



Call for Papers

Technological Illiberalism

Edited by Marlene Laruelle and Jasmin Dall'Agnola (George Washington University)

The rapid advance in information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) have had a profound impact on state-society relations and governance around the world. Yet, the initial optimism of scholars toward social media and AI and their liberalizing and democratizing potential (Earl and Kimport 2011; Carr and Hayes 2015) has long abated, with the realization that tech companies such as Meta, Twitter and Google are violating consumer privacy laws by selling and sharing the personal data of users to national security agencies and companies for the main purpose of profit-making (Zuboff 2019).

Like the twentieth-century factory workers who were separated from the knowledge and control of the end product of their labor by the segmentation of production chains across many factories, people often have insufficient knowledge about how information shared on the Internet and gathered via CCTV cameras is being used by IT companies and government agencies (Mallard 2022). The firewalls and paywalls that IT giants erect between users' experience of the digital world and IT companies' use of consumer experience online further enhance these illiberal practices. So far, we know little about the tools used by both high-tech companies and law enforcement to feed technological illiberalism.

This special issue seeks to explore the tools and ideologies espoused by IT companies and state institutions to justify and promote technological illiberalism. This special issue should serve as a reminder that, while they (whether the state, tech companies or new public-private hybrid structures) are watching us, we are watching them too. Making technological illiberalism more visible and understandable hardly guarantees a just and accountable society, but it is surely a necessary condition for one.

Contributions can cover topics including but not limited to:

- ✓ The Silicon Valley and Tech Moguls' ideologies
- ✓ Authoritarian regimes and the use of illiberal technologies
- ✓ The role of cookies and algorithm censorship on social media
- ✓ COVID-19 and the normalization of mass surveillance in democratic societies (street cameras, AI facial recognition)
- ✓ The experience of surveillance capitalism in everyday life
- ✓ The role of spyware in the age of surveillance capitalism

Please submit a title, a 250-word abstract together with a 100-word biographical statement to jasmin.dallagnola@gwu.edu by August 31, 2023. Successful candidates will be notified by September 13, 2023.

Draft manuscripts will be reviewed initially by the editors prior to submission to *the Journal of Illiberalism Studies* for peer review. Acceptance for the proposal does not guarantee acceptance for publication, which ultimately depends on the outcome of peer review.

Timeline

- 31.08.2023: Submission of a 250-word abstract, title and a 100-word bio to the editors
- 28.02.2024: Submission of the final version of your article to the guest editors
- 30.04.2024: Submission of your article to *the Journal of Illiberalism Studies* for peer-review. Publication planned for Spring 2024.

illiberalism
Studies Program