in building satellite-based interest as a new type of infrastructure. However, these conditions or qualifications are inconsistent with the fundamental policies of facilitating private growth in space-related activities. Specific rules must be formulated to remove or simplify the excessive obstacles that impede private participation in satellite development, including the development of micro-satellites and the implementation of relevant policies. Concerning the procedural requirements for satellites manufacturing, non-governmental enterprises have to get approval from the NDRC. These firms must submit application documents, including the files issued by the provincial development and reform commission, the application report, and the confidential agreement to begin work [36]. Similar to the launch permit application, these application requirements set forth by the NDRC allow for the provincial departments to determine the details of the process, creating an unstable legal environment for potential applicants. In brief, the inevitable growth of the private sector in space is the main reason for creating PPPs in space exploration. Yet, the current dominant role of the military in China’s space industry results in a complex administrative framework and strict requirements for those non-governmental entities willing to undertake space activities. This constrains the development of the private space sector that remains in an underdeveloped stage to date. In addition, ambiguous rules concerning the power of the relevant provincial departments in authorizing launching activities and satellite development make creating and effective implementation of space PPPs more difficult. However, given the growing importance of the private sector in the implementation of the PPP policies regarding space, the existing rules and regulations should be improved.

#### Their author also admits funding issues make Chinese commercial space exploration extremely difficult

1AC Patel 21 — (Neel V. Patel, Neel is the space reporter for MIT Technology Review, and he writes The Airlock newsletter. Before joining, he worked as a freelance science and technology journalist, contributing stories to Popular Science, The Daily Beast, Slate, Wired, the Verge, and elsewhere. Prior to that, he was an associate editor for Inverse, where he grew and led the website’s space coverage., “China’s surging private space industry is out to challenge the US“, MIT Technology Review, 1-21-2021, Available Online at https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/01/21/1016513/china-private-commercial-space-industry-dominance, accessed 1-11-2022, HKR-AR) recut DebateDrills EE

Other challenges

None of these new companies are yet profitable, and it will be quite some time before they are. “There isn’t any sign of indication that this industry will flop,” says Hines. “But many experts do think a lot of these companies will go out of business.” Apart from the challenge of attracting customers outside China, many companies are still trying to figure out who exactly their customers ought to be.

American companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin had billionaire founders ready to burn cash to take on large risks, push past big failures, and finally get off the ground. And while a Chinese billionaire [entered the industry last year,](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-03/geely-to-make-satellites-as-billionaire-li-follows-musk-to-space?sref=E9Urfma4)“there is no Chinese Elon Musk to push these riskier ventures forward,” says Hines. It’s also unclear whether Chinese companies, even those supported by wealthy backers, will have that appetite for risk.

#### Curcio–

#### 1] The first half of their evidence is about how China has always been independent in space. The one paragraph that is about buying products and export markets does not explain why that spills up to a full out partnership, much less an alliance. This alone just doesn’t mean anything because Russia exports to other States regardless of “alliance-status”

Their paragraph:

More Russian companies are looking to China to buy products. Historically these companies have bought material from Europe, but they have recently turned more to China because of how weak the Russian ruble is, making imports more expensive. At the same time, Chinese companies are looking to Russia as an export market as well as to Russia and former Soviet states as investment opportunities. There is synergy, for example, between a Chinese rocket company that sees a relatively cheap Ukrainian rocket company with specific technology that it wants and a Ukrainian company that has all the technology, intellectual property, and “know-how,” but does not have that much money.

### Sino-Russia

#### Bowman and Thompson –

#### Unsure why the plan solves since their ev is only about anti-satellite weapons and says that ground-based weapons are important.

#### It’s also just a PSA about China and Russia pushing the United States to agree to faulty treaties – that still happens post plan, probably more, because China would want to close the US out of cheap avenues to space weaponry.

#### No Russia-China alliance AND the US doesn’t impact it.

Carafano 19 — (James Jay Carafano is Vice President for Foreign and Defense Policy at the Heritage Foundation, 8-5-2019, "Why the China-Russia Alliance Won't Last," National Interest, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556>

So, now everybody wants to be Bismarck. They see themselves shaping history by artfully moving big pieces on the geostrategic chessboard. And one gambit they just can’t resist is moving to snip the growing bonds of Sino-Russian cooperation. My advice to them: Just stop. Fears of an allied China and Russia running amok around the world are overblown. Indeed, there is so much friction between these “friends,” any attempt to team up would likely give both countries heat [rash](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556). Siren’s Cat Call Here’s the lame narrative that’s animating the Bismarck wannabes: The United States is pushing back against Moscow and pressing Beijing. This is driving Moscow and Beijing closer together. Beijing and Moscow will then gang-up on the United States. To prevent this, the United States should make nice with Moscow (undermining the incipient Sino-Russian détente) and then focus on beating back against China. This is an idea that should be dumped into the dustbin before it has any [history](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556). Yes, China and Russia are going to work together to some degree. They have important things in common. For example, both are unaccountable authoritarian regimes that share the Eurasian continent. Other indicators of compatibility: they like doing business with each other, and both like to make up their own rules. Heck, they don’t even have to pretend the liberal world [order](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556) is a speed-bump in their joint ventures. Both happily engage with the world’s most odious regimes, from Syria to Venezuela. And, of course, neither has any compunction about playing dirty when it serves their interests. They already play off of each other to frustrate foreign-policy initiatives from Washington. For example, if the United States pressures Russia to vote a certain way on a measure before the UN Security Council, Russia will often don the white hat and vote as we desire, knowing that Beijing will veto the measure for them. Similarly, if the United States leans on Beijing stop giving North Korea some form of aid and comfort, Beijing can go along with the request, knowing that Moscow will pick up the baton for them. What the neo-Bismarcks need to ask themselves is: Why would Russia or China ever consider giving up these practices? Why would they make the ongoing great power competition easier for the United States? That makes no sense. That is not in their self-interest. Any notion that the United States could somehow seduce Russian president Vladimir Putin from playing house with Beijing is fanciful. Putin doesn’t do something for nothing; his price would be quite high. He could demand a free hand in Ukraine, or lifting sanctions, or squelching opposition to Nordstream II, or giving Russia free rein in the Middle East. Any of these “deals” would greatly compromise American interests. Why would we do that? And what, exactly, is Putin going to deliver in return? What leverage does Russia have on Beijing? The answer is not near enough to justify any of these concessions. On the other hand, what leverage would a Russia-China alliance have on the United States? They wouldn’t jointly threaten Washington with military action. A central element of both their strategies is that they [want to win](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556) against the United States “without fighting.” Moscow might be happy if the United States got distracted in a military mix-up with China. Conversely, Beijing could okay with the Americans have an armed confrontation with the Russians. But, neither of them will be volunteering to go first anytime soon.

Even if they linked arms to threaten the United States in tandem, the pain would not be worth the gain. As long as America maintains [a credible global](https://www.heritage.org/military-strength/download-the-2019-index) and strategic deterrent, a Sino-Russian military one-two punch is pretty much checkmated. Peace through strength really works. If direct military confrontation is out of bounds, then what can Beijing and Moscow do using economic, political, and diplomatic power or tools of hybrid warfare? The answer to that question is easy: exactly what they are already doing. We have plenty of evidence of on-going political warfare aimed at the United States, its friends, allies, and interests. Some of these activities are conducted in tandem; some are instances of copy-catism; and some are independent and original. The political warfare takes many forms—ranging from [corrosive economic behavior](https://www.cipe.org/events/corrosive-capitals-threat-to-democracy-how-china-and-russia-undermine-rule-of-law-through-foreign-investment-and-development-strategies/) to [aggressive diplomacy](https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Sharp-Power-Rising-Authoritarian-Influence-Full-Report.pdf) to [military expansionism](https://www.heritage.org/military-strength/assessing-threats-us-vital-interests/asia) and [more](https://www.iri.org/resource/new-report-exposes-chinas-malign-influence-and-corrosion-democracy-worldwide). All these malicious efforts are a problem. What they don’t add up to is an existential threat to vital U.S. interests. In other words, we can handle this without sucking up to Putin and undermining our own interests. In fact, we already have a [national-security strategy](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf) that adequately addresses these concerns. One more thing inhibiting a Sino-Russian hookup. Russian and Chinese power is largely asymmetrical. They have very different strengths and weaknesses. In coordinating their malicious activities against the United States, they don’t line out very well. China, for example, can’t really do anything substantive to help Russia in Syria. Putin doesn’t have much to offer in the South China Seas or in brokering a U.S.-China trade agreement. **Strategic Friction** There are also limits to the Sino-Russia era of good feelings. Other than trying to take America down a notch, their global goals are not well aligned. Indeed, the more they try to cooperate, the more their disparate interests will grate on the relationship. For example, China is meddling more in Central Asia and the Arctic—spaces where Russia was dominant. Moscow has to ask itself: Why is Beijing elbowing in? There is an argument that rather than looking for a strategic partnership, China is just biding its time till Russia implodes, and Beijing steps in and [sweeps](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-china-russia-alliance-wont-last-71556) up the choice pieces. And, as much as Putin likes to tweak Trump about Moscow’s ties with Beijing, it is becoming more apparent to Washington that Russia is ever more the junior partner. Can Putin really continue to play Robin to a Chinese Batman? As for China, they have to ask: What does Robin really bring to the dynamic-duo? **Play the Long Great Power Game** The world doesn’t require a twenty-first century Bismarck. The United States will do better simply by continuing its strategy of pushing back on Russia and China, while letting them know there’s an off-ramp waiting for them if—and only if—they respect U.S. interests. Sure, this makes double duty for Washington. The United States has to mitigate Moscow’s efforts to destabilize Europe, even as it pushes for a free and open Indo-Pacific. But these tasks are not beyond our capabilities—and for us the pain is worth the gain. Rather than try to pry Putin and Xi Jinping apart, Trump should continue to squeeze them from both sides. The natural friction in the Russian and Chinese relationship will prevent them from effectively ganging up on the United States. And it wouldn’t hurt if the United States should find subtle ways to remind them that they would foolish to trust each other too much. The primary interest of both Putin and Xi is to assure the survival of their regimes. The American squeeze play will leave them with little choice but to accept the fact that America is strong, it’s here to stay, and their regimes have to live with it. This is the only kind of global balancing that will bring about stable relationships in the long-term.

### Heg

#### Zero risk of escalation from ASATs

**Pavur and Martinovic 19** [James Pavur and Ivan Martinovic, May 2019, "The Cyber-ASAT: On the Impact of Cyber Weapons in Outer Space," ResearchGate, 11th International Conference on Cyber Conflict: Silent Battle [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334422193\_The\_Cyber-ASAT\_On\_the\_Impact\_of\_Cyber\_Weapons\_in\_Outer\_Space accessed 12/10/21](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334422193_The_Cyber-ASAT_On_the_Impact_of_Cyber_Weapons_in_Outer_Space%20accessed%2012/10/21)]Adam

A. Limited Accessibility

Space is difficult. Over 60 years have passed since the first Sputnik launch and only nine countries (ten including the EU) have orbital launch capabilities. Moreover, a launch programme alone does not guarantee the resources and precision required to operate a meaningful ASAT capability. Given this, one possible reason why space wars have not broken out is simply because only the US has ever had the ability to fight one [21, p. 402], [22, pp. 419–420].

Although launch technology may become cheaper and easier, it is unclear to what extent these advances will be distributed among presently non-spacefaring nations. Limited access to orbit necessarily reduces the scenarios which could plausibly escalate to ASAT usage. Only major conflicts between the handful of states with ‘space club’ membership could be considered possible flashpoints. Even then, the fragility of an attacker’s own space assets creates de-escalatory pressures due to the deterrent effect of retaliation. Since the earliest days of the space race, dominant powers have recognized this dynamic and demonstrated an inclination towards de-escalatory space strategies [23].

B. Attributable Norms

There also exists a long-standing normative framework favouring the peaceful use of space. The effectiveness of this regime, centred around the Outer Space Treaty (OST), is highly contentious and many have pointed out its serious legal and political shortcomings [24]–[26]. Nevertheless, this status quo framework has somehow supported over six decades of relative peace in orbit.

Over these six decades, norms have become deeply ingrained

into the way states describe and perceive space weaponization. This de facto codification was dramatically demonstrated in 2005 when the US found itself on the short end of a 160-1 UN vote after opposing a non-binding resolution on space weaponization. Although states have occasionally pushed the boundaries of these norms, this has typically occurred through incremental legal re-interpretation rather than outright opposition [27]. Even the most notable incidents, such as the 2007-2008 US and Chinese ASAT demonstrations, were couched in rhetoric from both the norm violators and defenders, depicting space as a peaceful global commons [27, p. 56]. Altogether, this suggests that states perceive real costs to breaking this normative tradition and may even moderate their behaviours accordingly.

One further factor supporting this norms regime is the high degree of attributability surrounding ASAT weapons. For kinetic ASAT technology, plausible deniability and stealth are essentially impossible. The literally explosive act of launching a rocket cannot evade detection and, if used offensively, retaliation. This imposes high diplomatic costs on ASAT usage and testing, particularly during peacetime.

C. Environmental Interdependence

A third stabilizing force relates to the orbital debris consequences of ASATs. China’s 2007 ASAT demonstration was the largest debris-generating event in history, as the targeted satellite dissipated into thousands of dangerous debris particles [28, p. 4]. Since debris particles are indiscriminate and unpredictable, they often threaten the attacker’s own space assets [22, p. 420]. This is compounded by Kessler syndrome, a phenomenon whereby orbital debris ‘breeds’ as large pieces of debris collide and disintegrate. As space debris remains in orbit for hundreds of years, the cascade effect of an ASAT attack can constrain the attacker’s long-term use of space [29, pp. 295– 296]. Any state with kinetic ASAT capabilities will likely also operate satellites of its own, and they are necessarily exposed to this collateral damage threat. Space debris thus acts as a strong strategic deterrent to ASAT usage.