From Italy also comes the word of Signore Pagliai of Florence saying that the "respect des fonds" is "the only scientific and natural principle, which should be followed to render intelligent the researches of the historian."[11]

Sir Henry Lyte, Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office of England, describes the records of that office as being "kept pretty much according to the courts or offices from which they came, more than according to the subject. They are classified according to the place of origin."[12]

In our own country Mr. Leland, secretary of the American Historical Association, writes: "The principle of the 'respect des fonds' should be adhered to. In accordance with this principle records should be so grouped that they at once make clear the processes by which they have come into existence. Archives are the product and record of the performance of its functions by an organic body and they should faithfully reflect the workings of that organism. No decimal system of classification, no refined methods of library science, no purely chronological or purely alphabetical arrangement can be successfully applied to the classification of archives."[13]

Dr. Dunbar Rowland, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, maintains that "the object to be attained in the arrangement of all governmental archives is to classify them in such a manner that the documents will tell the story, in an historical way, of the progress and development of the state and its people from the beginning."[14]

Dr. Thomas Owen, of Alabama, has adopted the source principle in the arrangement of the archives of that state and says that thus far he has never had any question as to the wisdom of this course.[15]

Professor Eugene C. Barker of the University of Texas cites the following incident, which shows a decided legal disadvantage which would result from a departure from this method of classification: "We found that in a lawsuit that came up recently, a man wanted to prove a claim by a certain document that had been transferred from the state department to the library and before that document could be produced in evidence, the defendant had to prove the history of the document. The judge, in other words, wanted to know how that document came to be in the library; wanted to be perfectly sure that it was the identical document."[16]

[11]Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1912, p. 260.
[12]First Report of the Royal Commission on Public Records, London, 1912, I, Pt. III, 17, Q. 440.
[13]American Historical Review, XVIII, 24.
[14]Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1912, p. 270.
[15]Owen, T. M. to Harlan, E. R., October 23, 1913.

At the International Congress of Archivists and Librarians held in Brussels in 1910, the following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that the 'principe de la provenance' (respect des fonds) be adopted for the arrangement and inventorying of archives, with a view to the logical classification of separate documents as well as in the interest of comprehensive historical study."[17]

The principle 'respect des fonds' we may say then is the established principle of archival classification today. In "A Report on the Public Archives" submitted to the trustees of the State Library and Historical Department of Iowa in 1906,[18] Prof. Benjamin F. Shambaugh presented the following outlines as leading up to a proper classification of the archives of that state. These outlines are a very simple and concrete illustration of the principle 'respect des fonds' adapted to the archives of Iowa.

Outlines of Classification for the Archives of Iowa.

By B. F. Shambaugh.[19]

I—Primary classification for Iowa.

Public Archives { State / Local

II—Formal classification for Iowa.

Public Archives { Printed / Manuscript

III—Historical classification for Iowa.

Public Archives { Period of the Territory / Period of the 1st Constitution / Period of the 2d Constitution

They present four classifications of the records. The first or primary classification provides for the separation of state

[16]Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1910, p. 307.
[17]Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1910, p. 285.
[18]Reprinted from the ANNALS OF IOWA, Vol. VII, pp. 561-91, January 1907.
[19]Shambaugh, Benjamin F., A Report on the Public Archives, p. 35.