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ROUNDTABLE
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Colonizing Mars in the Arabian Desert

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Across the Arabian Gulf, oil rich countries are increasingly turning to space exploration as a way to diversify their economies and assert their global influence. In 2020, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman committed over $2 billion to a national space program. Bahrain, Kuwait, and Oman have launched their first satellites, and Oman recently announced plans to establish the region's first space port alongside a research center for simulated Mars missions. Yet none of these initiatives rivals the ambitions of the United Arab Emirates, which in 2017 announced plans to establish a self-sufficient colony on Mars within a hundred years. Why have the UAE and other Gulf countries turned their gaze to human space exploration, particularly around the planet Mars?

Since founding its space agency in 2014, the UAE has made significant strides in its pursuit of Martian colonization, leveraging strategic partnerships and international expertise. In 2021, the UAE became the sixth country to successfully reach Mars with the launch of its orbital probe, al-Amal (Hope), developed in collaboration with several US universities and launched by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (Fig. 1). Two Emirati astronauts have traveled to the International Space Station, and two additional astronauts, including the first female Arab astronaut, are part of NASA's 2021 astronaut candidate class. The UAE's lunar mission is developing a second lunar rover, Rashid 2, after its first rover's unsuccessful landing attempt in 2022. Mars Science City, announced in 2017, aims to be the world's largest and most advanced Mars simulation. In addition to these scientific endeavors, the UAE strengthened its space sector in 2019 by enacting the region's first comprehensive space law, and leading the creation of the Arab Space Cooperation Group to foster regional collaboration in space exploration and technology.

The UAE's Mars 2117 initiative exemplifies the Gulf's pursuit of grand, techno-futuristic projects driven by oil wealth and the ambitious visions of its rulers. These megaprojects serve as powerful tools of branding, designed to attract global investment and tourism while promoting a narrative of technologically driven nationalism.[1] For instance, Saudi

[1] Gareth Doherty, "The Landscapes of Dubai's Urbanism," in *Instant Cities: Emergent Trends in Architecture and Urbanism in the Arab World*, ed. Center for the Study of Architecture in the Arab Region (Amman, Jordan: CSAAR Press, 2008), 103–11; Ahmed Kanna, *Dubai: The City As Corporation* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Rahel Aima, "Life on Mars: Dubai Projects a New Vision of Nationalism." *World Policy Journal* 35, no. 1 (2018): 10–15, https://doi.org/10.1215/07402775-6894696; Natalie Koch, "Sustainability Spectacle in the Gulf," *Current History* 123, no. 857 (2024): 330–335, https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2024.123.857.330.

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Figure 1. An attendee at a Dubai event to mark the Hope probe entering the orbit of Mars, 9 February 2021. Credit: Reuters/Christopher Pike.

Arabia's NEOM and Abu Dhabi's Masdar City market themselves as ecological utopias for future urban living, drawing on the language of sustainability and heritage to legitimize state authority and obscure their environmental and socioeconomic contradictions.[2] The UAE's Mars ambitions extend this strategy into outer space, showcasing the nation as a leader in addressing planetary challenges and advancing human progress. However, these speculative projects, although promising innovation, ultimately raise questions about their ecological viability and role in sustaining existing political and economic hierarchies.[3]

In this essay, I examine how the UAE's Mars 2117 initiative reflects and reconfigures desert landscapes as both symbolic and material spaces. Although focused on Mars, these projects are deeply rooted in terrestrial realities. I argue that the entanglements between the Gulf's desert ecologies and the imagined landscapes in which humans will live and operate on Mars produce a dual ecological utopian narrative: as demonstrations of technological triumph over arid environments and as acts of stewardship for planetary futures, drawing on Islamic and Bedouin heritage. This challenges us to reconsider the desert not merely as a site of conquest or erasure but as a frontier for ecological experimentation and a shared home for humanity.

[2] NEOM is derived from the Greek prefix "neo" (new) and the Arabic word *mustaqbal* (future), represented by the letter *M*. The *M* also is associated with Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman ("The Journey of Naming NEOM," NEOM, accessed 16 May 2025, https://www.neom.com/en-us/about/what-is-neom/journey). For a detailed account of Masdar City, see Gökçe Günel, *Spaceship in the Desert: Energy, Climate Change, and Urban Design in Abu Dhabi* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).

[3] Nicole Sunday Grove, "'Welcome to Mars': Space Colonization, Anticipatory Authoritarianism, and the Labour of Hope," *Globalizations* 18, no. 6 (2021): 1033–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2020.1859764.

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Figure 2. Sultan Al Neyadi announces the launch of *From the Desert to Space* aboard the International Space Station, 1 September 2023. Credit: Dubai Media Office, https://mediaoffice.ae/en/news/2023/September/01-09/Mohammed-bin-Rashid-second-children–book-launched-on-board-the-International-Space-Station.

From the Desert to Space: The Desert Pastoral

On September 1, 2023, a unique book launch took place aboard the International Space Station (ISS) that would be the envy of any author (Fig. 2). Emirati astronaut Sultan Al Neyadi, nicknamed the "Sultan of Space," announced via livestream the release of *The Journey from the Desert to the Stars* (also translated as *From the Desert to Space*), the second children's book by Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai. The book highlights Sheikh Mohammed's journey through five stories that showcase key milestones in his life and the UAE's progress since its founding in 1971.[4] With Earth visible through the ISS portholes, Al Neyadi held up a digital image of the book's cover and read an excerpt in Arabic, in which Sheikh Mohammed reflects on the UAE's space program and the launch of the Hope probe to Mars:

> My father [Sheikh Rashid] taught me a lot about the desert when I was young, how to live in it. He instilled in me the skills of survival in the desert, coexisting with its wildlife, its camels, and other animals in its cold and heat, and navigating by the stars in its skies. And now that we have reached space, I wonder, did I ever imagine in my childhood, as I gazed at the stars with my father on desert nights, that one day we would reach Mars?

Sheikh Mohammed's focus on the desert in a story celebrating the UAE's achievement in space exploration might seem surprising. But it reveals a deeper narrative connecting tradition and progress, visually reinforced in the triptych structure of the book's cover art

[4] Kirstin Bernabe, Angel Tesorero, and Ruqayya Al Qaydi, "In World First, Sheikh Mohammed's New Children's Book Launched from Space" (video), *Khaleej Times*, updated 3 September 2023, https://www.khaleejtimes.com/space/sheikh-mohammed-launches-new-childrens-book-from-space.

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Figure 3. Book cover illustration for *From the Desert to Space*. Credit: Dubai Media Office, https://mediaoffice.ae/ar/news/2023/September/01-09/Mohammed%20bin%20Rashid%20second%20children%20%20book%20launched%20on%20board%20the%20International%20Space%20Station.

(Fig. 3). In the foreground, Sheikh Mohammed stands firmly with arms crossed, gazing ahead as a leader whose vision spans past, present, and future. He stands amid a sprawling desert of undulating sand dunes, sparsely dotted with shrubs and trees, beneath an expansive sky awash in a warm, orange glow. Behind him, the Dubai skyline rises in silhouette, symbolizing the UAE's transformation from a desert to a global metropolis. Mars dominates the background, looming above the cityscape, with the Hope probe orbiting it like a small moon. Its orange hue complements the desert's tones, creating a visual link that ties the barren landscapes of Earth and Mars together.[5] This association reinforces the UAE's narrative of continuity between its expertise in desert transformation and its ambitions for extraterrestrial colonization. A quote attributed to Sheikh Mohammed appears above the cityscape: "We began the last fifty years in the desert of our country, and we embark on the next fifty from the desert of Mars, where our dreams will be even grander."

The image invites the viewer to see the desert as both a historical and futuristic landscape. Sheikh Mohammed's reference to his Bedouin heritage suggests that survival in the harsh desert environment cultivated the skills and adaptability necessary for the UAE's transformation. His gaze and stance reflect a forward-looking vision, whereas his position within the desert foreground anchors him to the UAE's past. Unlike dominant Western depictions of deserts as inhospitable wastelands, the desert here is life sustaining and a space of inspiration and transformation. This vision extends into space exploration, linking Earth and Mars in a shared narrative of progress.

[5] Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, *The Journey from the Desert to the Stars* (Dubai: Hudhud, 2023).

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Figure 4. Mars Science City, 2017. Credit: Bjarke Ingels Group.

Mars Science City: Desert Laboratory

Mars Science City, a centerpiece of the UAE's Mars 2117 initiative, reveals the country's ambitions to position itself as a global hub for scientific and technological research in human space exploration. Planned as a two million square foot prototype Martian settlement, the research facility would be the largest Mars simulation in the world (Fig. 4). Across several interlocking domes, it aims to recreate Martian conditions to allow research of essential technologies for survival on Mars, such as food production, water extraction, and energy systems. The complex also will house laboratories for developing robots that will build future settlements and analog habitats for studying the effects of long-term isolation. Additionally, educational spaces, including museums, will showcase the UAE's achievements in space exploration (Fig. 5).

The initial design, unveiled in October 2017 by the renowned Danish architectural firm BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group), was estimated to cost approximately $135 million. In a 2019 TED talk, Bjarke Ingels outlined his vision for the design, drawing on examples from Tunisia and Greenland to demonstrate how humans have adapted their built environments to extreme hot and cold desert climates on Earth.[6] Although he acknowledged the differences between Mars and Earth, he suggested that there were enough similarities between them that we could learn from Earth to see how we might live on Mars. He then posed the question: "What would a Martian vernacular look like?"

Mars Science City draws on such "vernacular" environments by incorporating principles of in-situ resource utilization (ISRU) or by using locally available materials to construct and sustain human-made ecosystems on Mars, rather than transporting resources from Earth. For instance, advanced 3D printing technologies will use the desert sand to construct the main elements of the structure. The goal is to create a controlled ecosystem independent of the desert's ecological complexities. The desert becomes a prosthetic environment, a tool that enables human survival in otherwise inhospitable conditions, while erasing the natural

[6] Bjarke Ingels, "An Architect's Guide to Living on Mars," TED talk video, 8:10, April 2019, https://www.ted.com/talks/bjarke_ingels_an_architect_s_guide_to_living_on_mars?subtitle=en.

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Figure 5. Mars Science City, 2017. Credit: Bjarke Ingels Group.

ecosystems it represents. In reimagining the desert as a site of experimentation, Mars Science City promotes the UAE's technoscientific identity while sidelining the complexities of both terrestrial and Martian ecologies, undermining the UAE's claims of ecological stewardship.

Proponents of Mars Science City also have emphasized its terrestrial application: "Long before the first habitats are erected under the Martian dunes, the dunes of the Arabian Peninsula and the Sahara may be home to new UAE-designed domed and self-sufficient cities and communities."[7] Lessons from Mars Science City offer potential solutions for creating resilient habitats in extreme environments on Earth. Here, Mars Science City assumes a paradoxical role as both a representation of Mars and a reflection of Earth. As it envisions a speculative future of human colonization on another planet, it simultaneously addresses pressing terrestrial challenges such as resource scarcity, climate change, and urbanization. This dual purpose creates a tension between its futuristic aspirations and its immediate terrestrial applications, demonstrating that the project, although focused on Mars, remains tied to priorities on Earth. Moreover, the transformation of earthly spaces into Martian analogs promotes a utopian vision of our future colonization on Mars.[8] This interplay is evident in representations that seamlessly transition from luxury cars on Earth to rovers on Mars (Figs. 6, 7). Analog projects and other simulation sites construct the desert landscapes as our "alien" home, blending the familiar with the speculative and reinforcing the narrative of deserts as both a challenge and an opportunity for human ingenuity and survival.

The ongoing delays in starting construction of Mars Science City further underscore this paradox. Originally slated for a site next to the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre, the project has since been relocated to Academic City to accommodate Dubai's shifting urban expansion plans. This relocation reflects the dominance of terrestrial priorities over speculative visions of space exploration and the fluidity of urban planning in the Gulf. Even

[7] Rick Tumlinson, "There Could Be a City on Mars within 100 Years," The National, 28 May 2020, https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/there-could-be-a-city-on-mars-within-100-years-1.1025953.

[8] Lisa Messeri, *Placing Outer Space: An Earthly Ethnography of Other Worlds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).

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Figure 6. Mars Science City, 2017. Credit: Bjarke Ingels Group.



Figure 7. Mars Science City, 2017. Credit: Bjarke Ingels Group.

as Mars Science City positions itself as a symbol of futuristic innovation, its development remains tied to the practical demands and evolving landscapes of Earth.

Mars 2117: Desert Utopias

But what exactly is the UAE's vision of Mars in 2117? At the 2017 World Government Summit in Dubai, attendees could step into a futuristic transport, don a virtual reality headset, and travel a hundred years into the future to attend the same summit—on Mars (Fig. 8). The seven-minute 3D immersive video provides a tour of the first city on Mars, the "City of

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Figure 8. Mars 2117 virtual reality experience at the World Government Summit, Dubai, 2017. Credit: Galerija 12, https://www.galerija12.com/mars-2117.



Figure 9. Video still from Mars 2117. Credit: Galerija 12.

Wisdom," narrated by a virtual guide named Saeed.[9] As we leave the landing bay, the opening scenes are grim: massive, spider-like robots noisily excavate the Martian desert, kicking up clouds of dust (Fig. 9). But we soon enter a network of domed structures that takes us through the city, designed to accommodate 600,000 permanent residents and 200,000 visitors. The city is serene and meticulously organized, with distinct zones serving specific purposes. A science zone focuses on energy preservation and technologies to depollute Earth, and a green zone generates oxygen for the colony. Visitors must complete a Mars orientation process, although only "the best that humanity has to offer" are permitted to

[9] World Government Summit, "Mars 2117," YouTube video, 6:58, 27 November 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JboqeUqQiv4.

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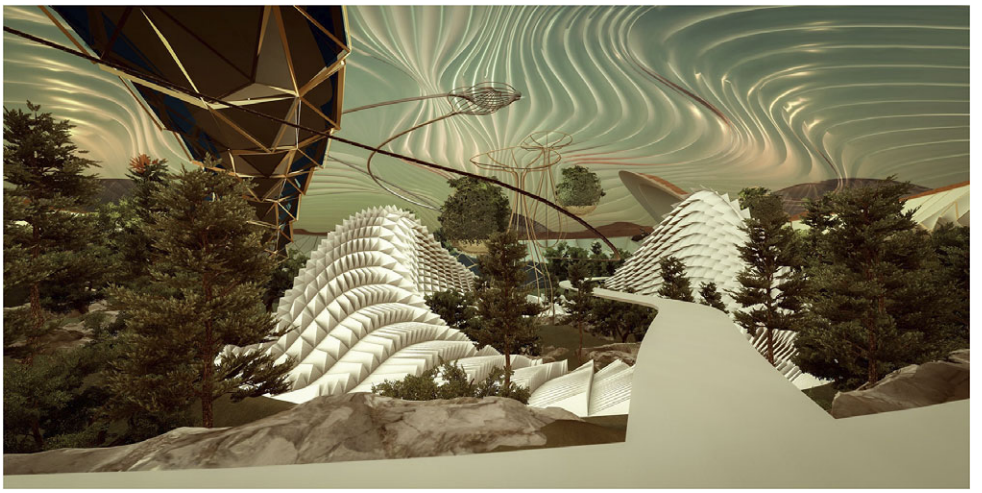


Figure 10. A Park in Mars 2117. Credit: Galerija 12.

stay. The city's governance, we learn, is overseen by national space agencies, with the UAE as a key founding member. The desert landscape occasionally visible through the domed enclosure has been effectively exiled (Fig. 10).

Mars is presented as a utopian space, free from the problems found on Earth, like the persistent pollution mentioned in the video. The clean lines, advanced technologies, and organized zones project a vision of exclusivity and order that contrasts with the messy realities of urban life on Earth. It is, in essence, Dubai reimagined as it might exist in a perfected future—an interplanetary hub of innovation and productivity. Yet this raises a question: If such a city can be envisioned on Mars, why not strive to achieve it on Earth in the next hundred years?

By chance, I came across Saeed Al Gergawi again—this time not as a virtual guide on Mars, but as a guest on a venture capital podcast, speaking in his role as vice president of the Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy.[10] The chamber's mission is to persuade foreign companies to relocate to Dubai or invest in the city as a digital technology hub. During the interview, the host asked Saeed what he believed had driven Dubai's rapid growth and success. He identified two key factors: strong leadership and a "mindset player" mentality. Saeed explained that although many neighboring countries are more resource-rich than Dubai, the scarcity has shaped a unique perspective rooted in life in the desert. "Anywhere in the world, to navigate, you need a landmark—a tree, a mountain, something like that," he said. But in the desert, those landmarks frequently shift with the winds. So, "you have to know where you're going and be comfortable with ambiguity. It's quite entrepreneurial in a primal sense." In the absence of fixed landmarks, Bedouin have learned to navigate by other means (like the "stars in the skies" in Sheikh Mohammed's children's book), cultivating a deep connection to and reliance on the desert and its ecologies. This perspective, Saeed suggested, has fostered a uniquely adaptive and entrepreneurial mindset that continues to shape Dubai's approach to innovation and development.

This mindset also aids Saeed in his current role of "ecosystem building," enticing companies to invest in Dubai and spearhead initiatives like the creation of "a million Arab

[10] The European VC, "EUVC #231: The Rise of Dubai with Saeed Al Gergawi, VP of the Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy," YouTube video, 41:21, 16 October 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5ayWrcKp0c.

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coders." The skills he highlights as key to Dubai's success are rooted in adapting to and navigating the challenges of the desert. However, Saeed's comments also can be interpreted as carrying a more cautionary undertone about Emirati exceptionalism: what appears stable and prosperous today may rest on unstable foundations, capable of vanishing as quickly as it emerges.

Finally, the UAE's Mars initiative draws not only on Bedouin heritage but also on a broader Islamic legacy, positioning its ambitions as a continuation of the scientific and cultural achievements of the Islamic Golden Age. By framing the Martian city as a site of knowledge production, the video evokes both a futuristic vision and a nostalgic return to an idealized past when the Islamic world was at the forefront of innovation. Omran Sharaf, mission project manager for the Hope orbital probe, emphasized this connection in a speech, explaining that the answer to the question of why Emiratis should go to Mars lies in building a knowledge-based economy. He reminded his audience that the "region was more than 800 years ago a generator of knowledge during the Islamic Golden Age, contributing to humanity by bringing knowledge."[11] The name "City of Wisdom" itself recalls the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikma), a renowned center of learning in Baghdad under the Abbasids in the late 8th century. This rhetoric of "return" by Emirati leaders, observes Nicole Sunday Grove, is a way of "sacralizing Mars 2117. . . drawing attention to the Emirates' possessive investment in western wish-fulfillment around asynchronous narratives that bring together Orientalist fantasies of a cosmopolitan Islamic utopia and the highly-technical zones of global commerce."[12] Such narratives, she argues, enhance the UAE's soft power by grounding its vision of modernity in the values of Islamic stewardship.

We Are All Bedu: 2117 Metaverse

Imagine a world in which the future of Mars colonization unfolds not in the distant cosmos, but within a virtual landscape that everyone can take part in—this is the vision of the 2117 Metaverse (Fig. 11). Launched by BEDU, a Dubai-based technology company, in collaboration with the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre, 2117 Metaverse reimagines the government's vision for space exploration as an interactive experience, allowing participants who will not be around in a hundred years the chance to "prepare for the future real-life colonization of the red planet."[13] Beyond gamifying Mars colonization, it will eventually offer a fully immersive virtual world where users can socialize, work, shop, and play, bridging physical and digital realities, with the goal of hosting 100 million users within a decade.

At a gala unveiling held at Dubai's Museum of the Future in 2022, Amin Al Zarouni, CEO of BEDU, introduced the vision of the 2117 Metaverse as inspired by the country's leaders: "a group of Bedouin who created a country that embraces the values of humanity and tolerance. . . and now want to explore a little further." However, it's not just Emiratis who are Bedouin. In the virtual world of 2117, all users are referred to as "Bedu," invoking the image of the Bedouin as humanity's archetypal explorers. Even the Mars spaceship, called "the Nomad," reinforces this association, linking interplanetary travel to the Bedouin ethos of mobility and resilience. By naming users "Bedu" and centering the narrative on a journey to Mars, the 2117 Metaverse collapses distinctions between past and future, desert and space, Earth and Mars, to suggest that the qualities associated with the Bedouin are essential for humanity's survival and progress. This framework erases the complexities of

[11] Omran Sharaf, "Why We Should Go to Mars | TEDxJESS," TED talk, YouTube video, 9:25, 21 June 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0cRrleFUIw&t=81s.

[12] Grove, "'Welcome to Mars,'" 1044.

[13] 2117_io, "The 2117 Official Launch Event at the Museum of the Future!" YouTube video, 38:09, 25 September 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtMwU89U83I.

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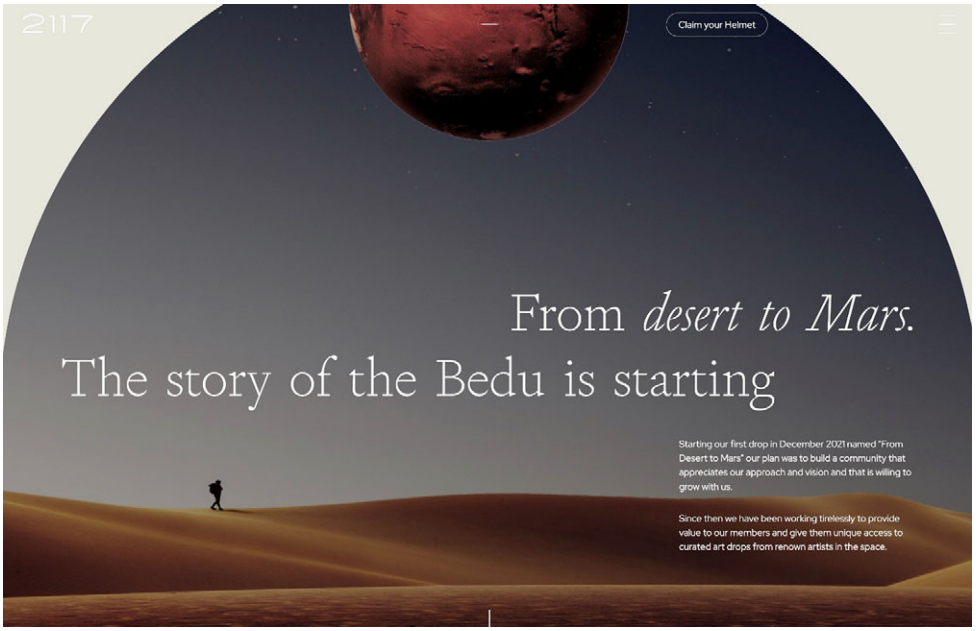


Figure 11. Screenshot of the landing page for the 2117 Metaverse website. Credit: BEDU, https://2117.io.

the Bedouin's lived experiences and risks replicating Orientalist tropes of deserts and its inhabitants. Nonetheless, it also positions the UAE as uniquely suited to lead us into a nomadic future, in which the desert—both terrestrial and Martian—becomes the proving ground for a new kind of interplanetary citizenship.

Although framed as an open and inclusive initiative "for the benefit of humanity," the 2117 Metaverse replicates exclusionary logics that characterize many of the Gulf's futuristic spaces. For instance, although anyone can visit, play, and shop in the 2117 Metaverse, only users able to purchase an NFT-based citizenship token will be granted full membership and access to decision-making processes. This mirrors the dynamics of Dubai itself, where visitors are welcome but citizenship is limited to a select elite.

BEDU also operates UAE NFT, a kind of digital art gallery for non-fungible tokens (NFTs)—unique digital assets stored on a blockchain. Selling NFTs is one way companies like BEDU monetize metaverse platforms and generate revenue. In celebration of the UAE's fiftieth anniversary and the successful entry of the Hope probe into Mars orbit, BEDU commissioned a special NFT collection titled "From Desert to Mars," featuring works by several artists. The collection was promoted with a poster that depicted a partially illuminated Mars rising from the sands of the UAE's desert (Fig. 12).

The image draws clear parallels to the iconic *Earthrise* photograph, taken during the Apollo 8 mission, which captured Earth rising over the lunar horizon in 1968. According to Denis Cosgrove, *Earthrise* is more than just a stunning image; it played a pivotal role in sparking the global environmental movement by presenting Earth as a fragile planet floating in the vastness of space in need of humanity's stewardship.[14] At the same time,

[14] Denis Cosgrove, "Contested Global Visions: One-World, Whole-Earth, and the Apollo Space Photographs." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 84, no. 2 (1994): 270–94, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1994.tb01738.x.

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Figure 12. "From Desert To Mars" poster, UAE NFT, 2022. Credit: BEDU, https://x.com/NftUae/status/1598544454515728384/photo/1.

the image also reinforced anthropocentric views of human dominance over nature and Western scientific achievement, particularly US supremacy in space exploration. The UAE NFT poster flips the narrative, portraying the red planet as a second home ready to be transformed in the image of Earth's deserts. Far more than mere lifeless wastelands or symbols of environmental collapse, deserts in this imaginary serve as sites of renewal that bridge our relationship with both planets.

Around the time *Earthrise* was published, Buckminster Fuller, in *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*, argued that the modern world was first connected by pirates, whose sea voyages revealed Earth as a globe linked by maritime routes.[15] Dubai's heritage is deeply rooted in coastal livelihoods and trade routes, its early economy thriving on fishing, pearling, and maritime commerce. Indeed, the region's historical significance in global trade was shaped by the threat of piracy, which in part led the British to colonize the region. This historical context underscores the irony of the UAE's Mars 2117 initiative, which shifts the narrative from oceans to deserts, promoting the latter as the foundation of its ecological and interplanetary vision. Although maritime routes once symbolized global interconnectedness, the UAE's futuristic ambitions suggest that deserts are now emerging as critical sites for shaping planetary and interplanetary connections and key sites for understanding future planetary ecologies. Within this vision, the Martian desert has become the reified desert of all deserts, the universal home for humanity and benchmark for progress, representing both the challenges and possibilities of a precarious environmental future. This ecological framing positions the desert—not the ocean—as central to humanity's next phase of exploration and survival, highlighting its role as a bridge between Earth and the cosmos.

[15] R. Buckminster Fuller, *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth* (Baden, Switzerland: Lars Müller, [1969] 2008).

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Conclusion: Nomads of the Cosmos

The UAE's Mars 2117 initiative offers a compelling lens through which to examine the intersections of space exploration, environmental narratives, and geopolitical ambitions. By reconfiguring the desert as an ecological utopia and metaphor for resilience and progress, the UAE positions itself as a leader in planetary stewardship. Yet, this vision is deeply ambivalent, raising critical questions about the role of space colonization in confronting Earth's ecological challenges.

As the global space race accelerates, the UAE's ambitions invite broader reflection: Is Mars truly a site for planetary experimentation, or merely a mirror reflecting Earth's colonial past? Whereas Elon Musk's SpaceX and other private ventures often imagine Mars as a refuge from environmental disaster or societal breakdown, the UAE offers a different vision grounded in continuity. By framing Mars as an extension of Earth's desert landscapes, the UAE presents space exploration not as a rupture with the planet but a reaffirmation that the skills honed in the shifting sands of the past are the same ones needed to build the future. If this vision is to be believed, then the desert—so often seen as barren and lifeless—may in fact be the most vital blueprint for humanity's cosmic future. Perhaps the journey to Mars is not about leaving Earth behind but about rediscovering how to live within it.

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