

21st SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE ACTIVITY AND SOCIETY (E5)

Future and current space missions: including and expanding all aspects of human life on-board and in other worlds (1)

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HOW TO COLONIZE SPACE IN SEVEN EASY STEPS – PART I: ASTRONAUTICAL
DEVELOPMENT FOR MAKING THE PEOPLE MORE SECURE

Abstract

A previous paper (Bernasconi, 2008), examined alternative models presented by preeminent researchers during the 1940's-1960's. Robert Heinlein postulated the first Moon flight as the outcome – supported by an ample development of aerospace transportation means – of the focused action of one man wishing to realize his deepest dream. A broad technological basis and a strong entrepreneurial drive would then sustain a fast human and economic expansion on three new planets.

Historically, the Moon was reached thanks to a “Faustian bargain” between astronautical developers and governments. The technical success of this enterprise resulted (through repeated processes) to the early triumph of Apollo – but it also established the presumption of this method as the sole one for enabling space development. Eventually, this paradigm's continued application of contributed to the decline of the astronautical endeavour (Bernasconi, 2009).

Furthermore, the 20th-century experience forcefully demonstrates that all kinds of collectivistic state schemes failed morally, and in defusing any major self-defined crises. Worse, they revealed themselves unfit to satisfy the basic needs of the subject people! This remains, however, an essential and demanding task in the third millennium, as well. Indeed, we have shown (Bernasconi Bernasconi, 1997) that generic human needs (in terms of metabolic resources, energy, materials, space) point to the Space Option as the logical choice.

Thus, just as conventional statist methods reveal their inaptitude to support the unfolding of the astronautical endeavour, we come to recognize space development as vital! This tension alone would suffice to break the “Apollo” operational paradigm. A self-supporting astronautical endeavour must build upon private actions that generate wealth through commercial activities. The technical processes for reaching, acquiring, valorizing, and distributing the resources of extraterrestrial space cannot, however, flourish within a predatory environment based on degenerate ethical principles.

As any predatory government can easily forfeit those resources, we must identify means for maintaining a viable social environment. Among the numerous initiatives needed, we list: dissemination of factual information, moral-rights education support, development and distribution of technical means; devices and processes for resilient, open communication; systems for power generation, to produce (and keep) new wealth.

In fact, the vital condition for true Astronautics – a vast increase in actual respect of moral rights – can also become its best consequence, as the prosperity from the space arena empowers the people, making them materially safer and more secure in their fundamental moral rights.