

Scalcău A.

BOOK REVIEW: THE NEW ROADS OF OUR SERVITUDE (LES NOUVELLES ROUTES DE NOTRE SERVITUDE), by Thierry WOLTON

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by Thierry WOLTON

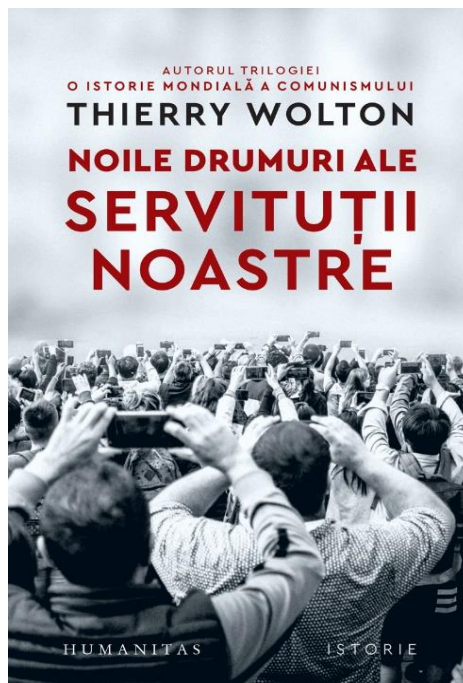
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Thierry Wolton is a French journalist, who has published numerous books, among which *A World History of Communism* in three volumes (2015-2017), which has won the *Jan Michalski* prize for literature as well as the *Hope* prize, awarded by the Revolution Memorial Association of Timișoara.

His latest book, *The New Roads of Our Servitude* (Les nouvelles routes de notre servitude), was published by Grasset in 2022, translated into Romanian by Adina Cobuz and published by Humanitas in 2023.

Thierry Wolton's previous books deal mainly with the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century (the author being particularly interested in communism); this one is an essay in which he explains how the rapid technological development (the growth of the Internet, of the social networks and of the various applications that most people use daily) can distort our perception of reality and lead to alienation, uniformity and compliance.



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Wolton does not deny the benefits of technology; in fact he even talks about its biggest paradox, which resides in the fact that it can be highly beneficial in those countries in which freedom is limited or restricted, but at the same time it may become a powerful instrument of control in democratic countries.

In my opinion, *The New Roads of Our Servitude* has two main strengths. First of all, it offers numerous examples of technology abuse in different kinds of political regimes (both democratic and undemocratic) on different continents. Secondly, it explains to the readers how this rapid development of technology has accentuated several human traits, such as the binary thinking (seeing everything in either black or white), the spirit of exaltation as well as two other opposite characteristics: the deep desire to display one's individuality and conformity, which stems from the need for acceptance.

Wolton's book is not anti-technology; it merely draws attention to some of its dangers which people tend to overlook and it also shows how technology can become an unparalleled instrument in the hands of those who seek power and control.