

***Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition - An Anthology [Paperback]* by Robert Scharff and Val Dusek (Editors), Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2003, 704 pages, ISBN-13: 978-0631222194, \$ 37.96 (USD).**

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This anthology which brings together, a collection of perceptively historical and contemporary essays on the nature of technology and its relation to humanity contains the following: extensive selections from the great classical philosophers on technology; attempts at integrating the latest developments in the philosophy of science with philosophy of technology and clarifies the relation between the two; discusses technology in relation to feminism, deep ecology, multiculturalism, social constructivism, and hermeneutics.

The book has, besides the 'General Introduction: Philosophy and the Technological Condition,' six parts together having in all fifty-five chapters or selected readings from prominent authors from classical ancient times down through the medieval and mostly modern period to the contemporary times. Each part has an introduction placing in context the selections therein and providing an ample guide to the reader of the section.

Part I entitled 'The Historical Background' consists (chapters 1-7) of the following: On Dialectic; and 'Techne': Plato; On 'Techne'; and 'Episteme': Aristotle; On the Idols, the Scientific Study of Nature, and the Reformation of Education: Francis Bacon; Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View: Immanuel Kant; The Nature and Importance of the Positive Philosophy: Auguste Comte; On the Sciences and Arts: Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Capitalism and the Modern Labour Process: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

Part II entitled 'Philosophy, Modern Science, and Technology' has under 'Positivist and Postpositivist Philosophies of Science' (chapters 8-14) the following in the first section: The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle: Rudolf Carnap, Hans Hahn, and Otto Neurath; Studies in the Logic of Explanation: Carl G. Hempel and Paul Oppenheim; Ideals of Natural Order: Stephen Toulmin; Revaluing Science: Starting from the Practices of Women: Nancy Tuana; Do You Believe in Reality? News from the Trenches of the Science Wars: Bruno Latour; Hermeneutical Philosophy and Pragmatism: A Philosophy of Science: Patrick A. Heelan and Jay Schulkin; Dysfunctional Universality Claims? Scientific, Epistemological, and Political Issues: Sandra Harding. In the second subsection entitled 'The Task of a Philosophy of Technology' (chapters 15-18) there are the following: Philosophical Inputs and Outputs of Technology: Mario Bunge; On the Aims of a Philosophy of Technology: Jacques Ellul; Technology and Ethics: Kristin Shrader-Frechette; and Toward a Philosophy of Technology: Hans Jonas.

In Part III the various attempts at 'Defining Technology' is taken into consideration (in chapters 19-22): What Is Technology? Stephen J. Kline; A Philosophical-Anthropological Perspective on Technology: Arnold Gehlen; The Social Construction of Facts and Artifacts: Trevor J. Pinch and Wiebe E. Bijker; Social Constructivism: Opening the Black Box and Finding It Empty: Langdon Winner.

Part IV is a special section looking precisely into one of the contemporary thinkers on the topic, 'Heidegger on Technology' (chapters 23-28): The Question Concerning Technology: Martin Heidegger; On Philosophy's 'Ending' in Technoscience: Heidegger vs. Comte: Robert C. Scharff; Heidegger's Philosophy of Technology: Don Ihde; Focal Things and Practices: Albert Borgmann; Heidegger and Borgmann on How to Affirm Technology: Hubert L. Dreyfus and Charles Spinosa; and Critical Evaluation of Heidegger and Borgmann: Andrew Feenberg.

Part V entitled 'Technology and Human Ends' has three subsections: the first, Human Beings as 'Makers' or 'Tool-Users?' (chapters 29-32) looks into: Tool-Users vs Homo Sapiens and The Megamachine: Lewis Mumford; The 'Vita Activa' and the Modern Age: Hannah Arendt; Doing and Making in a Democracy: Dewey's Experience of Technology: Larry Hickman; Buddhist Economics: E. F. Schumacher; the second subsection, 'Is Technology Autonomous?' contains (chapters 33-35): The 'Autonomy' of the Technological Phenomenon: Jacques Ellul; Do Machines Make History?: Robert L. Heilbroner; The New Forms of Control: Herbert Marcuse; and third subsection, 'Technology, Ecology, and the Conquest of Nature' contains (chapters 36- 41): Mining the Earth's Womb: Carolyn Merchant; A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century: Donna Haraway; In Defense of Bacon: Alan Sobel; The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: Arne Naess; The Deep Ecology Movement: Bill Devall; and Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Eco-Feminist Connection: Ariel Salleh.

The final Part VI entitled 'Technology as Social Practice' also has three subsections: the first, 'Technology and the Life World' (chapters 42-44) deals with Three Ways of Being-with Technology: Carl Mitcham; A Phenomenology of Technics: Don Ihde; Technical Progress and the Social Life-World: Jürgen Habermas; the second subsection, 'Technology and Cyberspace' has (chapters 45-48): Heidegger and McLuhan and The Essence of Virtual Reality: Michael H. Heim; Hacking Away at the Counterculture: Andrew Ross; Information and Reality at the Turn of the Century: Albert Borgmann; Anonymity versus Commitment: The Dangers of Education on the Internet: Hubert L. Dreyfus; third subsection (chapters 49-55), 'Technology, Knowledge, and Power' includes: Panopticism: Michel Foucault; Notes toward a Neo-Luddite Manifesto: Chellis Glendinning; Luddism as Epistemology: Langdon Winner; Anti Anticonstructivism or Laying the Fears of a Langdon Winner to Rest: Mark Elam, with Langdon Winner's Reply; The Social Impact of Technological Change: Emmanuel G. Mesthene; Technology: The Opiate of the Intellectuals, with the Author's 2000 Retrospective: John McDermott; and ends with 'Democratic Rationalization: Technology, Power, and Freedom' by Andrew

Feenberg. The elaborate Index with which the book actually closes is indeed a valuable resource for quick and easy reference.

The above array of selections reveal not only how the anthology situates technology in the familiar contexts of ethical, political, aesthetic, and engineering concerns, but also thoroughly examines historical, metaphysical, and epistemological issues through prominent theoreticians and experts on the subject. The volume begins with historical readings on knowledge and its applications that have laid the foundation for contemporary writings on the philosophy of technology. Contemporary essays then critically assess previous assumptions about science and discuss the relation between science and technology and philosophy's treatment of both. The second and larger half of the volume focuses on Heidegger's writings on technology, on the relationship between technology and the natural world, and on the issues that arise as technology becomes an integral part of our society. The blurbs to the book highlight that "Philosophy of Technology" includes, beyond the commonly anthologized figures, selections from European writers often not available in English-language collections. Therefore, it is recommended as a valuable resource for anyone who wishes to explore the technological condition.

The main focus of the book is to introduce the student and the reader, taking off from ancient historical beginnings to the impact technology began to have on society from the industrial revolution era onwards. The pervasive influence of technology which is contemporary and as having an unprecedented impact on human societies and world ecosystems calls for an adequate response and the volume with its broad spectrum of selections seems to seek an answer. The vast spread of mobiles, TV channels, the percolation of internet as a means for education as well and entertainment have transformed the way individuals perceive and interact with their worlds.

The book is designed as a manual for the course in Philosophy of Technology in Universities and it caters to the clients by way of sectional introductions. An additional list of reading material that could not be included but relevant to the course could have been a welcome feature. The introductions do serve the purpose of familiarizing the reader with the significance and interconnections between the selections within the section. The technological evolution from mechanical to chemical and electrical to electronic without going into the nuclear but dwelling within the realms of the virtual and the computational highlights the diverse impact technology has had on human populations over the millennia and especially in the last two centuries leading to the present.