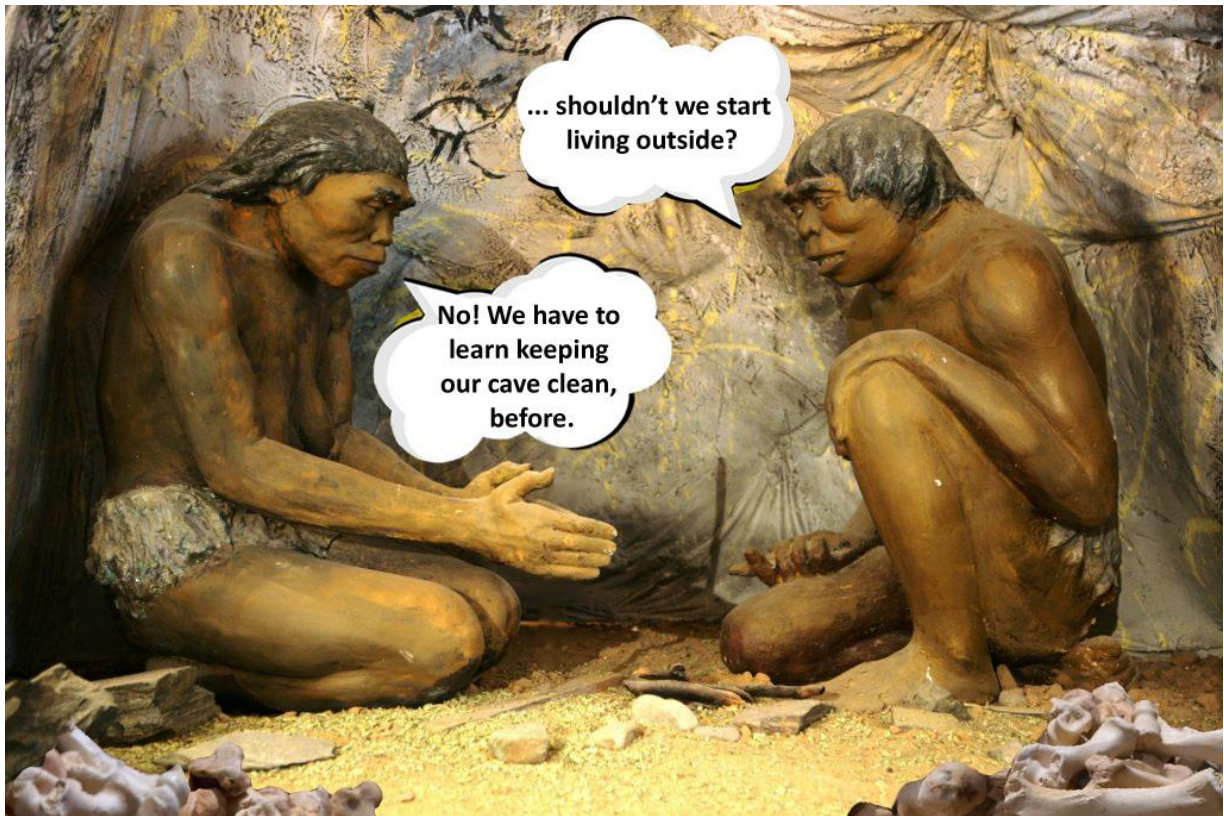


IS THIS A SMALL DIVERGENCE OF VISIONS OR A MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUE?



SRI NEWSLETTER – October 22nd 2020

by Adriano V. Autino

Recently Space Renaissance International went through a two months discussion, in a tentative to unify our efforts with some colleagues, since a few years organized in the International Lunar Decade group. The envisaged new alliance was to be called 'Global Space Renaissance' (GSR).

However, such a tentative has aborted, after acknowledging a fundamental difference in the views of our two organizations.

One of the organizers of ILD wrote: *"Our objectives cannot be accomplished by making statements that are considered unrealistic in timetable (...) We are definitely not an sole advocate of urgent human space settlements. Humans have not learned out to live sustainably on Earth and we need to learn this lesson before seeking to create settlements in space."*

After a quick email exchange, we both agreed to withdraw SRI from the GSR tentative.

I am aware that many could find bizarre to break a worth tentative of efforts unification between two space advocacy organizations due to a small divergence of visions. Couldn't such different visions work together, for the sake of our shared ideals?

The first answer is yes, they could, if they would be allowed to hold the same priority.

But clearly the statement *"Humans have not learned out to live sustainably on Earth and we need to learn this lesson before seeking to create settlements in space"* put space settlement in a hypothetical future, giving the highest and urgent priority to sustainability on Earth.

The second answer is that this is a philosophical divergence, and is not small at all: I maintain that it is big enough to reveal a meaningful difference in scopes, ideals and values.

This is a strongly divisive item, that we should finally be able to acknowledge as it is: a concept that separates humanist from non humanist space advocates.

The first answer to such a nonsense was given by Krafft Ehrlicke in his "The Extraterrestrial Imperative" (Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 1971)

"One of the most irresponsible statements, parroted ad nauseam since rational concern for our environment has exploded into an emotional syndrome, defines man as the only animal smearing his nest. Each animal fills its nest with the products of its metabolism if it is unable to get out of it. Space technology gives us for the first time the freedom to leave our nest, in order not to dirty it."

To say that we humans need to learn to live sustainably in the closed system of our mother planet before to start moving to outer space is like to say that a bird should "learn" to clean its nest before learning to fly, and taking its own wastes elsewhere.

The reality is exactly reverse: none of the 17 SDG's of UN 2030 agenda will be achievable, humankind doesn't have any possibility to achieve sustainability on Earth if we don't start immediately expanding into space. To start expanding into space is a necessary condition for any sustainable development.

What will we "learn", remaining confined within the limits of our mother planet? Maybe we will have to learn again how to light a fire in a cavern, in a time shorter than what we expect...

Begin moving the burden of our industrial development outside our planet is key, as Jeff Bezos wisely understood, and made his cislunar development plans accordingly, with the goal of saving human development and making of Earth a beautiful garden. Is the Bezos's plan unrealistic and untimely? Are the Elon Musk's plans to travel to the Moon and Mars unrealistic and untimely?

According to his favorite concept, who will likely be the president of the new organization – the Global Space Alliance -- will never give the necessary priority in his organization to 'space colonists', as he calls us. The narration and concepts in his writing are very 'old space' in time: it appears as a tentative to supply a claimed "new" language to the use of space only for Earth, and neither acknowledges the recent great success of private new space.

During our recent discussions, it was also written that we shouldn't use the term 'industrialization', since it was not politically correct.

Isn't industrial development a dramatic need for our civilization? The priority goal of the Earth-savers is to mitigate climate change and pollution in the closed Earth, using space for such goals. That's exactly the UN strategy that we saw in Wien at UNISPACE+50 in 2018. Though i have to admit that UN, at least, in their 17 SDG's also include social issues, totally neglected in the narration of the Earth-savers.

My understanding of the civilization status is that we have to face several crisis: environmental, social, economic, unemployment, migrations, pandemics. All of such crisis are exacerbated by the human successful growth in the closed system of our mother planet, and now the breaking point of a possible implosion of the civilization is closer than it was expected.

Our duty is to study and adopt active (and not passive) strategies to fight the global crisis: the first strategy is to progressively decrease our number on Earth, without killing anyone, and preserving the right to the future (i.e. to have children) for all of the 8 billion terrestrial citizens. That means, simply, expanding into outer space.

We say the above not because we are 'space colonists', romantic space explorers, or because space is our whim. (Yes, of course we are also all of that, and we are proud to be!).

The main reason is that we are Civilization Savers.

Humanity needs to start expanding into outer space before 2030 because civilization will not succeed going over the multiple crisis it is faced, should we abdicate to this huge evolutionary step.

These are the main rationales for keeping the Space Renaissance International organization, though still small and unpaired to its huge tasks, distinct and autonomous from any context where the true priority of humanity will not have the right relevance and visibility.

That doesn't mean SRI will not participate in possible initiatives of the new Global Space Alliance, when compatible with our aims and goals.

We, the 'space colonists', should also begin working on a key issue: are we a minority inside a minority? We should understand that, remaining we a minority in the society will decrease the possibility, for civilization, to overcome the crisis. The heroic efforts made by Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson could be not enough, if not duly supported by a strong public outreach. The goal should be to help conveying capitals and public support into the new space enterprises, and promoting research to allow civilian space development.

SRI should therefore restart calling all of the *space-colonists* and *civilization-savers* to join together, unifying our efforts in order to speak with a louder voice to the large public. This will make the difference.

We initiated the preparation of the SRI 3rd World Congress, that will be held in mid 2021. I am proposing to the SRI Board "2021 – Kicking off the Civilian Space Development" as a title. Soon we will publish the titles of the theses papers in progress of preparation and the open call for papers. A number of web public symposia will be developed during the months before the congress.

A first Zoom appointment is scheduled for next Monday October 26th, on the theme of Space Tourism, at 16pm UTC. The panel will include: Patrick Collins (Japan), Andreas Bergweiler (Germany), Sam Coniglio and Al Globus (US), Gennaro Russo (Italy).

It will be possible to participate via Zoom, Facebook and Youtube.

Ad Astra!

Do you think that kicking off civilian space development is the highest priority for our civilization?

Are you willing to help Space Renaissance in our outreach continuous action and to develop our next programs?

Join us as a member:

<https://spacerenaissance.space/membership/international-membership-registration/>

Give some of your spare hours to SRI, joining our Volunteer Team:

<https://spacerenaissance.space/volunteers/>

or make a donation to SRI:

<https://spacerenaissance.space/build-sri-with-us/donate-to-space-renaissance-international/>

Also, you might be interested to the book "**A greater world is possible: The expansion of civilization beyond the limits of our home planet is the moral issue of our time**", available on Amazon

<https://www.amazon.com/greater-world-possible-expansion-civilization/dp/1727889924>

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