

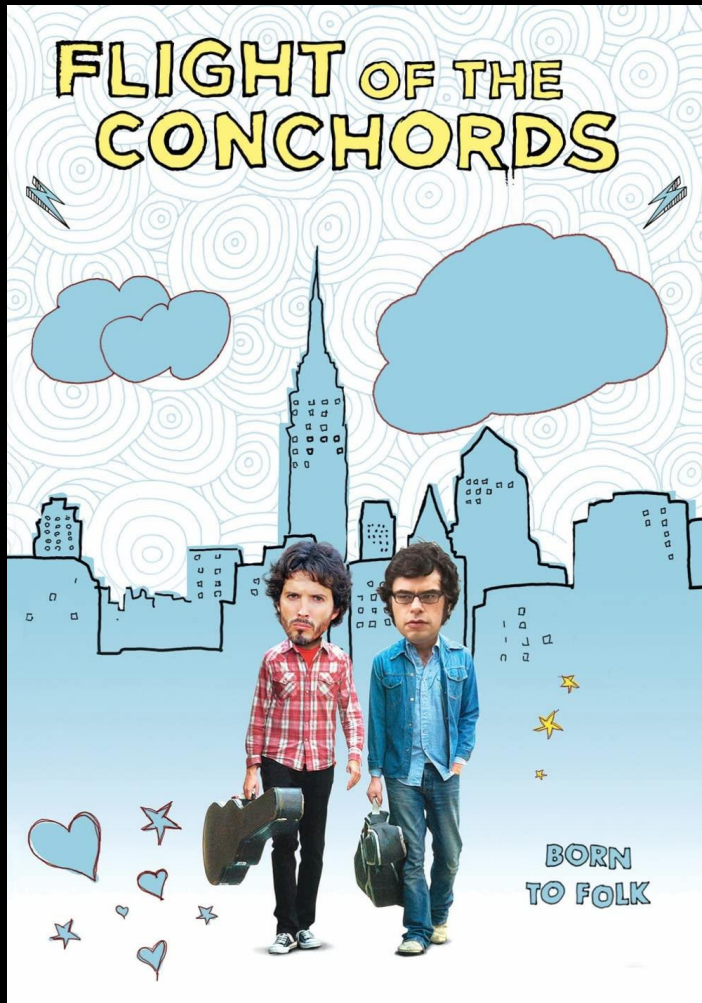
Money / Morality



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>

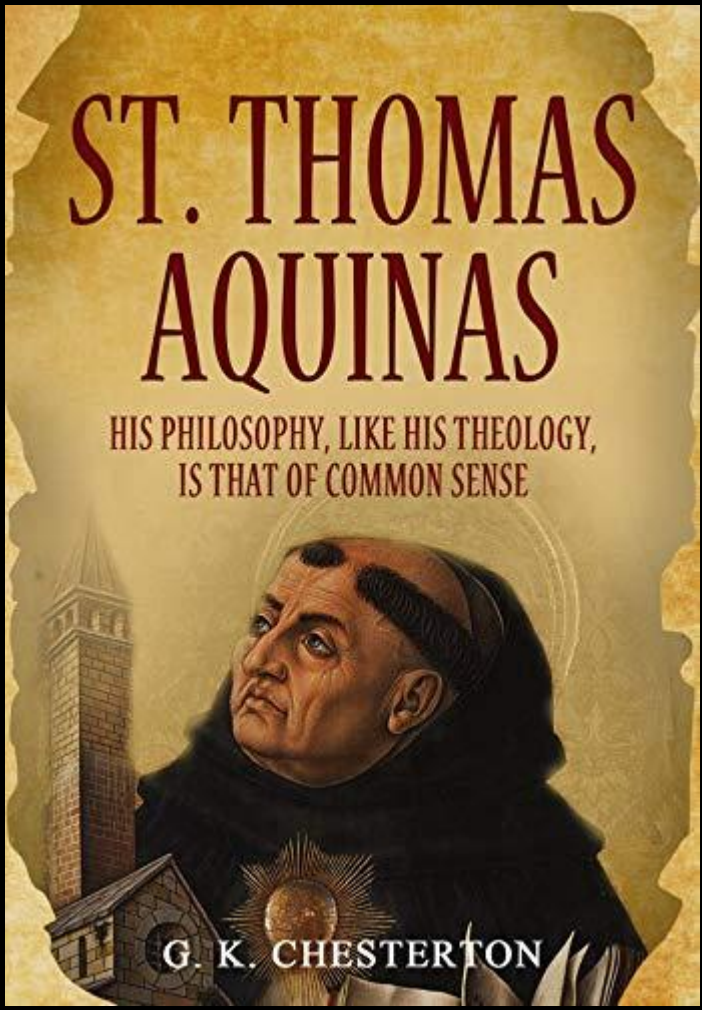
Start question Name some authors that Bloch & Parry are critical of:

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 non-labour 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]

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.

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, argues that the devil enters into pacts 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.

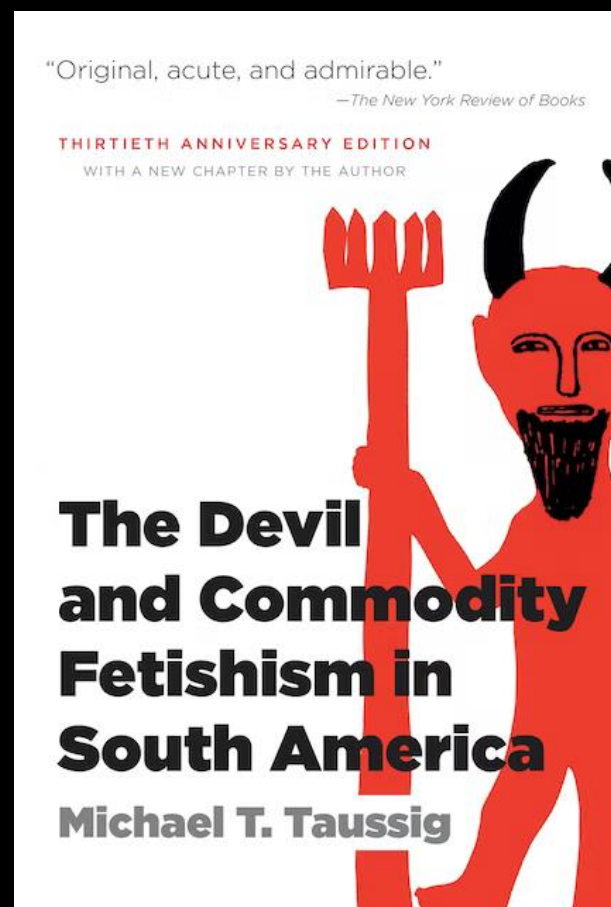
Not so according to our editors B&P who show that peasants have long been part of the pre-capitalistic markets and the latter does not have any comparable supernatural dangers.

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 anti-social acquisitiveness and Kava drinking as community. But this opposition has as much to do with the contrast between cross-cousin 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.

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 capitalism, this is not in the scope of their observations.

