

THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS OF THE "LUCIAN BLAGA" CENTRAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, CLUJ - NAPOCA

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The year 1923 marks the moment when the old Moldavian scholar Gheorghe Sion gave a considerable donation of books etc. to the Cluj University Library. According to the clauses of his request a room was put aside to store the most valuable books. It still bears the name of the donor and also that of "Special Collections".

Traditionally, the Special Collections of the "Lucian Blaga" Central University Library could be considered a museum of Romanian and European culture. A researcher into medieval and modern Romanian and especially Transylvanian history is able to find a rich source of historical documents from the Transylvanian families of ancient lineage. The earliest document dates from 1228. There are also 20th century documents. We must mention also the proceedings, the registers, the guild registers as well as historical, social, political, juridical, literary, religious and musical codexes and manuscripts in Latin, Hungarian, German, Slavic, Romanian and even some in Oriental languages.

A major part of the collection consists of the correspondence from historical and literary personalities including that of the scholar Gheorghe Sion.

The evolution of Romanian printing from 1508 to 1830 can be traced in the collection of Romanian old books (BRV - Bibliografia Română Veche). In addition the collection of incunabula and rare books (from the 16th to the 18th centuries) throw light upon the history of European printing as well as Transylvanian printing in Latin, German and Hungarian (BMV - Biblioteca Maghiară Veche).

There are stamps, French masters' drawings, ex libris and a vast amount of postcards within the Special Collections which are important historical - cultural documents. Its valuable collection of maps, books of

maps, the most interesting of them perhaps the 1500 maps from the 16th - 18th centuries, has proved to be a treasury of information for researchers, geographers and cartographers.

Processing the material of the Special Collections requires continuous research encompassing different aspects of Romanian and European culture. Giving an account of the results of this research will be a permanent preoccupation of this column.