

Essays in Post-Critical Philosophy of Technology

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Preface

This book grew out of an event titled Budapest Workshop on Philosophy of Technology, held 1-2 December 2017.

The workshop was a great success with authors from **USA, Japan, Canada, Portugal, Italy, France, Belgium, Russia, Norway, the United Kingdom** and **Kazakhstan**.

Authors from Hungary represented almost all major institutions of the field: Hungarian Academy of Science's Institute for Computer Science and Control (**MTA SZTAKI**) - a Fraunhofer Project Center; Budapest University of Technology and Economics (**BME**); Central European University (**CEU**); Eötvös Lóránd University (**ELTE**).

The event was a vibrant, highly successful one with many ideas exchanged between the participants. About half of them have subsequently written an article for this book.

This book is divided into four parts. Part I, *The Role of Technology*, sets up the perspective for all the remaining chapters. Both pieces in this part deal with the place of technology in intellectual history (in a very broad sense), but they apply a very different approach.

Part II, *Post-Critical Philosophy of Technology*, refers to a particular epistemic stance towards understanding the world, one that attempts to move beyond the rigidity of the past approaches. Both papers here investigate the famous philosopher of science, Michael Polanyi's works and their consequences for philosophy of technology. While Polanyi coined the term "post-critical" which we are using in the title of our book; this attitude is by no means limited to his works.

Aesthetic Approaches, part III of this book is a nice example of how we might use the term post-critical in a broad sense: the two chapters in this part start from the phenomenology of the body and make contact with technology and the novel experience it brings to our lives.

Finally, in part IV, *Applications of Philosophy on Technology*, the reader will find a variety of cases in which our authors apply a philosophical approach to contemporary problems, including Decision Support Systems, Crisis Communication, Choice Architectures and intriguing problems in the history of art.

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Part I -
The Role of Technology

Chapter 1

Essays on The Role of Technology

Mihály Héder

This book starts with two essays that provide a bird's-eye view of technology.

Barseghyan & Mirkin are discussing technology's role in Scientonomy, the empirical science of scientific change itself. Their central claim is that

"there is accepted propositional technological knowledge which plays an indispensable role in the process of scientific change."

However, technological knowledge has been underserved by the field of intellectual history - which then results in a gap in our understanding of change, especially scientific change. They investigate whether the reason for this negligence is in part the nature of technological knowledge. On this track, they touch on the partially tacit nature of technology, which will be a recurring topic in this book.

In their excellent work, they characterize technological knowledge in terms of epistemology, drawing on several important authors.

Laszlo Ropolyi also deals with technology as the possible driver behind change, but at a more abstract level. In his quest to characterize the nature of technology, he offers a very helpful review of approaches by several distinguished philosophers of technology.

In his overarching approach, he is able to locate his stance relative to Heidegger and Ellul, the SCOT approach, Feenberg, Marcuse, Foucault and Ihde.

He concludes that:

"... hermeneutics, social constructivism, and postmodern philosophical systems are systems of the philosophy of technology as well since they necessarily include the possibility of interpreting technology philosophically, though of course only in an implicit form, or using a Hegelian term, in an unhappy form." (...) "Given the above conceptualization of technology, it is evident that technology has primacy over intellectual practices such as do-

ing philosophy or doing science. This is because being a human is prerequisite for being a philosopher or for being a scientist.”

This characterization of technology sets the tone nicely for the other three parts of our book.

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