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Bookkeeping dates back to ancient history by Maxwood

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The first records and traces about bookkeeping have been found from the remains of old civilizations and from the area of for example ancient Mesopotamia and India. In those ancient days records were kept about the cattle and crops and the main purpose of the accounting was to keep the record on annual consumption and surpluses. The natural cycle of the farming gave an easy way to detect the resources.

Ancient romans kept also records on incomes and payments. Res Gestae Divi Augusti, dating back to AD 14, listed and quantified the public expenditure of Emperor Augustus. The purpose of this remarkable account wasn't, however, to monitor the expenditure of the state and give information for future investments, but to show to the subordinates how generous Augustus was for them. There were more professional accounts created as well in the times of Romans, and for example the army of the Roman Empire did neat bookkeeping on expenses and incomes.

The bible mentions accounting, but Quran was more precise on the term, transforming the accounts from the material records of products, resources and payments into the spiritual accounts and records on good and bad deeds, about which every human is entitled to report to God. Hindus, Jainas and buddhists have a concept of the spiritual accounting as well, since every good or bad deed adds to the account and affects the form in which the soul is born in the next life.

The modern accounting (in Finnish=kirjanpito) and double-entry bookkeeping was born later on, in the 14th century Venice, where the method of the Venetian merchants was first time described in letter. Double-entry bookkeeping is still used around the world in quite the same form.

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