

Technological reasoning and value co-creation

This is a study in the domain of ethics of technology. My argument will be three-fold.

First, I will present a phenomenological description of the human lifeworld, based on observations of Jacques Ellul. I will argue that Ellul, from an ethical perspective, usefully reduces technological phenomena (*technique*) to the research and application of new tools for the sake of efficacy. This broad sense definition includes not only machines and objectual technical mechanisms, but social engineering, and bureaucracy too. The overwhelming success of technological efficacy in the production of profit, which in turn is based on creation of value defined *solely* by the customer, radically transformed society and everyday life of human being in that society. The change, at least in part, consists in the transformation of character of human work. Success in work actualizes only a relatively thin part of human capacities, and deprives her from the vision, and so the responsibility, of the whole production process. Fast technological changes may put people in various situation, where the species of the needed capacities are different, but the narrow character of the used intelligence, and the involved frustration, seem to be constant throughout these changes.

Secondly, all ethical reflection starts with granted shared values. Profit is not an articulated value, it can be turned into virtually everything, as a universal tool for achieving in possession of other things. Narrow work activities, without granting a clear understanding of the distribution of responsibilities and merit, will not articulate values to be valued in themselves commonly. The maxim "Be efficacious" in this or that, even when matures into second nature in humans, won't make them smarter in finding out what kind of things are valuable in themselves when living with each other. Rather than that, fast technological innovations deconstruct even the most elementary "safe" facts about who is a teacher and who is a student, who is professional, who is not, who is a fool, and who is not. Culture becomes fast changing sum of sub-cultures relativized by technological divides and currents.

Thirdly, ethics presupposes valuable whole human lives, nevertheless, without grasping human goodness (Foot) that human life may or may not display, even with the most clarity achieved about the details of an ever-changing, non-understandable complexity of technologically gerrymandered reality, self-realization of the human being and human community are put in risk. Technological ethics, - that is not a mere moralizing based on alienated principles of armchair thinking, - presupposes, that stakeholders within the technological enterprise may, and should engage themselves into the process of a value co-creation with their colleagues and with their customers in view of a valuable common lifeworld. During this, effective measures probably should be introduced against mere efficacy and instrumentalism. If it is not possible, then technology won't have a chance to provide remedy for troubles caused by technology.