

Introduction to lowtechisation (from technosolutionism to lowtechisation)

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Table des matières

Introduction	3
I - Introductory example	4
II - Theoretical base : TAC thesis	6
III - Hypothesis : Redirection of technical design	7
IV - Adversary : Technosolutionnism	8
V - Lowtechisation	10
VI - Lowtechication and low-tech	11
VII - Lowtechication and digital technology	12
Crédits des ressources	14

Introduction

« We're not going to hit the climate goals anyway because we're not organized to do it [...] and yes, the needs in this area will be a problem. But I'd rather bet on AI solving the problem than constraining it and having the problem if you see my plan. (Eric Schmidt, 2024)

Former Google CEO says climate goals are not meetable, so we might as well drop climate conservation – unshackle AI companies so AI can solve global warming. tomshardware.com¹(october 7th, 2024) »

1. <https://www.tomshardware.com/tech-industry/artificial-intelligence/former-google-ceo-says-climate-goals-are-not-meetable-so-we-might-as-well-drop-climate-conservation-unshackle-ai-companies-so-ai-can-solve-global-warming>

I Introductory example

Example of solutionnisme approach : electric car

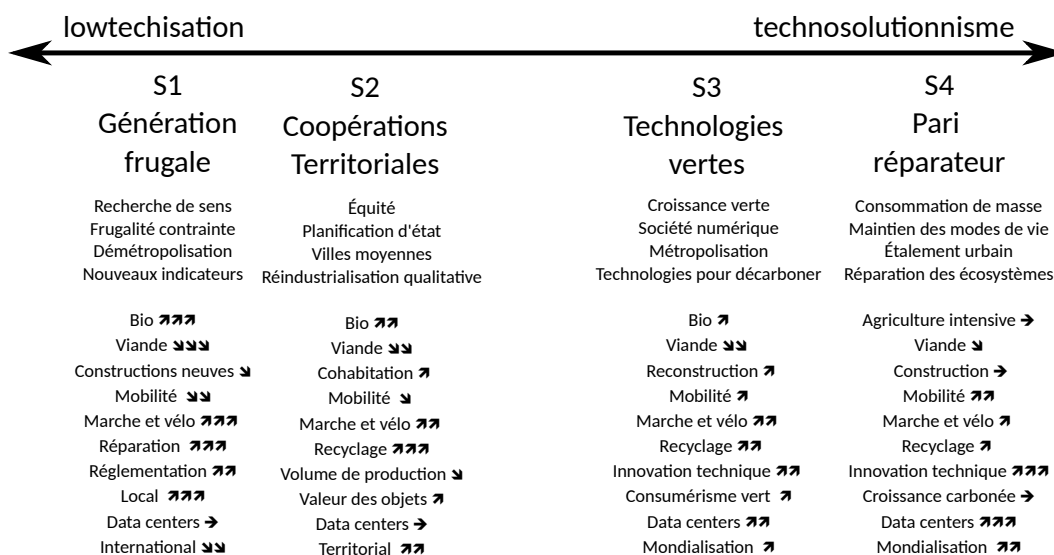
👁 Exemple

- private ownership
- individual use
- maximum speed > 150 km/h
- weight > 1 tonne
- lifespan < 15 years
- innovation, automation...
- ...

Alternative example: eXtrême Défi Mobilité (Ademe)

👁 Exemple

- ownership: private → common
- use: individual → shared
- maximum speed: > 150 km/h → average speed < 50 km/h (Illich speed)
- weight: > 1 tonne → 100 kg
- lifespan < 15 years → recyclability
- values: novelty, automation → control, simplicity
- ...



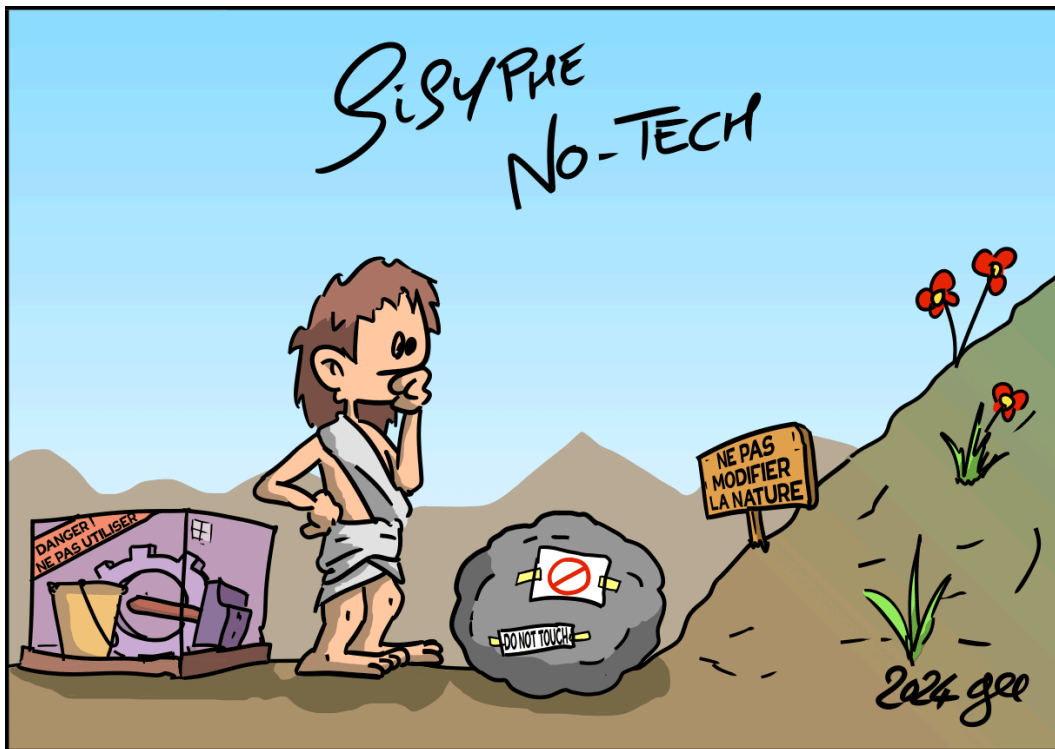
Interprétation des scénarios Transitions 2050 de l'ADEME sur l'axe lowtechisation / technosolutionnisme

💡 Fundamental

- Technosolutionnism is about developing new technologies in order to solve socio-ecological problems without changing the pillars of modern capitalist society : progress, growth, consumerism.
- Lowtechisation is about changing the perspective, the functions, the initial criteria, the « why » and the « what », and not only the « how ».

II Theoretical base : TAC thesis

There is no no-tech humans



Technology as Anthropologically Constitutive

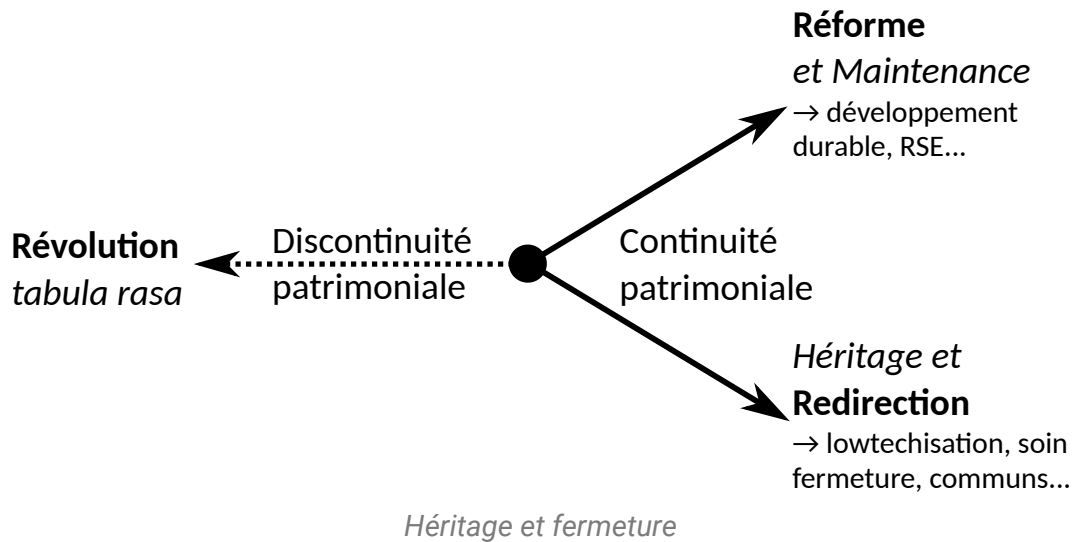
- Humans and technical objects form an ontological couple, which co-constitute each other.
- We abandon the idea that humans exist without his technical tools (and can think independently of them).
- We abandon the idea that humans precede and override technology (and can control it).

We have to deal with technology, but...

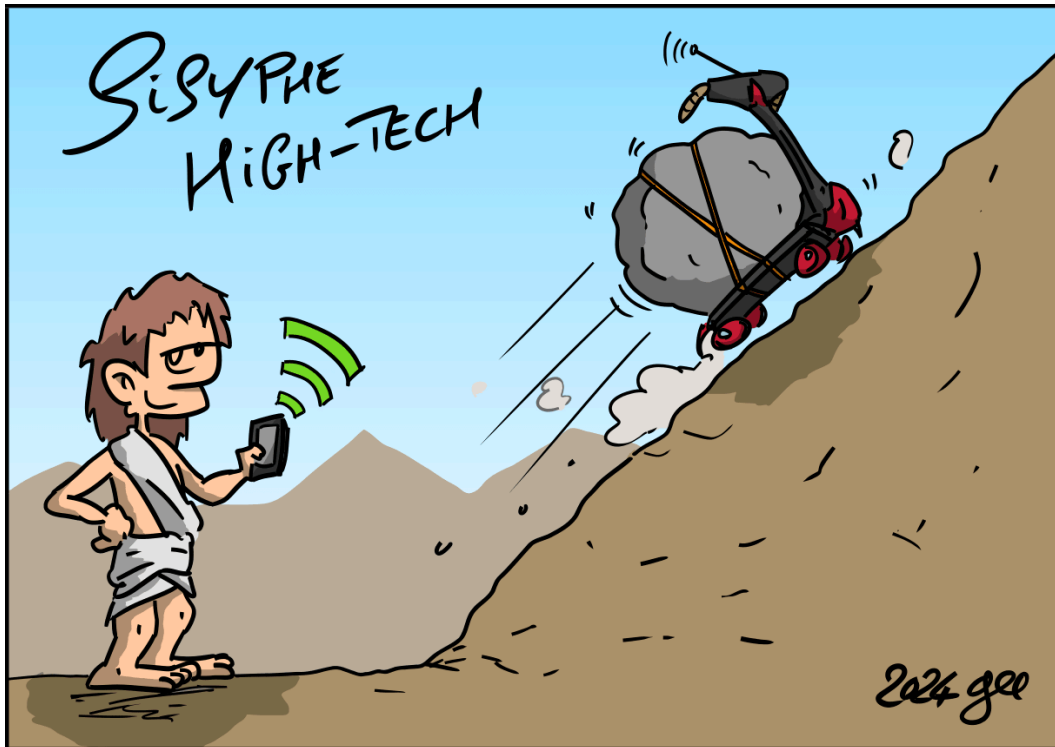
- Technology is neither good nor bad; nor is it neutral
- Technology produces the way we live into the world (constitutivity).
- Technology is both good and bad, there is poison in every medicine (pharmakon).
- Technology evolution has a part of autonomy (beyond design).

III Hypothesis : Redirection of technical design

- There is no determinism (neither technical nor human).
- We can make technical choices (which are political choices).
- We have to inherit the current technical situation (we can not reject it). (Monnin & al.)



IV Adversary : Technosolutionnism



- Technosolutionnism does not negate socio-ecological problems nor their human origin
- Technosolutionnism is serious (research and development is for real)
- Technosolutionnism is humanist (it aims at the well-being of human kind)



But...

- It is a bet
- It is a non secure bet
- It is a all-in bet



- Those who bet are not the first exposed to consequences

And...

- Prevents us from thinking about the problem differently (e.g. individual car)
- Fails to take account of complexity (e.g. monoculture)
- Minimize of indirect effects (e.g. rebound effect)

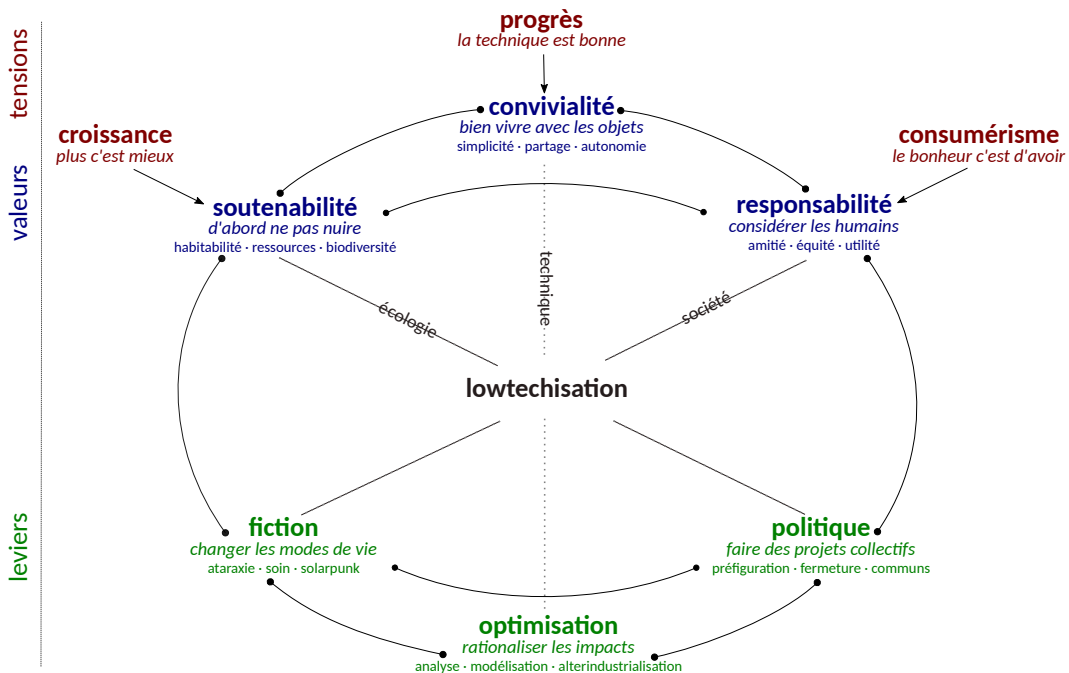
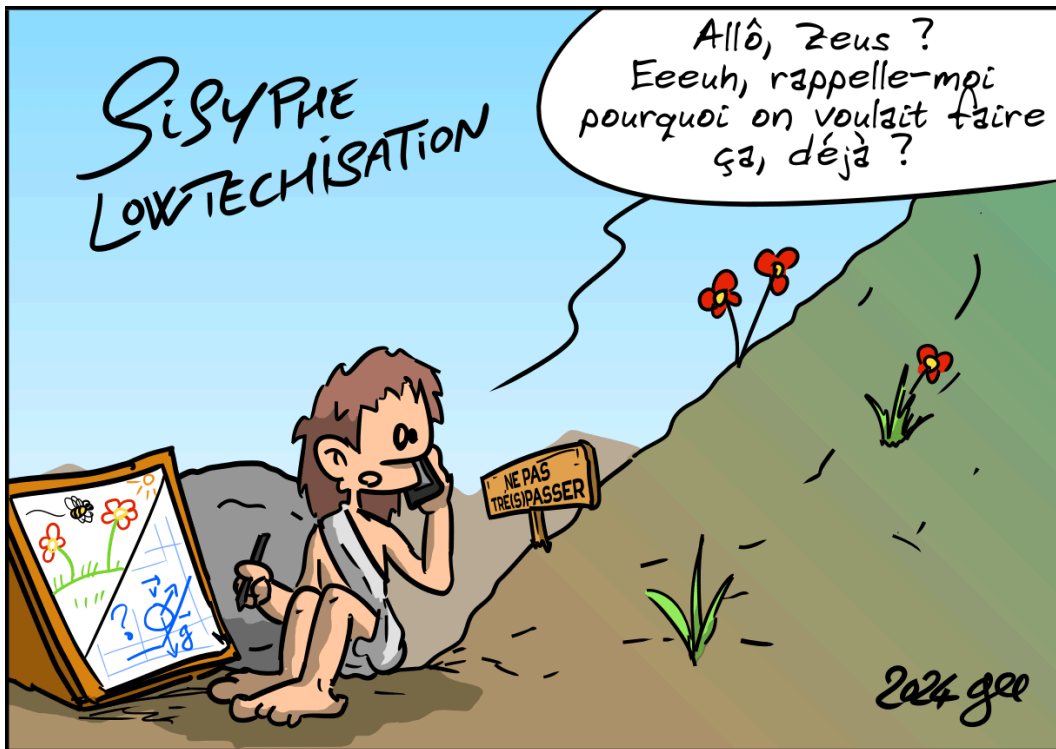
- Incorrect time scale, if we also recognise the urgency of taking action to reverse the trend (e.g. carbon capture)
- Fails to take account of the effects of generalisation on a global scale (e.g. nuclear power)
- ...

💡 Fundamental

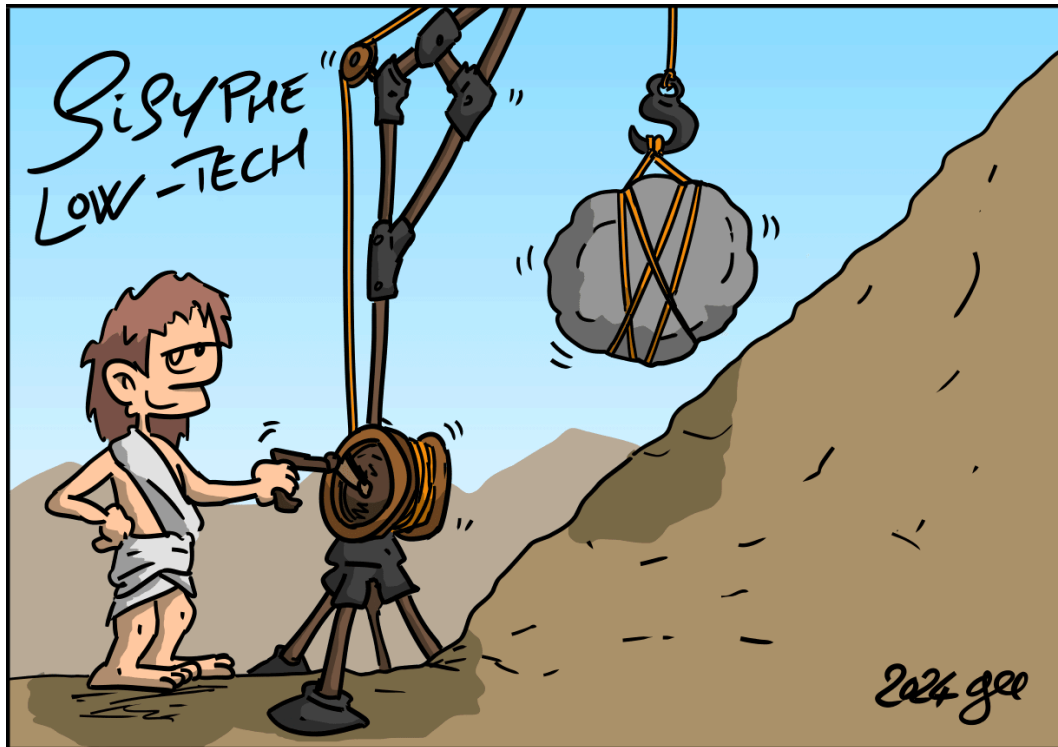
So we might have :

- alternatives paths and voices
- the democratic possibility of choices
- the possibility of changing our minds depending on what really happens in the future (« Everybody knows... That's how it goes...»)

V Lowtechisation



VI Lowtechication and low-tech



What is low-tech ?

A bike ?

- Non electrical ?
- With rolling bearing ?
- With a chain ?

💡 Fundamental

- A process, rather than a state.
- A posture and a method, rather than an ideology.
- Prefiguration (an anarchist concept) : what we can do here and now, in order to design the society we would like to have, and share the initiatives to spread the word (cf Masutti)

VII Lowtechication and digital technology

Oxymoron

- There is no low-tech digital



- There is no ecological crisis without digital technology...
...since we need it to collect data, compute, model !

💡 Fundamental

- We have to deal with digital technology (every other technology depends on it)
- It is a limit case

**#free-software #fediverse #communities #cooperatives
#simplicity #long-term-support ...**

👁 Exemple



LES LICORNES
COOPÉRATIVES
POUR LA TRANSITION

enercoop
L'énergie militante
Les coopératives d'énergie renouvelable, citoyenne et solidaire

TeleCòop
Le premier opérateur télécom coopératif engagé dans la transition écologique et solidaire

mobicoop
Pour une mobilité partagée, plus solidaire et écologique

Common
La Scic de l'électronique responsable. Des appareils plus éthiques et durables

COOP CIRCUITS
Des achats qui rendent le monde un peu meilleur

LA NEF POUR LA BANQUE ÉTHIQUE
En chemin vers la banque éthique

citiz
Premier réseau coopératif d'autopartage

railcoop
Pionnier du ferroviaire citoyen français

labelemmaüs e-shop militant
E-shop militant

éthiKdo LA CARTE ÉCO-SOLIDAIRE INSPIRANTE
La coopérative des plateformes avantages, cartes et coffrets cadeaux éco-solidaire

Lowtechisation with digital technologies

👁 Exemple

- Rlta. A social media to share common knowledge and resources for agroecology
- Lowcyclopedia. A community and portal to share low-tech projects

Lowtechisation of digital technologies

👁 Exemple

- L'Arbre à CHATONS. A guide to build your own lowtechised Chaton (cf chatons.org).
- The50YearProject. A computer that last 50 years

Crédits des ressources

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Héritage et fermeture p. 7

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² <https://stph.crzt.fr>

³ <https://stph.crzt.fr>

