

Aff- Africa Advantage

Because I believe that space exploration should be done for the betterment of all humankind, I affirm the resolution: Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust.

My value for this round will be justice which Cambridge Dictionary, last accessed on December 11, 2021, defines as “fairness in the way people are dealt with.” [accessed at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/justice>] MD

My value criterion is reducing exploitation. This criterion is the best way to evaluate the round because to exploit someone is to take unfair advantage of them, or to do injustice to them.

Zwolinski Professor of Philosophy at the University of San Diego, and Wertheimer, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Vermont, 2016.

Matt Zwolinski and Alan Wertheimer, “Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,” August 16, 2016.

[Exploitation, last accessed on December 11, 2021, Accessed at:

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation/>] MD

To exploit someone is to take unfair advantage of them. It is to use another person’s vulnerability for one’s own benefit. Of course, benefitting from another’s vulnerability is not always morally wrong—we do not condemn a chess player for exploiting a weakness in his opponent’s defense, for instance. But some forms of advantage-taking do seem to be clearly wrong, and it is this normative sense of exploitation that is of primary interest to moral and political philosophers. Exploitation can be transactional or structural. In the former case, the unfairness is a property of a discrete transaction between two or more individuals. A sweatshop that pays low wages, for example, or a pharmaceutical research firm that tests drugs on poor subjects in the developing world, might be said to exploit others in this sense. But exploitation can also be structural—a property of institutions or systems in which the “rules of the game” unfairly benefit one group of people to the detriment of another. As we will see below, Karl Marx believed that the economic and political institutions of capitalism were exploitative in this sense. And some contemporary feminists have argued that the institution of traditional marriage is exploitative insofar as it preys upon and reinforces pernicious forms of inequality between men and women (Sample 2003: Ch. 4).

I offer one contention to show how space exploration would be less exploitative without private companies.

African minerals

The transition to renewable energies is leading to the African continent's economic growth.

Signe, distinguished fellow at Stanford University's Center for African Studies and Johnson, PhD in Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley, 2021.

Landry Signe and Chelsea Johnson "The Policy Center for the New South," May 2021. [Africa's mining potential: Trends, Opportunities, Challenges and Strategies, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at: <https://www.policycenter.ma/sites/default/files/PP-10-21-Landry-Signe.pdf>] MD

The mining and natural resource sector is just as critical to human development as to economic growth. The stabilization of mining industries can be a necessary step to curtailing detrimental inflation, national debt, and outsized shocks to commodity prices. Political stability is a critical aspect of the mining industry's success because it gives positive assurance that countries can avoid the resource curse, and encourages greater foreign investment. The export of raw materials, particularly oil, diamonds, and platinum, has represented a key source of revenues on the continent for decades, but many African countries have been unable to receive the full economic benefits associated with their natural resources because of the so-called resource curse, which is discussed in greater detail below. Gold also has been a key resource, although its economic contribution varies based on whether its extraction is sourced from small-scale, artisanal mines or larger industrial mines that are subject to regulations that typically require the payment of royalties and other taxes to the federal government²⁸. Likewise, many regions remain underexplored, suggesting there is a high probability that the continent hosts natural resource wealth that, if leveraged correctly, could pull countries out of economic stagnation and into an era of emerging market growth. Protecting and expanding access to natural resources is also an important method of supporting pro-poor growth. Preventing the privatization of resources on which the poor depend encourages wealth distribution and inclusive economic activity²⁹. In addition to the potential for inclusive growth in the mining sector, there is a major potential for value-addition to minerals before exporting. In general, rising exports contribute to higher government finances, which provide the funding needed for building human and physical capital.

Space mining would crash the commodity market sending African markets into a free-fall.

CB Insights, a private company that provides market intelligence on private companies and investor activities, 2017. [and clients include Cisco, FirstMark Capital, and etc]

CB Insights, "Research Briefs," August 21, 2017. [Here's why mining platinum from asteroids could be a billion-dollar opportunity, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at: <https://www.cbinsights.com/research/asteroid-mining-goldman-sachs-platinum/>] MD

A single asteroid could contain as much as \$50B worth of platinum. Space mining could roil commodity markets back on earth and startups are taking the first steps to making it happen. The market value of precious metals on specific asteroids could fundamentally change supply and demand dynamics back on earth, according to various reports. As a recent Goldman Sachs research note put it: "a single asteroid the size of a football field could contain \$25B to \$50B worth of platinum."

A commodity price collapse leads to massive poverty and significant decreased government spending. Empirically proven.

McGroarty, Health & Medicine Bureau Chief, and Parkinson, Africa Bureau Chief for The Wall Street Journal, 2016.

Patrick McGroarty, and Joe Parkinson, "Wall Street Journal," March 4, 2016. [Mining collapse cripples Africa's dreams of prosperity, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/mining-collapse-cripples-africas-dreams-of-prosperity-1457104328>] MD

A decadelong commodity boom brought sleek shopping malls, tidy brick homes and dozens of private schools to this palm-pocked mining town in the heart of Africa. The population doubled and incomes soared as record copper prices and a flood of Chinese investment and workers transformed a region bordering war-ravaged Congo into a beacon for Africa's rising middle class. Now the global forces that propelled Kitwe's rise have reversed, fomenting an economic and social crisis that has interrupted dreams of greater prosperity across Zambia's copper belt and exposed the fragility of Africa's commodity-fueled growth model. Slowing Chinese demand has nearly halved the price of copper in two years, upending an economy reliant on the metal for 70% of its exports. Chinese contractors and restaurateurs that followed state construction companies into the landlocked country are starting to head home. Zambia's kwacha currency is one of the world's worst performers, losing half its value last year. In desperation, President Edgar Lungu has asked for divine intervention, decreeing nationwide days of prayer to resurrect the stricken economy. Kitwe is a prime victim of the commodity bust's outsize impact on Africa. Several mines have closed and some 15,000 workers have been laid off, with thousands more expected. Officials say each miner's salary supports 15 dependents, exposing the entire town to the ravages of the global rout. Violent crime is rising and blackouts have become commonplace. Hundreds of miners have withdrawn their children from private schools that sprang up to cater to new aspirations. Mining industry subsidies for HIV and malaria medications have been reduced. Double-digit inflation has frozen sales of the refrigerators, televisions and cars coveted here as hallmarks of success. "It's like being back to square one. We never expected such a situation," said Reagan Musonda, one of about 4,000 workers who lost their jobs at Glencore PLC's local Mopani unit in November. Saddled with tuition bills for three siblings and two children, Mr. Musonda—whose grandfather named him after the 40th U.S. president—is turning the forest on a patch of land he owns into charcoal to make ends meet. Kitwe's trauma is reverberating across Zambia and other resource-reliant African economies from South Africa to the Sahara. After years of blistering expansion, Nigeria, Angola and South Africa—whose oil, gold and platinum industries have long driven the region's growth—are mired in crises that are freezing development and testing increasingly cash-strapped governments.

This collapse has two impacts:

The first is pandemics-

Absent strong government investment, Africa is ripe to be next for a global pandemic.

Niengasong, head of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019.

John N. Nkengasong, "Nature," March 11, 2019. [How Africa can quell the next disease outbreaks, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at: [How Africa can quell the next disease outbreaks \(nature.com\)](http://www.nature.com)] MD

Africa's population is expected to double from 1.2 billion now to 2.4 billion by 2050. People are travelling greater distances, too. Last year, Ethiopian Airlines alone transported more than 10 million passengers — a 21% rise from 2017. Africa's ambitious plans to establish free trade and travel across the continent will increase movement even more. Although economically advantageous, these plans could set the stage for HIV, Ebola, pandemic influenza, chikungunya, plague, Lassa fever and antimicrobial-resistant bacterial infections to spread farther and faster. Waiting for emergency help from the West costs lives, health and resources. African leaders are starting to take ownership of investments in their citizens' health, but fewer than 15 countries on the continent currently have institutions that can perform the functions of an effective NPHI, such as disease surveillance linked with a diagnostic laboratory,

and the capacity to activate a rapid-response team for outbreaks and serve as an operation centre in public-health emergencies. As head of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (African CDC), I call on all 55 member states to establish or strengthen NPHIs. And I urge the private sector in Africa and worldwide, and bodies everywhere, to invest in these efforts. According to the World Bank, Africa needs between US\$2 billion and \$3.5 billion a year for epidemic preparedness; in 2015, 8 African nations received from various donors about \$700 million for this cause. I think that much of the gap can be filled from within Africa, where the 2014–16 Ebola outbreak cost roughly \$53 billion. The African Business Coalition for Health, formed in 2017, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa are encouraging investment and coordinating efforts by African philanthropists and business leaders to support health programmes. The African Union (AU), a 55-member continental organization based in Addis Ababa, has set up a programme to tax imports of goods to Africa, designed to shift AU running costs away from donors. A fraction of these funds should go towards NPHIs. NPHIs are a health-security imperative in a changing Africa, where rapidly expanding populations mean greater urbanization and more people in ~~stums~~ poverty. Currently, not even half of urban dwellers in sub-Saharan Africa have access to sanitation; even fewer have received the recommended suite of childhood vaccinations. Old diseases, and those once limited to rural and remote areas, are appearing in cities — plague in Antananarivo, Ebola virus in capitals across West Africa. And we have seen time and again that an outbreak in Africa is a global threat. NPHIs should prioritize four broad areas. First, providing basic functions such as disease surveillance and coordinating emergency operations, even in remote areas. Second, creating lab networks that can quickly diagnose, track and pinpoint the origin of emerging infections. Third, developing a workforce to collect, assess, share and act on quality data, including advanced technologies such as genetic sequencing and informatics. Fourth, developing a strong capacity for social scientists to engage with communities and change behaviours. Sociologists and anthropologists were crucial in ending the Ebola outbreak in West Africa by, for example, promoting safe burials — which meant modifying long-standing traditions, such as washing the corpse of a loved one. It will take years for NPHIs to strengthen their capacities in these areas. African countries must also collaborate with their neighbours to establish surveillance and lab networks and to pool public-health assets, for example by sending biological specimens to be tested in specialized labs in another country if local expertise is lacking. All this requires political leadership, financial commitment, partnerships and innovation. But I have reason for hope. Last month, Paul Kagame, Rwanda's president and AU chair, brought together heads of global bodies, including those of the UN and the World Health Organization, the AU Commission chair, private-sector leaders such as Bill Gates, and heads of state and government across Africa. This gathering culminated in the AU heads of state and government committing to increase domestic investment in health-care infrastructure, and to work with the private sector to do so. In response, a number of private-sector firms pledged \$200 million. This is the first time such high-level discussions on or commitments to domestic investment in health systems have occurred.

Every pandemic risks extinction, and lack of government investments for health in Africa make it even more likely.

Supriya, Ph.D. in polymer science and engineering from Virginia Tech, 2021.

Lakshmi Supriya, “News Medical Life Sciences,” April 19, 2021. [Humans versus viruses- Can we avoid extinction in near future, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at: <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20210419/Humans-versus-viruses-Can-we-avoid-extinction-in-near-future.aspx>] MD

In an essay published on the online server Preprints*, Eleftherios P. Diamandis of the University of Toronto and the Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto, argues that changes caused by humans, to the climate, and everything around us will lead to changes that may have a dramatic impact on human life. Because our ecosystems are so complex, we don't know how our actions will affect us in the long run, so humans generally disregard them. Changing our environment Everything around us is changing, from living organisms to the climate, water, and soil. Some estimates say about half the organisms that existed 50 years ago have already become extinct, and about 80% of the species may become extinct in the future. As the debate on global warming continues, according to data, the last six years have been the warmest on record. Global warming is melting ice, and sea levels have been increasing. The changing climate is causing more and more wildfires, which are leading to other related damage. At the same time, increased flooding is causing large-scale devastation. One question that arises is how much environmental damage have humans already done? A recent study compared the natural biomass on Earth to the mass produced by humans and found humans produce a mass equal to their weight every week. This human-made mass is mainly for buildings, roads, and plastic products. In the early 1900s, human-made mass was about 3% of the global biomass. Today both are about equal. Projections say by 2040, the human-made mass will be triple that of Earth's biomass. But, slowing down human activity that causes such production may be difficult, given it is considered part of our growth as a civilization. Emerging pathogens Although we are made up of human cells, we have almost ten times that of bacteria just in our guts and more on our skin. These microbes not only affect locally but also affect the entire body. There is a balance between the good and bad bacteria, and any change in the environment may cause this balance to shift,

especially on the skin, the consequences of which are unknown. Although most bacteria on and inside of us are harmless, gut bacteria can also have viruses. If viruses don't kill the bacteria immediately, they can incorporate into the bacterial genome and stay latent for a long time until reactivation by environmental factors, when they can become pathogenic. They can also escape from the gut and enter other organs or the bloodstream. Bacteria can then use these viruses to kill other bacteria or help them evolve to more virulent strains. An example of the evolution of pathogens is the cause of the current pandemic, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Several mutations are now known that make the virus more infectious and resistant to immune responses, and strengthening its to enter cells via surface receptors. The brain There is evidence that the SARS-CoV-2 can also affect the brain. The virus may enter the brain via the olfactory tract or through the angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) pathway. Viruses can also affect our senses, such as a loss of smell and taste, and there could be other so far unknown neurological effects. The loss of smell seen in COVID-19 could be a new viral syndrome specific to this disease. Many books and movies have described pandemics caused by pathogens that wipe out large populations and cause severe diseases. In the essay, the author provides a hypothetical scenario where a gut bacteria suddenly starts producing viral proteins. Some virions spread through the body and get transmitted through the human population. After a few months, the virus started causing blindness, and within a year, large populations lost their vision. Pandemics can cause other diseases that can threaten humanity's entire existence. The COVID-19 pandemic brought this possibility to the forefront. If we continue disturbing the equilibrium between us and the environment, we don't know what the consequences may be and the next pandemic could lead us to extinction.

Second, is Chinese economic growth-

China is becoming more dependent on Africa to grow its economy.

Ding, Chair professor of political economy at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, et al., 2020.

Xiaoquin Ding, Qiaoyan Chai, and Cheng Chen, "World Review of Political Economy," Summer 2020.

[China–Africa Economic and Trade Cooperation from the Perspective of the Community

with Shared Benefits: Achievements, Challenges, and Prospects, last accessed on December 12, 2021,

Accessed at:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.13169/worlrevipoliecon.11.2.0208.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A13be790e13730d063191b6f40de08290>] MD

In terms of growth rate, the proportion of exports to Africa in China's total exports and the proportion of imports from Africa in China's total imports rose steadily from 2000 to 2014. In 2015 and 2016, due to the impact of the global economic situation, there was a sharp drop. Another reason was that, under the influence of the Chinese government's strategy of "going global" and "great economy and trade," more and more Chinese enterprises went to Africa and invested in Africa, and their products replaced some of Africa's imports. Although the absolute value of China–Africa trade has declined, the economic ties have become even closer. Figure 2 shows the trend and growth rate changes of China's import and export trade with Africa. Since 2000, the proportion of China–Africa trade in China's total international trade has gradually increased from 2.1% to 4.3%. According to China's customs statistics, China's trade with Africa increased by 20% in 2018, which is the highest since 2011 and seven percentage points higher than China's international trade in the same period. China's imports from Africa rose by as much as 31%, 15% higher than the foreign trade in the same period.⁷ The importance of China–Africa trade to the social and economic development of both sides is self-evident.

Faced with stalled growth, China will lash out and risk war with the US.

Brands, professor of global affairs at John Hopkins University, and Beckley, associate professor of political science at Tufts University, 2021.

Hal Brands, and Michael Beckley, "Foreign Policy," September 24, 2021. [China is a declining power—and that's the problem, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at:

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/24/china-great-power-united-states/>] MD

There is an entire swath of literature, known as “power transition theory,” which holds that great-power war typically occurs at the intersection of one hegemon’s rise and another’s decline. This is the body of work underpinning the Thucydides Trap, and there is, admittedly, an elemental truth to the idea. The rise of new powers is invariably destabilizing. In the runup to the Peloponnesian War in the 5th century B.C., Athens would not have seemed so menacing to Sparta had it not built a vast empire and become a naval superpower. Washington and Beijing would not be locked in rivalry if China was still poor and weak. Rising powers do expand their influence in ways that threaten reigning powers. But the calculus that produces war—particularly the calculus that pushes revisionist powers, countries seeking to shake up the existing system, to lash out violently—is more complex. A country whose relative wealth and power are growing will surely become more assertive and ambitious. All things equal, it will seek greater global influence and prestige. But if its position is steadily improving, it should postpone a deadly showdown with the reigning hegemon until it has become even stronger. Such a country should follow the dictum former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping laid down for a rising China after the Cold War: It should hide its capabilities and bide its time. Now imagine a different scenario. A dissatisfied state has been building its power and expanding its geopolitical horizons. But then the country peaks, perhaps because its economy slows, perhaps because its own assertiveness provokes a coalition of determined rivals, or perhaps because both of these things happen at once. The future starts to look quite forbidding: a sense of imminent danger starts to replace a feeling of limitless possibility. In these circumstances, a revisionist power may act boldly, even aggressively, to grab what it can before it is too late. The most dangerous trajectory in world politics is a long rise followed by the prospect of a sharp decline. As we show in our forthcoming book, *Danger Zone: The Coming Conflict with China*, this scenario is more common than you might think. Historian Donald Kagan showed, for instance, that Athens started acting more belligerently in the years before the Peloponnesian War because it feared adverse shifts in the balance of naval power—in other words, because it was on the verge of losing influence vis-à-vis Sparta. We see the same thing in more recent cases as well. Over the past 150 years, peaking powers—great powers that had been growing dramatically faster than the world average and then suffered a severe, prolonged slowdown—usually don’t fade away quietly. Rather, they become brash and aggressive. They suppress dissent at home and try to regain economic momentum by creating exclusive spheres of influence abroad. They pour money into their militaries and use force to expand their influence. This behavior commonly provokes great-power tensions. In some cases, it touches disastrous wars. This shouldn’t be surprising. Eras of rapid growth supercharge a country’s ambitions, raise its people’s expectations, and make its rivals nervous. During a sustained economic boom, businesses enjoy rising profits and citizens get used to living large. The country becomes a bigger player on the global stage. Then stagnation strikes. Slowing growth makes it harder for leaders to keep the public happy. Economic underperformance weakens the country against its rivals. Fearing upheaval, leaders crack down on dissent. They maneuver desperately to keep geopolitical enemies at bay. Expansion seems like a solution—a way of grabbing economic resources and markets, making nationalism a crutch for a wounded regime, and beating back foreign threats. Many countries have followed this path. When the United States’ long post-Civil War economic surge ended, Washington violently suppressed strikes and unrest at home, built a powerful blue-water Navy, and engaged in a fit of belligerence and imperial expansion during the 1890s. After a fast-rising imperial Russia fell into a deep slump at the turn of the 20th century, the tsarist government cracked down hard while also enlarging its military, seeking colonial gains in East Asia and sending around 170,000 soldiers to occupy Manchuria. These moves backfired spectacularly: They antagonized Japan, which beat Russia in the first great-power war of the 20th century. A century later, Russia became aggressive under similar circumstances. Facing a severe, post-2008 economic slowdown, Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded two neighboring countries, sought to create a new Eurasian economic bloc, staked Moscow’s claim to a resource-rich Arctic, and steered Russia deeper into dictatorship. Even democratic France engaged in anxious aggrandizement after the end of its postwar economic expansion in the 1970s. It tried to rebuild its old sphere of influence in Africa, deploying 14,000 troops to its former colonies and undertaking a dozen military interventions over the next two decades. All of these cases were complicated, yet the pattern is clear. If a rapid rise gives countries the means to act boldly, the fear of decline serves up a powerful motive for rash, more urgent expansion. The same thing often happens when fast-rising powers cause their own containment by a hostile coalition. In fact, some of history’s most gruesome wars have come when revisionist powers concluded their path to glory was about to be blocked. Imperial Germany and Japan are textbook examples. Germany’s rivalry with Britain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is often considered an analogue to U.S.-China competition: In both cases, an autocratic challenger threatened a liberal hegemon. But the more sobering parallel is this: War came when a cornered Germany grasped it would not zip past its rivals without a fight. For decades after unification in 1871, Germany soared. Its factories spewed out iron and steel, erasing Britain’s economic lead. Berlin built Europe’s finest army and battleships that threatened British supremacy at sea. By the early 1900s, Germany was a European heavyweight seeking an enormous sphere of influence—a Mitteleuropa, or Middle Europe—on the continent. It was also pursuing, under then-Kaiser Wilhelm II, a “world policy” aimed at securing colonies and global power. But during the prelude to war, the kaiser and his aides didn’t feel confident. Germany’s brash behavior caused its encirclement by hostile powers. London, Paris, and St. Petersburg, Russia, formed a “Triple Entente” to block German expansion. By 1914, time was running short. Germany was losing ground economically to a fast-growing Russia; London and France were pursuing economic containment by blocking its access to oil and iron ore. Berlin’s key ally, Austria-Hungary, was being torn apart by ethnic tensions. At home, Germany’s autocratic political system was in trouble. Most ominous, the military balance was shifting. France was enlarging its army; Russia was adding 470,000 men to its military and slashing the time it needed to mobilize for war. Britain announced it would build two battleships for every one built by Berlin. Germany was, for the moment, Europe’s foremost military power. But by 1916 and 1917, it would be hopelessly overmatched. The result was a now-or-never mentality: Germany should “defeat the enemy while we still stand a chance of victory,” declared Chief of Staff Helmuth von Moltke, even if that meant “provoking a war in the near future.” This is what happened after Serbian nationalists assassinated Austria’s crown prince in June 1914. The kaiser’s government urged Austria-Hungary to crush Serbia, even though that meant war with Russia and France. It then invaded neutral Belgium—the key to its Schlieffen Plan for a two-front war—despite the likelihood of provoking Britain. “This war will turn into a world war in which England will also intervene,” Moltke acknowledged. Germany’s rise had given it the power to gamble for greatness. Its impending decline drove the decisions that plunged the world into war. Imperial Japan followed a similar trajectory. For a half-century after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan was rising steadily. The building of a modern economy and a fierce military allowed Tokyo to win two major wars and accumulate colonial privileges in China, Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula. Yet Japan was not a hyper-belligerent predator: Through the 1920s, it cooperated with the United States, Britain, and other countries to create a cooperative security framework in the Asia-Pacific. During that decade, however, things fell apart. Growth dropped from 6.1 percent annually between 1904 and 1919 to 1.8 percent annually in the 1920s; the Great Depression then shut Japan’s overseas markets. Unemployment soared, and bankrupt farmers sold their daughters. In China, meanwhile, Japanese influence was being challenged by the Soviet Union and a rising nationalist movement under then-Chinese leader Chiang Kai-Shek. Tokyo’s answer was fascism at home and aggression abroad. From the late 1920s onward, the military conducted a slow-motion coup and harnessed the nation’s resources for “total war.” Japan initiated a massive military buildup and violently established a vast sphere of influence, seizing Manchuria in 1931, invading China in 1937, and laying plans to conquer resource-rich colonies and strategic islands across the Asia-Pacific. The goal was to build an autarkic empire; the result drew a strategic noose around Tokyo’s neck. Japan’s push into China eventually led to a punishing war with the Soviet Union. Japan’s designs on Southeast Asia alarmed Britain. Its drive for regional primacy also made it a foe of the United States—the country from which Tokyo imported nearly all of its oil with an economy vastly larger than Japan’s. Tokyo had antagonized an overwhelming coalition of enemies. It then risked everything rather than accepting humiliation and decline. The precipitating cause, again, was a closing window of opportunity. By 1941, the United States was building an unbeatable military. In July, then-U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt imposed an oil embargo that threatened to stop Japan’s expansion in its tracks. But Japan still had a temporary military edge in the Pacific Ocean, thanks to its early rearmament. So it used that advantage in a lightning attack—seizing the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, and other possessions from Singapore to Wake Island as well as bombing the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor—which guaranteed its own destruction. Japan’s prospects for victory were dim, acknowledged then-Japanese Gen. Hideki Tojo, yet there was no choice but to “close one’s eyes and jump.” A revisionist Japan became most violent when it saw that time was running out. This is the real trap the

United States should worry about regarding China today—the trap in which an aspiring superpower peaks and then refuses to bear the painful consequences of descent. China’s rise is no mirage: Decades of growth have given Beijing the economic sinews of global power. Major investments in key technologies and communications infrastructure have yielded a strong position in the struggle for geo-economic influence; China is using a multi-continent Belt and Road Initiative to bring other states into its orbit. Most alarming, think tank assessments and U.S. Defense Department reports show China’s increasingly formidable military now stands a real chance of winning a war against the United States in the Western Pacific. It is unsurprising, therefore, that China has also developed the ambitions of a superpower: Xi has more or less announced that Beijing desires to assert its sovereignty over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and other disputed areas, becoming Asia’s preeminent power and challenging the United States for global leadership. Yet if China’s geopolitical window of opportunity is real, its future is already starting to look quite grim because it is quickly losing the advantages that propelled its rapid growth. From the 1970s to the 2000s, China was nearly self-sufficient in food, water, and energy resources. It enjoyed the greatest demographic dividend in history, with 10 working-age adults for every senior citizen aged 65 or older. (For most major economies, the average is closer to 5 working-age adults for every senior citizen.) China had a secure geopolitical environment and easy access to foreign markets and technology, all underpinned by friendly relations with the United States. And China’s government skillfully harnessed these advantages by carrying out a process of economic reform and opening while also moving the regime from stifling totalitarianism under former Chinese leader Mao Zedong to a smarter—if still deeply repressive—form of authoritarianism under his successors. China had it all from the 1970s to the early 2010s—just the mix of endowments, environment, people, and policies needed to thrive. Since the late 2000s, however, the drivers of China’s rise have either stalled or turned around entirely. For example, China is running out of resources: Water has become scarce, and the country is importing more energy and food than any other nation, having ravaged its own natural resources. Economic growth is therefore becoming costlier: According to data from DBS Bank, it takes three times as many inputs to produce a unit of growth today as it did in the early 2000s. China is also approaching a demographic precipice: From 2020 to 2050, it will lose an astounding 200 million working-age adults—a population the size of Nigeria—and gain 200 million senior citizens. The fiscal and economic consequences will be devastating: Current projections suggest China’s medical and social security spending will have to triple as a share of GDP, from 10 percent to 30 percent, by 2050 just to prevent millions of seniors from dying of impoverishment and neglect. To make matters worse, China is turning away from the package of policies that promoted rapid growth. Under Xi, Beijing has slid back toward totalitarianism. Xi has appointed himself “chairman of everything,” destroyed any semblance of collective rule, and made adherence to “Xi Jinping thought” the ideological core of an increasingly rigid regime. And he has relentlessly pursued the centralization of power at the expense of economic prosperity. State zombie firms are being propped up while private firms are starved of capital. Objective economic analysis is being replaced by government propaganda. Innovation is becoming more difficult in a climate of stultifying ideological conformity. Meanwhile, Xi’s brutal anti-corruption campaign has deterred entrepreneurship, and a wave of politically driven regulations has erased more than \$1 trillion from the market capitalization of China’s leading tech firms. Xi hasn’t simply stopped the process of economic liberalization that powered China’s development: He has thrown it hard into reverse. The economic damage these trends are causing is starting to accumulate—and it is compounding the slowdown that would have occurred anyway as a fast-growing economy matures. The Chinese economy has been losing steam for more than a decade: The country’s official growth rate declined from 14 percent in 2007 to 6 percent in 2019, and rigorous studies suggest the true growth rate is now closer to 2 percent. Worse, most of that growth stems from government stimulus spending. According to data from the Conference Board, total factor productivity declined 1.3 percent every year on average between 2008 and 2019, meaning China is spending more to produce less each year. This has led, in turn, to massive debt: China’s total debt surged eight-fold between 2008 and 2019 and exceeded 300 percent of GDP prior to COVID-19. Any country that has accumulated debt or lost productivity at anything close to China’s current pace has subsequently suffered at least one “lost decade” of near-zero economic growth. All of this is happening, moreover, as China confronts an increasingly hostile external environment. The combination of COVID-19, persistent human rights abuses, and aggressive policies have caused negative views of China to reach levels not seen since the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. Countries worried about Chinese competition have slapped thousands of new trade barriers on its goods since 2008. More than a dozen countries have dropped out of Xi’s Belt and Road Initiative while the United States wages a global campaign against key Chinese tech companies—notably, Huawei—and rich democracies across multiple continents throw up barriers to Beijing’s digital influence. The world is becoming less conducive to easy Chinese growth, and Xi’s regime increasingly faces the sort of strategic encirclement that once drove German and Japanese leaders to desperation. Case in point is U.S. policy.

Over the past five years, two U.S. presidential administrations have committed the United States to a policy of “competition”—really, neo-containment—vis-à-vis China. U.S. defense strategy is now focused squarely on defeating Chinese aggression in the Western Pacific; Washington is using an array of trade and technological sanctions to check Beijing’s influence and limit its prospects for economic primacy. “Once imperial America considers you as their ‘enemy,’ you’re in big trouble,” one senior People’s Liberation Army officer warned. Indeed, the United States has also committed to orchestrating greater global resistance to Chinese power, a campaign that is starting to show results as more and more countries respond to the threat from Beijing. In maritime Asia, resistance to Chinese power is stiffening. Taiwan is boosting military spending and laying plans to turn itself into a strategic porcupine in the Western Pacific. Japan is carrying out its biggest military buildup since the end of the Cold War and has agreed to back the United States if China attacks Taiwan. The countries around the South China Sea, particularly Vietnam and Indonesia, are beefing up their air, naval, and coast guard forces to contest China’s expansive claims. Other countries are pushing back against Beijing’s assertiveness as well. Australia is expanding northern bases to accommodate U.S. ships and aircraft and building long-range conventional missiles and nuclear-powered attack submarines. India is massing forces on its border with China while sending warships through the South China Sea. The European Union has labeled Beijing a “systemic rival,” and Europe’s three greatest powers—France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—have dispatched naval task forces to the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. A variety of multilateral anti-China initiatives—the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue; supply chain alliances; the new so-called AUKUS alliance with Washington, London, and Canberra; and others—are in the works. The United States’ “multilateral club strategy,” hawkish and well-connected scholar Yan Xuetong acknowledged in July, is “isolating China” and hurting its development. No doubt, counter-China cooperation has remained imperfect. But the overall trend is clear: An array of actors is gradually joining forces to check Beijing’s power and put it in a strategic box. China, in other words, is not a forever-ascendant country. It is an already-strong, enormously ambitious, and deeply troubled power whose window of opportunity won’t stay open for long.

US-China war results in a nuclear war and the end of civilization.

Cheong, senior journalist with the Strait Times, 2000.

Ching Cheong, senior journalist with The Strait Times, “No one Gains in war over Taiwan,” June 25, 2000. [From Will Taiwan break away: The rise of Taiwanese nationalism, Accessed at:

http://books.google.com/books?id=TocvXqTwiboC&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=No+One+Gains+in+War+Over+Taiwan&source=bl&ots=UOikACTknH&sig=pt7G3yOv3HKFi02A5HJd_aZUOrY&hl=en&ei=b-OuTpCBMuPq0gGq7_mcDw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CDAQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=No%20One%20Gains%20in%20War%20Over%20Taiwan&f=false

According to General Matthew Ridgeway, commander of the US eighth army which fought against the Chinese in the Korean War, the US had at the time thought of using nuclear weapons against China to save the US from military defeat. In his book, The Korean War, a personal account of the military and political aspects of the conflict and its implications on future US foreign policy. Gen Ridgeway said that US was confronted with two choices in Korea—truce or a broadened war, which could have led to the use of nuclear weapons. If the US had to resort to nuclear weaponry to defeat China long before the latter acquired a similar capability, there is a little hope of winning a war against China 50 years later, short of using nuclear weapons. The US estimates that China possesses about 20 nuclear warheads that can destroy major American cities. Beijing also seems prepared to go for the nuclear option. A Chinese military officer disclosed recently that Beijing was considering a review of its “non first use” principle regarding nuclear weapons. Major-General Pan Zhangqiang, president of the military-funded Institute for Strategic Studies, told a gathering at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington that although the government still abided by that principle, there were strong pressures from the military to drop it. He said military leaders considered the use of nuclear weapons mandatory if the country risked dismemberment as a result of foreign intervention. Gen Ridgeway said that should that come to pass, we would see the destruction of civilization. There would be no victors in such a war. While the prospect of a nuclear Armageddon over Taiwan might seem inconceivable, it cannot be ruled out entirely, for China puts sovereignty above everything else. Gen Ridgeway called that the biggest mistake the US made during the Korean War was to assess Chinese actions according to the American way of thinking.

Extensions

Link- Space mining floods the market

Space mining would collapse global commodity markets.

O'Neill, Ph.D. in solar physics from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and space science producer for Discovery News, 2012.

Ian "Seeker," April 24, 2012. [Mining asteroids: Not mankind's silver bullet, last accessed on December 12, 2021, Accessed at:

<https://www.seeker.com/mining-asteroids-not-mankinds-silver-bullet-1765750275.html>] MD

But the biggest selling point for asteroid mining is, of course, all the gazillions of dollars we stand to make from sucking precious metals like platinum from asteroids. As Diamandis kept emphasizing, by exploiting the solar system we would enrich the entire planet with huge wealth. How a profit-making industry became a world-wide charity, I'm not too sure. Last time I checked, BP wasn't busy enriching the world with the profits from their oil drilling. And, as Fish has pointed out countless times, flooding the world's economy with much-fabled trillions of dollars-worth of "cheap" platinum and other rare minerals could kill global markets. On the basis of supply and demand, the price of platinum group metals could collapse as supply routes from asteroids become common.

Space mining risks collapsing the commodity markets.

Campbell, managing partner for the consulting firm, MD Campbell and Associates, 2009.

Michael D. Campbell, managing partner for the consulting firm, MD Campbell and Associates, and Fellow in the Geological society of American, et. al, "AAPG energy minerals Division Uranium Committee annual report, June 9, 2009. [Developing industrial minerals, nuclear minerals & commodities of interest via off-world exploration and mining, Accessed at:

<http://www.mdcampbell.com/spaceminingeconomics060909.pdf>] MD

In the early 1990s, work began in earnest to consider near-Earth asteroids (NEAs) as resources of the future (see Lewis, et al., 1993) and continues today (see Ruzicka, et al., 2008). The time has arrived to begin to consider mining certain commodities on the Moon in addition to helium-3, as well as on the outlying planets, their moons, and asteroids. This will require long-duration robotic missions and manned-space missions that will involve working in adverse conditions. A combination of nuclear-powered and solar-powered systems will provide the needed energy for such missions. The former will provide the high-amp power while solar will provide the primary and back-up power needed for lower-amp requirements where possible. The availability and development of these off-world resources could easily overwhelm the markets on Earth for many years. The impact would drive the commodity prices down, hence making Earth-based operations unprofitable and eventually obsolete. As a natural progression over the next 40 to 50 years and beyond, natural resource corporations will certainly wring-out the last of the metals and other commodities on Earth from low-grade deposits, dumps and landfills until either the costs or the lack of political cooperation via NIMBY attitudes ("not in my back yard") will bring the activities to a close. Society will also encourage or require industry to expand the recycling of products until population demand exceeds such recoveries.

Mining is driving private industry

The promise of riches is driving private industry to space. Mining is essential to making trillions.

Mallick, currently pursuing LL.M in International Law at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and Rajagopalan, Director of the Centre for Security, Strategy and Technology (CSST) at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, 2019.

Senjuti Mallick and Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, ORF Occasional Paper, January 2019. [“If Space is ‘the Province of Mankind’, Who Owns its Resources? The Potential of Space Mining and its Legal Implications”, last accessed on December 15, 2021, Accessed at: <https://www.orfonline.org/research/if-space-is-the-province-of-mankind-who-owns-its-resources-47561/>] MD

June 2018 marked the golden jubilee of the first United Nations (UN) Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna in 1968. It also marked 51 years of the Outer Space Treaty (OST) of 1967. Today, what was once fodder for cosmological science fiction has become reality, owing to outer-space innovations that have happened in the last half a century. Unlike the lunar missions of the past, contemporary explorations are led mostly by private-sector entities eager to capitalise on the potential of extracting resources in outer space. How plausible is extraterrestrial mining—is it a long-term proposition or more of a fantasy? And what challenges are facing those engaged in space mining? Soon after a bill was signed increasing the 2018 budget for NASA (the US’ National Aeronautics and Space Administration),[1] Senator Ted Cruz said, “I’ll make a prediction right now—the first trillionaire will be made in space.”[ii] The question is, however, how those trillionaires will make their riches from space. Both Peter Diamandis (founder of the Google Lunar XPrize competition) [1] and Neil deGrasse Tyson (US astrophysicist) suggest that the financial returns are to be made in mining asteroids. [iii] Indeed, the economic imperative for space mining is evident and analysts predict that these extraction activities could translate to a multibillion-dollar industry. NASA estimates, for example, that the value of asteroids out there could be in the vicinity of US\$700 quintillion – that amount is roughly equivalent to US\$95 billion for each of us here on Earth.[iv] Another major attraction for the prospective extraterrestrial mining companies is the availability of precious minerals in abundance on the Moon, on Mars and the asteroids (among them—lithium, cobalt, nickel, copper, zinc, niobium, molybdenum, lanthanum, europium, tungsten, and gold).[v] After all, these metals and mineral resources have grown scarce on Earth, and both governments and commercial actors are pushing to look to celestial bodies for resources [vi].