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Origin and Development of the Concept of Archival Description

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Publicatiejaar	1993
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Samenvatting	By studying the origin and development of the concept of archival description, the main question addressed here was whether description has always been a major archival function. The conclusion is that description has never been an archival function. Instead, it has been one of the means used to accomplish the only two permanent archival functions: (1) preservation (physical, moral and intellectual) and (2) communication of archival documents, that is, of the residue and evidence of societal actions and transactions. This is probably the reason why there is no universally recognized conceptualization of archival description, no steady progress in its use, and not even linear development in its application. Description has been carried out or not carried out depending on specific needs and conditions, attitudes and requirements, and its products have consistently reflected the conceptions about archives held by the society of the time.
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