

Roger
Eckart

Konturen
einer Geschichte
des Sprechens
über Technik
on Technology
Essay



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In the wake of “digitalization,” reflection on technological development—but also on the historicity of language—is taking on new significance. The specific characteristics of various “kinds” of history are coming into focus.

Roger Eckart’s essay prompts us to consider to what extent it is possible today to take a fresh look at the course of modernity thus far. *“The questions that have arisen regarding a history of the ‘philosophy of technology’ extend beyond that field into general history [...]”*

At the beginning of the discussion, *“the question was raised as to whether the entire perspective on natural science and technology to date—as it pertains to the period between 1500 and 1800—was too imprecise, and whether something entirely new had begun in the 19th century. In any case, it seemed obvious that a history of modern technology told too one-sidedly within the framework of the history of the natural sciences remains inadequate. It misses the point. ‘The historical question of the development of modern technology—its emergence, its ‘expansion,’ as well as its current progression toward ‘digitalization’—can be linked more closely to the relevant aspects of political modernity [...]”*

Rooted in reflections on the modern era as a whole, the development of “discourse on technology” from the early 20th century to around 2010 is outlined, among other things, on the basis of the “technology” analyses by **E. Cassirer** and **M. Heidegger**. Their “discourse on technology” is compared with that of the so-called “’70s–’90s community,” a term introduced by the author. The question then arises as to what extent we have, today, an adequate language or way of speaking at our disposal to discuss all the new technological aspects of everyday life that are having such a profound impact on us. What has been the nature of modernity’s technological development to date? Has a capable everyday language evolved alongside it, or has a new kind of speechlessness emerged instead? In particular, the study examines the changes that took place beginning in the 1950s, since, according to the thesis, examining this period provides a starting point for possible solutions to today’s problems.

Roger Eckart, born in 1969, works full-time as a programmer. In addition to his career, he earned a degree in philosophy, history, and literary studies in Berlin and Hagen.

His areas of focus are: theory of technology and philosophy of economics. In 2020, he published a work in the field of philosophy of economics.

