

02

THE HISTORY OF STATISTICS **MIDDLE AGES**





MIDDLE AGES FRAGMENTED SOURCES

Medieval statistical sources were not state-wide since rural governments were not centralized. Statistical sources that we can find from that era include various foundation charters, last wills and testaments or records of purchase and/or donations of plots or real estate. There were also various listings and records made for the purposes of tax collection, conscriptions and property surveys. Feudal lords usually also kept records of their vassals, properties and taxes imposed, as well as other duties. Records of occupied houses or prospective conscripts were also preserved.

1058

*the oldest listing
preserved in
our territory*



The oldest document that is preserved in our territory that can be considered a statistical document is the listing of property of St. Stephen's Church in Litoměřice. According to the foundation charter, Spytihněv II, the Duke of Bohemia, "...those labourers from each of his castles, for each craft, as appropriate for a Duke's service, represented always by a man and a woman with their sons and daughters. He also donated fourteen villages to the guests and six villages to the chosen servants and ploughmen with all their necessities, i.e. forests and hides. He also gave them two vineyards with wine growers in sufficient numbers to cultivate it, thirty young female workers, then one hundred mares with a large field, as well as that many sheep, thirty cows and seventy pigs [...]. The names of the villages are: Křešice, Brná, Popovo, Zásada, Travčice, Řepčice, Týnec, Malečov, Březí, Ptačice, Liběšice, Chouč, Bohušovice, Chotěšov."



↑ Foundation charter of St. Stephen's Church in Litoměřice, 1058.



↑ Land and duties register from Broumov. Even old maps could be used as a statistical source.

LAND AND DUTIES REGISTER A STATISTICAL YEARBOOK FROM THE MIDDLE AGES

A land and duties register contained a total listing of the duties of serfs paid to the manorial lords per village or bailiwick. Alternatively, it was a record by name of all serfs and their duties. In addition to the land and duties register, there were also levy registers that kept records of actually collected fees, levies and performed compulsory labour.

The oldest land and duties registers in our territory are from the 13th century. They were compiled with the help of older records, donation deeds, testimonies or tradition. They also included data we can consider statistical findings. For instance, the land and duties register of the Rosenberg estate in southern Bohemia from 1373 contains evidence of the examination of the forest condition. It mentions the size of the forest, its composition by species and assumed method of exploitation.

Serfs paid their levies mostly twice a year, on the day of St. George (24 April) or St. John (24 June), and then on the day of St. Wenceslaus (28 September) or St. Gall (16 October). They were paid on other dates only very rarely. New land and duties registers had to be drawn up upon every change of conditions. The land and duties registers gradually developed into classic municipal or village land registers with records from the fields of contract law, inheritance law (last wills and testaments), family law (marriage articles, orphan's claims), and various



↑ Collection of taxes in kind in the Middle Ages.



In modern times, land and duties registers were followed by "Urbanial Fassions" that the nobility was obligated to draw up and maintain during the reign of Maria Theresa in order to obtain unified urbanial conditions throughout the entire country. While in Moravia from 1775 to 1776, the Fassions were drawn up in all fiefdoms. In Bohemia, the nobility boycotted such efforts and only a few new registers appeared. After the abolition of servitude in 1848, the land and duties registers lost their justification.

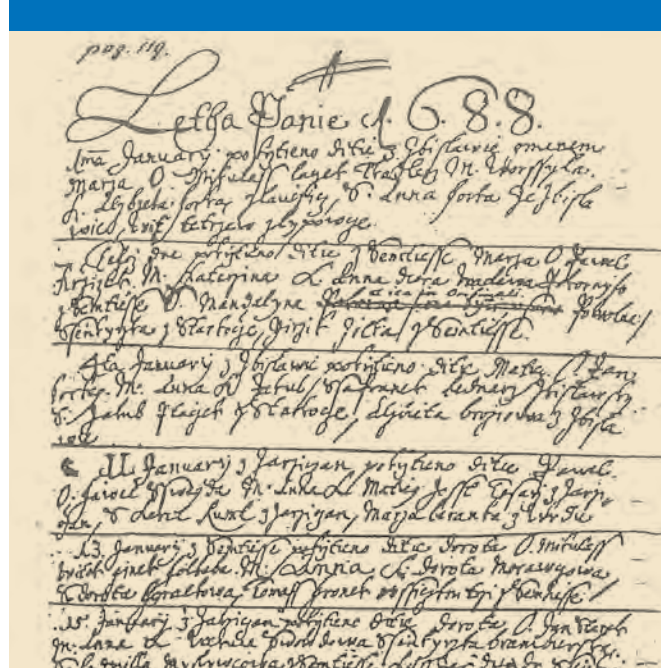
THE 13th CENTURY

PARISH REGISTERS

The first parish registers in Europe appeared in the 13th century. The oldest preserved register in our territory is the register of births from the municipality of Jáchymov from 1531. Registers contained records of marriages, baptisms and funerals. The records were usually in Czech or German and depended on the language prevailing in the parish or the nationality of the person who kept the register – it could have been not only the parish priest, but also a parish clerk or even a schoolmaster. In 1760, an ordinance was published that ordered the mandatory use of Latin. Until 1784, all records in registers were in sentences with a prescribed form that, however, was not unified and varied according to the writer's style.

For births, the writer stated the year, month and day of baptism of the child, name and surname of the baptizing person, the child's name, the father's name and by-name or surname and the mother's name. Then followed the names and surnames of godparents. Information on newlyweds included the date of the wedding, the names and surnames of the betrothed couple, the names of their parents, witnesses, the priest and information about the form of the banns. For death records, the pertinent information included the date of the funeral, the name and surname of the deceased person and his or her approximate age. There was also a note about the administration of last rites and the name of the person responsible for burying the deceased.

In 1781, all registers became public documents, and as of 1784, clerics had to submit their records of the registers to state offices. In 1785, the records in registers were unified and the form of sentences was replaced by filling out pre-printed forms. In 1950, registers came under the supervision of national committees. Today they are maintained by municipal authorities, and they keep track of weddings, births and deaths.



↑ ↓ A register of births from the Zbyslav parish.

The year of our Lord 1688

On the 1st of January a child of Zbyslav was baptised by the name of Mařa. F. Mikuláš Hájek, a weaver, M. Vorřila, G. Alžběta Horká of Loučice, W. Anna Horká of Zbyslav, Vít Tetřev of Lipovec.

On the same day, a child of Semtěš was baptised by the name of Mařa. F. Pavel Křížek, M. Kateřina.

G. Anna, daughter of Václav Pokorný of Semtěš, W. Mandalyňa Povolná, a barkeep of Starkoč, Jiřík Jilka of Semtěš.

On the 4th of January a child was baptised by the name of Matěj. F. Jan Horký, M. Anna. G. Jakub Šafránek, a barrel maker of Zbyslav, W. Jakub Ptáček of Starkoč, Alžběta Brožova of Zbyslav.

On the 11th of January a child was baptised in Zařičany by the name of Pavel. F. Pavel Švejda. M. Anna. G. Matěj Jořt, a bailiff of Zařičany, W. Havel Ruml of Zařičany, Mařa Beranka of Vrd.

On the 13th of January a child was baptised in Semtěš by the name of Dorota. F. Mikuláš Vítek otherwise called Holbaba. M. Anna, G. Dorota Moravcová, W. Dorota Horalková, Tomáš Hronek, all three of Semtěš.

Note: F – father, M. – mother, G. – godparent, W. – witness.

MIDDLE AGES

MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE...

1086 ENGLAND: THE DOOMSDAY BOOK

In 1086, William the Conqueror ordered to have drawn up the Domesday Book that registered all landholders in England. According to this book, there were about 9 300 landholders from the ranks of nobility and clergy, 85 000 freemen, 108 000 subject serfs and 25 000 slaves, who became bondsmen in the next century. One may deduce that at that time there were about 300 000 heads of household, i.e. about 1.5 to 2 million persons living in England.

1381 CHINA

The official population census of China in 1381 ended up with 59 873 305 persons. The following census that occurred ten years later, however, arrived at a number that was lower by 3 million. Years of corrections and adjustments followed until 1393, when the emperor was finally satisfied with the total number of 60 545 812 persons.

1427 THE FLORENTINE CATASTO

The Florentine Catasto contains demographic data of the Florence dominion in Tuscany. It included data on the population census and property listings carried out by the Republic of Florence in 1427–1429. Each household was represented by the name of its head, the number of its members and its property. The head of the household was responsible for proper payment of all levies and taxes. There was a flat tax rate that equalled approximately 0.5% of taxable supplies.

↓ *Florence in the Middle Ages had more than 100 000 inhabitants.*



↑ *Monastic libraries are an inexhaustible source.*



↓ *An example of a record in the catasto.*

Agnolo Lorenzo Machiavelli, banker, 45 years of age, married, head of a ten-member household. Total property equals 2 013 florins, taxable 1 992 florins. He lives in his own house in the Santo Spirito quarter (a part of Nichio), and does not own any animals.