

The Notion of Ramification of Archival Documents: The Example of the *Fonds* Related to the Brazilian Political Movement Araguaia Guerrilla

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ABSTRACT

In 2004, the Brazilian government's official discourse on the Araguaia Guerrilla (1972–1974), a political movement against the military regime then in power, claimed that all archival documents related to this historical event had been destroyed. The present study proposes the impossibility of this, using bibliographic and document surveys to unearth a complex network of inter- and transinstitutional relations developed under the aegis of a single mission: the dismantling of the Araguaia Guerrilla. As a consequence of this mission, the *fonds* of state institutions started “communicating” among themselves in a widespread fashion, although they did not intermingle, thus establishing myriad links with each other and revealing the notion of *ramification*.

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KEY WORDS

Archival Documents, *Fonds*, Principle of Provenance, Ramification,
Brazilian Political Movement, Araguaia Guerrilla

Terry Eastwood, in a celebrated text refuting a few of John Roberts's affirmations, proved the existence of archival theory by presenting the value of the nature of archival documents or records, their distinction in relation to other sources, and also their importance to other fields of knowledge.¹

Among the several explanations of the importance of the nature of documents—"the first object of archival theory"²—Jean-Pierre Brunterc'h and Olivier Porcet explained that the very nature of all archival documents is linked to a power structure, and this connection should be considered an integral part of their makeup and content.

Archives, by their nature, are therefore intimately linked to the exercise of a power inscribed within a period of length: the notions of commandment and of a return to founding principles, that is, of legitimacy, are inherent to the notion of archives and we can conceive that very early on care was taken of assigning them a specific place under the authority of those who govern.³

Both the legitimacy and authority present in archival documents arise from universal qualities and characteristics inherent in their own nature. Besides distinguishing them from other sources, the properties establish their trustworthiness in proving an act or a fact and "constitute the central ideas of archival theory."⁴

According to Luciana Duranti, the inherent characteristics of archival documents are

naturalness, which stems from the fact that archival documents are the result of practical and administrative demands, and they accumulate naturally and continually; *interrelatedness*, which derives from their spontaneous and at the same time structured cohesion, due to the location for which they are created and which is vital to their existence and to their ability to achieve their purpose and to function as a witness; *uniqueness*, which comes from the singular relationship each of them has with its own context, be it documentary or administrative; *impartiality*, which derives from the fact that archival documents are an integral part of the activities from which they arise; and *authenticity*, which comes from the fact that the documents are credibly and reliably generated by those who need to act relying upon them and are maintained with the appropriate guarantees for further activities, for consultation, information and testimony.⁵

Other important foundations of archival theory are essential to protect and to understand the properties of archival documents, as well as to comprehend how and in which context they were produced. The principle of provenance or *respect des fonds* is a foundational concept that refers to the origin or nature of the documents, a fact reflected by the manner in which they are ordered and also in which they may be distinguished from other sources.

In general terms, and still in reference to the origin of documents, the *respect des fonds* is related to the organizational practice in which documents aim to reflect the structure, functions, and activities of the institution. The principle of provenance is the theoretical basis defending that each public or private institution has its own unique identity, and for this reason intermingling the *fonds* of one institution with that of another will cause irreparable damage to the reading of the genetic chain of acts and facts that those specific sets of documents reflect.

Authors from countries such as Australia, Canada, Italy, and the United States have written about *fonds* and the principle of provenance and have contributed to the refinement of theory and to the perfection of archival practices. "In the end, then, theory becomes more than contemplation of the nature of archives when it presents ideas about the role or purpose archival documents play in social relations."⁶

Eastwood's arguments may be confirmed in the case described in the present article: after identifying and mapping the provenance and *fonds* of civil institutions mentioned in the works by the authors here cited, it became clear how advantageous it was to apply the concept of *fonds* and the principle of provenance to the example of governmental and private institutions that persecuted and assassinated members of the Araguaia Guerrilla, a political movement in Brazil against the military regime.

However, the concept of *fonds* and the principle of provenance are not sufficient to explain the presence of several sets of archival documents about Araguaia Guerrilla in the State of Pará even after official declarations by Brazilian authorities that all documents relating to that movement had been destroyed. It is the purpose of this article to present the notion of *ramification* as a theoretical proposal that can be used to explain the survival of those documents.

The "Total Destruction" Thesis of the Archival Documents of the Araguaia Guerrilla

In the late 1960s, under the auspices of the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B), Maurício Grabois, João Amazonas, and Ângelo Arroyo settled in a mostly rural area of Brazil called Bico do Papagaio,⁷ along the Araguaia River. All three were members of what became known as the Araguaia Guerrilla, a political movement that had as its principal goals the instigating of a communist revolution in the country and the undermining of the Brazilian military regime (1964–1985).⁸ By 1972, when Brazil was governed by then President General Emílio Garrastazu Médici, the Araguaia Guerrilla included hundreds of young university students from major cities, all of whom were instructed to relocate to the movement's hideouts in several municipalities within the Bico

do Papagaio region.⁹ That same year, the armed forces discovered the movement's existence and mobilized soldiers to combat the guerrilla through several operations, including one described in the following manner: "No fewer than 3,260 men fought for 12 days, all in regular combat gear, and it was considered the largest military mobilization in the country since the Second World War."¹⁰ After seven military operations,¹¹ the movement was completely suppressed and came to an end in 1975.¹²

The success of these operations can be attributed, in part, to the military's strategy of introducing undercover agents into the civilian population, which the guerrilla itself had infiltrated. This network enabled a surge in the volume and the velocity of communication among the armed forces and civil institutions. Besides destroying the enemy, the strategy of increasing the intercommunication among these organizations benefited the military regime in another way: it extended the reach of the state to areas until then beyond its reach. It also expanded the scope of a complex inter- and transinstitutional network of government informants operating within civil institutions, all of whom were commissioned to work toward the dismantling of the movement. Undercover soldiers, instructed to act as if they were civil servants, collected information that could aid in locating and routing the guerrilla. In 1975, this powerful inter- and transinstitutional network succeeded in disbanding the Araguaia Guerrilla.

The emergence of this powerful network resulted in a process of communication among these institutions' *fonds*¹³ themselves. A common task performed across myriad institutions had thus given rise to links among these *fonds*, a linkage here called the notion of *ramification*.

In 2004, approximately twenty-nine years after the end of the movement, the publication of photographs supposedly of the journalist Vladimir Herzog, who died while incarcerated as a political prisoner in 1975, galvanized discussions in the Brazilian media about the Araguaia Guerrilla archives and provoked reactions such as the following declaration of then Minister of Defense José Viegas: "the records on the Araguaia Guerrilla were incinerated or shredded, as were the 'terms of destruction' which authorized those acts."¹⁴ A few months after this declaration, however, Taís Marais and Eumano Silva's *Operation Araguaia: The Secret Archives of the Guerrilla*¹⁵ was published. The book included scanned and until then unpublished documents on the workings of the Araguaia Guerrilla and the role of the armed forces and other civil institutions in dismantling the movement. Subsequently, Hugo Studart published a book in 2006 containing archival documents about the guerrilla.¹⁶

As part of the research into the existence of archival documents produced by this military and civil network of institutions involved in the process of dismantling the Araguaia Guerrilla, the documents reproduced in the works of Elio Gaspari,¹⁷ Luiz Maklouf Carvalho,¹⁸ Taís Marais and Eumano Silva,¹⁹ and Hugo

Studart²⁰ were analyzed. Furthermore, other works on the same topic were also reviewed, including those by José Vargas Jiménez²¹ and Lício Maciel,²² retired military men who participated in the repression of the guerrilla; and Romualdo Pessoa Campos Filho²³ and Leonencio Nossa,²⁴ the latter containing a narrative on the participation of Major “Curió” as the leader of the mobilized forces responsible for the dismantling of the movement.

Of the analyzed works, four of them—Morais and Silva, Studart, Campos Filho, and Nossa—include copies of archival documents, many of which indicate the corresponding *fonds*, signatures, stamps, names, and numbers. Although these works do contain the names of participants and the number of casualties, this information does not coincide with the data presented in other works, nor is there a perfect match among the locations these works indicate as the burial grounds of those killed during the operations. This mismatch of information is due, in great part, to the fact that the archival documents still in existence had yet to be salvaged and mapped.

By analyzing the aforementioned works, it was possible to construct a preliminary map of these documents. Due to length restrictions, the present article will be limited to documents produced by institutions based in the State of Pará, through which the complex network of civil and military inter- and transinstitutional relationships may still be revealed. Most of these institutions had distinct missions, but they performed a common and all-encompassing task, one never officially declared: the dismantling of the Araguaia Guerrilla.

The mapping of these institutions, presented below, was made possible by the on-site distribution, during the months of January and April 2010, of more than twenty questionnaires to employees of institutions in several municipalities, such as São João do Araguaia, São Domingos do Araguaia, Marabá, and Belém, capital of the State of Pará.²⁵ By the reaction of the participants to the questionnaires, it became clear that the topic under analysis—even thirty-five years after its major events had ended—is still considered recent, troubling, and unresolved.

Given the complexity of the tabulations produced from the research, which may be consulted elsewhere,²⁶ as well as the limits on the length of the present article, only the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA)²⁷ *fonds* will be analyzed. The authors of the aforementioned works cited INCRA as the second major participant in the dismantling of the guerrilla, after the Army Information Center (CIE).

The presentation of these documents contributes to questioning the official declarations, according to which all archival materials relating to the movement had been destroyed. Furthermore, the present article also seeks to propose and define a new archival notion, ramification, by demonstrating that this “total destruction” thesis is untenable. In other words, the complete destruction of all

the archives related to a specific historical event with the magnitude of the Araguaia Guerrilla is implausible.

Questioning the plausibility of this thesis may weaken the force of the official arguments, declarations, and announcements, which state that not one of the preexisting documents related to that historic event had been spared and that there are, at the present time, simply none left.

The Notion of Ramification of the Archival Document: A Proposal

The *notion*²⁸ of ramification is the intercommunication among the *fonds* of several different institutions—although they do not intermingle, nor establish a mixed collections file—all directed toward a common task that supersedes the officially stated mission of each institution taken separately. This common task itself, which drives the production of documents, need not necessarily be explicit or published.

Figure 1 may serve as an example. Among the documents of the INCRA *fonds* from 1972 is a “Certificate of Good Conduct” produced (in terms of provenance)²⁹ by the Precinct of Marabá. If both the Precinct of Marabá and INCRA had had the same mission, then one could expect that the documents produced by the Precinct of Marabá were in the INCRA *fonds* by means of an accession.³⁰ However, the case at hand does not meet that condition. In fact, INCRA and the precinct did not have the same mission then, nor do they have the same mission now.

The above-mentioned certificate was required of citizens who requested land from the government in the Lenira region (municipality of Araguaína,

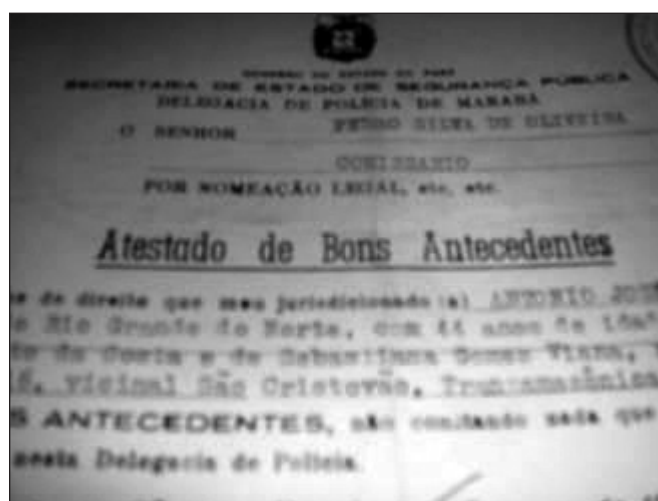


FIGURE 1. The Certificate of Good Conduct was produced by INCRA. Photo: Shirley Carvalhêdo Franco, 2010.

State of Goiás), one of the areas involved with the guerrilla. Produced by the Marabá Precinct, the document not only testified to the fact that records of crimes committed by the citizen making the request did not exist, but also facilitated the work of the armed forces, whose responsibility it was to identify the communists residing in the region and to prevent the involvement of the local residents with the guerrilla. This situation led to the establishment of an “imaginary *fonds*” endowed with its own legitimacy.

The following documents, produced by both the Precinct of Araguaia, in the State of Pará (Figures 2 and 3), and the Ministry of the Army (Figure 4) were also used to attest to the righteousness of the same individual who resided within the area where the guerrilla was active. Residents who possessed the certificate of a “lack of a criminal record” or “good conduct” were permitted to come and go as they pleased. Those who did not, however, were prohibited from doing so: they were considered “suspect” and were put under the auspices of state surveillance. This situation may be considered, therefore, another example of the

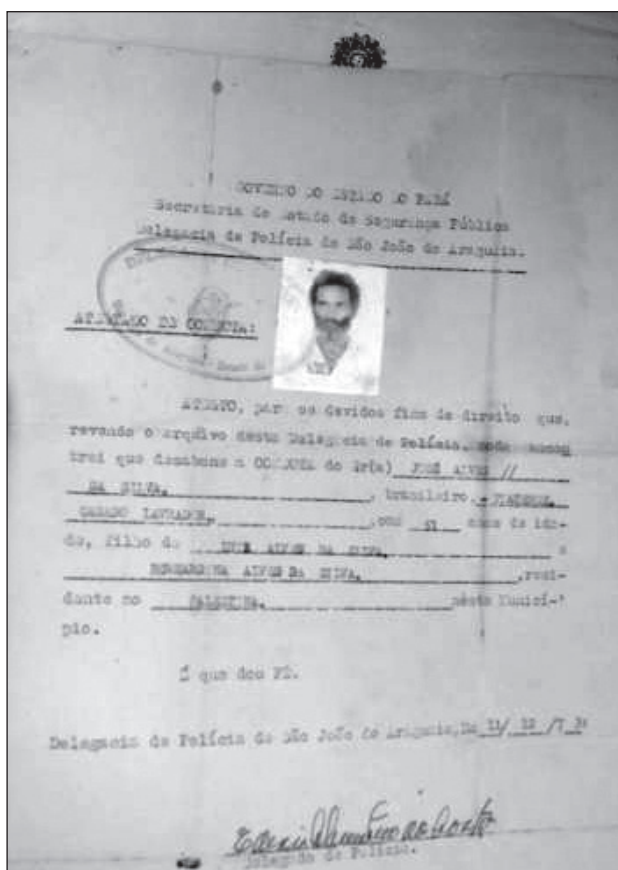


FIGURE 2. This Certificate of Good Conduct is from a private *fonds*.
Photo: Shirley Carvalhêdo Franco, 2010.



FIGURE 3. This Certificate of Life and Residence was from a private *fonds*. Photo: Shirley Carvalhêdo Franco, 2010.

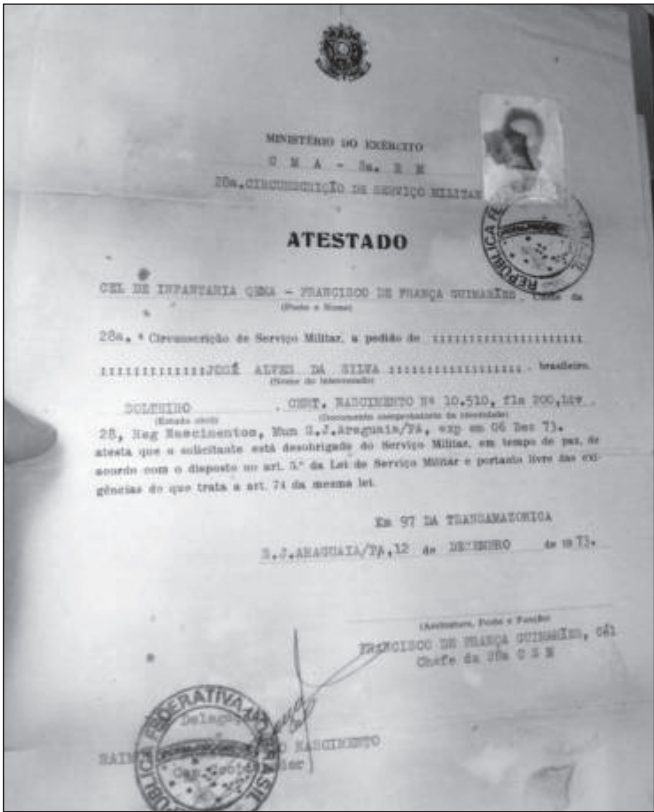


FIGURE 4. This Certificate of Conscription and Clean Record in the Army was from a private *fonds*. Photo: Shirley Carvalhêdo Franco, 2010.

existence of ramification. Given that many students infiltrated the region to join the guerrilla, it was necessary to identify them and locate their hideouts, a task commissioned to this institutional network. The task itself, however, went beyond the limits of the mission of each of the institutions involved. Therefore, the creation, meaning, use, and validation of the records produced with the aim of accomplishing this task will reflect the intercommunication among these institutions. Even though the documents above may have overlapped as to the issues being addressed, they came from different institutions, and thus the individual who did not present all three of those official documents to authorities when demanded was immediately arrested: a single certificate had no meaning without the remaining pair of the set.

Besides the armed forces themselves, the struggle against the Araguaia Guerrilla became, in practice, the task of other institutions, such as precincts, notary offices, schools, churches, and ministries. The involvement of these other institutions is the “higher task” to which all were subordinated and thus reveals a complex network of interrelationships, whose emblematic feature is that their respective *fonds* initiated a process of intercommunication among themselves. Though they did not share the same official mission, the institutions involved in that superior task improved the efficiency of the techno-bureaucratic system of the military regime.

This improvement facilitated and furthered a phenomenon that had been observed throughout the period under analysis: the expansion of the role of the state in society. One of the consequences of this expansion was the multiplication of documents, a phenomenon that Eastwood described in the following manner:

the advent of the welfare state (in some societies, at least) and the active intervention of all levels of government to regulate an ever-widening range of economic, social, and cultural affairs expanded public bureaucracies into new realms. . . . The pace of administrative change became almost bewildering as new—and in some cases, freer—administrative units were created, regularly transformed, or abolished in the search for more effective and efficient work processes. As a consequence of these transformations, the rate of records production grew dramatically.³¹

This growing production of documents, in turn, is one of the factors that supports the notion of ramification, because all areas of the state began using the tools that enabled the multiplication of documents. The communication tools, on the one hand, fostered the participation of several actors in the implementation of a single task; on the other hand, they also facilitated the participation of a single actor in the execution of several tasks, to fulfill a bureaucratic necessity. Such practices brought about the constant and vast multiplication of archival documents, by several methods and through different media. The

probability of observing ramification taking place grows, therefore, with the rise in the number of individuals or institutions taking part in the fulfillment of a single task—whether it be “official” or not—superseding the stated mission of each institution taken separately.

Although the mere multiplication of copies should not be construed immediately as an occurrence of ramification, it should lead the researcher at least into further investigation. The presence of these copies may indeed imply ramification, given that they contain references to the *fonds* to which they belong. The fact that these various institutions participated in the fulfillment of a superior task points to the existence of an intercommunication among distinct *fonds*; this intercommunication, in turn, is also an indication of ramification, which can manifest itself beyond the periods of martial law described in the preceding paragraphs.

In her article “Who Controls the Past,”³² Helen Samuels argued appropriately that “the changing structure of modern institutions and the use of sophisticated technologies have altered the nature of records,”³³ either in form or content. The present bureaucratic dynamics of society demand the integration of institutions, a consequence of which is documentary integration:

Individuals and institutions do not exist independently. Examination reveals the complex relationships between institutions and individuals. Government, industry, and academia—the private and public sectors—are integrated through patterns of funding and regulations. Governments award contracts to academic institutions and private companies to develop space shuttles and run hospitals, while they control the privacy of student records and the testing of new drugs . . . multiple hands have created the “individual’s” papers. . . . These complex patterns exist in any modern institution. MIT receives research funds from the National Science Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Exxon, and individual donors. Newark, New Jersey, receives federal funds for housing and road construction while it contracts out to a private firm for refuse collection. Farmers receive federal funds to control crop production. Records mirror the society that creates them. Integrated functions affect where and how the records of these activities are created and where they should be retained.³⁴

The existence of ramification confirms the argument, therefore, that the complete and absolute destruction of all archives related to a specific historical event would be practically impossible: archival documents tend to “escape” attempts of total destruction, becoming almost immune to complete elimination.

It is not possible to predict or control the destiny of the totality of archival documents, especially the more compromising or “sensitive” ones. The intercommunication among the *fonds* belonging to different institutions—that is, ramification—will dictate that the complete destruction of all the documents

related to a certain historical event will be, in practice, virtually impossible to accomplish.

There are, however, several historical examples of governments that attempted to follow through with all-out destructive campaigns. The Turkish government, for example, has been accused of “purging” documents that could have been used to blame it for crimes against humanity (the genocide of the Armenians).³⁵ Other examples include the Japanese order to completely incinerate archives before the arrival of American troops after World War II³⁶ and the destruction of innumerable documents by the apartheid regime in South Africa, before the handing over of power to the Nelson Mandela administration.³⁷

In Brazil, one may also point to the example of the destruction of archival documents relating to the period of slavery and to the case under analysis, about which the following quote is emblematic: “at the end of Figueiredo’s mandate, the last president of the military dictatorship, the heads of the secret service of the Armed Forces ordered the destruction of the archives related to the confrontation in [the State of] Pará.”³⁸ Institutions such as INCRA, whose missions and bylaws were different from those of the army, navy, and air force, did not obey the order. This is the reason many archival documents related to that event still exist today in INCRA’s collection, such as the certificate of good conduct.

The following inherent feature of archival documents contributes to their survival: they have the power to prove, testify, and verify. They are endowed with this power because they contain signatures, names of *fonds*, and other crucial information. A document itself, therefore, attains a high exchange value and may be used in different manners: secretly, as part of a bargain, to protect its owner or someone else; threateningly, to reveal someone else’s actions; and egoistically, to gain wealth or power (normally political). It is probable, therefore, that employees who participated in that historical event kept copies of documents to protect themselves or even to blackmail others. Perhaps they kept them simply to preserve the memory of that historical event.

Besides explaining the survival of archival documents, the notion of ramification can help researchers and specialists to read into the origin of archives “for its regularities, for its logic of recall, for its densities and distributions, for its consistencies of misinformation, omission, and mistake—*along the archival grain*.”³⁹

In possession of this key notion, archivists will be more prepared to answer questions related to “the retrospective (re)construction of a documentary universe”⁴⁰: where, by whom, why, and when was it created? By using the notion of ramification as an instrument, the professional’s capacity to visualize the social and political context in which archival documents were created will be improved, as will his or her ability to understand the historical event under scrutiny. It will thus be possible to determine the meaning of the document

by examining the entire circumstantial network within which the document is inserted.

Ramification in Contrast to Other Archival Concepts

With the objective of discarding the possibility that the notion of ramification falls under the definition of other archival concepts or even terms, the *General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G))*⁴¹ was consulted in reference to the following expressions: *parallel provenance*, *multiple provenance*, *complex fond*, *dossier*, *allied materials*, and *document dispersal*.

Given that apparently similar new archival concepts have been developed by Australian archivists, who have also contributed to perfect the concept of *fonds* and the meaning of provenance, the possibility that the notion of ramification simply rehashes those new concepts warrants consideration.

The concept of *parallel provenance* was formulated by the Australian archivist Chris Hurley because of his dissatisfaction with the definition of provenance laid out by the *ISAD(G)*. Hurley considered the existing definition limited and incapable of fully describing the formation and the function of documents and their respective processes:

the descriptive standardisation we have is not very helpful because it has been developed to implement a vision not of integration but of separation and the perpetuation of methods invalidated by current technological developments. Clever methods to emulate in cyberspace what we once did in physical space are a waste of time and effort. . . . This is the art of writing obituaries, not managing records. The standards are not broad enough to encompass both traditional and integrative views. They focus on the creation and management of descriptions of records, not the management of the records themselves. Another limitation one wants to avoid is one that precludes an analysis of contextual entities that produce documents being described vicariously rather than directly. This is *ambience*, or the context of provenance. The actual formation is undertaken by the author or filer of a document, by the record-keeper within an organization, family or group, by the agent mandated to act on behalf of an enterprise, or by the enterprise itself (or one of its component parts). Any of these may be nominated as the sole creator of records.⁴²

The author explained that he did not create the concept to completely abandon the established definition of provenance, but rather to enhance it; to Hurley, *provenance* is “a legitimate view, but not the *only* legitimate view.”⁴³

The term *ambience* refers both to the context of provenance and to the creation of documents; whereas parallel provenance “describes a situation where two or more entities are identified as establishing the provenance of records, where each resides in a different ambience.”⁴⁴

With this proposal, the author intended to go beyond the concept of multiple provenance, adopted in Australia since 1960 and whose definition includes the following procedure: “documents assembled as records can pass through the hands of several successive creators over time.”⁴⁵ Through this critical vision of the norm, Hurley justified the necessity of parallel provenance, given its ability to aid in the description of documents:

The objects of description exist in radiating layers of structure and meaning—documents within dockets exist within files that are part of a series. Many different agents of formation are involved in all but the most simplistic of functions—at each layer of understanding within which the documents are cocooned. The author of a document (indisputably its creator in at least one sense) may be very different from the agents responsible for formation of the docket, file, or series in which it is placed. Other agents (to say nothing of functions) are involved via their relationship with agents of formation—the parent corporation of the business unit responsible for forming the series, for example, or the family to which a personal correspondent belongs. These ambient entities contextualise documents vicariously. We cannot describe all of the possibilities. A selection must be made. Having done so, archivists took the fatal step of convincing themselves that the selection they prefer as the best one is the only valid one when preserving evidence. They are wrong.⁴⁶

Hurley demonstrated the benefits of applying the concept of parallel provenance in the case of “australia’s stolen generation,” children of aboriginal descent removed from their parents and families by aid agencies and churches, as permitted by acts of parliament whose purpose was child protection. He showed that this concept would further the understanding of the context in which those children were taken away, thus helping to determine the exact location of documents belonging to the churches and agencies that participated in the removals. In this manner, it would be possible to contact the aid recipients of that episode, who included both individuals and groups (the author reminded us that the Aborigines received different types of aid, in areas such as health, education, business, etc.).

As is evident from the description above, Hurley’s parallel provenance centers on the relationship between the document and its various creators. The present proposal for the notion of ramification, in contrast, focuses on the existence of communication among creators at different institutions, at a specific moment in time and given specific objectives.

The concept of parallel provenance presupposes identifying not only all the participating institutions, even if these institutions collaborated during different stages in the process of document creation, but also their respective functions and activities as well. This is done to determine the existence of a *legitimate archival whole*. The notion of ramification differs in that it depends on the identification of institutions (and their respective missions) assigned with a common

task (in this case, the dismantling of the Araguaia Guerrilla) and may contribute to the understanding of the sociopolitical dimension, the production of documents, and the establishment of the precise location of the corresponding *fonds*.

According to Sue McKemmish, attempts at modifying traditional archival concepts, as demonstrated by the example of Hurley's parallel provenance, are part of the Australian approach called the continuum model. Formally adopted in 1990, this model seeks to reconceptualize traditional theory and reinvent archival practice by stipulating that the life of a document extrapolates the definition of *life cycle*, which dominated archival practice during the second half of the twentieth century:

... records are "always in a process of becoming." ... Records can even have multiple lives in spacetime as the contexts that surround their use and control alter and open up new threads of action, involving re-shaping and renewing the cycles of creation and disposition.⁴⁷

As part of the continuum model, the Australians consider that the provenance of documents should not be linked, in a segregated manner, to only one creator, but should rather be situated within a complex context of creation encompassing several institutions. Through the prism of the notion of ramification, it would be important to note whether these different institutions, with their distinct missions, have forged links among themselves, a linkage in its turn emerging from the production of archival documents mandated by the fulfillment of their common task.

Concerning the concept of the complex *fond*, Paola Carucci and Maria Guercio, in their work *Manuale di archivistica*,⁴⁸ proposed the following definition:

A complex fond is made up of a plurality of fonds because it is: a) a fond constituted by a plurality of fonds hierarchically organized within the institutional structure inherent of the producing entity; b) a fond constituted by a plurality of fonds hierarchically structured within a documentary organization derived from the process of sedimentation or reordering of the document; c) a fond constituted by a plurality of fonds which, because they represent an institution reciprocity, converge in the archive of a specific entity (the collecting agent). There is no hierarchical connection between the archive of the collecting agent and that of the aggregated archive, which keeps its own autonomous and distinct configuration.⁴⁹

According to these authors, the importance of the complex *fond* comes from the fact that it is an archival concept capable of encompassing the institution's history, whose formation may have been the result of an organic structure, endowed with hierarchical or parallel connections with other institutions. In these cases, an archives is generated that reflects the complexity of those connections, such as the archives of ministries or public entities, or of very large private companies, or even of a family. An example of this would be

Brazil's Ministry of External Relations, which encompasses the following *fonds*: the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation (FUNAG), the Institute for the Research of International Relations (IPRI), and the Center of Diplomatic History and Documentation (CHDD).

According to Carucci and Guercio, the concept of the complex *fond* is also important because it makes up for the gap in the ISAD(G), whose solution to the aforementioned cases is "merely descriptive" and "general": they simply fall under the heading of "fond" or "sub-fond," which purges them of their particular hierarchical structures.⁵⁰

The present study, however, demonstrates that ramification is not simply the assembly of distinct *fonds*, sorted hierarchically, as is the complex *fond*. Ramification occurs, in fact, when documents of a *fond* are included in a different *fond* as a consequence of an existing trans- and intrainstitutional network of production, reception, and sharing of documents. This network, in turn, arises from the implementation of an ulterior task by all participating institutions, even though the task itself may not have been permanent or even officially published. When searching for evidence of ramification, it is important to take into consideration the political and social context, and not only issues relating to the documents themselves.

Would it be possible, therefore, to equate the definition of ramification with that of *dossier*? In the glossary of the descriptive standards in the Portuguese version, *file* is translated as *dossiê/processo* and defined as "an organized unit of documents grouped together either for current use by the creator or in the process of archival arrangement, because they relate to the same subject, activity, or transaction."⁵¹ However, the term *dossiê* as it is understood in Brazil almost matches the term *dossier* in English. The SAA Glossary defines *dossier* as "a group of documents assembled to provide information about a specific topic."⁵² Moreover, *dossier*

connotes information purposefully collected from various sources, as opposed to documents in an organic collection resulting from routine activities. In some instances, "dossier" may be used interchangeably with *file* in the sense of a case file. It is not equivalent to a file folder or other container; a dossier may be housed in several folders or other containers.⁵³

Thus, a *dossier* is a grouping of documents related to a specific theme, executed intentionally and through a planning process. It is not possible, however, to apply this definition to the archival box researched in the INCRA's *fond* in Marabá, where the "Certificate of Good Conduct" produced by the Precinct of Marabá was found, since that document was placed there naturally: controlling the government's land grants was one of INCRA's functions, but these did not include controlling guerrilla activity, which the military regime considered subversive.

Would it be possible to apply the definition of *allied materials* to ramification? This area is one of the ISAD(G)⁵⁴ fields that entails: a) the existence, location, availability, and/or destruction of originals where the unit of description consists of copies; b) the existence, location, and availability of copies of the unit of description; c) related units of description; and d) publications that are about or are based on the use, study, or analysis of the unit of description. In the case of allied materials, the archivist will base the description on the relationship that the described *fonds* establish with other *fonds*, a relationship that will arise from the existing similarities of missions, activities, biographies, and factors related to institutional identity. The archivist can be assured that these relationships exist because of their official nature.

The notion of ramification cannot be construed in this manner, since it is an analytical instrument that may be used by the archivist as an aid: it helps to determine the existing relationships (whether official or not) among distinct *fonds* and thus to discover the existing original documents or copies related to a historical event. These *fonds*, however, do not intermingle, nor do they form a mixed archives. For this reason, the archivist should base his or her analysis only upon hypotheses that arise from the notion of ramification itself.

One last option would be to assign to the notion of ramification the same definition as *document dispersal*. The definition of *dispersal*, however, is the following: "1. The act or effect of dispersal; 2. Separation of people or things of different meanings; and 3. Stampede; rout."⁵⁵ From an archivist's point of view, dispersal refers to documents belonging to a specific *fond* that end up included in a different *fond*, as a consequence of disorder, loss, or oversight, and not as a consequence of the intercommunication of distinct *fonds*. The definition of dispersal could not, therefore, be applicable to ramification.

It becomes evident that the documents found in INCRA's *fond* come from another *fond*. The documents from the Precinct of Marabá did not end up where they did because they were misplaced, but because they form an integral part of the dialogue among institutions, all of which were assigned a common task—the dismantling of the Araguaia Guerrilla. One of the documents that exemplifies this case was produced by the Precinct of Marabá: it could be the original, that is, "the first perfect version of a document"; or it could be a "multiple original," produced by "reciprocal obligation" or "multiple recipient" or through a "security program"; or else, as Duranti clarified, it could be a copy of the original document, "a transcription or reproduction of the original, because this copy cannot exist if it did not proceed from an original."⁵⁶ The fact that it is an original, whether it be single or "multiple," whose purpose is to make known the subject matter to the institutions or individuals involved in a specific task, precludes the possibility of justifying its presence in that *fond* due to oversight or disorder.

None of the archival terms or concepts mentioned above fully captures the notion of ramification here proposed. This does not mean, however, that the present article intends to question the validity of those concepts or any other established by the *ISAD(G)*. Rather, it intends to collaborate toward a refinement of the concept of provenance that takes into consideration the possibility that *fonds* need not always be analyzed through the prism of the sole creator; that accounts for the richness and diversity of possibilities that characterize the records creation process itself; and that presupposes the likelihood that the interests of the past may have yet been preserved, even in the face of extreme, hostile, and destructive action against their preservation. Specialists and researchers would do well to cherish the dynamism of society as reflected in the archival foundations themselves, for it is through the methodological operations of archival science—to which the notion of ramification hopes to contribute—that they may continue to strive toward the “comprehension of the immediate as well as the historic past.”⁵⁷

Conclusion

The institutions of the state analyzed during this research were all participating in a shared “higher” task: the dismantling of the Araguaia Guerrilla. Even though it was only temporary and had not been published as an official task, it nevertheless existed and produced specific outcomes, a few of which were discussed here. One of these outcomes is the fact that, due to this shared higher task, these institutions’ *fonds* started a process of intercommunication among themselves (they did not, however, intermingle, nor did they form a “mixed archives”). That this intercommunication was taking place implies the existence of a link among these *fonds*.

It is proposed, therefore, to identify this intercommunicative link as the “notion of ramification,” which may be used as an analytical tool to help researchers reveal the role of the documental, political, and social context of the documents themselves, especially in regard to the concepts and principles of *fond* and *provenance*. The notion may also help in answering the following questions relating to archival documents: by whom, why, when, and where were they created? The notion of ramification may aid, therefore, in unveiling the trans- and intrainstitutional network of production, reception, and sharing of documents.

It is important to note, however, that the notion of ramification should not be mistaken for *parallel provenance* or *multiple provenance*; it should not be regarded as a *complex fond*; it does not equate to *file*; and it should not be confused with *allied materials* or *documentary dispersal*.

Both parallel provenance and multiple provenance prioritize the identification of all creators involved in the process of generating archival documents, as well as the delineation of all their respective functions and activities. In

this manner, these new archival concepts elaborated by Australian archivists should not be equated with the notion of ramification. Ramification determines whether or not the creators of archival documents formed links among themselves through the fulfillment of a common task—in spite of differing missions—thereby contributing to the mapping of *fonds* and to the establishment of their exact location, a contribution that may be especially helpful in situations in which all *fonds* have been purportedly destroyed.

Ramification is synonymous with the presence of documents from a specific *fond* in another distinct *fond*, which is the result of a trans- and intrainstitutional network of production, reception, and sharing of documents. It is possible to deduce, therefore, that the documents found in the INCRA *fonds* are not the result of the joining of distinct, hierarchically ordered *fonds*, normally described as *complex fonds*.

It is likewise inappropriate to apply the definition of *dossiê* to these documents. The presence of the Police Precinct's "Certificate of Good Conduct" within the INCRA box in Marabá is actually an example of ramification because these archival documents were placed there in a natural manner; no predetermined plan or any intention to do so existed. This example contributes to undermining the "total destruction" theory, which implies that it is possible to destroy all the documents related to a specific historical event.

If it were possible to classify the links the INCRA *fonds* had established with other *fonds* as those in which the institutions involved were all fulfilling a common task, then the corresponding documents could be labeled "related sources." However, to determine the existence of a relationship among these distinct *fonds*, which do not intermingle, it is necessary to apply the notion of ramification and its underlying hypotheses.

It was possible to conclude, therefore, that the existence of the archival document of the Police Precinct found in the INCRA *fonds* attests to the occurrence of ramification and not of documental dispersion. This may be affirmed because those discovered documents, though deriving from another *fond*, had not been placed there because of dispersal, but rather because they proceeded from a complex network of institutions with different missions established to fulfill the common task of dismantling the Araguaia Guerrilla.

By proposing the notion of ramification, the present work does not intend to discredit the ISAD(G) or any other established concept or theory. On the contrary, it intends to present an analytical instrument based upon the richness of the nature of documents and its sociopolitical contexts and then to propose an archival *notion*. This instrument may be useful to researchers and professionals attempting to find the genesis of archival documents, or to those seeking to ascertain the survival of documents relating to a specific historical event—such as the Araguaia Guerrilla movement—in spite of and contrary to all allegations and theses attesting to the unequivocal certainty of their "total destruction."

NOTES

- ¹ Terry Eastwood, "What Is Archival Theory and Why Is It Important?," *Archivaria* 37 (Spring 1994).
- ² Eastwood, "What Is Archival Theory and Why Is It Important?," 125.
- ³ Jean-Pierre Brunterc'h and Olivier Poncet, "Prologue. Lieux d'archives, lieux de pouvoir: de Rome à l'hôtel de Soubise," in *Les Archives nationales: Des lieux pour l'histoire de France—Bicentenaire d'une installation 1808–2008*, ed. Claire Béchu and Philippe Béchu (Paris: Somogy éditions d'art, 2008), 10, author's translation.
Les archives, par leur nature, sont donc liées intimement à l'exercice d'un pouvoir inscrit dans la durée: les notions de commandement et de retour aux principes fondateurs, c'est-à-dire de légitimité, sont inhérentes à la notion d'archives et l'on conçoit que l'on ait très tôt pris soin de leur affecter un bâtiment spécifique placé sous l'autorité de ceux qui gouvernent.
- ⁴ Eastwood, "What Is Archival Theory and Why Is It Important?," 126.
- ⁵ Luciana Duranti, *I documenti archivistici: La gestione dell'archivio da parte dell'ente produttore* (Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, 1997), 18–19, author's translation. . . . *naturalzza, che deriva dal fatto che i documenti archivistici risultano da esigenze pratico-amministrative e si accumulano natutalmente e continuamente; interdipendenza, che deriva dalla loro spontanea e al tempo stesso strutturata coesione, dovuta alla regione per cui essi sono creati e necessaria alla loro esistenza e alla loro capacità di raggiungere il loro scopo e di servire come testimonianza; unicità, che deriva dal rapporto unico che ciascuno di esse ha con il suo contesto sia documentario che amministrativo; imparzialità, che deriva dal fatto che i documenti archivistici formano una parte reale delle attività da cui risultano; e autenticità, che deriva dal fatto che i documenti sono generati credibili e affidabili da coloro che hanno bisogno di agire per mezzo di essi e sono mantenuti con le appropriate garanzie per ulteriori attività, per consultazione, informazione e testimonianza.*
- ⁶ Eastwood, "What Is Archival Theory and Why Is It Important?," 130.
- ⁷ This territory encompassed the following regions: the northern part of Goiás (the name of that state has since changed to Tocantins), the western part of Maranhão, and the southern part of Pará.
- ⁸ The military takeover of Brazil occurred on April 1, 1964, through a coup (called *golpe* in Portuguese).
- ⁹ The municipalities most associated with guerrilla actions, located in those states, were Conceição do Araguaia; São João do Araguaia and Marabá, in the state of Pará; Imperatriz, in Maranhão; and Araguaia and Xambioá, in Goiás.
- ¹⁰ Hugo Studart, *A lei da selva: Estratégias, imaginário e discurso dos militares sobre a Guerrilha do Araguaia* (São Paulo: Geração Editorial, 2006), 41.
- ¹¹ The chronological sequence of the military operations detailed by Moraes and Silva (2005) was the following: Operation Peixe I, Operation Peixe II, Operation Peixe III, Operation Cigana, Operation Peixe IV, Operation Sucuri, and Operation Marajoara.
- ¹² Durbens Martins Nascimento, "A Guerrilha do Araguaia: 'Paulistas' e militares na Amazônia" (thesis, Universidade Federal do Pará, 1999).
- ¹³ *Fonds*: The entire body of records of an organization, family, or individual that have been created and accumulated as the result of an organic process reflecting the functions of the creator. Richard Pearce-Moses, ed., *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/f/fonds/.
- ¹⁴ Eliane Cantanhêde, "Ecos do regime," *Folha de São Paulo*, October 25, 2004, www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/brasil/fc2510200409.htm.
- ¹⁵ Tais Moraes and Eumano Silva, *Operação araguaia: Arquivos secretos da Guerrilha* (São Paulo: Geração Editorial, 2005).
- ¹⁶ Studart, *A lei da selva*.
- ¹⁷ Elio Gaspari, *A ditadura escancarada: As ilusões armadas* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002). Gaspari is the only author mentioned above who treats the guerrilla as a secondary topic; all the other authors treat it as their primary subject. Even though it is not the main subject in his work, however, Gaspari's book is important because of the sources to which he had access.
- ¹⁸ Luiz Maklouf Carvalho, *O coronel rompe o silêncio: Lício Augusto Ribeiro, que matou e levou tiros na caçada aos guerrilheiros do Araguaia, conta a sua história* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2004).
- ¹⁹ Moraes and Silva, *Operação araguaia*.
- ²⁰ Studart, *A lei da selva*.
- ²¹ José Vargas Jiménez, *Bacaba: Memórias de um guerreiro de selva da Guerrilha do Araguaia* (Campo Grande: edição do autor, 2007).

- ²² Lício Maciel, *Guerrilha do Araguaia: Relato de um combatente* (Rio de Janeiro: Corifeu, 2008).
- ²³ Romualdo Pessoa Campos Filho, *Guerrilha do Araguaia: a esquerda em armas* (São Paulo: Anita Garibaldi, 2012).
- ²⁴ Leonencio Nossa, *Mata!: o Major Curió e as guerrilhas do Araguaia* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012).
- ²⁵ The following institutions are among those whose employees responded totally or partially to the questionnaire: Fourth Military Police Battalion, Marabá, Pará; the Central Battalion, Belém, Pará; the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), Marabá, Pará; the INCRA of Belém, Pará; the National Department of Transport Infrastructure (DNIT), Marabá, Pará; the DNIT of Belém, Pará; the National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM), Belém, Pará; the Public Archives of the State of Pará (Apep). The following institutions were visited in the municipality of São João do Araguaia, Pará: São João do Araguaia City Hall; Post Office; Dr. Abel Figueiredo School (first and second grades); and Frutuoso and Silva Notary Public.
- ²⁶ This was part of a research project. Shirley do Prado Carvalhêdo, "O 'mito' da destruição total dos documentos: um estudo dos arquivos relacionados à Guerrilha do Araguaia à luz de princípios e noções arquivísticas" (PhD diss., Universidade de Brasília, 2012). Subsequently published as *Sobrevivendo ao Mito da Destruição Total: Os Arquivos da Guerrilha do Araguaia* (Curitiba: Appris, 2014).
- ²⁷ Created in 1970, by Decree-Law no. 1.110, of July 9, 1970, INCRA's primary mission is to conduct land reform, keep the national registry of rural properties, and manage the public lands of the Union. Brasil, Decreto-Lei no 1.110, de 9 de julho de 1970, "Cria o Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (INCRA), extingue o Instituto Brasileiro de Reforma Agrária, o Instituto Nacional de Desenvolvimento Agrário e o Grupo Executivo da Reforma Agrária e dá outras providências," www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/decreto-lei/1965-1988/De1110.htm.
- ²⁸ Notion: An element of a theory which does not yet present sufficient clarity and is used as an image of the representation of the real. Maria Cecília de Souza Minayo, *O desafio do conhecimento: Pesquisa qualitativa em saúde* (São Paulo: Hucitec-Abraso, 1999), 10, author's translation.
- ²⁹ Provenance: 1. The origin or source of something. 2. Information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection. Pearce-Moses, ed. "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/p/provenance/.
- ³⁰ Accession: Materials physically and legally transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time; an acquisition. Pearce-Moses, ed., "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/a/accession.
- ³¹ Terry Eastwood, "A Contested Realm: The Nature of Archives and the Orientation of Archival Science," in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, org. Terry Eastwood and Heather McNeil (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 11.
- ³² Helen W. Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?," in *American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice*, ed. Randall C. Jimerson (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2000). To deal with the documental integration that she describes, the author proposes the "documentation strategy." This strategy involves selecting a body of documents, or "collection" as termed by Samuels. The intention is not to gather this "collection" in a single physical space since the documentation is in many places. Information related to topics and locations will be decisive for the selection of those documents that will be part of this "collection." The author even mentions the term "ramification" to refer to those documents that are part of this integration but that will not be included in this "collection."
- ³³ Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?," 194.
- ³⁴ Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?," 195.
- ³⁵ See Taner Akçam, *Ottoman Sources and the Question of Their Being Purged*, press.princeton.edu/chapters/s9678.pdf.
- ³⁶ See Edward Drea et al., *Researching Japanese War Crimes Records: Introductory Essays* (Japan: National Archives and Records Administration for the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Interagency Working Group, 2006), www.archives.gov/iwg/japanese-war-crimes/introductory-essays.pdf.
- ³⁷ See *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, vol. 1, 1998, www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf.
- ³⁸ Morais and Silva, *Operação araguaia*, 540.
- ³⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 100.
- ⁴⁰ Brien Brothman, "The Past that Archives Keep: Memory, History, and the Preservation of Archival Records," *Archivaria* 51 (2001): 52.

- ⁴¹ International Council on Archives, ISAD(G), *General International Standard Archival Description: Adopted by the Committee on Descriptive Standards* (Stockholm, 1999), www.ica.org/10207/standards/isadg-general-international-standard-archival-description-second-edition.html.
- ⁴² Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance: If These Are Your Records, Where Are Your Stories?," Monash University, 2005, 7–8, <http://www.infotech.monash.edu/research/groups/rcrg/publications/parallel-provenance-combined.pdf>. This article appeared in two parts in *Archives and Manuscripts*: Part 1 ("What, If Anything, Is Archival Description?") in vol. 33, no. 1 (May 2005) and Part 2 ("When Something Is *Not* Related to Everything Else") in vol. 33, no. 2 (November 2005).
- ⁴³ Hurley, "Parallel Provenance," 24, emphasis in the original (PDF document).
- ⁴⁴ Hurley, "Parallel Provenance," 39.
- ⁴⁵ Hurley, "Parallel Provenance," 39.
- ⁴⁶ Hurley, "Parallel Provenance," 39.
- ⁴⁷ Sue McKemmish, "Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice," *Achival Science* 1 (2001): 335–36.
- ⁴⁸ Paola Carucci and Maria Guercio, *Manuale di archivistica* (Rome: Carocci Editore, 2008).
- ⁴⁹ Carucci and Guercio, *Manuale di archivistica*, 83, author's translation.
- Il fondo complesso è un fondo costituito da una pluralità di fondi. Può trattarsi di: a) fondo costituito da una pluralità di fondi gerarchicamente organizzati nell'ambito di una struttura istituzionale propria del soggetto produttore; b) fondo costituito da una pluralità di fondi gerarchicamente strutturati nell'ambito di una organizzazione delle carte derivante del processo di sedimentazione o di riordinamento delle carte; c) fondo costituito da una pluralità di fondi che, presentando un reciproco legame istituzionale, confluiscono nell'archivio di un determinato ente (soggetto collettore). No vi è collegamento gerarchico tra l'archivio del soggetto collettore e gli archivi in esso confluiti che hanno una con figurezione autonoma e distinta.*
- ⁵⁰ Carucci and Guercio, *Manuale di archivistica*, 83.
- ⁵¹ ISAD(G).
- ⁵² Pearce-Moses, "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/d/dossier.
- ⁵³ Pearce-Moses, "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology."
- ⁵⁴ ISAD(G).
- ⁵⁵ Aurélio Buarque de Holanda Ferreira, *Novo dicionário Aurélio* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1975), 482, author's translation. 1. *Atto ou efeito de dispersar-se*; 2. *Separação de pessoas ou de coisas em diferentes sentidos*; e 3. *Debandada, desbarato*.
- ⁵⁶ Duranti, *I documenti archivistici*, 20–21, author's translation.
- Un originale è la prima versione perfetta di un documento. . . . Esistono originali multipli dello stesso documento nei casi di obblighi reciproci (es. contratti, trattati, etc.), di destinatari multipli (es. circolari, inviti, memoranda), o di programmi di sicurezza (es. piani di protezione di documenti vitali per mezzo di dispersione di originali multipli in luoghi diversi). . . . Una copia è una trascrizione o riproduzione di un'originale, perciò essa non può esistere se non è stata preceduta da un originale.*
- ⁵⁷ Luciana Duranti, "Registros documentais contemporâneos como provas de ação," *Estudos Historicos* 7, no. 13 (1994): 52.

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