

# **A March to Mars? The Function of Outer Space within US Nationalism in Historical Perspective**



**Lotte Rigter**  
**5594308**

15-06-2020

MA Thesis  
Universiteit Utrecht  
'International Relations in Historical Perspective' – Faculty of Humanities

Supervisor: dr. Eleni Braat  
Word count: 13582

## Abstract

Outer space has become more popular in recent years due to a growth in spacefaring nations, the increasing importance of space-enabled capabilities such as GPS and espionage, and the entrance of private companies seeking touristic spaceflight and colonization of planets, amongst others. The US government under the presidency of Donald Trump has publicly voiced a necessity for new policies, mostly concerning the role of the US in the future of outer space activities and has even committed itself to engage in unilateral space missions. This development is an evident change from past policies, as US political narratives surrounding outer space during the ISS era predominantly encouraged international cooperation. Therefore, in this thesis I analyze the relationship between US nationalism and outer space, answering the question *why* there have been fluctuations in the prominence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism between the 1960s and 2019.

In order to answer the question, I make a comparative analysis of three periods since the development and growth of spacefaring capabilities and strategies in the 1960s, specifically the Cold War space race, the International Space Station era, and recent space exploration and narratives under the Trump administration. Using concepts of nationalism such as Eric Hobsbawm's *Invented Traditions*, the frontier theory, manifest destiny, and the link between technology and national identity, I argue that there is a correlation between the current conflict with China and the resurgence of US nationalism surrounding outer space, similar to the Cold War space race. I conclude that space is used as a symbolic arena during times of symmetrical conflict, used as a means to show and gain national power. As such, spectacular technologies are used to portray a spectacular nation in the face of an equal 'challenger'.

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>Introduction</i> .....  | 4  |
| <i>1. Conceptualizing Nationalism in the United States: from the Western ‘Frontier’ to Outer Space</i> .....                           | 12 |
| <i>2. From Conflict to Cooperation: Comparing the Role of Outer Space in the Cold War to the International Space Station Era</i> ..... | 24 |
| The Space Race: a ‘New Frontier’ for the US.....   | 25 |
| The International Space Station and US Space Exploration Narratives .....  | 29 |
| ‘Challengers’ in the Middle East .....   | 32 |
| <i>3. Space as the Final Frontier? Outer Space Narratives under the Trump administration</i> .....                                     | 36 |
| China as a ‘New Threat’ to the US .....  | 38 |
| US Outer Space Nationalism and China as a Symmetrical ‘Challenger’ .....   | 40 |
| <i>Conclusion</i> .....  | 44 |
| <i>References</i> .....  | 47 |
| <i>Plagiarism Rules Awareness Statement</i> .....  | 54 |

## Introduction

The extraterrestrial has always occupied a special place in the human mind - from Aristotle to George Lucas – but it remained an inaccessible arena until significant technological advancements were made, catalyzed by an interstate conflict otherwise known as the Cold War. The ideological rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union took its form in a space race, with both entities aiming to become the champion of space exploration.<sup>1</sup> Animals and men were consequentially trained and launched into the cosmos, some even setting foot on the moon. A giant leap for mankind it was, as the strategic and symbolic uses of outer space were discovered, eventually turning it into a useful arena to show, and make use of, technological prestige. Political narratives surrounding outer space became increasingly prevalent during the space race, a clear example being the presidential references to space as a ‘frontier’ for the United States to explore and conquer. Such nationalist political narratives decreased after the victorious ending of the Cold War for the US, demonstrated by the successful creation of the International Space Station. This orbital international laboratory and observatory, consisting of US, Canadian, European, Russian, and Japanese space agencies, has been continuously occupied by humans since November 2000.

Notably, the realm of outer space has become more popular in recent years due to a growth in spacefaring nations, the increasing importance of space-enabled capabilities such as GPS and espionage, and the entrance of private companies seeking touristic spaceflight and colonization of planets, amongst others. The US government under the presidency of Donald Trump has publicly voiced a necessity for new policies, mostly concerning the role of the US in the future of outer space activities. In December 2019, Trump announced the official creation of the US Space Force (USSF) as the sixth branch of the Armed Forces.<sup>2</sup> During the speech on the creation of the USSF, Trump amplified that “American superiority in space is absolutely vital. And we’re leading, but not leading by enough.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, such nationalist narratives surrounding outer space

---

<sup>1</sup> The Space Race was not the only form of the Cold War. Violent proxy wars were fought in Afghanistan, Vietnam, the Korean Peninsula, Congo, Cambodia and Angola.

<sup>2</sup> “Trump Officially Establishes US Space Force with 2020 Defense Signing Bill,” News, Space.com, created December 20, 2019,

<https://www.space.com/trump-creates-space-force-2020-defense-bill.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

show an important break from the cooperative era of the International Space Station, displayed by the return of unilateral US missions to the Moon and beyond.<sup>4</sup> The idea of space as an ‘American frontier’, which was a common perception during the Cold War, has seemingly returned both on a governmental and societal level.<sup>5</sup> This development is an evident change from past policies, as US political narratives surrounding outer space during the ISS era predominantly encouraged international cooperation, thus focusing less on nationalist frames such as leadership and prestige. Therefore, in this thesis I will analyze the relationship between US nationalism and outer space, answering the question *why* there have been fluctuations in the prominence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism between the 1960s and 2019.

In order to answer the question, I make a comparative analysis of three periods since the development and growth of spacefaring capabilities and strategies in the 1960s, specifically the Cold War space race, the International Space Station era, and recent space exploration and narratives under the Trump administration. Within nationalism, and especially US nationalism, outer space represents an exceptionally attractive arena in theory. It holds the potential to display superior character, as the pioneering spirit involved in exploring the extraterrestrial speaks to the human imagination. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to showcase spectacular technological achievements, as was accomplished with the 1969 moon landing, for example. Outer space, as a domain, holds a special symbolic and prestigious value. In this sense, it seems logical that activity in outer space is prioritized by anyone who desires to build or unite a nation, which is the eventual ambition of nationalism, granted they have the means and capabilities to do so.

This seems to point out that outer space, as an arena, indeed possesses the exceptional attributes for the invocation of nationalism that it does in theory. Why is it, then, that there has been such an extensive period of relative silence in relation to outer space? And why has it flared up again specifically in recent years? Concepts of nationalism only go so far in explaining these developments. However, when they are aligned with

---

<sup>4</sup> Louise Fleicher, Carolina Moreno Aguirre, and Johannes Norheim, “Lessons Learned from the ISS: Enabling Future Spaceflight Collaboration for the US and Russia,” *The Stanford US-Russia Forum Research Journal* 9 (April 2018): 66.

<sup>5</sup> Mehak Sarang, “Hope at the Frontier: *Firefly* and the Value of Space Exploration,” in *Outer Space and Popular Culture: Influences and Interrelations*, ed. Annette Froehlich (Cham: Springer, 2019), 160

economic, social and especially international political contexts, it becomes clearer how, and why, space has at times been a feeding ground for nationalism, and at times the scene of the complete opposite; successful international cooperation with traditional nemeses like Russia.

Throughout the thesis, I refer to several (historical) core concepts of nationalism at different levels, namely regarding nationalism at large and within an American context, and I apply these notions to outer space. As nationalism is a relatively new field of study within political, historical, identity, and cultural theory, I will discuss a combination of academically respected and relevant concepts as my conceptual framework.<sup>6</sup> The concept of nationalism at large is discussed by introducing Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Eric Hobsbawm's *Invented Traditions*, as the current academic convention largely follows their work.<sup>7</sup> Combined, these two authors present a clear description on the origins, definitions, function and outings of nationalism. Anderson argues that nations, as we know them, rest on little more than a communal imagination. In simple terms, he states that a man in southern Florida, for example, has absolutely no relationship with a woman from northern Montana. However, both these people could still feel united to each other, as they both believe or accept that they are 'American'; that they belong to the United States of America.

In his book *Invented Traditions*, Eric Hobsbawm relates to this phenomenon. Hobsbawm argues that historically, nations have been united by narratives that hold a loose base, or no base at all. He calls these narratives 'invented traditions', as they are constructed to give the nation a sense of historical legitimacy. As Hobsbawm argues, invented traditions are a "set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."<sup>8</sup> Such traditions are often invented by national governments, who aim to adapt a nation's past into a convincing narrative that highlights and promotes nationalist

---

<sup>6</sup> Christophe Jaffrelot, "For a Theory of Nationalism," in *Revisiting Nationalism: Theories and Processes*, ed. Alain Dieckhoff, and Christopher Jaffrelot (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 10.

<sup>7</sup> Enric Castelló, "Anderson and the Media. The Strength of "Imagined Communities"," *Debats* 1 (May 2016): 59-60.

<sup>8</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-2.

sentiment. Sara McDowell (2011) explains that using symbols, myths and historical inaccuracies to shape a national narrative provide a “form of *emotional glue*, which binds people together and promotes a collective identity,”<sup>9</sup> thus making it a “political process where cultural practices and acts are symbolically constituted to evoke memories of the past, which serve to strengthen a group’s position and/or its institutions in the present.”<sup>10</sup>

The multitude of nations that can be distinguished at present all have experienced their own nation building processes, at one time or another, and all have their own, specific, invented traditions. In the case of the United States, this is most strikingly manifested by the ‘American dream’, the frontier theory and manifest destiny. The term ‘American dream’ was coined by writer James Truslow Adams in his 1931 book *The Epic of America*, in which he described it to be a “dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain the fullest stature of which they are innately capable (...) regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.”<sup>11</sup> The term is now considered a type of national motto in common culture, used by US politicians, athletes, and companies, amongst many. As Jim Cullen (2004) illustrates, the term American dream “seems like the most lofty as well as the most immediate component of an American identity.”<sup>12</sup>

Equally as important to the US identity is Frederick Jackson Turner’s famous frontier theory, which he publicly announced in 1893. The frontier theory holds the belief that the main difference between the ‘Old World’ European and the ‘New World’ American originated from the environment in which they developed; the ‘American frontier’. Turner argued that the ‘most important’ feature of Americanism, namely the rise and spread of democracy, stems from the individualism and freedom that defined life in the frontier wilderness. The expansionist character of ‘America’, claims Turner, is what drives the nation.<sup>13</sup> The theory has been contested for its ethnocentric tone and

---

<sup>9</sup> Sara McDowell, “Inventing Tradition,” in *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, ed. Dale Southerton (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011), 812.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew Wills, “James Truslow Adams: Dreaming Up the American Dream,” *JSTOR Daily*, May 18, 2015, <https://daily.jstor.org/james-truslow-adams-dreaming-american-dream/>.

<sup>12</sup> Jim Cullen, *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5.

<sup>13</sup> “The Significance of the Frontier in American History (1893),” Historical Archives, American Historical Association, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>.

assumptions in recent years by historians such as Limerick (1987), which I will explain more thoroughly in the first chapter. Nonetheless, Massip (2012) argues that the theory has been widely important in the formation of US nationalism and national identity, as it provided a nation-building narrative that described the American tale as unique, glorious, and prodigious.<sup>14</sup> A means of justifying the frontier theory is the concept of ‘manifest destiny’, the belief that American settlers were chosen to expand across the continent due to the quality and righteousness of the American people and institutions.<sup>15</sup> When applying this belief to the realm of outer space, Leib (1999) analyzes three core ideas; it is destiny to explore and conquer space, exploration is inherently human, and that the US must be a leader in space to be a leader on earth.<sup>16</sup> Leib’s analysis acts as a useful tool to assess the space narratives of the US government in all three chapters, as it provides an analytical framework for the political discourse of space in all eras of space exploration.

In nationalism studies, technological superiority is often connected to national identity, power and progress.<sup>17</sup> Essentially, technological triumphs act as a symbolic portrayal of a nation’s strengths and identity, therefore being comparable to nationalistic symbols such as flags, anthems, or the tale of the American frontier. As Barker and Kelly (2008) argue, nations deemed great technological achievements necessary in order to ‘inspire awe in its beholders, and confirm its [*the nation’s*] legitimacy and status amongst nations worldwide’.<sup>18</sup> Technology is a crucial means to gain and maintain power, to be a relevant actor in the field of global politics. Thus, acquiring and mastering spectacular technologies like space exploration are reflections of a ‘spectacular’ national identity. This relation between technology and nationalism will be an important element throughout my thesis, as I argue that outer space is a technological arena used by the US government to demonstrate national prestige and power, if necessary.

---

<sup>14</sup> Nathalie Massip, “The Role of the West in the Construction of American Identity: From Frontiers to Crossroads,” *Caliban: French Journal of English Studies* 31 (2012), 244.

<sup>15</sup> Hiram M. Chittenden, “Manifest Destiny in America,” *The Atlantic*, January, 1916, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1916/01/manifest-destiny-in-america/528369/>.

<sup>16</sup> Karl Leib, “International Competition and Ideology in US Space Policy,” *International Studies Notes* 24, no. 3 (1999), 32.

<sup>17</sup> Joshua Barker and Sharon Kelly, “Technology and Nationalism,” in *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview*, ed. Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (California: ABC- CLIO, 2008), 128.

<sup>18</sup> Barker and Kelly, “Technology and Nationalism,” 128.

Historically, periods of intense nationalism have resulted in violence and conflict, making it especially useful and necessary to analyze rapid resurgences of nationalism, as is happening currently. Moreover, the manifestations of American nationalism under the Trump administration are particularly recent, and consequently lack extensive academic research. However, existing concepts on both general and American nationalism provide useful and accurate frames to observe these developments through, as becomes apparent from their application to the three different periods of space activities discussed throughout this thesis. I will show that the current resurgence of the prominence of outer space for nationalist motives fits into historical and theoretical trends of US nationalism.

Indeed, the theme of outer space within nationalism has been notably underrepresented within the academic world. This is surprising, as the connection between the two has had great impact on international affairs in the Cold War Era. The fact that, in recent years, a return of this connection is visible makes this topic all the more relevant. Moreover, the prominence of outer space as an arena for American nationalism has shifted significantly and regularly in the brief period of around sixty years in which man has been able to access outer space. Existing research on space and US nationalism is mostly limited to the Cold war and immediate post-Cold War period and seldom includes the ISS era and recent developments under the Trump administration. These periods are incredibly significant, however, as they can be juxtaposed to show two wholly different approaches to outer space within American political history.

The thesis is divided in three chapters with three distinct sub questions, namely 1. how does the notion of outer space fit into concepts of US nationalism, 2. why did outer space lose relevance as an arena for US nationalism after the Cold War, and 3. why is there a resurgence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism during the first three years of the Trump administration? Throughout the thesis, I use a comparative approach to analyze manifestations of US nationalism in the Cold War space race, the International Space Station era, and under the Trump administration.

Furthermore, I use a typology introduced by Holland and Burns (2018) to analyze the political narratives surrounding space exploration in the US. The typology consists of five predominant themes, namely competition, prestige, collaboration, leadership, and a

‘new paradigm’. By employing this typology, I am able to analyze the prevalence of nationalist narratives employed by the US government from the Eisenhower until the Obama administration. In chapter two, for example, I discuss the narratives in the Cold War space race and those employed during the ISS era. For the first part, I analyze the manifestations of US nationalism (frontier, manifest destiny, technological superiority) in speeches by Kennedy, as this is the height of the space race, to see how and why such narratives were employed. As my analysis of the outer space narratives employed by the Kennedy administration focuses on one president, I analyze speeches myself without using the typology. My analysis of the ISS era, however, includes multiple presidents and concerns a longer period of time. Therefore, I use the typology by Holland and Burns, which shows significant falls in nationalist narratives surrounding outer space during that period. I use speeches by Bill Clinton and George W. Bush to assess where manifestations of US nationalism were prevalent, using the political discourse on what I call ‘challengers’ to US dominance and values.

In chapter three, I use the elements of the typology to analyze presidential speeches on space exploration, defense reports, space policy directives, and the national space strategy. Within these sources, I search for discourses on ‘challengers’, and the previously discussed manifestations of US nationalism. These sources are chosen as they highlight the nationalist narratives employed by the Trump administration. They show what the government aims to convey to the US public. Moreover, I once again analyze instances of ‘space as a frontier’ and manifest destiny to uncover whether there has been an increase in nationalist sentiments surrounding outer space. Throughout the thesis, I consistently refer to those manifestations of US nationalism surrounding outer space to the concepts of nationalism introduced by Anderson and Hobsbawm to highlight the conceptual relevance.

Throughout the chapter, I encounter significant instances in which China is framed as a ‘challenger’ to American security and power. Following this, I uncover a correlation between China as an equal technological and economical rival, and increasing manifestations of US nationalism regarding outer space, such as the creation of a Space Force, a human return to the Moon and beyond, and presidential references to space as a new American frontier. Using the concepts concerning the link between technological prestige and national identity, I argue that there is a correlation between the current

conflict with China and the resurgence of US nationalism surrounding outer space, similar to the Cold War space race. I conclude that space is used as a symbolic arena during times of symmetrical conflict, used as a means to show and gain national power.

## 1. Conceptualizing Nationalism in the United States: from the Western 'Frontier' to Outer Space

The realm of outer space has been labelled the final frontier of American exploration, taking inspiration from the westward expansion of North America starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>19</sup> In this case, it is people like Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, the firsts astronauts to ever set foot on the moon, who occupy the role of historical frontier icons, such as Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, memorable for their two year expedition into the American frontier in the early 1800s. It is precisely that frontier identity that constitutes an integral part of US nationalist history and is claimed to be the defining process that made the Americans... *American*.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, in this chapter, I aim to answer how the notion of outer space fits into concepts of US nationalism.

To do so, I discuss and define concepts of nationalism, following the work of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Eric Hobsbawm's *Invented Traditions*. Then, I apply those concepts to specific manifestations of US nationalism, namely the frontier theory, manifest destiny, the function of 'othering' and the value of technological superiority. First, I consider Frederick Jackson Turner's famous "frontier theory", showing its history, criticisms, and legacy on US nationalism at large. I will connect and refer to manifest destiny and technological superiority throughout my explanation of the frontier theory, as the three are largely interconnected. Moreover, I discuss the role of space within US nationalism, which, all together, provide the conceptual framework for my analysis in the following chapters.

In the prewar era, nationalism was considered to be the study of national histories, rather than a distinct field of study. Increasingly theoretical debate on the matter arose around the interwar years, when Hans Kohn (1944) made an important distinction between Western and Eastern forms of nationalism. According to Kohn, Western nationalism was founded in a civic nation, meaning one unified by territory and respect for political institutions. By contrast, Eastern nationalism was founded in a

---

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Cruddas, "Space: Not the Final Frontier, But the New Wild West," *Politico*, January 19, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/space-final-frontier-wild-west/>.

<sup>20</sup> Nathalie Massip, "The Role of the West in the Construction of American Identity: From Frontiers to Crossroads," *Caliban: French Journal of English Studies* 31 (2012), 240.

multinational context, from which the drive for independence sparked ethnic nationalism.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, it is important to realize that during the time of Kohn's writing, the contrast between East and West was a popular subject, characterized by divisive prejudice and intolerance. Nonetheless, the period did mark a significant rise in the study of nationalism, which flourished further as an academic field during the periods of decolonization, as those oppressed by Western colonizers fought for national independence, and during the disintegration of the Soviet Union, as one multinational state transformed into fifteen separate nations. It was around this post-Cold War context that modern and postmodern understandings of nationalism arose. According to Anthony Smith (2013), this modern model shared a "growing emphasis on the socially created quality of all collective identities, including cultural identities, and hence the understanding of the nation as a cultural construct, forged and engineered by various elites to meet certain needs or cater to specific interests."<sup>22</sup>

As previously mentioned, the recent expansion in the study of nationalism has not resulted in concrete *theories* of nationalism, which sociologist John A. Hall (1993) claims is because "no single, universal theory of nationalism is possible."<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Hall owes this claim to the understanding that, as there are a multitude of different historical contexts regarding nationalism, the concepts must differ too.<sup>24</sup> Calhoun (1997) shares this sentiment, explaining that there can be no single theory of nationalism as "various nationalisms are determined by historically distinct cultural traditions, the creative actions of leaders, and contingent situations within the international world order."<sup>25</sup> However, the existence of multiple historical contexts does not refute the possibility of defining nationalism conventionally, which Hall describes as "the belief in the primacy of a particular nation, real or constructed."<sup>26</sup> As my thesis is centered around the political function of nationalism, I use a definition introduced by historian Peter Alter, who defines nationalism as "both an ideology and political movement which holds the nation and sovereign nation-state to be crucial indwelling values, and which manages to mobilize the political will of a people or a large section of the population."<sup>27</sup> Notably,

---

<sup>21</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cornell University Press, 2008), 17.

<sup>22</sup> Anthony Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 4.

<sup>23</sup> John A. Hall, "Nationalisms: Classified and Explained," *Daedalus* 122, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>25</sup> Craig J. Calhoun, *Nationalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 123.

<sup>26</sup> Hall, "Nationalisms," 2.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Alter, *Nationalism* (Hodder Education Publishers, 1994), 4.

Hall provides an example of nationalism which relates to the central hypothesis of my thesis, namely that “if the contemporary United States becomes mobilized, either as the result of incautious elite manipulation or of sentiment genuinely coming from below, around the conviction that Japan is an economic enemy, then this deserves to be considered as an example of nationalism.”<sup>28</sup>

Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm are two nationalism scholars who have inspired the current, postmodernist model in nationalism studies.<sup>29</sup> Anderson, who was an Irish political scientist and historian specialized in nationalism, published the book *Imagined Communities* in 1983.<sup>30</sup> Anderson introduces three paradoxes about the common perceptions of nationalism, namely that (1) historians see nations as modern entities whilst nationalists view them as age-old, (2) nationality is universal, yet each one is supposed to be distinct and superior, and (3) nationalism holds great power, yet has no coherent definition or philosophy.<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, Anderson gives his own, anthropological definition of a nation: it is an imagined political community.<sup>32</sup> Such a nation is not a fact, but rather a historical political construction.

Symbolisms like flags and anthems, but also the existence of national press and television, foster citizens’ belief that they belong to the same community, despite the near impossibility of them ever meeting in their lives. Political systems rest on these constructions of the national, as it is through this communal allegiance that they can remain in power. A strong, united nation has historically been the foundation of most states. As Anderson himself explains: “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”<sup>33</sup> Uniting such a nation ultimately has a starting point, as none of the existing nations on earth have been present since the dawn of times. In other words, they are no natural fact. In order to create or bolster nations, a legitimizing foundation is extremely useful.

---

<sup>28</sup> Hall, “Nationalisms,” 3.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> Sewell Chan, “Benedict Anderson, Scholar Who Saw Nations as ‘Imagined,’ Dies at 79,” *New York Times*, December 14, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/world/asia/benedict-anderson-scholar-who-saw-nations-as-imagined-dies-at-79.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006), 5.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

Interestingly, a process of ‘othering’ is often used to gain and maintain a strong national identity, acting as a tool to separate a great nation from a minor outsider. ‘Othering’ can be defined as the assumption that there is a specific group of ‘outsiders’ (this can entail a myriad of things, such as nationality, ethnicity, gender, or religion) who are branded as a direct threat to the ‘insiders’.<sup>34</sup> As Evans argues, “othering is a process that begins in institutions of powers and filters down to the people. (...) It is imposed upon the people of the nation through political rhetoric, the media, national historiography, and perpetuated through socialization.”<sup>35</sup> Additionally, Evans explains that othering has two distinct purposes, namely its power to “construct the self-identity of the nation, and providing a scapegoat to the nation for its present and past troubles.”<sup>36</sup>

Powell and Menendian (2016) provide a useful example of such actions: Trump’s commitment to build a wall on the US-Mexico border, which he claimed was a necessary investment in order to prevent “criminals and rapists” from coming into the country.<sup>37</sup> Although building a wall would merely represent a symbolic prevention of migration, rather than an actual blockade, many Americans resonated with the ‘other’ narrative.<sup>38</sup> Ignatieff (1993) gives a further insight in his argument that “enemies need each other to remind themselves of who they really are. Without hatred of the other, there would be no clearly defined national self to worship and adore.”<sup>39</sup> In essence, nationalism always tries to find an ‘other’ to emphasize its own superior identity, acting as a political tool to justify state behavior.<sup>40</sup>

Closely connected to this is the work of Eric Hobsbawm, who was a British Marxist historian, and wrote about how nations have been built through the invention of traditions in 1983. Similar to Anderson’s arguments, Hobsbawm argues that

---

<sup>34</sup>“Us vs. Them: The Sinister Techniques of ‘Othering’ – And How to Avoid Them,” World News, The Guardian, published November 8, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/nov/08/us-vs-them-the-sinister-techniques-of-othering-and-how-to-avoid-them>.

<sup>35</sup> John Evans, “The Use of Othering in the Formation of a Nationalist Society,” Essay, (Portland State University), 3.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> John A. Powell and Stephen Menendian, “The Problem of Othering,” *Othering and Belonging: Expanding the Circle of Human Concern*, Summer 2016, 19.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Macmillan, 1994), 22.

<sup>40</sup> Powell and Menendian, “The Problem of Othering,” 19.

“‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented.”<sup>41</sup> He gives a clear example of such an invented tradition, namely a judges’ “‘wig, robe, and other formal paraphernalia and ritualized practices surrounding their substantial action.”<sup>42</sup> There are three different types of invented traditions: “a) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status, or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behavior.”<sup>43</sup> National governments actively aim to invent traditions, creating a narrative of national power, pride, and identity. As Sara McDowell (2011) explains, the invention of traditions by national governments is often enacted by means of symbols (national flags, anthems, emblems) and myths, taken from historical inaccuracies. From this, a nation is to become a collective, bound by a shared history, customs, traditions, and identity.

Notably, technology can hold the same symbolic power as invented traditions such as national flags and anthems. In the nationalist paradigm, the connection between technological superiority and national power is a well-researched topic. Barker and Kelly (2008) clarify that the strong historical connection between technological innovation and nation-building, such as the railroad’s effect on unifying a nation both territorially and culturally, has resulted in an understanding that spectacular technologies act as symbols of national strength and power, invoking national pride.<sup>44</sup> Henry Ford, the founder of the Ford Motor Company known for popularizing mass production, indirectly spoke of this relationship in the 1920s, saying that technology holds the ability to “bind the world together in a way no other system can. The motion picture with its universal language, the airplane with its speed (...) Thus may we vision a United States of the World! Ultimately, it will surely come.”<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Joshua Barker and Sharon Kelly, “Technology and Nationalism,” in *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview*, ed. Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (California: ABC- CLIO, 2008), 128.

<sup>45</sup> David E.H. Edgerton, “The Contradictions of Techno-Nationalism and Techno-Globalism: A Historical Perspective,” *New Global Studies* 1, no. 1 (2007): 11

David Edgerton (2007) illustrates how Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union from 1929 to 1953, prioritized the innovation of spectacular technologies such as hydroelectric power stations and dams, despite the enormous human and economic costs of investing in such innovations. According to Edgerton, the “ambition was not merely to emulate, but to create a new and superior society. This society would be more innovative, and more capable of using new technologies than crisis ridden, uncoordinated capitalism.”<sup>46</sup> In this case, spectacular technologies were regarded as a useful means to portray strength in the face of a competitor, namely the United States.

Furthermore, national identity is especially strengthened when a spectacular technology is used to overcome or “tame” nature, as “technological interventions highlight nature’s magnificence and demonstrate the capacity of humans to manipulate the natural world. In the interplay between humans and nature, technology establishes humans – usually represented as national subjects – as the privileged.”<sup>47</sup> When applying this concept to outer space, the symbolic victory of humans taming the extraterrestrial becomes especially visible. The symbolic value of technology is echoed in a declassified CIA policy recommendation, in which it is stated that “the United States is the richest, most powerful, and most technologically advanced country in the world today. No small part of this is because we have the image of being the richest, most powerful, and most technologically advanced (...) The Soviet Sputnik gave us image trouble. We responded with Apollo.”<sup>48</sup>

Additionally, one of the dominant concepts within US nationalism, the frontier, can also be viewed as such an invented tradition. The term frontier entails a multitude of definitions and narratives, ranging across continents, cultures, and languages. Historically, a frontier solely had a military meaning, namely the area in which enemies from opposing sides fought, but later transformed to describe those regions outside and/or bordering settled territory.<sup>49</sup> Over time the term has adapted along with the

---

<sup>46</sup> Edgerton, “The Contradictions of Techno-Nationalism and Techno-Globalism: A Historical Perspective,” 24

<sup>47</sup> Joshua Barker and Sharon Kelly, “Technology and Nationalism,” 134.

<sup>48</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Science, Technology and National Power*, by Eberhardt Rechtin, CIA-RDP80B01439R000500100010-7, Washington, D.C., CIA, 2002, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80B01439R000500100010-7.pdf> (accessed June 10, 2020).

<sup>49</sup> Malcolm Anderson, *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 5.

growing importance of the sovereign nation-state and is presently defined as ‘a border within two countries’<sup>50</sup>, including in its scope both territorial and socio-cultural boundaries. In the US, however, the notion of a frontier holds a significant historical connotation that decouples the term from its literal definition and rather invokes a sense of national identity, nostalgia and pride.<sup>51</sup> The tale of the American frontier begins with the arrival of European settlers (the English, Dutch, French and Spanish) on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Competition and violent conflict occurred both horizontally amongst the colonizers and vertically with the indigenous population, with battles such as the French and Indian wars resulting in British victory. The US gained control of various British territories after its victory in the American Revolution, which in turn catalyzed rapid westward expansion.<sup>52</sup>

The ensuing era is typified by legendary expeditions to the ‘great West’, growth of trade and transportation, the gold rush, horrifying structural enslavement of Africans and African Americans, and the partly consequential civil war between the Unionists and Confederates. During the process of westward expansion, the indigenous population was continuously targeted with violence by European and American explorers and colonizers. The US Federal Government actively sought to remove the indigenous population from the frontier by structurally violent means, often labelling them as savage, wild people. In essence, the presence of the indigenous population in the frontier was merely considered an obstacle to the ‘manifest destiny’ of the US; the belief that American settlers were chosen to expand across the continent due to the quality and righteousness of the American people and institutions.<sup>53</sup> When references are made to the frontier within American nationalism, it is glorified, and the violence and disregard for human life that are heavily connected to it are selectively ‘forgotten’. Instead, the frontier spirit, which in reality points to a collection of peoples violently colonizing the United States, is declared as an exceptional quality of the American nation.

---

<sup>50</sup> “Frontier,” Dictionary, Cambridge Dictionary, accessed on March 1, 2020, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/frontier>.

<sup>51</sup> Chandra Ann Maldonado, “American National Identity and Discourses of the Frontier in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Visual Culture,” MA Thesis, (Florida Atlantic University, 2014), 73.

<sup>52</sup> “The American Frontier,” American History, Legends of America, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-americanfrontier/2/>.

<sup>53</sup> Chittenden, “Manifest Destiny in America,” <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1916/01/manifest-destiny-in-america/528369/>.

The term manifest destiny received its name in the 1840s, yet its underlying belief was already prevalent during the Jeffersonian era, which lasted from 1800 until 1824.<sup>54</sup> It was during this time that the US federal government actively annexed territories from their foes, mostly the Spanish and British. According to historians Owsley and Smith (1997), the main aspect of manifest destiny (that American expansion was based on moral progress and therefore a “natural right”) actually stems from “the power to conquer. What ultimately made expansion not only possible, but apparently inevitable was not some transcending destiny, but rather the absence of a powerful neighbor to check its progress.”<sup>55</sup> As far back as 1786, Jefferson had written about America as “our continent that must be viewed as the nest from which all of America, North and South is to be peopled”, a vision in line with the term manifest destiny that would be coined and made popular by John O’Sullivan in 1845.<sup>56</sup>

O’Sullivan introduced the term in an essay titled “Annexation”, in which he pleaded for the annexation of Texas to the United States and condemned territorial rivals, in this case Mexico, of obstructing the American “manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.”<sup>57</sup> After the publication, the term was adopted into common culture as magazines, papers, and politicians started using it as an argument for further expansion.<sup>58</sup> Historian Weinberg (1935) divides manifest destiny into three main elements: security (wanting a large nation with few borders strengthens security), a virtuous government (the American constitution is triumphant over the European system due to its focus on freedom and democracy), and a national mission or divine ordination (God pushed the Europeans to the American continent to create a supreme nation and government, which

---

<sup>54</sup> Frank Lawrence Owsley Jr. and Gene A. Smith, *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny, 1800-1821* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997), 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>57</sup> “John O’Sullivan Declares America’s Manifest Destiny, 1845,” Manifest Destiny, The American Yawp Reader, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/john-osullivan-declares-americas-manifest-destiny-1845/>.

<sup>58</sup> “Manifest Destiny: The Philosophy that Created a Nation,” Essays, American History from Revolution to Reconstruction, accessed May 13, 2020, <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/essays/1801-1900/manifest-destiny/manifest-destiny---the-philosophy-that-created-a-nation.php>.

they then needed to spread).<sup>59</sup> The belief in manifest destiny is in line with Hobsbawm's invented traditions, as it gives a type of historic exceptionalism to the American community, and legitimizes their institutions, status, and authority. Thus, the belief in manifest destiny (invented tradition) gives a sense of communal national greatness, turning into Anderson's concept of an imagined community. The belief in manifest destiny can be found recurrently, such as in 1917, when Woodrow Wilson amplified the US would enter the Second World War to "make the world safe for democracy."<sup>60</sup>

By 1890, it was officially reported that due to the amount and proximity of settlements from coast to coast, the American frontier had come to an end.<sup>61</sup> The 'overcoming' of the frontier displayed the successful creation of an American land with an American people. Nonetheless, it also meant the end of an era of freedom and expansionism in the wild that began to dominate popular culture, examples of this being the stories of Davy Crockett and Buffalo Bill. This gave rise to a debate amongst American scholars on the topic of what it meant to be American and what differentiated them from the Europeans. In 1893, at a meeting of the American Historical Association, the historian Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his famous essay on the connection between the frontier and the distinct American character.<sup>62</sup> According to Turner, the difference between the 'Old World' European and the 'New World' American originated from the environment in which they developed. Turner often referred to this process as European germs developing in American environments and wrote that "up to our own day American history had been in a large degree the history of colonization of the great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development".<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Albert Katz Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (John Hopkins Press, 1935).

<sup>60</sup> "American Manifest Destiny and Modern Foreign Policy," Issues, ThoughtCo, last modified July 8, 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/american-manifest-destiny-3310344>.

<sup>61</sup> Mark Bassin, "Turner, Solov'ev, and the "Frontier Hypothesis": The Nationalist Signification of Open Spaces," *The Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 3 (September 1993): 486.

<sup>62</sup> "The Significance of the Frontier in American History (1893)," Historical Archives, American Historical Association, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

In his explanation, Turner emphasizes that the most important feature of Americanism is the rise and spread of democracy, which stems from the individualism and freedom that defined life in the wilderness. Indeed, the democratic character of the people and institutions are owed “to the changes of an expanding people – to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in *winning* a wilderness, and in developing out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life”.<sup>64</sup> The expansionist character of America, claims Turner, is what drives the nation, and will “continually demand a wider field (...) but never again will such gifts of free land offer themselves”. These were the words with which Turner closed his critically appraised essay on the American character, highlighting the future necessity of open land and the frontier for further development.

Turner’s frontier theory inspired a nation searching for its own unique identity. Its impact is long-lasting. Academically, the thesis remained largely uncontested until the mid 1980s, and continues to be regarded as a vital work in historiography concerning American nationalism.<sup>65</sup> Turner’s work gave a scholarly explanation for what was believed to be an exceptional American identity, breaking away from previous understandings that prioritized the European impact. As Massip argues, the success of the thesis was due to three elements, 1) his nationalistic tone offered contemporaries a nationwide American history that was not based solely on local/regional experiences, 2) it provided a nation-building narrative in times of self-consciousness due to the lack of national history, and 3) it described the American tale as glorious and prodigious, giving it a historical *grandeur* similar to the ‘Old World’ European past.<sup>66</sup> In other words, it symbolized American progress as opposed to European stagnation.

Critics of the thesis became most vocal during the 1980s, arguing that its rosy tone undermined the structural violence of minority groups in the frontier, rightly opposing the racism inherent in viewing the frontier as a meeting ground between ‘savagery and civilization’. Patricia Limerick, a prominent scholar in the 1980s wave of New Western historians, gave light to Turner’s nationalistic and ethnocentric position, mentioning that

---

<sup>64</sup> “The Significance of the Frontier in American History (1893),” American Historical Association, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>.

<sup>65</sup> Massip, “The Role of the West in the Construction of American Identity,” 240-244.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

“English-speaking white men were the stars of his story; Indians, Hispanics, French, Canadians, and Asians were at best supporting actors and at worst invisible. Nearly as invisible were women, of all ethnicities.”<sup>67</sup> Besides his ethnocentric view, Limerick also criticizes Turner’s use of the Western frontier as a process rather than a place, as this undermines the history and culture of the West and forces it under the umbrella of American history.

Likewise, Bassin takes a critical stance in noting that “there is nothing exclusively American about the frontier”<sup>68</sup>, but nonetheless argues that its relation to national identity and character is an original American project, an American ‘invented tradition’. Moreover, Bassin explains the role of contemporary US historians such as Turner in the creation and spread of nationalist ideology, noting that it was them who engaged in producing an “interpretative saga that would account for the genesis of the nation and at the same time explain how it developed the distinctive ethos and charisma that were the general object of nationalist adulation.”<sup>69</sup> Indeed, such a selective national history is in line with Hobsbawm: using a reinterpretation of history as an invented founding myth in order to create a collective, imagined community.

Therefore, although the theory itself is largely (and rightfully so) contested, it remains an important element in this research. I argue it left a considerable impact on US national identity with its justification of the exceptional American character. From the creation of the frontier thesis until the present day, the necessity of the frontier for American principles such as democracy is voiced regularly: Franklin D. Roosevelt declared that winning the frontier had resulted in the end of equal opportunity, Woodrow Wilson thought the expansion of American authority and values abroad would increase business and democracy, and Truman thought of his Doctrine as a tool to spread and defend the ‘frontiers of democracy’.<sup>70</sup> Thus, it becomes visible that the idea of the frontier is integral to the American Dream; the belief that any hardworking person no matter their age, race or social status, can achieve success and prosperity for

---

<sup>67</sup> Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton & Company, 2011), 30-35.

<sup>68</sup> Bassin, “Turner, Solov’ev, and the “Frontier Hypothesis,” 475.

<sup>69</sup> Bassin, “Turner, Solov’ev, and the “Frontier Hypothesis,” 477.

<sup>70</sup> Ray Allen Billington, “How the Frontier Shaped the American Character,” *American Heritage*, April, 1958, <https://www.americanheritage.com/how-frontier-shaped-american-character>.

themselves, their family and unforgettably; America. In both cases, the promotion of the idea that there is always *more* to achieve, obtain, or conquer, is prevalent and ingrained in American national identity.<sup>71</sup>

Although the Western frontier was reported to have physically ‘come to an end’ with the colonization of the American continent, the prominence of the frontier narrative of exploration, superiority and democratic leadership did not wane. A new frontier was found outside the increasingly populated and delineated globe; outer space, which was labeled the final frontier, essentially taking the title Alaska formerly held. When applying the concepts of frontier nationalism and manifest destiny to outer space, similarities are found in the visions for exploration, colonization and bringing civilization to the extraterrestrial, in which the US holds superiority through self-authorized agency. Noticeably, such nationalist ideology seems to intensify during times when US superiority is challenged; westward expansion of the frontier occurred due to the challenge of European colonization in the East, and the frontier of outer space became a prevalent issue in the wake of the communist threat. Challenges to core elements of US national identity have consistently been used to rationalize American frontier conquests over history, ranging from intervention and conflict in the Middle East to competition in global commons such as the Arctic and outer space.

---

<sup>71</sup> Richard Powers, “Identity; American Dreaming,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 7, 2000, <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/07/magazine/identity-american-dreaming.html>.

## 2. From Conflict to Cooperation: Comparing the Role of Outer Space in the Cold War to the International Space Station Era.

On July 20, 1969, the first man set foot on the moon. This event marked the pinnacle of the space race that had typified the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was a dramatic moment in the battle between two ideologies. The United States had shown their technological prowess to the world, and to the American nation. The moon-landing, and the image of the American flag on extraterrestrial soil, has been etched in American communal memory as a symbol of national pride. Many more missions to outer space and to the moon were conducted thereafter, although the American national interest in space eventually began to decrease. With the Soviet ‘challenger’ beat, and American leadership demonstrated to the world, the nature of space exploration altered dramatically, switching towards international cooperation, culminating in the creation of the International Space Station, of which Russia too has become a part. In theory, space remained an attractive arena for acts of US nationalism, as it presented the opportunity to display superior spirit and spectacular technological achievement. Did the ISS era then mark an end to US nationalism, or did it simply transfer? In this chapter, I analyze why outer space lost relevance as an arena for US nationalism after the Cold War.

To do so, I discuss the narratives in the Cold War space race and those employed during the ISS era. I analyze manifestations of US nationalism (frontier, manifest destiny, technological superiority) in presidential speeches by Kennedy regarding outer space, to see how and why such narratives were employed. Then, I use data obtained by Holland and Burns to analyze precisely what space narratives were dominant under the presidencies of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, highlighting the changes in narratives of competition, prestige, collaboration, leadership, and a “new paradigm” throughout different presidential administrations. These presidents are chosen as they represent US leadership in the most significant periods of the ISS. I use the typology to assess whether a decrease in nationalist narratives (which, in relation to the typology, I consider to be competition, leadership, and prestige) occurs simultaneous to increasing international cooperation in space. The research by Holland and Burns does not provide detailed answers as to why specific narratives may have increased or decreased. Therefore, I analyze in what other arenas

those core elements of US nationalism may have been employed, as nationalism always tries to engage in a process of ‘othering’. I examine presidential speeches by Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, which show that the nationalist rhetoric has shifted towards conflict in the Middle East, using the political discourse on what I call ‘challengers’ to American dominance and values. I argue that because the new “challenger” was not able to compete with the US in terms of military, technology, and economics, nor was there any other relevant challenger, there was no necessity to return to nationalist narratives surrounding outer space.

### **The Space Race: a ‘New Frontier’ for the US.**

During the beginning stages of the Cold War rivalry, the belief that US leadership could not be challenged was widespread, in part due to its remarkable scientific developments such as the creation of the atomic bomb.<sup>72</sup> Vannevar Bush, an influential contemporary scientist and head of the US Office of Scientific Research and Development during the Second World War, claimed in 1945 that “the pioneer spirit is still vigorous within this nation, and science offers a largely unexplored hinterland for the pioneer who has the tools for his task”,<sup>73</sup> said in line with the idea that democracy and freedom are necessary precursors for leadership in the scientific field. Thus, when the Soviet Union successfully launched the Sputnik satellite in 1957 it was considered a threat to US leadership in science and world politics at large, as it implied Soviet superiority in space technologies.<sup>74</sup>

Therefore, a core element of US national identity was challenged by the launch of Sputnik, namely their technological dominance and superiority, which consequently precipitated an era of international competition in space exploration. This vision is supported by the reaction of prominent US media outlets; the New York Times reported that the launch signified a prestigious triumph for Soviet communism, and *Newsweek*

---

<sup>72</sup> Though a remarkable scientific invention, we must remember the victims of the nuclear disasters in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, inflicted wrongfully and without real purpose by the US government in 1945. Its effect on Japanese society has been immense.

<sup>73</sup> James Spiller, *Frontiers for the American Century: Outer Space, Antarctica, and Cold War Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 9.

<sup>74</sup> “60 Years Ago Today: The US Response to Sputnik,” Feature, NASA, last modified November 27, 2017, <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/60-years-ago-the-us-response-to-sputnik>.

quoted a Washington ambassador who claimed the diplomatic and political power had now shifted to the Soviet Union.<sup>75</sup> In response, the US government sought to create a leading space program to project power both internationally and domestically for the American people, institutionalized through the 1958 creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Despite increased reporting on the capabilities of space and the Soviet Union's advancements in this arena, it remained difficult for NASA to generate popular support for its space exploration agenda.<sup>76</sup>

It was Kennedy's presidency that supported a wave of space projects aimed to boost national prestige, not in the least due to continuous Soviet 'firsts' in space. In 1962, Kennedy delivered a speech in Houston, the location of NASA's human space flight center, claiming that this region, "once the furthest outpost on the old frontier of the West", would now become "the furthest outpost on the new frontier of science and space".<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Kennedy used the term "New Frontier" as the slogan in his presidential acceptance speech, vocalizing that the nation was standing "on the edge of a new frontier – the frontier of the 1960s, the frontier of unknown opportunities and perils, the frontier of unfilled hopes and unfilled threats (...) Beyond that frontier are uncharted areas of science and space, unsolved problems of peace and war. (...) I'm asking each of you to be pioneers towards that New Frontier."<sup>78</sup>

These historical references to the frontier invoked a sense of nationalism and responsibility to ensure American leadership in space, similar to the narrative of the Western frontier, namely in terms of transforming untamed land into democratic civilization, with equal opportunities for all Americans.<sup>79</sup> To Kennedy and his VP Johnson, winning the race to the moon was crucial, and though he could not live to experience it, his strategy and use of frontier narratives were essential for the successful landing of the first man on the moon in 1969. The historic event was viewed by 528

---

<sup>75</sup> Kim McQuaid, "Sputnik Reconsidered: Image and Reality in the Early Space Age," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 37, no. 3 (2007): 372.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.

<sup>77</sup> "We Need to Stop Talking About Space as a Frontier," Technology, Slate, published March 15, 2017, <https://slate.com/technology/2017/03/why-we-need-to-stop-talking-about-space-as-a-frontier.html>.

<sup>78</sup> "John F. Kennedy Acceptance Address," Online Speech Bank, American Rhetoric, last modified September 25, 2018, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfk1960dnc.htm>.

<sup>79</sup> Alan Brinkley, "The Western Historians: Don't Fence Them In," *The New York Times*, September 20, 1992, <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/99/04/25/specials/turner-frontier.html>.

million people globally, resulting in the widespread acceptance that the US had proven its superiority in space.

However, a wave of disinterest followed the space program's victory against the Soviet Union, as Cold War competition in space halted. Nixon's interest in the program diminished as he cancelled future Apollo missions and cut NASA's budget, showing the connection between challenges to US dominance and the employment of frontier narratives to spark nationalism.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, the extraordinary expenses that came with the promotion of national space programs created enormous debts, which became a crucial incentive for increased international cooperation in the field. The 1975 Apollo-Soyuz project, a US-Soviet joined spaceflight, was symbolic for the détente between the two superpowers and the future of cooperation in space. Towards the end of the Cold War, the competitive spirit of space exploration diminished, and agreements were made between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), Canadian Space Agency (CSA), and Japan's National Space Development Agency (NASDA) for the construction of space station *Freedom*.

In the beginning stages of the program, the question of whether to cooperate with other nations was dominant. Prior to the involvement of the European, Japanese and Canadian agencies in space station *Freedom*, any cooperative agenda was enacted under a series of guidelines that practically provided the US absolute control over objectives and development by labelling NASA as 'project manager'.<sup>81</sup> But such dominance did not wane well with potential partners like ESA, who sought additional equal participation. Thus, the US government had to decide whether to partially transfer certain elements of leadership and prestige in space exploration in order to continue with plans for an international space station or advance unilaterally and risk exhausting the available funds or be surpassed by competing spacefaring nations. Furthermore, the latter option would jeopardize the idea that the US should lead the free world into new arenas; the manifest destiny that is at the core of US nationalism. A dominant narrative during this period was that the future of humanity was beyond the boundaries of Earth, and to

---

<sup>80</sup> Andreas Reichstein, "Space – The Last Cold War Frontier?" *American Studies* 44, no. 1 (1999): 133.

<sup>81</sup> John M. Logsdon, *Together in Orbit: The Origins of International Participation in the Space Station*, Monographs in Aerospace History no. 11 (Washington: NASA History Division, 1998), 9.

maintain a leader on earth, the US had to become a leader in space before others would, thus deeming the space station a necessity.<sup>82</sup>

In 1985, NASA published a presidential report on aeronautics and space activities, which claimed that the space station *Freedom* would “provide a foundation for leadership in the free world, and for international cooperation in space for the next decade and beyond”.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, the contemporary NASA administrator James Beggs pleaded that the space station would exemplify “dramatically the vitality and strength of the free-world alliance”.<sup>84</sup> It is visible that cooperation in space with “free-world allies” became a possibility due to the understanding it would be the sole option to guarantee and maintain leadership for the consequent decades. As long as the US is the leader, space exploration remains a human destiny. It was during this time that competition in space shifted from a military and political understanding to an economic and technological paradigm, in which new actors such as Russia, Japan and Europe increasingly challenged the capabilities of the US.<sup>85</sup> To counter the rise of new actors, the US created an alliance with Japan, Europe, and Canada for space station *Freedom*, but delays and technical setbacks, such as the *Challenger* space shuttle disaster, showed its structural weaknesses.

Simultaneously, the Soviet Union had actively been working on the creation of their own space station, named *Mir*, but its future became uncertain after the Soviet Union experienced internal turmoil in its final stages.<sup>86</sup> The Berlin wall fell on November 9, 1989, standing symbolic for a turning point in Soviet-US relations. After the fall, a wave of revolutions swept across the Soviet Bloc that led to its internal disintegration, resulting in the official dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.<sup>87</sup> During this time, the Soviet Union disintegrated and as a consequence their *Mir* space station was in danger

---

<sup>82</sup>Karl Leib, “International Competition and Ideology in US Space Policy,” *International Studies Notes* 24, no. 3 (1999), 32.

<sup>83</sup> National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *Aeronautics and Space Report of the President: 1985 Activities* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1986), 36.

<sup>84</sup> Leib, “International Competition and Ideology in US Space Policy,” 33.

<sup>85</sup> National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *National Space Exploration Campaign Report* (Washington, DC: NASA, 2018), 15.

<sup>86</sup> Thomas Ellis, “Reds in Space: American Perceptions of the Soviet Space Programme from Apollo to Mir 1967-1991,” (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 2018), 210.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 198.

of getting terminated due to a decrease in budget and governance.<sup>88</sup> This exposed a great risk to the US, since crucial knowledge, scientists, materials and other strategic capabilities could get acquired by what the US perceived and framed as ‘rogue states’, a term employed to create a negative perception of ‘other’ groups and identities.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, in hopes of battling such risks and obtaining useful information and experience for improvements, the recently inaugurated president Bill Clinton invited Russia to join its international space station program in 1993.<sup>90</sup> Since then, cooperation in the form of the International Space Station has persisted up until this day, with an upcoming expiry date in 2024.<sup>91</sup> The shift from conflict to cooperation in outer space, most notably the partnership with former rival Russia, exhibits a significant change, especially when taking into consideration the nationalist narratives that were employed by the US government during the Cold War.

### **The International Space Station and US Space Exploration Narratives**

The International Space Station is widely regarded to be the biggest, costliest, and most intricate international technological and scientific project up until this day, with the involvement of five space agencies, counting fifteen nations, in its construction.<sup>92</sup> Space agencies get allocated specific time scopes for astronaut and research activities according to their monetary or material contributions. Consequently, more than half of all astronauts that ever set foot on the ISS have been of US nationality.<sup>93</sup> The first element of the space station that was launched into orbit was a Russian functional cargo block in November 1998, which provided electrical power and storage in the beginning stages of assembly. From this point, the station was constructed step by step whilst remaining in orbit, meaning that new modules and elements were sent by rockets and

---

<sup>88</sup> John M. Logsdon, and James R. Millar, “US-Russian Cooperation in Human Spaceflight: Assessing the Impacts,” *Space Policy* 17, no. 3 (August 2001): 172.

<sup>89</sup> K.P. O’Reilly, “Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the “Rogue State” Concept by U.S. Foreign Policy Elites,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3, no. 4 (October 2007): 298.

<sup>90</sup> “Space Station 20<sup>th</sup>: Historical Origins of ISS,” Feature, NASA, last modified January 23, 2020, <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/space-station-20th-historical-origins-of-iss>.

<sup>91</sup> Hanneke Weitering, “NASA: The International Space Station Is Open for Commercial Business in Orbit,” *Space.com*, June 7, 2019, <https://www.space.com/nasa-international-space-station-commercial-use.html>.

<sup>92</sup> W. Henry Lambright, and Agnes Gereben Schaefer, “The Political Context of Technology Transfer: NASA and the International Space Station,” *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 2, no. 1 (April 2004): 1-2.

<sup>93</sup> Elizabeth Howell, “International Space Station: Facts, History & Tracking,” *Space.com*, February 8, 2018, <https://www.space.com/16748-international-space-station.html>.

added manually by astronauts and robotics on spacewalks. Since 1998, it took 221 spacewalks to construct, maintain and upgrade the station, which now measures at 109 meters long, roughly the size of a football field.<sup>94</sup>

According to NASA, the ISS has three main objectives related to science and technology. These are (1) research on human exploration *beyond* low earth orbit, a well-known example of this being Mars, including long-term effects of reduced gravity environments on the human body and protection against radiation, (2) providing extensive space-based research capabilities on plant and cell biology, physics, and human physiology, and (3) observing Earth, the Sun and other celestial bodies.<sup>95</sup> In order to achieve and maintain those objectives, the station has been continuously inhabited by humans since November 2000, marking its upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Other than its pioneering scientific value, the complexity and importance of international cooperation in relation to the project is emphasized, as shown by NASA's statement that the program's "greatest accomplishment is as much a human achievement as it is a technological one", calling it one of the "most ambitious collaborations ever attempted".<sup>96</sup> Following these statements, it becomes visible that the primary narrative surrounding the ISS is one that promotes the benefits of international cooperation for technological progress in space despite possible earth-based tensions between nations. However, the ISS has been a focal point of debate in the US since its origin and has experienced budget restrictions, concerns regarding international security, and various efforts to discontinue the program all together when its direct benefits were challenged.<sup>97</sup>

In order to get an idea as to why the development and continuation of the ISS led to a diminishing presence of nationalism concerning space in the US, it must first be established that they indeed did. For this purpose, I will analyze data obtained by Dora Holland and Jack O. Burns, who documented the changes in narratives on space

---

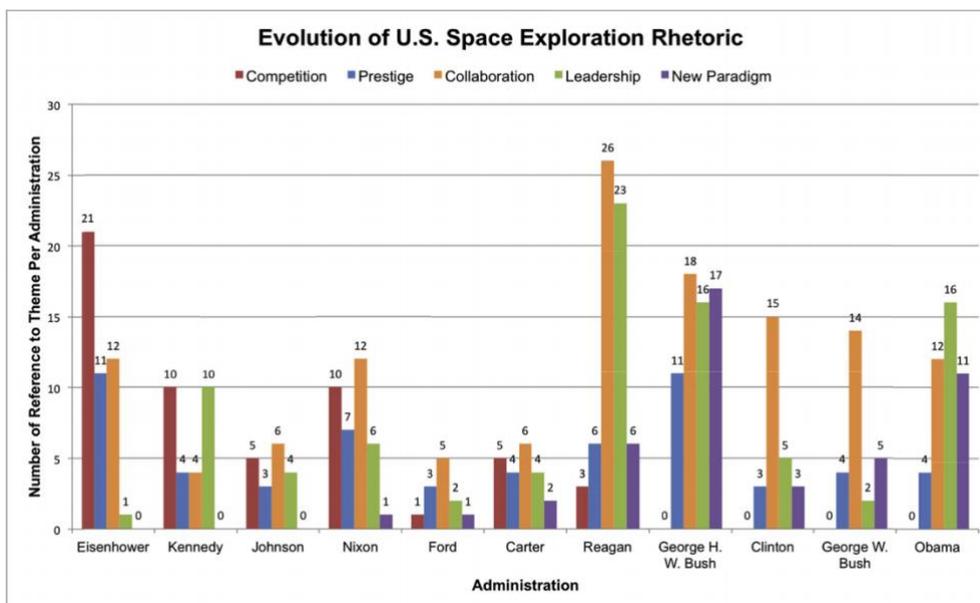
<sup>94</sup> "International Space Station Facts and Figures," Feature, NASA, last modified May 18, 2020, <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/facts-and-figures>.

<sup>95</sup> National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *International Space Station* (Washington, DC: NASA, 2005), 2.

<sup>96</sup> "International Cooperation," Space Station, NASA, last accessed May 15, 2020, [https://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/station/cooperation/index.html](https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/cooperation/index.html).

<sup>97</sup> Lambright, and Schaefer, "The Political Context of Technology Transfer," 2.

exploration from the presidencies of Eisenhower to Obama. They identify five themes of space narratives to analyze space policies, presidential statements, and policy recommendations, those being (1) competition, (2) prestige, (3) leadership, (4) collaboration, and (5) a “new paradigm”. Competition refers to direct rivalry, such as with the Soviet Union, in which the necessity to surpass another spacefaring nation is a dominant narrative. Prestige entails the rhetoric that promotes space exploration as a successful means to strengthen global status and power. Space exploration then becomes a symbol of prestige. Leadership, however, refers to the statements that articulate either how the US government holds a leadership role in space or desires to become the leading spacefaring nation. Collaboration indicates whether there is, or if it is a goal, to collaborate with other international space agencies and actors. The last theme, that of “new paradigm”, is the narrative that describes a new era of space exploration, with a multitude of new actors with new capabilities rather than bilateral conflict.<sup>98</sup> Within these themes, elements of US nationalism like the understanding of space as a frontier for American exploration is most present in the narratives of competition, prestige and leadership.



Source: Data from Dora Holland, and Jack O. Burns, “The American Space Exploration Narrative from the Cold War Through the Obama Administration,” *Space Policy* 46 (November 2018): 9-17.

<sup>98</sup> Dora Holland, and Jack O. Burns, “The American Space Exploration Narrative from the Cold War Through the Obama Administration,” *Space Policy* 46 (November 2018): 11.

As is visible in the graph above, the presidencies surrounding the end of the Cold War, namely the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, show a significant spike in both the narrative of collaboration and that of leadership. Essentially, such a development signals to the overlap between collaboration and nationalism, which could be understood as a paradox. However, this correlates heavily with the creation of the ISS, throughout which there was both extensive collaboration between space agencies, but also a perceived necessity to continue being the “free-world” leader of such international partnership, as explained earlier in this chapter. This also relates to the peak of the “new paradigm” narrative, as the creation of the ISS was both a reaction to, and a catalyst in, the growth of spacefaring actors.

Alternatively, the Clinton administration experienced a telling fall in the narratives and rhetoric of prestige, leadership, and “new paradigm”, whilst international collaboration remained an important strategy. It is during this point that nationalist outer space narratives seem to decrease heavily, not in the least due to Russian accession to the ISS program, in which the US was the leading actor. Moreover, when following the idea that US nationalist rhetoric is employed during times when their leadership is challenged, thus used as a means to an end, it is visible that the American position in space seemed secure and not strategically worthy of intensive investments without the existence of a clear competitor, similar to what had occurred in the Cold War. Instead, I argue that such competition has shifted to other arenas of international relations, namely the conflict in the Middle East. During the presidencies of Clinton and George W. Bush, space exploration narratives of leadership and prestige are visibly the lowest. Nonetheless, the existence and employment of US nationalist rhetoric prevailed in the face of a new contest.

### **‘Challengers’ in the Middle East**

Clinton was inaugurated as president in the aftermath of the Gulf War, and promoted his foreign policy as guided by democracy, characterized by the protection of American interests, countering radicalism, retaliating against weapons of mass destruction, and achieving peace in the Middle East.<sup>99</sup> Clinton’s policy in the Middle East is now

---

<sup>99</sup> Martin Indyk, “The Clinton Administration’s Approach to the Middle East,” (paper presented at the Soref Symposium, The Washington Institute, 1993),

remembered as one of conflict with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, where he actively promoted regime change, and the Iranian state, which he labelled a terrorist-sponsoring “rogue state” in 1994. Clinton often used similar discourse, such as *enemies of peace and democracy*, *states of concern*, and *outlaws*, the latter being a direct reference to antagonists of the historical American frontier.<sup>100</sup> The existence of a wild outlaw, in this case Iran and Iraq, requires the help of a frontier hero, namely the US government.<sup>101</sup> The use of such narratives show the rise of a perceived new ‘challenger’ to American power, and therefore its superior national identity.

This shift of nationalist rhetoric towards the Middle East is also demonstrated in Clinton’s 1998 State of the Union Address, in which he mentions that “on the eve of a new century, we have the power and duty to build a new era of peace and security. (...) We must combat an unholy axis of new threats from terrorists, international criminals, and drug traffickers. (...) To meet these challenges, we are helping to write international rules of the road for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, protecting those who join the family of nations, and isolating those who do not. (...) If we want America to lead, we have got to set a good example”.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, the wish for American leadership in the region and the demand for ideological change are intertwined with frontier nationalism and manifest destiny insofar as it entails a push outward of ‘superior’ American values meant to “tame” a wild area. Moreover, a process of ‘othering’ is visibly used to justify intensified military involvement in the region, which could be considered a display of technological (military) superiority.

As a consequence of the devastating terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 contemporary president George W. Bush extended this discourse to become a global ‘war on terror’, branding the perceived “rogue states” as an ‘axis of evil’ that could harm the free world created by the US. Interestingly, a similarity is found in Reagan’s ‘Evil Empire’, used to describe the Soviet Union in the Cold War, which was followed

---

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-clinton-administrations-approach-to-the-middle-east>.

<sup>100</sup> Chin-Kuei Tsui, “Framing the Threat of Rogue States: Iraq, Iran and President Clinton’s Dual-Containment Approach to Middle East Peace,” (paper presented at the Australian Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Murdoch University, Perth, 2013), 5.

<sup>101</sup> Tsui, “Framing the Threat of Rogue States,” 7.

<sup>102</sup> Bill Clinton, “State of the Union Address,” (speech, Washington, DC, January 27, 1998), Congressional Record,

<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/1998/1/27/senate-section/article/s20-2?s=8&r=39>.

by his famous ‘Star Wars’ speech, showing the strategic uses of discourse and nationalism in relation to space exploration.<sup>103</sup> In this case, radical terrorism has replaced the role of communism as the biggest perceived threat to American leadership and its normative role in the world. Since manifestations of nationalism were not viable in the realm of outer space due to increasing cooperation and lack of a technological ‘challenger’, a process of othering was employed to find a rival in the Middle East, which in turn enabled Bush to ignite a violent, expensive, and risky war. Labelling rivals in the Middle East as “rogue” and “evil” essentially strengthened the superiority of the American national identity, as they act as a perceived hero. Indeed, nationalism has the power to streamline national identity with foreign and domestic policies. It legitimizes an unorthodox reaction, as it is framed as the sole way to protect and ensure the core of American values.<sup>104</sup>

Interestingly, the leadership and “new paradigm” narratives of space exploration increased considerably under the Obama administration, whilst a small decrease in collaboration is evident. Despite his voiced commitment to the completion of the ISS, Obama made several efforts to guarantee US superiority in space, such as investing in the Curiosity rover that landed on Mars, partnering with the private sector, and voicing plans to explore asteroids.<sup>105</sup> Despite the continued existence of a perceived regional threat in the Middle East, namely the Islamic State in Syria, nationalist rhetoric has resurfaced in the realm of outer space. This hints to the further increase of space actors, such as a thriving private sector, and the possibility of a new symmetrical rival to US superiority and dominance, which will a topic of discussion in the subsequent chapter.

Thus, nationalism regarding outer space was significantly lower during the era of the International Space Station due to the lack of a relevant challenger. Whereas in the Cold War space exploration was defined by nationalism and the strive to become a winner in the face of conflict, the ISS period is characterized by the wish to maintain such leadership. Throughout this period, the US was unsure of its spacefaring identity, as the

---

<sup>103</sup> Newt Gingrich, “The Evil Empire,” *American Heritage*, Spring/Summer 2008, <https://www.americanheritage.com/evil-empire>.

<sup>104</sup> Paul T. McCartney, “American Nationalism and US Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War,” *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 400.

<sup>105</sup> Loren Grush, “Obama’s NASA Made Strides on Commercial Space but Stumbled on Exploration,” *The Verge*, January 19, 2017, <https://www.theverge.com/2017/1/19/14211964/obama-administration-nasa-legacy-private-sector-moon-vs-mars>.

lack of contest in space meant a lack of interest and investment, essentially reducing the relevance of nationalist rhetoric. When the national aspect diminished, room was found for international cooperation, so too with former enemies. Such nationalism had acted as a justification of intense unilateral space exploration during the Cold War, and a similar contest was later found in the ‘war on terror’. The Middle East became the new frontier, this time not in terms of territory, but ideology, displayed by the voiced necessity to spread American values of democracy and freedom to the region in order to battle an “evil people”.<sup>106</sup> The Middle East conflict acted as an ‘evil out-group’ to strengthen the ‘superior in-group’. However, the leadership narrative has resurfaced during the second term of the Obama administration, signaling to an increase in nationalism surrounding outer space, which will be investigated further in the following chapter.

---

<sup>106</sup> “Backgrounder: The President’s Quotes on Islam,” Policies in Focus, The White House President George W. Bush, last accessed June 2, 2020, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/ramadan/islam.html>.

### 3. Space as the Final Frontier? Outer Space Narratives under the Trump administration

Donald Trump was inaugurated as 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States on January 20, 2017. In line with his anti-Obama campaign rhetoric, Trump has actively reversed tens of regulations, rules, and deals made under the Obama presidency, ranging from withdrawal of the Paris accord to restricting transgender people from enrolling as military servants.<sup>107</sup> Although a presidential shift from democrat to republican, or vice versa, is typically coupled with a change in institutional structures and policies, the Trump administration is notorious in terms of reviewing past administrations' policies.<sup>108</sup> During his first State of the Union Address, Trump boasted that his administration had "eliminated more regulations in our first year than any administration in history".<sup>109</sup> Indeed, a similar development is visible in the field of space exploration, proven by the creation of a special US "Space Force", amongst others.<sup>110</sup> Notably, the first directive regarding space that was issued by Trump states that "the United States will lead the return of humans to the Moon for long-term exploration and utilization, followed by human missions to Mars and other destinations,"<sup>111</sup> noting the first space strategy that seeks a human return to the Moon since the Cold War space race.

Indeed, this is a significant break from previous strategies and narratives surrounding the role of the US in outer space, since it promotes a strictly unilateral approach to 'ground-breaking' space exploration in comparison to international cooperation in the form of the space station. This creates a paradox; why increasingly seek challenging and

---

<sup>107</sup>David Smith, "The anti-Obama: Trump's Drive to Destroy his Predecessor's Legacy," *The Guardian*, May 11, 2018,

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/may/11/donald-trump-barack-obama-legacy>.

<sup>108</sup>Juliet Eilperin and Darla Cameron, "How Trump is Rolling Back Obama's Legacy," *The Washington Post*, January 20, 2018,

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-rolling-back-obama-rules/?utm\\_term=.37bef96f5d72](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-rolling-back-obama-rules/?utm_term=.37bef96f5d72).

<sup>109</sup>Zack Colman, "Has Trump Killed More Regulations Than Any Other President?" *Scientific American*, February 1, 2018,

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/has-trump-killed-more-regulations-than-any-other-president/>.

<sup>110</sup>"Donald Trump Officially Launched US Space Force," *World, The Guardian*, last modified December 21, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/21/donald-trump-officially-launches-us-space-force>.

<sup>111</sup>"Presidential Memorandum on Reinvigorating America's Human Space Exploration Program," Presidential Memoranda, the White House, issued on December 11, 2017,

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-reinvigorating-americas-human-space-exploration-program/>.

extremely costly missions independently, when the US is part of the ISS and holds a leadership position within that partnership?

This chapter will analyze why there is a resurgence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism during the first three years of the Trump administration. To do so, I first analyze whether a discourse of a ‘new threat’ or ‘challenger’ has been employed, both during Trump’s presidential campaign and in his time in office. From this, we see that China is regularly branded as an economic, industrial, and technological power that holds the ability to challenge US superiority in those domains on a global level. I argue that this sparked a return to the outer space frontier, similar to what occurred during the Cold War rivalry, as it is a useful arena to display technological, industrial and scientific prestige without engaging in direct conflict.

When following the idea that national identity and technological superiority are inherently tied together, we see that the victorious ending of the space race for the US made them technologically superior on a global level. This strengthened a national identity of superiority, prestige and leadership. Nationalism always finds an ‘other’ to spark a superior identity, which was found in the ideological conflict in the Middle East. This conflict did not catalyze a comparable return to nationalist visions of space exploration, in part due to the established military dominance that the US held over its portrayed rival from the outset of the conflict. In essence, it was a vertical and asymmetric conflict about ideology, in which US forces were consistently more powerful and their technological capabilities were not challenged.

By contrast, I argue that the current competition with China is not about ideology, but rather about technological and economic rivalry. As the technological superiority of the US is once again challenged, this time by China, space has become a useful arena to compete and show superiority without engaging in direct conflict. In order to show the increasing nationalism in US outer space narratives, I use the typology introduced by Holland & Burns to analyze defense reports, speeches on the creation of the space force, the different space policy directives, and the national space strategy. As such, I empirically contribute to their typology, as the Trump administration is not included in the analysis by Holland and Burns. Moreover, I analyze the prevalence of ‘space as a

frontier' to highlight the comparisons between space narratives employed in the Cold War space race and during Trump's presidency.

### **China as a 'New Threat' to the US**

Trump's presidential campaign consisted of several hardline and predominantly inward-looking themes meant to attract mostly white working- and lower-class males.<sup>112</sup>

Essentially, the campaign advocated that solving issues such as illegal immigration from Mexico, Islamic terrorism, the status of American industries, and trade deficits were of paramount importance to "make America great again."<sup>113</sup> As Degani examined, the nouns employed most often throughout Trump's campaign were connected to competitive or "enemy" countries, with Mexico and China mentioned systematically.<sup>114</sup>

In a speech delivered in Pennsylvania during his 2016 presidential campaign, Trump explicitly stated that America had become "more dependent on foreign countries than ever before", after which he claimed that "half of the entire manufacturing trade deficit in goods with the world is the result of trade with China (...) I am going to label China a currency manipulator (...) I will bring trade cases against China. The era of economic surrender will finally be over".<sup>115</sup> In a different speech given in Indiana, Trump used emotional wording when talking about the effect of China on US welfare, not in the least by expressing that he could not allow "China to rape our country (...) We're going to turn it around, we have a lot of power with China"<sup>116</sup> Framing China as an aggressive and unjust competitor paved the way for increased societal perception of China as the enemy to American freedom and power.

Comparing Trump's strategy to Evan's explanation of the two purposes of 'othering' shows China is framed as a scapegoat for the economic troubles the US is experiencing. Thus, China may have received the role of an enemy outsider, which would invoke

---

<sup>112</sup> Derek Thompson, "Who Are Donald Trump's Supporters, Really? *The Atlantic*, March 1, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/who-are-donald-trumps-supporters-really/471714/>.

<sup>113</sup> Dilin Liu, and Lei Lei, "The Appeal to Political Sentiment: An Analysis of Donald Trump's and Hillary Clinton's Speech Themes and Discourse Strategies in the 2016 US Presidential Election," *Discourse, Context & Media* 25 (2018): 149.

<sup>114</sup> Liu, Lei, "The Appeal to Political Sentiment," 144.

<sup>115</sup> "Full Transcript: Donald Trump's Jobs Plan Speech," Story, Politico, published April 28, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/full-transcript-trump-job-plan-speech-224891>.

<sup>116</sup> "Trump Accuses China of 'Raping' US with Unfair Trade Policy," World, BBC, published May 2, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-36185012>.

nationalism in the US as having an enemy outsider strengthens a superior national identity for the insider. This statement is supported when comparing surveys from 2017 to 2019, as the share of Americans who perceive China unfavorably increased from 47 to 60 percent, an all-time high.<sup>117</sup> Although Trump’s narrative surrounding China shifts regularly from friend to foe, framing China as a “threat to the world” is a visibly long-lasting narrative that has resurfaced during the 2020 reelection campaign.<sup>118</sup>

Notably, a development running parallel to the increasing perception of China as a threat to national power is the resurgence of US nationalism surrounding outer space. China, and to a lesser extent Russia, are repeatedly accused of increasing their space force capabilities, perceived as attempts to undermine US leadership in space. In a 2019 report published by the US Defense Intelligence Agency, titled ‘challenges to security in space’, a narrative of competition with a direct rival in outer space is evident. Within the report it is claimed that “some foreign governments are developing capabilities that threaten others’ ability to use space. China and Russia, in particular, have taken steps to challenge the United States.”<sup>119</sup> The narrative of competition with China is amplified at a later part of the report which mentions that China is trying to “turn into a space power in all respects. Its rapidly growing space program – China is second only to the United States in the number of operational satellites – is a source of national pride and part of Xi Jinping’s ‘China Dream’ to establish a prosperous China”.<sup>120</sup>

Indeed, the report implies that letting China increase its space capabilities is meant to strengthen prosperity, which poses a direct threat to American global power and values. Moreover, the report claims that China plans to assemble and operate their own modular space station that can be inhabited by both Chinese and foreign actors, and has started a human lunar exploration program that seeks to put Chinese astronauts on the moon.<sup>121</sup> Thus, it is visible that the narrative surrounding China is one of a threat to US power on

---

<sup>117</sup>Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang, “U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tensions,” *Pew Research Center*, August 13, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/08/13/u-s-views-of-china-turn-sharply-negative-amid-trade-tensions/>.

<sup>118</sup> Jonathan Chait, “Trump Campaign’s Genius Plan to Blame China for the Coronavirus Has One Flaw,” *New York Intelligencer*, April 14, 2020, <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/04/trump-china-biden-coronavirus-false-travel-ban-wuhan.html>.

<sup>119</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Challenges to Security in Space* (Washington: 2019), 4.

<sup>120</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Challenges to Security in Space*, 13.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

earth, but also in space. The Chinese human lunar exploration program, if successful, could invalidate the famous ‘man on the moon’ mission of 1969. Likewise, the creation of a Chinese-led space station open for foreign participation puts pressure on the success and future of the International Space Station, through which the US has been able to guide space exploration on their own terms.

### **US Outer Space Nationalism and China as a Symmetrical ‘Challenger’**

The effect this technological competition has on the function of outer space fits into the nationalist trend and is especially visible in the wide range of space policy directives, strategies, and speeches from the US government. In December 2017, Trump made his first institutional change in relation to the realm of space by signing Space Policy Directive-1, which states that the “United States will lead the return of humans to the moon for long-term exploration and utilization, followed by human missions to Mars and other destinations.”<sup>122</sup> Interestingly, that directive was signed in the same month as the newly published national security policy, in which the US government officially proclaimed China and Russia as rival powers that “challenge American power, influence, and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity.”<sup>123</sup> Such a development portrays the interplay between the perception of China as an economical and technological threat to American security, and the return to grandiose space exploration strategies.

Moreover, we see that narratives of competition run parallel to outer space narratives of leadership and prestige. In March 2018, for instance, Trump publicly spoke of a new America First National Space Strategy, under the motto of ‘America First Among the Stars’. The official White House fact sheet on this strategy explains it as “ensuring a strategy that will make America strong, *competitive*, and *great* (...) partnering with the commercial sector to ensure American companies remain world *leaders* in space technology.” Furthermore, the strategy is described as “ensuring U.S *leadership* and success in space” in an era in which “our *competitors*, and adversaries have turned

---

<sup>122</sup> White House, “Presidential Memorandum on Reinvigorating America’s Human Space Exploration Program.”

<sup>123</sup> “China Condemns US ‘Cold War Mentality’ on National Security,” World, BBC, published on December 19, 2017. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42409148>.

space into a warfighting domain.”<sup>124</sup> Indeed, introducing a narrative of direct competition goes hand in hand with intensified nationalism, as leadership in space is framed as the sole option to win the competition, which will in turn reinstate them as the dominant power through global prestige.

This is evident in the creation of a US Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2019. During a speech about the creation of the Space Force, Trump mentioned that “when it comes to defending America, it is not enough to merely have American presence in space. We must have American dominance in space (...) I’m here by directing the Department of Defense and Pentagon to immediately begin the process necessary to establish a space force.”<sup>125</sup> An interesting comparison can be made here, namely that the creation of a space force has employed the administration with a military unit that stands symbolic for taming the space frontier, quite similar to the role of the Federal army in the historic frontier of America.

Following this train of thought, it is noticeable that there are increasing instances of space as an American frontier under the Trump administration. This is an important break from previous space narratives during the height of the ISS. For instance, in Trump’s speech regarding the creation of a space force, he elaborates that his administration is “reclaiming America’s heritage as the world’s greatest space-faring nation. The essence of the American character is to explore new horizons and tame new frontiers.”<sup>126</sup> When reminiscing about the 1969 moon landing, Trump describes the American astronaut as a reflection of the spirit of America; “the confidence of a cowboy, the skill of a fighter pilot, the ambition of a scientist, and the courage of a true, true, brilliant, tough warrior. They did the impossible because they knew that there is absolutely nothing Americans can’t do. Once more, we will summon that American

---

<sup>124</sup> “President Donald J. Trump is Unveiling an America First National Space Strategy,” Fact Sheets, the White House, issued on March 23, 2018.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-unveiling-america-first-national-space-strategy/>.

<sup>125</sup> “Remarks by President Trump at a Meeting with the National Space Council and Signing of Space Policy Directive-3,” Remarks, the White House, issued on June 18, 2018.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-meeting-national-space-council-signing-space-policy-directive-3/>.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

spirit to tame the next great American frontier. And once more, we will proudly lead humanity beyond the Earth”<sup>127</sup>

As explained in the first chapter, such references to the frontier help create nationalism in several ways. First, it relates to the ‘manifest destiny’ that is integral to US nationalism, which conveys that American ‘pioneers’ hold a certain degree of responsibility when expanding (either across the continent or in space) due to the superiority of American values, institutions and people. It becomes their responsibility to ensure global progress, displayed by Trump’s vision of ‘proudly leading humanity beyond earth’. Second, referring to space as a frontier streamlines space strategy with national identity; the American spirit of wanting to explore free lands in which anyone can achieve prosperity. It brings all Americans towards a shared goal; ensuring the expansion of their freedom, values, and power into the extraterrestrial. Essentially, comparing the space exploration program to the historical frontier enables the government to label it as similarly important as the defining process that created American national identity in the 1800s, a recurring theme in US nationalism.

By placing the American space exploration program as inherent to the American character and spirit, an example being “extending our pioneering spirit into the farthest reaches of the cosmos, the American Spirit that has inspired our nation to lead the world in space,”<sup>128</sup> it becomes unpatriotic to *not* support it. Indeed, references to national identity and the challenges it faces have always been employed to engage in frontier conquests. In this case, China is perceived as a threat to American values and framed as an obstruction to the spread of American values and leadership in the frontier of space. In line with nationalist theory regarding ‘othering’, labelling China as a competitor to the American character and values gives the US government a valid, nationalist reason to actively combat such competition. This has resulted in a resurgence of nationalist

---

<sup>127</sup> The White House, “Remarks by President Trump at a Meeting with the National Space Council and Signing of Space Policy Directive-3.”

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-meeting-national-space-council-signing-space-policy-directive-3/>.

<sup>128</sup> “Presidential Message on Space Exploration Day, 2019,” Statements & Releases, the White House, issued on July 20, 2019,

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/presidential-message-space-exploration-day-2019/>.

narratives surrounding space exploration, illustrated by the vision that “under President Trump, America is leading in space once again.”<sup>129</sup>

Considering the impact of technological innovation on national identity, the analysis shows that the technological dominance and prestige the United States obtained from winning the Cold War space race gave them a superior, exceptional national identity. Now that China has proven itself to be an equal competitor in the field of technology, economics, and even military, the dominance the US held is perceived to be at risk, as is visible from the Trump administration’s framing of China as a threat. In this case, space becomes a useful arena to symbolically display technological prestige and leadership, as had happened during the Cold War. Trump may have officialized a human return to the moon, and even beyond to Mars, as a means to exceed the technological innovation achieved in 1969, thus promoting a new national spectacular technology. Indeed, such symbolic victories are meant to create a “wow-factor” amongst the public, and act as proof of superiority over the rival, in this case China.

Thus, if successful, the realm of outer space is a useful tool to show technological leadership, which holds the potential to undermine the Chinese position, reinforcing global prestige for the US. Employing nationalism helps reach this goal, as it stimulates public support and justifies the generally extreme measures necessary to achieve technological victory and global prestige. Therefore, it can be concluded that the US has invested in grand unilateral missions in outer space, despite being a part of the ISS, because its leadership position regarding space technology is increasingly challenged by the entrance of China as a significant spacefaring power. Space, in these cases, functions as a competitive and symbolic arena during times of symmetrical conflict, intended to demonstrate and gain national power.

---

<sup>129</sup> “Moon, Mars, and Worlds Beyond: Winning the Next Frontier,” Statements & Releases, the White House, issued on February 21, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/moon-mars-worlds-beyond-winning-next-frontier/>.

## Conclusion

This thesis set out to answer why there have been fluctuations in the prominence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism between the 1960s and 2019. In order to demonstrate the existence of such fluctuations, I employed a comparative approach between three distinct eras of American space exploration, namely the Cold War space race, the era of the International Space Station, and recent outer space activities under the Trump administration. Using the discussed concepts on nationalism, and manifestations of US nationalism, I found that space functioned as an arena for US nationalism during the Cold War space race and the first three years of the Trump administration. During the International Space Station era, however, manifestations of nationalism regarding outer space seemingly decreased as room was found for cooperation with allies and even former enemies.

I have argued that such fluctuations can be explained by analyzing the economic, social, and especially the international political contexts running parallel to increasing or decreasing nationalism. As such, I found that ‘challengers’ to US superiority and global dominance define the direction of US nationalism, which has an impact on space policies and narratives. For instance, when the technological dominance of the US was challenged by the Soviet launch of *Sputnik* during the Cold War it precipitated an era of competition in space. It became of paramount importance to show leadership and prestige within this realm, to portray national power and promote a superior national identity. Similarly, the recent top-down framing of China as an economic threat runs parallel to grand unilateral US missions to outer space and increasing political narratives that highlight nationalist visions of space as an ‘American frontier’.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there have been fluctuations in the prominence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism because outer space is used as a competitive and symbolic arena during times of symmetrical conflict. As such, it is meant to exhibit and achieve national power and prestige, to use spectacular technologies in order to portray a spectacular nation in the face of an equal ‘challenger’. Indeed, this is in accordance with the function of nationalism, as winning a technological competition in outer space strengthens and promotes a superior national identity, which unites a nation.

To reach this conclusion, I first introduced and described the relevant concepts regarding nationalism at large and US nationalism and applied those to outer space. Within the chapter I analyzed the function of nationalism, particularly how manifestations of US nationalism such as the frontier, technological superiority, and manifest destiny guide national policies and mobilize the nation. In chapter two, I analyzed the prevalence of such manifestations in speeches by Kennedy, to portray the relation between political narratives promoting nationalism, grandiose space exploration activities, and the existence of a symmetrical rival, in this case the Soviet Union. The successful man on the moon mission in 1969 acted as proof of US technological superiority, which in turn ended an era of conflict in space proven by immediate budget cuts for NASA, cancelled space missions, and an overall decline in public interest. This enabled an opportunity for international cooperation, represented by the International Space Station, which even included former enemy Russia.

As nationalism always finds an ‘other’ to strengthen national identity, I analyzed speeches by Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, from which I found that the conflict in the Middle East acted as a new ‘challenger’ to American values and dominance. However, I argued this new challenger could not compete with the US in terms of military, technology, and economics, making it an asymmetric conflict. Therefore, because the ‘challenger’ was not able to equal the US, the conflict did not spark a return to nationalist rhetoric surrounding outer space, which reinforced the possibility of cooperation in the form of the International Space Station.

However, my analysis in chapter three shows a resurgence of nationalism in relation to outer space, displayed by President Trump’s creation of the US Space Force, the unilateral return to the Moon, the goal of going to Mars, and increasing references to space as an ‘American frontier’. I connected this increasing prominence of outer space as an arena for US nationalism to political narratives that frame China as a new threat to US global dominance. Indeed, the strictly unilateral approach to ambitious and revolutionary space exploration suggests that the rise of a new symmetrical ‘challenger’, namely China, has ignited a return to the ‘frontier’ of outer space, as the US leadership position in space is confronted. Similar to the situation during the Cold War, outer space is now used, by both parties, as an arena to display technological prestige without engaging in direct conflict.

As I finish writing this thesis in June 2020, the commercial spaceflight company SpaceX has successfully launched their *Dragon* rocket to the International Space Station, marking a historic moment in the future of commercial (thus non-state) spaceflight. At the same time, the Trump administration is finding itself in a turbulent moment with nation-wide protests against structural racism in political institutions and police brutality, whilst dealing with having the highest death-toll from the COVID-19 pandemic. This indicates an uncertain future for US dominance, leadership, and a desired superior national identity. Moreover, these developments will affect the US's future as a technological leader in space, with a growing spacefaring China, the official entry of private actors, and the internal turmoil in the US. These developments are worth investigating further, as it indicates a new era in terms of cooperation, leadership, and technologies, both in space and on planet earth.

## References

### **Primary Sources**

American Historical Association. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History (1893)." Historical Archives. Accessed March 1, 2020.  
<https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history>.

American Rhetoric. "John F. Kennedy Acceptance Address." Online Speech Bank. Last modified September 25, 2018.  
<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfk1960dnc.htm>.

BBC. "China Condemns US 'Cold War Mentality' on National Security." World. Published on December 19, 2017.  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42409148>.

BBC. "Trump Accuses China of 'Raping' US with Unfair Trade Policy." World. Published May 2, 2016.  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-36185012>.

Clinton, Bill. "State of the Union Address." Speech, Washington, DC, January 27, 1998. Congressional Record.  
<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/1998/1/27/senate-section/article/s20-2?s=8&r=39>.

Defense Intelligence Agency. *Challenges to Security in Space*. Washington: 2019.

Eilperin, Juliet and Darla Cameron. "How Trump is Rolling Back Obama's Legacy." *The Washington Post*, January 20, 2018,  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-rolling-back-obama-rules/?utm\\_term=.37bef96f5d72](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-rolling-back-obama-rules/?utm_term=.37bef96f5d72).

Holland, Dora, and Jack O. Burns. "The American Space Exploration Narrative from the Cold War Through the Obama Administration." *Space Policy* 46 (November 2018): 9-17.

NASA. "International Cooperation." Space Station. Last accessed May 15, 2020.  
[https://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/station/cooperation/index.html](https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/cooperation/index.html).

NASA. "International Space Station Facts and Figures." Feature. Last modified May 18, 2020.  
<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/facts-and-figures>.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *Aeronautics and Space Report of the President: 1985 Activities*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1986.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *International Space Station*. DC: NASA, 2005.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *National Space Exploration Campaign Report*. Washington, DC: NASA, 2018.

Office of the Secretary of Defense. *Science, Technology and National Power*. Eberhardt Rechtin, CIA-RDP80B01439R000500100010-7. Washington, D.C., CIA, 2002, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80B01439R000500100010-7.pdf> (accessed June 10, 2020).

Politico. “Full Transcript: Donald Trump’s Jobs Plan Speech.” Story. Published April 28, 2016. <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/full-transcript-trump-job-plan-speech-224891>.

Silver, Laura, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang. “U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tensions.” *Pew Research Center*. August 13, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/08/13/u-s-views-of-china-turn-sharply-negative-amid-trade-tensions/>.

The White House President George W. Bush. “Backgrounder: The President’s Quotes on Islam.” *Policies in Focus*. Last accessed June 2, 2020. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/ramadan/islam.html>.

The White House. “Moon, Mars, and Worlds Beyond: Winning the Next Frontier.” *Statements & Releases*. Issued on February 21, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/moon-mars-worlds-beyond-winning-next-frontier/>.

The White House. “President Donald J. Trump is Unveiling an America First National Space Strategy.” *Fact Sheets*. Issued on March 23, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-unveiling-america-first-national-space-strategy/>.

The White House. “Presidential Memorandum on Reinvigorating America’s Human Space Exploration Program.” *Presidential Memoranda*. Issued on December 11, 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-reinvigorating-america-human-space-exploration-program/>.

The White House. “Presidential Message on Space Exploration Day, 2019.” *Statements & Releases*. Issued on July 20, 2019. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/presidential-message-space-exploration-day-2019/>.

The White House. “Remarks by President Trump at a Meeting with the National Space Council and Signing of Space Policy Directive-3.” *Remarks*. Issued on June 18, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-meeting-national-space-council-signing-space-policy-directive-3/>.

Thompson, Derek. “Who Are Donald Trump’s Supporters, Really?” *The Atlantic*, March 1, 2016. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/03/who-are-donald-trumps-supporters-really/471714/>.

## Secondary Sources

Alter, Peter. *Nationalism*. Hodder Education Publishers, 1994.

American History from Revolution to Reconstruction. "Manifest Destiny: The Philosophy that Created a Nation." Essays. Accessed May 13, 2020.  
<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/essays/1801-1900/manifest-destiny/manifest-destiny---the-philosophy-that-created-a-nation.php>.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 2006.

Anderson, Malcolm. *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997.

Barker, Joshua and Sharon Kelly. "Technology and Nationalism." In *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview*, edited by Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan, 126-136. California: ABC-CLIO, 2008.

Bassin, Mark. "Turner, Solov'ev, and the "Frontier Hypothesis": The Nationalist Signification of Open Spaces." *The Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 3 (September 1993): 473-511.

Billington, Ray Allen. "How the Frontier Shaped the American Character." *American Heritage*, April, 1958.  
<https://www.americanheritage.com/how-frontier-shaped-american-character>.

Brinkley, Alan. "The Western Historians: Don't Fence Them In." *The New York Times*, September 20, 1992.  
<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/99/04/25/specials/turner-frontier.html>.

Calhoun, Craig J. *Nationalism*. University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

Cambridge Dictionary. "Frontier." Dictionary. Accessed on March 1, 2020.  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/frontier>.

Castelló, Enric. "Anderson and the Media. The Strength of "Imagined Communities"." *Debats* 1 (May 2016): 59-63.

Chait, Jonathan. "Trump Campaign's Genius Plan to Blame China for the Coronavirus Has One Flaw." *New York Intelligencer*. April 14, 2020.  
<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/04/trump-china-biden-coronavirus-false-travel-ban-wuhan.html>.

Chan, Sewell. "Benedict Anderson, Scholar Who Saw Nations as 'Imagined' Dies at 79." *New York Times*, December 14, 2015. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/world/asia/benedict-anderson-scholar-who-saw-nations-as-imagined-dies-at-79.html>.

- Chittenden, Hiram M. "Manifest Destiny in America." *The Atlantic*, January, 1916. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1916/01/manifest-destiny-in-america/528369/>.
- Colman, Zack. "Has Trump Killed More Regulations Than Any Other President?" *Scientific American*, February 1, 2018, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/has-trump-killed-more-regulations-than-any-other-president/>.
- Cruddas, Sarah. "Space: Not the Final Frontier, But the New Wild West." *Politico*, January 19, 2020.
- Cullen, Jim. *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Edgerton, David E.H. "The Contradictions of Techno-Nationalism and Techno-Globalism: A Historical Perspective." *New Global Studies* 1, no. 1 (2007): 1-32.
- Ellis, Thomas. "Reds in Space: American Perceptions of the Soviet Space Programme from Apollo to Mir 1967-1991." PhD diss., University of Southampton, 2018.
- Evans, John. "The Use of Othering in the Formation of a Nationalist Society." Essay. Portland State University.
- Fleicher, Louise, Carolina Moreno Aguirre, and Johannes Norheim. "Lessons Learned from the ISS: Enabling Future Spaceflight Collaboration for the US and Russia." *The Stanford US-Russia Forum Research Journal* 9 (April 2018): 65-71.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Gingrich, Newt. "The Evil Empire." *American Heritage*, Spring/Summer 2008. <https://www.americanheritage.com/evil-empire>.
- Grush, Loren. "Obama's NASA Made Strides on Commercial Space but Stumbled on Exploration." *The Verge*, January 19, 2017. <https://www.theverge.com/2017/1/19/14211964/obama-administration-nasa-legacy-private-sector-moon-vs-mars>.
- Hall, John A. "Nationalisms: Classified and Explained." *Daedalus* 122, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 1-28.
- Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Howell, Elizabeth. "International Space Station: Facts, History & Tracking." *Space.com*, February 8, 2018. <https://www.space.com/16748-international-space-station.html>.
- Ignatieff, Michael. *Blood and belonging: Journeys into the new nationalism*. Macmillan, 1994.

Indyk, Martin. "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East." Paper presented at the Soref Symposium, The Washington Institute, 1993.  
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-clinton-administrations-approach-to-the-middle-east>.

Jaffrelot, Christopher. "For a Theory of Nationalism." in *Revisiting Nationalism: Theories and Processes*, edited by Alain Dieckhoff, and Christopher Jaffrelot, 10-61. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Lambricht, W. Henry, and Agnes Gereben Schaefer. "The Political Context of Technology Transfer: NASA and the International Space Station." *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 2, no. 1 (April 2004): 1-24.

Legends of America. "The American Frontier." American History. Accessed March 2, 2020.  
<https://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-americanfrontier/2/>.

Leib, Karl. "International Competition and Ideology in US Space Policy." *International Studies Notes* 24, no. 3 (1999): 30-45.

Limerick, Patricia Nelson. *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*. New York: Norton & Company, 2011.

Liu, Dilin, and Lei Lei. "The Appeal to Political Sentiment: an Analysis of Donald Trump's and Hillary Clinton's Speech Themes and Discourse Strategies in the 2016 US Presidential Election." *Discourse, Context & Media* 25 (2018): 143-152.

Logsdon, John M. *Together in Orbit: The Origins of International Participation in the Space Station*. Monographs in Aerospace History no. 11. Washington: NASA History Division, 1998.

Logsdon, John M. *John F. Kennedy and the Race to the Moon*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Logsdon, John M., and James R. Millar. "US-Russian Cooperation in Human Spaceflight: Assessing the Impacts." *Space Policy* 17, no. 3 (August 2001): 171-178.

Maldonado, Chandra Ann. "American National Identity and Discourses of the Frontier in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Visual Culture." MA Thesis. Florida Atlantic University, 2014.

Massip, Nathalie. "The Role of the West in the Construction of American Identity: From Frontiers to Crossroads." *Caliban: French Journal of English Studies* 31 (2012), 239-248.

McCartney, Paul T. "American Nationalism and US Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War." *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 399-423.

McDowell, Sara. "Inventing Tradition." In *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, edited by Dale Southerton, 811-815. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011.

McQuaid, Susan. "Sputnik Reconsidered: Image and Reality in the Early Space Age." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 37, no. 3 (2007): 371-401.

NASA. "60 Years Ago Today: The US Response to Sputnik." Feature. Last modified November 27, 2017.  
<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/60-years-ago-the-us-response-to-sputnik>.

NASA. "Space Station 20<sup>th</sup>: Historical Origins of ISS." Feature. Last modified January 23, 2020.  
<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/space-station-20th-historical-origins-of-iss>.

O'Reilly, K.P. "Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the "Rogue State" Concept by U.S. Foreign Policy Elites." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3, no. 4 (October 2007): 295-315.

Owsley Jr., Frank Lawrence, and Gene A. Smith. *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny, 1800-1821*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997.

Powell, John A. and Stephen Menendian. "The Problem of Othering." *Othering and Belonging: Expanding the Circle of Human Concern*, Summer 2016.

Powers, Richard. "Identity; American Dreaming." *New York Times Magazine*, May 7, 2000.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/07/magazine/identity-american-dreaming.html>.

Reichstein, Andreas. "Space – The Last Cold War Frontier?" *American Studies* 44, no. 1 (1999): 113-136.

Sarang, Mehak. "Hope at the Frontier: *Firefly* and the Value of Space Exploration." In *Outer Space and Popular Culture: Influences and Interrelations*, edited by Annette Froehlich, 159-165. Cham: Springer, 2019.

Slate. "We Need to Stop Talking About Space as a Frontier." Technology. Published March 15, 2017.  
<https://slate.com/technology/2017/03/why-we-need-to-stop-talking-about-space-as-a-frontier.html>.

Smith, Anthony. *Nationalism and Modernism*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Smith, David. "The anti-Obama: Trump's Drive to Destroy his Predecessor's Legacy." *The Guardian*, May 11, 2018.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/may/11/donald-trump-barack-obama-legacy>.

Spiller, James. *Frontiers for the American Century: Outer Space, Antarctica, and Cold War Nationalism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

The American Yawp Reader. "John O'Sullivan Declares America's Manifest Destiny, 1845." Manifest Destiny. Accessed May 12, 2020.  
<https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/john-osullivan-declares-americas-manifest-destiny-1845/>.

The Guardian. "Donald Trump Officially Launches US Space Force." World. Last modified December 21, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/21/donald-trump-officially-launches-us-space-force>.

The Guardian. "Us vs. Them: The Sinister Techniques of 'Othering' – And How to Avoid Them." World News. Published November 8, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/nov/08/us-vs-them-the-sinister-techniques-of-othering-and-how-to-avoid-them>.

ThoughtCo. "American Manifest Destiny and Modern Foreign Policy." Issues. Last modified July 8, 2018. <https://www.thoughtco.com/american-manifest-destiny-3310344>.

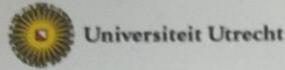
Tsui, Chin-Kuei. "Framing the Threat of Rogue States: Iraq, Iran and President Clinton's Dual-Containment Approach to Middle East Peace." Paper presented at the Australian Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Murdoch University, Perth, 2013.

Weinberg, Albert Katz. *A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*. John Hopkins Press, 1935.

Weitering, Hanneke. "NASA: The International Space Station Is Open for Commercial Business in Orbit." *Space.com*, June 7, 2019. <https://www.space.com/nasa-international-space-station-commercial-use.html>.

Wills, Matthew. "James Truslow Adams: Dreaming Up the American Dream." *JSTOR Daily*, May 18, 2015. <https://daily.jstor.org/james-truslow-adams-dreaming-american-dream/>.

# Plagiarism Rules Awareness Statement



Faculty of Humanities  
Version September 2014

## PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

### **Fraud and Plagiarism**

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above. |   |
| Name:   | Lotte Rieger  |
| Student number:   | 5594308   |
| Date and signature:   | 14-06-2020<br> |

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.