

### ***Transitions***

Between mauve and brown, November's  
Arson isn't quenched, but burns  
Right to the branch, leaving the bones.

Between green and grey, sharpening  
Waves saw past the sandbar, hone  
Right up the beach, slitting the dunes.

Between flesh and wax, bleaching  
Cells corrode their caskets, steer  
Right into earth, digging for stars.

LARRY RUBIN

# *Money, the State and Modern Mercantilism*

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

MONEY IS the nerve center of any economy above the most primitive level. An economy consists of a vast and intricate network of two-person exchanges, and money constitutes one side of every exchange. Money is the medium by which producers of goods and services (sold for money) proceed to become consumers of goods and services (bought for money). If any one person or organization manages to obtain control over the supply of money—over its quality, its quantity, or its use—he or it has thereby taken a long step toward gaining complete control of the entire economic system. Similarly, it is difficult to see how complete economic control could be achieved without domination of the supply of money.

## *I. Money on the Free Market*

IN THE PURELY free market, no one person or group can have control over money. Money arises, on the free market, when one or more commodities, in particularly intense demand and possessing such other qualities as durability, portability, and divisibility, are chosen by individuals to serve as media of exchange. Once a commodity begins to be used as a medium, the process accelerates as this makes the good all the more valuable, until it finally comes to be used as a general medium for exchanges—as a money. Over the centuries of civilization, gold and silver have been the leading commodities to be