Thematic Session 1.
The Future We Want: Global Crisis

We will explore the causes and solutions for the freedom crises discussed in the keynote. We will discuss how international solidarity and global leadership are needed to create a peaceful world free of war. As the debt relief for poor countries, we want to find ways of cooperation for a sustainable future for all countries. We will also discuss international solidarity to build a sustainable future where freedom, peace, democracy, and human rights are guaranteed.

Moderator Cho Hyo-Je (Sungkonghoe University)
Speakers
1. Breaking Away from War Discourse in the Age of War
   Chung Jujin (Center for Peace & Conflict Resoultion)
2. International Cooperation for Just Resoultion of Sovereign Debt
   Focus on Global South Countries in Asia
   Mae Buenaventura (Asian People's Movement on Debt and Development)
3. The Crisis of Freedom in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
   Lee Jinwoo (POSTECH)

Breaking Away from War Discourse in the Age of War

Chung Jujin
Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution

The Age of War

As of early March 2024 when I am writing this, the war in Ukraine has entered its third year and the war in the Gaza Strip of Palestine is in its sixth month. The Ukraine war has been at a stalemate for more than a year and the war in Gaza has mostly been a one-sided attack and strategy to level Gaza by Israel. These two wars have numerous implications. A particularly noteworthy point is that through these wars, the world is now paying attention to war itself and whether or not a war can be justified. Another point is that there is growing interest in the loss of life and injuries and social destruction caused by war as the wars are being broadcast in real-time around the world. The humanitarian crisis brought about by war is increasingly garnering attention from the international community. However, what deserves the most attention is that despite all this, the world has failed to end the wars and has failed to prevent a humanitarian crisis. In terms of the war in Gaza, the international community has reproached Israel for the genocide in the Gaza Strip. Earlier this year on January 26th, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) held hearings regarding the charge of genocide that the Republic of South Africa brought against Israel and, in effect, admitted the charge against Israel for genocide, ordering provisional measures to be taken to prevent this and Israel to submit a report within a month. However, Israel did not cease their indiscriminate attacks nor did they submit a report, sparking criticism of the ICJ for not ordering a ceasefire in the first place. The international community and the people of the world failed to find a way to stop Israel. Though the international community swiftly levied sanctions against Russia for its attack on Ukraine, this did not result in much.

The civilian death toll in the Ukraine war reached 10,582 as of February 15, 2024, the second anniversary of the start of the war. This includes 587 children. 19,875 were injured, among those, 1,298 were children. As of late January 2023, roughly a year after the war started, there were 8 million Ukrainian refugees. As the war enters its third year in early March 2024, there are still roughly 6.48 million refugees residing outside of the country. The war in Gaza is much more severe. As of March 10, 2024, five months after the war started, 30,960 Gaza residents were killed and 72,524 injured. Women and children accounted for roughly 70% of the fatalities. Israeli deaths remained at the 1,139 fatalities caused by the October 7th Hamas attack and more than 100 hostages being held in the Gaza strip. The war in Gaza resulted in the most deaths and injuries in the shortest period of time among all the wars of the past several decades. Furthermore, though there are not any refugees due to Israel's blockade, 85% of Gaza's 2.3 million residents have

been displaced. In particular, Gaza is facing the worst humanitarian crisis due to Israel's blockade and restriction of humanitarian aid. The UN and relief organizations have feared large scale deaths due to starvation since mid-February. Their fears became a reality in late February as starvation related deaths, particularly among children, started to occur. In addition to the fatalities and injuries, social destruction is severe in both Ukraine and the Gaza strip. It is forecasted that reconstruction will take decades, and in the case of Gaza, it is unclear if reconstruction is even possible.

The Ukraine war and the war in Gaza highlight issues facing the world in other ways as well. Both wars have continued based on full support from the U.S. and Europe in order to pursue their own interest. The war in Ukraine is a proxy war waged against Russia by the U.S. and Europe and Israel is committing genocide and leveling the Gaza strip backed by U.S. military aid and support from Europe. Underlying the conflict is a web of the U.S.'s strategy to strengthen their hegemony in the Middle East and Europe's efforts to sustain military cooperation with the U.S. and desire to secure their interests. This shows us that the two wars that have immensely impacted the world both politically and economically and have led to the worst humanitarian aid crisis have been sustained for the benefit of the U.S. and the countries cooperating with it. In addition, this shows that the world has suffered greatly for the sake of these countries' national interest. Most of all, irreparable damage has been done to Ukraine and Gaza where countless people have lost their homes and their lives.

Wars are taking place not only in Ukraine and Gaza. Yemen, Somalia, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, Myanmar and other countries around the world are in the midst of civil war. Though civil wars fail to garner as much attention as wars between countries as they tend to be considered domestic issues, the scale of harm to life and the humanitarian crisis are no less severe than that of wars between countries. In addition, in most civil wars, so called international interest and the interest of global powers are tangled up in the conflict resulting in blatant military intervention by foreign powers. Not until the conflicts lead to tragic humanitarian crises and refugee crises, and not until the news relays the situation via images, does the world care. Furthermore, the world continues to erase war with war. This is another point that the two wars shed light upon. The world's civil wars were forgotten with start of the Ukraine war. Then, with the start of the war in Gaza, the Ukraine war was forgotten. This exposed the bare face of the international community and people of the world.

The globalization of the impacts of war

The world found out through the Ukraine war that in an age of globalization, a war cannot simply remain a localized combat. Though the refugee crisis brought about by the Syrian civil war left the world with a hefty concern, it did not have the global impact that the Ukraine war has had. The Ukraine war was a big blow

to the everyday lives of people around the world. The most immediate and serious problem was soaring grain prices. The war between Russia and Ukraine disrupted wheat export from Ukraine, the world's largest exporter of wheat. Russia blocked Ukraine's wheat exports and Russia could not export wheat due to international sanctions. After around a month of war, global wheat prices went up between 20% to 50%. In parts of Africa, the price skyrocketed up to 60%. As such, countries that had an 80% to 90% reliance on Russian and Ukrainian wheat imports were hit hard. Many of these countries were low-income countries. Countries struggling with internal armed conflict that were dependent on aid from the international community were also impacted severely due to the fact that the rise in wheat prices meant a decrease in wheat that international relief organizations could secure. The price of cooking oil rose as well as Ukraine supplied 48%, and Russia 23%, of the world's sunflower oil. The disruption in sunflower oil exports led to an increase of prices for all cooking oils on the international market. Energy prices increased as well. All of these price increases deepened economic hardships and poverty for people around the world.

As war posed a significant threat to not only the daily lives of the people of the world but to their survival, in particular those in low-income countries and those living in poverty, international organizations including the UN and low-income countries pleaded for a ceasefire. However, this did not align with the interests of Russia, Ukraine, the U.S., and Europe. The U.S. and Europe argued that effective punishment of Russia was necessary to prevent further such conflict from arising in the future. They provided huge amounts of arms to Ukraine and when their stocks ran low, they secured arms and provided arms indirectly from countries like South Korea. The U.S. and Europe used Ukraine as an excellent shield while avoiding harm to their own troops. As the victim of invasion, Ukraine was justified in its war. Still, it is clear that the war must come to an end at some point and the sooner the better. Ukraine and the U.S., however, were not interested in a ceasefire. There was no attempt at holding peace talks for a ceasefire even once after March 2022, right after the start of the war.

 The creation of refugees is one of the clearest and most common indicators of the globalization of war. Syrian refugees were instrumental for the world to become more sensitive to war and refugee crises. However, this was distorted. The reason the refugee crisis made international news was because Syrian refugees became a headache for European countries. This was not because European countries took in the most refugees. The largest recipient countries of refugees were neighboring countries that were going through armed conflict themselves. Further, countries with middle to low-income economies took in the most refugees and migrants. According to the 2023 UN High Committee on Refugees (UNHCR) annual report, these countries took in 76% of all refugees and migrants. The Ukraine war has created roughly 8 million refugees, most of whom remain in neighboring European countries, but this has not impacted overall figures. As of the end of 2022, Türkiye was the top refugee recipient with Iran being second.

War refugees and migrants often cause serious social stress and social conflict in the countries accepting them. The more fundamental issue, however, is not taking in refugees but in their repatriation. The end goal of taking in and protecting refugees is their repatriation. However, due to ongoing wars, the rate of repatriation of refugees and migrants is extremely low. In 2022, roughly 6 million refugees and migrants were repatriated. Considering that there were roughly 184 million refugees and migrants globally at the end of 2022, this is a very low figure. Syrian refugees and migrants account for the largest number of refugees around the world at roughly 52%. These were all persons who left their country due to war. Even now, more than a year after that statistic was calculated, it is unclear as to when they will be able to be repatriated. It is possible that many will live out their lives uprooted in a foreign country. This means that they will continue to have a low quality of life for the rest of their lives.

Along with economic problems and refugees, the threat to safety is another problem that has dire impacts on the world. The destructive nature of war, the political instability, and the economic crisis brought upon by war is a threat not only to those living in war zones but to the safety everyone around the world. The Ukraine war led to the intensification of the arms race and a Cold War-level division and creation of blocs in the international community. The war in Gaza has increased the threat of war in the Middle East which is already unstable due to armed conflict and political confrontation. Civil wars being waged around the world and intervention by regional and global powers has transformed parts of the world into a powder keg. We live in a time when the political dynamics surrounding war has a detrimental impact on the safety and everyday livelihoods of everyone around the world. In other words, we live in a time when war poses a dire threat to human security. Furthermore, we are being dragged deeper into an even more dangerous world.

Another serious consequence of war that has been largely overlooked by the international community and the people of the world is the large scale carbon emissions that aggravate climate change. According to a study conducted last January by Luviv Polytechnic National University in Ukraine and Poland's WBS University, the carbon emissions emitted during the 18 months of war in Ukraine exceeded the annual emissions of countries such as Austria, Portugal, and Hungary. Carbon emissions were the result of missile launches and explosions, the use of fossil fuels in military vehicles, fires in crude oil storage facilities, the destruction of buildings and industrial infrastructure, forest and agricultural land fires, the destruction of wooden structures, and others. The war in Gaza also led to significant GHG emissions. Based on the results of the Social Science Research Network's study released last January, the carbon emissions from 60 days of war were equivalent to the emissions that would be emitted if 75 thermal power plants burned 150 thousand tons of coal for a year. This exceeds the combined annual emissions of the 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change. 99% of the Gaza war's carbon emissions were from Israeli air strikes and ground operations.

With the globalization of war, regardless of whether it is a war between countries or a war within a country, war in a particular area is no longer a domestic problem nor a regional one. War in a particular place impacts the world and at the same time, the world impacts war in a particular country and regional security. Despite this, we are still work hard to turn a blind eye to the many problems caused by war because of geographical distance and national interest.

The spread of war discourse

War always accompanies ethical issues. One human killing another is not considered a crime during war – in fact, it is praised as a heroic act. The act of killing the enemy's citizens and destroying their society is regarded as a justified way of protecting the interest of one's own country. War becomes an excuse to ignore basic ethical and moral responsibilities required of all humans such as preserving humanity and respecting the life and livelihood of others. Just war theory and related discourse are employed to justify this excuse. Just war discourse appeared right from the offset of the Ukraine war and the war in Gaza. Not only the countries directly involved in the wars, but the international community and people of the world looked for grounds to either support or oppose them. Unlike with civil wars, whether or not war can be justified greatly influences the direction of public opinion in the international community. As the war in Gaza is between Israel and the Hamas regime, it can be viewed as a war between countries. War discourse played a pivotal role in shaping public opinion in the international community.

The foundation of war discourse is the theory of just war. This theory is comprised of the principles of "justice of war" (jus ad belleum) and "justice in war" (jus in bello). Justice of war looks at whether a country started a war with just cause and is primarily concerned with whether or not there was a invasion. Countries that have been invaded can secure justice of war as they have the right to protect the community and its citizens and defend its territory. Still, war must be the last resort. The basic standard to judge the justice of a war is whether war will lead to less damage than alternative means of solving a problem. What is important here is the principle of proportionality. To be deemed proportional, it is key that civilian damage is lesser than damage to combatants.[5] Civilian damages, of course, includes not only damage to lives but damage to society as well.

Ukraine was attacked by Russia and Israel was attacked by Hamas which justified their going to war in order to protect the community and its citizens. Even without knowledge of the just war theory, the people of the world were certain that both wars were started justly. As justice of war was secured, war discourse spread quickly and there was increasing public opinion supporting the two countries. The idea that countries that were attacked could rightfully defend

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5) Jujin Chung. 『Peace Studies』, Cholsoo and Young-hee 2022, pp.49-53.

themselves or retaliate with military force and that this was indeed necessary for their future security was at the center of war discourse. Thus, war was inevitable in guaranteeing a safe and "peaceful" life. The people of the world supported Ukraine's and Israel's choice and were not concerned that war should only be the last resort and that it can create "hell." War discourse spread while antiwar discourse remained in the margins, unable to gain momentum.

As the wars continued, war discourse naturally moved on to the issue of justice in war. When it came to the Ukraine war, the international community and the people of the world scrutinized Russia's war crimes and condemned Russia. There were no difference in opinions. However, such differences arose when it came to Israel's war crimes. After Hamas attacked Israel killing 1,139 and taking over 240 hostages on October 7, 2023, Israel launched a large-scale attack on the Gaza strip. In a mostly one-sided attack, Israel leveled all corners of Gaza around the clock, leading to record casualties and injuries in a short period of time. The principle of proportionality was not abided by. With the justification of eradicating Hamas, Israel justified large scale civilian killing and attacks on hospitals, schools, bakeries, refugee camps, and other facilities that should be protected even in wartime. Approximately 85% of Gaza's residents were displaced by Israel's attacks. These residents had to fight for their lives every day in the face of water, food, medicine, and power shortages due to a shortage of aid caused by Israel's blockade and restrictions on the Gaza strip. If it had been a different war, most of these residents would have crossed the border, becoming international refugees. However, the residents of Gaza were trapped in hell under Israel's blockade. Though they moved from north to south, south to central Gaza, no place was safe. Though Israel caused immense loss of life and injuries and a humanitarian crisis under the guise of exterminating Hamas, they did not disclose how much damage they did to Hamas or how many Hamas agents and militants they took out.

Despite Israel committing serious war crimes throughout the war in Gaza, the public opinion of the international community and people of the world remained split. The U.S. and Europe continued to call Hamas a terrorist group and supported Israel's right to self defense. They protected Israel, deeming them justified, even though Israel's retaliation went far beyond the damage they suffered. They justified Israel's devastation of Gaza as a means of preventing future attacks. Much of the world agreed with this. In fact, they even attacked the UN and international humanitarian organizations' strong criticism of Israel for these reasons. Their condoning and approval of Israel's war crimes differed from their judgment of Russia's war crimes. This shows both how generous war discourse is to the use of arms and war itself and the flaws of war discourse.

If we focus on war discourse, it is impossible to accurately judge the Ukraine war. As Ukraine was attacked, they were able to secure justice of war and there have not been significant issues with their conduct in terms of justice in war. However,

it is debatable whether continuing the war and not even attempting peace talks is how a country should conduct itself considering its citizens. This is because war should be avoided until it is unavoidable and when it is started inescapably, it should be finished in a short period of time. Ukraine, on the other hand, staunchly continued a war that had no guarantee of success while depending on support from the U.S. and Europe. At the same time, the U.S. and Europe supported or neglected the Ukraine war based on their own interests even though it was unclear whether that was right for the safety of the Ukrainian people and the future of the country. Deep reflection and discussion about the Ukraine war should have revolved around the safety and peace of the Ukrainian people rather than war discourse.

Breaking away from war discourse

We are living in the 21st century, the age of war. With the end of the Cold War which suppressed warfare, the world has witnessed countless wars, the majority of which were civil wars. But not long after the start of the 21st century, wars between countries started again. It started with the Afghanistan war which began with U.S. invasion and the Iraq war that followed it. At the same time, civil wars frequently became international wars upon intervention from global powers and neighboring countries. The 20-year war waged by the U.S. in Afghanistan ended on August 20, 2021 and the Ukraine war began in February 2021 with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. With the start of the Afghanistan war, the U.S. unjustly forced the world to cooperate and this situation was repeated during the Ukraine war. As with the Afghanistan war, the Ukraine war's influence and impact on the international community was immense. On top of that, the war in Gaza started in October 2023 leading to enormous impacts on not only the Middle East but global politics and economy as well. We live in the age of war; a time when war significantly impacts our lives. Ironically, war discourse is getting stronger even as the destruction of war becomes more severe.

The fundamental reason that war discourse can gain such power is based on the widespread belief that warfare and the use of arms by a state is always just and that if a state declares war, it is for the safety of its people and and the nation's interest. However, many wars show that this is not the case. At the same time, they also show that a country's judgment can be wrong. The U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are such cases. The Iraq war was even based on wrong information. The biggest problem with wars declared by the state is that they are based on the decision of a minority with power. Citizens cannot participate in the decision-making process and their opinions are deliberately excluded. It is the same with ceasefires. Even if the majority of citizens want a ceasefire after experiencing loss of life and the destruction of livelihoods, politicians and top military officials who live relatively comfortable lives even during wartime are sure of victory and do not work towards ceasefire even in the face of defeat. What is worse is that

leaders, politicians, and the military abuse war for political purposes. The Afghanistan war, Iraq war, Ukraine war, and the war in Gaza all have this in common. In general, it is a lie that the state, or in other words, politicians, start and continue wars unavoidably for the safety of their citizens and national interest.

Another reason that war discourse can gain so much power is the baseless faith that justice in war is possible. Many people believe that in a war started by a country for just reasons, just military action will be guaranteed through the protection of civilians and minimization of damage. But such war does not exist. In general, civilian casualties are several times more, or even over tens of times more, than casualties among soldiers. The world has witnessed this in the Afghanistan war, Iraq war, Ukraine war, and the war in Gaza, and statistics have confirmed that it is true. Even with such facts, people assume that in modern warfare, the development of high-tech arms and precision strike technology means there is hardly any errors in bombing and thus, minimal civilian loss of life or injuries. Although even minimal harm to human life is a problem, war discourse easily justifies this with the double effect logic stating that these are unavoidable damages that occur during combat.[6] The gravest problem is war crimes. All countries fighting in a war commit war crimes. This is true even for countries that are justified by the principle of justice of war. However, war crimes committed by countries with the justification of justice in war are easily covered up and not even mentioned.

War discourse is focused on victory. It is emphasized that the countries and citizens who fight hard in a just war can be rewarded with victory. Though applying retributive justice logic and using psychological consolation to the immensely real and desperate situation of harm to life and social destruction is very duplicitous and inappropriate, war discourse condones and even goads on wars with such logic. Large numbers of refugees and migrants, the destruction of infrastructure, war crimes, the continuation of unstable lives are all deemed unavoidable in the process of securing victory. The distorted logic that a state's warfare is right and based on national interest strengthens war discourse.

War discourse is continuing to spread globally. As a result, arms deals are increasing and dependence on military power is growing as well. Statistics confirm this. In particular, European countries are arming themselves further following the Ukraine war and this has lead to an increase in arms deals. As a result, U.S. arms and defense related transactions shot up 55.9% in 2023 compared to 2022. This is a record high.[7] Germany's arms exports also recorded a new high in 2023.[8]

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6) *ibid.* p.55.
7) US Department of State. Fact Sheet: Fiscal Year 2023 US Arms Transfers and Defense Trade. January 29, 2024.
   https://www.state.gov/fiscal-year-2023-u-s-arms-transfers-and-defense-trade/
8) Defense News. German weapons exports reached record high in 2023. January 2, 2024.
   https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2024/01/02/german-weapons-exports-reached-record-high-in-2023/

South Korea, where military tensions between North and South Korea is fixed and war discourse is prevalent throughout society, is among the countries showing a sustained increase in arms imports. South Korea's arms imports increased 61% during the period of 2018-2022 compared to 2013-2017.[9]

There are two problems at the core of war discourse. One is that it not only argues that war in unavoidable, but it emphasizes the necessity of war. Another problem is that it ignores the specific damage caused by wars taking place and does not acknowledge the need to work towards a ceasefire. This leads to easy approval and sustaining of war. The option to not choose war is overlooked while at the same time, it ignores the immense human and social destruction that the world has experienced repeatedly through numerous wars. It ignores the point that war should be the last resort and is quick to allow a military approach over a diplomatic one. It is overly generous to military action by countries that have secured "justice of war" and claim that war in unavoidable. By easily permitting use of force and war, war discourse deepens armed confrontation between countries and between communities, making war more likely. It makes it difficult to surveil and punish war crimes. In order to imagine peaceful coexistence in an age of war, we must break away from this weak, biased, and dangerous war discourse. We will then be able to break free of the illusion that justice of war and armed force will guarantee national security and the safety of individuals.

War is one of the crises threatening the world. In order to escape this crisis, we must take concrete steps to break away from the war discourse discussed. The top priority is to understand the distorted delusion of war discourse and develop a new discourse that centers peace and coexistence. Furthermore efforts to develop and spread a new discourse must be made in each social domain while being pursued comprehensively through exchange across domains.

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9) SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute). Fact sheet: Trends in international arms transfers, 2022. March 2023.

International cooperation for Just Resolution of Sovereign Debt Focus on Global South countries in Asia

Mae Buenaventura
Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development

Dangerous times for the Global South

More than two years after the UN declared an end to the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain in a context of increasing uncertainty and precariousness. We continue to feel spillovers and cascading effects on our societies and economies, and our very households and daily lives. The heaviest impacts are suffured by the poorest and low-income groups in the Global South that were hit by the pandemic in the midst of decades-long, unresolved economic and financial crises, and in a context of intensifying climate change.

Unsustainable debt immediately stood out as a major red flag endangering peoples' survival. There was common concern the global community that the accumulation of public in the last couple of decades preceding the pandemic would be a significant factor in recovery, and that borrowing countries would no doubt need more financial resources to survive and hurdle the multiple crises. This holds true today. Little has changed. If anything, with the swift accumulation of debt on previously high levels of borrowings, we are now faced with a growing mountain of public debt and at higher interest rates, thus raising the cost of debt servicing. High debt levels figure as well in the inevitable fate of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), that clearly, these will not be met even partially by 2030. According to the OECD, the financing gap to reach the SDGs in developing countries increased by 56% during the COVID-19 years, totalling USD 3.9 trillion in 2020. Unsurprisingly, inequalities within and between countries have also deepened, and are projected to further worsen, especially for those called "low-skilled", youth and women.

Record-breaking debt

More than 60 countries are today in or approaching debt distress, from 46 in January 2021. Global sovereign debt as reported by the International Finance Institute now stands at an unprecedented $313 trillion, an increase of $15 trillion in 2023. World Bank data show that developing countries spent a record-breaking $443.5 billion to service their external public and publicly guaranteed debt in 2022 alone. Debt Service Watch unequivocally calls the current debt situation as "the worst debt crisis the Global South has faced since global records have begun".

Debt service has also unsurprisingly ballooned. Data from Debt Service Watch reports that this already averages almost 30% in all countries. The heaviest burdens fall on lower income countries (39% of spending), lower middle-income countries

(33%), least developed countries (33%) and landlocked countries.

Several of these countries are in the Asian region. Sri Lanka defaulted in 2022, following defaults of Zambia, Chad and Ghana. Not far behind is Pakistan, still struggling to address the enduring impacts of catastrophic floods in 2022 while saddled with a $127-billion external debt for which it coughed up $16.6 billion in debt service that year.

Flawed and futile solutions

The Group of 20, at the urging of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, set up in 2020 the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI). Aiming only to provide immediate liquidity interventions for a year and a half, covering only bilateral loans and limited to Low Income countries, (LICs) the DSSI failed to deliver the relief needed by developing countries to be able to shift their financial resources from debt service payments to

essential services. After the DSSI closed in December 2021, participating countries had to resume paying debt service notwithstanding worsening socio-economic conditions and fiscal position. Only 43 countries of the 73 LICs eligible for DSSI applied, resulting in the suspension of only $13 billion in debt service or a mere quarter of the amounts projected by the G20.

Another scheme of the G20 is the Common Framework for debt treatments beyond DSSI, launched by the G20 in late 2020 with the IMF as lead coordinator and technical adviser. It was meant to accelerate debt restructuring processes, but again, this has failed in enforcing the primary goal of comparability of treatment, i.e., that all creditors including private lenders will participate and agree to losses on the face value of their loans. Like the DSSI, its coverage is limited to bilateral loans and LICs, and does not subject private lenders to the same requirements as official creditors. Like the DSSI, it also excludes Middle-income countries (MICs) from even minimal debt relief despite situations approaching or similar to LIC contexts.

Sourcing public debts from private or commercial sources has become a significant trend in Asia and other Global South regions and is a key factor driving the higher interest rates that are charged to "high risk" developing countries. From only 47% in 2010, the share of privately sourced debts in the composition of external public debt stood at 62% in 2021; in Asia and Oceania, this rose from 39% to 63% during the same period. Private lenders continue to resist attempts to require them to participate in debt relief, on the same terms as lending governments. Without this requirement in the G20 schemes, the influx of new debts during the COVID years only means that public money has become available to bailout private lenders who are often paid first and lose less than bilateral lenders.

Costly trade-offs, human rights and inequality

As debts accumulate and interest rates rise, so do debt service payments. To keep lending windows open, debt-trapped countries are compelled to keep up with debt repayment obligations even if this results in more constraints to their narrowing fiscal space.

In 2020, UNCTAD reported that developing countries were allocating over 1.5% of GDP and 6.9% of revenues to debt service. Interest payments alone also grew faster than public spending for education and health. More recently for Asia, a number of countries already count among the group of countries with debt service payments eating up more than 30% of revenues. Against health budgets of Asian countries, for example, as much as three times goes to debt service.

Debt Service Ratios, selected Asian countries.

Country	Total Debt Service		
	As % of revenue	As % of expenditure	As % of GDP
Pakistan	49.03	34.03	8.32
Bangladesh	48.75	28.16	4.28
Maldives	37.82	32.18	10.05
Sri Lanka	119.86	53.49	14.12
Lao PDR	122.24	89.82	16.60
Indonesia	36.16	29.97	4.60
Myanmar	62.81	46.25	11.58
Philippines	32.33	27.82	6.52

Source: Debt Service Watch

Pressure on borrowing countries is also driven by loan conditionalities which often take the form of fiscal consolidation or so-called austerity measures that require borrowers to cut down on public expenditures, including selling off public service provision to the private 4 sector, freezing the wages of public sector employees, increasing value-added regressive taxes and setting social spending floors, among others. Low-income households and women who most need publicly subsidized essential services end up bearing the brunt of austerity policies, often by increasing both paid and unpaid labor at the expense of their health and well-being.

It is important to remember that State parties to core human rights treaties are legally obliged to create an enabling environment for the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including through international assistance and cooperation. But there is a grave disconnect with their application in an international financial architecture

that is controlled and dominated by the advanced economies, the world's wealthy elites and leading international financial institutions sometimes described as human

rights-free zones.

As pointed out by Attiya Waris, the UN Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights: "Debt is a human rights issue….When countries are burdened by debt, they don't have the money to ensure access to their human rights, including services such as water and food or, during the pandemic, vaccines, hospitals and medical personnel. Human rights require money".

Global civil society and social movements – advancing debt justice calls and demands

International cooperation towards changing lending and borrowing practices and policies should start with addressing the serious democratic deficits in decision-making. Currently, decisions are made in the narrow spaces of the G7/G20, the IMF and the World Bank, the Paris Club, the OECD and other formations dominated by the advanced economies and wealthy countries. There is no multilateral space, mechanism or process to democratically address sovereign debt issues, where Global South countries have a meaningful voice and a say over public debt, including the recognition of illegitimate debts claimed from the South – questionable, fraudulent, environmentally harmful, violative of human rights – that must be unconditionally cancelled. **We continue to call for the establishment of a fair, transparent, binding and multilateral framework for debt crisis resolution (under the auspices of the UN and not in lender-dominated arenas) that addresses unsustainable and illegitimate debt.**

It is high time that the dominant "debt sustainability" framework of the IFIs are revamped. Debt continues to be viewed superficially as a problem of liquidity or capacity to pay when it is clearly a systemic problem requiring systemic solutions. Human rights, climate vulnerabilities and risks, multi-dimensional inequalities and other indices must be brought to bear in assessing countries' debt and fiscal positions.

Southern governments themselves must be held to account for fraudulent acts (corruption, bribery) in contracting loans and other borrowing practices that do not meet even minimum democratic standards such as ensuring public access to information and ensuring the informed participation especially of communities affected by debt-funded projects. Thorough-going national and global review and changes in lending, borrowing and payment policies and practices must be supported to precent the re-accumulation of unsustainable and illegitimate debt, strengthening democratic institutions and processes, and upholding human rights and peoples' self-determination. Citizens should also push for the exercise of the sovereign right to unilaterally repudiate debts that caused harm, including suspending and/or stopping payment where people's survival, well-being and human rights are at stake.

More strategically, the Global South calls for reparations for the historical and continuing damage to our societies and economies by unsustainable and illegitimate

debts and the enslaving chains of debt service and loan conditionalities. To see debt from its colonial origins to the present is to realize that this the debts claimed from the Global South have been paid many times over in interest, in human labor, in the plunder of environmental resources, or the net transfer of resources from the South to the North overall.

Crises are mutually reinforcing; without a just resolution to the debt crisis and the deep deprivations and inequalities that it creates within and between countries, other crises of our times will also be exacerbated. There is a long way to go to realize the system change that will usher in the alignment of economies and global finance with sustainable development, justice and human rights, and accordingly, emplace a financial architecture that truly serves people and the planet.

But global civil society and social movements across the world are rising to the challenge of exposing and resisting the impunity of corporations and private lenders as well as the false solutions to the debt crisis pushed by the Global North, international financial institutions, and other lenders. The growing magnitude and widening scale of multiple require much more than international cooperation but a global solidarity that comprehensively seeks profound changes in the international financial architecture (of which one element is the debt problem), and the just transformation of steeply unequal systems, structures and relations of power underpinning the South's indebtedness, increasing vulnerabilities to shocks and perpetual crisis of development.

The Crisis of Freedom in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

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1. The Crisis of Democracy Threatening Freedom

Crises emerge when what was once taken for granted is no longer assured. Following the extended period of peace after World War II, we came to take peace for granted, considering it as our rightful due. We believed that international disputes could be resolved through rational compromise and negotiation. However, the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, sparked by Russia's invasion on February 24, 2022, under the pretext of a special military operation, and continuing to this date, has starkly eroded the legitimacy of peace. It has reminded us that peace hinges on specific prerequisites to endure.

In moments of safety, its true value often eludes us. The COVID-19 pandemic, which erupted in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and swept across the world, has forced us to reevaluate the delicate equilibrium between safety and freedom. The global health crisis has posed a philosophical challenge, urging us to reassess and redefine the nuanced relationship between our safety and freedoms. Do we embrace the Chinese model where citizen safety and life are prioritized over freedom, or the liberal model that seeks societal safety without compromising individual freedoms and privacy? The pandemic-stricken states have rekindled Hobbes' Leviathan, a concept that guarantees safety and order above all else. Yet, reflecting on John Locke's principle of "life, liberty, and property" as inalienable natural rights of man emphasizes the intrinsic link between life and liberty[10]— freedom is futile without life, just as life is meaningless without freedom. Benjamin Franklin's cautionary stance, "Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety," serves as a potent reminder that overly prioritizing safety can indeed jeopardize freedom.

Democracy's peril extends beyond external threats like wars and pandemics, unraveling from within due to systemic imperfections. In times when democracy was universally revered as the pinnacle of political systems, there was an overarching assumption that it would only strengthen. Societies were expected to progress materially and culturally via capitalism, naturally fostering democratic governance. Contrary to these beliefs, the emergence of various forms of neo-authoritarianism across the globe today poses a grave challenge to liberal democracy. The threat of neo-authoritarianism is not restricted to countries with differing social systems, like Putin's Russia or Xi Jinping's China; it equally challenges the stability of established free democracies, as notably seen during

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10) John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), §10, in *Two Treatises of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. Ian Shapiro (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 102.

Trump's presidency in the United States.

When our freedom is threatened by authoritarianism, resistance might seem more straightforward, as the enemy is clearly defined. However, the most significant danger arises when democratic systems start to compromise their foundational values under the pretense of upholding democracy itself. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, in their seminal work How Democracies Die, highlight that "democratic backsliding today begins at the ballot box."[11] While the oppression of freedom by overt forms of dictatorship like fascism and communism is commonly understood, the erosion of our freedom in subtle yet dangerous ways through the collapse of democratic norms, starting with elections, is not easily recognized. If leaders chosen through legitimate elections abuse democratic institutions as political weapons to wield power, democratic norms will collapse.

How can democratically elected leaders dismantle democratic norms? The undeniable culprit is extreme populism. Regardless of democracy's robust foundation, no society is immune to the emergence of extremist agitators who exploit societal divisions. These demagogues fragment societies in the name of 'the people,' a term they narrowly define to only include those loyal to their faction. The degradation of democratic norms originates from partisan polarization, which obliterates the critical democratic values of mutual tolerance and understanding, essential for democracy's viability. Political parties, viewing each other not as legitimate competitors but as foes to be vanquished, create a hostile divide. Such partisan polarization perpetuates a destructive cycle that undermines democratic norms, where extreme polarization threatens to extinguish democracy itself—the very condition for freedom.[12]

2. What is the Greatest Threat to Freedom?

Freedom is facing a grave crisis from both external enemies like wars and pandemics and internal threats such as neo-authoritarianism. The optimistic assertion by Francis Fukuyama, heralding the victory of democracy, has been debunked as a hopeful fallacy. In his famous 1989 essay The End of History?, Fukuyama posited that the end of the Cold War would mark "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government."[13]

The misconception that democracy could signify the 'end of history' was not entirely baseless. Observations of post-war history showed that in countries where economic prosperity and democratization advanced in tandem, democracy solidified, leading to remarkably stable political environments. Dictators, even when offering their citizens a high standard of living, were often ousted, while democratization

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11) Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *어떻게 민주주의는 무너지는가* (Seoul: Across, 2018), 11; originally published as *How Democracies Die.*
12) Ibid., 16.
13) Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *National Interest*, no. 16 (Summer 1989): 4 (3-18); and Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*(New York: Free Press, 1992).

efforts in poorer nations were prone to failure. For democracy to be sustainable, it was essential not only for a nation to achieve wealth but also for the rights of citizens to be extensively realized. A harmonious blend of capitalism, fostering national growth, and liberalism, bolstering citizen rights, was deemed necessary for sustainable democracy. Countries in North America and Western Europe, which advocated for this combination, were confident in the enduring strength and future prosperity of democracy.

However, as the case of Trump demonstrates, even at the heart of democracy, sustainable democracy faces peril. Until recently, it was assumed without question that democracy inherently meant 'liberal democracy.' We have long equated liberalism with democracy, where democracy, as an antithesis to dictatorship, strives for the rule of law on the premise that power emanates from the people. Democratic states consider the protection of individual rights as their foremost responsibility, safeguarding minority group rights and ensuring the press's freedom to critique the government, thereby enabling citizens to elect and replace their leaders through free and fair elections. This capacity for peaceful transition of power is the quintessence of citizens' freedom. A system granting sovereignty to citizens ensures that a min

ority of elites and powerholders cannot trample on the rights of the less well-off. The intertwined nature of individual freedoms and democratic self-governance is as inseparable as the relationship between a needle and thread, constituting a fundamental prerequisite for the viability of democracy.

The peril to democracy lies in the deteriorating bond between individual freedoms and civic self-governance, that is, between liberalism and democracy. This decoupling represents the most significant threat to democracy's integrity. People have lost faith in the self-evidence of liberal democracy. Democracy has morphed into populism, masquerading as civic self-governance while alluring and misleading the populace. Today's neo-authoritarian leaders consistently put 'the people' at the center of their rhetoric, professing to understand precisely what the populace wants and positioning themselves as the bearers of solutions to our era's most pressing issues. For instance, they frame refugees as a threat to America and propose erecting barriers along the borders as the optimal solution. In doing so, populists oversimplify politics, presenting one-size-fits-all solutions to nuanced problems.

At its core, democracy embodies civic self-governance. Yet, neo-authoritarian leaders pervert this essence into populism, claiming they alone can truly represent the will of the people. They argue that this will must be unequivocal, not hindered by the diverse voices of minority groups. Such populist leaders, by purporting to fulfill the people's will, infringe upon the very freedoms of citizens. Dissenters are deemed to be opposing the people's will, effectively narrowing "the will" to reflect only the views of their supporters. Populism, by asserting that individual rights should not diminish the voice of the people, ultimately undermines the very conditions for freedom. Within neo-authoritarian regimes based on populism, the will of the people becomes omnipotent. Neo-authoritarian democracy, severed from

its liberal roots, institutionalizes a singular will at the expense of suppressing the rights of minority groups and individuals with critical views. Though ostensibly democratic, neo-authoritarianism fails to uphold individual rights, revealing its inherent opposition to liberal principles.

Neo-authoritarianism may appear at first glance to oppose elite rule and seek governance by the people. Yet, this raises the question: Why is there such pronounced disdain for the elite? As Western democracies solidified the principle that the state must guarantee individual freedoms and rights, they became increasingly bureaucratized. Political leaders, despite being elected through fair democratic procedures, gradually formed a secluded elite group. Essentially, these leaders have transformed into technocrats. While technocrats still respect individual rights and strictly follow democratic procedures, they represent an undemocratic element in that citizens find themselves with limited opportunities to engage in public policy beyond the ballot box. In societies governed by technocratic bureaucracies, political elites exhibit behaviors that are inherently undemocratic.

Yascha Mounk outlines two degenerative trends of liberal democracy in his book The People vs. Democracy: "democracy without rights" and "rights without democracy14) Consequently, the union of liberalism and democracy, which once underpinned sustainable democracy, is disintegrating. Populism, while outwardly democratic, suppresses and dismantles citizens' freedoms, and the technocracy of political elites displays undemocratic tendencies. Exposed to the allure of populism, the public is increasingly becoming anti-liberal, and political elites are growing more undemocratic.

Will these trends intensify, or will the inherent resilience of democracy sustain liberal democracy? Regardless of the answer, the crisis confronting liberal democracy is undeniable. As external pressures and threats mount, the decoupling of liberalism and democracy deepens. This trend has been confirmed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The question remains: Can the traditions of liberal democracy be revitalized and reinforced after these external pressures diminish? Unfortunately, the threats to liberal democracy extend beyond wars and pandemics. Artificial Intelligence (AI), hailed as a monumental wave of civilization in the 21st century, now represents a considerable challenge to liberal democracy. AI stands as the most significant threat, not merely amplifying the forces of populism and technocracy but also undermining the essential conditions for liberal democracy itself.

3. The Socio-Political Effects of Artificial Intelligence: Polarization of Society and the Emergence of a New Class Society

We are living in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). The age of AI, hinted at by

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14) Yascha Mounk, 위험한 민주주의 (Seoul: Wiseberry, 2018), 39; originally published as *The People vs. Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018). The original title "The People vs. Democracy" more aptly represents the two principles of democracy and its issues.

AlphaGo's debut, has finally unfolded. The moment Google DeepMind's AlphaGo triumphed over Go champion Lee Sedol 4-1 in 2016 marked a prelude to AI transforming from science fiction into our reality. With the launch of ChatGPT by OpenAI on December 1, 2022, a generative AI capable of understanding and conversing like a human, society began to normalize the presence of AI. Unbeknownst to us, AI has rapidly advanced, permeating every facet of our lives. Now, AI is a common topic of conversation everywhere.

Yet, the discourse around AI often lacks depth, with insufficient consideration of its potential repercussions on future society. Perhaps the sheer pace of AI development leaves us no time to ponder. For perspective, ChatGPT reached 100 million users in just eight weeks post-launch, a milestone that took Instagram two and a half years and TikTok nine months. The rapid adoption of this conversational AI is astonishing, and the profound transformations and challenges it will bring are almost beyond our imagination. As Bill Gates declared in his blog Gates Notes, "The age of AI has begun."

Conversations about AI invariably begin with its revolutionary potential. Bill Gates heralds ChatGPT as a breakthrough akin to the invention of the microprocessor, personal computer, internet, and smartphone. Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google, went further in 2018, asserting the impact of AI will surpass that of fire or electricity. Henry Kissinger posits that conversational AIs like ChatGPT will fundamentally alter human intelligence, likening this shift to an 'intellectual revolution' on par with the Gutenberg press of 1455.[15]

Where, then, is the AI revolution leading us? The response varies with the dual sentiments AI invokes. Perspectives on ChatGPT also reflect this duality: some view AI, if controlled by humans, as a harbinger of prosperity, while others caution against its significant threats to society and humanity, advocating for its restraint. We view AI through the lens of both hope and fear. The issue is that AI, even in such a context, continues to evolve, having fundamentally transformed our lives. AI could either be our salvation or the seed of catastrophe.

The advancement of generative AI has furnished us with machines capable of engaging in human conversation, seen by some as 'intellectual companions.' However, our new mechanical partners do not merely remain as tools of convenience. AI will influence how we understand the world, "redefine human knowledge, accelerate changes in the fabric of our reality, and reorganize politics and society[16] Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari states that AI holds "the master key to civilization[17] The societal shifts catalyzed by AI are manifest. New sciences and technologies emerge, revolutionary inventions are created, production methods change, and along with them, human communication evolves. AI has the potential

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15) Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher, *AI 이후의 세계* (Seoul: Will Books, 2023), 17; originally published as *The Age of AI: And Our Human Future.*
16) Ibid.
17) "The AI is 'grabbing the master key of civilization,' and we 'can't afford to lose,' warns Sapiens author Yuval Harari," *Fortune*, March 24, 2024, https://fortune.com/2023/03/24/yuval-harari-artificial-intelligence-openai-ai-chatbots-gpt-4-chatpt-warning/.

to beat cancer, discover life-saving medicines, and provide solutions to climate and energy crises. However, as AI's capacity to benefit humanity grows clearer and its remarkable achievements mount, we risk neglecting its political and social ramifications. Before our politics, economy, and daily lives grow dependent on it, we must examine the threats posed by AI.

The danger posed by AI originates from its capacity to mimic human understanding and speech. How can 'talking AI machines' potentially encroach upon human freedom and even profoundly challenge our identity? Envisioning the transformations AI could bring to our external environments may provide some answers. Many fear AI will take away our jobs. Goldman Sachs predicted in a 2023 report released shortly after ChatGPT's launch that 300 million jobs could be lost or diminished by AI.[18] While AI-driven automation might spur innovation and new job categories, it will undoubtedly eliminate or substitute numerous jobs through its replacement of simple, repetitive labor.

In the past, automation posed a threat primarily to manual labor; now, AI extends this threat to intellectual tasks. If industrialization automated physical assembly lines, AI has begun to automate intellectual ones. Where workers once competed with machines, the development of AI is now putting pressure on humans across more domains. The question, "Is your job truly irreplaceable?" looms large. However, focusing solely on the fear of job loss might blind us to AI's potential to fundamentally alter the essence of work.

AI is poised to amplify capitalism's strengths and weaknesses alike. Capitalism's paramount economic advantage is undoubtedly the rational maximization of profits, and AI will introduce mechanisms that reduce costs and maximize profits. When capitalism was synonymous with democracy, economic growth offered many chances for self-realization. Capitalism promises to satisfy individual desires and aspirations. Despite these merits, capitalism has consistently produced inequality in reality. Academic research indicates that automation has been a primary driver of income inequality in advanced North American and European countries over the last half-century. Various studies and reports suggest that 50-70% of wage changes in the US since 1980 are attributed to the wage reductions of production workers replaced by automation.

AI will exacerbate income inequality, further dividing society. AI, robotics, and new technologies have significantly widened the wealth and income gap. For now, white-collar professionals with a college education have escaped the fate that befell their less-educated counterparts. Yet, AI has the potential to blur the distinctions between physical and mental labor, blue-collar and white-collar work, leaving no refuge from AI's reach. Even well-trained and experienced doctors could be ousted by sophisticated robots capable of detecting cancer cells invisible to the human eye

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18) Jack Kelly, "Goldman Sachs Predicts 300 Million Jobs Will Be Lost Or Degraded By Artificial Intelligence," *Forbes*, March 31, 2023,
https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2023/03/31/goldman-sachs-predicts-300-million-jobs-will-be-lost-or-degraded-by-artificial-intelligence/amp/.

for more precise surgeries. Software engineers, too, might see their demand diminish as generative AI progresses to autonomously design and develop software. Lower-level intellectual tasks will also be overtaken by AI, accelerating a trend that could adversely affect workers across all strata. AI's expansion of income inequality will further polarize society. A future dominated by AI may see a bifurcation into two distinct classes: those proficient in AI and those who are not, deepening social strife. The rise of a new class society is in itself the greatest threat to liberal democracy.

4. AI's Destruction of the Possibility of Freedom

AI promises to exacerbate economic inequality and socio-political polarization, undermining the conditions necessary for sustainable democracy and ultimately endangering human freedom itself. Until now, we have discussed the crisis and challenges within the political system of liberal democracy. However, the advent of AI forces us to question the very possibility of freedom, as we are now facing not just a technological crisis but a philosophical one as well. Why do humans need freedom? What is freedom? What does it mean to be human? The emergence of these questions signals that what we have long taken for granted about 'freedom' and 'democracy' is no longer self-evident.

We need not define freedom in detail here; it suffices to acknowledge a fact that has always seemed self-evident to us. Freedom is a condition for politics, and the essence of politics is freedom itself. Hannah Arendt, renowned for her thorough examination of totalitarianism's extreme suppression of freedom, succinctly articulates the prerequisites of politics in The Human Condition: "Action corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world. While all aspects of the human condition are somehow related to politics, this plurality is specifically the condition—not only the conditio sine qua non, but the conditio per quam—of all political life."[19] Just as public opinion cannot crystallize in the absence of diverse viewpoints, politics loses viability without a plurality of ideologies, values, and opinions, regardless of the number of participants.

Arendt argues that the ultimate purpose of politics is freedom—"The meaning of politics is freedom[20]. If we no longer question the meaning of politics today, it is because we equate politics with freedom. Here, freedom implies the ability and conditions to initiate one's own life, not living a life imposed upon one but choosing one's own path. It is no coincidence that Arendt concludes her seminal work, The Origins of Totalitarianism, with Augustine's words, "That a beginning be made man was created." "Beginning [⋯] politically, it is identical with man's freedom."[21] The essence of liberal democracy lies in ensuring that all individuals

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19) Hannah Arendt, 인간의 조건 (The Human Condition), revised ed., trans. by Lee Jin-woo (Seoul: HanGilSa, 2017), 73-74.

20) Hannah Arendt, 정치의 약속 (The Promise of Politics), trans. by Kim Sun-wook (Seoul: PureunSup, 2007), 148.

have the right to start life in their own way.

From this perspective, two critical prerequisites of freedom are 'plurality' and 'autonomy,' both of which are endangered by AI. Modern populism incites people with fake news, a phenomenon exacerbated by AI technology. In Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Alice follows a white rabbit into a rabbit hole, leading her into the surreal world of Wonderland. The derived term 'rabbit hole' is a metaphor for plunging into a state or situation that is astonishingly or troublingly surreal. The rapid proliferation of fake news generated by AI deprives us of the ability to distinguish between reality and virtuality, truth and falsehood. We have fallen into the rabbit hole of virtual reality created by AI and social media.

When social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok combine with AI's text and image generation capabilities, they possess the power to change our world. Notably, OpenAI, the developer behind ChatGPT, recently introduced Sora, an AI capable of swiftly generating hyper-realistic images and movies with simple commands, ushering us into the deep fake era. Deep fakes, a portmanteau of 'deep learning' and 'fake,' excel not only in replicating existing imagery but also in fabricating entirely novel visuals and characters. Just as we use ChatGPT, inputting desired text prompts Sora to rapidly generate high-quality videos. In a society where more images are created with such precision and speed than originals, can we truly distinguish the real from the fake? Or are people increasingly losing interest in reality and truth? One certainty prevails: AI technology can be wielded for propaganda and agitation, shattering the bedrock of freedom—plurality. Plurality is possible only when individuals independently exercise discernment; relying on AI-dominated social media instead of making our own judgment renders plurality untenable.

The other precondition for freedom is autonomy. Liberals highly value individual freedom because they believe in human free will. According to liberal beliefs, neither consumer nor voter choices and decisions are deterministic or random. Making random, haphazard choices without any purpose or simply following a path laid out by external forces does not constitute freedom. Freedom is an ethical judgment about values, not a factual statement about the world. Indeed, freedom is the goal we all strive for in our lives.

Science does not delve into values; it cannot conclusively prove whether liberalism's prioritization of freedom over equality or the individual over the collective is correct. Today, science attempts to treat and verify free will as a factual statement, suggesting that what we perceive as free will is merely the outcome of brain activity. Each choice and decision we make is preceded by electro-chemical processes in the brain. Even as we believe we act freely based on our own desires and decisions, we must question the nature of our autonomy. Do we truly choose our desires, or are we merely responding to them, unable to

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21) Hannah Arendt, 전체주의의 기원 (The Origins of Totalitarianism), trans. by Lee Jin-woo and Park Mi-ae (Seoul: HanGilSa, 2006), 284.

influence their direction? If AI understands our desires better than we do, could it manipulate and control them?

AI has advanced to the point where it can effectively hack humans.[22] It knows us better than we know ourselves. To hack a human being is to understand what is happening inside us on the level of body, brain, and mind, capable of predicting what we will do. Once AI understands how we feel and identifies and predicts our desires, it gains the potential to manipulate, control, and even replace those desires. Every time we use AI technology, we leave digital footprints, which it uses to track us in reverse. We can never hide our true selves.

AI technology even signals the end of the 'poker face.'[23] Emotional AI is predicated on the understanding that despite our best attempts to conceal our feelings, our inner state inevitably surfaces. This transparency extends beyond mere facial expressions, gestures, tone, or attitude. The distribution of body heat, the dynamics of our speech, pupil dilation, and variations in heart rate all reveal our emotions and feelings. We, as humans, desire to keep our inner state just as that— internal. When our deepest feelings become visible to others, it feels like an intrusion into our personal identity. The poker face serves as our shield, protecting certain thoughts and emotions from the outside world. If AI can penetrate these defenses to read our innermost thoughts, it drastically undermines our autonomy. In weakening our belief in free will, AI challenges the very notion of freedom.

5. How Should We Address the Threats Posed by AI?

AI represents the greatest threat to our freedom by intensifying existing trends that jeopardize liberal democracy. Liberal democracy, built on the presuppositions of human freedom, rights, dignity, and the sanctity of human life, is now at serious risk. Despite our continued commitment to the ideals of freedom and rights forged during the Enlightenment era of the 18th century, AI threatens to undermine the foundation of these ideals. This underscores the urgent need for a thorough understanding of AI's impact on society. As we increasingly rely on AI at the expense of our cognitive functions, we risk diminishing certain human capacities, potentially including our sense of freedom.

In an AI-shaped future, decision-making will split into three realms: decisions made by humans, by machines, and collaboratively by humans and machines. AI is evolving from a simple tool to a partner of humans. While there is debate over the timeline for AI to independently make decisions without human input, it is clear that humans are becoming increasingly dependent on it. We are moving towards a future where tasks once thought to be exclusive domains of humans are either autonomously performed by AI or done in cooperation with it. If AI

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22) "When Tech Knows You Better Than You Know Yourself. Historian Yuval Noah Harari and ethicist Tristan Harris discuss the future of artificial intelligence with WIRED editor in chief Nicholas Thompson," *Wired*. https://www.wired.com/story/artificial-intelligence-yuval-noah-harari-tristan-harris/.

23) Poppy Crum, "Empathetic Technology and the End of the Poker Face," *LinkedIn*, July 27, 2018. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/empathetic-technology-end-poker-face-poppy-crum.

integration becomes integral to all human endeavors, discerning between decisions made by humans, by AI, or jointly might soon become a complex challenge.

Before AI gains autonomy, we must proactively decide on the nature of our partnership with it, guided by crucial questions such as "Does AI enhance our freedom?" If AI threatens rather than enhances human freedom, we must establish regulatory frameworks to mitigate or eliminate its potential harms. Clearly, individuals alone cannot counter such a formidable technological force. Only through political avenues can we regulate and control AI, reflecting our valuation of freedom in the regulatory frameworks we adopt.

AI is undeniably steering us towards a pivotal shift in civilization. The awe-inspiring capabilities of AI also spark unease among citizens, regulators, and even its creators. Prominent tech enthusiasts like Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, and Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, have voiced concerns about the unbridled dangers AI poses to individuals and society at large. Their alarming predictions include its potential to devastate the job market, obsolete human skills, or, in the most extreme scenarios, precipitate the downfall of humanity.

As tech companies vigorously pursue AI development despite facing severe criticism, Washington confronts mounting pressure to craft regulations that balance control with fostering innovation. In the US, China, and Europe, distinct regulatory paradigms, each grounded in unique values and incentives, are taking shape. These approaches are set to not only transform domestic markets but also amplify their digital dominance globally. Each nation is developing its competitive vision for the global digital economy while attempting to expand its influence in the digital world.

The future society that AI ushers in will be shaped by both technological innovations and the ethical and legal frameworks governing them. The US adopts a market-centric regulation model, China a state-centric model, and the EU a rights-centric approach. The American model, emphasizing market faith with minimal government intervention, views digital technology as a source of economic prosperity and political freedom, thus a tool for societal transformation and progress. The American stance on AI regulation, rooted in deep-seated technological optimism and a relentless pursuit of innovation and technological advancement, is hesitant to impose restrictions. The AI Bill of Rights blueprint issued by the White House in October 2022 offers guidelines for AI developers and users on how to protect the rights of the American public in the age of AI while ultimately trusting technology.

In contrast, China has embraced a state-centric model, aligning with its ambition to emerge as a global tech superpower. Beijing's direct approach to the digital economy employs digital technology as a tool for censorship, surveillance, and propaganda to reinforce the Communist Party's grip on power. Recognizing the potential economic and political benefits of AI, the Chinese government is investing heavily in new tools that bolster its capability to conduct mass surveillance of citizens under the guise of maintaining social stability. While AI-based facial

recognition could aid the state's political control, generative AI technologies like ChatGPT could weaken it.

The European Union, unlike the US and China, has pioneered its own regulatory model focused on the rights of users and citizens. It believes that AI regulation cannot be left to the autonomy of tech companies, and in order to properly address AI's potential for destruction, regulations must firmly rest on the rule of law and democratic governance. This implies government intervention to protect individual fundamental rights, preserve the democratic structure of society, and ensure the fair distribution of the benefits of the digital economy. The AI Act, a significant piece of legislation within the EU, was proposed by the European Commission on April 21, 2021. After extensive negotiations, a provisional agreement was reached between the Council and the European Parliament on December 9, 2023. The act specifies "unacceptable risks," thus clearly defining AI's limits: "For some uses of artificial intelligence, the risks are deemed unacceptable, so these systems will be banned from use in the EU. These include cognitive behavioral manipulation, predictive policing, emotion recognition in the workplace and educational institutions, and social scoring. Remote biometric identification systems such as facial recognition will also be banned, with some limited exceptions."[24] Once enacted, this binding legislation will become the world's first comprehensive AI regulation.

AI could also starkly reveal the internal contradictions of liberal democracy. When liberalism and democracy are separated, citizens' freedom faces threats from two directions: the market and the state. The US' market-centric model has generated immense wealth and spurred technological progress, but AI technology capable of hacking individuals' desires and wants severely compromises personal autonomy. If leading tech companies like Google monopolize digital advertising technology, we lose the means to resist the tech power that has monopolized information. As global governments now strive to reclaim control over the digital market and regulate leading tech companies to diminish the vast influence of American IT companies on international internet users, China has already established a digital Silk Road and is exporting AI-based surveillance technology and other digital infrastructure worldwide. Authoritarian governments find the Chinese model attractive, given its apparent ability to combine thriving innovation with political control.

We can neither leave the AI threatening our freedom to the 'market' nor entrust it to the 'state.' The US market-centric model is too lenient, and China's state-centric model is too restrictive. If neither the market nor the state is the solution, we must ultimately seek a third path led by the citizens themselves. This approach should safeguard freedom and fundamental rights while preserving democratic institutions and checking the corporate power of AI. We need to find ways to control the technological and digital economic power of AI. Given the

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24) "Artificial intelligence - Consilium," *Council of the European Union*.
    https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/artificial-intelligence/#AI%20act.

unprecedented pace of AI's development and the escalating rivalry surrounding it, human freedom could suffer irreparable harm. Feeling powerless in the face of the inevitable rise of AI signifies a loss of human agency. If AI has the potential to aid in building a future that aligns with our values, we must earnestly examine the possibilities of freedom.