

Johannes Beck  
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## **Invitation for an International Symposium for Ivan Illich in Bremen, Fryday, December 5th - Sunday, December 7th, 2003**

### **PHILIA - IN DISCIPLINED AND INDEPENDENT THINKING**

In December 2nd, 2003 it is a year since Ivan Illich died. On this occasion we invite to a symposium in Bremen to remember Ivan and to continue our conversations with him. We invite you also in the name of Dr. Henning Scherf, the Mayor-Governor of the City of Bremen, and with the help of the Bremen University, the Bremen Theatre and friends in town.

There are five reasons that moved us to initiate this encounter: firstly, we want to take up aspects of Ivan's thinking asking ourselves what his legacy means; secondly, we want to continue conversations with Ivan, and tie in each one's personal and political reflection with Ivan; thirdly, for once we would like again to offer hospitality to so many friends over so many years creating an occasion for meeting each other; fourthly, it seems good to offer an occasion for reflection on and with Ivan to his Bremen audiences who this winter will miss him particularly; finally, last but not least, we arrange a feast for Ivan, make him the gift of a disciplined and independent thinkery among his friends. We trust the he will join us when we feast him.

We have found it challenging how to conceive these days. Under no circumstances did we want to organize a ceremonial commemoration; also it seemed inappropriate and unfeasable to interpret the "complete works of Ivan Illich" - in parts or whole. We invite to this symposium not under a specific topic - his critique of development, his call for deschooling, his analysis of iatrogenic harm, his anger at the power of experts, his analysis of proportionality or gender - but with a leitmotif: to search for the hope and the disquiet which drove his essays, studies and indictments and which runs as a red thread through them all. We want to speak about the stance and the "ought" which moved Ivan, the author, the scholar, the teacher and the friend. Not his written work but himself, Ivan the person, shall be the leitmotif. The preliminary plan for the three days is not arranged so that one topic after another will be discussed, but one theme: his stance. Philia in disciplined and independent thinking, will be the underlying tone, motif, rhythm. In this way we might succeed to honor Ivan's unrelenting analytical acuity without loosing the heart of his being, his gift of mutual attention and warm affection. Ivan was one of those rare thinkers who consciously lived and suffered through the unprecedented transmogrification of the second half of the 20th century. As the obituaries justly noted, Ivan was a critic of his times, but they failed to grasp how keenly he observed the rapid changes, the loss of world, sense and flesh, in his own times. During the last decade did he rarely raise these insights explicitly, but much more in talking, obliquely. By concentrating on Philia as the

implicit centre of our conversation we hope that we will be able to reflect on stance, "hexis" and the "ought" - the prerequisite and goal of independent thinking - while at the same time speaking about the devastation in late modernity's transformation.

"What I speak of is simple, generous hospitality; it is nothing contrived or sanctimonious; the taste of a relaxed, humorous, sometimes grotesque fit among mostly ordinary but sometimes outlandish fellows who are patient with one another. I have been blessed with a large portion of it..." Ivan said in his address given at the Villa Ichon in Bremen 1998. It is in this spirit that we invite you and look forward to the Symposium for Ivan.

Johannes Beck, Barbara Duden, Marianne Gronemeyer, Ludolf Kuchenbuch, Wolfgang Sachs

The evening before we start the Symposium, Thursday, 4.12. 6 pm, there will be a Mass for Ivan Illich at the Church of St. Johann, Bremen (Im Schnoor).

## **SYMPOSIUM: Sequence of conversations**

**Fryday, December 5th, 3 pm- 6.30 pm**  
at the University (Hörsaalgebäude "Keksdose")

Wellcome, Introductory speeches under the guiding question: "Who was and who is Ivan Illich from my point of view?"  
(Lee Hoinacki, David Cayley, Jean Robert, Teodor Shanin, Barbara Duden)

In the evening: Eating and drinking at the University (Cafeteria GW2)

## **Saturday, December 6th, 9.30am - 1 pm**

at the University

Speeches and conversations:

### **9.30 am - 11 am**

"The parable of the Samaritain: the hidden centre of Ivan's thinking?" (David Cayley, Marianne Gronemeyer, Lee Hoinacki, Sebastian Trapp)

### **11.30 am - 1 pm**

"Philia - a horizon to confront the furor of modern institutions and their strategies of management and self-management?"

(Johannes Beck, Heinrich Dauber and others)

"Place and Space - globalization and disembodiment - how are they connected?"

(Jean Robert, Christine von Weizsäcker, Barbara Duden)

"Homo systematicus- the new model of the human being?"

(Kostas Hatzikiriaku, Carl Mitcham)

### Lunch at the University

### **3pm- 6.30 pm**

at the University

Second round of conversations:

### **3 pm - 4.30 pm**

"What about Ivan's critique of development and the 'Development dictionary' twenty years after?"

(Wolfgang Sachs, Hans Achterhuiz, Teodor Shanin)

### **5 pm - 6.30 pm**

"Corruptio optimi quae est pessima" - does Modernity originate in a sin of the church?"

(Lee Hoinacki, Klaus Beier, Giannozzo Pucci)

"A call for an ascesis of the senses - who cares?"

(Heinz Buddemeier, Reginald Luif, Barbara Duden)

## **Saturday, 6.12., 8 pm**

The Theatre of the Concordia

"Traces of a pilgrim, echo of a fool: a symposium for Ivan Illich" Dinner organized by actors of the Bremen Theatre

**Sunday, December 7th, 10am- 12.30 pm**

City Hall (Upper Hall)

Bundle up by Ludolf Kuchenbuch

Speeches:

"Formalization of the Delivery of Pain"

(Nils Christie)

"The Art of Rhetoric as a School of Politics"

(Uwe Pörksen)

**12.30 pm**

City Hall (Upper Hall)

Reception and lunch offered by Dr. Henning Scherf, Mayor-Governor of the City of Bremen

All sessions and events are open to the public. For the dinner on Friday night, the symposium on Saturday evening, and the reception on Sunday we kindly ask you to informally register with Katrin Urban. Also for other practical requests (questions of Housing etc.) please consult Katrin Urban who took over the secretariat of the symposium (Her address see below).

The speeches and conversations will be held in German and English. We are aware of the difficulties involved but hope they can be solved. There will be help with translations.

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