

Improves the English Economy

There are many reasons why the English wanted to improve their economy. One reason was that England was involved in many wars, which required huge amounts of resources. In the 16th century alone, the English were involved in 14 different conflicts. Another reason is that around a quarter to half of the English population was impoverished. This situation only got worse as prices rose and wages stagnated.

These events (and more) inspired Richard Hakluyt to write his case for English Colonization in 1584. He believed that “this western voyage will yield unto us all the commodities of Europe, Africa, and Asia, as far as we were wont to travel, and supply the wants of all our decayed trades.” This suggests that the English recognized the wealth that the New World could bring to them. By stating that it can be given to everyone, he would be targeting their massive impoverished population who would benefit the most from the economic boost. In other words, the English would start to think about the benefits they would receive but tune out the exploitative processes required to amass such wealth.

Rivalry With Spain

In his 1584 case for English Colonization, Richard Hakluyt argues that the king of Spain's dominions in the West Indies are not as extensive or powerful as commonly believed. He claims that the popish Clergy and others who support Spain spread false information to intimidate Protestant Princes and deceive them.

This shows us the extent of the rivalry had between the Spanish and the English. This rivalry led both nations to frequently be in war with one another. For example, one of the most infamous wars fought between the two was the Eighty Years' War fought between 1566 till 1648.

However, this rivalry between the Spanish and the English extended beyond politics and war. The Spanish had a one-hundred-year head start on England in the New World, amassing significant wealth that made England envious. To keep up economically and prevent the Spanish from gaining too much power, the English needed to find a way to grow economically as well. The easy answer to this problem was to colonize in the Americas, just like the Spanish.

Put More Men to Work

The population in England experienced an incredible rate of growth. Unfortunately, this rapid increase in population coincided with rising prices of goods and land, while wages remained stagnant. Additionally, there were movements to enclose public land, leaving many of the poor population with very little to live on as they were landless and jobless. In fact, a quarter to half of the population lived in extreme poverty.

However, as Richard Hakluyt stated in his 1584 case for English Colonization, the ventures and employment opportunities created by colonization would help alleviate the nation's poverty. Not only that, it would mean that a larger portion of the population would be contributing to the economy, making it a win-win situation for England.

More Power to the English

Richard Hakluyt, in his 1584 case for English Colonization, provides several reasons how colonization would bring more power to the English Crown. One such reason is that the English Navy, which is vital to the island nation, would witness significant improvements as a

direct consequence of colonization. This would enable England to enhance its capabilities with the navy.

Moreover, colonization in the New World would grant the English the opportunity to employ “special means” to undermine King Phillippe, the reigning Spanish king at that time. This would not only weaken a strong rival but also pave the way for England emerge onto the global stage.

A stronger navy and the downfall of the Spanish were just a few of the many reasons that motivated English colonization in the Americas.

Rare Earth Metals on the Moon

The Earth is plentiful in resources, however we only have a finite amount of them. Out of the finite resources that we have, rare earth metals and other value resources are even less plentiful. Unfortunately, rare earth metals are crucial in various modern technologies, such as batteries for phones and EVs to microprocessors. However, the moon hosts rare earth elements (REE) that could be mined to substitute, or at the very least, work alongside REE mines here on earth.

In the modern day, countries with large deposits of REEs hold sustainable power as they are providing the resources that are needed to keep the modern day society afloat. Not only that, due to their rarity, they are expensive and therefore bring in large profits for their host countries. In fact, China, the country with the largest deposits of REEs, has exported 653.4 million USD worth of REEs in 2021 alone!

The expense of lunar mining, however, is unaffordable with current technology since, according to TheConversion, it would take 1.2 million USD to launch 1 kg of material to the moon. While this would seem to indicate that lunar mining won't begin until the far future, advances in rocket technology are occurring quickly enough that, according to NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine, lunar mining for rare earth metals may be feasible by the twenty-first century!

Helium-3 is Plentiful on the Moon

Of the many resources available on the moon, the "cash crop" of the moon is its Helium-3. Helium-3 is one of the gases required for Deuterium-Helium-3 nuclear fusion. According to a paper done by the University of Alberta, 1 kg of Helium-3 fused with 0.67 kg of deuterium can produce enough energy to power the United States for an entire year. However, the problem with nuclear fusion is that at least one of the necessary elements is super rare. On average, Helium-3 accounts for about 0.0001% of all helium on earth according to PhysicsWorld. That's not enough to sustainably run a fusion power plant.

So, whoever has control over the Helium-3 deposits on the Moon are not only going to make large profits from its expensive price tag of around \$2000 per Liter (according to the research paper by the University of Alberta) but they are also going to become a powerful nation as energy will be more than plentiful.

Ineffective Law

The Moon Treaty is an international agreement that was signed in 1979, which states that no nation can claim ownership of the Moon. However, no spacefaring nation recognizes this treaty. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the treaty is doubted.

One of the problems with the pact is that it will be nearly hard to enforce it because of the distance and equipment needed to send people to the moon. To put it another way, legislation with minimal authority will be ineffective.

Furthermore, it lacks the legal framework for lunar mining and leads to concerns about the potential for conflict between nations over resources on the moon. As more countries invest in space exploration and lunar mining operations, it is becoming increasingly important to establish a clear legal framework for resource extraction on the moon. This would help ensure that all nations have equal access to these resources and prevent conflicts over ownership and control of lunar resources.

Rivalries Between Nations

The benefits of lunar mining is clear but the cost of mining on the moon is still a barrier to tall for nations in the modern day to overcome. So are there any reasons why there is a sudden spike in interest? A hint to this can be found in an executive order that Donald Trump signed on April 6, 2020. In this executive order, Donald Trump gives support for lunar mining operations.

Once digging further into the subject, it's around this time that tensions between China and the US were high as they were currently in a trade war. It was through this trade war that the interest in lunar mining becomes clearer. China currently has the largest deposits of rare earth metals crucial for developing electronics and microprocessors. This much control over such an important resource gives China a huge power. A Power that the US is mostly helpless to defend against. However, this is where lunar mining comes into play.

In other words, countries with large amounts of rare earth metals and other valuable resources needed to make technology have significant amounts of power. While these deposits on earth are controlled by the nations that were lucky enough to have been founded on top of, the moon is yet to have been utilized by any nation. Therefore, being able to gain control over the moon and its resources is one of the many reasons for the interest in the moon by many nations.