condition for the maximization of the societal capacity for survival, creativity, experimentation, and freedom."

The book is a most welcomed addition to the growing number of works in STS devoted to the intersections of democracy theory and science and technology. While this reviewer would have liked to see a more selective focus on particular forms of participatory democracy (i.e., deliberative democracy [the word deliberation is used no less than 39 times in the final chapter]), the book successfully does a lot of the heavy lifting of demonstrating the fertile areas in which science and technology may constructively interface with democratic theory while making both the science and the society better for it.

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Dorsality: Thinking Back through Technology and Politics (Posthumanities Series) by David Wills (University of Minnesota Press, 2008). 280 pp. ISBN: 978-0816653454.

David Wills' *Dorsality: Thinking Back through Technology and Politics* begins with a neologism of sorts, a noun derived from an adjective referring to the backside of a body; under Wills' novel spin, it also refers to the back of our thought. Regarding the former, the notion of dorsality serves to describe the constitution of a human body and, as such, humanity; regarding the latter, it is a standard philosophical practice of looking back or beyond and into the customary conditions of possibility of philosophy. *Dorsality* is not a book about the latest technological developments in metallurgy or biotechnology; rather, it is a philosophical treatise concerning the conceptual framework that governs our understanding of technology.

As spelled out by Plato and Aristotle, and interpreted by Heidegger, Derrida, and now Wills, *techne* means both art and craft – that is, both artistic creation and technological production. To fully grasp the meaning of technology, one must inquire into the nature of both. Moreover, following the thesis of his *Prosthesis*, which according to Wills, is to be seen as a "back-ground" for *Dorsality*, there is no pure, natural, non-prosthetic origin; instead, everything is always already infused by the artificial (245). The same applies to humans: there is no pristine, simple human that later creates technology; instead, moving the timeline of evolutionary biology by following the anthropologist Leroi-Gourhan, Wills asserts that technology is literally embedded in our upright stance which in turn frees our thought-creating brains and tool-making hands. Technology as production/creation by humans of something other than human, as a differentiating force, is, after all, not something other than human.

Dorsality is made up of a series of critical readings of sources ranging from Exodus and Homer to Rimbaud, Sade, Heidegger, and Derrida. Given his background in literary theory and practice in deconstruction, Wills mainly focuses on the Western literary and philosophical tradition. Wills' method and style are decidedly deconstructive. Unlike his *Prosthesis*, *Dorsality* does not employ an elaborate personal autobiographical conceit and, as such, is more akin to his *Matchbook*. Thematically, it explores the areas of ethics, politics and sexuality. Wills references the standard bearers of continental philosophy and literary theory such as Blanchot, Barthers, Lyotard, Deleuze, Derrida, Nancy, and Lacou-Labarthe, as well as the more recent, rising stars such as Giorgio Agamben and Bernard Stiegler. On a more personal note, one of the concepts developed – namely, that of "leaving" as "the originary moment of thinking (and desiring)" – is said to be

owed to Branka Arsić to whom, it may be inferred from a reference to the first name in the dedication, the book is dedicated (251).

Dorsality is "framed" by black and white reproductions of art works that precede epigraphs. The works range from Salvador Dalí and Frida Kahlo to Bill Viola, and even include a photograph of Emily Dickinson's tombstone by Wills himself. The common theme among most of these seem to be women and (fragmented, disintegrating) bodies.

"The Dorsal Turn" serves as an introduction of both the notion of dorsality and the rest of the book. In the "Facades of the Other: Heidegger, Althusser, Levinas," in addition to discussing Althusser's analysis, via the notion of interpellation, of the constitution of the political subject in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" and Levinas' notion of ethical relation, Wills offers a reading of a number of Heidegger's texts with a focus on "The Question concerning Technology." Through the analysis of Heidegger's shifts, turns and step-backs, Wills attempts to recover Heidegger's rejection of technology.

"No One Home: Homer, Joyce, Broch" describes the odyssey of "polytropic" and "polytechnic Odysseus" by developing the concept of "originary exile" or "technotropological departure." Departing from one end of Western literary history, the chapter arrives at the other by the examination of Joyce's *Ulysses* and Broch's *Death of Virgil*. Along the way, Wills asks: "What if, 'before' any act of creation or procreation, before any domestication via the womb or the earth, before any Earth Mother or Uranus, any Rangi or Papa, any Zeus or Hera, there were only the fiction of the same? What if the origin could only ever be conceived (of) in the form of such a construction, if the originary home were a possibility of a concept, a technotropological hypo-prosthesis that is the opening to inventing, to thinking and to fiction?" (82). In a similar fashion, "A Line Drawn in the Ocean: Exodus, Freud, Rimbaud" looks further into the formation of national identity, this time by means of, literally speaking, oceanographic exploration – that is, by describing the rhetorical force of the ocean in Exodus, Freud and Rimbaud.

"Friendship in Torsion: Schmitt, Derrida" examines the possibility of unnatural (technological, prosthetic) friendship as developed by Wills' "sorely missed" friend Derrida in his analysis of Schmitt in *The Politics of Friendship*. "Revolutions in the Darkroom: Balász, Benjamin, Sade" is an essay in aesthetics that takes a penetrating look at dorsal sexuality via a series of reversals (theory/practice, aesthetic/political, nature/technological artifice) cinematically developing in Sade's darkrooms. Moving from perversion to controversion, the final chapter, "The Controversy of Dissidence: Nietzsche," examines Nietzsche's deicide and concludes that: "Henceforth, whichever way we walk, we are all on Nietzsche's path" (243).

Effectively demonstrating Wills' dexterity and the breadth and scope of his interest, *Dorsality* is an excellent book. It is an essential reading for those practicing continental philosophy, aesthetics or literary theory. It could be an interesting read for those interested in philosophy in general or those engaged in broad, definitional aspects of technology studies.

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Engines of the Imagination: Renaissance Culture and the Rise of the Machine, by Jonathan Sawday (Routledge, 2007). 424 pp. ISBN: 978-0415350611 (hbk), 978-04153562x (pbk), 978-0203696158 (ebk).