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INTENSIFICATION OF THE POLYCRISIS AND THE RISE OF A TECHNO-OLIGARCHIC IDEOLOGY IN THE USA**

Abstract. *The article analyses the techno-oligarchic ideology in the USA during the 2nd Trump Administration and the implications it holds for tackling the climate/ecological crisis. It argues that this ideology is a novel, far-right political ideology of the US techno-oligarchy whose rise was predicated on intensification of the polycrisis. Its central purpose is to expand the techno-oligarchy's influence, power and wealth, and squash opposition to its dominance and any visions/policies that critically interrogate the existing ecologically unsustainable capitalist model of growth and technological development. By analysing its central characteristics, its re-imagining of the state and political institutions via the introduction of AI, and in the context of the Israeli genocide of Palestinians, the article shows that its novel nature stems from the centrality of technological development and technology(ies) in its oligarchic, anti-democratic, repressive, neo-imperial, eugenic, hyper-capitalist, extractive and destructive vision of society.*
Keywords: *polycrisis, techno-oligarchy, far-right political ideology, the state, AI, genocide.*

INTRODUCTION

The following article analyses the rise of a new far-right ideology, a techno-oligarchic ideology, which can be observed in the USA in the context of the 2nd Trump Administration and the centrality of the tech-oligarchs (e.g., Elon Musk)[1] in it. This rise could have a crucial impact on the global order, especially in relation to an intensification of the polycrisis (above all the climate/ecological crisis affecting it) and the fact that the USA is at the centre of this order. An order

that is capitalist (the logic of the continuous expansion of capital and exploitation of labour and natural resources), West-dominated, and neo-imperial (built on past exploitative, extractive imperial structures and asymmetrical relations of power, wealth and influence), ecologically unsustainable and historically prone to crises. Today's polycrisis can be considered as qualitatively different since the various crises (from ecological to geopolitical, social and political) do not have clear boundaries and are not mono-causal, they are quite a complex set of various shocks to the system and their joint effect is worse than the mere sum of their individual effects (Tooze 2022). Its effects are also intensifying and have more directly started to affect the West, specifically the USA.

We initially understand the rise of techno-oligarchic ideology as a specific response on the part of the American elites to the polycrisis. Given that in the polycrisis there is no return to normal (Tooze 2022), we initially argue that the rise of a techno-oligarchic ideology and its central characteristics must be seen as the rise of a novel political ideology that could shape the USA's future and, crucially, could generally have a negative impact on sustainably and democratically tackling the polycrisis. This rise must be viewed in the context of a novel central part of the capitalist class – the techno-oligarchy – that utilises its power derived from its novel centrality in the political economy to assert its direct political power to achieve hegemony and thereby the conditions to further consolidate its power, wealth and influence in the setting of the polycrisis (see Hočevar and Vodovnik 2025; Sadowski 2025). Crises produce novel openings for political struggle to articulate and implement fresh visions of society. The polycrisis is no exception because one of its central dimensions is the political destabilisation of the ideological consensus among the major political forces concerning the future of society.

In modern capitalist societies it is the political sphere that is vital for articulating and disseminating novel visions of the order, and rationalising and legitimising its specific transformations (Banjac 2025; Hočevar and Lukšič 2018; Zevnik Tomazin 2025). The political is critical as it is a field of strategically (re)ordering other socio-political-economic relations, structures and institutions (Foucault 2001). It is the central sphere where actors articulate and politicise specific issues and solutions in order to achieve strategic goals. There is a continuous contestation of various visions promoted by specific actors and formed into specific political ideologies. The latter are a coherent set of ideas that establish the basis for organised political action to preserve, modify or overthrow existing systems of power (Heywood 2021). They are an instrument of political mobilisation and include a critique/celebration of the existing order, a vision of a desired future order, and the theory of political change/consolidation. Their success is related to the extent that their views on particular concepts become normalised. Each political ideology has a cluster of core concepts, which ensures coherence in spite of variations concerning the adjacent and peripheral concepts and notwithstanding their ambivalences and contradictions (Freeden 1998).

The political struggle is always-already unequal as the capitalist nature of modern liberal representative US democracy inherently subverts the fantasy of political pluralism and its notions of equal competitions among interests. The US political system has strong oligarchic tendencies whereby corporations and the wealthy disproportionally influence political decisions (see Gilens and Page 2014), which is understandable when we consider that the power of US capitalists rests not only on the political-ideological sphere but is tied to the repressive state apparatus and their economic power that determines the living conditions of all societal groups (Mau 2023).

We argue that the techno-oligarchic ideology is a vision of a novel oligarchy articulated, promoted and implemented by its individual and collective members. Oligarchy in general refers to a system in which a wealthy minority holds and maintains power at the expense of the common good and by excluding the majority from political power. The US political system can be understood as a form of oligarchy where the super-rich control governance. Yet they have done this in an indirect way through influence over impersonal state institutions, making the USA a form of civil oligarchy. The tech-oligarchic ideology promotes a mutation of this system into a ruling oligarchy where the oligarchs play an active role in consolidating their power, wealth and influence and govern directly in a collective manner via institutions and infrastructure that they themselves control (see Van den Bosch 2025). Here the technological dimension plays a central role as the techno-oligarchy derives its strength not only from its wealth but above all from their control over the core technological infrastructure that society needs for its functioning and survival. This enables them to imagine and potentially implement a novel intrusive system of coercion, manufacturing of consent and determining the living conditions of individuals and communities to assure public obedience and maintain control. Despite technology(ies) playing a role in previous political ideologies (e.g., in liberalism and socialism) and playing a central role in the foundational ideological legitimisation of the capitalist social form (Mau 2023), we argue that technology(ies) and technological development play an unprecedented central role in the techno-oligarchic ideology. Upgrading our materialist framework with neo-luddite analytics, we initially argue that technology(ies) and technological development are conditioned by the capitalist social form and its imperatives. And that they are determined by a set of choices made by the capitalists which are intended to reinforce their power (asymmetrical power relations) in the class struggle, their domination over communities and workers (and users of technology) and curtailing their autonomy, enhance their capabilities for expanding the accumulation of capital and exploitation of workers and natural resources (Merchant 2023).

In the context of the above framework, the core question that will guide us in our analysis concerning the rise of a techno-oligarchic ideology is what are the conditions for its rise and crucially what is its core set of ideological notions, and which implications do they hold for the present and the future of not just the

US order but also the global implications for tackling the most prescient issues, primarily the intensifying climate/ecological crisis.

INTENSIFICATION OF THE POLYCRISIS AND THE IDEOLOGICAL-MATERIAL CONDITIONS FOR THE RISE OF A TECHNO-OLIGARCHIC IDEOLOGY

Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic and the succession of 'historical' natural disasters, the polycrisis has started to massively affect the USA. 2024 was the hottest year on record globally and a year of catastrophic hurricanes, floods, droughts and fires that continued into 2025.[2] The crisis was also societal, geopolitical, economic and public health-related and, combined, these crises were truly unprecedented and have led to an intensification of the existing political crisis. Trump's victory in the US presidential election of 2024 and the intensification of the polycrisis under Biden has put to rest the fantasy of centrist political forces[3] that the first Trump Administration was an aberration (see Frank 2020). The worsening of the climate crisis, rampant inflation, uneven economic growth and exploding inequality, falling life expectancy, the plethora of intensified geopolitical crises that have further destabilised the US-dominated global order demonstrate the specific limits of the US-led western powers (Russo-Ukraine war), their belligerent nature (trade war on China) and their explicit hypocritical, neocolonial, racist nature by enabling the Israeli genocide of Palestinians. These crises show that destabilisation is a consequence of the constitutive contradictions of the capitalist global neo-imperial order. The latter is ecologically and socially unsustainable due to its organising imperatives and logic of ever-expanding capital accumulation. This has inevitably led to the unsustainable exploitation of finite natural resources, ecological catastrophe(s) and a general degradation of living conditions, ever increasing levels of exploitation and domination of people as workers, carers, and further neo-colonial expropriation, exploitation and extermination of third-world populations and first-world marginalised populations. It has caused ever stronger geopolitical competition for strategic resources, control over crucial value chains and general speculative financialisation and assetisation of social and natural life as the avenues for expansive growth become harder and financial bubbles are becoming bigger and more dangerous. It has also led to higher levels of inequality and growing isolation and segregation of elites from the lives of the common people and escalated discontent of common citizens with the existing order and greater political radicalisation, especially in Western countries that are inextricably tied to re-articulated and novel political

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[2]   See https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/national-climate-202413.
[3]   It refers to all political forces that subscribe to a variation of the status quo concerning the fundamental organisation of society on the basis of capitalist logic and imperatives of continuous growth, commodification and the private ownership of the means of production and the private property system and the capitalist sovereign nation state and the neo-imperial global system of geopolitical domination and capitalist exploitation.

ideologies promoting various visions of a future order that would specifically resolve the polycrisis (Dunlap 2024; Patel and Moore 2017; Vodovnik 2025).

The most central expression of these destabilisations was the rise of left-wing populist and (far)right-wing quasi-populist movements and the radicalisation of the centrist political forces in cracking down on the discontent targeting primarily populist left movements that were anti-systemic (Frank 2020). Centrist and far-right visions represent pro-or-hyper systemic ideologies that differ only in the ways in which specific constitutive elements of the existing unsustainable capitalist neo-imperial order are being intensified. The far-right 'alternative' is a more sadistic version of the existing order with regard to the oppression of marginalised communities (e.g., immigrants, Native American, Latino and Black communities, the LGBTQ community) and above all oppression against all (e.g., homeless, poor, disabled) that do not conform to the 'normal productive' American population and its 'natural' hierarchies where wealth and economic success is perceived as directly linked to the moral and biological/racial superiority of existing elites. Hence the partial fascistic leanings of these visions concerning the state where it is imagined as a tool of oppression of marginalised communities and of workers and their autonomous organised power. A tool for destroying any emancipatory potential and forces. A tool for materially strengthening capitalist oligarchy (plutocrats) by expanding the repressive apparatuses (the police, the military, the prison system, secret services) targeting the marginalised and workers (the law and order doctrine) and also via the destruction of state capacities to provide material benefits to marginalised communities and at least to partially hold corporations and capitalist responsible (e.g., the minimum wage, working conditions, workers' rights, ecological standards) that were gained through successful past democratic emancipatory struggles. These visions ideologically strengthen the capitalist oligarchy as they subscribe to the ideological tenet concerning law and its application since they explicitly make a distinction between the in-group(s) that the law protects but does not bind and the out-groups whom the law does not protect but binds (Harris 2023).

The similarity of centrist and far-right ideologies can also be traced to their similar veneration of technologies and technological development and the general constitutive capitalist techno-deterministic, utopistic, solutionist ideology. Both the founders/CEOs of technological corporations are imagined as inherently beneficial for the progress of humanity, for a continuous resolution of subsequent issues and problems, and as an expression of the genius and superiority of a nation, a "race", a civilisation (McQuillan 2023). This common feature is essential for understanding the context of the rise of the far-right techno-oligarchic ideology and the changing political allegiance of most of the crucial Silicon Valley (CA, USA) adjacent techno-oligarchs that switched sides and began to explicitly support Trump. Previous darlings of the centrists, such as Musk, participated in the campaign with unprecedented financial, technological and ideological support and became part of the new Trump Administration. Musk

and other techno-oligarchs (e.g., Zuckerberg (Meta), Bezos (Amazon)) began to explicitly subscribe to the far-right political visions (from anti-environmentalism, selective anti-migration, to the retrenchment of (parts of) the state, militarisation, neo-imperial expansion, hyper-nationalism, anti-China positions, to elitism, hyper-masculinity, and eugenics) joining the list of far-right tech-billionaires such as Thiel,[4] Schmidt,[5] Andreesen,[6] Karp[7] etc. (see Aronoff 2025; Lewis 2025). We argue that this is part of the political awakening of the techno-oligarchy (Big Tech and the techno-oligarchs) and the rise of the techno-oligarchic ideology in the context of the gradual re-configuring of the political economy and the perceived danger to its novel central position. The latter was connected with centrist policies, especially those that intensified the anti-democratic developments of the system. These policies established a national and global regulatory framework that enabled the techno-oligarchy to amass unprecedented power and wealth, to establish monopolies and crush competition, and to establish highly exploitative employment practices and unprecedented intrusive accumulation and surveillance regimes targeting the users of their technologies for the purposes of algorithmic governance to increase engagement and/or for tailored advertisement and the general commodification of people's lives. Whilst ever their activities could be ideologically framed as "defending our democracy" and furthering American interests globally, the Big-Tech abilities to surveil, discipline, and stifle dissent and crush competition had a stamp of centrist approval (Doctorrow 2023; Larson 2020). The legitimising of these activities by the centrist forces must be seen as part of a larger decades-long neoliberal dismantling of democratic achievements of past emancipatory struggles (Slobodian 2018). It should also be understood as a fundamental dimension of the process of expanding, consolidating and/or retaining the USA's global political, economic and military power and hegemony over the global neo-imperial capitalist order. Since the 1990s the US establishment forces have seen the control over central Internet technologies, the fundamental infrastructure of digitalised capitalism and neo-imperialism, as essential for American supremacy (Levine 2019). Successive crises (the 9/11 attacks (2001), the global financial crisis (2008) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-?)) have further strengthened the power, capabilities and importance of the techno-oligarchy that has ascended "the commanding heights" (cf. Lenin) of American capitalism (joining the finance, fossil fuel, and

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[4] Peter Thiel, co-founder of PayPal and Palantir, is directly connected to Trump's administration and to Musk. Vice-President JD Vance is his protege and he is primarily responsible for the success of PayPal's IPO where Musk, a part owner, received an enormous payout of several hundred million dollars, that acted as the foundation of his subsequent acquisition of Tesla.

[5] Eric Schmidt, former CEO of Google/Alphabet, and promoter of 'AI hype' and technological neo-imperialism.

[6] Marc Andreesen is one of the crucial financiers of Silicon Valley start-ups and is very close to the 2nd Trump Administration.

[7] Alex Karp, co-founder and CEO of Palantir, the surveillance/spyware company providing tech to the NSA.

transport industries) and become the most important sector of the US economy. Given that the policy responses to each of these crises leaned on the tech sector as the provider of 'solutions', these corporations became central to people's lives, central to the economy and politics, and central to the USA's global power (Larson 2020; Morozov 2022).

Starting in the 1990s, the Silicon-Valley-centred techno-oligarchy, the corporate (and new) media, and politicians have established an ideological Teflon-like framework where the hype to do with the capabilities of technologies and radical breaches of existing laws and various negative effects of technologies on people's lives, the democratic political processes, economic competition, could be obfuscated without any serious push-back from centrist forces (Marx 2022). The Teflon-like nature was retained despite various crises such as the dot.com crash of 2000, the 2010 Occupy Movement, the 2013 Snowden revelations, and the 2016 social media crisis that temporarily shook this ideological framework. In part, the early "Internet utopianism" of "open networks" enabling a "globalised, connected world", the idea of the Internet as an engine of democracy, a technology that should not be regulated by state power was muted and a new focus was given to the notion of technology as a weapon in the service of US-national interests. Until the mid 2010s, US technological corporations were dominant and the first framing was beneficial to their power and thus to the interests of the US state in consolidating its global hegemony. As soon as other countries (especially China) began to catch up and overtake US corporations, the second framework became more prominent and the techno-oligarchy partly re-branded itself as central to US neo-imperial interests and started to shed their image of defenders of an open Internet and claim the mantle of primary defenders of American online spaces from 'foreign nefarious forces'. They also framed their monopolistic power as necessary for the USA's technological supremacy (Doctorrow 2023; Marx 2022; Levine 2019).

On the level of the societal legitimisation of wealth, influence and power of the US techno-oligarchs, this ideological framework drew from the fantasy of the 'typical' Silicon Valley entrepreneur, which contrary to the facts turned these oligarchs into inherent geniuses, maverick entrepreneurs, self-made men, pioneers who through their individual brilliance and by going against the dominant trends, practices, technologies in their garages out of nothing created world-changing innovations and disruptions of existing structures and practices for the benefit of all humanity. Their success was imagined in the public sphere as giving them the exclusive right, despite a complete lack of any actual expertise and knowledge, to articulate the future of society and 'improvements' in every societal sphere and to formulate tech-based solutions to every central issue (Larson 2020; Sadowski 2025). This acted like a Teflon-like shield against criticism. Their belief in their inherent superiority and elitism (e.g., Bezos, Gates, Musk, Zuckerberg, Thiel), dabbling in eugenic racist thinking (e.g., Musk), pronatalism (e.g., Musk), hyper-masculinity, sexism and patriarchy (Gates, Bezos, Musk,

Zuckerberg etc.), hyper-nationalism, American exceptionalism, and totalitarian fantasies taken from various science fiction stories (e.g., Zuckerberg and the Metaverse) make the notion of the sudden right-wing turn of the techno-oligarchs and corporations problematic (Lewis 2025; Torres and Gebru 2024). It should be understood as an instrument of centrist forces that in a self-serving manner absolves them from blame by rationalising and legitimising their past (future?) collaboration with the techno-oligarchy and past centrist policies that established the conditions for its rise.

The changing political allegiances must instead be viewed as the rise of a techno-oligarchic political ideology in response to the (limited) curtailment of its power. This was linked to the tech-clash tied to various scandals that revealed online platforms' detrimental effects on societies ranging from negatively effecting adolescents, to fostering genocide (e.g., the Rohingya genocide), negatively effecting the democratic political process by promoting far-right views (e.g., the Cambridge Analytica scandal that is thought to have led to the first Trump election victory in 2016 and the success of the Brexit referendum). Public trust in the techno-oligarchy was also heavily eroded by the process of "enshittification" (Doctorow 2023) tied to the "rot economy" (Zitron 2023) that has made crucial technological services substantially worse due to Big Tech's increased power over consumers, business, advertisements and the media and their sole focus on maximising growth and share prices.

The centrist elites became open to the idea of regulating these corporations especially following the 2020 presidential campaign. To secure Biden's victory, Bernie Sanders' large voting block needed to be accommodated. Hence, the Biden Administration implemented several policies to at least partially curtail the power of the tech-oligarchy (Vassallo 2025). Various US federal agencies (e.g., the FTC) began to take important steps to regulate the tech sector and its blatant breaches of existing laws.[8] For instance, Musk's companies faced over 20 governmental investigations and reviews to do with environmental harm, the safety of Tesla cars, detrimental working conditions (harassment, sexism, racism) and were given various fines.[9] However, the policies of the Biden Administration were contradictory because regulation activities were accompanied by the continuing veneration of the tech sector and its dubious innovations (e.g., generative "AI"). During the Biden Administration, the entanglement of Big Tech (Musk's companies[10], Google, Amazon, Microsoft etc.) with the federal government grew even deeper. They expanded their provision of crucial technological infrastructure via lucrative government contracts. Further, they influenced public policy and the government's day-to-day functioning and were positioned as critical for the US state's power. Despite prospering under Biden, the novel regulatory

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[8]   In 2024, a federal judge ruled Google was a search monopoly, and that it had violated Antitrust Law.
[9]   See https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/20/us/politics/elon-musk-federal-agencies-contracts.html.
[10]   Musk's companies accounted for approximately USD 15.4 billion in contracts in the last 10 years.

activities were perceived by most of them as dangerous for their monopolies, for their economic, political and societal power. This was deemed even more potentially dangerous as the US regulatory undertakings were not isolated from those in other contexts like the EU and China (Del Valle 2025). The tech-oligarchy began to intensify their activities (e.g., lobbying, financing political campaigns, ideological warfare via owned or subservient media) to apply pressure to the centrist forces to stop these policies (see Vassallo 2025). They also perceived the existing volatile political situation as a strategic opportunity to expand their power and began to distance themselves from the centrist political forces and to support the far-right and its anti-democratic/authoritarian, anti-welfare, anti-union, racist, sexist, hyper-nationalist, neo-imperial, genocidal political project(s) (Blakeley 2025). Practically the whole techno-oligarchy either explicitly (e.g., Musk) or silently supported Trump's candidacy. They were unbothered by the optics of attending Trump's inauguration, even for paying for it.[11] They not only started to explicitly commend and represent the far-right forces and policies as generally beneficial to the technological sector but also to articulate their own techno-oligarchic political ideology that, as we show in the following part, is anti-democratic, anti-emancipatory, anti-sustainable, exploitative, exclusionary, elitist, and eugenic in nature. It has a specific framing of the past, understanding of the present central issues, and a highly dangerous vision of the future.

CENTRAL NOTIONS OF THE TECHNO-OLIGARCHIC IDEOLOGY

In order to critically interrogate the techno-oligarchic ideology, we shall focus on the core notions promoted by central actors of the techno-oligarchy ranging from prominent techno-oligarchs (Musk, Zuckerberg, Bezos, Thiel, Altman, Andreesen, Ellison[12] etc.) to Big Tech to specific policies and their rationalisations enacted by DOGE,[13] while drawing from and synthesising reflections from various analysts (Gallagher 2025; Gebru and Hanna 2024; Ongweso and Sadowski 2024). We shall consider various sources, including statements that accompany their actions, while focusing on ideological manifestos that clearly outline key central elements of their ideology. In this context, the manifesto of the tech-oligarch Mark Andreesen, the 2023 *The Techno-Optimist Manifesto,* represents an illuminating general framework for understanding the various dimensions of the techno-oligarchic ideology.

The techno-oligarchy represents itself in a self-aggrandising manner that legitimises its distancing from centrist political forces and their (far)right-wing

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[11] Musk, Zuckerberg, Bezos, and Pinchai (CEO of Alphabet/Google) attended, while Amazon, Meta, Google, Microsoft, and Uber made a corporate donation and Cook (CEO of Apple), Altman (Open AI) and Zuckerberg made personal donations for the inauguration (USD 1 million each). See https://www.commoncause.org/articles/big-tech-is-donating-millions-to-trumps-inauguration/.

[12] Ellison is the billionaire founder of Oracle.

[13] DOGE – Department of Government Efficiency – is a creation of the 2nd Trump Administration and can be considered a personal instrument of Musk to radically transform the US administrative and regulatory state according to the ideology of the techno-oligarchy.

drift, while promoting authoritarian policies and politics and an oligarchic system in which they enjoy an *exalted social status*. They frame themselves as *victims of the ungrateful public and the state* that not only fail to see their crucial contribution to the prosperity of all but also have *broken an unwritten contract* to not interfere in their presumably socially beneficial activities by (starting to) regulating them and their technologies and the free markets that presumably enable the unprecedented technological development. Any critique of themselves and their technologies and the ways they are developed is de-legitimised as irrational and dangerous for humanity as it could lead to regulating technological development (see Andreesen 2023).

They perceive this as leading to the curbing of *growth*, a process that must never be stopped. Only growth is deemed to lead to higher well-being. As technological innovation is imagined as the central element of growth, and population growth and natural resource utilisation are deemed to have limits, any form of 'artificial' limit on technological development is considered harmful. Growth is framed as an issue *of survival* since stagnation (or even worse degrowth) is seen as leading to the ultimate death of society (Andreesen 2023). This is diametrically opposite to the extensive scientific research on the unsustainability of our capitalist model of development and its contribution to potentially making our planet uninhabitable for humans (Wallace-Wells 2020).

Similarly to growth, *technological development is seen as inevitable*, as something that realises our inherent potential. They subscribe to *techno-optimism* in the sense of technology being a non-corruptible force for good and dismiss any notion of technology and technological development having negative effects on humanity, society and the environment and, ultimately, on a liveable future. They also subscribe to *techno-determinism* and *techno-utopianism* in the sense of ascribing an inherently beneficial nature to (novel) technologies and imagining these (novel) technologies (generative AI being the focus of today) as instrumental for reaching a utopia of unimaginable productivity, energy and abundance. They believe that not only should there not be any obstacles to technological development and any prohibition on developing certain technologies, but that the pace should be accelerated (Andreesen 2023; Vance 2025).

They see no contradictions between accelerating development *and the degradation of a liveable natural environment*. This belief is based on the notion that our *domination of nature* is something positive and crucial for building a better world and the implicit notion that technologies are detached from the material-natural world. They are imagined as instruments that allow us to create more valuable things. And *expanding markets and consumption are imagined as the only proper measurement of the quality of life*. They still believe in the fantasy of competitive markets as obstacles to the consolidation of power and as agents of fostering technological innovation precipitating the continuous advancement of societies (see Andreesen 2023; Bezos 2025).

Moreover, they perceive that continuous growth and technological devel-

opment is inherently connected to the *expansion of energy production and use*, which they believe, contrary to scientific facts, is not detrimental to the natural environment (Andreesen 2023; Altman 2024). This is based on notions of *technological solutionism and total technological substitution*. The latter notion refers to the idea that natural resources could be replicated technologically *ex nihilo* as technologies are imagined divorced from their dependence on natural resources (Patel and Moore 2017). The notion of technological solutionism is even more central to disregarding the negative effects of technological development and of expansive growth on the natural environment, societies, groups and individuals. It is a notion that is constitutive of our capitalist industrial order (Merchant 2023). It refers to the idea that no ecological, social, political or economic problem exists that cannot be solved through technology. There is no need for any structural politico-economic change to address the causes of given issues (e.g., burning fossil fuels for energy). *The problems that were, are, and will be created by technology (or the market) will be solved by more technology (or more markets).*

These beliefs are founded upon a fabulous tale of technology solving past problems according to which hunger, poverty, exploitation, pollution and other social ills were solved by technology. These fables gloss over the actual history of capitalist societies and the fact that these issues have either persisted or intensified in various (historical) contexts. They present as lies the actual negative and destructive effects of the implementation of capitalist technologies during industrialisation (a reduction of wages, unemployment, poverty and immiseration, massive increases in inequality and the domination of workers, detrimental health effects for workers and society, and due to pollution, environmental destruction) that is increasingly affecting the global ecological well-being and threatening to catastrophically erode the foundations of a liveable planet (Harris 2023; Jensen et al. 2021; Merchant 2023; Noble 1999) (see Andreesen 2023). And they gloss over the fact that capitalist technologies are being utilised by the (neo) imperial West for the ecological-social-cultural destruction and exploitation of non-Western peoples and environments (Harris 2023). These fables also silence the fact that the beneficial societal effects of technologies and the partial tackling of issues have been predicated on the resistances, struggles and revolutions of workers, citizens, exploited and oppressed masses and movements that have forced capitalist states and capitalists to make concessions and adopt policies that have (partly) addressed these issues and (partly) limited the power of the capitalist classes in favour of increased well-being of the masses. Without the movements that struggled to (re)distribute the wealth and benefits of capitalist industrialisation and technological development, the beneficial effects would be massively outweighed by their negative effects (Merchant 2023).

The techno-oligarchs imagine themselves as singularly capable of understanding and directing the 'inevitable', 'divine' force of technological progress. They claim for themselves *the status of infallible prophets/kings* who should be given free reign to do what in their "divine" minds is seen as necessary, be

celebrated, and not face any doubts or criticism for their actions and ideas since they are the harbingers of fantastical technology-enabled futures (Marx 2022; Nobel 1999). In the latter, there is no place for doubters and no place for reality as these imagined futures are built on technologies that are either fantastical/impossible or ecologically devastating and accelerating a path to dystopia, not utopia (e.g., generative "AI"). They assert this *'divine' status based on their past and present success* measured in their present wealth and power and based on their technological innovations that they either made themselves or claimed ownership over (see Andreesen 2023).

They completely obfuscate the structural societal conditions of their success, their appropriation of the collective work of innovation, the dependence of their innovation and their success on luck and contingency and certain public policies. The techno-oligarchs' eugenic obsession with *the notion of intelligence* and its problematic measurements such as IQ becomes understandable as their supposed *superior intelligence* makes their success inevitable. They are touched by the 'divine' not only in the sense of their capability to create technological inventions but by being inherent, biological geniuses. They deem their 'expertise' and their superior intellect as above any type of specialist expert knowledge that should be ignored, if and when they decide that this would be 'beneficial' for tackling specific issues and for the future of society. They also believe themselves to be above and beyond any laws and regulations, traditions and existing procedures that they can and should be able to ignore, breach, and make obsolete. Other experts, politicians, as well as citizens (the masses) should accept and follow their lead without question (Gebru and Tores 2023; Merchant 2023)

They also project the historically singular uncritical glorification of technology and innovators and their superior status into the past as something normal. This is closely connected with their experience in the context of the rise of the novel ICTs in the 1990s through to the mid-2010s when they were uncritically glorified and their transgressions were normalised and left unchecked. It was in this context that the problematic principles of "move fast and break things" and "do not ask for permission, ask for forgiveness" were formulated (Harris 2023; Levine 2019).

Their claim to exalted societal status also draws from the framing of society as analogous to contemporary (computer) software. The majority of tech-oligarchs are computer software engineers and the majority of Big Tech are primarily software corporations (Ed Zittron 2025; Scott 2025). Software is imagined as principally developed for the purpose of continuous expansions and growth, entailing a continuous deepening of its invasion into our lives via ever expansive surveillance and data gathering. It is framed as a universal means to achieve innovation in practically all industries and societal spheres. Innovation is presented as achievable only insofar as the tech-oligarchy via its software penetrate and disrupt the 'old-fashioned, tradition-rules-regulation-following' ways of doing and thinking. Thus, every type of societal structure and institution should

be either open to interventions from the tech-oligarchy and emulate software companies, especially Silicon Valley start-ups that are imagined as uniquely innovative, agile, problem-solving collectives with extreme working conditions (e.g., long hours, sleeping in the office) and meritocratic high-risk, high-reward cultures where only the best can thrive.[14] In the contemporary oligopoly of centralised Big Tech, innovative start-ups are however either destroyed or taken over by Big Tech, thereby stifling any disruption of the status quo. The notion of a meritocratic high-risk, high-reward culture is also factually problematic given that the vast majority of founders come from privileged backgrounds and are predominantly part of the white majority, are male, heterosexual, and able-bodied (Larson 2020; Liu 2020).[15]

The start-up fantasy is a tool for making palatable a plethora of problematic issues of the oligopolistic and oligarchic reality of the contemporary tech-sector and its material and ideological dominance of our societies. Notions of innovation and efficiency have become thoroughly colonised where they are deemed to be exclusive to Big Tech and the tech-oligarchs and to their digitalisation of everything and the automation of every societal process. The tech-oligarchy has normalised its right to determine what these notions refer to, while simultaneously normalising general surveillance, authoritarian censorship, propaganda, exclusion and domination via its ownership, development, implementation and control over specific software (Scott 2025).

The tech-oligarchic ideology is transforming the notions of citizenship rights and sovereignty. The techno-oligarchy claims for itself the prerogative of a sovereign, that is authoritarian, absolutist, unaccountable, arbitrary and should have the absolute right to change (user) agreements/terms and conditions ('laws'), change the functionality of the software, change the user experience, arbitrarily ban some and privilege other users, to extract as much data as possible, to breach laws and regulations concerning privacy, freedom of expression and anti-discrimination, and to make leaving the service/software as hard and unpleasant as possible (Doctorow 2023). Big Tech ultimately owns and controls the central digital infrastructure and utilises it to extract as much value from users in the form of surveillance, data-gathering, algorithm manipulation, and ad-selling as possible regardless of the fact that you are paying for the service/software. They imagine themselves and in many ways are a corporate autocracy. A sovereign that is deemed to have no accountability to its users, the general public, and the state (Doctorow 2023; Zitron 2023).

Still, the state and political institutions figure prominently in the techno-oligarchic ideology as the re-imagining of the state represents a central set of notions and provides a framework in which a systematic legitimisation is made as to

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[14] DOGE is an almost perfect example of utilising this ideological fantasy of start-ups to radically transform 'legacy' US state institutions.

[15] There are very few exceptions (e.g., Sundar Pichai (Alphabet/Google), Satya Nadella (Microsoft)).

who counts as relevant, whose interests are naturalised and made unquestioned in the context and in relation to the capitalist representative democratic state. And above all, whose interests should the state heed, what is the public interest, who should articulate it, and what role should the common citizens (the masses) play in it. As we show in the next section, this re-imagining mirrors and radic-alises the role of the state during the industrial revolution when representative political institutions were not only firmly aligned with the interests of nascent industrial capitalists but actively supported the industrial revolution by ideolo-gically and materially brutally attacking any resistance to industrialisation as irrational, anti-progress and techno-phobic and primarily contrary to the public interest, which was conflated with the interests of industrial-capitalists (Mer-chant 2023). We argue that this re-imagining is fundamentally predicated on the specific central fantasy of the 'unimaginable' capabilities of "AI" systems and on the template of Israel's genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza and the relationship of the US state and tech-oligarchy with it.

THE RE-IMAGINING OF THE STATE VIA AN 'AI-POWERED REVOLUTION'

The techno-oligarchic ideology draws heavily from far-right re-imaginings of the state and democracy, their nature, scope and necessary transformation that were articulated as a reactionary-revolutionary response to the New Deal capit-alist and biopolitical welfare administrative-regulatory state developed following the Great Depression and the Second World War. In this context, we can observe various interrelated re-imaginings of the state. These include *the sleek state* whose purpose is to maximise the returns on investment and *the shackled state* that is unable (legally and organisationally) to provide well-being to the majority of the population, especially the most vulnerable parts (Slobodian 2025).

The notion of the sleek state is built on the idea of government as a special corporation that has a monopoly on violence and cannot go bankrupt. As a cor-poration, it should be made as efficient as possible by shedding every service and staff that, according to 'analyses' of private-sector-trained managers perceived as having a better grasp on efficiently allocating resources, are declared redundant/wasteful. As a corporation, the government should outsource as much as possible to the private sector as it is deemed to be inherently more efficient. Along with outsourcing, the state is imagined as a crucial source of funding for privately oligopolistically controlled and directed technological development (Slobodian 2018). Here the notion of the public interest and nation state interest plays a cent-ral ideological role. The tech-oligarchy frames its interests, its (control over) tech-nological development and technologies as beneficial to wider society. It presents the (massive) financial (and scientific) support it receives as normal, necessary, competition-re-affirming and inherently socially beneficial if the state funding is not tied to strict (or any) regulation and the tech-oligarchy has free reign over how it develops and implements technologies (see Andreesen 2023).

The notion of the shackled state is utilised to delegitimise the public regulation of the tech-oligarchy's actions, and problematise who has the legitimacy to articulate and enact the public interest. Even more generally, it is an ideological attack on the general functioning of the state especially in relation to its policies, its administrative-regulatory institutions that have a mandate to assure the well-being of society, including its (historically) marginalised communities. The post-war (New Deal) welfare state that has been under continuous ideological and material attack from the right-wing and centrist political forces, corporations and the oligarchs at least since the neoliberal revolution of the 1970s is in the context of this ideological attack re-framed as a fantastical right-wing representation divorced from any facts (Slobodian 2018). Putting a modern twist on the Cold War anti-communist paranoia, the state and its institutions are seen as totally dominated by leftists, above all Marxists, who have co-opted the state to wage war against the 'silent majority', against the interests of hard-working, productive Americans and private entrepreneurial wealth. Welfare policies, policies addressing past and present harms and discriminations (DEI policies), environmental policies and similar policies that (strive) to provide for the well-being of general society and are generally socially desirable are re-framed as universally wasteful, fraudulent and being systematically abused by nonproductive special interests (e.g., liberal elites, minority rights NGOs, illegal immigrants) (Slobodian 2025).[16]

The techno-oligarchic ideology frames these polices as part of a 'sinister ideological project' to promote 'wokeism', which can include everything (e.g., critical race theory, transgender rights, feminism) that critiques the right-wing white-washed fantasy of US history, its social structures, institutions, and relations. The latter fantasy silences their genocidal, racist, sexist, discriminatory, class-exploitative, expropriational, white-supremacist, patriarchal, hetero-normative, ecologically devastating and imperial history and its present legacies that determine the radically asymmetrical life-possibilities of various social groups depending on their place in the societal hierarchies (see al-Gharbi 2024). It naturalises existing social hierarchies, the radically asymmetrical wealth and income distribution, the radical divergences in life expectancy, the disproportionate criminalisation of marginalised minorities and other forms of structural discrimination. It legitimises what Gilmore (2023) calls organised abandonment by the state and capital whereby marginalised communities, those deemed less worthy by being less well-off, the less productive, are left behind or biopolitically killed (cf. Foucault 2001) via disinvestment, privatisation and environmental degradation.

The concept of "alternative facts" also becomes central to these ideological-material undertakings in line with the notion that if the reality does not correspond to ideological fantasy, then the reality should be obfuscated via censorship

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[16] The central mantra of DOGE is fighting waste, fraud and abuse by destroying the regulatory and administrative state.

and propaganda. A crucial element of the ultimate ideological goal of the notion of the shackled state is, apart from the abolition of all policies that respond to the demands of citizens, the goal of incapacitating administrative and regulatory institutions to collect data on various inequalities and discriminations and hence to destroy the specific data-gathering capabilities used to formulate and implement socially desirable policies. Censoring reports on the wrongdoing of corporations[17] and official statistics enables unhinged propaganda to be created by the tech-oligarchy and the wider right-wing political forces and also hinders emancipatory struggles. The ideological goal is a very specific deconstruction of the administrative and regulatory state and its capabilities to curtail the power, wealth and influence of the tech-oligarchy and the broader US elites and corporations and regulate their socially, politically and ecologically detrimental behaviour, while simultaneously framing this deconstruction as being in the public interest, as democratisation, as socially beneficial, in line with the will of the people (see Doctorow 2023; Gilmore 2023). Any kind of expansion of the regulatory state contrary to the interests of the tech-oligarchy is re-framed as illegitimate, irrational, a Marxist-communist coup, and being infected by the "woke mind-virus" (Gallagher 2025; Slobodian 2025). In the most radical expression of its ideology, the tech-oligarchy imagines itself as the central arbiter that decides who ultimately has fundamental civic and political rights, including eligibility to vote.[18]

The ideological notions of the sleek and the shackled state are conjoined by a specific vision of technology, technological innovation and specific technologies as the central means to enact the above-mentioned ideological goals, while also disciplining, deskilling, punishing and reducing the number of the public administrative workers who the techno-oligarchy frames as lazy, inefficient, "woke" and "radical/Marxist" etc. Here, the ideological *mystification of AI systems* plays a key role. The tech-oligarchic ideology imagines AI systems as unprecedentedly powerful automation and decision-making technology that will enable enormous efficiency and productivity gains and a stark reduction of government workforce (directly fired by AI), by automating and streamlining work processes, speeding up administrative decisions, and making them properly unbiased and neutral by radically reducing the input and autonomy of human workers with their biases, personal preferences, ideologies, labour rights, and their biological limitations. The AI systems are framed as inherently beneficial, universally applicable, value-neutral, supremely capable technologies and implicitly or explicitly presented as inevitably leading to a novel radical reorganisation of government for the benefit of all (Andreesen 2023; Altman 2024). Workers, on the other hand, are framed as being ultimately replaceable by these inherently

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[17]   Under Trump's 2nd administration, the FTC removed online material critical of Big Tech.
[18]   According to Trump's decree (25 March 2025), Musk's DOGE is positioned as central in deciding who is eligible to vote by reviewing state voter rolls. The latter is supposed to be done via technological means (AI systems).

superior systems or as logically subservient to these systems, while *austerity* is re-framed as a necessary step towards unimaginable abundance being unleashed by the power of AI (McQuillan 2023).

Research (Boulamwini and Gebru 2018; S. Nobel 2018) demonstrates that AI and related automating technologies used by governments, police, juridical systems, educational institutions, financial institutions and employers in general perpetuate, reinforce and intensify existing asymmetries of power, existing historically established discriminations and marginalisations of individuals and communities by naturalising their ever more extensive surveillance, control and breaches of privacy (gathering of their personal data). And by creating the appearance of the impartiality of automated-decisions that have historical socio-political, economic, biological and cultural biases, hierarchies and asymmetries of power baked into them and produce even more discriminatory outcomes than human-led decision-making and make these decisions even more unchangeable and even less accountable. These technologies empower the bosses and the tech-oligarchy, while dis-empowering the workers and the individual and the communities that are their users/targets. When these systems are implemented, the results are always in line with the imperatives of the capitalist ruling forces, as well as with austerity for the workers, their exploitation, and domination and repression, dispossession, disciplining and punishing of marginalised communities and individuals and the masses generally and exuberant profits for the owners and controllers of these technologies. Their implementation leads to worse results as they make ethically reprehensible results normal and obscure the accountability of managerial elites.[19] These systems are prone to failures and incapable of properly replacing human workers but make the work of humans worse. They destroy institutional knowledge passed from generation to generation, and atrophy crucial skills or destroy the context where they can be learned.[20] These systems are also implemented of the purpose of scaring workers into submission (Merchant 2023).

These technologies are developed and implemented by Big Tech in an authoritarian way that prevents those negatively affected by them to participate in and influence their design, implementation and functioning. They are developed with logic and imperatives fundamentally opposed to public interests and the needs and interests of the masses of citizens, government workers, and marginalised communities. Moreover, their implementation makes the complex workings of government institutions that have been built on (at least partial) responsiveness and resilience substantially more prone to failure and dysfunctional by

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[19]   For an overview of various examples, see K. de Liban – AI Means "Oh-No" for Low-Income Americans – https://inequality.org/article/ai-means-oh-no-for-low-income-americans/.

[20]   See the Microsoft study concerning critical thinking skills and various reports on how the use of generative AI negatively effects the skills of computer programmers where experienced ones are losing skills, while junior ones even fail to learn many fundamental skills of programming (see Namanyay 2025) – https://nmn.gl/blog/ai-and-learning.

concentrating control, erasing redundancies built to ensure the continuous functioning of core government services. It makes the functioning of these services totally dependent on the technologies owned, controlled and maintained by the tech-oligarchy, which establishes an unprecedentedly lucrative profit extraction scheme while also concentrating power and eliminating accountability. This reduction of state capabilities and the inevitably worse functioning state institutions insidiously also serve the ideological goal of further delegitimising the state as the agent of public interest and position the private sector, the tech-oligarchy responsible for the degradation, as the saviours (Dell Valle 2025; Merchant 2025).

AGI, GENOCIDE, AND THE RE-IMAGINING OF THE NEO-IMPERIAL AND REPRESSIVE DIMENSION OF THE STATE

The re-imaginings that focus on the economic and social welfare dimension of the state are inextricably connected with the re-imagining of the repressive and neo-imperial geopolitical dimension of the US state. Initially, we must stress that these re-imaginings never subscribe to the logic and imperatives of austerity but *the logic of expansion* and imperatives of increased accumulation via extending the neo-imperial and repressive reach of the US state.

Silicon Valley has since the outset been a testing ground of US neo-imperialism and its engineers and corporations have been in the vanguard of the US state's rising global influence. Especially during and after the Second Worl War, the US state massively supported the nascent computer industry, which it perceived as central to the expansion of its power. Most of technologies related to the Internet and computers were developed for the purposes of the military in fighting foreign wars and specifically for counter-insurgency (surveillance, control, discipline, punishment, elimination) in the third world and at home, for fighting resistance to the global capitalist neo-imperial (biopolitical) order. The US state understood that technological supremacy in the novel ICT field is crucial (militarily, geopolitically, economically, ideologically) for consolidating and deepening the USA's global hegemony in the post-Cold War era (Harris 2023; Levine 2019). With the rise of Chinese technological companies that began to directly compete with the USA and to endanger the global dominant position of the US tech-oligarchy, the latter started to re-imagine the neo-imperial dimension of the state in its relationship with the tech-oligarchy. The notions of (Internet) freedom and global competition as the foundation of US hegemony were replaced or re-articulated with a novel explicit neo-imperial twist. And the primary ideological tool was the discourse around (generative) AI (Morozov 2023).

The tech-oligarchy has re-framed the development of (generative) AI systems as the fundamental geopolitical issue, as an issue with the highest national security priority, as an existential issue for the continuation of the USA's global hegemony (see Vance 2025). In this context, the AI systems are framed as unprecedentedly capable technologies that will revolutionise the military and will confer unimaginable powers on whoever controls them. The most extreme, and

from the point of view of the existing and potential capabilities of LLM[21] AI systems ludicrous, idea promoted and utilised by the tech-oligarchy to rationalise neo-imperial policies is the idea of the nascent AGI (artificial general intelligence) (Bender et al. 2021). A truly autonomous, thinking, self-reflecting system with its own agency capable of immediately solving any type of issue concerning humanity and hence being ultimately superior to humans. This idea is thoroughly eschatological and eugenic in nature and combines both the foundations of the techno-oligarch's claim to their superior societal position nationally and globally, while also perfectly aligning with the ideological bedrock of US imperialism, the belief in US exceptionalism as either an instrument of God or of historical forces of social and biological evolution as the chosen and globally superior entity (Harris 2023; McQuillan 2024).

The coming of AGI is framed in a eugenic manner as the final stage of the evolutionary development of intelligence that mirrors the historical eugenic quasi-scientific 'measurements' and hierarchisations and reduction of human intelligence to numerical values (McQuillan 2024). The US tech-oligarchy imagines their striving for developing AGI as an existential battle for the future of human civilisation with China, where the former is framed contrary to facts and hypocritically as a force of divine good, freedom and democracy, of moral and intellectual and biological superiority and the latter as a force of evil, authoritarianism, unfreedom and moral, intellectual and biological degradation and inferiority (see Vance 2025).

The tech-oligarchy believes the primary existential threat to human civilisation is not the climate crisis, not global warming, the destruction of biodiversity, unsustainable natural resource use, climate and the natural environment harming fossil fuel emissions and industrial pollution. It frames these issues as non-existential because not all of humanity will be destroyed by the climate crisis (Andreesen, 2023; Kissinger et al., 2022). In an eschatological manner, they claim that *the central existential risk is the development of AGI, of a malevolent God* that could destroy the whole humanity if it were to be developed and controlled by the wrong people, the wrong corporations, the wrong nation state(s), and aligned with the wrong values.

The techno-oligarchy claims for itself the authority to define what the crucial existential risks are and the superior intellectual and moral capability and authority in developing responses to this primary existential risk for human civilisation and for the US-led neo-imperial order. This ideological framework legitimises the existing power, influence and wealth of the US tech-oligarchy nationally and globally and its further expansion in the name of developing the AI God, the ultimate solution to human problems.[22] It rationalises the US state's

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[21] LLM stands for large language models.
[22] All future visions of humanity promoted by the US techno-oligarch follow the same logic of the eternal nature of capitalism and the logic of their continuous central position in it, where their power, wealth and influence is consolidated or even expanded.

unconditional support for and active defence of the supremacy of US tech-oligarchy by waging a technologically-focused trade war against the USA's only serious competitor – China and its technological corporations – in the form of sanctions, restrictions and through threats of potential military escalation for as long as China does not submit to the supremacy of the US tech-oligarchy.

On the other hand, the framework legitimises and rationalises the existing environmentally and socially/politico-economically unsustainable model of development and functioning of generative AI systems since this is framed as the only and inevitable path to developing AGI, to the future of abundance and prosperity and sustainability. This gives the tech-oligarchy *carte blanche* to expand their domination of the development of AI systems as it establishes the predominant model of authoritarian hyper-exploitative, resource, energy and data hyper-intensive development as universal, neutral and without alternatives (the "bigger is always better" doctrine). The predominant model of development and implementation is already based on disregarding existing laws and regulations, and actively limiting and fighting against any form of democratic oversight and state regulation that would limit what the tech-oligarchy can do in the development of AI (Williams et al. 2022).

Considering the already worsening climate and broader ecological crisis and the vast amount of research establishing a scientific consensus on the need to limit emissions of greenhouse gases, phase out fossil fuels, reduce our energy and resource use for the planet to remain liveable for the majority of the population, this neo-imperial singular focus on the AI system and specifically developing AGI is completely detrimental to establishing an environmentally sustainable system. It is slowing down the already slow transition from fossil fuels due to their immense energy needs, and by their expansive natural resource use, which includes precious clear water for cooling the data centres, thereby helping to worsen the ecological crisis (Brevini 2022). The insatiable need for energy is also silently re-legitimising the fossil fuel industry as the techno-oligarchy has entered into close cooperation with it while simultaneously silencing and breaking their once explicit commitments to the green transition and sustainability.

The re-imagining of the neo-imperial dimension of the US state is intimately and inextricably connected with the re-imagining of its repressive dimension, especially as concerns the development and implementation of AI systems and their rationalisation in surveilling, identifying, analysing, managing, regulating, disciplining, punishing, segregating, oppressing and ultimately removing unruly, resisting, non-docile, not-quite-normal and abnormal, historically marginalised, discriminated, oppressed and harmed populations and individuals as their members.

The way the repressive dimension of the state is re-imagined can most clearly be discerned from the vision articulated by the tech-oligarch Larry Ellison (Oracle).[23] His dystopian vision is a vision of an AI-driven surveillance state

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[23] See https://fortune.com/2024/09/17/oracle-larry-ellison-surveillance-state-police-ai/.

where there is continuous (from work to leisure) surveillance of individuals utilising advanced facial-recognition software where all their actions are recorded, analysed and judged by AI systems ensuring that we are all on our best behaviour. As we will demonstrate, the actions of the tech-oligarchy imply that "best behaviour" is determined by people not resisting the wealth, power and influence of the tech-oligarchy, not resisting the status quo. As the repressive dimension of the state in techno-oligarchic ideology is never burdened by the imperatives of austerity but operates on the logic of the continuous expansion of resources to secure the functioning of the capitalist, hypermasculine, racist, eugenic, heteronormative ecologically destructive system (preventing and cracking down on resistance), hence providing an almost unlimited source of profit accumulation for the tech-oligarchy.

Reminiscent of past historical examples of imperial outposts influencing the imperial centre, the techno-oligarchic re-imagining of the repressive state is inextricably connected with the neo-imperial outpost of the US state namely the Zionist Israeli settler colonial apartheid regime and its technological capabilities and specifically with its recent genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza that relies on genocidal AI systems (Khallil 2021; Loewenstein 2024). As concerns the development and implementation of technologies and their legitimisation, the relationship between the US centre and its neocolonial outpost is symbiotic and interdependent where the US tech-oligarchy (e.g., Microsoft, Google) provides Israel and it corporations with crucial technological infrastructure and financial resources, while Israeli corporations develop the most advanced and ethically reprehensible, dehumanising, repressive technologies (e.g., CCTV, facial recognition, location tracking, web surveillance technologies), including automated decision-making AI technologies. The Palestinians are ideal test subjects as they live in a state of permanent exception that enables Israeli tech-companies to develop and implement these technologies without legal limits. These technologies are then procured, adapted and implemented by other authoritarian regimes and forces, including the USA's repressive apparatus for tackling domestic political resistance (Loewenstein 2024).

A brutal implication of the above vision of the repressive state can be observed in the full commitment of techno-oligarchy to the unlimited US state support for the total destruction of the lived environment and the genocide of the Palestinian people who are designated as expendable, less-than-human, unworthy, and opposed to US geopolitical interests, which legitimises the most reprehensible actions (from the mass slaughter of civilians, to the use of human shields, to the cutting off of water and humanitarian supplies, to systemic sexual assault) without accountability.

The genocide has revealed *the actual lethal risk of AI automated decision-making systems*, not the 'existential' risk promoted by the tech-oligarchy. AI systems (e.g., Habsora) utilised by the Israeli army for perpetrating the genocide were developed to rapidly process massive amounts of data to generate massive

amounts of targets for military strikes in wartime operations. Their explicit rationality was to prevent human bottlenecks in both locating and decision-making to approve targets. To prevent a kill matrix from operating at the maximum of its efficiency and to establish a "mass assassination factory" with no review of targets and no oversight, no moral or legal obstacles (Abraham 2023). This brutally illustrates the central ethical issues of automating decision-making processes whereby reprehensible actions are objectified, normalised, sanitised and accelerated to an extreme via these systems, while the developers and users of these technologies are obfuscating their accountability for how these systems operate, on which grounds, with which biased data, with which central purpose that is directly predicated on the wanton slaughtering of civilians including children that the Zionist racist ideology deems inhuman monsters, collectively responsible for every action of individuals or groups. It is essential to stress that the Palestinians are the test object as the most marginalised populations are always the first to be subjected to abusive, destructive technologies that never remain confined to them (McQuillan 2023). This can clearly be observed in the US domestic context where the genocide plays a crucial role in developing and legitimising a brutal response by the repressive state to those resisting the genocide, which illustrates how the above re-imagining of the state in the tech-oligarchic ideology is gradually taking shape. It can be seen as a template of how the response of the state and the tech-oligarchy will look when faced with organised domestic opposition and the critique of its policies, practices, technologies and ideologies that will increase due to the intensifying polycrisis.

The US protest movement against the genocide has faced extreme material and ideological repression and an intensive collaboration between various private collective, corporate and individual actors, private security forces, the state repressive apparatus and political elites. The tech-oligarchy has played a key role in the establishment and rationalisation of this novel private-public repressive arrangement that utilises physical and technological repression of resistance (enhanced by Israeli tech) tied to a violent crackdown on protest activities by private and public security forces and private far-right/Zionist zealots and also tied to expansive on- and off-line surveillance of protesters and views that criticise the genocide and technologically (via algorithmic manipulation and shadow-banning) repressing these critiques that they do not reach a wider audience. The tech-oligarchy technologically and ideologically supported and amplified Zionist and far-right and centrist views that have either denied the genocide is happening have blamed the Palestinians themselves, or even legitimised it, thereby contributing to the systematic and systemic delegitimisation of anti-genocide views via technological and ideological means (Goodarzi and Dolinar 2025; Marcetic 2025; Whittaker 2024). The US state's and tech-oligarchy's censorship and propaganda activities have entered an even more unhinged stage as any pretext of division of interests was replaced by the notion of a common enemy against the order that can be easily identifiable and who should be dealt with in

the most decisive, brutal, repressive manner. Constitutional rights including the freedom of speech have been further eroded, where in an Orwellian manner history and the present have been subverted in an insidious way. The Israeli genocide has been legitimised by obfuscating its settler colonial history, the past occupation and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, and by silencing the racist apartheid nature of the Israeli regime and presenting Hamas' attacks on Israeli civilians as an *ex nihilo* brutal inhumane attack that legitimises every imaginable brutality. This erasure was paired with an ideological discourse that turns "wokeism" into its antithesis and is used to delegitimise the opposition, curtail the freedom of speech, and breach other constitutional rights (due process). Here antisemitism has been invoked in a way that re-frames it as any form of criticism of Israel and the genocide. Those protesting against the genocide have been framed as those who are truly genocidal, not those who actually perpetrate the horrific, dehumanising fascistic acts. These "alternative facts" have framed rationalised various repressive actions (firing, imprisonment, revocation of degrees, deportation etc.), various curtailments of constitutional rights (e.g., freedom of speech, due process) against all that according to the state and the tech-oligarchy have breached the "best behaviour" norm set by them. This has also legitimised the further expansion and development of surveillance and AI data analysis systems by the tech-oligarchy to identify and brutally tackle global and internal opposition to the environmentally and socially unsustainable neo-imperial capitalist order (Finkelstein 2024; Haskins 2024; Marcetic 2024).

CONCLUSION

The article analysed the rise of a techno-oligarchic ideology in the USA and its grave potential implications for tackling the polycrisis in a democratic, emancipatory and sustainable way, not just in the USA, but globally as well. We first interrogated the conditions of possibility of its rise, which was followed by analysis of its core notions focusing on the centrality of technological development and technologies for imagining the past, present and future order, and for legitimising the specific societal status of the tech-oligarchy. In the third and fourth parts, we considered the way this political ideology re-imagines political institutions and the state in its various dimensions, focusing first on the economic and welfare dimension and, finally, on the neo-imperial and repressive dimension of the US state and the central role that AI systems and the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza and the responses to it play in these re-imaginings. We demonstrated that the techno-oligarchic ideology represents a new far-right political ideology of some of the US capitalist elite who have became central for the US and global neo-imperial capitalist order due to their control over crucial technological infrastructure on which this order depends. We determined that the rise of this ideology must be understood as a highly dangerous political response of the tech-oligarchy to the polycrisis and to recent state policies intended to regulate and limit its power, influence and conditions for ever expansive growth.

It is an instrument in the class struggle that takes the form of an anti-democratic, anti-egalitarian and oligarchic political ideology that is hyper-capitalist, ecologically unsustainable, anti-welfare, unaccountable, eugenic, neo-imperial, repressive and ultimately genocidal. And that is centred on self-serving fantasies of technological development and technologies and their benevolent societal effects and posits the tech-oligarchy as religious or secular prophet-kings. We showed that the radical implication of the techno-oligarchic ideology is the establishment of a system that would purge capitalism of its welfare dimension and bolster the ability for existing capitalist regimes of exploitation and extraction, while establishing a techno(AI)-enabled unprecedentedly penetrative police and neo-imperial state overseen by the techno-oligarchy that would brutally strive to repress any form of resistance and would exacerbate the polycrisis. The intensification of the latter will result in a world where the conditions for living of not simply humans but all living beings (animals and plants) in general will severely deteriorate, making the world ever more un-nurturing, uninhabitable, and deadly for all, not only for certain living beings (see Toplak 2025). To prevent this, emancipatory reflections, visions and movements should systematically attack and push the centrist forces to euthanise the techno-oligarchic ideology and dismantle the basis of the power of the techno-oligarchy itself. This should start with the delegitimisation of their authoritarian control over the direction and nature of technological development, the characteristics of technologies, and their horrific visions of the future that worsen the unsustainable status quo and lock us into paths that are leading to a world that is unliveable.

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▪ Blaž VREČKO ILC

INTENZIVIRANJE POLIKRIZE IN VZPON TEHNOOLIGARHIČNE IDEOLOGIJE V ZDA

Povzetek. *Članek analizira vzpon tehnooligarhične ideologije v ZDA v kontekstu druge Trumpove administracije ter njen potencialni učinek na reševanje ekološke krize. V tem okviru razkrivamo, da gre za novo skrajno desno politično ideologijo ameriške tehnooligarhije, ki je povezana z intenziviranjem polikrize. Trdimo, da je temeljni namen te ideologije krepitev moči, vpliva in bogastva tehnooligarhije ter hkrati zatiranje uporov proti njeni dominaciji in utišanje kritičnih pogledov ter zamišljanj, ki problematizirajo obstoječi, ekološko nevzdržen in netrajnosten kapitalistični model rasti in tehnološkega razvoja. Na podlagi analize temeljnih značilnosti ideologije ter načina, kako si zamišlja državo in politične institucije skozi sistematično vpeljavo umetne inteligence – v kontekstu izraelskega genocida nad Palestinci –, v članku pokažemo, da novost te ideologije tiči v osrednji vlogi, ki jo igrata tehnologija in tehnološki razvoj. Slednja namreč predstavljata temelj oligarhične, nedemokratične, represivne, neoimperialne, evgenične, hiperkapitalistične, ekstrakcijske, destruktivne vizije družbe, ki jo ta ideologija zagovarja.*

Ključni pojmi: *tehnooligarhija, politična ideologija, polikriza, tehnologija, UI, genocid.*