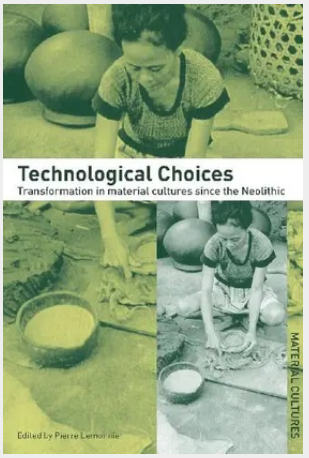
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Technological Choices

Transformation in Material Cultures Since the Neolithic



Technological Choices applies the critical tools of archaeology to the subject of technology and its impact on humankind throughout the ages. An examination of the challenges technological innovations present to various cultures, Technological Choices asserts that in any society, such choices are made on the basis of cultural values and social relations, rather than on the inherent benefits in technology itself. Of course, this revolutionary viewpoint has critical implications for contemporary Western societies. Based on case studies covering a wide range of chronologies and geographies, Technological Choices moves rapidly from Neolithic Europe to the modern industrial age, stopping on the way to examine the tribes of Papua, New Guinea, rural Indian and North African societies as well as several European peasant communities. The techniques studied range from the manufacture of stone implements to the development of high-tech transportation devices. With its breadth of subject matter and multidisciplinary approach, Technological Choices offers new insight into the interrelationship between technology and society. Also unprecedented is the book's emphasis on the functional aspects of material culture.

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