

## Archives and University. The role of Personal Records in the Recent Historical Research

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### *ABSTRACT*

The relevance of the archives for any scientific historical research has always been central. But during the last few years there has been a greater diversification of sources, and perhaps a greater role for the personal archives. This trend has led to a greater interest among different cultural and scientific institutions, for the collection and conservation of personal archives of the most diverse nature. In this article we analyze the importance of this trend among many Spanish historians, doing special reference to the efforts done in this direction by the Spanish universities, driven in many cases started by their own lectures or university research centers.

Archivi ed università. Il ruolo dei documenti di persona nella recente ricerca storica

### *SINTESI*

L'importanza degli archivi per ogni ricerca storica scientifica è sempre stata centrale. Ma negli anni recenti si è avuta una grande differenziazione di fonti, e forse un maggior ruolo per gli archivi di persona. Questa tendenza ha portato ad un maggior interesse fra differenti istituzioni culturali e scientifiche per la collezione e la conservazione di archivi di persona della più diversa natura. In questo articolo viene analizzata l'importanza di questa tendenza fra molti storici spagnoli, con particolare riguardo agli sforzi effettuati in questa direzione dalle università spagnole, in molti casi iniziati e diretti dai propri studiosi o centri di ricerca universitari.

Arhivi in univerze: vloga zasebnega arhivskega gradiva v sodobnih arhivskih raziskavah

### *IZVLEČEK*

Za znanstvene in zgodovinske raziskave je bila relevantnost arhivskega gradiva vedno bistvenega pomena. Toda v zadnjih nekaj letih se je pojavilo veliko število različnih novih virov, večjo vlogo pa je pridobilo tudi zasebno arhivsko gradivo. To je pripeljalo do večjega zanimanja različnih kulturnih in znanstvenih institucij po zbiranju in hranjenju različnega zasebnega arhivskega gradiva. Prispevek analizira pomen tega trenda med španskimi zgodovinarji in obravnava trud španskih univerz za pridobivanje ovrstnega gradiva, ki ga v mnogo primerih vzpodbujajo predavatelji in univerzitetni raziskovalni centri.

Archivos y Universidad. El papel de los archivos personales en la investigación de la Historia reciente

### *SÍNTESIS*

La importancia de los archivos siempre ha sido determinante en cualquier investigación histórica de carácter científico. Sin embargo en los últimos años se observa una mayor diversificación de las fuentes, y un mayor protagonismo de los archivos personales. Esta tendencia ha provocado un mayor interés entre las distintas instituciones culturales y científicas, por la recopilación y conservación de archivos personales de la más diversa índole. En este artículo se pretende analizar la importancia que ha adquirido ésta tendencia entre los historiadores españoles, haciendo especial referencia al esfuerzo realizado en este sentido por las universidades españolas, impulsado en muchos casos por las propias cátedras o centros de investigación universitarios.

## Introduction

The objective of this article is to display how during the past few years there has been an important increase in the use of personal archives - primary sources - for the historical researches, as in the responsibility of the archives in the conservation and dissemination of these fonds. As Dr. Redondo says in his work: "Policy, culture and society in Franco's Spain": "History is not a set of pulcher monographies in parallel. Quite the contrary, History is a "text", that is to say, a weave that is from intercrossing of the life of the people in the different situations through which they go"<sup>1</sup>. therefore the importance of conserving the personal archives to know how the things were in fact. And this is the mission of the archives, to conserve the memory of the people which contributed to construct History, and to facilitate the access to these documents.

So that, this study considers the importance of these fonds, the increase of the researchers interest in consulting these unpublished historical sources and on the diferent public and private institutions that are dedicating resources to this services nowadays more demanded. The aim will be the Spanish situation, more in particular in the university archives, like institution of reference for the scientific research, and special referring to the General Archive of the University of Navarre.

## The historical research

"The today historians try to recreate the experiences passed by the humanity, trying not to distort the real facts and conditions of the time. They collect, examine, select, verify and classify the facts according to specific norms, and they strive to interpret them in a suitable way and to display them so that they'll be able to resist the test of the critical examination. The modern historical investigation represents a critical search of the truth"<sup>2</sup>

Following these authors, the first part of the work of the historian, once selected their topic of interest, is the collection of material. His work material is the result of the data search, which will provide information about past events. Its aim will be, therefore, the search of primary sources, as close as possible to the historical facts, the testimony of eyewitnesses to these facts, the people who lived them and who talk about them in first person trough their handwritten notes, in letters written to friends and family, diaries, memoirs, etc ... originals, unique and irreplaceable documents to know the most recent past. "Primary sources are the basic materials of historical research"<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, the sources used by the historian are mostly documents kept in archives with the intention of transmit the information in them contained to the rest of the society.

## Personal Archives

The personal archives are "all documents, whatever their date, form, or medium, accumulated in a natural process by an individual in the exercise of activities that are proper and which are retained by their creators and or their successors for their own needs, and transmitted to a competent archival institution because of their archival value"<sup>4</sup>.

By their very nature, personal archives are therefore considered within the private sphere, in terms of ownership, not so much as to their content; by its very definition been formed by the accumulation of documents collected by a person throughout his life (mainly his career) it is usually difficult to distinguish between the public and the private documentation. These conditions also complicate the appropriate treatment given to the documentation, especially in the assessment of access and dissemination of these documents.

In fact, the Spanish legislation consider as private archives, the archives and documents, existing in the Spanish territory, of private ownership that are a property of a person or juridical - private entity, with independence of its public or private nature.

1. Gonzalo REDONDO, *Política, Cultura y Sociedad en la España de Franco (1939-1975)*, T.II/1 En *Los intentos de las minorías dirigentes de modernizar el estado tradicional español (1947-1956)*, p. 31.

2. Deobold B. VAN DALEN y William J. MEYER, *Estrategia de la investigación histórica* En *Manual de técnica de la investigación educacional*, México 1983, p. 27.

3. Deobold B. VAN DALEN y William J. MEYER, "Estrategia..."

4. Juan P. GALIANA CHACÓN, *De los archivos personales, sus características y su tratamiento técnico* En *Seminario de archivos personales (Madrid, 26 a 28 de mayo de 2004)*. Madrid 2006, pp. 17-28.

In a general sense we can say that the spirit of the Spanish legislation in the treatment of the private archives has the intention of trying to identify, to preserve, and to disseminate the whole documental heritage, always doing compatibly, referring the private documentation, the right of property, recognized by the Constitution, with the requirements of the general interest, as it is the right of access of the citizens to the documental fonds, administrative or historical, public or private.

To obtain this purpose, the laws looks for, and sometimes under an obligation, the collaboration of the natural or juridical - private persons to obtain the aims established in the laws of Documental heritage, usually by the corresponding agreements with the public administrations.

This legislation tries to assure its conservation, well doing directly the opportune projects, well facilitating the pertinent helps to public entities and natural and juridical private persons for the conservation and dissemination of the Documental heritage<sup>5</sup>.

According to the Spanish law for the Historical Heritage (Ley 16/1985 de Patrimonio Histórico Español), it is integral part of the Documental heritage the documents with more than a hundred years of antiquity from its generation, preserved or assembled by any other particular entities or natural persons, so that, subject to its provisions. In this sense and regarding the access to information on these fonds, the Law in its article 53.c records that “The documents containing personal data of a police nature, procedural, clinical or other nature that may affect the safety of persons, their honor, the privacy of their private and family life and his own image, will not be publicly consulted without express consent of those affected or until the expiry of twenty years from death, if the date is known, or otherwise, fifty years from the date of the documents. “

This is a very important aspect to consider when working and using this documentation, since the archivists need to know the legislation that protects and covers not only the creators of the fonds, but also to all those quoted in the documents, therefore the archivist will have to do a rigorous study of access to the data contained in those documents. The work of the archivist must not only ensure the physical preservation and custody of all the documents, but also doing so in light of those legal criteria. This professional zeal can cause a conflict of interest to researchers seeking access to these data, otherwise very relevant to their work, regardless of these other legal aspects. It will also be task of the archivist combine both interests, sometimes radically opposed.

Regarding the types of documents kept in personal archives, they are very diverse: letters, reports, certificates, notes, deeds, purchase, wills, photographs, drawings, models, memoirs, diaries, records, collections of objects, brochures, magazines, etc ... and they need a very different technical approach to conventional administrative records.

### Personal fonds in the Spanish university archives

By university archives we mean all documents produced or assembled in the exercise of its functions and activities by the different members and university bodies. About these functions see the article “The Spanish University Archives. A proposal for standard rules for private universities” publicado en Atlantis en 2005<sup>6</sup>.

From the rise of universities, its documentary fonds have been used over time mainly as a source for the history of their own institutions. As an institution with a historical projection, the custody of his own archive is the most eloquent and faithful witness of its activities and, therefore, it make possible for the future researchers to write the history based on an accurate and complete source. The usefulness of these archives has been almost exclusively for reconstructing the history of a particular university or of the development of university education in a specific period. However, in the recent years the interest of the researchers has focused on using these fonds, documentaries studies on the social history of culture.

But it is not this type of documents the focus of this article, but in private fonds, personal and

5. Francisco Javier AGUADO GONZALEZ, *Private Archives in Spain: Legislation and Dissemination*, “Atlanti”, 17(2007), N. 1-2, pp. 209-222.

6. Francisco Javier AGUADO GONZALEZ - Yolanda CAGIGAS OCEJO, *The Spanish University Archives. A Proposal for standard rules For Private Universities*, “Atlanti”, 15(2005), N. 1-2.

family archives acquired (mostly by donation or purchase) by the universities and integrated into the own university archive system, which aims is the archival organization to make them available to researchers and contribute to the progress and scientific development (ultimate aim of universities).

In fact, as reported regularly in the regulations of the Spanish University Archives, the documental heritage of the University consists of the set of documents produced or received by the organs of government and university representation (both services of the central administration and faculties, schools, institutes or departments or any office created to facilitate the functions that the university has) as well as the documentation produced by individuals serving the university in the exercise of their teaching, research and administrative functions, and documentation from other natural or legal persons who make explicit assignment or donation of their documents.

The kind of donated funds is diverse, and therefore very rich; it depends on the policy of each university to accept external funds, which are mainly personal archives, although as already mentioned, in many cases into the personal documentation are also included archives which first origin were other public or private institutions already disappeared.

It is, therefore, external documentation to the University functions, but, as we have already seen in the definition above cited, it is part of the documentary heritage of the University and increases itself the value of the university archive by preserving these sources with a proper archival treatment, and consequently its dissemination to the scientific community, providing to the historical researchers an unique value material, which otherwise may not be conserved.

**The legal form of incorporation** of these funds to the various institutions is very diverse: donations, deposits, transfers, bequests, etc ... The convenience of using the various existing formulas raises an interesting debate, such as occurred in the course “The roadmap for personal, family and business archives” held in the Summer Courses of the University of Navarra 2010<sup>7</sup>

Within this area also raises a question difficult to solve, which is the legal entity to which the donation is delivered. In Spanish universities there are several possibilities: the donation to the institution, to the Archive service or to the library service. Since we have not reached an agreement, either for legal reasons or because the tradition, when in this article we refer to the university archives, we mean personal funds donated to the universities, regardless of legal and physical installation within them.

This situation not only reflects the common practice of universities, but is a phenomenon that occurs in all types of institutions, such as the National Library of Catalonia, which has received by donation more than two hundred personal funds, so does with the Spanish National Library, although the number of funds that houses, it is rather small. Therefore personal funds in Spain are preserved in all types of institutions: archives and libraries (both public and private ownership), museums, foundations, corporations, banks, Royal Academy, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Apart from these other institutions, the interest that each university has had on this type of funds has greatly varied over the years. Anglo-Saxon countries were the first to realize the importance of preserving personal funds, first those coming from the people involved in its university community, encouraging donations from academic and research staff and among the prestigious professionals who work with them. The websites of many American universities, are encouraging these donations and they take are very special care of the role of these donors, even after donations, and encourages the use and dissemination of these “special collections”.

In this sense highlight the University of Columbia with more than 3,500 “Archival Collections”, and an institutional repository for the easier use and dissemination. Princeton University holds more than 400 personal archives, the University of New York more than 200, and Yale more than 1,700<sup>9</sup>.

7. [http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/documentos\\_archivos\\_personales](http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/documentos_archivos_personales) [Consulta: 13 junio 2011].

8. <http://fondospersonales.blogspot.com/> [Consulta: 13 junio 2011].

9. <http://archivesportal.cul.columbia.edu/about.php> [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

<http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/chrisxrf.htm> [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

<http://www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/research/fales/findingaidstest.html> [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

[http://www.yale.edu/collections\\_collaborative/primarysources/](http://www.yale.edu/collections_collaborative/primarysources/) [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

The situation in Spain is far away from this image, but fortunately in recent years has increased the number of universities that have a strong commitment to promoting the incorporation of personal archives to their own institutional Archive. Don't forget that over a long time repositories and warehouses of those universities have been accumulating donations, legacies and personal funds, which are currently being rescued, and thanks to the work of archivists are being sorted and spreading among researchers, eager to locate and work with these unpublished sources.

Within their own professional group of archivists, there has been an increasing of the valorization of these funds, and of the need of collaborate with researchers in a very productive symbiosis for both professional groups. For researchers this means access to a unique documentation, which until now was not readily available, and for archivists, extraordinary perspectives for his professional work are been open, in the studio and in the search of normalizing processes of the university archives.

An example is the recent establishment of a Working Group for Personal Funds, within the Conference of Archivists of Spanish Universities (CAU), which aims to systematize the archival work to be done in the treatment of these funds for conservation and use. The group includes members from the Universities of Alicante, Barcelona, Granada, Jaime I of Castellón, and Navarre. The main objective of this Group is to develop a common classification system for all these funds. Today has been achieved consensus on a draft, which will be further refined, and seeks a common platform to facilitate exchange of knowledge and the dissemination and exchange of classification systems for personal archives conserved in Spanish universities.<sup>10</sup>

The conservation and use of personal funds in Spanish universities is rising, but at the same time it suppose an important effort that is being fruitful because of the systematic work of archivists, and now more recently with the backing of their own institutions. Despite this the situation of these funds is very uneven across universities. As an example, we present a small study of personal funds existing in various Spanish universities, based on information provided by the Conference of Archivists Spanish University (CAU), the consultation of their own university archives and, above all, their institutional websites.

### Main points for an agreement between the university and donor:

According to our experience the transfer agreement should take into account of a least the following:

- Legal capacity of donor and archive legalrepresentative to grant the contract.
- The stated that peaceful possession of the archive by the owner.
- The Donor intention to donate his archive to the University in order to contribute to research and scientific progress.
- the interest of the University in receiving this donation.
- The donor gives pure, simple and irrevocable, in full command, the archive at the University, which accept.
- For tax purposes the donation is valued in a provisional and symbolic amount.
- The donor states that reserves sufficient real property to live in a state that corresponds to his circumstances.
- In the context of cultural and research purposes, this grant expressly includes the assignment of exclusive, indefinite, or for the maximum time allowed by law, all intellectual property rights of all works includes on the archive given including the use of them fragmentary, for any form of exploitation, public communication, distribution and support, format and media, including audiovisual, computer, multimedia, telematics, and so on.
- The donation of this archive suppose the transfer of ownership to the University which will become the owner and assume the following commitments:
  - Put the archive available to researchers and the general public for dissemination, the way the technicians of the University deem most appropriate.
  - Establish criteria for specific treatment and adequate evaluation and selection in order to ensure better management and preservation of the entire archive.
  - Organization and development of tools for description of the archive for easy access and

10. <http://cau.crue.org/Quehacemos/gruposdetrabajo/archivospersonales/index.html> [Consulta: 13 junio 2011].

dissemination.

- Deliver to the transferor a copy of the various finding aids.

#### Personal Archives in the Spanish Universities

UNIVERSIDAD DE MURCIA	1	UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA DE MADRID	3
UNIVERSIDAD DE SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA	1	UNIVERSIDAD DE OVIEDO	4
UNIVERSIDAD DE VIC	1	UNIVERSIDAD DE VALENCIA	4
UNIVERSIDAD POMPEU FABRA	1	UNIVERSIDAD DE CASTILLA-LA MANCHA	5
UNIVERSIDAD PÚBLICA DE NAVARRA	1	UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA	5
UNIVERSIDAD ROVIRA I VIRGILI	1	UNIVERSIDAD DE CANTABRIA	6
UNIVERSIDAD DE ALCALÁ DE HENARES	2	UNIVERSIDAD DE LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA	6
UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA	2	UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA	6
UNIVERSIDAD DEL PAÍS VASCO	2	UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA DE COMILLAS	6
UNIVERSIDAD FRANCISCO DE VITORIA	2	UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BARCELONA	11
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA	2	UNIVERSIDAD DE BARCELONA	11
UNIVERSIDAD RAMÓN LLUL	2	UNIVERSIDAD DE LA LAGUNA	12
UNIVERSIDAD DE LÉRIDA	3	UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID	13
UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA DE CATALUÑA	3	UNIVERSIDAD DE NAVARRA	205

This is a selection of cases that are considered representative of the current situation, both because the fonds have been received recently, because what is new is its dissemination and free consultation. So the University of Valencia, has received the fonds and the documentation of the University Federation of Students. Carlos III University of Madrid, has recently joined to their own fonds the Juan Pascual Sanahuja, José Elduayen, José Luis López Aranguren and the Institute of Legal Studies National Research Council archives; and above all, thanks to funding from the Ministry Culture has undertaken the digitization and has made available to researchers the personal fonds of Joaquín Ruiz Giménez.

The University of Salamanca, obtained the fonds of Pedro Dorado Montero and Miguel de Unamuno. The University of Granada received fonds from several local institutions, which have become part of their documentary heritage: the funding of the Economic Society of Friends of Granada and the Royal Colleges of Santa Cruz de la Fe and Santa Catalina Martir. So it is with the University of the Balearic Islands, which has received fonds from the Old University Circle Lluiana and Catholic Workers. The University of Barcelona, received several personal fonds, among them those of Guillermo Diaz-Plaja, and Jose Fernandez-Arroyo. The University of Cantabria has recently joined the Mina

Reocín, and Carballo fonds. The Complutense University of Madrid has made available to researchers the personal archives of Tomás Navarro Tomás and Ildefonso Martínez y Fernández. In the Autonomous University of Barcelona there are 11 accessible personal archives, including those of José Agustín Goytisolo and Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer.

### The General Archive of the University of Navarra

The Personal Fonds donated to the University are part of the General Archive of the University of Navarra, since its founding in 2006 as University Service. Previously, since 1987 and within a research project of the Department of History at the University, were collected various personal fonds about Spain's recent history, in different formats and with a variety of types and archival treatments. As a result, nowadays a significant percentage of the fonds of the General Archive correspond to this geographical and chronological period, and from 2006 all this fonds were included in the General Archive of the University of Navarra.

Throughout these years, the number of donated fonds has grown considerably and therefore the value of the documentation they contain has increased in equal measure. Nowadays there are 205 personal family and company fonds<sup>11</sup>. As a result, the General Archive has become a focal point for researchers from more recent history of our country.

Into the fonds which are kept in the Archive, have an important relevance in terms of numbers, the fonds corresponding to characters in the Spanish public life of the second half of the twentieth century. This is the case of the archives of politicians as Laureano Lopez Rodo, intellectuals such as Rafael Calvo Serer, businesspeople like Joaquín Félix Huarte or Maestro Morata (archive of the first Public Relations company in Spain), Carlist leaders like Manuel Fal Conde, writers as Ernestina de Champourcin, architects such as Javier Carvajal Ferrer, Luis Borobio Navarro, the journalists Juan Pablo Villanueva, University teachers as Angel Lopez Amor, Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo or José María Albareda, etc ... But there are also older personal archives as the earliest documentation from the chronicler of Valencia Luis Cebrián Mezquita, the writer Francisco Navarro Villoslada or the family of Ponce de Leon and Perez de Seoane, which in the coming months will be freely accessible after the completion of the digitization process to which they are being subjected.

The experience gained during this time, the willingness of donors, the importance of documentation received and the support of the University of Navarra are an incentive to continue to accept donations of personal and family fonds as a means to achieve the ultimate goal: gathering primary sources that been classified can sustain quality researches.

#### **Main characteristics of this service to the university community and society:**

- Active searching of personal fonds
- Legal Regulation of donations
- Archival Treatment of fonds, for
- Availability to researchers, for
- Contribute to research and scientific development
- and the dissemination of the Archive

From the very beginning we saw the need to promote, seek and accept the donation of personal fonds, and this aim it has become in one of the priorities. As we have already seen along this article, there is no agreement on how these fonds should be incorporated to the patrimony of the universities. In this case and having regard to this situation, right from the Archive it has been promoted the implementation in writing of donation agreements, and once studied the legislation has been undertaken the development of a unique document, approved by the Legal Department of the University and which is being currently developed with satisfactory results. The established model is available on the website of the General Archive into the "Summer Course of the Universities of Navarra 2010", already quoted in this article.

This active search for donations implies the systematization of the search procedures and the establishment of clear policies that outline the interests and groups of potential donors to contact. In

11. <http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/relaciondefondos> [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

this sense we have established often meetings and contacts with the members of the university community to explain and offer this possibility. At the same time, it has been expanded the chronological context of the searched fonds (at the beginning the interest was only for documentation from the XX th century) and today the archive preserve fonds with documentation from the S. XIVth century to the present.

The procedure in the searching of personal archives begins with a systematic search of biographical data of selected characters: tracking websites about Spain's history, institutions, official journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries.... in any medium. Thus begins contact with these people through various systems, mainly the preparation and mailing of several models of cards (as a reminder, as a way of maintaining contact with archives donors, as well as with those with whom it is possible to be donors in the future, asking for applications forms of donation, thanking their collaboration, and especially Christmas cards ...).

The starting point for contact, usually is a personal visit to the selected potential donors, explaining the project in which we are working in the Archive from more than twenty years ago. Usually the first reaction is a surprise, since most of them are not aware of having a documentation that may be of interest to researchers and, therefore, worthy of preservation in an archive. The following reaction is gratitude because the consideration about the role -more or less important- that they have been playing throughout his life, deserving to be given attention. The final reaction is often puzzling, since the donation of documentation supposed to discard a part of "life" and also a wariness of how and what for that documentation is going to be used.

After these years of experience and seen the work done, there has been added some modifications to the policy of acquisitions: we have established relationships of trust with all these people, which has led to new donations, there has been a better knowledge and greater dissemination of the archive, which has also led to an increase in donations and thanks to this dissemination an increasing number of researchers visiting the Archive and using this personal and family fonds.

The procedure continues with monitoring via telephone and email, all these efforts. It was considered essential to the development of a database that will keep up to date all these efforts, which currently exceed five hundred different contacts.

The main objective of this search is to get the donation of more personal fonds, which once classifieds can be disseminated and contribute to research. For this reason from the General Archive there is a personalized waiver for all researchers who visit us, and just as actively as we seek sources, we enhances the access by researchers to these sources. At present there is a newsletter for users interested in informing them of the news in the Archive, and updates of classified fonds, which are freely accessible for consultation<sup>12</sup>.

We also offer individualized advice based on the various investigations carried out using personal fonds, and suggestions for future researches to the Research Departments and other interested users

From the archive, we also enhance the contacts with the History departments and research groups from different institutions and Spanish universities to promote knowledge and dissemination of the fonds kept in the archive, thereby enhancing their use and future consultation researches.

To facilitate the access to those fonds, there has been systematized the application procedure and consultation of documents. So that, can be freely available only the fonds that are already classified, since this is the only way to know the documents they contain, and at the same time safeguarding the documentation, and donors on intellectual property and the fundamental right to honor, personal and family privacy and own image, as required by Spanish law. The fond will be freely available once it is made from the archive the corresponding report of valuation of these aspects and has been authorized the access.

The previous process to the consultation of the fonds can be made from the Archive's own website: checking the data location, time table and conditions of access, services provided, and basically the updated list of personal fonds freely available. Selecting the interest fond, fill the application form,

12. [http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/boletin\\_noticias](http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/boletin_noticias) [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

indicate the dates you want to query... The whole procedure is done on-line: fond selection, the day of consultation, request boxes and schedule. You can also access information on the consultation room and access to all required forms, including the request for copies, issuing certificates and personalized advice on the content or use of fonds.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, the work of archives staff and the support of the University in this process in recent years, the number of researchers visiting the Archive and the number of queries that they do has grown considerable (see Annex 1).

Through a users satisfaction survey, carried out the last academic year, there have been some improvements. They were consulted and asked to assessment of: access to fonds, the extension of office hours, increased frequency in the documents service, increasing the number of boxes that a researcher can consult at the same time, the ease of finding information, the general condition of the consulting room, the speed of responses to requests, quality and speed in doing copies and the utility and flexibility of using the website as a means of making requests and consultation, through online forms.

As a result, the Service has been reorganized with the extension of hours of consultation documents, to be held from Monday to Friday during morning and afternoon and has increased the number of times the documents are served. It has also improved the website, giving it greater visibility, clarifying processes and improving the use and dissemination of all personal fonds.

Another way to diffuse the Archive's personal fonds and disseminate them has been organizing exhibitions (also virtual), with representative documents of the Archive, and impact not only in the university community it serves, but also in the rest of the society through the didactic guide included, and the promotion of visits<sup>13</sup>.

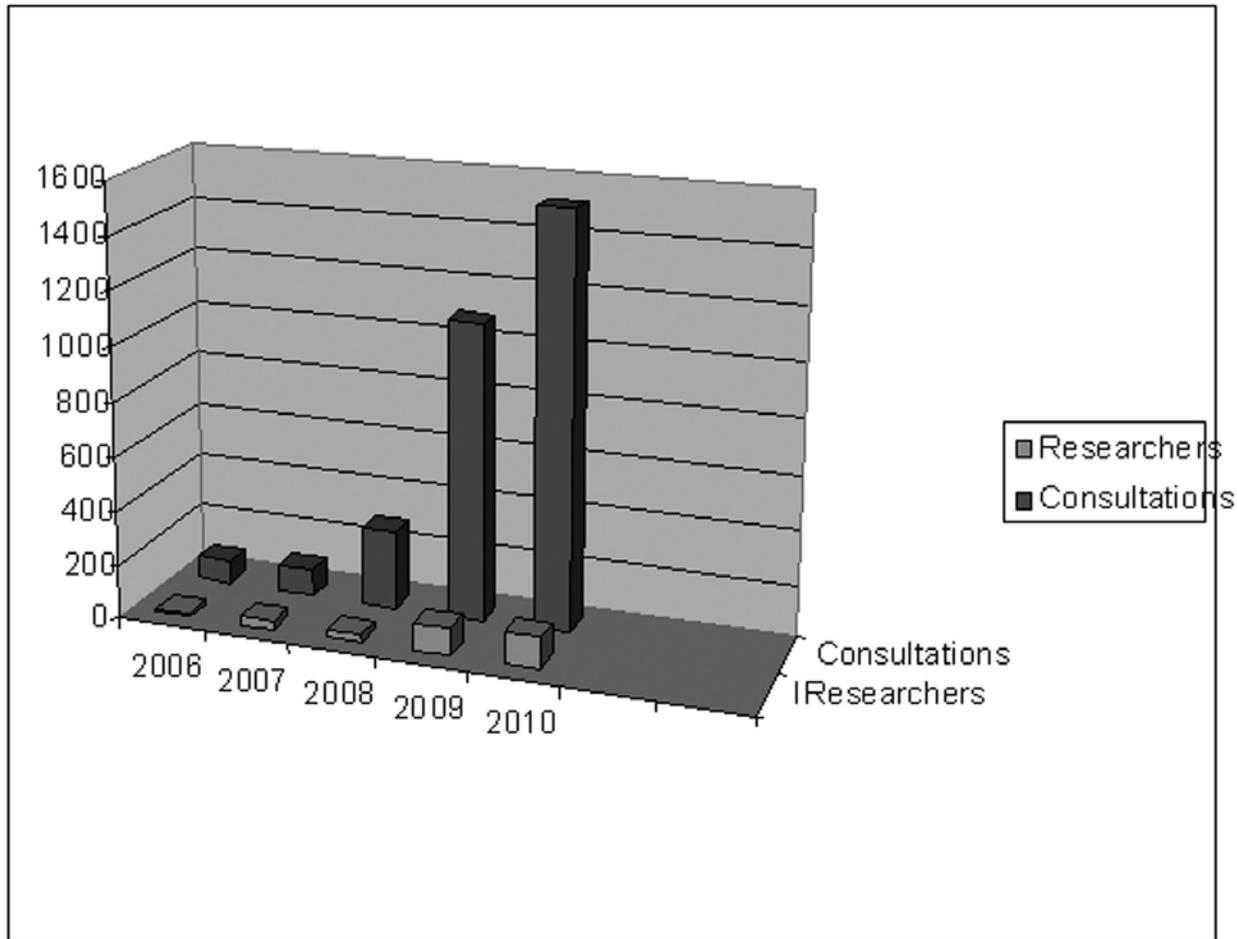
In view of these facts it is clear that much work remains to be done. The use of personal fonds as a source for research is not a new topic, but only now is being considered stronger. We must seize this occasion to try to accept and take on this challenge, opening to the archival profession new career opportunities to collaborate actively and useful in the treatment and classification of personal fonds that are kept in Spanish universities, in in order to facilitate their access and thus collaborate in the development of collective memory.

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13. <http://www.unav.es/servicio/archivo/exposicionesvirtuales> [Consulta: 7 junio 2011].

## ANNEX 1

Evolution of the number of researchers and consultations in the General Archive of the University of Navarra, since its creation in 2006 to present



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### SUMMARY

The relevance of archives for any scientific historical research has always been central, but during the last few years there has been a greater diversification of sources, and perhaps a greater role for the personal archives. This trend has led to a greater interest among different cultural and scientific institutions, for the collection and conservation of personal archives of the most diverse nature. In this article we analyze the importance of this trend among many Spanish historians, doing special reference to the efforts done in this direction by the Spanish universities, driven in many cases started by their own lectures or university research centers. By their very nature, personal archives are considered within the private sphere, in terms of ownership, not so much as to their content; by its very definition been formed by the accumulation of documents collected by a person throughout his life (mainly his career) it is usually difficult to distinguish between the public and the private documentation. These conditions also complicate the appropriate treatment given to the documentation, especially in the assessment of access and dissemination of these documents. Regarding the types of documents kept in personal archives, they are very diverse: letters, reports, certificates, notes, deeds, purchase, wills, photographs, drawings, models, memoirs, diaries, records, collections of objects, brochures, magazines, etc ... and they need a very different technical approach to conventional administrative records. By university archives we mean all documents produced or assembled in the exercise of its functions and activities by the different members and university bodies. But it is not this type of documents the focus of this article, but in private fonds, personal and family archives acquired by the universities and integrated into the own university archive system. The kind of donated fonds is diverse, and therefore very rich; it depends on the policy of each university to accept external fonds, which are mainly personal archives, although as already mentioned, in many cases into the personal documentation are also included archives which first origin were other public or private institutions already disappeared. We study all the procurement and management processes, specially **the legal form of incorporation** of these fonds to the various institutions, and the collaboration between with researchers and archivist, and these with donors. In fact, recently has been established a Working Group for Personal Fonds, within the Conference of Archivists of Spanish Universities (CAU), which aims to systematize the archival work to be done in the treatment of these fonds. As reference we refer specially to the Personal Fonds donated to the University of Navarra, since 1987 within a research project of the Department of History at the University, about Spain's recent history and as result, nowadays a significant percentage of the fonds of the General Archive correspond to this geographical and chronological period, more than 200 personal, family and company fonds with documentation from the S. XIVth century to the present. As a result, the General Archive has become a focal point for researchers from more recent history of our country.

Original scientific article

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