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SEMINAR

Artificial Intelligence, Subliminal Manipulation and Cognitive Freedom: New Challenges to Law and Legal Thinking

SYNOPSIS

The 2021 UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence recognizes the profound and dynamic positive and negative impacts that artificial intelligence (AI) has on all aspects of life and particularly on the human mind. The recommendation restates the growing global awareness about the potential dangers of AI. For instance, AI is believed to pose particularly serious dangers and risks to the human mind through so-called "subliminal AI systems." According to Article 5 (1) lit a) of the European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA), subliminal AI systems are able to "deploy subliminal techniques beyond a person's consciousness in order to materially distort a person's behaviour in a manner that causes or is likely to cause that person or another person physical or psychological harm". These systems open unprecedented possibilities of the manipulation of human thoughts and actions, which is why they are deemed to pose serious risks to the freedom of thought and other related rights. The lecture will address the challenges posed by AI to law and legal thinking by leading an interdisciplinary inquiry into the nature of subliminal perception, a possible absolute threshold of awareness and existing as well as future subliminal AI systems and related neurotechnologies. It aims to flesh out the potential dangers for the right to freedom of thought and to revisit different proposals for a right to cognitive liberty as a way to ensure that the notions of 'privacy of thought' will not become an oxymoron anytime soon.

SPEAKER



Professor Rostam J. Neuwirth
University of Macau

Rostam J. NEUWIRTH is Professor of Law and Head for Department of Global Legal Studies at the University of Macau. Previously, he taught at the West Bengal University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS) in Kolkata and the Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU) in Raipur (India) and worked as a legal adviser in the Department of European Law of the International Law Bureau of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He received his PhD degree from the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence (Italy) and also holds a master's degree in law (LLM) from the Faculty of Law of McGill University in Montreal (Canada). As an undergraduate he studied at the University of Graz (Austria) and the Université d'Auvergne (France). He is the author of the books "The EU Artificial Intelligence Act: Regulating Subliminal AI Systems" (Routledge 2023) and "Law in the Time of Oxymora: A Synaesthesia of Language, Logic and Law" (Routledge 2018) as well as numerous other publications that focus on contemporary global legal problems by exploring the intrinsic linkages between law, on the one hand, and language, cognition, art, culture, society, and technology, on the other.

CHAIR

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Registration will close on 1 March 2024.

Lunch bento will be provided.

DATE

6 March 2024, Wednesday

PROGRAMME

11.50am

Registration

12.00pm

Introduction by

Professor Wang Heng

SMU Yong Pung How School of Law

12.05pm

Presentation by

Professor Rostam J. Neuwirth

University of Macau

12.45pm

Q & A (moderated by Professor Wang Heng)

1.15pm

End of Seminar

VENUE

Singapore Management University
Yong Pung How School of Law
Level 5, Meeting room 5.04
55 Armenian Street
Singapore 179943



Professor Wang Heng
SMU Yong Pung How School of Law

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