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No Transition

A New History of Energy

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A material view of the dynamics of industrial societies that deconstructs the discourses promising an ecological energy transition.

In the late 19th century, more trees were felled just to prop up tunnels in coal mines than had been used for the entire preceding century. Similarly, petroleum increased the world's coal consumption and no substitute for it was ever found.

So where does this strange narrative that makes us believe in the "transition" from one energy to the next come from? Jean-Baptiste Fressoz retraces here the story of an illusion, explaining how primary energies grow by piling one atop another.

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