A Review of DARREN BYLER, *TERROR CAPITALISM: UYGHUR DISPOSSESSION AND MASCULINITY IN A CHINESE CITY*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022, 296 pp.

Liliia Zemnukhova

Deutsches Museum
1 Museumsinsel, Munich, Germany
l.zemnukhova@deutsches-museum.de

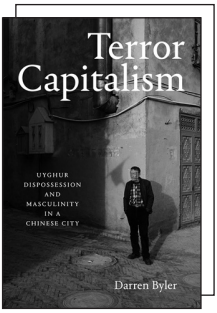
Abstract: The book is a study of the position of the Uyghur population of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region through the prism of the effect of technology. The author uses the concept of terror capitalism to show the whole complexity of the Uyghurs' relations with the authorities and with other ethnic groups, and also amongst each other in everyday life. To this end he identifies three processes which Uyghur men are forced to undergo: digital enclosure, ethno-racial devaluation and deprivation of material possessions. He also proposes three means of coping with life's difficulties: friendship, minor politics and subtraction.

Keywords: terror capitalism, techno-politics, Uyghurs, China, gender.

To cite: Zemnukhova L., 'A Review of Darren Byler, Terror Capitalism: Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022, 296 pp.', *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*, 2023, no. 19, pp. 139–152.

doi: 10.31250/1815-8870-2023-19-19-139-152

URL: http://anthropologie.kunstkamera.ru/files/pdf/eng019/zemnukhova.pdf



A Review of **Darren Byler**, *Terror Capitalism: Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022, 296 pp.

The book is a study of the position of the Uyghur population of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region through the prism of the effect of technology. The author uses the concept of terror capitalism to show the whole complexity of the Uyghurs' relations with the authorities and with other ethnic groups, and also amongst each other in everyday life. To this end he identifies three processes which Uyghur men are forced to undergo: digital enclosure, ethno-racial devaluation and deprivation of material possessions. He also proposes three means of coping with life's difficulties: friendship, minor politics and subtraction.

Keywords: terror capitalism, techno-politics, Uyghurs, China, gender.

When I was considering reviewing this book, I expected to see a detailed analysis of how the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region had become an experimental platform for a system of surveillance and evaluation of the idea of social rating. These expectations were formed by the widespread attention in social studies of technology addressing the collection of big data about citizens by means of a combination of systems of facial recognition, voice recognition, location tracking, and the subsequent testing of the system of "social credit" in particular Chinese regions (see, for example, [Meissner 2017; Wong, Dobson 2019; Liu 2022]). In critical studies of technology, the Chinese experiments with algorithms and data are at that extreme against which independent institutes, responsible developers, professional associations and democratic governments protest. Within this, social scientists' main attention is directed towards Western telecommunications companies and their policy of developing algorithms and regulating data (see, for example, [Seaver 2017; Zuboff 2019; Christin 2020]), while cases of studying technology under totalitarian régimes remain less accessible and all the more important for study.

Liliia Zemnukhova
Deutsches Museum
1 Museumsinsel, Munich, Germany
l.zemnukhova@deutsches-museum.de

Byler's book turned out to be much more humane, profound and emotional than one might have expected from a critical study of technology. It was not technology as such that was at the centre of the author's attention, but the "coerced 'user experience'" (p. xiii) of the technological system, which redefines the life and everyday activities of Uyghur society in China. The drama of human lives, of biography with gloomy prospects, the constant authorial reflection, the polemic with a huge amount of literature and unique observations and descriptions of life make this book a model of immersion in an inaccessible, closed milieu under the conditions of a totalitarian régime built on ethno-racist principles. Here the feminist anthropological approach, studies of terror capitalism, the decolonial critique and personal storytelling are all combined, and so the resulting book is not only sensitive and acute; it also broadens the conceptual prospects for studies of vulnerable groups.

Darren Byler is an American anthropologist currently working at Simon Fraser University in Canada. This is his second book on the phenomenon of the exclusion of ethnic groups under conditions of techno-capitalism. In his other works Byler has studied how everyday religious and linguistic practices are transformed, how the politics of oppression become routine, and the role played in this by the media and other technologies. He analyses what is happening in Xinjiang according to a range of different optics — technology, gender, labour, and power.

Byler "strove to view Uyghur male voices and experiences not as nongendered and normative expressions of Uyghur identity, but as sites of emotional care [for one another — *L. Z.*]" (p. 22). Men were at the centre of attention, because it was towards them that the state's efforts at racial "cleansing" were directed, and also because the author himself, being a male researcher, was able to become a co-participant in this anti-colonial struggle as he collected his informants' narratives. This book is the continuation and result of the author's prolonged ethnographical work in the region, twenty-four months of observation overall at various periods. This state of inclusion allowed the author to follow individual histories and biographies and the dynamics of change in the techno-political régime through the authors' close relationships with Uyghurs and Han settlers, and through a joint interpretation of their social position.

The book's key question is "about continuing to live despite systems of enclosure, devaluation, and, ultimately, dispossession" (p. 3). The first part of the book, and its first three chapters, are devoted to these three phenomena: (digital) enclosure, (ethno-racial) devaluation and (material) dispossession. The second part presents the informants' responses to these three challenges: friendship, minor politics and "subtraction".

In the introduction the author develops the concept of terror capitalism, in which material dispossession, colonial domination and media resistance are intertwined. To conceptualise the role of technology in terror capitalism the author relies on Foucault's idea of bio-political security [Foucault 2007], which allows the identification of new relationships of dependency, the production of new régimes of valuation and the mediation of people's behaviour [Samimian-Darash 2016]. Techno-political systems model behaviour and create particular scenarios of social reproduction of members of "different" groups, and at the same time make them into a constant source of digital data (p. 20). The concept of terror capitalism contributes to the sphere of research that Shoshana Zuboff has developed using the concept of surveillance capitalism [Zuboff 2019]; the author himself supplements it with a feminist and decolonial view of the global co-production of economic and techno-political relations.

In the first chapter, devoted to digital enclosure, Byler shows how the technology of surveillance and control make specific social groups politically and economically vulnerable and constant providers of data. In the complex history of the region's development, he concentrates on the period when technology became the basic local policy pursued by the state. After all adult residents of Xinjiang had gone through "the health check of the whole people",[1] the Chinese state services and private analytics companies had a large amount of biometric data at their disposal: "DNA, blood type, fingerprints, voice signature, and face or iris scan" (p. 32). These data formed the basis of the selection on which all the surveillance systems of pass-control points and street surveillance cameras would henceforth be trained, and on which the digital models of deviant or suspicious behaviour would be constructed. In this way data about the bodies and behaviour of the Uyghur people were used to form the technological infrastructure that reinforced and reproduced the dominant relationships of power.

The concept of digital enclosure places the reproduction of sociality in a technological context. The construction of an information-communication infrastructure, the improvement of the wifi network, ubiquitous surveillance and GPS transmitters for tracking have created a multidimensional space for the collection of data and their analysis, evaluation and the modelling of behaviour. Digital enclosure imposes an institutional order in which groups who are

[1] Universal screening was promoted by the authorities as an initiative to manage digital patient records and a means of improving the delivery of medical aid. However, it was only carried out in Xinjiang, and the data were then used not for medical, but for political purposes. See the relevant research by Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/12/13/china-minority-region-collects-dna-millions>.

discriminated against are forced into captive labour and captive lives, inasmuch as they are deprived of access to social goods and information.

The paradox is that the developed network of digital communication in Xinjiang first served as the basis for the development of the Muslim community and its social reproduction. By 2012, all regions had been provided with information-communication networks and television, and so the knowledge and practices of local communities were accessible and could be freely circulated. But with the increase of the role of the media in the maintenance of the culture of the Muslim community and the Uyghur people, this ethnic autonomy came to be perceived by the state authorities as a potential terrorist threat, and "the People's War on Terror" was declared in the region in 2014 (p. 41). In response to the Uyghurs' ethnic and religious consolidation, private companies began, with the support of the Chinese state, to develop large-scale projects for maintaining security.

As a result, a pass system was initiated — a green card with a QR-code, available to only a small minority of Uyghurs (about 10 % of them), and without which they could not leave their native district (p. 44). Rural localities became for the Uyghurs "open-air prisons", with no possibility of leaving. The Uyghur population of the towns was either deported *en masse* to the countryside, or else subjected to re-education in special camps. Re-education camps are an authoritarian form of repression that began in China after the Uyghurs' meetings in 2009 (the first satellite evidence of their construction dates from 2011).[1] This repressive machine was brought into being through the efforts of hundreds of thousands of policemen and civil servants, who were sent to carry out sudden inspections in places where Uyghurs live or who engaged in selective checks on citizens in the city streets [Byler 2018]. The Uyghur population had to consent to labour under conditions of exploitation and precarity, or be sent to the camps for re-education and unpaid work. Many of them did not return. There is still no direct verifiable evidence about where these captives are held in the work or education camps.

Such a system for the suppression of a particular ethnic group led not only to discrimination against them in the employment structure and an assault on their civil rights, but also to "an epistemic transformation of Uyghur sociality itself" [Byler 2019]. This means that, as a result of its deprivations and enclosure, the Uyghur population is undergoing a forced redefinition of its own social order, knowledge and activity. What was usual and significant in

---

[1] The BBC Russian Service conducted a major investigation into the camps, analysing data from the aerospace company GMV: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/resources/idt-sh/China_hidden_camps_russian>.

the everyday is now treated differently and receives new meanings, first in the economic context (for example, wage labour instead of a trade or profession), and then in an ever more ideologised political context. "State authorities and contractors constantly referred to Uyghurs as 'separatists, extremists, terrorists', and demanded that state workers and community members provide 'enemy intelligence' (Ch.: *diren qingbao*) about the Uyghurs they encountered," writes Byler (p. 45). They were regarded as "enemies" because they were seen as a threat to national state security.

Technological breakthroughs in the area of computer vision and the decoding of voice communications only intensified digital enclosure and formed a universal platform for the security system — according to the rules of the authoritarian power in existence. In this system, the Uyghur population tacitly represented a danger and was used to perfect the teaching algorithms of surveillance. Within the system low-paid technical specialists worked as "data cleaners" [Irani 2019], engaged in processing or "cleaning up" large volumes of data to prepare them for analytical work. Among the low-paid cleaners there were also qualified workers, some of them from among the Uyghurs themselves; evidence for this is the story of Baimurat, who got a job at a police station (p. 48). Having been part of the security service at a commercial centre, he became an employee of the state police. His work included identifying people from the Muslim minority, with the security rating that ensued for them.

The arrest of Uyghurs was justified by their religious or political misdeeds, traced via social networks and data in the telephones of other people who had been arrested. In addition, it became suspicious to have a relative who had emigrated, to have travelled abroad, to have attempted to destroy one's mobile telephone, or simply not to have one. All those who were arrested were sent to the re-education camps or disappeared. Digital enclosure was the starting-point for the subsequent processes of devaluation and dispossession that became possible in the capitalist-colonialist context of North-West China: Muslims were thus transformed into "terrorist' bodies" (p. 60).

The second chapter demonstrates the process of ethno-racial devaluation to which the constructed system of surveillance has led, particularly in the city of Ürümchi. While the Uyghurs were subject to discrimination and persecution, Han migrants, by contrast, received support of various kinds (p. 63). This underpinned the "people's war" directed towards the tacit stigmatisation of the Uyghurs as criminals. Byler compares the trajectories of Han and Uyghur men who find themselves in such a structure of social reproduction, which creates very different opportunities for the two groups.

The techno-political régime of terror capitalism makes everything Chinese valuable and culturally significant, and everything Uyghur backward and even dangerous (p. 63), and this cannot but be reflected in social reproduction. Uyghur men were only valuable as informers for the state and unqualified workers, though previously they had been part of their own traditional economy based on traditional crafts. On entering the urban milieu they aimed, like other people, to become fully-fledged participants in modern urban life, which they saw in clips (not then forbidden) and advertising on the internet. In a certain sense quality of life became the aim of both Han and Uyghurs, although their positions were by no means equal.

Han settlers also became participants in the bio- and techno-political dispossession: their bodies and metrics were needed "to clear the social atmosphere" (p. 67). Therefore they received extra resources, positions of cultural influence and social value. Uyghur Ürümchi became a city of opportunity for the Han. And the ease with which new achievements and resources were attained added value to the quality of life and consumption. Moreover, many of Byler's Han informants felt sufficiently well protected for self-realisation, saw no threat from the Uyghurs, and on the whole were not entirely aware of the privileges that existed thanks to their "correct" ethnicity (pp. 74–75).

Ideas about the quality of life were formed to a large extent under the influence of the internet for both the Han and Uyghur migrants from the countryside to the city. But their freedom for achievement and self-expression was limited. They were not supposed to look "too Uyghur and too Islamic and not Chinese enough." Still, "exotic" images of the locals dancing happily were welcomed as able to satisfy the curiosity of tourists (p. 78). And urban residents had the possibility of demonstrating their quality of life against a background of social goods, although this demonstration might afterwards become a digital trace and be used as evidence.

The story of Yusup, described by Byler in the second chapter, illustrates young Uyghur men's aim of looking cosmopolitan and participating in the knowledge economy. Yusup was involved in the practice of traditional crafts and an active participant in Islamic communities, together with others among his friends who had moved to the city, and discussed the possibilities and restrictions on the reproduction of traditions and the search for decent work. But in 2017 the author lost contact with him and his account in the social networks was shut down: during one of the regular waves of mass detentions of Uyghurs more than a million people had been set to the re-education camps on account of "religious extremism" and "ethnic separatism" (p. 92).

The third chapter unfolds the process of material dispossession. At the centre of the chapter are the stories of two young Uyghur migrants, Mahmud and Aziz, who used social networks to create an urban Islamic identity.

Mahmud was one of those who invited Byler to visit his native village and meet his relations, although both of them realised how risky this idea was. It was at that moment that the police descended on the house, and this situation showed how vulnerable the position of the Uyghur rural population was even in their own homes. The impossibility of receiving guests properly, a refusal to obey absurd orders, a prohibition on switching off the television with Chinese propaganda — this was all humiliating for families' everyday life, although Mahmud's parental home had been designated with a government rating sign as "a peaceful family" (pp. 98–99). Dispossession extends far beyond material property and includes the discursive and epistemic aspects of people's lives [Coulthard 2014; Goldstein 2017]. This leads to the imposition of a different social order, a belittling of their knowledge and experience, a devaluation of their property and rights. In a market economy based on an infrastructure of railways and pipelines, with the new settlement policy the farm work of the rural Uyghur population was reinterpreted: market relationships were replaced by threats of confiscation and arrest, which inevitably placed the Uyghurs in a position of complete dependence and consequent poverty, oppression and disempowerment (p. 105).

Aziz's story is a story of a search for an image of the town dweller who still retains an allegiance to patriarchal Muslim culture [Byler 2015]. Modern Islamic teachings were widespread on the internet and reinforced other forms of dispossession (for example, the sequestration of women and the devaluation of domestic work). These in turn overlaid the vulnerable position of young men in the labour market on account of ethnic segregation, which radicalised their search for a place for themselves in society as a whole and the city in particular. For example, the image of a young businessman from Istanbul seemed relatively safe to Aziz both to demonstrate his belonging to modern Islamic culture and for existing within the framework of surveillance without exciting unnecessary suspicions (pp. 121–122). But even this survival tactic was powerless against digital enclosure.

With the repressions of 2014 against extremism and terrorism, the media environment in which both Mahmud and Aziz worked was under special surveillance. The creators of all Uyghur content were subject to extra checks and arrests, the history of the digital behaviour of the rural relatives of urban Uyghurs was analysed going back five years (p. 123). Persecution for religious behaviour extended

to social centres and mosques: the authorities raised Chinese flags, and the families involved in producing Uyghur content were made to take an oath of fidelity to the state (p. 127). The Uyghur public sphere was turned into an instrument of terror capitalism, and the private sphere ceased to be self-governing.

The second part of the book shows those grass-roots responses and means of surviving this traumatic experience that appeared in conditions of digital enclosure, devaluation and dispossession. The fourth chapter is devoted to friendship between young Uyghur migrants. In Uyghur society, "friendship has historically been a major source of ethical obligation and sociality" (p. 139). Friendship is a recurrent theme throughout the book, and has been a refuge, a support, and an attempt to make sense of the new conditions of life of young migrants far from their families and communities. In all Byler's descriptions, this friendship is accompanied by feelings of despair, alarm, loneliness and vulnerability, but equally by concern, trust and community.

Byler stresses the significance of anti-colonial friendship, which helps people to survive in conditions of state violence by means of fellow-feeling and shared experience (p. 137). He goes on to make use of feminist research on masculinity [Sedgwick 1985; Gutmann 1997; Kimmel 2004], and also of works on Islamic masculinity [Dautcher 2009; Rana 2011], and manhood among indigenous peoples [Innes, Anderson 2015]. He shows that the assemblage point for Uyghur masculinity is not in the domination of women, but in defence against isolation and devaluation through practices of shared involvement, exchange of complex experience, and the inter-subjective interpretation of traumas. Uyghur men could not find decent work or freely rent accommodation, they were subjected to discrimination and oppression. Such a self-reproducing form of structural repression finally gives rise to the inter-generational trauma of colonial violence [Wolfe 2006]. In this context almost every one of Byler's informants had a very close friend, who did not simply listen to them, but often helped them to survive. Storytelling turned out to be a powerful therapeutic practice, since stories give meaning to life and redefine what has been experienced [Jackson 2002]. In such stories Uyghur men occupied the active position of those who cope with difficult situations, although they continue to encounter belittlement and deprivation.

At the centre of this chapter is Ablikim, who is the book's hero from the first page of the introduction. As a student Ablikim chose chemistry, thinking that the universal language of science would help him to find his place: in the laboratory he felt significant despite his ethnicity (p. 145). It was, however, impossible for him to get a job in academia, and in industry his tasks had nothing to do with

science. He found work as a chemistry teacher, and was the only Uyghur in the school. Moreover, he continued to encounter prejudiced attitudes towards him on the part of the Han teachers and unmotivated pupils, which intensified his already difficult position in conditions of digital enclosure (for example, daily searches and checks).

To describe the position of Ablikim and other Uyghur men Byler turns to the idea of "slow death", as physical and mental wearing out and exhaustion from constant vulnerability [Berlant 2011]. "These systems of enclosure and devaluation prevented them from finding jobs or working their own land; blocked them from moving except under direct orders; forced them to watch state television, censor their speech, and proclaim their undying loyalty to the state; dictated what they could wear and how they cut their hair; and tracked their digital social network to determine who should be detained" (p. 147). More than once Ablikim had fallen into depression and spoken of suicide, and it was always his "life and liver" friend Batur, whom he saw and ate with every day, who came to his aid (p. 156). In conditions of constant vulnerability, such a palliative form of social reproduction of the Uyghur community was essential, though it could not save them from everything. The author lost touch with Ablikim in 2017 too, having received an e-mail from him ending their correspondence out of safety considerations. Batur remained free, and was horrified, and felt guilty and powerless at this breaking-off of friendship (p. 157). Byler interprets this experience of the loss of someone who had become his friend via anthropology as "the work of mourning" [Briggs 2014], and the writing of this book as a practice of anti-colonial friendship: "listening to and writing the stories of friends in order to stage them for readers to know that they matter" (p. 161).

The fifth chapter deals with minor politics, another means of coping with enclosure, devaluation and dispossession. Here Byler tells the story of the Han migrant Chen Ye, who recorded the life of Uyghur migrants, both in the city and in their village homes, by means of documentary photographs.

Minor politics [Deleuze, Guattari 1986; Lionnet, Shih 2005] become possible thanks to the activity and practices of particular people directed towards giving meaning to the invisible or imperceptible phenomena of everyday life that form exceptions to the imposed dominant order, economic, political, ordinary. Marginalised and oppressed groups use their devotion to traditional values and affections, reproducing thereby their way of life in response to external threats and crises. "It provides marginalized people with a political sensibility of having power to move and act in the world

and on others, but its legitimacy does not rest on legal or formal recognition from the state or capitalist institutions" (p. 168).

Chen Ye tried to identify himself with the Uyghur migrants, and showed not only the various difficulties, but also the moments of happiness and the sources of inspiration and strength in their everyday life. He tried to show them as ordinary people with their own strong culture and traditions in spite of the dominant policies. He photographed poverty, powerlessness and vulnerability, but stressed their individuality, deconstructing the myth of the conquering sovereignty of the Chinese state (p. 174). Chen Ye himself refused state aid to support his cultural production, and resisted the projects to re-educate the Uyghur population. Not only that, he acted as a witness to the normalisation of terror capitalism when he noticed how the discourses of dispossession and devaluation were becoming natural in the migrant milieu. He did not aspire to a good life; instead, being a migrant himself, he regarded himself as in solidarity with the placelessness and powerlessness of the Uyghur migrants (p. 179). Not only did he document their everyday life, he was ready, as far as possible, to assist them in their dealings with the authorities, being their interpreter and their representative. Having become part of the Ürümchi artistic community, Chen Ye began to use his position to defend the Uyghurs, though it is not easy to scale up the minor politics that reject colonial relationships.

The last chapter is about subtraction. To understand the meaning that the author gives to this concept, one must turn to another concept, the emic category of *musapir*, on which the religious economy of the Uyghurs is based. *Musapir* (in Classical Arabic *musāfir*) means "traveller", but in the Uyghur context it conveys a sense of both material and psychical displacement, and also devotion to Islam, piety and freedom (p. 192). To demonstrate the profundity of the concept, Byler uses two stories at opposite ends of the spectrum of what might be called *musapir* sociality.

The first is the story of Emir and his wife Bahar, a family of migrants of the older generation of informal settlement in the city. In this house, "the family was able to use urban sheep farming — raising a small herd of sheep inside their home and in the rubble that surrounded it — as a viable means to prepare for the oncoming wave of dispossession" (p. 193). They were important members of their community, and built their way of life and its meaning on close relationships with other *musapir*. But in 2015 their home, hearth and way of life were destroyed.

The second story is that of Hasan, a young Uyghur *musapir* who found a source of both personal and economic identity and stability in the practice of reformist Islam. Like other migrants, he used the Chinese messaging app WeChat for communication, exchanging

religious texts and looking for work. In 2016 all these data were used to identify religious extremists among Uyghur migrants.

In the end, none of Byler's heroes was able to secure himself a safe existence in the city, and this is what led to *subtraction* — their banishment and "epistemic erasure" (p. 194). The Islamic moral framework and the increase in religious consolidation were a reaction to the Chinese authorities' colonial capitalist project. This project united the Uyghur community, allowing its representatives to reproduce their social life in conditions of vulnerability. At the same time this unity became a further pretext for persecution for extremism, and legitimised digital enclosure as a component of terror capitalism. "My argument here," writes Byler, "is not that Uyghur lives were fractured in multiple identities, as is often conceptualized in Western liberal frameworks, but rather that their everyday experience of Islam was situated in changing structures of power, influence, and capital accumulation" (p. 195). The friends and relatives of those Uyghurs who were being detained or re-educated preferred to describe them through a state of "non-existence" or subtraction, which meant not simply that they had disappeared, but that their subsequent fate was unknown, and also that there remained a hope of their return after their "encoding" and forced labour.

In the conclusion Byler reflects on how his research outlook has changed along with the intensifying "people's war on terror", particularly when, in 2015, his informants began disappearing one after another. The study of minor politics and friendship showed that they can help to reproduce sociality, but are no defence against terror. The expansion of social networks and expectations of a relatively safe environment for rural Uyghur migrants in the city turned into a clash with techno-racist attitudes and the formation of a database of unreliable behaviour. The choice they were faced with was working as "data cleaners" testifying against their relations and neighbours with no ability to refuse, or else loss of liberty in the re-education camps. Both variants ended badly: suicide or disappearance. "The People's War on Terror created roles for everyone: detainees, police, and the relatives of detainees. Everyone participated in the project" (p. 223). The greatest fear was that at some moment a person would lose control over his own life, and this is what most often happened.

Of all Byler's informants, only Mahmud succeeded in emigrating to the United States and regaining a sense of control over his life. But even this sense was only relative, because Uyghur society is still undergoing the processes of digital enclosure, ethno-racial devaluation and material dispossession. What at the very beginning of the people's terror could still be humane and flexible (for example,

as in the case of Chen Ye's help for his Uyghur friends) later became faceless, automatised, delegated to technology and turned into a "black box". Uyghur society has been turned into a politically unreliable program that nevertheless functions well for its purposes, and that, alas normalised social engineering.

Darren Byler's book on the process of the techno-political dispossession of the citizens of a totalitarian régime produces a profound impression. Through the fate of individual people Byler succeeds in tracing the dynamics of the mutual reinforcement of technology and everyday user experience, particularly in the context of interaction between authority and the vulnerable Uyghur community in Xinjiang. However, one may identify three points in the book that are not completely developed. First, although the author often reflects on his own role as a "Western researcher" and strives to reinforce his anti-colonial position, he pays little attention to explaining what exactly he means by anti-colonial, and uses the context in various senses and contexts. Second, the central concept of terror capitalism appears insufficiently convincing in the context of the communist régime that is in power in China, and needs refining and correcting. Finally, the actual technology of surveillance in the book remains rather a background infrastructure than an immediate part of the processes of Uyghur dispossession, although it does seem that it is critically important, and therefore the technological infrastructure itself that influences people's lives requires further interpretation.

References

Berlant L., *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011, 352 pp.

Briggs C., '"Dear Dr. Freud"', *Cultural Anthropology*, 2014, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 312–343. doi: 10.14506/ca29.2.08.

Byler D., 'Uyghur Women and Memetjan Semet's Film "Dad, I Love You"', *The Art of Life in Chinese Central Asia*, 2015, April 25. <https://livingotherwise.com/2015/04/25/uyghur-women-memetjan-semets-film-dadi-love-you/>.

Byler D., 'China's Government Has Ordered a Million Citizens to Occupy Uighur Homes: Here's What They Think They're Doing', *Chinafile*, 2018, Oct. 24. <http://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/postcard/million-citizens-occupy-uighur-homes-xinjiang>.

Byler D., 'Preventative Policing as Community Detention in Northwest China', *Made in China*, 2019, Oct. 25. <https://madeinchinajournal.com/2019/10/25/preventative-policing-as-community-detention-innorthwest-china/>.

Christin A., 'The Ethnographer and the Algorithm: Beyond the Black Box', *Theory and Society*, 2020, vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 897–918. doi: 10.1007/s11186-020-09411-3.

Coulthard G. S., *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014, 245 pp.

Dautcher J., *Down a Narrow Road: Identity and Masculinity in an Uyghur Community in Xinjiang China.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009, 350 pp.

Deleuze G., Guattari F., *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, 136 pp.

Foucault M., *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Colluge de France, 1977–1978.* New York: Springer, 2007, 464 pp.

Goldstein A., 'On the Reproduction of Race, Capitalism, and Settler Colonialism', *Race and Capitalism: Global Territories, Transnational Histories.* Los Angeles, CA: Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin, 2017, pp. 42–51. <https://challengeinequality.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/04/Race-and-Capitalismdigital-volume.pdf>.

Gutmann M. C., 'Trafficking in Men: The Anthropology of Masculinity', *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 1997, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 385–409.

Innes R. A., Anderson K., *Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015, 304 pp.

Irani L., *Chasing Innovation: Making Entrepreneurial Citizens in Modern India.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019, 304 pp.

Jackson M. D., *The Politics of Storytelling: Violence, Transgression, and Intersubjectivity.* Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002, 320 pp.

Kimmel M. S., 'Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity', Gergen M. M., Davis S. N. (eds.), *Toward a New Psychology of Gender.* Boca Raton, FL: Taylor and Francis, 2004, pp. 223–242.

Lionnet F., Shih S.-M., *Minor Transnationalism.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005, 368 pp.

Liu C., 'Seeing Like a State, Enacting Like an Algorithm: (Re)assembling Contact Tracing and Risk Assessment during the COVID-19 Pandemic', *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 2022, vol. 47, no. 4, pp. 698–725. doi: 10.1177/01622439211021916.

Meissner M., *China's Social Credit System: A Big-Data Enabled Approach to Market Regulation with Broad Implications for Doing Business in China.* Berlin: Mercator Institute for China Studies, 2017, 13 pp.

Rana J., *Terrifying Muslims: Race and Labor in the South Asian Diaspora.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011, 229 pp.

Samimian-Darash L., 'Practicing Uncertainty: Scenario-based Preparedness Exercises in Israel', *Cultural Anthropology,* 2016, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 359–386. doi: 10.14506/ca31.3.06.

Seaver N., 'Algorithms as Culture: Some Tactics for the Ethnography of Algorithmic Systems', *Big Data and Society*, 2017, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 2053951717738104. doi: 10.1177/2053951717738104.

Sedgwick E. K., *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, 272 pp.

Wolfe P., 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2006, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 387–409. doi: 10.1080/14623520601056240.

Wong K. L. X., Dobson A. S., 'We're Just Data: Exploring China's Social Credit System in Relation to Digital Platform Ratings Cultures in Westernised Democracies', *Global Media and China*, 2019, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 220–232. doi: 10.1177/2059436419856090.

Zuboff S., *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for the Future at the New Frontier of Power*. New York: Public Affairs Books, 2019, 704 pp.