**Review of Martha Mejía-Kaiser, *The Geostationary Ring: Practice and Law* (Nijhoff|Brill 2020) ISBN: 978-90-04-41102-9, 482 pp., €160.00/$192.00**

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Abstract

The new book of Marta Mejía-Kaiser published in Brill/ Nijhoff in 2020 can be shortly described as a combination of information and passion. For the author, the interest in space orbits is not new, as in 2010, she drafted and published a proposal of an International Convention in the Removal of Hazardous Space Debris.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The volume opens with a foreword that links ancient Mexican culture (Mexico is the author’s country of origin), to the space age illustrated by traditional pictures, and it then moves on to a detailed investigation of geostationary governance. The scope of the book is both comprehensive and impressive: The first of ten chapters is devoted to the characteristics of the geostationary orbit (GSO), followed by the basic concepts of space law, and by sovereignty claims with respect to GSO (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 focuses on slots and electromagnetic frequencies; space traffic in the GSO is explained in chapter 5. A next group of sections examines the pollution of the GSO (Chapter 6), re-orbiting into graveyard orbits (Chapter 7), as well as on-orbit servicing and removal and recycling of space debris (Chapter 8). The book concludes with the analysis of unauthorized cyber activities (Chapter 9), and a survey of future systems using GSO and their legal framework (Chapter 10). Each chapter is drafted with the goal of explaining to the reader the legal framework of the geostationary orbit and interpretive approaches, and each is supported by comprehensive factual information on the practice connected with the subject. This detailed fact-based analysis is the main strength of this publication.

The key notion of the study is – surprisingly - the “geostationary ring” rather than simply the geostationary orbit (GSO). This term is understood as the geostationary orbit and its adjacent areas (p.2). This broader term allows the author to go further than the spatial limitation of the orbit and analyze a wider interrelated legal framework. Pedagogically, the book begins with the explanation of the physical characteristics of the geostationary orbit, accompanied by numerous explanatory figures, as well the enumeration of its key users. In line with the space law background of the author, the first large analysis explains the basic concepts of international space law applicable to geostationary orbit; specific attention is devoted to the sovereignty claims with respect to this orbit raised by several equatorial states in the 1976 Bogota Declaration.

1. Mejía-Kaiser, Martha. "Removal of hazardous space debris." In *Space Safety Regulations and Standards*, pp. 371-382. Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)