

### Giorgio Agamben: Pro memoria Ivan Illich

17th December 2012, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Egy6xRwHrwE> (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> November 2025).

### Daniel Baric: Introduction to Illich's Landscape: An Insular Exploration

Using place names, this text explores an Adriatic island in relation to Ivan Illich's family, childhood, and intellectual journey. Based on autobiographical passages from Illich and his work, the text takes a literalist approach to reading the map of Brač, inspired by the medieval reading presented by Illich in the *Didascalicon*. This reading connects the historical and linguistic context of Illich's family background with some of his central concerns.

**Keywords:** Ivan Illich, *Didascalicon*, Hugh of Saint Victor, Brač, toponymy, etymology

### Alpár Losonc: Ivan Illich and the Critical Political Economy of Scarcity

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

### Ivan Illich: Shadow Work

In *Philosophica*, 1980, 26(2): 7–46.

### Lajos András Kiss: Variations for the Critique of Capitalism and for the Eco-Socialism – Ivan Illich and André Gorz

Two philosophers with Austrian origin, Ivan Illich and André Gorz are among the most significant diagnosticians and critics of the modern and postmodern industrial society. Both of them observed the dangers based on the cult of advancement and on technological gigantism that enforce upon humans a new-type slavery as early as the second half of the last century. Ivan Illich set the vision of the liveable society against the threat of the technological apocalypse. Beyond that, he inexorably criticised the authoritarian institutions of the modern society (education, healthcare); and he urged the creation of organic, local and democratic communities as opposites of the global trade, which is a threat of an ecological catastrophe. André Gorz who synthesized the ideas of Western Marxism and Existentialism, expressed a hard criticism of the progress-mania of the modern capitalism that is usually connected with the augmentation of the intensity of the work, the extreme growth of the maniacal consumption and destruction of the environment. Gorz's ideas linked the need of the liberation from the compulsion for work with the imperative of the guaranteed basic income.

**Keywords:** progress-mania, liveable society, free time, environmental protection, organic communities

## Lajos Mitnyán: Notes on Ivan Illich's Critique of Development and Ideology in the Context of Degrowth Discourse

The study undertakes an examination of the critical views on development articulated in Ivan Illich's work, *Myths of Progress*. It interprets the work written in 1978 within the context of today's degrowth discourse. The consumption and acceleration characteristic of the post-industrial era, along with the increasingly strong institutional control, are interpreted as consequences of covert ideologies that increasingly undermine human autonomy and freedom. This process has accelerated in recent times and has even become self-perpetuating. The place of creative, autonomous thinking and creation has been almost imperceptibly taken over by the dominance of ideologies. Following Illich, the degrowth discourse also points out that technological development and economic growth not only do not necessarily accompany the growth of human autonomy and creativity but can also become obstacles to the free unfolding of the human spirit.

**Keywords:** ideology critique, degrowth, post-industrial era, technology, digitalization

### Ivan Illich: Das Recht auf die gemeine Sprache

In idem: *Vom Recht auf Gemeinheit*. Rowohlt, Hamburg, 1982, 11–29.

### Ivan Illich: The Futility of Schooling

In idem: *Celebration of Awareness. A Call for Institutional Revolution*. Penguin, London – New York, 1970, 89–101.

## Ármin Tillmann: Can One Be Integral(ly healthy) in the Fragmented? The Politics of Pain and the Critique of the Cult of Health in the work of Ivan Illich

In this study, Ivan Illich's multifaceted critique of modernity takes the form of a critique of scientific logic, and within that, of "medical reason". According to Illich's diagnosis, modern humans view pain as a negativity that is not part of life, but rather something that must be eliminated as meaningless and obstructive. He believes that our culture has lost the art of enduring pain that existed in pre-modern societies. Medicine now champions a cultural program of overcoming pain, which, through the deployment and monopolization of the scientific and technical apparatus associated with it, causes iatrogenic, or medically induced, diseases and accompanying phenomena. In order to preserve and/or regain our health, Illich argues that we must renounce individualistic approaches and reorganize the practice of healing on a communal basis, while individually mastering the techniques of self-restraint.

**Keywords:** medical mind, the art of enduring pain, iatrogenesis, scientific-technical apparatus, self-restraint

## Éva Kocziszký: Logos, Graphe, Biblion. The Medieval Criticism of Deconstruction

The study examines Ivan Illich's critical archaeology of the book. Although writing dates back to well before the advent of books, the codex as a medium is an invention of Christianity, just as the emergence of the individual reader can be linked to monasticism. Illich outlines the interconnected history of the book as an object and the act of reading, highlighting the significant changes that, in his view, were not brought about by technical innovations, but rather by a shift in thinking. With his imaginary medieval perspective, he seeks to shock us into realizing that we no longer know what reading actually is as an activity.

**Keywords:** book, writing, reading, deconstruction, medievalism

Ivan Illich – Barry Sanders: Postscript:  
The Silence and the We

In idem: *ABC: The Alphabetization of the Popular Mind*. Penguin, London, 1988, 119–127.

Ivan Illich: The Eloquence of Silence

In idem: *Celebration of Awareness. A Call for Institutional Revolution*. Penguin, London – New York, 1970, 39–46.