

**He Is Not a (neo)Liberal: Revelations of a Pandemic and
the “Prophecies” of Ivan Illich¹**

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Preamble

The COVID-19 pandemic is apocalyptic. For decades, the social imagination has been shaped by the spectacle of the end times, whether through the aesthetic elegance of Tarkovsky’s “Sacrifice” or the cool cybernetics of the Matrix trilogy. The culture industry’s ceaseless stream of mediocrity whose core plot is a virus, a fatal disease, or an alien attack reinforces the feeling that industrial civilization is stumbling into a hecatomb.

Apocalypse, however, is the Greek term for revelation. The most famous book in Western literature on this theme is undoubtedly the Apocalypse/Revelations of Saint John. In the biblical text, we find a conceptual architecture elaborated and convincingly translated into a comparable code of images (Lourenço, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic is apocalyptic not as much for its eschatological features as for its revelatory aspect. This revealing is not to be understood in the sense of bringing to light what is hidden, but in the sense of highlighting what is ignored or forgotten.

The pandemic is, above all, a revealing experience replete with narrative and supporting images. A palimpsest contains layers of text where the prior is only

¹This paper has its origins in the conversations around Samar Farage and Sajay Samuel’s table. I owe to them and to my wife Isabelle, the probing questions that sharpened the arguments.

² I have taken my last two names, Neto Leão, for my signature. I am finishing a PhD in Environment and Society in the State University of Campinas, Brazil. My dissertation is dedicated to the works of Illich, above all, to an analysis which elaborates a conceptual triad, conviviality-commons-vernacular. Alongside my companion, the artist Isabelle Cedotti, we search for the vernacular in the corners of society. Inspired by the encounters with Illich’s friends and collaborators, we hope to foster/document conviviality. See more on: www.gazeproject.com.

incompletely hidden by the overwriting. The pandemic is as a palimpsest, in and through which the text structuring industrial society is still legible. I argue, after Illich, that the pandemic makes visible, above all, two major lines that crisscross the fabric of contemporary societies. First, the almost total capture of the planet by property, whether private and public, which leaves nothing to the commons or in common. This ‘tragedy of the (un)common’ finds its zenith in ‘Life’ understood as property. Second, the rituals of fostering, protecting, and saving lives makes ‘Life’ sacred. The sacralization of life creates a new religious fetish, which few can oppose. The transformation of the commons into property and the fetishization of ‘Life’ are ignored or overlooked by those caged within the two polarized worldviews of the present: the neoliberal and the liberal.

In this paper, I show that Illich’s core arguments and his analytical diagnosis of industrial society does not conform to either the liberal or the neoliberal position. Only a careless reader can mistake Illich for an intellectual companion of Milton Friedman, and his writings as supporting the program to dismantle education in Brazil which Bolsonaro has started since 2019.³ It is precisely this confusion that accounts for the rediscovery of Illich, after 50 years of ostracism, in the form of *Deschooling Society*, published by Vozes in 2018 as *Sociedade sem Escolas* (*Society without schools*). I argue it is the inability of both the liberal and neoliberal thought collective to escape their mental categories that make them blind to Illich’s convivial dimension, a radically distinct third way.

³ See the article “A negação da escola como projeto do Governo Bolsonaro” (The negation of schools as Bolsonaro’s Government project) by Christian Lindberg. Written for the magazine “Portal Vermelho: esquerda bem informada” (Red Portal: left well informed) in 2019, the writer argues that Illich’s ideas of vouchers and his radical critique of institutions are precursors of neoliberalism. To access it: <https://vermelho.org.br/coluna/a-negacao-da-escola-como-projeto-do-governo-bolsonaro/>.

In presenting this argument I suggest that Illich can be read as if he were a prophet. Todd Hartch, in *The Prophet of Cuernavaca*, has explicitly recommended such a reading (Hartch, 2014). I do understand Illich as a prophet of modernity, but on a register quite different from that adopted by Hartch. The prophetic vision of Illich is not because he could see into the future. Instead, I understand Illich as a prophet in the sense of one who reveals what he sees in the present. I believe that the prophet makes visible what is not widely acknowledged, exposes what is papered over by the shiny surfaces of the present and is therefore generally neglected. Illich did not predict the coronavirus. What Illich saw was the underlying shape of contemporary society now exposed by the coronavirus.

First Line: The Tragedy of the Uncommon

The COVID-19 pandemic starkly reveals the ‘tragedy of the uncommon’. With the advent of industrialism and the enclosure of pastures, one’s surroundings gradually became hostile to common use. This transformation of the commons into an environment, which is an economic resource, has occurred in all spheres of experience. Formerly, the commons was that to which people “had recognized rights of use, not to produce goods, but to provide for their homes” (Illich, 1992). It was neither enclosed by private fences nor policed by public law. The suffocation of the commons by private and public property leaves people very little on which to freely subsist. However, the distinction of the commons from the regimes of private or public property is invisible to the field of political economy in both its historical and contemporary forms.

Sajay Samuel and Jean Robert have already demonstrated that the origin of political economy, Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, is based on a decisive overturning of the Aristotelian tradition. Rather than basing his arguments on the

question of what is good and just, Adam Smith legitimizes the art of economic enrichment. Under these conditions, political economy is the science that enables the wealth of individuals and nations (Samuel & Robert, 2010). For the structure of Smith's arguments to stand, it was necessary for him to explicitly ignore any and all activities that are rooted in use value (see chapter 2 of book I of *The Wealth of Nations*). Smith thus bequeaths to neo-classical economics its blindness to all but private or public ownership regimes.

What is true of neo-classical economics is also true of Marxist economics. In Chapter 1 of *Capital*, Karl Marx elaborates the function and origin of the commodity in the mode of industrial production to examine the fundamentals of exchange value. Despite rescuing the distinction between use value and exchange value, Marx devotes the rest of his work to a critique of the commodity understood as exchange value. Both Smith and Marx, although only partially, thereby ignore as historical detritus the commons – the zone beyond all ownership whether private or public – wherein people do for them and/or by themselves.

Similarly, the American ecologist, Garret Hardin, changed the historical meaning of the commons when he argued that the “tragedy of the commons” would be an inevitable result when the scarce resources were not controlled by the property regime – private or public (Hardin, 1968). Hardin's argument that access to resources that are not part of the property regime would lead to environmental collapse has become dogma. His work, which reinterpreted the commons from the perspective of acquisitive property regimes, legitimized a race to appropriate what remained of the commons.

Approximately twenty-two years later, Elinor Ostrom – Nobel Laureate in economics – partially challenged Hardin's thesis. For her, the “tragedy of the

commons” is not a necessary result of access to resources that are outside the property regime. For Ostrom, environmental abuses can be contained and avoided through sensitive methods of governance of the commons through institutions in collective action (Ostrom, 1990). She argued that the arenas of environmental conflict should be seen as the meeting place and occasion for the construction of collective institutions of sustainable governance, based on the rational action and interest of economic agents.

Both authors correctly understood the commons as an alternative to property. But neither escaped the shadow thrown by the economy. While Hardin sought to excise the commons to avoid the supposed tragedy of overuse, Ostrom sought to extend modes of economic governance to ensure the efficient use of the commons. In sharp contrast to these economistic interpretations of the commons, Ivan Illich proposed the commons as the inverse of the economy. In his many books such as *Tools for Conviviality* (1973), *Shadow Work* (1981) and above all in the essay titled, “*The Three Dimensions of Public Option*” published in *In the Mirror of the Past* (1992), Illich argued for extricating the commons from an economic or propertied reading.

Thus, Illich revived the term vernacular⁴, whose etymology designated everything that was woven, cultivated, made at home, as opposed to what was sought through exchange. That is, vernacular named a way of life born of structures of mutual dependence inscribed in each aspect of existence. In such a world, there was no possibility of ‘the economy’ being disembedded from its deeper social matrix (Illich, 1982). Samuel has elaborated the scope of the vernacular in Illich, which does not only refer to things, places and activities, but also to ways of knowing (Samuel, 2016). The

⁴ The reader might be more familiar with the term vernacular within linguistics. Ivan Illich, however, breathes “new life into the old word”. According to him, vernacular “is a technical term that comes from Roman law. It can be found there from the earliest records up to the codification by Theodosius. It designates the inverse of a commodity... Vernacular means those things that are homemade, homespun, home-grown, not destined for the marketplace, but that are for home use only” (Illich, 1981).

example of roads is instructive of the destruction of the commons by property. Today the streets are either public or private property. The streets are owned and the law of the road determines who and how they shall be used. There is no street, highway or road, within the industrial mode of production, that, like a path – hundreds of kilometers made by different peoples, like the *Guarani* in South America or the *Zapotecas* of Oaxaca – has been shaped by the communal effort of many steps. Though the use of what is in common is not without any rules, there is a gulf between communal self-determination and the myriad impositions of the law

During the pandemic, the planetary social confinement together with the emergency stoppage of the economy offer stark evidence of the disappearance of the commons. Who can supply themselves with food, basic hygiene, or shelter outside dependence on economic resources and the regimes of private and public property? Which woods, pastures, roads, and small plots still belong to the commons? And what about those who live on the exchange value earned day after day, who eat at the end of each day only if they get paid for work? Could it be that what we have left of the commons lies in the cemeteries where the countless bodies, victims of the new coronavirus are dumped? It is in this sense that the COVID-19 pandemic reveals the tragedy of the uncommon.

The social confinement and the collateral suspension of almost all social and economic activities are evidence of the complete dependence of modern industrial societies on commodities. Satellites show the sharp drop in pollution generated by China; California residents reported the excitement of seeing stars in the sky for the first time; and fish were seen after decades in the Venice canals. Such reports demonstrate the planetary violence of the industrial mode of production and confirm the environmental crisis in which we live. Property regimes have destroyed the commons.

Every property, public or private, is defended by the police. Public and private property promote exchange value. They appropriate the environment and transform it into goods, commodities, resources. Property whether public or private, is owned and therefore governed by the rights of use. Some can be excluded from using private and public property which makes them scarce and therefore an economic resource. Twenty-eight years ago, Illich warned us that “the transformation of the environment from a commons to productive resources constitutes the most fundamental form of environmental degradation” (Illich, 1992). His prophetic remark reveals Illich is not a Luddite, but the contrary. His understanding of mature societies is based on a political struggle to seek a balance between industrial tools that promote exchange value and convivial tools that foster use value, aware that only within a certain limit and scale can they coexist (Illich, 1973; Illich, 2005).

To start regaining the commons we must first abandon the fruitless dilemma that animates our political imagination. Liberals want to restrict market forces and private property to protect society against rapacious capital. They recommend strengthening the public sphere with a stronger safety net including welfare programs for the poor, universal health and schooling, and legal protections for the environment. In contrast, neoliberals want to expand the realm of the market and restrict the public domain. They recommend abolishing welfare programs, privatizing healthcare and schooling, and selling public lands to private interests.

Illich’s third way, what Gustavo Esteva calls commonism, opens a window through which one can see the flourishing of the vernacular. Autonomous communities, such as the Zapatistas of Chiapas (Mexico), the Zapotecas of Oaxaca (Mexico), or the fishers of Marujá in Ilha do Cardoso (Brazil), have abandoned the premises of scarcity⁵

⁵ Illich used the term scarcity in a very precise sense, that which was also used by the economists since Walras: the field in which the laws of economics relate subjects, institutions and commodities “within an

which define economic society and the assimilation of resources through the market or the planned economy. Avoiding the idea of technology as a means to achieve political ends and also of any belief in a technological imperative, these communities are building convivial societies, founded on the limits of proportionality (Esteva, 2018). The tragedy of the uncommon reveals how uncommon it is to imagine such a vernacular solution, based on *savoir-faire* (know-how) or what André Gorz called “spontaneous protest against the destruction of everyday culture by the devices of economic and administrative power” (Gorz, 2010).

Perhaps, this pandemic also reveals what should be obvious, what Illich stated together with some friends, thirty years ago: “we stand on soil, not on Earth”. Illich’s ‘*Declaration on Soil*’ is an invitation to be with the neighbor who stands within the grasp of our hands; to engage socially and politically with those with whom we can share a piece of bread right after walking a hundred steps. To regain neighborhood communality is a far more profound and radical revolution than the advocacy for the ‘global commons’. Hundreds of empty schools are sitting on fertile soils. In my village, the school is becoming a garden of manioc, beans and all sorts of leaves. Reading groups and movie clubs have been formed at the local square. People are regaining the trust in their own ability to shape their surroundings according to a local proportionality. To not rely only on the commodity is the beginning for the day after ‘normal’.

Our political task, what Illich suggested back in the eighties, is to defend and to regain what was lost of the commons. The ongoing crisis, now crystallized in a frozen economy and a distanced society, is an opportunity to abandon the premises of scarcity and progress and start concretely reanimating forms-of-life that are outside a commodified world of both liberals and neoliberals. As Illich had already pointed out,

environment in which the commons have been transformed into resources, private or public.” For more of Illich on scarcity, see footnote 11 in the book *Gender* (1982).

the war against the vernacular started with commodifying language (Nebrija)⁶. He further argued that these 500 year-long wars now culminate with the ultimate commodification, that of 'Life', which the pandemic has nakedly exposed for all to see. Illich pronounced the words, 'to hell with "Life"!'. I suggest this statement be read with great care.

Second Line: The Religion of 'Life'

The sacralization of 'Life' as the new idol is perhaps the most overlooked facet of modern industrial societies. The COVID-19 pandemic puts a spotlight on this topic. There is no life outside the lived. Living is a verb, a human activity and not a thing. Living presupposes actions, attitudes and activities. Just as there is no dance outside the act of dancing, it is only possible to live living. 'Life' as a noun, as an abstract substance, conceptualized and managed outside the realm of living entails idolatry in the Judeo-Christian tradition. To attribute divine power to abstract properties is to engage in idol-worship and it is in this sense that Illich argued that 'Life' created as an institutional object had become an idol (see Illich's *The Institutional Construction of a New Fetish: Human Life*, 1989).

In contemporary medicine, ecology, law, politics, and even the church, references to life occur in essentially ethical terms (Illich, 1989). The first Franciscan Pope in history celebrated Easter in St. Peter's Cathedral without the congregation assembled, for the sake of 'Lives'. Ecologists remind us that the earth breathes while the global machine is in suspension. Judges sanction laws of social distance, a concept that once meant a social gap between classes. One of the largest Brazilian newspapers *O Estadão*, in its editorial of May 16, 2020, categorically warns us: "Isolation is Life".

⁶ See Illich's essay "Vernacular Values," in *Shadow Work* (1980).

Who would have dared, only a few months ago, to answer the question of what life is with such statement?

According to Ivan Illich, the historical root of 'Life' as a substantive is to be found in the perversion of Christ's announcement to Martha, 'I am Life' (Gospel of St. John 11:25). The discussion of life which was confined to theological or philosophical reflection transformed it into a substantive only around the year 1801. The term biology, coined by Lamarck in the same century, inaugurated a new field of studies, "the life sciences". Since then, a formal, mechanistic and abstract terminology has assumed to describe what mainly defines 'Life' and what it needs to exist (Illich, 1989).

In modernity, living is transformed into a scarce resource, an economic condition, from womb to tomb. Housing is scarce, a product of the housing industry. Taking care of yourself is scarce, a service of the health industry. Coming and going is scarce, a product/service of the transport industry. Learning and knowing is scarce, a product/service of schools and the professionalization of specialists. Empathy and sympathy are scarce, a product of the culture industry and life coaches. Breathing is scarce, because ICUs lack respirators. Dying is scarce, because you can no longer bury your own dead but depend on the services of the funeral industry. Dressing, eating, having fun, all aspects that make up the human condition are scarce, either in the form of products or services. Living is thereby made scarce, transformed into a series of economic commodities and services, things and actions to be bought and sold. Living is thereby transformed into 'Life' – a national resource, a right – and made almost impossible outside the limits of the market or the planned economy. The illusion that capitalist societies are the kingdoms of abundance should fall apart. Life is the object of government and legislation. Everywhere, biocracy⁷ — managing life through the

⁷ A term coined by Illich, to designate a specific form of medical-sanitary power, in an article entitled: "Brave New Biocracy: Health Care from Womb to Tomb," (NPQ 1994).

mechanisms of the State and the market — has become the norm. The idea of authorizing or disallowing killing, protecting, saving, or sacrificing Lives has become acceptable. The Jair Bolsonaro government authorizes the death of people through neglect⁸ while the Angela Merkel government protects life through medical management. Dull doctors authorize chloroquine, evangelical mercenaries disallow quarantine.

Abundance is found when people construct the autonomous way of life ingeniously, when most of the time their activities do not impose restrictions or oblige others to do other activities. Thus, the vicinity that surrounds abundant living bears the marks of their hands, imprinted with the gestures of those who do for/by themselves and/or for the other. Confusing abundance with the number of yachts or cars in the garage is the signature of capitalism. Under these conditions, ‘Life’ can only be lived religiously. According to Agamben, the term *religio* does not derive, as customarily thought, from the vernacular *religare*, that is, the experience that connects and unites the human to the divine; religion understood as a rope that binds. Instead, religion stems from *relegere*, the “restless hesitation (rereading)”, reading and rereading the norm, interpreting and reinterpreting the rules, being attentive, observant, and respectful of all the innumerable rites — washing your hands with scruple, two meters away, isolation for ten days — that constitute the sacred (Agamben, 2007).

In this sense, the rituals of Covid-19 have the function of separating people, things, animals, places from the common and ordinary condition. The sacred is

⁸ I agree with the article by Cícero Castro, “*Viva a morte, abaixo a inteligência*” (Long live death, down with intelligence), in which he says that Jair Bolsonaro preached death throughout his career. Therefore, Bolsonaro does not discredit the existence or lethality of the virus, on the contrary, his social security policy is death – the symbol of his campaign, the gesture of the weapon with the fingers of the hand. Covid-19 exposes the truth that not all property is the same, the death of some is useful for the profit of others. Trump/Bolsonaro disagree with shutting the economy in the name of health because the regime of the commodity is restricted (profits are reduced).

everything that is ritually separated from the commonplace while acquiring extraordinary status (Agamben, 2007). In the age of Corona, the gel alcohol bottle might be on its way to becoming a sacred object, requiring a series of ritualistic gestures that prescribe where and how it is placed in public and private spaces, how the bottle must be touched, the liquid in it used, to be touched, to be used, all of which are rituals that transform a bottle of gel alcohol into a sacred object.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposes the essentially religious condition of modern industrial societies. In the realm of scarcity, 'Life' is fabricated through the rites prescribed and supervised by professionals, one for each ritual. It is in the guise of priest turned professional in a white coat that health experts now teach us the pandemic rites: wash your hands for more than twenty seconds, rub well between your fingers and spread below the wrist. How many times? Whenever you leave the house, following each sneeze, after any and all minimal contact with others. Always maintain safe distance between humans, defined as two meters.

Liberals believe the economy should be shut down to save 'Lives' from succumbing to the virus. Only a few essential workers need to be sacrificed and their sacrifice must be publicly acknowledged in celebratory rituals. In contrast, neoliberals urge that the economy be opened, also to save 'Lives'. They believe widespread exposure to the risk of disease is necessary so all who depend on the commodities of the market and the state will not starve to death. In the name of 'Life', liberals want experts to dictate the rhythm of deaths by quarantining the risk of disease. In the name of 'Life', neoliberals want to reanimate the economy by socializing the risk of disease.

Illichian thought, from a different *topos* of argument attracts the anger of both neoliberals and liberals (to mention just a few, see David Cayley's article on the

pandemic⁹, Agamben's series of reflections on the plague, Sajay Samuel's essay on the crowned virus and Gustavo Estevás' [COVID-19 Pandemic: Worlds Stories from the Margins] The day after). Neither liberals nor neoliberals distinguish 'Life' as property from the existential experience of forming one's own way of living, what Illich calls 'the vernacular'. Both liberals and neoliberals agree on one point, that property is sacred. Liberals see 'Life' as the most sacred of all property whereas neoliberals sacralize money as the property needed for maintaining their 'Lifestyle'. Unlike Illichian thought, both liberals and neoliberals believe in the rule of experts. Liberals want the expert to explicitly manage the coronavirus crisis from the perspective of science by defining the rules of behavior for the masses to follow. In contrast, neoliberals want people to manage themselves using apparatuses that obscure the coded instructions of the experts who rule them. Smart watches that measure your blood pressure and urge you to walk 10,000 steps exemplify the hidden expert shackled to one's wrist.

Both liberals and neoliberals are fixated on 'Life' as property. In this sense, capitalism is not opposed to religion. Planetary capitalism is the great sect of the 21st century, and this pandemic shows that, from India to the United States, people kneel before the priests of modernity, whether these appear as experts or talking watches, both products of the religion of science. In opposition to both liberals and neoliberals, Illich argues against such fetishization of life.

⁹ I disagree with one argument in David Cayley's otherwise illuminating paper "*Questions About the Current Pandemic from the Point of View of Ivan Illich*". He argues for the opening of small businesses and for the closing of hockey arenas. By suggesting saving the 'small' exchange value and not the 'big' exchange value, I thought he would have engaged with Illich's balance of industrial and convivial tool (the 'small' can coexist with the commons whereas the 'big' is necessarily destructive of the commons – Illich's notion of scale and limits). However, this major distinction does not pertain to his paper. There are basically no arguments evoking the commons. Cayley's signature is his clarity and sharp reading of Illich's ideas, which one can easily see in his analysis of *Medical Nemesis* and the lines dedicated to the embodiment of systems and risks. However, in the particular argument aforementioned, I hear more the voice of a liberal than that of what I am trying to define as a position influenced by Illich's thought.

Profanations

Profanation, in these conditions, is the free and ‘distracted’ attitude of detaching oneself from norms. Not accepting the sacred, dissolving the separating function of rituals defines the act of profanation (Agamben, 2007). To profane is to dissolve the religious, which was arguably why the first Christians were persecuted as irreligious. To profane ‘Life’ in the time of Corona is to take on the most cherished religious object of our time. The COVID-19 pandemic represents a historical milestone. It exposes two fundamental lines that crisscross the fabric of modern industrial societies. Their entanglement constitutes the spindle on which liberals and neoliberals weave their narratives. Illich’s ideas run orthogonally to these arguments. His insistence on the vernacular that is antithetical to both the realm of the technological and the economic *per se* confronts the homogeneity of managed ‘life’ with the tapestry of the myriad possible forms of living. Ivan Illich witnessed, during his life as a social thinker, the weaving of the suit into which peoples from all over the world are now fitted. The vernacular is being suffocated by both liberals and neoliberals.¹⁰

Illich’s call for celebration does not invoke the *carpe diem* of the end times, quite the contrary. Aware of the demons that are running freely through the industrial tool and its services, he invites the careful reader to open him/herself to the surprise awaiting in the corner of conviviality, where neither public or private properties, welfare-state or free market are able to dampen the flourishing beauty of regaining the trust in one’s abilities to shape the environment according to a proportional fit. While liberals call for a stronger state and neoliberals urge for more ‘individual freedom’,

¹⁰ Illich argued, almost thirty years ago, something quite similar regarding the commons: “anti-capitalist politics so far have bolstered the legitimacy of transforming commons into resources”. Illich, Ivan. “Silence Is a Commons,” in *In the Mirror of the Past: Letters and Addresses 1978-1990*. New York: Marion Boyars Publishers, 1992.

those shaped by Illich's thinking should engage themselves with the vernacular form-of-life and focus on building the third way which at this very moment can sprout through the ashes of burning lands and forests.

Illich is against all property if it exceeds the possibility of the commons; of a flourishing vernacular. His arguments and ideas invite one to question the naivety of liberals and the blindness of neoliberals. To write after Illich requires the courage to take the stance against all forms of fetishizing 'Life', aware that one might be mistaken for a Bolsonarian from the left, or for a knight of chaotic anarchism from the right. To write after Illich, therefore, might also mean to live accordingly, to walk the walk of one's own words. Perhaps that is the reason why Illich has been obscured for so long. Perhaps, Agamben is right, the time for the legibility of Ivan Illich's work has arrived.

According to some, the book of Revelations discloses, through the prophet St. John, the fall of the Roman Empire. It is too strong to say that the COVID-19 pandemic Apocalypse reveals the collapse of capitalism. Nevertheless, if Ivan Illich should be read as a prophet, then he saw, during his lifetime (1926-2002), what is widely visible today: the tragedy of the uncommon and the religion of a new commodity: Life. We are all witness to the escalating authoritarianism that rises to fill the space left by the decline and fall of capitalism. On the other hand, this pandemic has also revealed the possibility of reanimating the commons and resurrecting concretely forged communal relationships. Lest it remain forgotten, Illich's third way for modernity is sprouting all around the world; it is now more feasible than ever before¹¹.

¹¹ To avoid confusion regarding this statement, I believe that what Illich said of Leopold Kohr in 1994 suits, today, and also to him: "He [Leopold Kohr] never attempted to seduce people into utopia, which is always a misplaced concreteness. He fostered a vision that could be realized because it fell within limits, it remained within reach."

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