

> China Leading the AI Revolution, Digital Colonization

By: Jose Wilfredo Molina

Founder and Chairman of the Board
Nakasawa Mining & Energy



Recently, on one of my trips to India, I came across Rajiv Malhotra's book, "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Power." His reflections led me to seriously consider the profound implications of AI on the global landscape, and particularly on how China has assumed a leadership role in this emerging terrain. During my interactions with locals, I noted the growing awareness of the importance of AI in India. Despite the anxiety around job threats and the widening economic gap, there was a palpable recognition of the critical role AI will play in shaping the future. Malhotra's book outlines five "battlegrounds" where AI will have influence: Economic Development and Jobs, Global Power, Psychological Control and Agency, Metaphysics, and finally, the future of India. However, it was the exploration of AI as a tool for global domination that resonated with me the most.

Today, China has firmly positioned itself at the forefront of the AI revolution, swiftly embracing this technology to establish itself as a world leader. In exploring this theme, Malhotra suggests that China is using AI to undertake what he calls a "digital colonization". This colonization is not a military invasion but a subtle, yet powerful, infiltration into the economy and digital infrastructure of other nations. It is not an exaggeration to say that whoever dominates AI in the current age has the potential to control the world, just like controlling the Indian Ocean was deemed key to world domination in the '90s. China's impact in this space is undeniable. According to Malhotra, one-third of all papers published on AI come from China, reflecting the country's commitment to this groundbreaking technology. And they are not only generating knowledge but applying AI on a large scale to their vast population, setting a roadmap that other countries, like India, could follow. This digital colonization is a cause for concern, especially for developing countries. Digital powers can sway the governments of these countries by collecting and analyzing vast amounts of data. This potential to "make or break" governments represents a form of control that can profoundly alter the balance of power. During my time in India, I got to see firsthand the growing digital divide that was further widened by the pandemic. The shift to online education laid bare the disparities between those who could adapt and those who were left behind. India, like many other developing countries, is at risk of falling behind in this race for AI. Malhotra argues that India must learn from China's strategy, use its population as a resource, and at the same time protect itself from foreign influence and uphold its democratic ethos. The struggle for control of AI is underway and the battlegrounds are set. While the challenges are many, AI also presents opportunities. My time in India showed me that, though there is anxiety and fear, there is also hope. Hope that with education, engagement, and preparation, countries can shape their own destiny in the AI age.

