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The Provenance of Provenance in Germanic Areas

Maynard Brichford

The conventional story is that the principle of provenance was "formulated at the French National Archives" in the 1820s and adopted gradually in nineteenth century Europe as a response to the necessity to organize archival material for scholarly research. Based on the 1841 French statement concerning *respect des fonds* in departmental archives, the Prussian edict of 1881, the publication of the classical and neutral formulation by Muller, Feith, and Fruin in 1898, and the international ratification at the Brussels Conference in 1910, the principle of provenance became a governing factor in archival arrangement.

This story does not always take into consideration the status of archival practice and the literature available at the time. Often, the story was written by archivists who were influenced by their association with programs that had invested man-years in the restoration of provenance. Many archives were planned and established and had arrangement systems determined long before the French Revolution. Provenance or organization

according to source was a natural and normal practice. Bureaucracy and hierarchy provided a rational organizational structure for government and a natural organizational scheme for archives. Archivists had kept records according to their origin in chancellery or financial chamber for hundreds of years. Provenance was a significant factor in the authentication, appraisal, and description of archives as well as their arrangement. While archival theory and practice developed along parallel lines in all major European states, the acceptance of the principle of provenance in the German states of Prussia, Saxony, Hesse, Bavaria, and Austria illustrated how archival growth and state building established provenance as a fundamental part of archival theory.¹

In 1632, the Venetian scholar Baldassare Bonifacio noted that "order itself is something divine" and that academicians called order "the soul of the world." He held that "confused and badly mixed" archives "are of no use." In the ninth chapter of his *De Archivis*, Bonifacio recommended dividing archives first by locations, then by affairs, and finally by times. Locations were for material pertaining to the Italian cities from which Venice received records. Affairs included categories for wills, trade documents, and contracts. His strong commitment to a tertiary chronological order was followed by an appeal for alphabetical indexes.²

¹ Ludwig Bittner, "Einleitung. Die geschichtliche Entwicklung des archivalischen Besitzstandes und der Einrichtungen des Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv," in *Gesamtinventar des Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* (Wien: Adolf Holzhausen, 1936), 10; Theodore R. Schellenberg, *The Management of Archives* (New York: Columbia University, 1965), 42.

² Lester K. Born, "Baldassare Bonifacio and his Essay *De Archivis*," *The American Archivist* 4 (1941): 236.

There is a direct connection between diplomatics and provenance or *respect des fonds*—between the seventeenth and eighteenth century work of the Maurist scholar Jean Mabillon and Göttingen history professor Johann Gatterer and those who formulated the nineteenth century archival theory of arrangement. In 1681, Mabillon's *De Re Diplomatica* created the science of documentary criticism and the authentication of documents. Mabillon's detailed studies and comparisons of documents issued from the same chancellery focused attention on the source of records. In 1764, Gatterer founded a historical institute to provide an academic basis for instruction in the disciplines required for archival practice. Diplomatic manuals included sections on the chancelleries, their organization, and documents they issued.³

Before the French Revolution, archivists were administrative or juridical officials who supplied documents to support the claims of kings, ministers, or institutions or to defend the laws and privileges of the state against hostile claims. By the eighteenth century, the influence of the Benedictine Maurists and Jean Mabillon had established a school of historians who valued both the knowledge and the serious study of original documents. As a result of this movement, the French Bourbon monarchs appointed jurist-scholars, such as Theodore Godefroy, to be archivists for the royal Trésor des Chartes. In the post-revolutionary reaction, the nobility employed archivists as

³ Joseph Bergkamp, *Dom Jean Mabillon and the Benedictine Historical School of Saint-Maur* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1928), 45; Harry Bresslau, *Handbuch der Urkundenlehre für Deutschland und Italien*, 2 vols. (Berlin: 1958), 1: 25-33, 40; James W. Thompson, *A History of Historical Writing* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1967), 122; Arthur Giry, *Manuel de diplomatique* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1894), xiv-xv.

"feudalists" who could recognize the surviving registers of fees and debts. Working with these old documents required experienced jurists familiar with customary law or Roman law for former times.⁴

Governments kept records arranged in chronological series and alphabetical by subject, that is, topic, person, or place. In Germany, registers date from the fifteenth century when a general growing differentiation in the organization of public administration and management occurred. Registries formed the genetic elements of archives. The first German works on the care of registries were published by Jacob von Rammingen at Heidelberg in 1570 and 1571. Between 1713 and 1715, Jakob Wencker published two manuals on archival practice in Strassbourg. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, many archival texts appeared. In his 1777 archival manual, Brandenburg archivist Philipp E. Spiess extolled the "permanent order" that the archives provided for office registries and declared that access should be the main criterion for evaluating arrangement systems. In 1928, Hans Kaiser lamented that archivists ignored Spiess's sound advice and, influenced by the "systematizing spirit of the 18th century," established subject arrangements. In 1783, Karl G. Günther's *Über die Einrichtung der Hauptarchive besonders in teutschen Reichslanden* proposed groupings according to internal affairs and external affairs with many divisions and subdivisions. Texts by Johann C. Gatterer (1799), Friedrich Stuss (1799), Karl F.B. Zinkernagel (1800) and Georg A. Bachmann (1801) took similar approaches. In 1786, Bavarian Karl von Eckhartshausen wrote that "organization is

⁴ Robert Marquant, "La formation des archivistes en France," in *Vorlesungen zum Archivwesen Frankreichs* (Marburg: Veröffentlichungen der Archivschule Marburg Institute für Archivwissenschaft, Nr. 5, 1970), 36-37; Thompson, *Historical Writing*, 6.

the first pillar of archival sanctity." He stressed the importance of a knowledge of governmental organization and arrangement for future use. In his 1796 text, published in Augsburg, Ludwig Benedikt wrote that the "principal aim" of the archivist was to arrange the official documents and papers in his custody. In 1788, the Prussian government adopted the principle of chronological filing.

With slight variations, most German states adopted systems for the chronological accumulation of documents relating to specific topics or functions in bundles, cartons, or binders. Before 1808, single subject files were typical. Thereafter, the volume of records increased rapidly, and collective records relating to many subjects became common. Subject classification appeared to facilitate user access to the rapid accumulation of archives, and it was championed by secondary users such as historians. In 1833, L.B. von Medem of Stettin wrote that "arrangement is almost the purpose of the archives, without it the archives is meaningless; its use inconceivable."⁵

⁵ Botho Brachmann, *Archivwesen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Theorie und Praxis* (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1984), 16, 84; Heinrich O. Meisner, *Archivalienkunde vom 16. Jahrhundert bis 1918* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 99, 347-348; Leonhard Benedikt, *Belehrung eines angehenden Archivars* (Augsburg: Leonhard Benedikt, 1796), 2-4; Philipp E. Spiess, *Von Archiven* (Halle: Johann Jacob Gebauer, 1777), 5; Berent Schweineköper, "Zur Geschichte des Provenienzprinzips" in *Forschungen aus Mitteldeutschen Archiven zum 60. Geburtstag von Hellmut Kretschmar* (Berlin: 1953), 50; Hans Kaiser, "Aus der Entwicklung der Archivkunde," *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 37 (1928): 103-104; Karl von Eckhartshausen, *Über Praktisch-Systematische Einrichtung fürstlicher Archiven* (Munich: Anton Franz, 1786), 48, 91-93, 126; Rudolf Schatz, *Behordenschriftgut, Aktenbildung, Aktenverwaltung, Archivierung* (Boppard am Rhein: Harold Boldt, 1961), 19, 28, 42-56; L.B. von Medem, "On

Archival growth was the driving force in the development of German archival theory and practice. From 1457 to 1924, 232 archives were established in the German-speaking countries of Europe. In this 467-year period, half of the archives were founded in four time periods amounting to 100 years--seventeen in the generation following the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, thirty-two in the forty-five years after the 1715 Treaty of Rastatt as Hohenzollern Prussia and Hapsburg Austria achieved dominance, fifty-five in the thirty-five-year period at the close of the Napoleonic wars, and twelve in a five-year period at the founding of the modern German state in the 1860s. These periods of state building following major peace treaties provided optimal conditions for archival growth. The employment of new archival staff at the four key cities of Berlin, Munich, Stuttgart, and Vienna reached twenty-five in the decade of the 1850s and continued at a high rate until 1939. The late nineteenth century was a growth period for large archives, city archives, and Austrian archives.⁶

The problem of mass was of increasing importance in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as modern nation states took shape and the use of printed forms spread. Case files and dossiers for military, health, and penal purposes became common as governmental records systems. With the increasing volume of official records, registries began to identify the value of documents in advance and to authorize their destruction and divide them for filing according to value, for example, the French schedules of the 1840s. While many of the old privileges were abolished in the era of the French Revolution, archival records

Archivwissenschaft, "Zeitschrift für Archivkunde, Diplomatik und Geschichte 1 (Hamburg: 1834): 30.

⁶ Wolfgang Leesch, *Die deutschen Archive, 1500-1945*, vol. 1 (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1985), 23-204.

gained new importance for scientific research. The growth of the Austrian Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv shows the dramatic increase in archival holdings during the nineteenth century:

Year	Documents	Volumes	Record files
1750	13,125	32	82
1840	63,250	1,348	7,243
1868	71,750	3,000	40,000
1909	73,000	5,000	80,000

Between 1866 and 1878, the Hessian archives in Marburg grew from twenty-five hundred to ten thousand linear meters. The increased volume of archives and the growth of archival institutions in the nineteenth century are also reflected in the construction of buildings to house archives. Archival buildings were erected in Vienna (1843-46 and 1899-1902), Düsseldorf (1873-76), Breslau (1875-77), Wiesbaden (1879-81), Strassbourg (1894-97), and Karlsruhe (1902-05). In many other cities, castles, palaces, government buildings, libraries, museums, and other structures were converted to archival uses.⁷

The wars of the Napoleonic era emphasized the potential value of documentary patrimonies and the problem of alienation. Napoleon's seizure of archives and their removal to Paris contributed to an increased concern for provenance as an organizational principle. The emperor attempted to create a vast central European archives in Paris for international historical

⁷ Schatz, *Behordenschriftgut*, 67-72, 275-276; Bresslau, *Urkundenlehre* 1: 36-37; Bittner, *Gesamtinventar*, 61; Fritz Wolff, "Das Hessische Staatsarchiv in Marburg," *Hessisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte* 27 (1977): 143, 147; Wolfgang Leesch, "Archivbau in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 62 (1966): 11-15.

research. On his orders, 35,000 boxes, 15,556 trunks, and 12,049 files were moved from European capitals to Paris. The cornerstone for the new Archives Nationales was laid on 15 August 1812, but the fall of the empire led to the provisions of Article 31 of the Peace of Paris, which required the return of all archives, plans, and other documents. The principle that records belonging to territories pass with sovereignty to the newly formed states has been accepted by settlements from the 1356 Treaty of Paris between the Dauphin and Savoy to the 1919 Treaty of Saint Germain establishing new nations from the Austro-Hungarian empire.

The principle of provenance was not a new idea, but a theoretical formulation based on experience. Like other successful theories, provenance gained acceptance. Several factors contributed to its development. First was the termination of ecclesiastical archives, the 1803-06 period of *Mediatisierung* in which sovereignty passed from independent imperial states to new national states, and the consolidation of archival resources in public repositories. A second factor was an increase in the conflicting pressure on archivist-jurists and archivist-scholars to organize material in accordance with subject interests, that is, the principle of pertinence.⁸

The parallel evolution of romantic and scientific history has characterized modern archival development. Whether annals, chronicles, pamphlets, or tracts, records were compiled to glorify the Middle Ages and legitimize nationhood. At the same time, universities launched research efforts to understand the past "wie es eigentlich gewesen ist" (as it actually was)—a phrase used by

⁸ Pierre Debofle, *Histoire et Organisation des Archives en France* (Paris: Prefecture de Paris, 1980), 11-12; Henri Bordier, *Les Archives de la France* (Paris: Dumoulin, 1855), 27; Leopold Auer, "Staatenachfolge bei Archiven," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 57 (1986): 51, 53; Charles Samaran, ed., *L'histoire et ses méthodes* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1961), 1128.

the director of the Vienna Archives in a twenty-two-volume history begun in 1778. In the early nineteenth century, the romantic movement brought a renewal of taste for medieval history. Political events, which rendered the mass of old documents of little use for administration and justice, strengthened the demand for archivists who were historical scholars rather than jurists. In 1819, in proposing the compilation of a state history, Friedrich Wilkens of the Berlin Academy of Sciences recommended that the holdings of the Prussian state archives from different districts, institutions, cities, and religious foundations should be kept together in an arrangement by source. "To mix different archives in confusion" was not advisable.⁹

After the Peace of Tilsit in 1807, the Prussian state developed modern departmental ministries. The archives of the new ministries were soon added to the archives of the old state council. By 1815, the new ministerial registers were reaching the archives. The "old flasks," or classifications suitable for the old Brandenburg state, were receiving the "new wine," or the records of nineteenth century Prussia. The resulting "disaster" involved an application of the principle of arrangement according to subject rather than the historical-archival arrangement according to the source or provenance of the registers. This situation continued for the next fifty years as some incoming records were distributed according to chronological or subject schemes. Only a group of experienced archivists made the access system in the Prussian state archives tolerable. From 1853 to

⁹ Thompson, *Historical Writing*, 125; Robert Marquant, "La formation des archivistes en France," 37-38; Helmut Lötze and Manfred Unger, "Das Provenienz Prinzip als wissenschaftlicher Grundsatz der Bestandteilung, Part 1," *Archivmitteilungen* 26 (1976): 50.

1873, Gottlieb Friedlaender, an archivist with library experience, was a determined advocate of subject arrangement.

In 1875, Heinrich von Sybel took over the direction of the archives. Records delivery lists provided links between registry locations and archival locations, but the mixing of documents and the lack of a thorough, absolute system brought increased demands for an effective arrangement principle. On 1 July 1881, Sybel issued the regulations adopting the principle of provenance and the registry principle. Written by Max Lehmann, they required arrangement according to source and the maintenance of the order and file designations assigned in the agency of origin. The segregation of older record groups from those of the newer administrative authorities was facilitated by the Prussian practice of fastening or binding the documents. Thus, the merger of files or bundles from different origins was somewhat superficial and relatively easy to correct. In 1896 and 1907, the 1881 regulations were extended to description work and made applicable to provincial archives within Prussia.¹⁰

In 1869, Karl Menzel noted that the different German states held similar archives and that it should be possible to draw up similar rules for their classification and arrangement. Conceding that many archives had satisfactory arrangement practices, he criticized "incorrect viewpoints" and, specifically, schemes

¹⁰ Paul Bailleu, "Das Provenienzprinzip und dessen Anwendung im Berliner Geheimen Staatsarchive," *Korrespondenzblatt des Gesamtvereins der deutschen Geschichts- und Altertumsvereine* 50 (1902): 193-195; Meta Kohnke, "Die Ordnung der Bestände in Geheimen Staatsarchiv zu Berlin vor und nach der Einführung des Proviienzprinzips," *Archivmitteilungen* 4 (1961): 112-113; Johannes Schultze, "Gedanken zum 'Provenienzgrundsatz'" in *Archivstudien zum siebzigsten Geburtstag von Waldemar Lippert* (Dresden: Wilhelm and Bertha von Baensch Stiftung, 1931), 125, 127; Lötze and Unger, "Provenienz," 52-53.

developed to serve administrative needs that could not be adapted for use by scholars. Menzel noted that nonofficial or private use of the Prussian state archives in 1868 outnumbered administrative use by 653 to 521. Seven years later the ratio of private to administrative use was 969 to 500. Noting that the scholars became more numerous every year, he concluded that a re-examination of arrangement practice was mandatory. He cited examples of scholars' access problems, but counseled archivists to act conservatively and retain "what is useful from the old" so that both administrative and scholarly users could use the arrangement and not be confused by frequent changes in archival practice.¹¹

Similar developments were occurring in Saxony, where, in 1816, Christian Heinrich Delius offered a plan to unite Saxon archives in Halle. A student of Gatterer and collaborator with the Prussian statesman and scholar Baron Heinrich von Stein, Delius proposed that documents should be separated on the basis of origin and not "disunited according to an arbitrary classification." Delius's plan was not carried out. In 1822, Karl Hahn was instructed to establish a provincial archives in Magdeburg. Heinrich A. Erhard was chosen to direct the arrangement and inventorying of archival records. He devised a geographical subject system to establish "territorial provenance." Like most such schemes, Erhard's divisions resulted in a mixture of provenance and pertinence. From 1822 to 1846, Christian L. Stock organized records and accepted registry order as superior to the subject scheme outlined in his instructions. By 1834, when a second Saxon archives was

¹¹ Karl Menzel, "Über Ordnung und Einrichtung der Archive," *Historische Zeitschrift* 22 (1869): 226-227; Franz von Löher, *Archivlehre, Grundzüge der Geschichte, Aufgaben und Einrichtung unserer Archive* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1890), 229.

founded in Dresden, a provenance system had been formulated and was in use. Around 1850, a reaction in favor of subject arrangements set in, which lasted until 1906.¹²

When the Hessian state archives were assembled at Marburg in 1867, Kassel archivist Christian Grein adopted a subject scheme based on Zinkernagel's 1800 archival handbook. At this time, the Prussian archives in Berlin was adopting a provenance system based on formation and origin, but, in 1870, the director in Berlin approved Grein's system for the merged Hessian archives in Marburg. In a 5 March 1873 instruction, Prussian state archivist Max W. Duncker stated the basis for the application of the principle of provenance in the Hessian archives. In 1877, when Gustav Könnecke became chief of the Marburg archives, provenance was recognized as the controlling principle of arrangement.¹³

Bavaria's archival history was well documented. From 1881 to 1896, Max J. Neudegger published five monumental volumes on the history of the Palatine-Bavarian archives of the Wittelsbach family. He discussed provenance, the creation of new record groups, and organizational structures and arrangement. His chronologies record the first archivist (1589), the centralization of the archives and registry system (1640), problems relating to volume and classification (1710), academic work in documentary criticism (1727-32), Eckartshausen's decree concerning arrangement (1784), and frequent removals and losses due to wars. The Bavarian archives law of 26 June 1799 established the archives for the kingdom. Archivist Franz J. von Samet coped with the dislocations and wars of the 1790s and the

¹² Schwineköper, "Provenienzprinzips," 50-59; Brachmann, *Archivwesen*, 24-25; Lötze and Unger, "Provenienz," 51.

¹³ Kurt Dülfer, "Ordnung und Verzeichnung an Pertinenzen und Provenienzen im Staatsarchiv Marburg," *Der Archivar* 16, 2 (1963): 232-233; Wolff, "Hessische Staatsarchiv," 143-144.

secularization of religious institutions and territories that brought a continuous flow of new material into the state archives. Primarily a collector, von Samet arranged his holdings in three parts according to state and feudal geographical jurisdictions, city and markets, and religious. The secondary arrangement was alphabetical. Under the capable hand of Maximilian Joseph Count Montgelas, the archives survived the Napoleonic tumult. The best contemporary account of archival life is provided by Karl H. von Lang's memoirs. A Swabian, von Lang worked his way through the positions of protocolist and secretary for the Hardenberg house. He prepared records inventories, wrote a family history, and supplied "a fresh pile of dispatches" for the baron's signature each day.

When the Bayreuth archivist, Philipp Spiess, died in 1794, Hardenberg commissioned von Lang as his replacement in the position of privy archivist, with a salary increase from 240 to 1,000 gulden. In 1811, von Lang went to Munich to establish the imperial Wittelsbach archives and, a year later, received an official appointment to a position that carried a salary of 4,000 gulden. His memoirs record his concerns when his employers in Munich asked for an archives plan for "the institutions and people" as if he were "the director of a new acting troupe" and when his predecessor refused to hand over the key to the office. Von Lang persevered, learned about the topography of Bavaria and its officialdom, and developed a plan for Bavarian historical research. In the late nineteenth century, the military archives and other new record groups were not mixed with previous holdings, and access was improved by guides and indexes. A final commitment to provenance came in the 1920s.¹⁴

¹⁴ Max J. Neudegger, "Geschichte der bayerischen Archive neuerer Zeit bis zur Hauptorganisation vom Jahre 1799," *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 6 (1881): 118-154, 7 (1882): 57-106, NF2

Based on a proposal by Christian J. Schierl von Schierendorff in the 1720s, the Austrian Hapsburg house archives were planned in 1748 and formed in 1749. Archives of other state offices and regions were added during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa. The archival removals and turmoil of the Napoleonic wars increased interest in improved archival organization. Archives director Josef Hormayr organized the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in 1810. The organizational and territorial complexities of the empire and the record groups it produced prompted Ludwig Bittner to describe the nineteenth century as the period of artificial or synthetic arrangement systems. Until 1851, the archives centralized its holdings in Vienna, and Josef Knechtel was in charge of arrangement work. While Theodor von Sickel, who founded the Institute for Austrian History in 1854, understood the concept of organic archival bodies of records and the principle of provenance, the Viennese archives directors were unable to develop an arrangement program. In the years after 1897, Director Gustav Winter sought to achieve a synthesis between the numerical control system based on the guidelines in the founding decrees of 1749-52 and the principle of provenance. The appearance of the German edition of the Dutch manual (Muller, Feith, and Fruin) in 1905 and the adoption of provenance by the International Congress in 1910 removed the last opposition in the Austrian archives.¹⁵

The establishment of new archives in the nineteenth century created a demand for professional literature. German archivists

(1891): 312-365, NF4 (1893): 53-76; Walter Jaroschka, "Reichsarchivar Franz Joseph von Samet (1758-1828)," *Mitteilungen für die Archivpflege in Bayern* 8 (1972): 11-12; Albrecht Liess, "Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv," *Der Archivar* 39 (1986): 271-272, 275-276.

¹⁵ Bittner, *Gesamtinventar*, 16-17, 20-22, 24, 35, 138, 143-144, 149.

published four journals. In 1806, Paul Österreicher and F. Döllinger published the *Zeitschrift für Archiv- und Registraturwissenschaft* in Bamberg. In 1834, Ludwig F. Hoefler, Heinrich A. Erhard, and L. B. von Medem issued the *Zeitschrift für Archivkunde, Diplomatiek und Geschichte* at Hamburg. Erhard's section on the organization of the archives related to physical arrangements and archival skills. In 1850, Friedrich T. Friedemann published the *Zeitschrift für die Archive Deutschlands* at Gotha. The first three journals did not long survive. Most of the contents concerned diplomatics, paleography, and news of archival institutions. In 1875, Franz von Löhner began publishing *Archivalische Zeitschrift*, which included information on archival organization.¹⁶

Scholars developed a strong interest in publishing archival resources. In 1819, Baron von Stein organized a society to publish the source documents for medieval German history. He hired Georg H. Pertz as editor, and the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* became a model for historical criticism, a powerful incentive for the development of archival programs, and a "nursery of . . . archivists." Leopold von Ranke, the central figure among nineteenth century German historians, was introduced to archival sources by one archivist, borrowed his "wie es eigentlich gewesen ist" phrase from another archivist, and used archives throughout Europe. These contacts have not been stressed by historians as much as the denial to Ranke of access to the Vatican Archives and his practice of having assistants bring documents from the archives to his home, where they were read to the

¹⁶ Adolf Brenneke, *Archivkunde: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie und Geschichte des europäischen Archivwesens* (Leipzig: Koehler and Amelang, 1953), 52; Heinrich A. Erhard, "Ideas on the Scientific Founding and Formation of Archivwesen," *Zeitschrift für Archivkunde, Diplomatiek und Geschichte* 1 (Hamburg: 1834): 224-247; Kaiser, "Archivkunde," 105-106.

master to secure his decisions concerning copying. In 1894, the Prussian Academy of Science began publication of *Acta Borussica*, an administrative history of the eighteenth century Prussian state.¹⁷

Archival principles and theory are based on and validated by experience or practice. National pride may stimulate claims of priority or uniqueness. The evidence suggests that the acceptance of the principle of provenance was a slow process and not the sudden result of decrees, edicts, regulations, and endorsements. Archivists had always recognized the fundamental advantages of arrangement according to source. The principle of provenance was a response to changing conditions in the nineteenth century. These included the reorganization of postrevolutionary national governments; new types of records and new governmental functions, in part due to the secularization of religious institutions and the centralization of power; shifts between centralized and decentralized systems; systemizers who sought to cope with increasing volume of records; scholars who created a new clientele for archives; library classification systems; and bureaucratic and professional pressures for regulations and standards. In 1983, Lieselott Enders summarized the usefulness of the principle of provenance in the organization or arrangement of records; its value as an appraisal principle in selecting the documentation of specific registry builders; and its role as research principle for the authentication of archives by the investigation of archival sources and source criticism. Enders's observations constituted a current endorsement of an archival principle based on centuries of experience. Information in

¹⁷ Thompson, *Historical Writing*, 125, 141, 165-181; David Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises, Problems in Monastic History* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1963), 96.

archival sources is not a commodity with a common, fixed market value. Its significance lies in its source.¹⁸

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¹⁸ Lieselott Enders, "The Principle of Provenance in the Present and the Future," *Archivmitteilungen* 33 (1983): 151-153.