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THE CENTRAL INSTITUTE FOR SOUND AND AUDIOVISUAL HERITAGE OF ITALY: THE PAST AND PRESENT

The paper is dedicated to the history of the creation of the Central Institute for Sound and Audiovisual Heritage of Italy and the exploration of the heuristic possibilities offered by its storage. The foundation of the Institute stems from the legacy of the private collection of audio recordings “The Words of the Greatest”, donated in 1927 to the Italian State. The first name of the Institute was “State Records”, since the first archive mostly consisted of audio recordings on phonograph records. Thanks to the efforts of its first Director, video recordings were added to the collection. Moreover, the archive began to evolve from a deposit of mainly propaganda recordings to a scientific institution for the collection and conservation of audio and video sources. Having successfully survived the Fascist Era, the Institute became the largest center for the collection of recordings coming from different sources, such as the renowned Sanremo music festival, rich private collections of Italian folklore, artifacts from the history of recording instruments, as well as the mandatory copies of all audio and video documents produced in Italy. In addition, the Institute stores the unique access point to the Archives for Visual History of the state archives, which include interviews with the Italian victims of the Holocaust, as well as the databases of the Steven Spielberg Shoah Foundation. The sources of the Institute can be of considerable interest to historians, ethnologists, and anthropologists.

Keywords: *State records, Central Institute for Sound and Audiovisual Heritage of Italy, audio recording, visual sources, Holocaust, folklore, discography, phonograph record, Italian song, unique access point*

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