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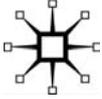
Money and Finance in Central Europe during the Later Middle Ages

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In memory of my parents

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	ix
<i>List of Tables</i>	x
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	xvi
Introduction: Medieval Finance in Central European Historiography <i>Roman Zaoral</i>	1
Part I Money and Minting	
1 A New Perspective on the Imperial Coinage <i>Hendrik Mäkeler</i>	25
2 The Reception of Imperial Monetary Reforms in 16th-Century Northern Germany <i>Michael North</i>	32
3 The Kremnica Town Book of Accounts: The Economy of a Mining and Mint Town in the Kingdom of Hungary <i>Martin Štefánik</i>	42
Part II Medieval Court Funding	
4 Financiers to the Blind King: Funding the Court of John the Blind (1310–1346) <i>Zdeněk Žalud</i>	59
5 The Financial Dimension of the Pledge Policy of King Sigismund of Luxembourg in Bohemia (1419–1437) <i>Stanislav Bárta</i>	76
6 The Pledge Policy of King Sigismund of Luxembourg in Hungary (1387–1437) <i>János Incze</i>	87

7	The Economic Background to and the Financial Politics of Queen Barbara of Cilli in Hungary (1406–1438) <i>Daniela Dvořáková</i>	110
8	The Courtly Accounts of Prince Sigismund Jagiello (Late 15th to Early 16th Centuries) and Their Historical Context <i>Petr Kozák</i>	129
Part III Trade and Towns		
9	Accounting Records of the Town Offices in Bohemia and Moravia: Methodology and Application <i>Pavla Slavíčková and Zdeněk Puchinger</i>	155
10	Remnants and Traces: In Search of Wrocław's Accounting Books (Late 14th to Early 16th Centuries) <i>Grzegorz Myśliwski</i>	169
11	Financial Obligations of the City of Gdańsk to King Casimir IV Jagiellon and His Successors in the Light of the 1468–1516 Ledger Book <i>Beata Możejko</i>	181
12	Old Interpretations and New Approaches: The 1457–1458 Thirtieth Customs Registers of Bratislava <i>Balázs Nagy</i>	192
Part IV Church and Money		
13	Financing a Legation: Papal Legates and Money in the Later Middle Ages <i>Antonín Kalous</i>	205
14	St Vitus Building Accounts (1372–1378): The Economic Aspects of Building the Cathedral <i>Marek Suchý</i>	222
15	'De mandato dominorum divisorum...': Finances in the Life of Prague's Metropolitan Chapter <i>Martina Maříková</i>	247
	<i>Index</i>	265

List of Figures

2.1	The Lower (grey) and Upper (black) Saxon Imperial Circles	34
2.2	Communication structures of the Lower Saxon Imperial Circle for 'Monetary Issues', 1579–1581	39
14.1	Weekly activity of setters, masons, carpenters and day labourers measured by their numbers at the building site or weekly expenses on their salaries in 1376	229
14.2	Weekly expenses for day labourers and their numbers (when recorded) at the building site in 1373	231
14.3	Weekly expenses for carpenters and their numbers (when recorded) at the building site in 1377	232
14.4	Weekly activity of carters and stonecutters measured by their numbers at the building site and amount of wagons or stone pieces delivered in 1376	235
14.5	Total expenses for different building activities in 1373	237
14.6	Total expenses for different building activities in 1375	237
14.7	Total expenses for different building activities in 1376	238
14.8	Total expenses for different building activities in 1377	238
14.9	Expenses for binding material in 1376	239

List of Tables

3.1	Income in gold florins	48
3.2	Income in accounting florins	48
3.3	Expenditure in accounting florins	51
3.4	Expenditure in gold florins	51
3.5	Contributions of the town and wealthiest burghers	52
3.6	Loans provided by the town	52
4.1	Creditors and debts	61
8.1	Types of currency	141
12.1	Balance of foreign trade	194
12.2	Distribution of imported goods	194
12.3	Distribution of exported goods	195
15.1	Time span of accounting registers	248
15.2	Content of the registers	249
15.3	Regular income of the common treasury	249
15.4	Principal expenditures of the common treasury	251
15.5	Evidentiary value of accounting registers	258

Preface

Money is a topic of enduring importance. Nevertheless, the financial history of Central Europe during the Middle Ages has lain outside the mainstream of scholarly interest for a long time. The aim of this volume is to fill this gap by publishing contributions by Central European historians that were presented at the international conference 'Financial Aspects of the Medieval Economy', held at Charles University in Prague on 17–19 October 2013.

All of the chapters are based on primary sources. They focus on both the broader context of monetary and fiscal policy and the analysis of different types of accounting sources. The authors pay attention to technical questions relating to the ways in which accounting entries have been recorded; how taxes, loans, debts, credit and account books themselves have been organized. Further, they consider what light these accounts can shed on everyday life, including on the value of things and their exchange, prosopographical possibilities and what they reveal about habitual practices. The contributions draw on late medieval sources found in various archives in Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary. They allow us to investigate the institutions in which they originated, and to reconstruct the budget of a given originator or the supply of money in circulation. Nevertheless, working with a large number and variety of documents gives rise to considerable methodical problems. Some of the following chapters therefore also analyse the internal structure and genesis of accounts to demonstrate how such sources, which seem at first sight to be standardized and homogeneous, are in fact, much more diverse and problematic on closer examination.

The analysis of late medieval financial sources from Central Europe can help us to explain aspects of the economy and society at that time, as well as everyday life in the broadest sense of the word. It also contributes to debates on the structure of such records and the methods used by their creators. At the same time it can introduce these questions and materials to an English speaking community of historians and thus serve as a basis for comparison with financial conditions in Western Europe. This will allow a better understanding of how Central Europe can properly be incorporated into European history.

The volume is divided into four thematic parts preceded by a treatise on Central European historiography concerning medieval finance.

The first thematic part is concerned with money and minting. Hendrik Mäkeler highlights areas that were of importance for the imperial coinage of the 14th century, including a projected monetary policy that would have united the west and east European currency systems. At the same time he explains how innovations in monetary theory and in finance originated in and around the major mints in Central Europe. Michael North deals with 16th-century monetary reforms in the Holy Roman Empire. These have been traditionally regarded as a failure by monetary historians and numismatists, but his chapter clarifies the communication processes between the Imperial Estates (princes and cities) in Northern Germany and the reformers working on behalf of the emperor. In particular, the differing interests between princes and cities and their strategies to gain support on the Imperial Diet (Reichstag) is examined. Martin Štefánik then focuses on the economic situation of Kremnica (Kremnitz/Körmöcbánya), the main mining and minting town in the Kingdom of Hungary during the reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437). His analysis of the Kremnica town book of accounts from 1423 to 1424 makes it possible to explore the structure of regular tax incomes, terms of tax collections, financial reserves and various expenses of this mining town. The book of accounts also contains information about the changing values of silver and gold coins, an issue which was of great importance for currency conditions in the whole Kingdom of Hungary.

The second part consists of five chapters related to medieval court funding. Zdeněk Žalud examines the role of credit in the territorial policy of John the Blind, King of Bohemia (1313–1346). This extraordinary source of income allowed the king not just to expand the territory of the county of Luxembourg, but also to acquire Upper Lusatia and Silesia. The chapter also deals with the activities and personal careers of four main creditors of the king: Peter I of Rosenberg, Arnold of Arlon, Frenzlín Jacobi of Prague and Gisco (Gisilbert) of Reste. King Sigismund of Luxembourg frequently resorted to pledging royal properties and this policy is the subject of two chapters: Stanislav Bárta traces the situation in Bohemia and János Incze in Hungary. Their studies are based on the analysis of sums pledged in relation to the annual issues of the pledged property as well as to other duties that the recipients were expected to fulfil. They also pay close attention to the legal phrasing and political rhetoric of pledge deeds, the size of the financial sums paid by pledgees as well as their personal stories. The economic background and financial

policy of Queen Barbara of Cilli in Hungary (1406–1438) is analysed by Daniela Dvořáková. With reference to charter evidence, she deals with the way the queen's extensive possessions were administered, as well as her incomes and expenses, including her debts and shopping in foreign markets. By analysing two court accounts, Petr Kozák explores the economic background to the travels of Prince Sigismund Jagiellon (late 15th to early 16th centuries). He investigates how finances, services and information were distributed, as well as sheds light on Sigismund's remarkable mobility.

The third part tackles trade and towns and includes four studies; Pavla Slavíčková and Zdeněk Puchinger seek to establish a methodology for the study of early accounting history. They study the techniques and operating procedures found in the accounting records used in the town offices of Bohemia and Moravia before 1750. Their proposed methodology is based on the examination of accounting institutes (balance sheet, final accounts) and accounting record keeping (particularly principles of continuity, balance sheet and completeness of records) from the moment of their origin through their subsequent development. At the same time, the authors present the first results from their analysis of the accounting books of the City of Olomouc in comparison with sources from other town offices in Bohemia and Moravia. Financial conditions in late medieval Breslau (Wrocław), the capital of Silesia, are the subject of the study by Grzegorz Myśliwski. This chapter focuses on fragments from lost accounting books, based on the assessment and interpretation of some direct references to them as well as on their indirect reflections in other sources. The author tries to answer the question of how much they were used by Breslau merchants. He also considers wider trends in the development of the economic administration in the city, including the use of double-entry bookkeeping. Another important trade city of medieval Central Europe is at the centre of Beata Mozejko's exploration of the role that the rents owed by the city played in the financial relationship between Danzig (Gdańsk) and Casimir IV, King of Poland (1440–1492). Using this connection, she also examines the way in which Danzig's financial obligations were recorded and realized. The 1457–1458 thirtieth customs registers of Pressburg (Pozsony/Bratislava) represent one of the most studied and frequently debated sources for the economic history of Hungary during the Middle Ages. Balázs Nagy seeks to re-interpret this source from the viewpoint of an adverse balance of Hungarian trade.

The fourth part is focused on the role of money in the church. Antonín Kalous discusses the various ways by which the legations of papal legates

throughout the Middle Ages were financed. The chapter highlights the different sources of payments for cardinal legates and other types of legates and nuncios, varying from *procuratio canonica* to individual benefices and the central income of the papal chamber, and how these changed from the 11th to the 16th centuries. Although its findings are wide-ranging, its main attention is on legations in Central Europe. Marek Suchý deals with the economic aspects of the construction of St Vitus cathedral in Prague. This research is based on a thorough analysis of weekly building accounts dated back to 1372–1378. The chapter grapples with methodological questions such as what has been recorded in the accounts (and, equally importantly, what has been not recorded) and in what manner the entry was made. A comprehensive interpretation of the accounts, in combination with other written, archaeological and iconographical sources, allows Suchý to reconstruct the course of the building work week-by-week. The accounts also shed light on wider economic questions. They are an invaluable source of information on the price of building materials and the living standards of the craftsmen working on the building site. In this way the author tries to quantify the total expenses for various building activities in particular years. The final contribution analyses four accounting registers and two fragments of the Prague Metropolitan Chapter from 1358 to 1418, which have been quite unknown until now. The broad spectrum of data contained in this source allows Martina Maříková to study a variety of different aspects of everyday life in the church milieu. The chapter poses important questions concerning accounting methods, the material conditions of residential canons and the chapter economy shortly before the Hussite Revolution.

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I would like to pay tribute to a number of institutions and people who have helped to make this volume possible. It is the output of the international conference which would not have come into being without the generous financial support of my home Faculty of Humanities at Charles University in Prague and of the Centre for Medieval Studies, joint workplace of Charles University and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, which provided lecture hall with all needed facilities. I am also immensely grateful to D'Maris Coffman, Tony K. Moore and Martin Allen for enforcement of their intent to publish conference papers within the Palgrave Studies in the History of Finance series and to the editorial team of Palgrave Macmillan, who showed the highest professional skill and flexibility in handling the project from start to finish. I would also like to offer heartfelt thanks to Tony K. Moore and Michael Goddard for language corrections, to František Kalenda for preparing the index as well as to all contributors for their valuable feedback on the ideas and evidence presented herein. My thanks are also due to the Gallery of the Central Bohemian Region for permission to reprint the late medieval Kutná Hora illumination on the cover of this volume. Last but not least, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my wife and my sister for their continuous support.

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