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Arndt Brendecke (Hg.)

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9.3 Structure and practice in the emergence of *Registratur*:  
the genealogy and implications of Innsbruck registries, 1523–1565<sup>1</sup>

In organizing and reorganizing archival collections, modern archivists generally follow the principle of provenance, which rests on two assertions: first, that bodies of records naturally and organically reflect the organizations and processes that produced them; and second, that the resulting arrangement of records should be retained as they move to different repositories, even if the purpose of retention changes.<sup>2</sup> This paper investigates practices in early modern Europe that predated the theory of provenance, and argues that early modern registry (*Registratur*) in particular directly contributed to the theory's emergence. Like other ways of thinking about records from the past, such as Mabillonian diplomatics and the *ius archivi* of the eighteenth century, provenance as an explicit theory developed in the nineteenth-century as an interpretation of record-keeping practices of the early modern period, practices that depended closely on the consolidation of the administrative state.<sup>3</sup> Understanding those earlier practices, therefore, makes it clear that we should not naturalize provenance as universal principle, but rather understand it as a culturally-infllected approach to understanding and managing repositories in a particular tradition, namely the recordkeeping of early modern European states.

Dutch and North German archival traditions of *Registratur* – the name given to the region's distinctive approach to managing and arranging state records – were an important precursor of the category of provenance, which became to

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1 The author wishes to thank the University of California Academic Senate and the Newberry Library/National Endowment for the Humanities, which provided funding for research; the staff of the Tiroler Landesarchiv, Innsbruck, especially Dr. Christoph Haidacher, who enabled additional research despite restricted archive hours; and Mr. Kyle Stevenson for assistance with preparing the manuscript.

2 Nineteenth- and twentieth-century archival science made abundant use of metaphors of naturalness and organicism in describing the principle of provenance. A typical example, appears in Ludwig Bittner's introduction to the published inventory to the Viennese Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv: Bittner, Ludwig: *Gesamtinventar des Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs, aufgebaut auf der Geschichte des Archivs und seiner Bestände*. 5 Vols. Vienna 1936–1940, e.g., p. 10.

3 For more on this connection, see my article: Head, Randolph C.: Documents, archives and proof around 1700, in: *The Historical Journal* 56 (2013), pp. 909–30.

central to European archival theory and practice in the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The most widely known form of *Registratur* is the Prussian *Sachaktenregistratur*.<sup>5</sup> Scrutinizing registry practices in European chancelleries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is thus a vital step in understanding both how practitioners and later thinkers conceptualized records management. The practices involved in recordkeeping at every level deserve scrutiny, from the scribal practices of clerks (which remained relatively stable), to increasingly bureaucratized practices of decision-making, to practices of governance as an evolving game among power players. This paper will concentrate on the sophisticated serial registry that crystallized in the new Innsbruck *Hofkanzlei* around 1565. I will argue that the combination of codex-based recordkeeping in sixteenth-century Innsbruck with the architecture of the Habsburg system of dominion shaped the emergence of *Registratur* there in a way distinct from both the *Amtsbuchregistraturen* of urban administrations and the Prussian *Sachaktenregistratur*. Understanding a wider range of early modern registry practices helps illuminate how the theory of provenance emerged from them.

My approach here builds on Joachim Lehmann's observation forty years ago that we must question *which* late medieval modes of record compilation lay behind the *Registratur* of the seventeenth century and beyond, rather than assuming a straightforward trajectory from late medieval chancelleries to early modern registries to modern archival science.<sup>6</sup> The timing and the political-administrative context of different registries' emergence left indelible traces in the practices they adopted. The Innsbruck case, I argue, helps us see that the pathway from medieval registers to early modern records management had multiple branches that recombined existing practices in different ways, thus revealing the conceptual horizons of the actors involved. I am therefore convinced that we need to enrich and revise the *Aktenkunde* launched by Heinrich Otto Meisner and Johannes

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4 The practices that underlie theories of provenance clearly reflected certain forms of social and political organization that extended far beyond early governmentality, but I argue that the specific pathway from registry (*Registratur*) to the theory of provenance is closely tied to the exercise of dominion, and only later colonized other bodies of documents.

5 The seminal contribution of the archival manual of Müller, Feith and Fruin to the concept of provenance, which integrally linked provenance to a *Registraturprinzip*, drew on long-standing Dutch and German practices and the archival science that was emerging in interaction with them. For a brief introduction, see: Ridener, John: *From Polders to Postmodernism. A Concise History of Archival Theory*. Duluth 2008. Ridener draws heavily on the work of Eric Ketelaar and his students.

6 Lehmann, Joachim: *Registraturgeschichte und quellenkundliche Aspekte älterer Kanzleiregister*, in: *Archivmitteilungen* 26/1 (1976), pp. 13–18; Ernst Pitz's seminal study, *Schrift- und Aktenwesen der städtischen Verwaltung im Spätmittelalter. Köln – Nürnberg – Lübeck*. Cologne 1959, raises similar issues explicitly in the context of urban *Amtsbuchregistraturen*.

Papritz after the war, and recently reinvigorated by Jürgen Kloosterhuis and Michael Hochedlinger, in order to fully understand the processes involved.<sup>7</sup>

### 9.3.1 Defining Registry

The German term *Registratur* is polysemic, applying equally to institutions for records management and the bodies of records and finding aids that such institutions generated. Deriving from the ubiquitous older term ‘register’, *Registratur* came ultimately to designate the entire management of governmental records between the chancellery and the archive.<sup>8</sup> In Cornelia Vissman’s words, “Around 1600, registries that hitherto had acted as specially designated keys to specific little treasure boxes start turning into independent agencies that connected records, their users, and the chancery personnel. The registry was an interim zone in which circulating records turned into recorded files.”<sup>9</sup>

In a way, the emergence of registries as distinct offices formalized practices for dealing with the material that accumulated *ad hoc* in chancelleries, separately from treasury-archives of older charters stored in some sacral location: registry and archive thus helped define each other’s boundaries as both crystallized after 1400.<sup>10</sup> In the nineteenth century, material from both registries and the archival treasuries reconverged to produce the modern heterogeneous state archive. The emergence of the registry as a distinct institution between these endpoints – as cannot be emphasized enough – corresponded closely to changing modes of administration that increasingly relied on written records to conduct diplomacy and to administer subjects and territories. For the early modern period, registry can be defined as: assemblages of administrative structures and practices dedicated to managing documents and the information in them, with the resulting records organized in ways that privileged the internal processes of the producing

7 Meisner, Heinrich O.: *Urkunden- und Aktenlehre der Neuzeit*. Leipzig 1950; id.: *Aktenkunde: Ein Handbuch für Archivbenützer, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Brandenburg-Preußens*. Berlin 1935; Papritz, Johannes: *Neuzeitliche Methoden der archivischen Ordnung (Schriftgut vor 1800)*, in: *Archivum* 14 (1964), pp. 13–56; Kloosterhuis, Jürgen: *Amtliche Aktenkunde der Neuzeit. Ein hilfswissenschaftliches Kompendium*, in: *Archiv für Diplomatik* 45 (1999), pp. 465–563; Hochedlinger, Michael: *Aktenkunde: Urkunden- und Aktenlehre der Neuzeit*. Vienna/Munich 2009.

8 On the evolution of the terms, see: Hochedlinger, *Aktenkunde*, p. 61.

9 Vismann, Cornelia: *Files. Law and Media Technology*. Palo Alto 2008, p. 97.

10 Pitz, *Schrift- und Aktenwesen*, p. 467.

actors, and intentionally held accessible to support administrative and political decision-making by rulers and their agents.<sup>11</sup>

This definition helps clarify the difference between medieval registers and early modern registries (viewed as recordkeeping protocols): the latter always gathered heterogeneous records, usually including some internal to a political body, some arriving from its subjects and from other polities, and some it emitted, whether these were charters, letters, or belonged to other genres. This heterogeneity, together with the growing volume of documents in circulation, had the consequence that the material found in any registry increasingly required the context of other records to become effectively meaningful.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the idealized self-definition of the classical *Urkunde*, the files of European registries were thus explicitly contextual. Files were also conceptualized as a resource for administration as much as an armoury for litigation, useful if they could be connected to future contexts of contestation.<sup>13</sup>

An emergent characteristic of registries was that they increasingly organized material according to administrative entities or processes, rather than according to content (here lies one root of the later idea of provenance). Two other features characterized early modern registries (especially in their Germanic versions) as they became a systematized practice. First, registries provided spaces for *all* documents (at least, potentially) that arose in the course of administrative governance. No matter what a transaction involved, its *Sachakte* had a place in the larger *Aktenplan* of the Prussian registry, or its individual records in the serial storage

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11 This definition draws most directly on Hochedlinger, *Aktenkunde*, p. 22: “Als Registratur bezeichnet man [...] jene Abteilung oder jenen Ort einer Behörde usw., an dem das im Geschäftsgang erwachsene Schriftgut in einem bestimmten Ordnungszusammenhang verwaltet und abgelegt wird, um für die laufenden Geschäften benützlich zu bleiben.” As is common in much of archival theory, Hochedlinger’s definition comprises both the institution and the place (“Abteilung [...] einer Behörde” as well as “Ort”).

12 In this, they are a specific site for a general process proposed by Simon Teuscher: Teuscher, Simon: Document collections, mobilized regulations, and the making of customary law at the end of the Middle Ages, in: *Archival Science* 10 (2010), pp. 210–230; and more comprehensively in: id.: *Erzähltes Recht*. Frankfurt a. M. 2007.

13 The terminology here from Bautier, Robert-Henri: La phase cruciale de l’histoire de le archivistique, in: *Archivum* 18 (1968), pp. 139–149. In this, registries accelerated but also changed the dynamic of *desemiosis*, *transsemiosis*, and *resemiosis* that characterizes all practices of document storage. See the introduction to Hildbrand, Thomas: *Herrschaft, Schrift und Gedächtnis. Das Kloster Allerheiligen und sein Umgang mit Wissen in Wirtschaft, Recht und Archiv (11.–16. Jahrhundert)*. Zurich 1996 for an analysis of and argument for these terms.

of the Austrian system.<sup>14</sup> A second critical feature of registries is that they were conceived and oriented toward *future* transactions: registries built on on-going practices for managing records, which set them apart from the retrospective focus that characterized many early projects of archival organization.

### 9.3.2 The Innsbruck *Hofregistratur* after 1564

A sophisticated registry emerged in Innsbruck in 1564, drawing on both local and Viennese antecedents. The rupture in the Austrian Habsburg succession on the death of Ferdinand I in 1564, during which his sons divided his realms into three segments, provided the new Tyrolean Archduke Ferdinand's administrators with the opportunity to transform the tools they knew from Innsbruck, Vienna and Prague into a new system. The result was a distinctive corpus built by well-defined practices, the so-called *Hofregistratur*,<sup>15</sup> that operated without interruption until 1667 and whose principles continued to shape Austrian registry practice into the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup>

Several earlier systems contributed to the *Hofregistratur*. The powerful codex-based record-keeping systems established in Innsbruck during the 1520s provided one key source of practices for the *Hofregistratur*. Of vital importance is that Innsbruck practice in the mid-sixteenth century relied on the seriality of the codex not just for its material form, but also for its logic. The Innsbruck copybook series protocolled and indexed diverse genres of communications and decisions coming into or going out of the regional chancellery after 1523. In particular, two special book-series covered correspondence from or to the

14 Miller, Thea: The German Registry. The Evolution of a Recordkeeping Model, in: *Archival Science* 3 (2003), pp. 43–63 (here 51) cites a revealing clause an 18<sup>th</sup> century Prussian administrative manual that instructs each *Registrator* “to think of the registry assigned to him as a whole,” and to “identify the principle concept of this whole, and check to see if the divisions which have been made are genuine constituents of this concept.”

15 The *Hofregistratur* had shifting names from the sixteenth to early twentieth centuries. Otto Stolz proposed calling this particular corpus the *Hofregistratur*: Stolz, Otto: *Archiv- und Registraturwesen der oberösterreichischen (tirolisch-schwäbischen) Regierung im 16. Jahrhundert*, in: *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 42/43 (1934), pp. 81–136, here p. 105, pointing out that the term was already in circulation in Maximilian I's time. The materials in the *Hofregistratur* were substantially reorganized in the 1990s according to very granular principles of provenance and are now described in Beimrohr, Wilfried: *Das Tiroler Landesarchiv und seine Bestände*. Innsbruck 2002 pp. 87–88 under the designation Landesfürstlichen Kanzleien: Oberösterreichischer Hofrat.

16 The system is described in great detail in Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, pp. 107–113. I have worked with the early volumes in the series to examine the indexing principles. Tiroler Landesarchiv [=TLA], *Hofregistratur/Hofrat*, *Journale/Protokolle, Einkommene Schriften*, Series R, vol. 1; *Einkommene Schriften*, Series K, vol. 25; *Konzeptbücher*, Series R, vol. 49; *Konzeptbücher*, Series K, vol. 73 (all from 1564 to 1566.)



usually distant sovereign, and were thus ordered according to decision-making pathways rather than by content or pertinence.<sup>17</sup> The Innsbruck copybooks represent a particularly well-articulated example of the expansion of late medieval registers to cover informational records of multiple types, and continued to be produced throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The new Innsbruck court chancellery also drew on Viennese antecedents as it began business. As Archduke Ferdinand acceded to the Tyrol under the terms of his father's testament, masses of documents were redistributed to reflect the new organization of the Austrian lands. A substantial body of loose documents from Vienna, gathered chronologically into bundles dating from 1528 to 1564, found its way to Innsbruck, and may have provided a second impetus for the *Hofregistratur*.<sup>18</sup> The practice of collecting drafts of outgoing documents and originals of incoming material was already described in the Vienna chancellery ordinance of 1526: several categories of documents were to be gathered monthly into bundles, while the secretaries were to record their key points in memory books (*Gedenkbücher*), along with notes on oral transactions.<sup>19</sup>

On his accession, Archduke Ferdinand appointed a court chancellor to manage his Tyrolean affairs, who proceeded to found the new court chancellery and *Hofregistratur*. The latter did not cover the entire Innsbruck administration: rather, as its name suggests, it was the registry of Archduke Ferdinand II's own court (*Hof*), whose chancellery communicated with the separate chancelleries

17 The context of an itinerant emperor and archduke communicating constantly with several central chancelleries left a deep mark on Austrian chancellery practice: from the early 1520s, each administrative center kept serial records of this correspondence as a separate corpus from the recordkeeping on local administration. Notably, this corpus was serial but not based on a fixed schedule, in contrast to the famous Jesuit annual letters analyzed in Friedrich, Markus: *Der lange Arm Roms? Globale Verwaltung und Kommunikation im Jesuitenorden 1540–1773*. Frankfurt a. M. 2011. The different communicative context led to different archival strategies.

18 Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 105. On p.108, Stolz notes that the fascicles of documents now found in Innsbruck are products of the nineteenth-century: the basic unit of storage and management before that was the monthly bundle, each of which had a cover sheet on which the series, month and year appeared in large calligraphic script.

19 The terms *Gedenkbuch* and *Gedächtnisbuch* both appear. I rely on Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, pp. 105–106, for the Vienna materials. Stolz reports that none of these Vienna memory books or the associated bundles survive in Vienna. Innsbruck archivists have speculated that similar bundling and storage took place in Innsbruck after 1523, but no such bundles from the critical period 1523–1564 survive (cf. Beimrohr, *Das Tiroler Landesarchiv*, p. 70). It is not clear, however, why retention would have seemed important in the first place for the Tirol administration, seeing that all important documents were copied into the massive codex copybooks started in 1523 (which appears to have distinguished the Innsbruck administration from the Viennese, where storage of documents and recording of metadata in the *Gedächtnisbücher* was the preferred approach).

for the administration of the *Vorlande* to the west, and with Vienna, Prague, Graz, Milan and other Habsburg centres. In this respect, the new structure reproduced Innsbruck's place in the Habsburg composite monarchy, linked to a separate imperial court chancellery that corresponded with various regional chancelleries. The documents that circulated through the new *Hofkanzlei* were extremely diverse in nature: they included diplomatic correspondence, correspondence on Habsburg family affairs, commands and reports from the regional administrations, and personal affairs of the Archduke and his court, right down to the purchase of English hunting dogs for his amusement.

The system that the new *Hofkanzlei* established to manage loose records shows clearly that the secretaries' goal was to know about and have easy access to every document that reached them (whether from the territorial chancelleries in Innsbruck, from subjects, from other Habsburg centres, or from anyone else), and also of every document sent out in the Archduke's name. To achieve this goal, they recombined elements from the existing Innsbruck copybook system and from the Viennese system of bundling documents and recording their contents in a *Gedenkbuch*. Unlike the older Innsbruck copybooks, into which secretaries copied important incoming and outgoing documents, the *Hofregistratur* was built around preserving and accessing the actual documents. In contrast to the flexible Viennese *Gedenkbücher*, however, the new journals were organized as strictly chronological protocols that closely mirrored the arrangements of the documents in storage, and that were provided with detailed alphabetical indexes managed according to Innsbruck indexing practices.

Both the Viennese and Innsbruck practices that the *Hofkanzlei* adopted went beyond High Medieval practices and thus may be considered true registries (*Registraturen*), as the Habsburgs' own designations suggest. They made heterogeneous documents (well beyond formal proof-records) accessible to support decision-making; they were organized according to the flow of documents rather than according to their contents; and they were capacious, open-ended and designed for continuous additions. At the same time, the continuity of media technologies and decision-making practices during the *Hofregistratur's* evolution out of existing practices left deep traces in its organizational logic and practical operation. Notably, the system's reliance on the codex form and the technologies that made it so effective (foliation, rubrication, alphabetical indexing) helps explain the dominance of linear chronological order in both the storage of documents and the construction of finding-aids (though, as we shall see, exceptions to this logic emerged very early in the *Hofregistratur's* operation). The adaptation of the Viennese bundle-and-*Gedenkbuch* approach, meanwhile, helped free metadata from documents, allowing the production of denser finding aids for placement in the chancellery, while the bulky documents could accumulate in separate repositories.

A closer examination reveals that the *Hofregistratur* was not only built on sixteenth-century chancellery practices, but was ultimately also limited by them. At the heart of the *Hofregistratur* lay an elegant linkage between structures for storage and finding, on the one hand, and processes of registration and management on the other. Despite the heterogeneous genres of documents it included, the *Hofregistratur* divided them into only two major categories – one for political matters, the other for fiscal affairs – which in turn were divided only into incoming and outgoing chronological series. Documents in each of the four resulting series were stored in monthly bundles, with documents placed by the date of their issue.<sup>20</sup> For incoming documents, the Innsbruck *Hofkanzlei* sent the original document to storage once it had been dealt with by the Archduke's court and had been journaled and indexed. For outgoing documents, it was the chancellery's final draft (the *Konzept*) that went to storage after the actual emitted charter or letter was complete. This meant that adjacent documents in the main series usually had no connection to one another, since only their date determined their position (as had been the case in the Innsbruck serial copybooks that preceded the *Hofregistratur*). The practice of journaling each document by date, meanwhile, meant that entries in the journals mirrored the sequence of the stored records: the journals thus served as a browsable inventory as well as an indexed protocol to the separate documents in storage.

The journals' indexes provided the primary way to access and identify documents for later use. Indexing allowed users to move from a category of action or actor that they were interested in to a document summary, which could reveal what was involved and whether retrieving the document was worthwhile. If it was, the journal, mirroring the repository, also provided information about a document's location. The summaries in the journals were concise – typically three to four entries per quarto page in the journals – and occupied only the right-hand section of each page; in the left-hand section, keywords (rubrics) identified the document's main matters and actors. Each journal entry typically had several keywords, which then appeared in the volume's index. Just beneath each entry was information on where the document was located. In many cases, this information consisted simply of the document's date (sometimes with the abbreviation G.M., for *Gemeine Missive*), which was sufficient to identify the monthly bundle and position. Other documents, however, had a special 'rubric' category next to the date: such documents did not take their places in the main series, but were rather extracted and placed in sub-series dedicated to specific

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20 The sorting into series was according to a *Vermerk* or annotation made by the chancellery's *Registrator*, on the top or back of each document. For incoming documents, the date was that of the document's production, not the date it was received in Innsbruck by the chancellery. Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 108.

topics. This practice points to the limits of the system's chronological logic, which was implicit in book-form registry, but became increasingly problematic for a loose-document registry as its repository grew.

Naturally, this entire system did not take shape overnight in 1564. The names of the journal volumes, the number of series (originally five, not four) and other details took several years to work out.<sup>21</sup> A few early journal volumes actually carry the title *Gedenkbuch*, used in Vienna since 1526, helping confirm the influence of Vienna practices in establishing the *Hofregistratur*.<sup>22</sup> Once fully established, though, the system operated largely without interruption through the following archducal reigns. It is worth noting how labour-intensive such a registry was. In Innsbruck, every document had to be analysed, journaled, indexed, and placed in the right sequence. Ferdinand's *Hofkanzlei* employed a dozen men, including a chancellor, four secretaries, and seven scribes, to keep up with this work – all in addition to the Tyrolean territorial chancellery.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the costs involved and the challenges of storing the rapidly accumulating bundles, certain features of this system began undermining its efficiency from the outset.<sup>24</sup> The first problem arose from the use of rubrics to separate groups of documents from the main series of *gemeine Missiven*, which were ordered chronologically.<sup>25</sup> Although journaled and indexed with the main series, the documents involved were stored as separate groups, breaking the otherwise comprehensive mirroring between journals and storage. Aside from the mechanics of managing the growing complexity of the document bundles this caused, the rubrics thus undermined the coherence of the chronological system. The rubrics themselves were heterogeneous, including domains and places, people, events, areas of governmental action, and others. As Otto Stolz notes, "These show no signs of a planned and systematic principle of division, but were only chosen from time to time according to need; once they had been

21 The fifth series, for outgoing general missives, existed only in 1566 and 1567, after which four series of documents and journals were again maintained. See: TLA, Repertorium B342, pp. 36–37; I rely on my own observations of the series and volume names as recorded in various locations, as well.

22 Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 109, discussing the changing terminology.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86, describes the personnel in Innsbruck. The regional chanceries for the Tyrol, which continued to operate the copybooks mentioned above, had an even larger staff.

24 The travails of the accumulated documents are traced in Beimrohr, Wilfried: *Die Ehemalige Hofregistratur. Ein Überblick*, (msc. 1996), TLA, Repertorium B 701/1–13.

25 See Beimrohr, *Das Tiroler Landesarchiv*, p. 100; Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, pp. 108–109. TLA, Repertorium 701/7, p. 3, describes the process, using the term *Betreff-akten*, 'topical files', which is more accurate than calling this material a *Sachaktenregistratur*, since the rubrics identified topics rather than specific transactions. There were eventually some 186 special rubrics, according to Beimrohr's careful count.

established, however, they were preserved.<sup>26</sup> In effect, the material gathered under rubrics formed a separate, content-oriented registry of its own. Although still tracked through the journals, the proliferation of unsystematic rubric categories meant that documents became more burdensome to find and easier to misfile at their return to storage. By 1667, the disorder was sufficient that a special adjunct registrar had to draft a new systematic index for the material held under rubrics.<sup>27</sup>

The rigidity of the *Hofregistratur's* chronological structure and the resulting proliferation of journal volumes became a second obstacle as the system continued in operation. Searching the journals in the 1570s would have been easy, since only a few existed in each series; thirty years later, the same search might involve searching the indexes of forty or more journals in both incoming and outgoing series. Lacking anything like a card catalogue, searching grew ever more burdensome as the system continued to operate.<sup>28</sup> Finally (and unlike the later Prussian *Sachakte*), the Innsbruck *Registratur* provided no way to include documents produced during internal deliberations within the court, which represented an important new genre of document in the early modern period. Only incoming and outgoing documents were journaled.

Still, the *Hofregistratur* represents an impressive and innovative cultural product. Building on the codex-based practices they had already developed to manage governance with an itinerant sovereign, the officials in the new Innsbruck *Hofkanzlei* used the opportunity to create a machine for managing documents that their archduke and his council could use in the process of governing. This system rested on a strikingly systematic chronological storage of documents, together with coherent metadata in book form that allowed individual loose documents to be located, at least in theory, with great precision.<sup>29</sup> Notably, this comprehensive system needed neither new media nor new technologies to operate: the codex, the bundle, and the alphabetical index were already familiar and well-honed tools in Vienna and Innsbruck, as they were across sixteenth-century Europe.

26 Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 109, with a full list of the rubrics on p. 116.

27 In particular, there was a tendency for documents from the chronological series to wander into the rubrics, rendering the journal indexes incorrect. On filing problems, Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 113; on the 1667 reorganization, p. 109.

28 In Stolz's words, "Da muß man oft ziemlich viele Jahresrepertorien durchsehen und die entsprechenden Bündel öffnen, um alle einzelnen Akten zu finden, welche über eine bestimmte Angelegenheit handeln." Stolz, *Archiv- und Registraturwesen*, p. 113.

29 The management of loose documents as they proliferated was one of the greatest challenges to all late medieval and early modern chancelleries. Varied responses emerged, most of them heavily reliant on deploying practices enabled by the technologies of the codex.

### 9.3.3 Conclusions

To study archives is to study two things at once: the collections of records that describe events, actions and ideas in the past, and simultaneously one of the critical tools for conducting historical research in the first place. The order in which we encounter historical records, the finding aids (contemporary and modern) and the published guides that help us use them are themselves both products of and tools for historical research. In consequence, the history of archives imposes on its researchers an unavoidable duality of perspective – immanent, perhaps, in all uses of surviving texts to elucidate the past, but here explicit and an integral part of the task of understanding archives as historical phenomena. We all use archives shaped by a century of management according to the principles of provenance and *respect des fonds*; but when we study the history of those archives, those modern principles can become a conceptual veil that as easily obscures as well as reveals how each archive evolved. In this paper, I have sought to show how close attention to specific practices can help us understand both the construction of particular repositories and finding tools as they existed in the past, and how past practices shaped the conceptual terrain on which later archivists stood as they created both the archives that we now use and archival science that continues to guide their arrangement.