Making Archives in Early Modern Europe: Proof, Information, and Political Record-Keeping, 1400–1700. Randolph C. Head.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. xviii + 348 pp. $120.

In this book, historian Randolph C. Head traces the development of archives as political institutions in medieval and early modern Europe. He argues that during this period, there were parallel, interrelated transformations of how Europeans conceptualized documents as records and archives as institutions. Medieval rulers and their subjects understood documents, such as charters, as proofs: evidence of authorized acts granting rights and privileges. With gold, silver, and other valuables, a ruler locked up probative records in the treasury, which Head terms the *archivum*. During the early modern period, rulers took increasing interest in documents as ongoing sources of political information—a process not unrelated to their efforts to consolidate power. Archives began to take modern shape as collections of documents superintended by specialized personnel and regularly consulted by rulers, their advisers, and, eventually, historians.

Organized chronologically and thematically, the book establishes how recordkeeping practices developed in late medieval Europe; how early modern chancelleries transformed archives into tools for governance; and how political authorities used records. In case studies touching down in Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands, Head shows how scribes, secretaries, and chancellors elaborated archival systems with a set of stable medial forms and scholastic "little tools of knowledge" (the latter phrase is from Peter Becker and William Clark, *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices* [2001]). Some of these tools were material: paper or parchment codices, quills, ink, slips and labels, string, bags. Others were more conceptual: indexing, alphabetization, cross-referencing, folio numbering, leaving blank space for future records. Head illuminates the labor of anonymous and identifiable recordkeepers, such as the sixteenth-century Wilhelm Putsch, a Habsburg "proto-archivist" whose finding aids were used into the nineteenth century (161). Head reads collections management practices from explicit testimony, such as manuals, as well as from tools of organization themselves—cartularies, indexes, and registers. He traces how recordkeepers transformed archival indexes from guides to physical storage space to conceptual maps of archival holdings. Often, archival ambitions outstripped staff and financing, or were disrupted by war, leading to cycles of decay and reorganization.

In the concluding section, Head turns to seventeenth-century debates about authenticating documents. Jean Mabillon, in founding the science of diplomatics, advocated an approach in which carefully trained scholars judged authenticity by scrutinizing each document's substrate, ink, handwriting, and seals. German scholars, such as Ahasver Fritsch, advocated *ius archivi* (archival law), in which documents in a public archive were generally deemed trustworthy. Head argues that Mabillon's approach dovetailed with Louis XIV and his minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert's efforts to undercut local and

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regional claims to authority by gathering up and de-authenticating older charters. Fritsch's approach, conversely, allowed princes and cities across German-speaking territories to stake governing claims on documents otherwise invalidated under Roman law or by Mabillon's diplomatics. Solutions to the problem of knowledge, as the sociologists of science say, are solutions to the problem of social order.

Head's book participates in the burgeoning historical field of the history of archives, building on works by Ann Blair, Arndt Brendecke, Antoinette Burton, Liesbeth Corens, Filipo de Vivo, Markus Friedrich, Laurie Nussdorfer, Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and others. He also attends to scholarship in archival science, citing figures past and present—such as Hilary Jenkinson and Terry Cook—and providing a working prehistory for the nineteenth-century emergence of key concepts such as the *respect des fonds*. Head's work can be read fruitfully along others in the field—some already published, some yet to come. For example, Head restricts his focus to public archives—those connected to entities exercising dominion. But how did political recordkeeping practices intersect with developments in other paper-based institutions, such as joint-stock corporations, learned academies, churches, and families? Further, Head, in focusing on public institutions, largely contemplates the work of male actors. But in domains where women were more welcome, how did they participate in the work of recordkeeping? Finally, looking out from Europe, how did archival cultures form and develop in other societies and in colonial contact zones? How did cross-cultural exchanges shape European archival practice? As scholars continue to explore these questions, Head's *Making Archives in Early Modern Europe* will stand as a rich and erudite contribution to the field.

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Migrating Words, Migrating Merchants, Migrating Law: Trading Routes and the Development of Commercial Law. Stefania Gialdroni, Albrecht Cordes, Serge Dauchy, Dave De ruysscher, and Heikki Pihlajamäki, eds. Legal History Library 34. Leiden: Brill, 2020. xii + 324 pp. €116.

Several decades ago, Philip D. Curtin's *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (1984) offered an expansive account of the role of global commerce in fostering cross-cultural interaction. Combining economic and cultural history, Curtin documented how the movement of merchants and goods created far-flung cultural diasporas and shaped cross-cultural interactions across continents. Since the publication of Curtin's landmark work, scholars in many fields have extended his approach to consider how trade and merchant travel brought cultures into contact and led to manifold linguistic, artistic, and religious changes. Scholars working in the global history of the early modern