The “new” history of political thought and the “new” history of scholarship both began around the same time, in the first half of the 1950s. They also, both, took as key agents the long-despised “antiquary.” And, they focused on England in the seventeenth century. Peter Laslett’s research into the scholarly context for the work of Locke and Filmer, along with that of his spiritual heir John Pocock, emphasizes the role of the “ancient constitution” in seventeenth-century English political argument. Their work, in turn, needs to be set amidst the history of seventeenth-century English erudition produced at the same time by T. D. Kendrick, David Douglas and Levi Fox.1 This body of work, with its focus on those who studied the ancient and especially medieval past, marked a real recovery of a lost historical practice.

But whatever attention has relatively recently been devoted to early modern European antiquarian scholarship, these works are almost entirely forgotten, cast into deep shade by the brilliant light of Arnaldo Momigliano’s “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” published first in the Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes in 1950, and then republished in 1955 in the first collection of Momigliano’s essays.2 Momigliano’s essay, which can with justice be seen as launching the interest in the means and ways of scholarly tools that is now propagated by his student, Anthony Grafton, was actually not a history of antiquarianism. Its point, as I have argued elsewhere, was

other: to seek an anti-relativist platform for historical scholarship that could be deployed to counter the kind of racist obscurantism that passed as radical skepticism in the 1930s.3

What Momigliano was not interested in, seemingly, was the scholarship on English antiquarianism that was going on all around him in London.4 Because Momigliano never claimed that “Ancient History and the Antiquarian” was the missing history of antiquarianism this omission is less glaring. Nevertheless, almost everyone else has read the article in just this light and this has made it a more insistent problem. By focusing on the history of classical scholarship and largely ignoring the beginnings of medieval historical scholarship, it was also relatively simple for Momigliano to present his scholars as more-or-less apolitical, above the fray. He closes the essay by arguing that perhaps the greatest legacy of the antiquarian was an “ethical” one, quoting Mabillon on the need for a “coeur dégagé des passions.”5 But yet his was a political argument, albeit with a small “p” because his target was a politics of relativism and nihilism.

When Momigliano’s essay was reprinted in 1955, a young Ph.D. from New Zealand, J. G. A. Pocock, was revising his Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation for publication. The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law begins with a brilliant description of the revolution in the historical study of law in sixteenth-century France, before turning to Sir Edward Coke and then proceeding through the seventeenth-century in England. In a vague footnote, Pocock gestures at Momigliano’s “Ancient Historian and the Antiquarian,” but it is not clear whether he had read the article when first published in the Journal the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes (1950) in Cambridge, or in Dunedin when revising the dissertation for publication, or reprinted in the Contributo when putting the finishing touches on the manuscript in Cambridge in the fall of 1956. In any event, by the time he did encounter the essay, his own approach to these issues was through “legal humanism” not “antiquarianism.”6 As for Momigliano, though he was strikingly oblivious to English scholars of the English antiquarian tradition, he was himself intrigued enough by Pocock’s project to begin drafting a review—probably for the Revista Storica Italiana, for which he was doing much work at the time—but it was never completed.7

Pocock’s book attracted many admirers, but its first chapter, few converts. These would have to include Julian Franklin (1963) on Bodin, and Donald R. Kelley’s Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship (1970) on Baudouin, Bodin, and Hotman. No readers of Pocock seemed to notice his hesitant attempt to link his project to Momigliano’s. (It goes without saying that precious few of Momigliano’s readers—at the time nearly all Classicists—would have cared about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French and English legal history.) Even in the jubilee edition of The Ancient Constitution published in 1987, in which Pocock was given a long postscript in which to respond, he found no need to return to this point—because no one in the intervening years had found it worthy of comment. Only recently, with Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine’s wonderful essay on “How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy” and William H. Sherman’s on

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2 See Anthony Grafton’s brilliant article on what, exactly, Momigliano was doing during his “middle period” at the Warburg, in Miller, Momigliano and Antiquarianism, 97–126.
4 For this chronology I am grateful to John Pocock, private communication, 7 July 2008.
the political mobilization of erudition in Elizabethan England—and we could even throw in, perhaps, Richard Tuck’s gesture at the “new humanism”—have historians of scholarship and historians of political thought began to explore their reciprocal practices and purposes.6

Pocock, however, has recently himself flagged just this story, though telegraphically only, by dedicating the first volume of his Barbarism and Religion to Franco Venturi, and the second to Momigliano himself. Surely drawing together these twin helices of historical scholarship and political thinking is a main task for historians of early modern Europe.

What follows is really a small sketch towards what it might have looked like if Pocock had met Momigliano at the Warburg Institute in 1950, or really grappled with his great essay in the years that followed—but with one important change. Had I wanted only to bring Momigliano and Pocock into conversation, I would have chosen for my title “The Ancient Constitution and the Antiquarian,” as I did in Peiresc’s Europe. What I propose by the term “genealogist” is to go a step towards redefining early modern antiquarianism, not so much away from the Classical world that was so dear to Momigliano, and so important for the many art historians who have mostly been responsible for returning antiquarianism to the scholarly agenda in the last decade or so, as towards the middle ages.

It is generally accepted, though without enough clarification, that the same “movement of ideas” that began with the historical recovery of the sources of ancient (Roman) history in the fifteenth and especially sixteenth century had led, by the end of the sixteenth century, to a new trans-Alpine attention to medieval history. Lacking much of an ancient history, so the storyline goes, scholars in the Habsburg lands, Scandinavia, England, and even France, began to turn their attention to the origins of their modern nations in the immediate post-Roman centuries. This was the beginning of medieval history, and we find it bound up with law and political thought all across Europe. The great heroes are Mabillon in France, Muratori in Italy, Leibniz in Germany, and Brady in England.

And in this trajectory we can already perceive how the turn to study of the middle ages required a different kind of historical scholarship. With certain kinds only of evidence descending from this period, these scholars had then to develop ways of making the sources speak. The origin of medieval history, in short, was also the origin of modern research. When the modern universities of the eighteenth century (i.e. Göttingen) then decided to establish a curriculum for the study of history, the most fundamental of these tools were incorporated as a preliminary course for aspiring historians.

This is the more or less true account of the origins of the “auxiliary sciences,” or historische Hilfswissenschaften, that is found in handbooks of medieval history. What it omits is the fact that a) many of those early medievalists were practicing antiquaries and that b) the specific “auxiliary sciences” were themselves developed within an antiquarian context by antiquaries for use first on ancient sources.

When antiquaries took their tool-kit and turned to post-classical history, they often reached first for genealogy. “Genealogy” was a set of questions or mind-set or rubric or lens for studying the past. Genealogy, and by extension, the genealogical mind, is about people. And, as a result, no matter how dry the materials collected by the genealogist-antiquary, this is a people-centered story.

Also, as a result, it is inevitably diachronic, because people are creatures who live in time (angels would be creatures who lived outside of time). Thus, the antiquary working through genealogy is focused on people, time and, therefore, change. Where then is the difference between the ancient—or modern—historian and the antiquarian? The genealogical perspective explodes the dichotomous view that sees synchrony, structure, and documents as the antiquarian’s lot, the diachronic, the individual and the narrative as the historian’s. What we are left with, instead, is a difference between research and narrative as primary modes of presentation. And by putting Peiresc at the heart of this inquiry, we could not more starkly frame the difference between a project shaped by research and research needs, and one driven by a literary output and its genres.

Our story unfolds in 1618. Peiresc was then in Paris, as the secretary of Guillaume du Vair, Keeper of the Seals. The French court was recovering from the shock of the Concini affair, the Netherlands was convulsed by the Gomarist controversy, about to come to a climax at the Synod of Dort, and the Empire was finally to collapse into thirty years of civil war. For Peiresc, it was a year of vigorous political scholarship. Gassendi explains, in the *Vita Peireskii*:

*Being returned to Paris, [in 1618] there was nothing which he desired more, then to vindicate the Roiall Line from the Plots of one Theodoricus Piespordius, Secretary to the Archdukes or Princes of the Low-countries, who in imitation of Johannes Valdesius a Spanish Concellor, endeavoured to draw the Austrian familie in a succession on male, from Pharamond the King of France, and consequently in title the King of Spain to the Kingdome of France, by right of Succession.*

Roberto Bizzocchi notes that the origins of this dispute could be traced back to 1581 and Matteo Zampini’s *De origine et atavis Hugonis Capeti*, defending the French succession from the Capetians. But many at the time thought that the Habsburgs were the better Merovingians, more French than the French. Bizzocchi notes Piespord’s broadside of 1617 (the engraving is dated 1616), dedicated to the Archdukes of the Netherlands, Albert and Isabella, but mistakenly explains that “this initiative occurred at a moment of peace between France and Spain. Twenty years later, after the French intervention against the Habsburgs in the Thirty Years War, it appeared anything but innocent to the eyes of Scipion Dupleix, creature of Richelieu and Royal Historiographer.”


But this earlier moment, 1618, was in fact no year of peace, and the Habsburg gambit did
not pass unnoticed, at least by Peiresc. Thierry Piespord had published his Principum Habsburgi-
Austriacorum stemma, origo res gestae in Brussels in 1617—the work is described as “Très rare... le
seul exemplaire reperé sur le net à la Bibliothèque de Munich dans les livres d’emblèmes.”12 It
built on Jacques de Valdes, Dignitate Regum Hispaniae (Grenada, 1602) and, probably even
more substantially, on Franciscus Guillimannus (Francois Guilliman), Habsburgiaca, sive de An-
tiqua et vera origine domus Austriacae, vita et rebus gestis comitum Vindonissensium sive Altenburgiens-
sium, in primis Habsburgiorum, libri septem (Milan, 1605).

Peiresc seems to have read these books, because we have an autograph note listing them
and several other titles on the subject, including Lignum vitae, ornamentum et decus Ecclesiae in
quique libros divisum, written by one Arnold Wien, dedicated to Philip II and concerned with
the origins of the House of Austria, published in Venice in 1595.13 Then there was De majorum
Divi Maximilianum II of Jacob Menlius (Augsburg, 1593) and Historia breve dell’Augustissima
Casa d’Austria, by Paolo Morigini, a Milanese, and published in Bergamo in 1593.14

There is in fact a whole volume in the Peiresc archive at Carpentras (MS. 1781), devoted to
the “Domus Austriaca”—to the polemical genealogy that made the Habsburg heirs to the
French throne. It begins with a detailed critique of Guilliman’s 1609 Syntagma de vera origine et
stemmate Cunradi II (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1609).15 In it Peiresc painstakingly probes the weak
points in Guilliman’s argument, the loose identifications that are glossed over but which enable
him to forge the desired link between France and the Habsburgs. Peiresc even draws up a family
tree (“STEMMA CONRADI II SALICI) based on Guilliman in order to better spot the false
suppositions.16 This is clearly the work of someone who knows the archival details very well.

Gassendi goes into great detail in his account of this episode in the Vita. Yet with all the de-
tail, there is one crucial item Gassendi omits. Indeed, perhaps we might even be tempted to ob-
serve that all the profusion of detail is designed to obscure the omission of one singular fact: the
French response to Guilliman and Piespordius was orchestrated, composed, written, edited,
printed, and published by Peiresc. Anonymously, of course, and Gassendi kept his friend’s secret
from beyond the grave.17

This microhistory begins in the Spring of 1618 in the register devoted to the genealogy of
the House of Austria, but earlier still if we turn to Peiresc’s correspondence with the person who
turns out to be the key actor, Meric de Vic, later Keeper of the Seals. In 1617 he was French am-
assador extraordinary to the Swiss Cantons. This is where and when his letters to Peiresc begin.
They are preserved in late-seventeenth-century copies in the Bibliotheque Méjanes in Aix.18

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13 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 62r; Peiresc had the title page copied out.
14 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 66r.
15 Carp. MS 1781, fols. 4r–9r.
16 Carp. MS 1781, fols. 5v–6r.
17 The somewhat melancholy side of this discovery is that all it took was looking through that Carpentras volume.
That no one had noticed this beforehand suggests that for nearly 400 years no one bothered to look. For every step in
this story is documented in Peiresc’s volume.
18 The register containing the letters of Peiresc to Vic, Carp. Bibl. Inguimbertine MS 1876 contains 61 letters, but ends
at the beginning of February 1616—and is thus obviously incomplete.
In a letter of 25 November 1617, de Vic writes that he had sent on ahead of him to Basel "the mémoire of the books that you sent me in order to do the research that you wanted. The ambassa-
dor, who was there, assured me that it would be easy to get the first on the list, but that there are  
also two or three chronicles mentioned in your mémoire which had never been printed." These  
would have to be located in manuscript and copied out.\(^\text{19}\) From this we learn that Peiresc had al-
ready a plan in the fall of 1617 at the latest, presumably not long after dissemination of Piespord’s  
broadside. The autograph of this list is preserved, in the hand of Peiresc’s friend, colleague and fel-
low legal scholar, Théodore Godefroy, but with marginal precisions by Peiresc.

By January, de Vic had arrived at Soleurre (Solothurn), residence of the permanent French  
ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, and informed Peiresc that he had received Peiresc’s let-
ters of 19 and 22 December. "As for the books mentioned in your mémoire"—recurring again to  
the document Peiresc had drawn up for him—"for which I’ve had checked all the principal cities  
of Switzerland,” he had found the Chronicles of Alsace and Basel, as well as Strumpfen’s History  
of Switzerland, in an old edition that included much of what was found in the specific annals and  
chronicles Peiresc desired. In addition, the Bernese reported possessing two volumes of histories  
in the form of diaries. From Lucerne he learned that they had illustrated scenes from local his-
tory on the walls of a gallery.\(^\text{20}\)

By the end of February de Vic could report that in addition to contacting Strumpfen (Strumphius’s) heirs about the possibility of additional materials, and writing to Berne to see the  
chronicle of a monastery he had visited there once before, he had sent to Muri to see if they pos-
sessed anything worthwhile. The bearer of this letter was also carrying de Vic’s request to the  
King to be discharged from his embassy, his intelligence-gathering on the state of affairs in the  
mountains having been successfully concluded.\(^\text{21}\)

"Not so fast" must have been Peiresc’s response to de Vic’s bid to be sent home. Peiresc  
would have turned to his friends to get the King to renew the embassy in order for more work to  
be done on Muri. Peiresc seems to have received a preliminary report from de Vic on the abbeys  
of the area and the dramatis personae by May 1618.\(^\text{22}\) The memo ends with news that Guilliman,

\(^{19}\) Meric de Vic to Peiresc, 25 November 1617, Aix, Bibl. Méjanes 213 (1031), 159: “Avant mon arrivée en Suisse  
j’avois envoyé a Basle le memoire des livres –que m’aves baillé pour en faire faire la recherche que vous desiries  
pendant la Foire qui s’y tennoit; Mr nostre Ambassadeure s’y est trouvé par rencontre, qui s’y est tres utilement  
employé, et m’a asseuré que je pourrois recouvrer le premier qui contient presque tous les autres. Il y a aussi deux ou  
trois chroniques mentionnées en votre memoire qui n’ont jamais esté imprimées, mesme celle de Lucerne ou l’ay  
escrit pour la faire transcrire, si elle se peut trouver en quelque Bibliotheque; c’est pour vous assurer Mr combien  
j’affectionne ce que m’avés recommandé, a quoy ie n’espargnera y soin ni depence. J’escris a Monseigneur le Garde des  
Sceaux l’estat des affaires pour lesquelles on m’avois envoyé par deça, et vous supplie me mandere si M.” nos quatre  
principaux Ministeres de l’Estat sont en la bonne intelligence que je desire, et pour cause qui leur importe a touts.”

\(^{20}\) “Quand aux livres mentionnés en votre memoire—lequel i’ay fait courir par toutes les principales villes de Suisse,  
i’ay recouvert les Chroniques d’Alsace et de Basle avec Struemphius [sic] de l’ancienne impression qui comprend tout  
ce qui est dans les Annales ou Chroniques particulières que vous demandiez, lesquelles sont manuscrites et gardées  
dans les thresors publics de ceux qui y ont intere, toutes lesquelles ont esté communiquées aud. Struemphius quand il a  
voulu composer son histoire, de sorte qu’il en a tiré tout ce qu’il y a de remarquable. M.” de Berne m’ont dit avoir  
deux volumes de leurs histoires qui sont comme deux livres journaux, et estre gardés avec leurs principaux titres. M.”  
de Lucerne m’ont escrit avoir fait peindre en une de leur galerie tout ce qu’ils ont en leurs histoires particulières  
laquelle ils m’ont convié d’aller voir.” Vic to Peiresc, 13 January 1618, Aix, Bibl. Méjanes 213 (1031), 161–62.

\(^{21}\) de Vic to Peiresc, 24 February 1618, Aix, Bibl. Méjanes 213 (1031), 163–64.

\(^{22}\) Peiresc filed the document under “1618. en Avril/ ALSACE” (Carp. MS 1781, fols. 69r–70r) and, indeed, the first  
part of it deals with the geography and cities of Alsace. But the flyleaf reads, in a hand associated with de Vic’s  
embassy, “Response envoiée de Friburg en Brisgau sur le Memoire de Monsieur Peiresc que y avois faict tenir. Receva  
a Soleurre le 25 Avril 1618.”
who had been professor of history at Fribourg in Breisgau, had died some years earlier. The title of the report, however, seems to reflect the situation in the Fall of 1618, rather than the Spring: "Extract from the response sent me, from Fribourg and Comar [sic] on the points contained in the mémoire of Ambassador de Vic."  

In late summer 1618 Peiresc was in Paris, in the Palace, as secretary to Guillaume du Vair, then Keeper of the Seals. Peiresc was, then, not merely defending the honor of France in this ancient constitutionalism, but he had the workings of government behind him—in fact, in this episode, he was the government.

In August, he sat down and formulated—for himself, but later, as we shall see, it became the basis of policy—a mémoire in his own genre of "instructions" to distant correspondents. These might concern astronomy, oriental studies, or medieval history—whatever it was that he was working on and needed help with. The document, therefore, is a typical product of Peiresc’s curiosity. Labelled by him “MURI/ EGISHEIM/ BASLE &C/ PAIERNE/ 9. Aoust 1618,” it is a functional attempt to make a distant agent aware of what he should be looking for.

Beginning, characteristically, Peiresc wrote “One would like to have” (On desire avoir) a report “on the description of the state of the book on the foundations of Mury [sic].” The first thing he wanted to know was whether it was written on parchment. If it was, then he thought that would make it more than 400 years old; if it wasn’t, then it would have to be based on an earlier prototype, but even so it was necessary to date the hand, “which isn’t difficult for men of letters to recognize who are more than a little experienced in the reading of ancient manuscripts and even for notaries.” The next thing Peiresc wanted to know was whether it was written in different hands and different scripts, and what these were. In addition, Peiresc wanted to know whether the volume was more or less complete, and whether one could tell if any quires had been removed. Peiresc wanted to know if the title and chapters of the book were rubricated or not.

In the second place, Peiresc asked for a sample on parchment or vellum of the first chapter of that book, which contained a genealogy of the old princes. “But above all, it is necessary that this extract be exactly collated” so that particularities of spelling and grammar be preserved rather than normalized, “since these errors serve also as proof of the time in which these pieces had been composed or transcribed.” Because, he continued, speaking authoritatively, “in the

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23 “Sr Guilman professeur en Histoire a Fribourg en Brisgau est mort il y a quelques annees. Le Sr Windek professeur en Theologie au lieu est encore en vie, mais malade maintenant a l’extremité.” Peiresc copied out the title and took notes on the Raetia of Joannis Gouler de Veineck (Zurich: Joann. Rodolf. Wolffin, 1616) in folio (fol. 73r). Another page of reading notes from works produced in this circle is at fol. 75r, on the Pro Hasburgiacis of Christopher Hartmann (Friburg, 1612).

24 “Extraict de la responce qui m’a esté donnée, tant de Fri boug que de Comar, sur les pointcs contenus a memoire de monsieur l’ambassadeur de Vic.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 69r.


26 “un petit proces verbal sur la description de l’estat du livre des fondations de Mury[,] scavoir s’il est escript en parchemin ou en papier et s’il est en caractere bien ancien ou non, Car si c’est l’original primitif j’estime que le caractere doit estre de plus de quatre cens ans ou environ et s’il se trouve de maniere plus moderne ce sera une coppie tiree de l’original et tousjours sera il bon de scavoir a peu prez en quel siecle elle peut avoir esté faitce, ce qui n’est pas difficile a cognostre aux gens de lettres qui sont tant soit peu versez en la eucture des manuscripts anciens et aux notaires mesmes.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 47r.

27 “Mais surtout il faut que tel extraict soit si exactement collationne qu’il n’y ayt s’il se peut aultcne difference d’avec l’original pas mesme en l’ortographe des noms propres ne aux fautes de grammairres s’il y en avoit en l’original d’autant que telles fautes servent souvent de justification du temps que telles pieces ont esté composees ou transcriptes.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 47v.
matter of genealogies very similar proper nouns are often repeated, there often occur equivocations and omissions when one transcribes them. That’s why one desires that the collation be made very exactly on the original."²²⁸ Peiresc also focused attention very microscopically on locations where parts of the original manuscript could have been tampered with, urging the attention of his agents to the presence or absence of inappropriate syllables which could be the sign of innocent omissions—or deliberate ones.²²⁹

Then Peiresc turned to the question of ensuring that the sample he would be sent was authentic. He wanted the sample signed and attested by a notary and the prelate or magistrate, and sealed with their seals.³⁰ And if a copy of the entire manuscript could be made, he wished for it to be sealed, signed, and even initialed on each page.³¹

Peiresc then went on to speak more locally about three charters mentioned in the manuscript before turning to other forms of evidence, the martyrologies and cartularies that might have remained in the abbey’s library. Peiresc thought it necessary to explain to his agent what these were. "All abbeys were used to having not only charters and ancient titles in their archives, but also cartularies, which are books in parchment where all the ancient titles were registered."³²

If the Abbot of Muri and his monks resisted public dissemination of these materials, he was to be reassured that "they would not be used except for serving as proofs of the ancient nobility and illustrious extraction of a family of great lords"—which would be done with "all circumspection."³³

What is so strikingly on display in this note is how Peiresc’s long practice with medieval manuscripts is projected in a systematic way as a guide for others. When Peiresc emphasizes letter forms, or writing materials, or even grammatical or factual errors, as crucial pieces of evidence not to be cleaned up by the copyist, he is showing the depth to which his historical sensibility

²²⁸ "Et d’aultant qu’en matiere de genealogies on reitere souvent des noms propres tous semblables les uns aux autres il y advient souvent des equivocues et des obmissions quant on les transcript. C’est pourquoy l’on desire que la collation en soit faicte sur l’original fort exactement." Carp. MS 1781, fol. 47v.

²²⁹ "Car il seroit plus conforme au reste de l’histoire desduicte dans ledict livre et si ce most s’est rencontre sur la fin d’une ligne et commamentement d’une autre cee premiers syllables pourroient avoir esté obmise fort innocemence par le copiste, voire le parchemin pourroit s’estre efface ou usé en l’endroit du commencement dudit mot ce qu’il fault scavor." Carp. MS 1781, fol. 48r.

³⁰ "S’il se pouvoit avoir par mesme moyen un extract de tout le livre entier faict en parchemin ou autrement signe par notaries atteste par des prelatz et magistratz et seelle de leurs seaulx il ne seroit pas inutile mais s’il y a de la difficulté on se contentera de celuy du premier chappistre," Carp. MS 1781, fol. 48r.

³¹ "S’il se pouvoit avoir par mesme moyen un extract de tout le livre entier faict en parchemin ou autrement signe par notaries atteste par des prelatz et magistratz et seelle de leurs seaulx il ne seroit pas inutile mais s’il y a de la difficulté on se contentera de celuy du premier chappistre. Que si on accordoit d’apporter les mesmes solemnitie a tout le livre il faudroit en ce cas la cotter et paraffer tous les feuillets du livre original et le faire signer au commencement et a la fin ne varietz, et apres on en feroit de mesmes a l’extraict que l’on en retiendroit ensemble du supliment s’il s e trouvoit en un autre volume." Carp. MS 1781, fol. 48r.

³² "Touttes les abbayes ont acoustume d’avoir non seulement des chartres et tiltres anciens en leurs archifs mais aussey des Chartulaires qui sont des volumes en parchemin ou estoient enregistrez tous leurs anciens tiltres," Carp. MS 1781, fol. 48r.

³³ "Si Mr l’Abbe de Mury et messeieurs ses religieulx ne sont pas bien aises que leurs tiltres soient publiez on les en aseurera et ne seroit emplozy que pour servir aux preuves de l’ancienne noblesse et grande extraction d’une famille de grands seigneurs et demeureront grandement redevables et en useront avec toute la circonspection et retenue qu’ils sauroient desirer sans en abuser en facon quelconque et sans les divulguer d’autre facon que comme il leur sera prescript par ledit Seigneur Abbé." Carp. MS 1781, fol. 49r–v.
was able to find evidence in the everyday. Above all, there is the constant exhortation to precision, and to detail.

This memo, it will be recalled, was dated August 1618. Meric de Vic had been in Switzerland; Peiresc hit upon the idea of deputizing him to find the answers to these questions. The mémoire, "pour escrire à Mr de Vic en Suisse," is a letter to du Vair that is obviously not meant as an informal document but rather takes the the form of a request that Puyssieux, Secrétaire d’État, be asked to write a letter on the King’s behalf charging de Vic to assist Peiresc with this project.34

Peiresc began by declaring that "There are no better means of repulsing all those books that have been made in favor of the house of Spain ... than by showing the true origins of those of Austria, for which there remains important documents and certain testimonies in many abbeys of the cantons of the Swiss ... and particularly in the Abbey of Mur."

Peiresc urged that no resource be spared in acquiring an authentic and attested copy of an ancient register there, and that it be deposed in the royal Trésor des Chartes. Now we understand why, in his earlier memo, Peiresc had insisted upon authenticating each and every page of the manuscript: because of the political implications of the document, there would be those on the other side who would not only tamper with the original manuscript, but also dispute the authenticity of any copy made by the French.36

To make this happen, cash was needed. "In those Swiss lands, they do nothing without authority and money. It will not be easy to obtain these extracts without using the name of the King and his purse." Therefore, Peiresc concluded, "one would desire that the King would write thusly to M. de Vic his Ambassador Extraordinary."

Peiresc concluded that "if Monsieur the Keeper of the Seals would condescend to take the trouble to say a word about this to Monseigneur the Cardinal and to Mr. de Puyssieux [the secretary of state], the thing is so advantageous and so plausible" that there would be no difficulty effecting it.

Peiresc the political operator got the results he wanted. The next page in the dossier, filed by Peiresc as "LE ROY a Mr de VIC/ MURY," is a restatement, nearly word-for-word, of Peiresc’s pitch to du Vair. The copy is in a secretary’s hand, but Peiresc himself filled in the address and

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34 "Monseigneur le Garde des Seaux est tres humblement supplié de vouloir dire à Monsieur de Puyssieux qu’il est à propos d’escrire une lettre au nom du Roy à Monsieur de Vic," Carp. MS 1781, fol. 55r-v.
35 "Il n’y a point de meilleurs moyens de r’embarrer touts les livres qui ont esté faicts en faveur de la maison d’Espaigne, par ceux qui l’ont voulue, non seulement esgaller mais preferer a celle de France, qu’en monstrant les vraies origines de ceux d’Austruche dont il est demeuré de grands documents et assurees testimoignages en plusieurs abbayes des cantons des Suisses. Lesquelles ont esté miraculeusement conservées non obstant tout le soing qui y a esté apporté pour les supprimer, ou pour le moing desguiser comme ils ont fait en quelques lieux...& particulierement en l’Abbaye de Mur...，“ Carp. MS 1781, fol. 55r.
36 "Estant bien certain que si on obmet toutes cest precautions ils ont tant de partisans, et de soing de s’advantageur, à quel prix que ce soit, qu’ils feront toute sorte d’efforts pour faire perdre l’original dudit registre, & de toutes les autres titlres qui se pourroient induire contre eux, & qu’ils n’y espargneront rien pour en venir à bout." Carp. MS 1781, fol. 55v.
38 "On desireroit donc qu’il pleut à S.M. d’en escrire à Monsieur de Vic son Ambassadeur extraordinaire,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 55v.
39 "Si Monsig. Le G.d.S. daigne prendre la peine d’en dire un mot a Mgr. le Ch. & à Mr de Puyssieux, la chose est si favorable & si plausible qu’il n y si auroit avoir de la difficulté. Il ne faut que presser un peu la despesche, et la faire tenir en diligence pour ne perdre une si bonne occasion,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 55v.
date at the bottom: “to M. de Vic, Councillor in my Council of State, and my Extraordinary Ambassador in Switzerland, at Monieaulx, 24 September 1618.”

The ambassador’s reply was not long in coming. It was filed by Peiresc under “12 Oct. 1618 / Attestation de MURY.” But he was not pleased with the report—and the failings exactly underline specific facts Peiresc had asked for. Missing was the day and date on which the copy was made, and the name of the magistrate who gave the order. Missing was the location of the manuscript, and the name of its possessor. Missing was the name of the person who furnished and afterwards retrieved the manuscript. And, finally, missing was the seal of the overseeing magistrate.

Peiresc then provided a “model” or template for his agent, based, as he noted, on the form of the “Vidimus”—which he was familiar with from his work on Provence’s medieval history. The magistrate was to give his name and “qualities.” He would attest to the authenticity of the manuscript and the integrity of its transport and copying. That “the collation was made by these and these notary publics” (“la collation a este facite par telz et telz notaires publics”). A seal was to be affixed, too. “One”—Peiresc’s language, again—“would desire, more, to have two or three words from the scribe imitating the ancient writing of this original for better judging the time it was written.”

Peiresc’s archive also contains the response of de Vic’s Swiss agent, Zurlouben, to Vic’s requests. A letter of 26 October 1618 began “I am sending you what you wanted concerning the Abbey of Mury” (“Je vous envoye ce qu’aves desire de l’Abbe de Mury”), and the information that the Assembly General of the Cantons could be accommodated for the sum of 400,000 escus, paid out in smaller sums to each of the cantons (what Peiresc had in mind when he spoke of the avarice of the Swiss?).

Zurlouben ended with a surprising offer—so surprising that Peiresc underlined it. He noted that it would please the abbot of Mury “if a cup for the Mass in the Roman usage, were sent to him, or the life of Saint Benedict in Latin, big and with pictures.” Vic, for his part, annotated the letter on the flyleaf: “M. Zurlouben, on the 16th day of October 1618, sending the act signed and sealed by the Abbot of Moury [sic] and asking on his behalf for two Messels because the Catholic cantons are offended by the agreement made by M. de Longueville [the standing French ambassador to the Swiss Confederation], without conveying it to them.”

40 “a Mr de Vic, Con. en ma Conseil d’Estat, et mon Ambass. Ext. en Suysse, a Monieaulx, 24 Sept 1618,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 58r.
41 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 51r.
42 “Or il eust fallu dire le jour et datte qu’elle avoir esté faicte par ordonnace de quel magistrat. A qui appartenoit l’original et ou il estoit conservé. Par qui l’original avoir esté exhibé et retiré (et falloit que ce fust quelqu’un du Monastere). Et finalement falloit dire que pour y faire adjoystier plus de foy on y avoir apposés le seau dont uesoit ledict Magistrat ou republique en ses jugements. Et falloit que le magistrat signast en qualite de magistrat de son seing acoustume et le secretaire de mesme,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 51r.
43 “On desireroit encore d’avoir deux ou trois mots imitez par quelque bon escrivain sur l’escriture ancienne de cet original pour mieulx juger du temps qu’il a esté ecris.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 51v.
44 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 83r.
45 “si luy envoyes une coupple de Missale a l’usage de Rome, ou la vie de Saint Benoist en Latin gros et avecques des figures,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 83v.
46 Mons. Zurlouben du 16 jour d’Octobre 1618 envoiant l’acte signé et scellé de Mr l’Abbé de Moury et demandant pour luy deux Messels que les cantons catholiques sont offences de l’accord que Mr de Longueville a faict sans leur en communiquer. desseign de parler des paiements a la prochaine journee generelle,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 84v.
Did the Abbey of Mury, in the middle of Switzerland, actually want for communion cups or a Missal book? The “deux Messels” mentioned by de Vic would seem to refer to a Missal book, while Zurlauben’s “coupple de Missale” seems to refer to a cup. The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694, 1st edn) defines “Coupelle,” the feminine noun as, “Certain vase dans lequel les Orfevres affinent l’or & l’argent en petite quantité.” A crucible could, indeed, seem like a way of describing a large cup for the mass. In addition, therefore, to the ambiguities of “coupple” we need to accommodate the possibility of misunderstanding between Zurlauben and de Vic.

De Vic had done his homework. He described the content of his communication on the flyleaf as “Observations that I have made on the original Book of the Antiquities of Mury, Order of St Benedict, which was brought to me at Soleurre by two of my friends, Monday 10th day of September 1618, and returned the same day.” De Vic seems to have internalized Peiresc’s insistence on precision relating to all facts of the episode.47

De Vic began his report with a discussion of the script, paper, composition, and binding of the book—all material evidence for dating the manuscript. This was a precise point-by-point response to Peiresc’s memoranda. There were no indications of tampering. Nevertheless, Vic’s judgement was that these thirty-seven leaves were taken from some other old book and badly recovered, also adding as many blank pages before and after the leaves with writing. This made for an octavo-sized book about two fingers thick. There was a small oval on the cover with the coat of arms of the abbey and abbot. De Vic also described the binding and its decoration. And, just as Peiresc had asked, he noted that there were seventeen rubricated capital letters in red.

De Vic noted that following the last page of text there was an index which he thought contemporaneous with the text itself. He then copied out the list. De Vic concluded with his own judgment of the integrity of the volume, and his own attestation. “All the above was transcribed from the original, which was brought to me at Soleurre where I was on the King’s service, the 10th of September 1618. By me, the undersigned, M. de Vic.”48

On a scrap of paper in the hand of de Vic, we read: “Copy of an Ancient book, and written by hand, which is in the Abbey of Mury in Switzerland in the canton of Lucerne, containing the foundation of the said Abbey and the genealogy of the princes who founded it. With three different copies of that genealogy, collated on the original, all brought in the year 1618, as I was in that land on the service of His Majesty in order to assist Mon. r Peiresc in the work that he has undertaken for His Majesty” [emphasis added].49

This is direct evidence for Peiresc’s role in this project. The copy of the book is not preserved in Peiresc’s file, but the “acts” are, and also the various attestations of authenticity, viz. “Copy collated on the original of the Genealogy of the founding princes, or benefactors, of the Abbey of Mury, Order of St Benedict, in the canton of Lucerne in Switzerland. The said copy written and signed by the Secretary of State of the City and canton of Soleure and sealed with the

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47 “Observations que j’ay faict sur l’original du Livre des Antiquités de l’Abbaye de Mury, ordre de St Benoist, lequel me feust porté a Soleurre par deux de mes amys le lundy Xe jour de Septembre 1618 et retiré le mesme jour. Pour envoier a Monsieur Peyresc Conseiller du Roy en sa coeur de Parlement de Provence. A Paris,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 86v.
48 “Il semble qu’on peut induire de ceste forme de table que le cors dudit livre est entier puis qu’il ne contienne de ce qui est cotté par ladit table. Tout ce que dessus a esté transcrit de l’original qui m’a est porté a Soleure ou j’estois pur le servis du Roy le Xe jour de Septembre 1618 par moy soubsigne. M de Vic,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 85v.
49 “Coppie del Livre Antien et Escrit a la Main qui est en l’Abbaye de Mury en Suisse dans le canton de Lucerne contenant la fundation de ladit Abbaye et la Genealogie des princes qui l’ont fundee. Avec tros diverses coppies de ladit Genealogie collationnes a l’original le tout porté en l’annee 1618 comme j’estois audit pais pour le servisse de Sa Ma.” Pour en secourir Mons. r Peiresc en l’ouvrage quil a entreprins pour Sadit Ma.,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 87r.
seal of said city where I had brought the original said original [sic] in the year 1618, being there on the King’s service.”

Peiresc preserved another letter from Zurloube n to de Vic, dated 30 September 1618, from Zug, which, according to Peiresc, accompanied the first chapter of the Antiquités de Mury “signed by three religious of the said Abbey in the absence of the Abbot,” (“signe de troys Religieux de ladit Abbaye en l’absence de l’Abbe”), and was received in Soleurre on the 1st of October 1618). In this letter Zurlouben explains that the book had been copied out eight days previously and that they had been waiting for the abbot to affix his seal but he had been visiting other monasteries in the vicinity and was not expected back for another fortnight. In order not to slow things down any more, he had the Prior and the secretary attest to its authenticity instead.

But then Zurlouben turned to the question of the quid pro quo, helping resolve the aporia concerning the word “coupple.” “I content our goldsmith with what you have sent me, but he complains that you didn’t take the other piece. With regard to the weight that I informed you of, it was that I took you to mean an ounce for a lot.” This seems directly to pick up the thread of the discussion of providing a communion cup to the monastery in exchange for access to the manuscript. “I would ask, My Lord,” Zurlouben continued, “for the arms of his Highness de Longueville and yours, to send to me a sketch on paper.” Obviously, the plan was to have the goldsmith engrave the arms of the French donors on the cup before presenting it to the Abbot. This exchange of manuscript for ritual article anticipates by nearly twenty years Peiresc’s offer of a communion cup to a Coptic monastery in Wadi Natrun in exchange for one of their prized Psalters.

In receipt of the manuscript from Mury, Peiresc began to study it. His archive preserves a variety of attempts to digest the materials. Genealogy and, in particular, the graphic display of genealogical information, is a key tool for Peiresc. Thus, we find a chart in Peiresc’s hand of the princes mentioned in the charters documenting the origins of Muri, and another version of the same information in a different hand—we will later see whose this is. Yet another genealogical table is entitled by Peiresc—and in his hand—“VINDICIAE FRANCIAE sive originum Habsburgicarum et Austriacarum per victorem ....” A draft of this, on the reverse, employs the different title “Table of the ancient counts remembered in the slightest way in the ancient

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50 “Coppie collationee a son original de la Genealogie de s Princes fundateurs ou Bienfacteurs de l’Abbaye de Mury ordre de St Benoist dans le canton de Lucerne en Suisse. Ladit coppie escritte et Signee par le Secretaire d’Estat de la Ville et canton de Soleure et scellee du sceau de ladit ville ou je fais porter l’original ledit original [sic] en l’annee 1618 y estant pour le servisse du Roy,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 90r. Another example is found at fol. 91v: “Acte de la genealogie des princes denommes au livre des Antiquittés de l’Abbaye de Mury ordre de St Benois dans le canton de Lucerne en Suisse. Signé de Mons. l’Abbé dudit lieu et scellé de son sceau envoià par Monsr Zurlouben le 16 Octob. 1618 et receu a Soleurre par homme expres le 17 desdit Moys et an.” (An example of one of these authenticated acts is at 91r.)

51 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 96r–v.

52 “Je content notre orpheuvre de ce que m’aves envoye mais il se plainct de ce que ne luy ays prins l’autre piece. Pour le poix que ie vous avois mande s’estoit que j’atendois dire une unce pour un lott, je vous prie Monseigneur pour les armes de son Altesse de Longueville, et les vostres m’envoyer sur un papier le modelle,” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 96r–v.


54 “Stemma Principum Qui in antiqua tantum genesi Murensi memorantur.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 33v, and “Antiqua Principum fundatorum Murensis Monasterii genealogia in tabulam redacta, integra M. codicis verba summa fide fide complectens...” fol. 34v.

55 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 35r.
origins of Muri.” A whole series of Habsburg stemmae follow, again drawn up by Peiresc in great, great detail (38v-39r). Following this we find, again in Peiresc’s hand, “SCHEDAE PRIORES EX MURENSIBUS MONUMENTIS ET GUILLMANNO. Rerum habsburgica-rum.” There is yet another stemma, this time entitled “Table of the ancient counts whose name is written in founding acts of the monastary of Muri, and extant in the ancient origins and other kinds of authentic documents of the said society.”

These information-management documents include also a page with different headings, as if titles for a work on Muri, including “Antiqua Murensis Monasterii Genesis,” “Acta fundationis Murensis Monasterii,” “Antiqua Principum Fundatorum Murensis Monasterii Genealogia in Tabulam Redacta” (39v).

Another of the fascinating aspects of this micro micro-history is how it illustrates the fully collaborative nature of the project. The first part of it we cannot be sure of, but it surely must involve the hurt pride (and worse) of the King when handed a book by the ambassador of the Spanish Netherlands purporting to show how that French crown rightfully belonged to the Habsburg Emperor. Peiresc either took upon himself or was tapped to lead the response. He then used du Vair to access the French ambassador in Switzerland. But at home, Peiresc also drew on the knowledge and skills and talent of various érudits or legal humanists (to use terms preferred by Pocock, Franklin, and Kelley), especially Jacques Godefroy and André Duchesne, both great scholars, some of whose fame actually endures.

Thus the page of Habsburg stemma in a hand other than Peiresc’s—that of André Duchesne. Then, on a page filed as “GUILLIMANI/ AUSTRICA,” Peiresc copied out the title of his main work, Francisci Guillimanni HABSBURGIACA, sive de Antiqua et vera origine DOMUS AUSTRIAE, vita et rebus gestis comitum Vindonissensium sive Altenburgiensium in primis Habsburgiorum, libri septem published in Milan in 1605. Below, we find the titles of three other works by Guilliman, written out in the hand of Peiresc’s friend Théodore Godefroy (1580–1649; royal historiographer in 1613 and son of Denis Godefroy I; Théodore’s brother, Jacques (1587–1652), was secretary of state in Geneva and wrote about the Codex Theodosianus). The document is important evidence for the collaborative nature of this project. We do not have to imagine these three great scholars of the French monarchy, Peiresc, Duchesne, and Godefroy, getting together in Paris and working on this anti-Habsburg project—we see the marks on the page.

In this dossier there are several documents in the hand of either Godefroy or Duchesne, and some with that of Peiresc as well. In the hands of Godefroy we find a chart devoted to reconstructing Piespord’s proposed genealogy of the house of Austria (fols. 151–52; 153), a set of “Remarques sur les Tables Genealogiques que dessus de Theirry Biespord, Secretaire de l’Archeduc Albert” (fols. 155–58), “Remarques sur l’Origine de la Maison d’Austriche qu’on pretend estre issue en ligne masculine des Rois de France de la premiere Race” (fols. 159–67), notes from an old book at Muri (fol. 167), and, finally, a short essay on the Counts of Thierstein and Homberg (fols.173–78). Despite being in Godefroy’s hand, they show the occasional underlinings that were typical of Peiresc’s reading practices. Peiresc’s mark is most directly found in the margin of this last memorandum, where he writes in “It would be necessary to have, if it is

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56 “Stema priscorum comitum qui in Antique tantummodo Murensi genesi memorantur.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 37v.
57 “Stema Priscorum Comitum quorum nomina conscripta apud acta fundationis Murensis monasterii, atque in antiqua genesi, alisque authenticis, ejusdem coenobii Monumentis extant.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 41r.
58 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 35r.
59 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 67r.
possible, an extract of the charters of this confirmation by the Counts of Theirstein and Homberg from the chapter and other foundations of Zurich.” Where Godefroy observes that Rudolph Count of Homberg and Rudolph Count of Theirstein are mentioned in “la confirmation de la Prévosté de Zurich,” Peiresc’s sense of priorities is registered in the underlining. And at the bottom of the page, where Godefroy enumerates the ten chronicles that Jean Strumpfen noted having used to perfect his history of Switzerland (Zurich, 1548), Peiresc puts marks next to those of Basle (by Conrad Schnitten), Ebersheim Munster, and Zurich, and wrote in the margin “these three marked chronicles, above all the others” (“cez trois chroniques croixees, sur toutes les autres”), reflecting some serious familiarity with this corpus. Peiresc’s file also preserves an autograph copy of André Du Chesne’s (1584–1640) never-published Refutation de l’imposture et fauléte de Thiry Piespord Secrétaire de l’Archiduc, Touchant la première origine de la Maison d’Austriche.

THE BOOK

All of this points unmistakably to Peiresc’s chief role in coordinating the scholarly-literary response to the Habsburg-orchestrated challenge to the Bourbon succession. But we have more, too: we have the book. Peiresc’s archive preserves printed pages of the book, galleys and manuscript drafts in Peiresc’s hand, for those same printed pages. This is surely the most unequivocal proof of his responsibility for the project—though whether this amounts to “authorship” in a conventional literary sense is a question that lurks in the background of this story.

The book whose parts Peiresc preserved was the Origines Murensis Montasterii—Origins of the Monastery of Muri, of the Order of St Benedict, in Switzerland, and through all of Europe most celebrated. With varied Imperial and Apostolic privileges, Princely and other truthful ancient grants and the early most ancient Genealogy of the Counts of Habsburg, in which the true origin of the House of Austria is most securely demonstrated and the fictions of the Spaniard Jacob Valdes are destroyed. Supplemented by a letter to whomsoever learned men which mentions these Origins. This appears to be the title page of the second edition of a title published in Spiremberg in 1618, but which is not found amongst Peiresc papers. The differences between the two editions are minimal and, as we will see, can be explained from within Peiresc’s archive.

60 “Il fauldroit avoir s’il est possible, extract des chartres de cette confirmation de prêvosté & autres fondations a Zurich, par les Comtes de Theirstein & d’Homberg.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 173r.
61 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 173r.
62 Carp. MS 1781, fols. 190–263.
63 In Helvetiis, atque adae Europa universa celeberrimi, Ordinis S. Benedicti. Cumque varis privilegiis Apostolicis ac Caesarem, Principum, aliorumque fidelium antiquis largitionibus Atque imprimis antiquissima Comitum Habsburgiensem Genealogia, Qua vera Austriacae Domus origo certissime demonstratur, & Iacobi Valdesii Hispani figmenta destruuntur. Accedit Eruditissimi cuiusdam viri Epistola quae harum Originum meminit. The title page is at Carp. MS 1781, fol. 10r.
65 The absence of a 1618 title page is puzzling; on the other hand, Peiresc’s archive preserves emendations and drafts of texts that did appear in that first edition.
The *Origines* is rare. No copies of the book are found in the United States nor in the British Library. Where copies are found, though, is interesting: there are 11 copies in Paris, between the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Arsenal and the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève.

There are two copies of the *Origines* in the old Habsburg capital of Vienna, and the online catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek actually gives Peiresc as its author. The Swiss National Library, in turn, gives Paris as the presumed place of publication for both its copies and Peiresc as author. If the work was intended as a propaganda counter-blast on behalf of France, its rarity suggests either that it was not much circulated, or that it was “consumed”—read as a piece of occasional literature and soon after discarded.

And where is Spiremberg? There appears to be a good deal of confusion about this. Indeed, it seems that no other book was ever published in Spiremberg. But a careful look through Peiresc’s dossier shows that this one wasn’t published there either. We find a manuscript title page, very full, and almost clean, down to Muri’s coat of arms. There is lots more wording here than on the final version, and Peiresc seems to have given some thought to layout—notes preserve marginal indications to the printer on how to lay out several lines of the subtitle’s text. The arms of Mury are drawn in by hand. But there is one very crucial piece of information on the draft title page: the place of publication is given as Frankfurt (“Francofurti”), not Spiremberg. And if we turn to a still earlier version of this title page, with many more crossings-out and insertions, we find something even more interesting. For in addition to place of publication we are

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66 We do, however, find a copy of the 1618 edition in the library of Sir William Camden, one of Peiresc’s close friends, and a portal to the world of English erudites. See Richard L. DeMolen, “The Library of William Camden,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 128, no. 4 (1984): 388, but note that place of publication is given here as “Spilimbergo.”

67 Two of the copies at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève bear the arms of Jean du Bouchet, the next generation’s anti-Habsburg polemicist (4 M 322 INV 490 RES P.5 and 4 M 322 INV 490 RES P.4). The *Catalogue Collectif de la France* also indicates individual copies held at Nancy, Dijon, Amiens, Strasbourg, Orleans, and Le Mans.

68 Both copies are of the 1627 edition and both are listed with Paris as the place of publication (A 11906 and A 11906 Res.) The second volume bears the Ex-libris of the Zurlauben family and gives Peiresc as author (A 11906 Res.) Worldcat lists copies of the 1618 edition at the Royal Library at The Hague and at the Universiteitsbibliotheek, Leiden. I have also located copies in the Fach-Katalog der Aargausischen Kantonsbibliothek, ed. Hermann Brunnohofer (Aargau, 1881), 1:209. In the section on German imprints in the survey of the items in the Royal Library, presented to Cambridge by King George I in 1715, the editor notes the presence of several “unusual imprints” including the first Schamlkalden imprint of 1565, the first Rinteln imprint of 1622, “and a scarce item published in Spiremberg in 1618 entitled *Origines Murensis Monasterii in Helvetiis*” (*Handbuch Deutscher historischer Buchbestände in Europa*, vol. 10, *A Guide to Collections of Books Printed in German-Speaking Countries before 1901 (or in German Elsewhere) Held by Libraries in Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. Graham Jefcoate, William A. Kelly, and Karen Kloth, with Holger Hanowell and Matthias Bauer [Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 2000], 174).


70 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 99r.
now also given date of publication: “Francofurti 1618” [underlining is Peiresc’s]. Subsequently, the decision must have been made to print this with a false place of publication.

If we compare the editions, we find a work of 65 pages, exclusive of front and back matter. The latter includes an index and errata list, the former a preface to the benevolent reader, citations from the work of Francis Guillman, and a letter to the learned reader (re-ordered, often, within the same edition). There are some small changes to the stemma. But the biggest difference between the two editions is the addition to the second of a long letter to the “Eruditis-simi” supposedly found and translated from the French to the Latin (3–14). The letter is an account that revolves around discussions of authority and monarchy in the middle ages, heavily citing from the appropriate authorities. It has almost nothing to do with the subject of the Origines, except for one sentence, and that is the one that Peiresc underlined, emphasizing not merely the greater antiquity of the French king, but pinpointing the origins of the Habsburgs to 1072—thanks to the founding documents of the Monastery of Muri.

From this sentence, we are able to gauge the importance the French attached to the manuscript of Muri. Peiresc’s dossier contains much that enables us to probe his working practices as “author” and “publisher” of a work that seeks in a medieval charter a contemporary license for French public authority. In terms of assessing Peiresc’s contribution we have three large groups of material to go by:

1. the preface to the “Benevolent Reader”
2. the stemma
3. titles, chapter headings, and running heads

Peiresc preserved several loose gatherings of the prefatory material, with multiple copies of a letter “To the Benevolent Reader” (LECTORI BENEVOLO). He also kept his own autograph draft of this same text, full with crossings-out and insertions. Peiresc began by emphasizing that the “collector of the acts, although anonymous” (Actorum collector, quamvis anonymus) and a

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71 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 20r.
72 Other copies of this edition (64 pp.; Arsenal H-5828) contain a table of contents (liv-liir) and index (liiv-liiir). Arsenal H-4221 also contains a list of chapters (liv-liir) and a tipped-in title page. Francisci Guillimanni Consiliarii et historiographi Caesarei Austriaci. De Vera origine et stemmate Cunradi II. Imp Salcie syntagma (Friburgi Brisgoiae, 1609) (which we have seen already was used as a punching bag for Peiresc).
73 (1) On the chart’s left margin, there are generations marked with Roman numerals proceeding down the left side of the foldout in the gutter, from “I” to “VIII” (2) All of the characters in the left two lines of descent have crochets or brackets over their names, just as Peiresc indicates in his notes on the chart in Carp. MS 1781 fol. 32r. (3) The lines of descent under “Ita Comitissa de Habspurg” have moved. In the first edition, they came down on the “A” of “Ita” and descended from the “r” in “Habspurg,” which was directly beneath that “A.” In the second edition, it comes down on the “M” in “Comitissa” and descends from the “H” in “Habspurg,” which is directly below the “M.”
74 “Nec vero opus est ad attoledam Hispaniae Regum prosapiam eis Regem nostrum submittere, cuius Maiiores Galliae Regnum & Sceptrum tenebat longe ante quam Arx sive Castellum Habspurgense, unde orta haec familia, extaret. Eius quippe prima fundamenta a VVernero quodam Argentinensi Episcopo sub annum 1072 iacta sunt, ut Origines Murensis Monasterii Habspurgo proximius clarissime demonstrant. Primi omnium sibi Comitum Habsburgensium nomen sumpersunt Ortho, Adelbertus & VVernerus filii Radeboti Episcopi illius fratris, ut colligitur ex stemmate sibi familiae per stirpes recta linea ducto ad Rudolphum habsburgensem usque.” Origines Murensis Monasterii... (Spiremberg, 1627), 10; in Carp. MS 1781, fol. 14v.
75 Fol. 28 contains a typeset version of the “Lectori Benevolo,” gathering iiir-v, followed by five pages of “acts” of the monastery quoted out of Francis Guillaume’s Habsburgiacis (iiir- ). Then (31r, iiir) another version of the “Lectori Benevolo.”
76 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 21v.
monk of Muri, was extremely trustworthy (*fidelissimus*). He then turned to whatever details of
his life could be established. He lived during the Abbotship of Ronzelino for whom we have
diplomata from 1128 and 1132, but wrote probably a little after the death of Count Adelbert,
around the year 1142. But what really interested Peiresc were the details of genealogy.

The large, fold-out stemma presents another site for archaeological investigation. We begin
at the “surface,” with a finished copy, entitled “Antiqua Principum Fundatorum Murensis
Monasterii Genealogia in tabulum redacta” [18r]. A clue that all might not be what it seems is
that the other side of this printed fold-out sheet is covered with an alternate table, presented
graphically as a “tree,” and with detailed biographical notes, all in the hand of the famous gene-
alogist and Peiresc’s collaborator on this project, André Du Chesne. If we dig still deeper, the
next stratum we hit is the page’s galley, with Peiresc’s comments about how to alter the visual
presentation, such as curving the crochets, putting the names of siblings on the same line, mark-
ing the correct heirs and of course correcting errors in the spelling of people. All of these seem
to reflect pre-publication transformations, since the Stemma that appears in the second pub-
lished edition is unchanged.

At this first level, there is an autograph draft of what seems like Peiresc’s report to the printer
on the kinds of changes that he wanted made to the chart. The memo is entitled “To render this
genealogy, in whatever state it was, complete.” It is fascinating to see the great scholar thinking
aloud about how he wanted the graphical information to read so as to better fit with the flow of
the text. In this he offers contemporary evidence not only for the history of reading words, but
also for the history of reading diagrams (not pictures either). Peiresc gave specific examples of
how the chart should be re-written so as to function better as an argument, by enlarging it, and
systematizing the lines and positions of names. A key construction principle was to avoid dis-
rupting “the thread of the discourse of the author of the genealogy.” For a subsequent edition,
Peiresc proposed stretching the information over two pages rather than one.

And then, finally, we hit bedrock: Peiresc’s own genealogical charts. But even here, there are
layers of creation. At fol.19v there is a spectacular genealogical chart by Peiresc, which—like a
kudzu vine—spreads across the page from left-to-right, with rich biographical information in the
bubble, and dense marginal annotation all around. There is a less finished version of this too
(fols. 38v-39r), but also primitive, sketchy charts (fol. 33v) that would seem to take us back to

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77 In the autograph, Peiresc began by referring to an “author,” then “Quorum Collector anonymus quidem,” then to
“Quorum Scriptor aut Collector Anonymus quidem,” before finally settling on “Actorum collector.” Carp. MS 1781,
fol. 21v.

78 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 28r–v.

79 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 18v.

80 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 32v.

81 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 33r: “Pour rendre cette genealogie en tel estat qu’elle fust à sa perfection. Il faudroit eslargir la
Table Genealogique qui en a esté dressee en feuille ouverte un peu davantage qu’elle n’est pour mieux distinguer les
diverses branches de la descendance les unes d’avec les autres, qu’elles ne sont a present en laditz feuille.// Et a fin de
pouvoir remettre en une mesme ligne, toutes les parolles qui y debvoit estre lesquelles l’imprimeur à quelquefois mis
dessoubs par forme de reprinze [*sic*] pour sa seule commodité, et pour restressir sa forme.// Ce qui a donné subject a
quelques inconveniants, qui interrompent la fil du discours de l’autheur de la genealogie, qui est tout ce qu’on avoit
desire d’éviter.// Mais en cette autre edition, il se peut reparer, en faisant plustost en deux feuilles qui se colleront
ensemble, ce que ceux-ci ont mis en une seule pour plus commodement restablir toutes lesditz parolles en leur vraye
situation, et rendre avec plus de fidelité, toute la tissure du discours du vieu manuscript.// On les a toutes trasses par
dessoubs de petites rayes interrompees et les a l’on accompagnées de certains petits doubles traicts, qui monstrent le
lieu ou chacune desdites parolles debvoient etre. Scavoir est...”
the beginnings of Peiresc’s work on this subject—especially if we think of these charts as working tools for arraying information in the course of research, as opposed to after-the-fact reconstructions.

What we discover in this dig is that, as thoughtful as Peiresc was, and as much control as he may have had over the project, there was a real difference between what he could do in manuscript and what he could do in print. For Peiresc’s own charts, in a style that could not have been reproduced in print, were much richer informationally. The real break is between this and the chart as it would appear in print. For here we see the fault line between the standard arborial model, with clear chronological descent from the top of the page to the bottom, and Peiresc’s left-to-right movement, emphasizing time’s complicating, rather than clarifying, power. Moreover, whereas Peiresc’s manuscript drafts and corrected galleys anchor him to the first, “1618” edition, the layers of the chart take us all the way to the “1627” edition—though it cannot be stated with certainty that it was in fact printed in 1627.

But as we dig down through the different strata of creation we find also a change in Peiresc’s description of the information, since the early draft of the chart had as its title “Chart of the Princes who are remembered at all in the ancient Genesis of Muri,” while the one presented as it would appear in print reads “Ancient Genealogy of the founding princes of the monastery of Muri redacted in a table, including the full text of manuscript books with highest reliability.” What is interesting here is the replacement of “Genesis” with “Genealogia.” Indeed, we find this in the accompanying drafts of prefatory material as well. The first section was originally called “Ancient Origin of the Monastery of Muri. Founding Acts of that Society” (“Antiqua Murensis Monasterii Genesis. Actis fundationis ejusdem coenobii”). The following section, in turn, referred to the ancient manuscript that provided the evidence and began, “This is the genealogy of our princes...” By the next draft, “Genesis” had been replaced almost everywhere by “Genealogia,” viz. “Ancient Genealogy of the Founders of the Monastery of Muri.” The subsequent reference to the supporting source is unchanged. Names were to follow. But the section concludes with the words “Genesis Murensis”—intended either as a running title, or an introduction to the next section (fol.21r).

The replacement of “Genesis” by “Genealogia” is meaningful: Peiresc was shifting the story towards a clearer focus on the genealogy of the founders, rather than the origins, or history, of the institution. The printer, however, was a little slow in making this change, so we have Peiresc’s corrections to the galleys: “Antiqua Fundatorum Murensis Monasterii. GenesisnungalOGIA.” To make the import of this change indubitable he suggested inserting a new opening sentence: “De Genealogia Comitum & Principum nostra terra.” And then, on the verso, we find Peiresc changing his mind about the running head, too, altering the last “Genesis” in the book, “Genesis

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82 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 34v. For the richest and most comprehensive treatment to date of the graphical mode of representing family relations, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, L’ombre des Ancêtres, Essai sur l’imaginaire médiéval de la parenté (Paris: Fayard, 2000), but note that she does not deal at all with Peiresc’s graphical style.
83 “STEMMA PRINCIPUM QUI IN ANTIQUA TANTUM GENESI MURENSI MEMORANTUR. EAM NIMIRUM QUAE ACTIS FUNDATIONIS CCC. AB HIN ANNIS, PRAEFIX EST) (fol. 33v); “ANTIQUA PRINCIPUM FUNDATORUM MURENSIS MONASTERII GENEALOGIA in tabulam redacta, integra M.S. Codicis verba summi fide complectens, ne unica quidem syllabi demta, vel addita” (fol. 34v).
84 Antiqua Murensis Monasterii Genesis. In veteri codice MS actis fundationis alisque antiquioribus ejusdem coenobi monumentis, plerisque ab hinc sacculis praefix, cum hoc titulo: ISTA est genealogia Nostrorum Principum. Theodor. etc.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 39v.
85 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 24r.
Murensis,” to “Genealogia Murensis.” It would be “Genealogia” that would then make it into the first rough draft of the title page (20r) and of course into the finished one (99r). But while “Genesis” was replaced within the text, its broader implications were not. For the title of work preserved its field of reference, with “Origines” now standing in for “Genesis,” even as it managed at the same time to keep the reader focused on the genealogy of the Habsburgs.

In the printed text, the section “De Genealogia fundatorum Murensis Monasterii” quotes from three loci in Guilliman’s Hasburgiacis on the fidelity and certainty of the genealogical account of the founders of the monastery given in the monastery’s own instruments (29r; aiiir). This section is followed by another, “De Actis Murensibus,” in which Guillimann is again quoted in order to uphold the importance and reliability of the monastery’s records. Quoting from Guilliman—the enemy—is designed, it would seem, to present the source as unimpeachable.

The main text, extracted by Peiresc and de Vic from Muri, runs from page three to page sixty-five in the printed edition. It is on the last page of the manuscript—but not the printed text—that Duchesne scrawled: “This description of the ancient annals of Muri by Jacob of Sonnensberg, courtly knight, praetor and standard-bearer [labarifer] of the Republic of Lucerne, was presented as a reverent and compliant sign by the most illustrious Lord de Vic, most worthy patron, councillor and ambassador of the most serene and powerful king of Gaul and Navarre.”

Peiresc mobilized in 1617 on behalf of Du Vair and the King’s noblesse de robe. If there actually was a second edition printed in 1627 it probably reflects the atmosphere captured in a letter from Peiresc to an unnamed correspondent in October 1624. An earlier draft of this letter, preserved in a truncated form immediately following (187r), notes that Juan de Pineda, who wrote against the French, followed in a long line of similarly pro-Spanish genealogical arguments, among whom was “a Piespordius” who had the “audacity” to have the Archdukes’ ambassador present it to the King. Then Peiresc tipped his hand just a little bit.

86 Carp. MS 1781, fol. 24v. While most of the corrections to this galley were of typographical errors, there was one instruction to the printer. Peiresc thought it necessary at a certain point to set off the final stage of the genealogical chain recreated here, and so he wrote: “Il fauldroit icy une petite distance au moins de trois ou quatre lettres, en blanc, ou bien un paragraphe.”

87 Carp. MS 181, fols. 102r-149r.

88 “Hanc Antiquorum Murensium annalium descriptionem Jacobus a Sonnensberg, eques auratus, praetor et labarifer republicae Lucernensis, illustriissimo domino de vic, serenissimi ac potentissimi Galliarum et Navarrae regis consiliario et legato, patrono colendissimo, in observantia et obsequii signum donavit. Anno salutis MDCXVIII.” Carp. MS 1781, fol. 149r.

89 “J’ay prins plaisir de voir le bon zeelle de Mr Mongins, à destruire l’imposture de Pineda en sa genealogie [the book was called Observation de la Monarchie Ecclesiastique] & me suis prins garde qu’il faict l’empereur Rodolphe fils d’Albert II petit fils d’Albert le riche lequel estoit fils d’un Verner dernier de ce nom Comt. de Habsbourgh qui n’ estoit pas de la race masculine de Habsbourg comme escrivent les partisans d’Espagne, lesquels y font un degré de plus (car ils font Albert I pere de Rodolfe, ce Rodolfe pere d’Albert II & celui cy de l’Empereur Rodolfe.) Mais l’importance est à l’extraction de ce Verner dernier soit fils d’Oton Comte de Habsbourg, qui estoit fils d’un autre Verner Comte de Habsbourg. & toutefois ce Verner dernier pere d’Albert I estoit fils d’Rodolfe de Thierstein et de Ute de Habsbourg seur de cet Otton Comte d’Habsbourg, et succédà à la Comté d’Habsbourg par le deceze sans enfans d’Albert Comte d’Habsbourg frere dudit Oton & Oncle & successeur de Verner II Comte d’Habsbourg fils dudit Otton, cousin german dudit Verner dernier de Thierstein. Ce qui coupe tout le tronc de l’arbre de cette genealogie, si pres de notre temps qu’on n’y peut contredire, & se justifie pleinement, par le livre que je vous envoie des Antiquitez de Mury, ou vous pourrez voir par la suite de la genealogie des Comtes d’Habsbourg qui en estoient les fondateurs, que les ayeuls dudit Emperor Rodolfe ne descendoient que d’une fille de ladit maison d’Habsbourg, & non de la ligne masculine.” Peiresc to Mongins, 3 October 1624; Carp. MS 1781, fol. 2; Aix, Bibl. Méjanes 186r.
In order to destroy it as much as possible, one had a way to recover the registers of the founding of the Monastery of Muri, made by the Counts of Habsburg, where was found their ancient and authentic genealogy, written three or four hundred years before, and alleged by Guilliman, the most celebrated of the historians of that house—who cut the passages. It was printed in Germany [referring to the *Origines Murensis monasterii*] and plainly proved that this Albert I whom Sr Mongins made the grandfather of the Emperor Rudolph and whom the historians of that House made the grandfather.90

In other words, Peiresc never avowed his authorship of this tract, even when writing to a sympathetic correspondent a few years after the event. And it might have been this continuing smoldering—no doubt intensifying during the war years and the mounting tension between France and Spain over the Valtelline—that generated the need for a second edition in 1627.

With this, as with all microhistories, we need to end with the question of what we actually learn. First, in this we enrich Gassendi’s account of what Peiresc actually was doing in 1618. Beyond Gassendi’s account, we see here Peiresc ranging across the spectrum of surviving medieval evidence, and especially the related troika of diplomatics, sigillography and heraldry, with paleography annexed to it, that ties this project in to Peiresc’s ongoing long-term study of the history of Provence, which Gassendi himself recognized as the pioneering site of Peiresc’s development of what a later century would call the *historische Hilfswissenschaften*.

Second, from knowing this story we can fit it into the wider narrative of French-Imperial competition in the era of the Thirty Years War. Bizzocchi, for instance, gives us a lot of information about the revival of this dispute in the late 1630s and 1640s, and about its origins in the 1580s. Peiresc’s work on Muri and refutation of Piespord closes this circle.

Third, the whole story raises fascinating questions and sheds light on the meaning of “authorship” at the time. It focuses particular attention on the role of compiling-as-authorship and, at the same time, on the question of joint authorship, since so much of the Muri project was collaborative, with the hands of Peiresc and sometimes Du Chesne and Godefroy on the same page. This is the book-as-archive, and leaves us wondering about whether one could, therefore, be the “author” of an archive. What might this mean?

Fourth, and last, this story sends us back to the Momigliano-Pocock connection. In this micro-history we see antiquarianism and political thought coming together. Historical scholarship of the sort undertaken by Peiresc is about political thought. This is inevitable not only because it was a legal society, but also because in the ancien régime genealogy was legitimacy. But we can also look ahead from this early seventeenth-century conjunction of ancient constitution with antiquarianism towards the mid-eighteenth-century conjunction of conjectural history and cultural history signalled for us by Pocock in his oracular manner by dedicating the first books of *Barbarism and Religion* to Venturi and Momigliano. Looking ahead to the nineteenth century, Ranke’s

90 “pour le destruire de plus prez, on eut moyen de recouvrer les registres de la fondation de l’Abbaye de Mury, faicte par les Comtes de Habspourg, ou se trouve leur ancienne genealogie escripte depuis 3 ou 400 ans pour authentique et allegeue par Guilleman le plus celebre des historiens de cette maison qui en avoir tronquee les passages. Laquelle a esté imprimee en Allemgagne & Verifie pleinemment que cet Albert premier que le Sr r Mongins faict l’ayeul de l’emepr. Rodolphe, & que les historiens de cette maison font bisayeul.” Peiresc to Mongins, Aix, Bibl. Méjanes 187.
political history and his exploitation of newly-opened national archives suggests that the intertwining of historical scholarship and political argumentation does not end with the end of the ancien regime.

The familiar line on Peiresc is that he was forgotten because he never published anything. More sophisticated comment would say that he survived as a subject at all only because he did not try to publish and so never became absorbed into a scholarly literature. In being disciplined, he would have been reduced to the boundaries of a single successor field and so denatured, fundamentally altered.

Peiresc’s “authorship” of this project has escaped all inquirers, despite the fact that the evidence has been hiding in plain sight: in Carpentras, Bibliothèque Inguimbertine MS. 1781, for nearly four hundred years. Leibniz, who as a historian and as a researcher most closely approximates Peiresc’s skills, when once casting about for models of how to study monuments, gave as an example those of the Monastery of Muri for the foundation of the House of Austria.91 Indeed, the resurfacing of Muri’s charters may indeed parallel debates about the origins of the House of Habsburg, with all that entailed.92 The Origines was cited as recently as 1925—in a work on peasants.93

This project shows Peiresc in command of the tools of medieval history. He seems fully conversant with ways of reading charters, of using seals and navigating monastic archives. But, the key word in this project is “Genealogia.”94 This is not just family history, however, but an entire human-centered vision of the proper subject of historical research. Ever since Momigliano it has become customary to think about the dichotomy between antiquaries and historians as expressed in terms of the former’s synchronic, structural approach to the past and the former’s narrative res gestae. But in the Peiresc archive we see a tremendous focus on human lives and their...
accomplishments, all sketched out in genealogies—the diachronic form of presentation *par excellence*. If ancient history and the antiquarian seemed for so long sharply separated modes of studying the past, replacing “antiquarian” with either the “ancient constitution”—*what* so many antiquaries studied—or with the “genealogist”—*how* they studied—helps us realize that if the history of historical scholarship is to be reduced to a binary opposition only—but should it?—it is between those whose pleasure is writing and those whose pleasure is research.