

nothing more than an erased line of code.

The collision of these three forces threatens to inflict a fatal blow to human security, leaving us entirely exposed and defenceless. We are stripped of our mental sovereignty as our minds are colonised by code, and we are robbed of our bodily autonomy, tracked like livestock by an omnipresent digital eye. Ultimately, we face a future governed by automated violence, where life-and-death choices are dictated by soulless machines. By weaponising our deepest fears, this techno-delirium transforms humanity into a collection of what I earlier called “undead canvases” — breathing, but completely drained of freedom, privacy, and soul.

There is the belief that AI will be able to further human enhancement, improving our overall cognition and quality of life. How might the emergence of artificial intelligence alter the nature of the human condition?

As it stands, some of the lofty goals proclaimed are convenient marketing ploys to generate investment. It is not that AI does not promise amazing things in all fields of human endeavour, even in the most sensitive areas such as medicine and psychology. But as of now, the manual is in the wrong hands. We can't trust Musk and Co. They want profit and they don't have the intellectual acumen or human empathy to be trusted. Musk, in particular, has turned into a right-wing agitator with extremely unhinged attitudes. We know about Gates and Epstein, so there is a legitimate case to be made here that the AI engine is driven by a bunch of blinkered specialists. That said, we are monitoring some of the advances into absolute cognitive mastery. Silicon Valley aggressively pitches the illusion that merging machine intelligence with neuroscience will finally unlock the nature of dreams and consciousness. I think we humans will compete well on that front, as opposed to AI advances in fields where the human mind is marginal to exec-

utive function.

The second core promise that we are monitoring with scepticism guarantees a future of utopian human security and frictionless living. Corporate tech lobbies promise revolutionary medical breakthroughs, claiming hyper-optimised data tracking will yield near-instantaneous drug discoveries and eradicate human disease. Alongside these medical miracles, the public is promised “smart cities” that leverage automated resource management to build safe, perfectly efficient urban environments. Ultimately, the tech sector promises to replace human judgment with infallible, mathematically precise calculations, eliminating human error across every major industry. Ironically, then, in this system of perfectionist sameness, clearly an effect of the obsessive-compulsive disorder of many tech giants, the most imperfect humans will be the most authentic. Imperfection will be the marker of our humanity and I think this is very beautiful.

Finally, in the cosmic theater of the 21st century, Silicon Valley tech giants pitch the conquest of outer space as the ultimate monument to human ingenuity — an era where artificial intelligence will unshackle us from our terrestrial chains. The engineering advancements are undeniably real and staggering: autonomous spacecraft that navigate the lethal voids of deep space without waiting for Earth's sluggish radio signals, machine learning models that sift through petabytes of cosmic data to discover new exoplanets in seconds, and hyper-precise algorithms that maneuver satellites away from catastrophic orbital debris. AI promises to be humanity's tireless vanguard, enduring deadly radiation to build the infrastructure of an interplanetary species. However, this cosmic colonisation may lead directly to the birth of post-human star warfare. The promise of peaceful exploration serves as a thin camouflage for the total militarisation of Earth's orbit. As autonomous satellite-networks and orbital



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weapons systems are handed control of planetary security, the human veto may be entirely stripped away. The final frontier is transformed into a frictionless, data-driven battlefield where life and death are dictated by cold, algorithmic calculations. Humanity is not ascending to the heavens; we are sleepwalking into a reality where our celestial future is gatekept, commodified, and weaponised on purely corporate terms.

You discuss how AI and other forms of machine learning have inherited colonial modes of thinking, as exemplified by techno-orientalism. How can we learn from legacies of historical injustice in advancing more equitable AI?

We must first shatter the comforting illusion that algorithmic bias is a mere “technical glitch” to be patched with minor software updates. It is not. It is a digital resurrection of the ghost of empire. Modern machine learning has inherited a hierarchical, colonial mode of thinking rooted directly in the dark underside of the European Enlightenment. Just as biological racism was originally codified during the Enlightenment as a pseudoscientific weapon to justify Western colonial conquest, modern tech

empires use the myth of mathematical neutrality to mask an aggressive, totalising expansion of data extraction. This is a systematic process of psycho-codification as indicated. We are bowing before the machine as if it were an infallible silicon god, when in reality, it is merely automating, scaling, and accelerating our historical sins.

This inheritance manifests very violently through techno-orientalism — a high-tech mutation of the classic colonial binary. Historically, Western empires manufactured “Orientalism” to frame the non-Western world as primitive, untrustworthy, and requiring forensic management. Today, techno-orientalism translates this prejudice into a digital panopticon. It builds biometric filters, predictive border-control tools, and automated surveillance networks that treat non-Western identities as inherent security risks. To forge an equitable AI, we must wage a philosophical revolt against the false premise of “objective” data. We must aggressively audit and purge these colonial power dynamics from training models, stripping monopolistic tech conglomerates of their power to impose corporate standards as universal human norms. By forcing AI to exist under strict human vetoes and localised

governance, we can transform technology from an instrument of imperial control into a weapon for social justice and genuine equality. That doesn't mean that we all have to live the same, as communists suggested in the past. We don't need more ascetic hypocrites in history. But it does mean that we try to widen the options for self-realisation in life so that they appear wider and more equally distributed, even in this age of “stupid money and power”.

How can our international legal architecture address the changes wrought onto the security landscape by artificial intelligence?

When I ask a conventional corporate lawyer for legal advice on AI, they tend to hand me a compliance checklist. They will talk about data privacy laws, algorithmic transparency, and corporate liability. So, I think, standard legal advice under the current framework is a dangerous narcotic. It lulls society into a false sense of security while the algorithmic executioner sharpens its blade. Most modern AI legislation is not written to protect human dignity; it is drafted to legitimise corporate monopolies under the guise of “risk management”. We must aggressively reject corporate ethics-washing. The vol-

untary “ethical AI guidelines” and self-regulation frameworks heavily promoted by the tech lobby are nothing more than smoke and mirrors designed to evade binding legal consequences. I have interacted with their oversight boards and I encourage everyone to do so. They truly are a farce. Ethics without teeth is merely public relations. Lawmakers must strip big tech of this shield, transforming passive ethical suggestions into severe, binding criminal and civil liabilities for tech oligarchs.

Second, the legal system must codify an absolute “human veto”. Current regulatory loopholes allow corporate and state entities to delegate highly sensitive, life-altering choices to automated systems in the name of mathematical optimisation. Legislation must enforce a strict, mandatory barrier: no machine learning model should ever hold final legal authority. Whether deciding a criminal sentence, denying critical medical care, filtering a job applicant, or determining an automated murder of a civilian nuclear scientist in foreign countries, a human being must always possess the supreme, unalterable right to override the algorithm.

Finally, human rights lawyers must erect an airtight legal firewall that separates civilian technology from military AI. Deep-tech conglomerates are quietly fusing corporate data harvesting with state warfare. To halt this descent into autonomously post-human warfare, international and domestic laws must be completely rewritten. We must enforce strict legal boundaries and compartments, guaranteeing that human commanders — and not autonomous silicon processors — are held fully and criminally accountable for violations of international humanitarian law. If the law fails to decolonise data and aggressively strip tech monopolies of their sovereignty, it ceases to be a shield for human dignity and becomes the paperwork certifying our subjugation.

The full article first appeared on E-International Relations.

SCO Media, Think Tank Summit calls for broader consensus

CONFERENCE

The 2026 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit, themed “The Shanghai Spirit in the New Era: From Shared Values to Practical Cooperation,” opened on July 27 in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. The summit gathered about 260 representatives from nearly 150 mainstream media organizations, leading think tanks, government departments and the SCO Secretariat across SCO countries.

Daiyrbek Orunbekov, head of the Information Policy Service of the Presidential Administration of Kyrgyzstan, said in a keynote speech at the opening ceremony that media organizations and think tanks shoulder great responsibilities in guiding public opinion and safeguarding trust and security among countries in today's world.

Coordination between media organizations and think tanks will provide a reliable shield against disinformation, he said, expressing confidence that the summit would serve as a platform for generating new ideas and initiatives and contribute to strengthening information security within the



The photo shows a scene at the 2026 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on July 27, 2026. ● FENG KAIHUA/XINHUA

SCO, deepening academic cooperation and building bridges of friendship.

Xi Yanchun, vice president of Xinhua News Agency, said in her keynote speech that Xinhua has always been committed to telling SCO stories well and amplifying the SCO's voice.

Under the SCO framework, me-

dia organizations and think tanks should continue to serve as bridges and links, she said.

She called on them to seek common ground while respecting differences and promote solidarity and mutual trust; pursue mutual benefit and drive development and revitalization; uphold openness and inclusiveness and build

bridges for people-to-people exchanges; uphold fairness and justice and advocate multilateralism; and remain practical and efficient while taking the lead in action-oriented cooperation.

Mederbek Shermetaliyev, director of the Kabar News Agency of Kyrgyzstan, said that while digital technologies have facilitated

information exchange, they have also brought risks such as disinformation and cybersecurity threats.

SCO member states should jointly establish regular dialogue mechanisms among think tanks, conduct joint research, cultivate young experts, promote in-depth exchanges among media professionals, and continuously deepen intellectual, information and people-to-people cooperation, he said.

Liu Jiangping, Chinese ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, said media organizations and think tanks are not only chroniclers of the times but also advocates of cooperation, and that cooperation between them has become an important way of putting the Shanghai Spirit into practice.

At a time when methods of information dissemination are undergoing profound changes, the world needs objective, truthful and comprehensive reporting more than ever, as well as in-depth and rational research, efforts to overcome prejudice, bridge differences and enhance mutual understanding, and stronger dialogue and cooperation, Liu said.

Kadyrbek Sarbayev, a senior expert with the SCO Secretariat,

said the summit will help further deepen exchanges and cooperation between media organizations and think tanks under the SCO framework and contribute to the organization's long-term development.

Mirzokhid Rakhimov, head of the Department of Contemporary History at the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, said that the SCO should build on the Silk Road's legacy of exchanges among civilizations and promote regional connectivity as well as sustainable and stable development through deeper think tank exchanges.

The summit ran until July 30 and was jointly hosted by Xinhua News Agency and the Kabar News Agency of Kyrgyzstan.

During the summit, think tank reports, titled “Contemporary Features and Global Significance of Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building” in Kyrgyz and Russian, and “Upholding Fairness and Justice and Improving Global Governance — Achievements, Opportunities, and Prospects for SCO Cooperation” in multiple languages, were released.

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