

Ivan Illich és a szűkösség kritikai gazdaságtana

[Ivan Illich and the Critical Political Economy of Scarcity]

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Abstract

Ivan Illich constructs a philosophy that interprets the present through a constellation of phenomena of loss. Although this line of thought might have led him toward conservatism, his critique—directed at the infrastructure of existing institutions (see, for instance, his objections to the institutional system of the welfare state)—has an anarchistic character. His institution-focused critique evokes the critical register of 1968, while his use of the past as a reference point (which sparked debate with certain strands of feminism) reflects a more post-’68 mode of thinking. All of this lends a distinctive tension to his thought. This study pays particular attention to the elaboration of a critical political economy within Illich’s work. I consider the fundamental transformations in the meaning of scarcity in his system of thought. I then examine the homologies between language and the commodity economy, tracing certain Nietzschean echoes. Finally, I discuss the regimes of development and needs, arguing that these critiques shape Illich’s *sui generis* mode of thinking.

Keywords: critical political economy, loss, language, scarcity, development

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