# Silicon Valley tech oligarchs reshape politics and culture beyond business



In a comprehensive analysis published by EL PAÍS English, commentator Evgeny Morozov examines the growing influence of Silicon Valley’s technology elites—often celebrated entrepreneurs and investors such as Elon Musk, Marc Andreessen, Sam Altman, Peter Thiel, and Balaji Srinivasan—on political, cultural, and intellectual spheres. Morozov’s article highlights how these individuals, far from being solely business magnates, are shaping grand narratives that extend beyond their financial empires, embedding themselves as new forms of intellectual and ideological authorities.

The piece describes this new generation of tech oligarchs as a “new species” of thinkers who blend immense wealth, celebrity status, and unapologetic ideological stances. Unlike traditional intellectuals or anonymous experts, these figures communicate by producing a high volume of content—from blog posts to podcasts—and integrate philosophical traditions to back their expansive visions. For example, Peter Thiel’s concept of the “network state” proposes blockchain-based micro-nations with bespoke citizenship and services, while Sam Altman is deeply engaged in shaping global approaches to artificial intelligence regulation.

This tech elite is not limiting itself to futuristic or speculative ideas. They have become key players on more conventional battlegrounds such as defence and foreign policy. Figures like Eric Schmidt and Palantir’s CEO Alex Karp are contributing to discussions that traditionally took place behind closed doors in institutions like the RAND Corporation. Morozov contrasts the older generation of sober “defense intellectuals” with the brash and media-savvy tech founders who freely admit to shaping narratives and even manipulating truth to serve their goals.

One notable area of contest is the realm of ethical investment, particularly the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework. Silicon Valley magnates have positioned themselves decisively against ESG principles—Elon Musk dismisses it as a “scam,” and other financiers have launched funds opposing what they perceive as ideological overreach. Their approach combines investment, ideological advocacy, and media influence to destabilise and challenge prevailing corporate governance norms.

Morozov situates this phenomenon within a broader intellectual context, citing thinkers like Jürgen Habermas and Zygmunt Bauman, suggesting these tech billionaires are transforming the public sphere by wielding concentrated power via platforms they control. Their authority is bolstered by “plutocratic gravity,” “oracular authority,” and “platform sovereignty,” allowing them to shape societal conversations and enforce compliance with their visions.

An important dynamic discussed is the internal tension within the technology sector. While employees and “technical intelligentsia” often adopt progressive, anti-establishment views and reject involvement with the military-industrial complex, the oligarchs push back, seeking to reassert alignment with traditional power and oppress dissent. Karp, for example, has publicly denounced “wokeness” within his company and established strict political allegiance requirements.

Morozov also explores the paradox faced by these leaders: their empires were initially built on revolutionary or disruptive ideals, but now they strive to suppress radical change to maintain control. Using references to historical sociological theories—such as Alvin Gouldner’s concept of the “New Class”—the author highlights how today’s tech oligarchs differentiate themselves by combining investment portfolios with ideological agendas, effectively operating as capital’s “organic intellectuals.”

The piece concludes by cautioning that these oligarch-intellectuals risk isolating themselves within echo chambers, mistaking their curated visions for reality, an error reminiscent of Soviet technocratic class errors. Despite their power to influence politics, markets, and discourse through digital platforms and venture capital, their detachment from unmediated facts may undermine their ambitions over time.

Morozov’s article provides an expansive portrait of how Silicon Valley’s elite are increasingly entangling wealth, ideology, and governance, transforming from mere entrepreneurs into architects of a broad socio-political restructuring. The narrative, published in EL PAÍS English, underscores a critical shift in the nature of contemporary intellectual power and public discourse shaped by technology magnates operating at the intersection of capitalism, innovation, and ideology.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/silicon-valley-ascendant-illiberalism/> - Corroborates the claim that Silicon Valley’s elite, including influential entrepreneurs and investors, have become actively involved in political, cultural, and ideological debates, shaping policy and public discourse beyond mere business interests.
* <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/digital-future-daily/2025/01/21/two-titans-explain-why-silicon-valley-veered-right-00199765> - Supports the portrayal of key figures like Marc Andreessen and others in Silicon Valley adopting strong ideological stances and engaging in expansive public communication, influencing political and technological debates.
* <https://datasociety.net/points/what-does-silicon-valley-want/> - Confirms the observation that Silicon Valley elites are increasingly merging their technological ventures with state power mechanisms, extending their influence into defense, foreign policy, and governance.
* <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/digital-future-daily/2025/02/19/silicon-valley-politics-worry-trump-00204971> - Supports the article's point about the tension within the tech sector between progressive employees and oligarchs who push back against dissent and progressive movements like 'wokeness' within their companies.
* <https://www.perc.org.uk/project_posts/silicon-valley-from-tech-utopia-to-reactionary-dystopia/> - Illustrates the transformation of Silicon Valley elites from revolutionary disruptors to reactionary figures focused on preserving their power through ideological advocacy and political influence, including opposition to ESG principles.
* <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/silicon-valley-ascendant-illiberalism/> - Corroborates the cautionary view that the tech oligarchs, wielding platform and plutocratic power, risk isolating themselves in echo chambers and misreading realities much like historic technocratic elites, affecting the public sphere and discourse.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMinAFBVV95cUxOTjNvUVEtWEdCUXRSYXZIMC1sWEF3UnpURXVxalRET3E2b3RINEFYRXhCNVRaeldvRjNvZFRhczVHamJuOHVPOUZrYmtvUG9QTldDLUI4X3pUbHkza3NWNXFnX3drNDlMVlRPV3UtVGhQblYxc1g4SmdiVndDbnpBcFZLTDBpeVdsWEpPRVlzeEdLTFhUX01OOVpVTW7SAbABQVVfeXFMTzVhd1RaRDlyeGdhSkJYbVhORUs2bEYtcmVjMFdLcm9wQUMwVkJpZzZwZmRVMnNTRVdmbExtbERfeGFtOHE4NWd3Si1ETVZjMDVJdFdQNzlMRklMR3B1NXdfQnU3SjdaY1JxSDVSaGFUYjVrVU5XSk5IQWN4S3JnelhnNHduZERzQ0pQSUNDeF9CaFFvR3ZjcGdjZkFxc19jdmwyRnF3bzlhRlNqbDNQQmY?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data