

Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0959-6526(16)32197-7

DOI: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.12.134](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.12.134)

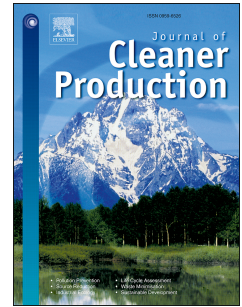
Reference: JCLP 8709

To appear in: *Journal of Cleaner Production*

Received Date: 24 January 2016

Revised Date: 13 December 2016

Accepted Date: 23 December 2016



Please cite this article as: Likavčan L, Scholz-Wäckerle M, Technology appropriation in a de-growing economy, *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.12.134.

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Technology appropriation in a de-growing economy¹

Abstract

This article proposes a concept of technology appropriation as a means of ideological repurposing of technology in a de-growing economy. Its economic and institutional foundations are set forth using an endogenous theory of economic development in the spirit of Marx, Schumpeter and Veblen. Technological and institutional change lead interdependently to the emergence of socio-technical complexes which are subject to ideological appropriation. These complexes are analysed as actor-networks from an ontological perspective and exemplified using special cases in the information and communication technologies (ICTs). The approach contributes to synthesizing critical political economy with actor-network theory. Technology appropriation is elaborated as a means of repurposing existing technologies in terms of recombination, with an emphasis on the strategy of habilitation. This political economic strategy delivers new insights for a solidary mode of economic reproduction in a low-carbon de-growing economy.

Highlights:

- Technology appropriation presented as means of ideological repurposing of technology.
- Economic and institutional foundations set out in Marx–Schumpeter–Veblen framework.
- ICTs as enablers of a new mode of economic (re)production in de-growing economy.
- Ontological and political foundations elaborated using actor-network theory.
- Habilitation proposed as a political economic strategy of technology appropriation.

Keywords: *political economy, technological change, de-growth, actor-network theory, habilitation, information and communication technologies*

JEL: B52, D74, O33, Q57

¹ Both authors have contributed equally to this article.

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