

FIRST SET OF SERMONS

This is a statutory announcement.
Tonight, you will be exposed
to money burning invocation propaganda.
This may increase your propensity to burn money.
You listen at your own risk.
Tonight we bring you...
Sermons from the Church of Burn.
With the invention of writing around 5000 years ago
the idea of Money emerges.
Taking the form of account entries
impressed into clay tablets;
almost without exception
the records are concerned
with what was owed
to the State or Temple.
Coins did not appear until around 2800 years ago.
They may have evolved from religious tokens,
or sacrificial spits,
which symbolized a participant's due share.
Inscribed with sacred images
coins were regarded as liminal objects,
nodal points between quotidian reality
and the world of spirits.
It seems that money wants to rival god,
to become immanent spirit
in the form of pure metaphysicality
which nevertheless "rules the world".
Money & religion enter opposition --
one cannot serve God & Mammon simultaneously.
Over & over again reformers arise within religion
to chase the moneylenders from the temple.
But always they return -- in fact often enough
the moneylenders become the Temple.

Millennium - Religion and Revolution

Hakim Bey

Re-writes and amends by Daisy Campbell and Jon Harris

Justin Welby, the current Archbishop of Canterbury tells us,
“... the more interconnected the world becomes,
the more power is held over individuals and nations
by economics, by money and flows of finance.
Mammon - a name given by Jesus to this force
gains strength through our obedience.
The more we let ourselves be governed by Mammon,
the more power he has,
and the more the vulnerable suffer.”

Dethroning Mammon - Making Money Serve Grace

Justin Welby (2016) p.1

The power of money is spiritual.
It calls individuals into the state of subjectivity
of the one who participates in the market;
it calls them out to be individuals,
characterized by violent claims to property,
the self-discipline of labor,
and enjoyment of freedom and prosperity.
It is not sufficient, therefore
to point out the destructive effects of market society
and to advise people to return to local or traditional economic activities.
For the blessings, of enhanced productivity and prosperity
available to individuals through the market,
can always be contraposed
to the curses and limitations of traditional life.
The morality of the market
will always prove more attractive
to those who stand to benefit from it
than any other bases for morality.
The theology of money, with its promises,
its narcissistic self-positing as the supreme standard
and measure of all value,
its speculative detachment from current conditions,
and its despotic power expressed in debt,
can be transformed only by a stronger spiritual power.

Theology of Money

Philip Goodchild (2009) p.129

Economists have got it all wrong.
Adam Smith is wrong. John Mills is wrong. Marx is wrong.
John Maynard Keynes is wrong.
Piles... stacks... entire yards of book shelves,
whole wings of libraries have missed the point.
They try to make a dry mathematical science
out of an inherently wet social phenomenon.
Of course, the whole of the monetary system is an illusion...
a massive conjurors trick.
Call it an inter-subjective construct if you want
to sound more science-y about it,
but the thing the tedious magicians are trying to conceal from us
is the fact that money is, in its very essence,
spiritual, mythical, and magical.
And I mean all these words
not in some vague, hippie-dippy, touchy-feely sort of way...
but literally.

Money & Magic - On Gift, Grift and Graft

Mark Wagner (2018) p22-23

From a commonsense point of view,
economic activity in the capitalist economy is all about money:
making money, earning money, spending money, saving money, and so forth.
Orthodox economic theory has had a persistent tendency
to deny the importance of money in determining economic outcomes,
despite the evidence of our senses.

What is Money?

John Smithin (2000) p.1

But much as they would like to, economists can't *completely* ignore the role of banks.
They spent much of the twentieth century arguing about what actually happens
when someone applies for a loan.
Only a minority of mostly heterodox economists
upheld what is called the "credit creation theory of banking":
that bankers simply wave a magic wand and make the money appear.
In this view, rather than loans being based in deposits, deposits are the result of
loans. (...cont)

Against Economics

David Graeber (2019) [link to article](#)

A review of Money and Government: The Past and Future of Economics

By Robert Skidelsky (New York Review of Books)

During those 20th century debates
the one thing it never seemed to occur,
to any economist to do,
was to get a job at a bank,
and find out what actually happens
when someone asks to borrow money.

In 2014 a German economist named Richard Werner
did exactly that, and discovered that, in fact,
loan officers do not check their existing funds,
reserves, or anything else.*

*These lines were in the script but cut on the night to avoid repetition from the Synod.

They simply create money out of thin air, or, as he preferred to put it, “fairy dust.”
2014 also appears to have been when elements in Britain’s notoriously independent
civil service decided that enough was enough.

The question of money creation became a critical bone of contention.

The overwhelming majority of even mainstream economists in the UK
had long since rejected austerity as counterproductive.

Before long, the Bank of England rolled out an elaborate official report
called “Money Creation in the Modern Economy,” replete with videos and animations,
making the same point: *existing economics textbooks, and particularly the reigning
monetarist orthodoxy, are wrong. The heterodox economists are right.*

Private banks create money.

Central banks like the Bank of England create money as well, but monetarists are
entirely wrong to insist that their proper function is to control the money supply.

In fact, central banks do not in any sense control the money supply;
their main function is to set the interest rate—to determine how much private banks
can charge for the money they create. Almost all public debate on these subjects
is therefore based on false premises.

One might have imagined that such an admission
would create something of a splash, and in certain restricted circles, it did.

Central banks in Norway, Switzerland, and Germany quickly put out similar papers.

Back in the UK, the immediate media response was simply silence.

The Bank of England report has never been mentioned on the BBC
or any other TV news outlet.

Newspaper columnists continue to write as if monetarism was self-evidently correct.

Politicians continue to be grilled about where they would find the cash for social programs.

It is as if an entente cordiale has been established, in which the technocrats are allowed to live in one theoretical universe, while politicians and news commentators live in an entirely different one.

[...]

Economic theory as it exists increasingly resembles a shed full of broken tools.

Against Economics

David Graeber (2019) [link to article](#)

A review of Money and Government: The Past and Future of Economics

By Robert Skidelsky (New York Review of Books)

SECOND SET OF SERMONS

The King once summoned Nasruddin to court.

Said the King: "Tell me, Nasruddin.

You are a mystic, a philosopher, a man of unconventional understandings.

I have become interested in the issue of value.

It's an interesting philosophical question.

How does one establish the true worth of a person or an object.

If I were to ask you to estimate my value, what would you say?

"Oh, " Nasruddin said, "I'd say about two hundred dinars."

"What?! But this belt I'm wearing is worth two hundred dinars!"

"I know," said Nasruddin.

"I was taking the value of the belt into consideration."

A Medieval Turkish Story quoted in **Debt - the First 5000 years**

David Graeber (2011) p273

It is no longer sufficient to oppose will and matter, representation and production, being and becoming, the one and the many, transcendence and immanence, for the relations between these dualisms are always mediated by the spectral power of money. It is a question of belief and desire. Even if no-one really wants money - it is always a means, never an end - everyone believes in money, or, rather, money is the reality, the interiority of belief and desire in which we dwell. It is not we who desire money; it is money that desires us.

Theology of Money

Philip Goodchild (2009) p.69 [Rewrite and amends Jon Harris]

The role money has played in how we conceptualize the world and the cosmos is one of those odd things we seem to know dimly but which never quite breaks through to full consciousness. It's almost as if our wish for it not to be true, the wish that money wasn't so deeply involved with our vision of the universe is so strong that we can willfully blind ourselves to how it pervades our cosmology. And if our blindness wasn't enough, there is also the way in which rationality prevents us from taking seriously, or even noticing, the sacred nature of money. Economics is the secularization of the money form. Money being sacred is "an irrational, archaic belief" So, when the classic learned texts on money were written an economic logic was imposed on the sacred rituals that were identified as money's true origins. We are told about how sacrificial spits upon which the meat of a sacrificed bull was skewered then shared, were transformed, through a recognition of their utility as instruments that transferred value, into currency. The origin of money in sacred rituals is thus identified, but then quickly subsumed and subjugated to economic logic. [...]

And economics sets aside all the clues. The relationship of gold to the sun, and silver to the moon, And the symbolism that exists on notes to this day. Instead it adopts a shallow economic logic Which determines that money *must have* arisen through barter. This false history is being eroded. But the ideas at its core, that money represents things, that money is entirely secular, and most of all, that money is nothing more than its functions, are much more difficult to shake.

The Money Burner's Manual (2nd Ed)
Jonathan Harris (aka MBG) (2018) p.29

Religious visions that remain stuck in the oppositions and contradictions of the past pose a threat to the future. Simplistic beliefs are dangerous in an ever more complex world and therefore must be confronted directly and criticized vigorously.

But the criticism alone is not enough. It is also necessary to develop alternative types of religion that might lead to new social, political, economic and cultural realities.

Confidence Games

Mark C Taylor (2004) p.313

Religion never goes away. It just takes on new forms.

Confidence Games

Mark C Taylor (2004) p.?

God does not go for personalities;
nor does the Last Judgement
consist in the award of prizes to personalities
for the performance of their parts.
The performance principle must go;
the show must not go on.
The parts are not real.
In the Last Judgement
the apocalyptic fire will burn up the masks,
And the theater, leaving not a rack behind.
Freud came to give the show away;
the outcome of psychoanalysis is not 'ego psychology'.
It is the doctrine of 'anatta' or no-self;
the ego is a 'me-fabrication' (ahamkara), a piece of illusion (Maya),
which disintegrates at the moment of illumination:
'the self has been completely understood, and so ceases to be.'
And with the doctrine of no-self goes the doctrine of non-action:
action is proper only to an ignorant person, and doing nothing is,
if rightly understood, the supreme action.

Cf Powell, Zen and Reality, 49, 69, Nikhilananda, Bhagavad Gita, 15, Durckheim, The Japanese Cult of Tranquility, 88-89. Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, 44, 75, 89. Mauss, 'La notion de personne,' 348."

Love's Body

Norman O Brown (1966) p.105

Ready must thou be to burn thyself
In thine own flame;
How couldst thou become new
If thou have not first become ashes.

Thus Spake Zarathustra

Friedrich Nietzsche

You can't shine
If you don't Burn!

From a handwritten note found next to his death bed
Kevin Ayers (2013)

In theory, salvation in Christianity
liberates the ends of religious life
from the domain of productive activity.
But if the faithful's salvation
is the reward for his merits,
if he can achieve it by his deeds,
then he has simply brought more closely
into the domain of religion
the concatenation that makes useful work
wretched in his eyes.
Hence those deeds
by which a Christian tries to win his salvation
can in turn be considered profanations,
even the mere fact of choosing salvation as a goal
appears contrary to the truth of grace.
Grace alone brings about an accord with the divinity,
which cannot be subjected to causal series as things can.
The gift that divinity makes of itself to the faithful soul cannot be paid for.

The Accursed Share

Georges Bataille (1988 [1967]) p.121

Sovereignty is NOTHING.

The Accursed Share

Georges Bataille (1988 [1967]) p.?

THIRD SET OF SERMONS

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try.

Imagine
John & Yoko (1971)

Each time money is used,
an epistemology, a metaphysics, a politics, an ethics, and even a theology is evoked.

Theology of Money

Philip Goodchild (2009) p.20

The tendering of a few coins across a counter opens an abyss
that reaches to the heart of the universe

Money as We Knew it?

Joachim Kalka in New Left Review (60) (2009) [link to article](#)

So what happens when you burn it?

Burning Issue Special Edition SUPER DELUXE

Jonathan Harris (2017)

Capitalism is a purely cultic religion,
perhaps the most extreme that ever existed.
A cult is an emaciated religion;
it lacks a proper theology,
cannot answer questions of ultimate value,
and offers only superficial comforts.
A true theology would promise redemption:
forgiveness, an encounter with God,
or resolution of life's underlying tensions.
A cult offers only distractions:
it is closed and inward looking,
and everything is drawn back into its nexus of value.
Things have meaning only in their relationship to the cult.
And every action and every deed
is assigned a rating in its shallow moral economy.
A cult offers ritual but not transcendence.
Capitalism is such a cult.

The Social Life of Money (2014)

Nigel B Dodd from Nietzsche's Money in Journal of Classical Sociology 13(1) p. 55
(2012) quoting Walter Benjamin ([link original article](#))

And money burning
is capitalism's missing redemption.

The Money Burner's Manual (2nd Ed)
Jonathan Harris (aka MBG) (2018) p.93

You may say she's a dreamer
But she's not the only one

Imagine
John & Yoko (1971) - amended by Jon Harris

Sacrificial ritual is sovereign.
Sacrificial ritual is not an exchange with the Gods.
This might be what it's become,
but it is not what it should be.
In its ideal form, sacrificial ritual has no function.
To ask what a ritual is for
is to misconceive of it.
It's not *for* anything.
Recognising the sovereignty of sacrificial ritual
helps us escape the economic logic we impose on it.
It puts us in the world described by Georges Bataille
where 'sacrifice restores to the sacred world
that which servile use has degraded, rendered profane'.
To be completely clear on the meaning here,
the 'restoration to the sacred' is the effect of sacrifice, not its purpose.
Having a purpose makes one servile to an end.
For Bataille, even employing the present time
for the sake of the future is servile.
And so too is knowledge.
Only unknowing is sovereign and beyond any notion of utility.
For the truly sovereign being, there is only now.

The Money Burner's Manual (2nd Ed)
Jonathan Harris (aka MBG) (2018) p.1

Imagine all the people
living for today.

Imagine
John & Yoko (1971)

Give thanks to the madness of Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty
in a boathouse on the Isle of Jura on the 23rd of August 1994.
From what they did in that boathouse a new archetype arises.

Daisy Campbell/Jon Harris

It's one thing to start burning a million pounds
it's quite another to finish burning a million pounds .

The KLF: Chaos Magic and the Band that Burned a Million Quid

John Higgs

For two thousand years the dominant archetype
of sacrificial ritual the pure form to which all sacrifice aspires
has been of the Son by the Father.

This is the ultimate sacrifice that can be made
without killing oneself. It is the most powerful representation
of the most complete annihilation of one's sovereignty
that we have been able to imagine thus far.

But perhaps for us now

Bill and Jimmy in that boathouse on Jura
imagined one even more potent.

If we're able to assimilate money burning
into the way we are, then we open up new possibilities
about what we may become.

The Money Burner's Manual (2nd Ed)

Jonathan Harris (aka MBG) (2018) p.92

Imagine all the people
living life in peace.
Imagine there's no countries.
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world.
Imagine no possessions.

Imagine

John & Yoko (1971) - amended by Jon Harris

A £20 or £50 note burns very differently to normal paper.
The paper is dense so it can be made to burn more slowly.
Getting the right burn is a sensual thing.
You must concentrate all your attention.
If you tip the note too far into the flame,
The fire can become ferocious.
That's when you might burn yourself
and drop the note too early. The foil sections on the notes burn a different colour and
at a different speed to the rest of the note. You might find it is the only part that
survives the burn.
The polymer £10 and £5 are different again.
They do burn. Because everything burns.
But the flame takes to them in a unique way.
As they are consumed they have a brief moment of melting.
Then, the heat-energy pushes them to release their material form as smoke.
They burn a bright iridescent blue. Like paper the foil bits spark and fizzle in a playful
release. Money burning is a material change in your relation to money. No amount of
theorizing can replicate the experience of it.

The Money Burner's Manual (2nd Ed)

Jonathan Harris (aka MBG) (2018) p.92 [with amendments 2019]

We experience money through its impact
on our minds and bodies.
The fear and faith,
love and hate,
joy and pain,
we feel around money
are its landscape.
Money exists though these oppositions.
It's the AND of 'The One and The Many'.
It is that which both brings things together,
and separates them.
The ones and zeros in banks' computers
are a representation of money, not its essence.
It's not out there in the numbers,
it's in here with you and me.
It is cellular, visceral and sexual.

Money Burning Man at Festival 23 (with additional last line)

Jonathan Harris (2016) [link to article](#)

There is nothing more common
than a momentary incursion
into the world of sexual truths,
followed, all the rest of the time,
by a fundamental denial of those truths.

The Accursed Share Vol 2 The History of Eroticism

Georges Bataille (1988 [1967]) p.178-179

Let us admit that we have attended parties
where for one brief night
a republic of gratified desires was attained.

T.A.Z.

Hakim Bey (1990) p.133

If you can allow for the possibility
That there is some form
of redemptive magic in money burning
then you will have carved open a space
in your mindscape for its reality to exist.
It doesn't need to be an article of faith.
You don't need to declare it to anyone.
It just needs to be an idea
seeded in your mind which can flower in ritual.

Money Burning Man at Festival 23

Jonathan Harris (2016) [link to article](#)

Love
loves love
into ever widening circles.

Introduction to Critical Realism Part Six: The Philosophy of metaReality

Roy Bashkar from his last video podcast. [Link to video](#) (slight amend by Jon Harris)