

# Space exploration according to the treatises of hobbes, locke, bentham and mill r...

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## Philosophy of Space Exploration

### Introduction

Philosophy stands as quite an universal way of solving problems related to values, existence, mind, knowledge, reality, reason, and language. In philosophy, there are various methods of dealing with such problems by looking at their magnitude, practical approach and their reliance on ways of thinking. Different philosophers have varying classifications of distinctive philosophical or intellectual points of view, rather than inflexible and universal sets of beliefs. Space exploration has become among the fields that philosophy has shaped, particularly through secular utility maximization, which basically posits that maximizing developments to the benefit of greatest amount of people is duly connected with the growth of human knowledge.

This study seeks to juxtapose space exploration with secular utility maximization. The basic premise this study seeks to analyze states that the development activities by humans in space exploration comes from their desire to gain benefits from it, particularly in terms of investigating

possibilities for human inhabitation and discovering new resources useful for developing human life, among many others. In order to use secular utility maximization as an effective tool analyzing space exploration, it is crucial for this study to incorporate works attributed to human nature, particularly those of the philosophers Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill and David Hume. The ideas of economists Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman and Adam Smith further provide insights on the desire of humans to explore in connection with their role in the expansion of the free market to global terms.

Understanding space exploration in light of secular utility maximization requires a stronger understanding of human nature. Hobbes, a 17th-century English philosopher, discussed the state of nature of humans. Humans, according to Hobbes, are all equal in terms of their bodily and mental abilities. Based on that argument, Hobbes emphasized that no human could claim distinction on account of bodily and mental superiority, for such does not exist in the first place. Instead, Hobbes claimed that the equality of humans has urged them to fight one another under unfounded entitlements to superiority against one another. With that, Hobbes stated that humans have the liberty to do anything that would lead them to protect their lives from harm, hence the necessity of going into war against one another. The absence of laws other than natural laws in the state of nature entails that humans therein do not possess properties or could not lay claims to injustice. What changes the course of the state of nature is the emergence of the Leviathan, or the sovereign-ruler of all humans, to whom humans form a

social contract (Hobbes 60-77; Macpherson 19-28).

Locke, in an apparent response to Hobbes, wrote about the state of nature in *Second Treatise on Civil Government*, which he described as one in which humans have the freedom to dispose of their actions in accordance to natural law. The natural law, according to Locke, is reason, which he touts as the concept that prevents humans from harming one another. All humans, Locke has noted, have the duty to protect the “life, liberty and property” of one another. (Locke 2-9; Macpherson 238-246).

Bentham derived greatly from the premise of Hobbes on the state of nature, in that he held that two factors sovereignly hold humans, namely pain and pleasure. Humans avoid pain by all means and seek pleasure as much as possible; Bentham takes that analysis into account in claiming that humans pattern their actions based on factors that bring them pain and pleasure. Given the foregoing, Bentham has extended his pain-pleasure premise to analyzing governmental actions, stating that actions that encourage pleasure are permitted and those that induce pain are not. However, Bentham has failed to come to terms with psychological egoism, in that his premise on promoting pleasure and suppressing pain may go against individual values. The psychological egoist considers that what is pleasurable and painful for one may not be the same for another. Moreover, Bentham has created a conflict between the promotion of morality and the avoidance of fulfilling self-interests. Morality, for the psychological egoist, should not be based on self-interests; the common good must find basis on morality, not on the whims of a single individual. In later years, however, Bentham pulls out from his analogy that self-interests shape the promotion of morality,

recognizing that altruism is possible from humans (Mill 131-204).

Mill has promoted utilitarianism from the terms set by Bentham in his pain-pleasure premise. The priority of the “greatest-happiness principle” set by Mill lies on the need to aggregately cultivate happiness within humankind, subject to reason. Differentiating Mill from Bentham is the fact that the former has treated happiness as one that is varied based on higher pleasures and lower pleasure, as against the premise of the latter that happiness is equal. Higher pleasures, according to Mill, refer to those referring to intellectual and moral desires, while lower pleasures are those attributed to physical inclinations. Moreover, Mill further demarcated happiness from contentment, saying that the latter forces humans to succumb to things that do not bring out maximum happiness within them. Mill went on to describe utilitarianism in relation to the nature of humans as beings capable of progressing towards reaching, what he has termed, a “higher mode of existence”. The maximization of happiness, with respect to the foregoing, would require the creation of developments to satisfy the expanding desires of humans (Mill 131-204).

The utilitarian treatise of Hume considers what proof can be obtained in relation to the principle of utility. Hume adds that the only obtainable proof should be tangible objects. There are two most important perspectives of philosophers on the beginning and foundation of utilitarianism, one is the point of view of primordials explaining nationalism as a manifestation of the perceived evolutionary predisposition of humans to put in order different groupings based on similarity of birth; the other is the modernist standpoint that looks at nationalism as a new trend, which requires the structural

circumstances of contemporary society in order to exist (Hume).

The arguments raised by Hobbes, Locke, Bentham, Mill and Hume collectively and circumspectfully characterized the nature of humans as beings interested in protecting their means of survival, preserving their happiness and inducing measures allowing them to progress. In the case of space exploration, one could think that humans, with their desire to prevent their own kind from eventual annihilation due to the impending exhaustion and destruction of the planet earth, involve themselves in space exploration to discover possible places and resources that would enable them to survive outside the planet earth. In light of the foregoing, both the arguments of Hobbes and Locke have found contextual compatibilities with the concept of space exploration, given that such is done in the interest of preserving the human race. The progress that comes along space exploration, done out of maximizing the happiness of humans in terms of looking for prospective locations and resources that could preserve human life outside earth, finds due compatibility under the utilitarian treatises of Bentham and Mill.

Henceforth, humans ought to continue space exploration using their capabilities – in this case, using the Fermi paradox and Drake equation. Once humans begin interacting any extraterrestrials, the chances of proving that they exist gets higher. Space exploration should therefore be an important component of the curiosity of humans in knowing more about the space (Hobbes 60-77; Hume; Locke 2-9; Macpherson 19-28; 238-246; Mill 131-204).

## **Insights on Space Exploration from Economists**

The connection between the argument of Hobbes with those made by Hayek and Smith reflects that the latter two both look at the changes within society. However, both Hobbes, on one hand, and Hayek and Smith, on the other, look at the different perspectives in content - in that the former has written about how technological development has affected human lives, and the latter two has written about language. There is an understanding that language manifests the inner thoughts of people. The utilitarian point of view of Hayek is unique because it clearly renounces any self-indulgent notion of the concept of utility itself. Language is believed to be the physical representation of the mind of any person (Hayek 13-27; Smith 8-14).

The treatises of Smith on the free market has found due relevance in the study of space exploration. The free market stood as an important element satisfying the smooth operation of a democratic nation, in that such induces people therein to undergo further developments and foster changes. The self-regulating character of the free market provides people with the most potent opportunities to promote innovation, in turn entailing their practice of self-expression, intellectual prowess and personal growth, among many others. Within the free market, people have vast rooms to motivate themselves towards development. With that, the cultivation of basic human desires to explore what has yet to be explored is one that arises from the treatise of Adams. People, knowing that the end of planet earth is impending on account of its material features, see space exploration as an opportunity for them to navigate to an area that has yet to be travelled, in that it is an area that is outside of the planet earth. A democratic nation, based on the

analysis of Smith, therefore stands as the most capable force that could induce the creation of successful programs for space exploration. Within a democratic nation fully functional in its purest sense, there are no hindrances to the curious desire of humans to create innovations. The government within a democratic nation would only provide for the needs of the people reflecting the common good and would not, as much as possible, interfere with space exploration programs other than supporting the needs of experts therein in terms of funding and facilities. However, one paradoxical account of utilitarianism against free markets is the fact that the latter somewhat espouses a “tyranny of the majority”, in that supplies therein respond to the aggregate demand of the majority, as opposed to fulfilling individual maximum happiness. Free markets could not just benefit the happiness of every individual being, for its focus on maximizing aggregate happiness, as exemplified through demand and response by supply, is required to maintain profitability (Smith 123-130).

According to Friedman, thought experiment refers to ways of weighing options within a given situation before the commission of an act. Such makes individuals wary in terms of weighing their options before committing particular actions. Friedman has explained that human wisdom makes an individual to desire becoming a good person within society, perhaps by living up to the expectations of the community in which he lives. In human wisdom, the action of a person is believed to correspond to his beliefs, which Friedman divides into two as conventional wisdom and conformist wisdom. Friedman is notable for his theory on money, which became instrumental to replenishing the money supply of nations that applied it. The modern



quantity theory has money as the major object in all the endeavours. The quantity theory can be traced back, but Friedman revived the theory and made it new and applicable to all people. Economic activities are supported by money and the supply of the money must be controlled. Anytime when the world experiences money fluctuations the economy of the world also fluctuates. Summarily, Friedman stated that the short-run effect is on output while the long-term effect lies on the price level (Friedman 37-55).

Herbert Spencer proves his scepticism in saying that the process of integrating the new technology into human lives takes different ideas.

Today, many people think as if their brains work as computers. The Internet is known to have far much reaching effect to human cognitive abilities.

Spencer explains that the computer has taken up almost all of the things that are around us. Another reason that makes the internet important is because it has become a part of human being everyday life as it is easy to use and has diversity and speed. The Internet, above all, is easy to use.

Through the Internet, most people can navigate the search engine easily.

Such allows users to look for the different information that they would like to find and use. In the contemporary world, the Internet facilitates the exchange of goods and services, as it gives humans the provision of selling and buying online. The Internet makes it easy to reach what we need from a different point in the world in a very short time (Spencer 22-53).

Additionally, the main push in support of the movements by Barry Goldwater were the socialist and nationalist factions. This dichotomy was to a larger extent as a result of the extensive allure of communism as a new method for the national movement as presented to most of the Greek students and

youth. While the socialist and nationalist camps came into recurrent conflicts with each other over their contradictory perceptions and methods in relation to the national movement, the two opposing camps started from the mid 1920s onwards, in order to strengthen the overall capability of the national camp, to find ways to prevail over the mutual disbelief that existed between the two camps and put together their own movement (Perlstein 371-408). The insights of the economists on satisfying the seemingly never-ending desires of humans is duly applicable to the concept of space exploration, in that those provide notable treatises on not only the rationale of human behavior as depicted in the foregoing section on the state of nature and utilitarianism, but also on the kinds of settings applicable for the cultivation of the innovative and progressive character of humans. Both Hayek and Adams recognize that physical and verbal manifestations of humans have led to progressions in technology, particularly in terms of the use of language and its sexist side. Adams, in a strictly economic viewpoint, sees innovation as an inevitability among humans and that the free market is perhaps the best venue wherein humans could best exert their capabilities as innovators. Speaking for the potency of a democratic government, Adams noted that the government should practice a “hands-off” policy towards the free market and play the role as a mere source of support for people looking to transform their innovations into reality. Friedman implied the essence of maintaining the sustainability of the monetary system as a means of providing greater support for the efforts of humans to innovate. In light of that, Friedman noted that there must be sufficient control over the money supply in order to prevent economic fluctuations from hindering the

efforts of humans to support their efforts for innovation financially. Spencer, for his part, cited the Internet as an emerging tool for humans to innovate, in part due to its instrumentality as a portal for information. (Friedman 37-55; Hayek 13-27; Perlstein 371-408; Smith 8-14; Smith 123-130; Spencer 22-53).

## Conclusion

Through the philosophers discussed in the foregoing sections, people have come up with new ideas every day of their lives as a result of what the experience in their day to day life. The idea of an individual is transformable and may find implementation into the society as change for the betterment of human life. The scepticism is brought about by the fact that the Internet has made people fond of finding solutions to the extent that of brainwashing settling in. It is explained that for some time now that the individual may have had uncomfortability over ideas or common sense that something, or someone, has been tinkering with his brain, re-organizing the neural content or circuitry, just like reprogramming the memory.

In conclusion, the philosophy of space exploration brings into board the knowledge of great philosophers and economists in exhibiting the knowledge and wisdom for the system. The human evolution dates back from the days of Hobbes, an English philosopher with great political ideology. Pragmatism works in the same way as they have a believe of a preposition or the truth of the ideology lies on satisfactorily works, and wisdom is something that is acquired from the environment we live, and it is also acquired as an individual grows older in life. With that, secular utility maximization comes to the fore as a reasonable point of analysis in explaining ongoing support

behind activities related to space exploration. Hobbes and Locke noted that humans, with their ultimate desire to preserve their lives, submit themselves to sovereign powers harboring their interests. Bentham, Mill and Hume all agree, albeit in varying tones, that humans are naturally curious and fond of looking for new information, as part of their vision to expand their utility for attaining maximum happiness. The economists cited in the foregoing sections summarily agree that humans must achieve favorable economic and political conditions in order for them to have considerable support in terms of their desire to achieving maximum utility – their happiness based on their survival and perpetuation of their own kind from the impending destruction of planet earth. Overall, the philosophical concepts imbued within space exploration speaks more on the desire of humans to develop for the purpose of survival. In the present case, maximum happiness is qualifiable in the form of survival, in that space exploration is primarily conducted with the objectives of looking for new locations and resources that could adequately support human life.

In terms of analyzing the state of nature of humans in light of space exploration, one could say that humans are inherently curious beings that are always hungry for new discoveries and knowledge. Discovering new places and endowments via space exploration is something humans has yet to explore on thoroughly, given that the hypothetical model of the Fermi paradox and its attendant equation, the Drake equation, has yet to find satisfaction through an empirical discovery. Several accounts of unidentified flying object (UFO) sightings and alleged discoveries have emerged, particularly throughout the 20th century, as attempts to establish that,

indeed, extraterrestrial life exists. Yet, the fact that no human has yet to interact with beings outside of planet earth speaks for the fact that extraterrestrial life remains unproven. One may lead such to think – is life on planet earth by sheer circumstance, or is such pattern the same in other similar circumstances somewhere in space? Thus, the purpose of space exploration is not just limited to feeding the curious human mind, but it more so focuses on the aspect of knowing what lies beyond planet earth and proving whether life is exclusive to it or not. Any discovery favorable to the premise that life on earth also exists elsewhere in space could then lead to the insight that there is a pattern for the existence of life – intelligent life, even, based on the circumstances of planet creation that duly supports it. Is life exclusive to earth-like conditions, or could it also emerge from other conditions? The possibilities of space exploration, at this point, seems limitless.

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