

Personal Records in the Central State Archives and their Role in Preserving Albanian Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

The personal and family fonds preserved in the Central State Archives constitute an important part of Albania's documentary heritage. Unlike institutional fonds, which primarily document administrative activity and official decision-making, personal fonds preserve the relationship between individuals, families, and broader historical processes. Correspondence, diaries, manuscripts, biographical records, photographs, telegrams, creative materials, and collected documents reflect not only the life of the records creator, but also the political, social, cultural, and economic environment in which that person lived and worked.

This article examines the role of personal fonds in preserving Albanian memory and cultural heritage, taking as its starting point the thematic guide devoted to Italian-language documents held in the personal and family fonds of the Central State Archives. Drawing on examples from the fonds of Abaz Kupi, Aladro and Gjergj Kastrioti, Aleks Buda, Aleksandër Stavri Drenova, Aleksandër Xhuvani, Mit'hat Frashëri, Rauf Fico, and other prominent figures, the article argues that personal records are irreplaceable sources for political, diplomatic, linguistic, literary, economic, and everyday-life history. The identification, processing, preservation, digitisation, and publication of finding aids for these fonds constitute a fundamental responsibility in protecting Albania's national cultural heritage and transmitting it to future generations.

Keywords

Personal records, family fonds, Central State Archives, cultural heritage, historical memory, Italian-language documents.