

Thanatia: The Destiny of the Earth's Mineral Resources : A Thermodynamic Cradle-to-Cradle Assessment

Antonio Valero Capilla, Alicia Valero Delgado



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Is Gaia becoming Thanatia, a resource exhausted planet? For how long can our high-tech society be sustained in the light of declining mineral ore grades, heavy dependence on un-recycled critical metals and accelerated material dispersion? These are all root causes of future disruptions that need to be addressed today.

This book presents a cradle-to-cradle view of the Earth's abiotic resources through a novel and rigorous approach based on the Second Law of Thermodynamics: heat dissipates and materials deteriorate and disperse. Quality is irreversibly lost. This allows for the assessment of such depletion and can be used to estimate the year where production of the main mineral commodities could reach its zenith. By postulating Thanatia, one acquires a sense of destiny and a concern for a unified global management of the planet's abiotic resource endowment.

The book covers the core aspects of geology, geochemistry, mining, metallurgy, economics, the environment, thermodynamics and thermochemistry. It is supported by comprehensive databases related to mineral resources, including detailed compositions of the Earth's layers, thermochemical properties of over 300 substances, historical energy and mineral resource inventories, energy consumption and environmental impacts in the mining and metallurgical sector and world recycling rates of commodities.

Contents:

Readership: Thermodynamicists, geologists, economists, policy makers, and mining, environmental and chemical engineers.

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