

MY DETERMINED REFUTATION OF PHIL TORRES'S ARGUMENTS AGAINST SPACE COLONIZATION



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by Adriano V. Autino

“Space colonization and suffering risks: Reassessing the ‘maxipok rule’” is an article published in 2018 by Phil Torres Director of the Project for Future Human Flourishing.

The article, published two years before Covid19, argues that expanding civilization into space would be the worst dystopian future. This nonsense theory is based on the hypothesis that expansion into space will generate a wide variety of different species, many having their own cultural, political, religious faiths and traditions. According to the author, such a great diversity will not represent a fantastic cultural richness of the space civilization (!). Opposite, it would only result in catastrophic conflicts between different civilizations. Any mitigation strategies, such as a cosmic government (called “Leviathan”) and the implementation of policies of deterrence to prevent conflicts would be problematic, due to the limited speed of space travel and the transfer of information, and the advanced weaponry that future civilizations will almost certainly have at their disposal. The outcome would be a paranoid fear of each civilization to be attacked and destroyed by others. Btw, the author foresees that future civilizations will have advanced weaponry, but not advanced ethics and full inclusive culture, open to different intelligent species, however coming from the same homo sapiens strain.

The first consideration is that the author – as did his referred mentor Daniel Deudney before him -- is projecting his claustrophobic terror of the future on future millennia.

We already [discussed and dismantled](#) the Deudney's delirious rants, expressed in his book "Dark Skies". These guys claim to know what people will think and be – and what their culture will be -- in thousands and millions years. This vane exercise looks like when people, endowed by a 100 average IQ, try to speculate about how it is to be a 200 IQ. We, earthlings of the 21st Century, are very much far away from a scenario like the one described by Torres: how can we claim to know what those distant pro^{nth}-nephews of ours will think, which problems will they have, which strategies will they come up with?

The narration of Torres is based on the eternal misconception that humans are bad in their nature, and that thousands years of evolution didn't change and will never change that very basic animal behavior. Actually, we space expansionists are humanist. We believe that human nature is good: when humans have enough resources and space to develop in peace, only psychopathic characters will stick on using violence. Why the heck should I prefer to fight and kill to get what I can have in peace? Very much better to have fun, wellbeing and love, than to have corps, destruction, desperation and hate!

Torres imagines the evolution of many different species, with different cultures, physiologies, ways of thinking... but he's not able to think that the abundance of resources of the expanse will generate new confidence, by reducing dramatically the risk of starving and extinction. Neither he's able to see the beautiful perspective of a cultural diversification allowed by the great diaspora: this attitude reveals his fear of the diversity, seed of all racisms. Historically, racism prevent people to enjoy the great richness of cultural diversity. Oddly, many cry about the loss of bio-diversities, but are not able to appreciate the great richness of cultural diversity: how boring would be a society in which a mono-cultural thought is cultivated and allowed! And how many fantastic stories we will listen too, by our future distant cousins coming from other stars!

Torres also put together several bogeymen of the civilization risks, as the fear of the *cyborgization*, considered not as an added value, to allow substantial growth in knowledge, culture and ethics, but as another danger... In his narration there could be tons of materials to feed a new generation of dystopian science fiction writers!

Last, in his paper he doesn't spend a single word to understand the true dystopian future that we are already experiencing, and how worse it could be should we remain closed within the boundaries of our mother planet. A devastating multi-crisis – pandemics, resources, environmental, economic, climate, mass migration, wars – is striking our civilization NOW, and not in a distant future.

Natural evolution works by diversification. Is that a "good" or a "bad" thing? It is survival, simply, and progress.

Multiplying intelligent human species will just extend our history of some more million years, perhaps perpetuating good and bad behaviors. But what we humanist expansionists believe is that achieving the immense space resources the bad behaviors will decrease, and ethics have a great chance to raise.

At least there will be a choice. Should we remain closed inside the boundaries of our mother planet we would not have that choice.

We kicked-off the Pre-Congress period, towards the **SRI 3rd World Congress “The Civilian Space Development” Congress**, the conclusive events to take place end of June 2021.

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