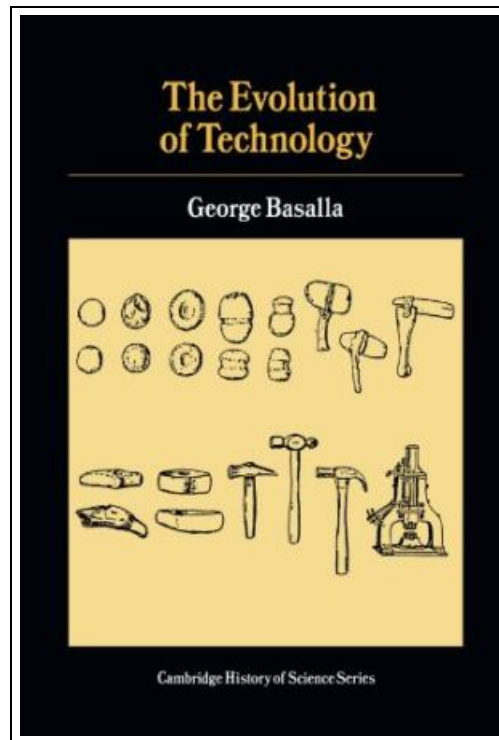


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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, United Kingdom, 2002. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.This book presents an evolutionary theory of technological change based upon recent scholarship in the history of technology and upon relevant material drawn from economic history and anthropology. It challenges the popular notion that technology advances by the efforts of a few heroic individuals who produce a series of revolutionary inventions owing little or nothing to the technological past. Therefore, the book's argument is shaped by analogies taken selectively from the theory of organic evolution, and not from the theory and practice of political revolution. Three themes appear, and reappear with variations, throughout the study. The first is diversity: an acknowledgment of the vast numbers of different kinds of made things (artifacts) that have long been available to humanity; the second is necessity: the belief that humans are driven to invent new artifacts in order to meet basic biological requirements such as food, shelter, and defense; and the third is technological evolution: an organic analogy that explains both the emergence of novel artifacts and their subsequent selection by society for incorporation into its material life without invoking either biological necessity or technological progress. Although the book is not intended to provide a strict chronological account of the development of technology, historical examples - including many of the major achievements of Western technology: the waterwheel, the printing press, the steam engine, automobiles and trucks, and the transistor - are used extensively to support its theoretical framework. The Evolution of Technology will be of interest to all readers seeking to learn how and why technology changes, including both students and specialists in the history of technology and science.

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