

Star Wars or Star Peace: Navigating the Legal and Ethical Dilemmas of Militarization and Security in Outer Space



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Abstract: *Against a backdrop of skyrocketing progress in the realm of space exploration and the ever-expanding domain of outer space activities—that are dual-use, in the sense that they serve both civilian and military purposes—there is a web of complicated legal and ethical dilemmas. Starts with the Declaration of the title of the research paper, which is "Star Wars or Star Peace: Navigating the Legal and Ethical Dilemmas of Militarization and Security in Outer space" and goes on to a full adventure to explore the vast issues created by the militarization of Outer space itself. At the heart of the conversation is the tension between the desire to ensure national and international security through weaponization and the moral obligation to maintain space as a zone for peaceful and shared scientific endeavor. This paper provides a close examination of international treaties, namely the Outer Space Treaty, as well as national policies, to explore the current legal mechanisms in place, which purportedly address militarization and weaponization in space. Taking a multi-dimensional approach, it conducts a critical examination of different ethical theories in relation to the militarization of space, thereby expose the ethical difficulty that is entangled in preemptive security and the likely military seizure of space. By breaking apart a variety of case studies, the exploration is complemented with the means of how militarization may be actualized in practice, the dangers and the ethical dilemmas of militarizing. This paper further argues in strong favor of finding a middle ground, backed by necessary legal reforms and ethical guidance, along with bolstered international coordination, to walk the tightrope between guaranteeing global security and ensuring the peaceful and meaningful use of the space domain. Ultimately, this research aims to facilitate conversation and to reform policy making in advance of protecting a future where space will still be an environment for peaceful exploration and collaboration as we navigate the realities between those high concepts and the world of global security and militaristic endeavors.*

Keywords: Space Militarization, Outer Space Treaty, Ethical Dilemmas, Global Security, International Cooperation, Space Law, Peaceful Use, Space Exploration

Introduction

While space is often regarded as borderless and we should explore in search of knowledge, but in fact, the space is using as Showbiz for

demonstration of our technology and strategic key for combat. Space Militarization refers to achieving military objectives in or through outer space, a category where a wide range of activities such as satellite reconnaissance,

communication, and navigation to and from space can be included, while Space Weaponization goes one step ahead, either attacking from space to land, or launching arms into space. In other word the law and ethic rule set around these concepts (Jakhu and Pelton 2017).

The potential for the militarization of outer space has been a dormant worry among the wider international community dating back to the beginning of space exploration. This anxiety is compounded by the dual capacity of space technologies, the peaceful application of which can easily be converted to militarily aggrandizement. From anti-satellite demonstration to plans for space-based missile defenses, states have demonstrated the capacity and intention to militarize outer space, making space an international security issue.

The accelerating advancements in space technology and the emergent capabilities of numerous nation-states and private entities in the space domain pose pertinent questions regarding the trajectory of space activities(Listner, 2012). This research seeks to disentangle the intricate weave of legal and ethical aspects surrounding the militarization and the weaponization of outer space. The importance of this study lies in the proliferation of space actors and technologies that make the exploration of this topic necessary for orienting and guiding the future of space activities within a pathway that is based on peace and international cooperation in the use of outer space.

Research Questions/Objectives

This study has been designed as an attempt to puzzle through the bogs and byways of the legal and ethical quandaries posed by the militarization of outer space.

Key research questions include:

1. How do existing international treaties and national policies address the militarization and weaponization of outer space?
2. What are the ethical implications of militarizing outer space, considering

global security, and cooperative space exploration?

3. How might the international community formulate a path forward that ensures the peaceful and sustainable use of outer space amidst growing security concerns?

Methodology

The section of Methodology would explain which research design, approaches and strategies were used to study, analyses and interpret the legal and ethical aspects of space militarization. The field could be more theoretical and therefore methodologically more qualitative, with document analysis as its core research method.

A. Qualitative Research Design

The goal of this research is to address the legal and ethical issues of space militarization from a qualitative perspective, attempting to uncover and interpret the laws and ethical standpoints in the complexity brought by such issue. The ideal design for a thorough, nuanced, and detailed investigation of the issue, the qualitative design allows also to adopt a complex legal analysis, an ethical evaluation, and case studies.

B. Data Collection

1. Document Analysis:

- **Legal Documents:** Exploration and analysis of international treaties, national laws, and policies concerning space activities and militarization.
- **Academic Journals:** Review of academic journals encompassing aspects of space law, ethics, international relations, and space technologies.
- **Reports:** Analysis of reports from governmental and non-governmental organizations related to space activities and security.
- **Case Studies:** Exploration of specific instances of space militarization, including ASAT tests, policy developments, and military space

initiatives.

2. Media and Public Discourse Analysis:

Analyzing media reports, public discourses, and debates related to incidents and policies of space militarization to understand public perceptions, international responses, and diplomatic stances.

C. Data Analysis

Employing juridical analysis to scrutinize existing legal frameworks, exploring their capacities, limitations, and applicability to instances of space militarization. Utilizing various ethical theories and principles to evaluate and interpret the moral and ethical dilemmas presented by space militarization, providing a multifaceted ethical perspective.

3. Case Study Analysis:

Using case-studies to explore examples in the militarization of space, to give life, and a touch with reality to legal and ethical discussions, which relate to particular (and often problematic) scenarios. This requires careful sourcing of LARCs and ethical theories, honest and transparent representation of legal documents, as well as clear explanation of analytical methods. Cross-checking of data from multiple sources and proper maintenance of ethics in the research increases the reliability of the research. The work built upon the necessary frameworks and ethical considerations in academic writing as capturing accurate and clear references, valid citation of intellectual transactions, and an unbiased and neutral reflect in analysis and synthesis of content

Literature Review

A. Exploration of the Outer Space Treaty (OST)

The Outer Space Treaty (OST) adopted at the peak of the Cold War situation has been a milestone in providing the basic legal structure for space. For example, the OST has been criticized in a number of forums Public Consultation Paper-An International Space Strategy for Canada³⁵ for its ambiguities with respect to militarization and weaponization (Listner, 2012; Jakhu & Pelton, 2017). Space is free from weapons of mass destruction, but the

meaning of "peaceful use" is construed differently and broadly enough to allow some for military in space (United Nations, 1967). Although the literature describes general agreement on the need for the OST to function as the foundation for governance of space activities, it also acknowledges the requirement for the modification of the present treaty regime and/or supplementary frameworks to accommodate new challenges.

B) Military -Defining and Weaponizing Outer Space

Militarization In Space In recent years, a number of scholars, officials, and experts have underscored a growing trend of militarization in space and its implications for global security and space sustainability. Moltz (2014) explores a similar duality applied to space technologies, the latter being potentially dual-use conducive for either civilian or military aims. Growing number of anti-satellite (ASAT) tests by the U.S., China, and India are considered principal threats to space debris and weaponization of space (Weeden & Samson, 2017). The guiding literature consistently highlights the security dilemma, wherein the efforts of nations to securitize militarize the international environment, inadvertently increasing insecurities and tensions around the world (Handberg, 2019).

C. Space Militarization Moral Quandaries

The literature considers ethical considerations of space militarization through a prism of some points of view. For example, scholars such as Schwartz (2016) and Catena (2017) speak to the moral obligation of protecting the sustainability and the peaceful use of outer space, pointing out the outer space is the common heritage of mankind. Many ethical analyses have involved the question of balancing national and global security with collaboration and peace which are central to the ethics of space. While an elaboration of these complexities finds itself in the literature (8), transitively, so too the need to develop ethical guidelines around space activities to establish the coproduction of space that benefits all of humankind.

D. International cooperation and coordination of foreign policy

The literature review demonstrates a strong call for more international cooperation and better global space governance. Authors such as Su (2018) and Robinson (2019) shed light on the challenges and opportunities surrounding promoting international collaboration, in a world more and more marked by competitive and nationalist endeavors. This literature has discussed different ways in which global governance can be improved, from the creation of an international space agency to strengthening existing mechanisms such as the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

E. Technological Advances And Space Security

Concerns about rapid developments in space technologies and their security implications pervading the literature. Academics look into numerous aspects of space such as the evolution of ASAT technologies, space-based surveillance and communication systems, and capabilities for space-based offensive and defensive countermeasures (Al-Ekabi, 2018). The literature also recognizes the importance of legal and ethical frameworks that are able to address the challenges posed by the developments of technology, meaning that technology must be deployed in a way that enhances security, but not the detriment of peace and cooperation.

Synthesis:

The literature portrays a wide array of perspectives on space militarization, covering a vast spectrum of legal, ethical, and security aspects. This helps to establish a strong foundation for which you have a valid ground to base the analysis, discussion and recommendations, and it sets the course for broader insights and multiple streams of influence. Based on that, the review of literature enlightens gaps, particularly in the exploration of the intricate relationship between legal, ethical, and security needs, that the current research seeks to fulfil in a sophisticated, well-informed, and structured way by deploying a variety of approaches to understand militarizing

space.

Significance of the Research

In seeking to link legal analysis with moral critique, the research aims to present a more nuanced perspective on militarization of outer space. Contributing to the debate on international security and space, this research, carried out in a sphere where law and ethics often lag behind technological development, represents an important discussion, which should inform policy, facilitate international discussions, and steer future space endeavors towards a course of security, exploration and international cooperation.

II. Historical Context of Space Militarization

A. The Outer Space Treaty and Its Provisions on Militarization

The Outer Space Treaty (OST) (in full: Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies) entered into force in 1967. It is the foundation of international space law embracing the concept of space being the province of all mankind. In this regard, the OST implicitly and explicitly provides rules and measures on the topic of the militarization of space, including, but not limited to, the ban on the placement of nuclear weapons in space and the proscription of the use of force in outer space. On examination, these provisions indicate, at worst, that the desire to maintain peace may be set in stark contrast, through omission, to any prohibition on the deployment of conventional weapons or determination of where such 'peaceful use' shall begin and end.

B. Past Military Activities in Space

The darker edge of the history of space exploration is that it is, in a curious sense, militarized. Because of military-related activities (for example), two things have remained clear: first, since the beginning of satellite technology in response to the Soviet Union's 1957 launch of Sputnik; and second, by the anti-satellite (ASAT) tests of the major powers. The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), nicknamed the "Star Wars" program under

President Reagan, stands as a frightening case in point as to how outer space could become militarized. Recent events, such as ASAT tests and setting up military spaces branches further drive home the point that the militarization of space has come a long way since its inception.

C. The Development of Space Tech and Weaponized Space

The development of space capabilities has fundamentally changed the nature of warfare. Space-based applications like reconnaissance satellites for surveillance, and global navigation systems for positioning, became standard tools of modern combat. Advances in both kinetic and non-kinetic Anti-Satellite (ASAT) capabilities as well as the consideration of space-based missile defenses have further increased the pervasiveness of militarization. The path of these technologies has always closely followed, and to some extent guided, the geopolitical and strategic vitality of nations, rendering a vibrant tapestry of a narrative where technical accomplishment is interlaced with national defense.

The historical context attempts to give us a full background of political, social, and military events under which the subsequent legal and ethical analysis will be carried out. The interconnectedness between technological advancements, military ventures, and geopolitical developments in shaping the course of space militarization is important. This section should provide readers with a comprehensive background to understand the current militarization/militarization of outer space. However, you must be cautious to represent and source historical events and data appropriately.

III. The Legal Framework of Space Militarization

A. International Law: Treaties and Agreements

1. Outer Space Treaty (OST): Despite the fact that the OST sought to ensure the prevention of national jurisdiction and nuclear weapons in addition to the inclusion of outer space as a region beyond the reach of national appropriation, loopholes were present within the

OST concerning the military utility permissible activities within the TT and scope of military operations (Moltz, 2014). This section will look at the stated prohibitions, permissions and gaps in space militarization and weaponization as presented by OST by way of analysis through its articles.

2. Both the original ABM Treaty and its demise, when the United States withdrew in 2002, offer important lessons about the difficulties of negotiating and maintaining arms control agreements with space security implications.

3. Other Relevant Treaties and Agreements: This includes the Partial Test Ban Treaty and the proposed Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) treaty -- which MISAC has been negotiating in the United Nations for some time.

B. National Laws and Policies

1. United States US: As an early leader in space technology and military programs, the US will have numerous policies and directives for review including the National Space Policy and the creation the US Space Force US which will need to be examined with respect to international norms and global security.

2. Russia and China - prolific in space and offering the PAROS treaty, but with anti-satellite efforts, too. This creates a perfect storm for the war arcade who like talking about the clash between diplomacy and military solutions.

3. India and others: This will entail an examination of the policies and activities of nations like India, who poses advanced space capabilities like ASAT Tests to understand the motivations behind and implications of the space policies of the emerging space powers writ militarization.

C. Gaps & Challenges in the present legal Framework

1. Ambiguities and Limitations: The OST and other international agreements are criticized for their generality and lack of enforcement mechanisms that gave room for subjective readings and practices across states.

2. Parity and Security Dilemma: Parity in capabilities among states that are engaged in space activities, which is sought in the interest of strategic stability, lead to insecurity among nations since they are devoid of a legal framework that comprehensively proscribes militarization.

3. Space as a Global Commons: The global commons principle itself articulating the area of space as free for exploration and use by all states raise the difficulties in distinguishing the types of activities which are permitted to be conducted, or vice versa-or with having to balance permissible and impermissible activities, in particular in respect of dual-use technology.

This segment traces through layers of legal frameworks: from international treaties to national policies that supposedly regulate militarism in space. It investigates the inconsistencies and lacunae in and amongst different legal instrument and how they have been utilized, challenged or circumvented by various actors. The discussion of the legal frameworks is necessary as a basis upon which to build the ethical analyses and policy recommendations in the sections to follow, which are thereby underpinned by a full understanding of the legal context. To avoid misinterpretation and improper ways of citing historical legal documents, be meticulous about how you interpret legal documents and legal policies.

IV. Ethical Dilemmas in Space Militarization

A. The Debate on Weaponization vs. Peaceful Use

The dual-use nature of space technology, which may be used for peaceful or hostile activities, has consequently given rise to an ethical debate: how are nations to balance their pursuit of security through weaponization with the ethical imperative to use space for peaceful purposes? Ethical arguments for and against militarization : This portion will deconstruct the ethical reasoning for the pros and cons of militarization such as deterrence, global security, and ensuring space set aside as a scientific and exploratory domain.

B. The Ethics of War in Space

This potential for human conflicts in space raises ethical questions about not only the human, environmental, and scientific ramifications of such engagements, if they occur, but also the long-term governance and autonomy of rapidly accelerating space colonization. This included examining the aftermath of kinetic conflicts in space, space debris generation, and aerospace consequences for ongoing and future missions. Security narratives will then be evaluated against ethical imperatives of securing astronauts, satellites, and latterly-people in space against warfare.

C. Impacts on Global Security and Cooperation

This might affect the global security landscape and prospects for international cooperation in space activities. In this light, this section will examine the ethical dilemmas inherent in reconciling national security aims and objectives with the themes of shared responsibilities and shared values that typify international activities in the space arena. Established values related to the above security and arms control dilemmas will be reviewed, including questions of non-proliferation and the possibility of creating a zero-sum game that might lead to a world where a few nations have access to space whereas space might be denied or confined to just a few countries, all premised on security considerations.

D. The Ethics of Scientific Research and Exploration

Scientific research and exploration are important roles of space activities, and help to increase human knowledge and improve technology. The following section discusses the ethical implications of processes of militarization in relation to the obstruction, manipulation or control of scientific research and knowledge exchange. For example, they planned to consider when fighting might displace, limiting or determining the scientific questions we even ask, or so that questions are not asked, and various ethical scenarios.

E. Analysis through Ethical Theories:

1. Utilitarianism: Does the militarization

of space result in the greatest good for the greatest number, especially considering global security?

2. **Deontology:** How does the duty to preserve space for peaceful uses reconcile with the duty to protect national security interests through potential militarization?
3. **Virtue Ethics:** What virtues or moral characters are nations exhibiting through their policies and actions concerning space militarization?
4. **Justice:** How does space militarization impact the equitable use of space and its resources by all nations and generations?
5. **Ethical Relativism:** How do different cultural and national perspectives shape the ethical considerations and justifications regarding space militarization?

Reflection:

Ethical considerations in space militarization intertwine with legal, political, scientific, and humanitarian aspects, forming a complex moral landscape that demands thorough exploration. This section aims to articulate and critically evaluate the ethical dilemmas, exploring various perspectives and ethical theories to provide a nuanced, balanced, and multifaceted ethical analysis of space militarization. Ensure that the ethical analysis is thorough, unbiased, and considers a multitude of perspectives and scenarios to provide a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the ethical landscape.

V. Case Studies

A. Specific Instances of Space Militarization

In this section, several pertinent cases illustrating the complexities and nuances of space militarization will be explored to ground the preceding legal and ethical discussions in real-world scenarios.

1. Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Tests:

China's 2007 ASAT Test: Examination of China's controversial ASAT test that created

thousands of pieces of space debris, exploring the legal, security, and ethical implications, particularly concerning space environment sustainability and global security (Handberg, 2019).

India's 2019 Mission Shakti: Analyzing India's ASAT test, including its stated objectives, the international response, and its implications for regional security and global space activities.

2. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI):

The “Star Wars” Program: a study on the proposed United States SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) during the Cold War, which was intended to shield intercontinental ballistic missiles using ground- and space-based systems, and the consequences of such a proposal on the arms race and treaty negotiations involving outer space (Schwartz, 2016)

3. Creation of Military Space Forces:

Space Force USA: U.S. Space Force established itself as a separate branch of its military. The purpose of this program was to ensure that the U.S. protection of interests in space has increased, in recognition of its strategic importance. The primary objectives of the Space Force are to enable the U.S. and its allies have gained the freedom to maneuver in space to deter attacks and provide the Coalition Forces with space capabilities. Formally, the creation of a space force is in line with the US. a national space program that contributes to the ability to protect and defend space assets but the move has raised concerns about the deployment of space forces and compliance with international treaties such as the Space Treaty that recommend its use in peace on the of space. Ethically, the creation of a space force reflects a challenge between national security and the broader goal of maintaining space as an area of peaceful exploration, and the international community reacted warily in 1999, and some countries expressed concern about the arms race in space (Schwartz, 2016). The United States has emphasized that the purpose of the Space Force is not to arm space but to defend against

terrorism, but its implications for global space governance and security remain a matter of debate.

Russia's Military Space Voices: Russia has a long history of military engagement in space, dating back to Soviet times. In recent years, Russia has continued to develop and test space capabilities such as anti-satellite weapons (ASAT) and advanced surveillance satellites. These activities are part of a broader program for the Russian military part of those in space to rise above and protect the interests of his country. Legally, Russian space activities are subject to the same international treaties and agreements as other space-faring nations. However, development and testing of the country's ASAT capability has raised questions about its commitment to the peaceful use of space. The legal uncertainty surrounding the definition of "peaceful use" allows for a variety of definitions, which Russia has used to justify its military space program. Ethically, Russia's military and space activities present significant challenges. For example, the development of ASAT weapons increases the risk of space degradation, potentially threatening the sustainability of the space environment. Moreover, these activities contribute to the perception of space as a highly contested resource, potentially undermining efforts to promote international cooperation and peace exploration. International reaction to Russia's military and space activities has been mixed. Some countries called for greater transparency and compliance with international norms, while others expressed concerns about the implications for global security. Russia's growing military power in space highlights the need for international coercion strengthen inter-communications and regulatory frameworks to address the challenges of space force participation.

B. Future Preparedness:

Mining the analyses for implications about how the international legal, diplomatic, and technologic community might be more well positioned to address similar scenarios when they arise in the future.

In doing so they allow common legal and ethical

matters treated in the preceding sections to be applied, tested and illustrated in specific space militarization related contexts. They should offer insights into the real-world dynamics of space militarization, providing readers with a nuanced understanding of how legal and ethical considerations manifest in actual scenarios and how these, in turn, influence policies, perceptions, and activities in outer space. Ensure rigorous analysis, accurate representation of events, and substantiated assessments to uphold the integrity and validity of the research.

VI. Navigating the Path Forward

A. Balancing Security and Peaceful Exploration

In the quest to strike a balance between ensuring national security and preserving the sanctity of peaceful space exploration, a multi-pronged approach is warranted. This could include review and strengthening of international accords relevant to space - both to reflect advances in technology and to account for new threats - and the development of a collaborative spirit among spacefaring nations and organizations.

B. The Legal Reforms and Additions in The Future

1. Spruce Up the Old Agreements:

The interpretation and revision of current treaties such as the OST to close the gaps and ambiguities on the militarization and weaponization of space.

2. Establishing New Legal Instruments

Negotiate new international accords that take into consideration advances in technology and are sufficiently comprehensive, enforceable, and flexible to accommodate future changes.

3. National Legal Frameworks:

Promoting the development and alignment of national laws and policies with international standards and the common goal of the secure and sustainable use of space.

C. Guidelines for Space Security:

1. Ethical Use of Technology:

Setting the principle for responsible development and utilization of space technologies as it comes to ethics and peaceful usage

2. Ensuring Equitable Access:

Creating policies that secure universal access to space for all nations, regardless of their current capacity, and that integrate all nations into the apparatus of global space governance.

3. Maintaining Both: Science and Exploration Missions

Guidance to ensure that military-related activities do not supplant or endanger scientific and exploration missions.

International Collaboration and Diplomacy

Strengthening work of diplomacy among countries for the purpose of discussing, negotiating and solving space safety and militarization. Cultivating an atmosphere conducive to collaborative space missions-hope that a spacefaring foundation will set the stage for trust building and the laying down of norms among nations. Establishing appropriate mechanisms for global governance of space activities that were inclusive of emerging space nations as well as of broader perspectives and interests.

Reflection:

It should weave the legal and ethical analyses and case studies together to propose a balanced and workable and persistent solution for the state. Theory-based recommendations should be made that stem from the preceding discussions and analyses, grounded in the discussions and analyses, but also grounding the discussions and analyses in practical, theoretical light. Space being a global and cooperative endeavor, the way forward must also be found in an inclusive approach that complements the good of all mankind in both the military and civil dimensions so that space remains a border open, beneficial and secure for all mankind. The recommendations should not be overly prescriptive, so that they remain germane and action-able as new technologies develop and the global politics of space activities evolve.

VII. Conclusion

A. Summary of Findings

This research highlights a host of thorny legal and ethical quandaries, foremost among them militarization. Having covered the web spun of the space law complexities, this research is a journey through the loophole-ridden ambiguities that allow, if not promote, the militarization of space. Moral reflections have detailed the various ethical questions surrounding the strategy of security through military usage, weaponization, in contrast to the ideal of a peaceful and cooperative stewardship of space. For example, space law and ethics, (theoretical issues substantiated as present or future problems in a physical space) become much more tangible when analyzed in the light of its practical implications with respect to case studies, everything ranging from the threats it imposes to the moral dilemmas it throws up due to reality of space militarization.

B. Implications for Policy, Law, and Ethics

The findings have implications for not only policy and law, but for ethics and suggests the need for a more comprehensive approach that appeals to international legal frameworks, ethical rules, and governance practices to align security and maintaining the character of space as a domain for science, exploration, and cooperation. The findings reinforce both the immediate necessity of filling the lacunae in the present legal and regulatory environment, the imperative of industry-informed robust new legal standards and the importance of anchoring policies and actions to ethical norms that promote the interests of humankind as a whole in outer space.

C. Recommendations for Future Research and Policy-Making

Future research can look in more detail at elements brought out by this work, such as specific technologies, the geopolitics of the space powers or the philosophical debates about ethics in space. Policy makers are encouraged to use the findings and analyses from this research to inform and guide their policy-making on how to draft policies that are both legally viable but

also ethically defensible to ensure that the future of space activities is one that is sustainable, secure, and consistent with the will and well-being of all of humanity.

D. Final Thoughts

Components thereof might make the wheel turn, but navigating the space between “Star Wars” and “Star Peace” warrants collective, collaborative, and conscientious work. The universe, vast and infinite, offers an invitation to explore, to experience, perhaps to understand and share in the pursuit of discovery. The findings of this research reinforce the need to ensure that the footprints humanity leaves behind in space are guided not only by laws and ethics that underpin peace, cooperation, and sustainable, equitable use of the space environment. As an international community of space faring nations, we all have a role to play in this chapter in humanity's long history of human endeavors in space, and it is critical that we insure this is done with wisdom foresight and an enlightened view of mechanisms that evolved to protect the domain of space as a province of all mankind.

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