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The book begins by tracing the growth and development of monetary systems, from the ancient civilisations of Mesopotamia and Egypt to the establishment of coinage in the Greek and Roman world. The following chapters develop a broader world view, exploring the monetary systems of Europe during the Middle Ages, the Islamic world, India and China. In the final part of the book the focus is on the processes by which money has become a global phenomenon, with chapters looking at the expanding role of money in early modern Europe and the Americas and the introduction of paper money and banking, the effect of European contacts on the local payment systems of Africa and Oceania, and concluding with an examination of the increasing impact of economic thought on monetary affairs.

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Money: A History By Catherine Eagleton, Jonathan Williams Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1641610 in Books
- Published on: 2007-12-31
- Released on: 2014-09-09
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.50" h x 7.25" w x .75" l, 1.83 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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Editorial Review

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An untold number of books have chronicled--and even pictured--the history of money. These range from scholarly economic treatises to lavishly illustrated works to John Kenneth Galbraith's sweeping *Money: Whence It Came, Where It Went* (1975). This new look at the growth and development of ancient monetary systems and the origins of coinage occupies a niche somewhere in between. Williams is a curator in the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum and a specialist in Roman and Iron Age coins. In the context of today's increasingly "cashless society," this is a fascinating survey of the roles played by various cultures in the concept and evolution of money and exchange. Williams traces the rise and diversity of various mediums of exchange and coinage in Mesopotamia, ancient Greece and Egypt, the Roman world, medieval Europe, Islamic lands, and Asia, Africa, and Oceania. The text is superbly enhanced by more than 500 illustrations, more than 200 of which will be in color. *David Rouse*

Review

"It is easier to write about money than to acquire it..." Voltaire "This volume will...make an excellent reference book for all decent libraries....it is also to be recommended as a handsome addition to individual coffee table collections." *History Today*

About the Author

Catherine Eagleton is a curators at the British Museum, specializing in modern money and Roman and Iron Age coins respectively.

Jonathan Williams is a curator at the British Museum, specializing in modern money and Roman and Iron Age coins respectively.

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