

The Political Economy of the Space Age

How Science and Technology Shape the Evolution of Human Society

SERIES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summary

This book provides answers to the questions of why human-kind should go into space, and on the relative roles of governments and markets in the evolution of the space economy. It adopts an interdisciplinary approach to answer those questions. Science and technology define the boundaries of what is possible. The realization of the possible depends on economic, institutional, and political factors. The book thus draws from many different academic areas such as physical science, astronomy, astronautics, political science, economics, sociology, cultural studies, and history.

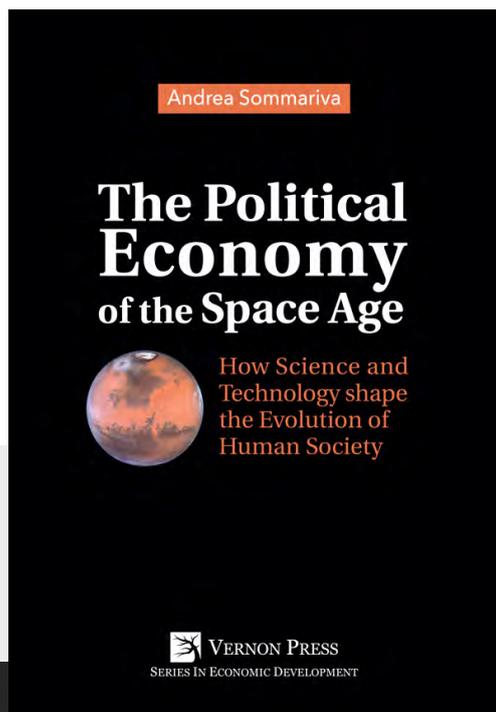
In the literature, the space economy has been analyzed using different approaches from science and technology to the effects of public expenditures on economic growth and to medium term effects on productivity and growth. This book brings all these aspects together following the evolutionary theory of economic change. It studies processes that transform the economy through the interactions among diverse economic agents, governments, and the extra-systemic environment in which governments operate. Its historical part helps to better understand motivations and constraints - technical, political, and economical - that shaped the growth of the space economy. In the medium term, global issues - such as population changes, critical or limited natural resources, and environmental damages - and technological innovations are the main drivers for the evolution of the space economy beyond Earth orbit.

In universities, this book can be used: as a reference by historians of astronautics; for researchers in the field of astronautics, international political economy, and legal issues related to the space economy. In think tanks and public institutions, both national and international, this

book provides an input to the ongoing debate on the collaboration among space agencies and the role of private companies in the development of the space economy. Finally, this book will help the educated general public to orient himself in the forest of stimuli, news, and solicitations to which he is daily subjected by the media, television and radio, and to react in less passive ways to those stimuli.

About the author

Andrea Sommariva. Economist by profession, but fascinated by many other disciplines. He has worked for international organizations, multinational companies, and has spent many years in the Far East as a consultant. His interest in astronautics stems from a collaboration with Prof. Bignami, a world known astrophysicist, and from long discussions with him and other members of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) on the possible effects of the use of space on the world economy and international relations. He is a member of the IAA Study Group 3.17 on Space Mineral Resources - Challenges and Opportunities. At present, he is the director of a center (SEE Lab) for the analysis of the evolution of the space economy within the SDA Bocconi in Milan, a leading business school in Europe. The Center is a global community using innovative strategies to tackle the challenges posed by the evolution of the space economy. He is the author of numerous publications on international business, economic history, and the space economy. He collaborates with some journals devoted to the analysis of the political, economic, and military implications of the use of space.



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