Fig. 15. Medal commemorating John Law and the Mississippi System. France, 1720. Obverse. In field, a windmill; on the post by which it is supported and on which it revolves, MERCURE (Mercury, the god of merchants); on the base or floor, MONOYÉ (money); and on the side to right, reading downward, BANCO (bank). Into two of the arms (or sails) winged coins, jewelry, and art objects are entering; the other two are industriously showering forth slips of paper labeled ACTIEN (shares) and BILLETs (bank bills). A head at the right, in cocked hat and wig, supplies the wind, labeled LOVISDORS, by which the sails are made to revolve. Legend: LES RICHESSES DE FRANCE (The Riches of France). In exergue: 1720. (American Numismatic Society)

Fig. 16a. Medal commemorating John Law and the Mississippi System. Germany, 1720. Obverse. A man, cloaked, walks toward the right and operates a bellows, from the nozzle of which is discharged a quantity of shares or bills, while from his mouth issue the words WER KAUFT ACTIEN (Who buys shares?). Legend: WER SICH DÜRCH DIESEN WIND DEN GELDGEITZ LAESSET FVHREN (He who [deceived] by this wind allows himself to be led by covetousness). In exergue: SEY KYLGEVWIZCIN / VERKEHREN (Be wise and keen-witted in traffic).

Fig. 16b. Reverse. A dog on a bridge, crossing a stream and carrying in his mouth a piece of meat, sees the reflection in the water, snaps at the imaginary meat, and in so doing loses what he has; the whole is an illustration of Aesop's well-known fable. Legend, continued from the obverse: DER KAN VERWIRRUNGS VOLL / SEIN HAABVGYVTIPVERLIEREN (that man will be full of trouble and lose his possessions and goods). In exergue: SOLL DICH ESOP HUND / NICHT LEHREN / 1720 (Shall not Aesop's dog teach thee?). (American Numismatic Society)
Fig. 17a. Medal commemorating John Law and the Mississippi System. France and Germany, 1720. Obverse. In the field, an empty hat, wig, and coat, in position, seen from behind; on the waist (or belt) of the coat, MDCCI. Legend: BANQVRODT IST A LA MODE (Bankruptcy is all the fashion). In the field, to left, reading upward, VISIBILIS (visible), and to the right, reading downward, INVISIBILIS (invisible; or "Now you see it and now you don’t").

Fig. 17b. Reverse. A man lies face down on the ground, his head toward the left; his right hand grasps the caduceus of Mercury, the god of merchants, and his left, a package on which is WEXEL / BRIEFE (bill of exchange). Legend: CREDIT ist mausse-todt (Credit is dead as a mouse). (American Numismatic Society)

Fig. 18. Medal commemorating John Law and the Mississippi System. Germany, 1720. Obverse. A man in cocked hat and court dress stands facing left; he holds in his right hand a magnifying glass, marked 100, through which he is looking at a quantity of bills or shares of different denominations (1000, 200, 100); his left hand, extended behind him, points toward an open chest full of coined money. Legend, a rhymed couplet, in three curved lines above: VERGRÖSSRUNGS GLAS THVTS HIER VND AN SO VIELEN ENDEN / DAS SICH DIE KLVGSTEN ACH DIE GELDSVCHT LASSEN / BLEN DEN (The magnifying glass here serves so many ends, that even the knowing ones allow themselves to be blinded by the lust for money). In exergue: DER ACTIEN BETRYC / VND LIST (The shares are a trick and a fraud). (American Numismatic Society)
Fig. 19. Cartoon, “Law, als een tweede Don-Quichot, op Sanchés Grauwitje zit ten Spot” (Law, like another Don Quixote, sits on Sancho’s Ass, being everyone’s fool). Netherlands, 1720. The engraving shows John Law riding on an ass. On the flag is, “Ik koom. Ik koom Dulcinia” (I come, I come, Dulcinea). A coffer, filled with bags of money, is inscribed, “Bombarioos Geld kist 1720” (Bombario’s [i.e., Humbug’s] money box, 1720). Behind Law is a devil, the “Henry” of the text; he holds up the tail of the ass. The ass voids papers inscribed 1000, 0, 00, and so on. From Het Groote Tafereel der Dwaasheid (Amsterdam, 1720). (Buffalo and Erie County Library)

Fig. 20. Assignat. France, 18 Nivôse 3rd year of the Republic (January 7, 1795). Inscribed “Hypothéqué sur les DOMAINES NATIONAUX.” (American Numismatic Society)
Fig. 21. Cartoon, "De Verlagen ACTIONIST in de STOEL met RINKELS, overreeden gewest van't gelaauwerd Pard van TROJ" (The defeated Stock-jobber seated in the Chair with Jingles, having been defeated by the Laureated Horse of Troy). Netherlands, 1720. The illustration shows part of this engraved satire on the South Sea Company. A man flies a kite, which is about to fall. The inscription may be translated as "My kite loses its tail, I will drown myself in the South Sea." From Het Grote Tafereel der Dwaasheid (Amsterdam, 1720). (Buffalo and Erie County Library)

Fig. 22. Cartoon, "The Blessings of Paper Money." By George Cruikshank. From Scourge and Satirist; or Literary, Theatrical and Miscellaneous Magazine (London) 2 (August 1, 1811): 87. (Johns Hopkins University Library)
Fig. 23. Tetradrachm. Abdera, ca. 473/70–449/8 B.C. Obverse: Griffin seated with forepaw raised. (Hirmer Verlag)

Fig. 24. Bank note. Bayerische Hypotheken- und Wechsel-Bank, Germany, 1836. (Sammlung Albert Pick [Hypobank, Munich])
become virtually worthless. The paper money inflation of the 1920s, like that of the 1720s (John Law's system), influenced even the most serious philosophy of the time. The aesthetic interpretation of monetary inflation—insinuated by Mephistopheles in the study of the small world and in the court of the large one—was adapted by Fascist "philosophers" and ideologues in their attempt to aestheticize politics. Like a number of issues of emergency money, those represented in figs. 25–39, dating between 1920 and 1923, depict and quote scenes and passages from Goethe's Faust. (Figs. 25–39: Sammlung Albert Pick [Hypobank, Munich], Museum des Deutschen Bundesbank, and American Numismatic Society)

Fig. 25. Emergency money. Vohwinkel. Shows a fantastic face value of 50 billion marks, with a quotation from Faust 1904–99. Emergency money (Notgeld) was issued by most German states during the great inflation of the early 1920s, when conventional banknotes had become virtually worthless.

Fig. 26. Emergency money. Vohwinkel. Faust 2540–53. Shows a face value of 50 million marks while at the same time quoting the multiplication table or arithmetical hocus-pocus in Witch's Kitchen.

Fig. 27. Emergency money. Vohwinkel. Faust 2802–4.
Fig. 28. Emergency money. Hasloh (Schleswig-Holstein). Faust 2802–4.

Fig. 29. Emergency money. Schierke am Harz (Sachsen). Faust 4127.

Fig. 30. Emergency money. Roda. Faust riding on a flying horse (Mephistopheles).

Fig. 31. Emergency money. Vohwinkel. Faust 4778–86 and 4799–802.
Fig. 32. Emergency money. Vohwinkel. Faust 4839–42 and 4847–51.

Fig. 33. Emergency money. Hasloh (Schleswig-Holstein). Faust 4852–54.

Fig. 34. Emergency money. Hasloh (Schleswig-Holstein). Faust 4889–92.

Fig. 35. Emergency money. Staufen. Faust 6057–58 (adapted).
Fig. 36. Emergency money. Schleswig-Holstein. Faust 6119–20.

Fig. 37. Emergency money. Roda. Faust's courting of Helen.

Fig. 38. Emergency money. Hasloh (Schleswig-Holstein). Faust 9229–32 (adapted).

Fig. 39. Emergency money. Hasloh (Schleswig-Holstein). Faust 9275 (adapted).
Fig. 40. Illumination, the Court of the Exchequer. England, ca. 1450. An usher stands on the table, apparently speaking; in the foreground is a square cage, grated and barred, behind which are two prisoners; there are two large, iron-bound chests, suggestive of treasure. From G. R. Corner, "King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, at Westminster," Archaeologia; or, Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity, vol. 39 (1868).