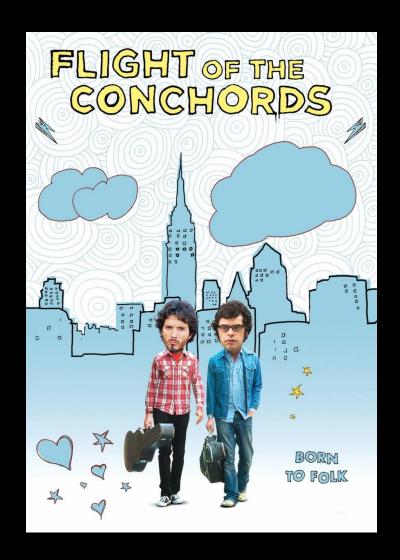
Money / Morality



Pet Shop Boys: Opportunities (Let's Make Lots of Money) [1985]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyeWRd7ZEBs





Flight Of The Conchords. *Inner City Pressure*. (Series 1 - Episode 2 – 'Bret Gives Up The Dream'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNfV1dTTMLU

Start question Name some authors that Bloch & Parry are critical of:

Maurice Bloch & Jonathan Parry (LSE) London School of Economics and Political Science

Bloch, M. & J. Parry (eds) 1989. *Money and the Morality of Exchange* (Cantab: Cambridge University Press).

Book aims to show how diff societies symbolically represent money and understand their moral evaluation of money and commercial exchanges as opposed to other systems of exchange.

Not concerned with 'primitive money', since all chapters deal with state-issued currencies.

Unsurprisingly, there's enormous cultural variation, so:

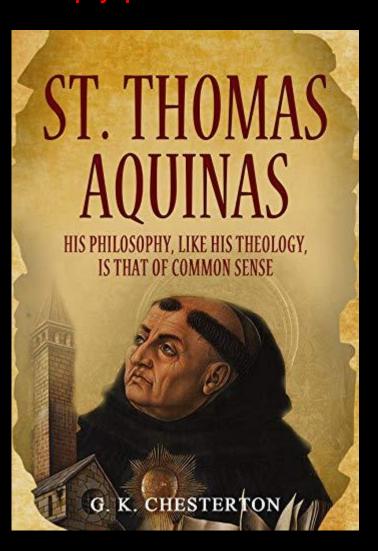
"it is vitally important to understand the cultural matrix into which it is incorporated" (p.1).

From Aristotle we have an overall damnation of money and trade as against an idealised view of household self-sufficiency (remember the word *Oikos* etymologically behind 'economy' refers to domestic management).

These views resurface in the middle ages, 13th century with St Thomas Aquinas, to illustrate the Church's distrust of nonlabour valuation.

The insinuation is that the 'Aristotle-Aquinas sentiment influences or is reproduced in Marx, through his main idea that money denies humans their bonds of solidarity.

13th century, end of middle-ages. Following a romantic ideology, Aquinas cites Aristotle's view that 'usuary' and accumulation are deeply problematic.





The School of Athens, Raphael [1509-1511]

Another side of the case studies reveal a real unity. This is neither in the meaning or the moral perceptions. Rather a pattern that is part of a reproduction of social and ideological systems winch are concerned with time scales far longer than individual lifespan.

So Bloch & Parry claim to have uncovered a cyclic relationship between short-term exchange, domain of individual, vs long-term reinforcement of socio-cultural and cosmic orders.

First part of introduction, how has Western discourse impeded any true appreciation of cross-cultural variations. Second part, highlight a wider total system of exchange thesis.

Tendency to formulate a fundamental division between non-monetary and monetary economies. And this gets associated with other dichotomies. Pre-post capitalistic; gift/commodity; traditional/modern. Inalienable objects between interdependent transactors vs alienable objects between independent transactors.

Our western idea of gift has been constructed in antithesis to market exchange.

But money exists in non-market economies and is thus connected to moral ideologies where kinship/friendship rules are guiding principles. So money gifts are not problematic in such cases. Likewise, money can also moral qualities of those who transact it.

Marx's assertion that money is not inert but personified approximates Mauss view of the gift. So both pre and capitalistic societies can demonstrate this fetishistic view of exchange mediums (maybe because of separtion of producer and product). So this old anthropological dichotomy for Bloch & Parry is not convincing.

Bohanann's Tiv example. Elders deprived of power through no longer arranging marriage.

Spheres of exchange Kopytoff. In perfect market economy everything is exchangeable. Tehcnology limitations are the explantion for why not all spheres of exchange overlap. Bloch Parry call this technological determinism.

Myth: Money gives rise to particular world view (Simmel Marx)

Money in Alan Macfarlane, often seems connected to increasingly evoking moral confusion (sense of evil).

Contrary to this, Bloch & Parry argue it's the other way around: existing worldviews give rise to particular ways of representing money.

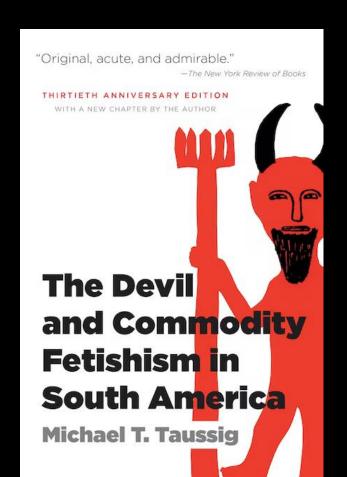
Michael Taussig, Mining in Andean cases, aregues that the devil enters into packs with miners. This reflects an indigenous perceptions of danger and immorality of new capitalistic system. Ore is a gift that is transformed into a commodity. This is the problem (the sin) for Taussig.

Not so according to our editors B&P who show that peasants have long been part of the pre-capitalistic markets and the latter does not have any comparable supernatural dangers.

Also, agriculture and mining are not symbolically or ritually opposed. Ore is like a super-valuable fruits or vegetable. It can replenish itself underground via libations, offerings and sacrifices as well as with fallow time.

The problem in mining is that the value should rise upward toward the state. If there's a good balance, the community is prosperous.

This balance is threatened by individual accumulation of wealth.



Fijians talks of the 'world of money' as the antithesis of the ordered moral world of chiefs and kinship. But money itself does not stand in opposition to the realm of the sacred. Initially it seems there's an opposition between money as antisocial acquisitiveness and Kava drinking as community. But this opposition has as much to do with the contrast between crosscousin and other kinsmen as between market and pre-monetary economy.

Fijian kinship opposes society as ordered by hierarchy to an egalitarian chaotic system of cross-cousin affines. The latter can destabilise the order unless the cousins marry or the tension is appeased. This takes place in a synthesis of these opposites which occurs in the 'drinking cash' ritual. Her cash rivalries get transformed into a beneficial social fund.

Other examples of money being cooked. Or digesting pilgrim gifts.

All this is to highlight Short-Term cycle of exchange vs long term social reproduction cycle.

Much of the Formalist – Substantivist debate revolved around issues of whether a maximising human existed or exists now in the pre-capitalist examples.

What is the place of the individual in a social or cosmic order that transcends the individual.

B & P's relativistic conclusions are: because of the instrumental uses to which money lends itself, we have more examples of short term cycle. And so the morality connected with money is seen as more negatively. But even in non-market economies, exchange can take place in anonymous, impersonal and instrumental ways.

So the values of the short-term order become elaborated into a theory of long-term reproduction (Adam Smith, freedom depends on abstracted money systems).

i.e. capitalism has so engrained the idea that gift and market economies are fundamentally different. But since the case studies of the volume take place outside (or at the margins) of capitalistism, this is not in the scope of their observations.