
THE MIRCEA CARP DONATION. PRELIMINARY TO A RESEARCH

Ionuț COSTEA

Researcher

Special Collections, "Lucian Blaga" CUL

The recovery of the recent past is one of the main problems of historiography in general and even more so of Romanian historiography preoccupied with the research of the Communist period. It is at the same time a necessity which has an individual motivation. Communism is still a "mass of memories": attitudes and behaviours have been created from it which would be irrelevant in another equation. It is this doubling of the past (memory versus historiography) that creates suspicion among specialists as well as those who lived in "the desert of Communism". The elimination of these "suspicions" can only take place with a thorough knowledge of the past and of its "traces". The recovery of the past is at first approach, an accumulation of "testimonies" which must be analysed afterwards. The more or less pragmatic efforts of our library in the collection and grouping of material belonging to some personalities of social or cultural life in the country or abroad, who opposed the communist regime in Romania, ask for such discount. One of these collections is the Mircea Carp Donation which became part of the stock of the "Lucian Blaga" CUL in 1995. Mircea Carp, descendant of a Moldavian family of intellectuals living in Transylvania, spent his life in different cities of the country: Gherla, Chișinău, Botoșani, Bălți, Sibiu and București. He had a military career like his father: he studied in Germany and served on both fronts (East and West). He was wounded and decorated several times. He was expelled from the army in 1946 and arrested a year later in the Orăștie Mountains. He left the country in 1948. During the first "stage" of his Austrian exile he served in the American Army for three and a half years. After emigrating to the USA with a special visa he became a journalist, ascending from the post of newscaster to that of the Head of the Romanian Service and chief correspondent for Europe at the Voice of America. His activity lasted until 1975 when he became editor of the Political Programme and then Assistant Director of Free Europe. During his life dedicated to the radio Mircea Carp (under the pseudonym of Dan Mircescu or Mihai Șoimu) made reports and had interviews with different Romanians living in America; he discussed journeys with nuclear aeroplanes or nuclear submarines, he reported on the Cuban crisis, had interviews with cinema actors and covered president elections, etc. He visited Romania thirteen times; the most important of these were perhaps when he

accompanied American presidents on their visits to our country: Richard Nixon (the first American president to visit Romania, in August 1969) and President Ford (1975), or his visit on the occasion of the 1977 earthquake. The attempt to "free the country from communism" in 1989 marked an important moment in his activity. After that he participated in the major political actions in Romania (the elections in May 1990, the visit of King Mihai in April 1992).¹

Mircea Carp gave evidence of his exigency and professionalism as a journalist of those two radio stations and this motivates the importance of this material in the research of a past which is obsessive in some parts. The Mircea Carp Donation contains: 1. Invitations to the Inauguration of the President of the USA (27 January 1975); 2. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (17-19 November 1963); 3. The visit of President Richard Nixon (2-3 August 1969 - the programme and official discussions, reports, correspondance, personal notes and documents, the press reaction in Romania); 4. American Photo Exhibition (31 July 1969); 5. The Agreement at the Opening of the American Library (Bucureşti) and the Romanian Library (New York), 3 August 1969; 6. Journal 30 July - 3 August 1969; 7. The New-York - Bucureşti Inaugural Flight (28 April 1971); 8. The Visit of William P. Rogers, U.S. Secretary of State (5-6 July 1972); 9. The Second Unesco Conference of the Ministers of Education of European States (Bucureşti 26 November - 1 December 1973); 10. The Visit of N. Ceauşescu in USA (5-10 December 1973); 11. The Presentation of the Harry C. Barnes Credentials, Ambassador in Romania (14 March 1974); 12. American Official Preparations, Visits (11-19 April 1974); 13. The Works of the Interparliamentary Union (12 April 1974) and American Exhibition of Posters; 14. The Visit of Edward M. Kennedy, Senator (15 April 1974); 15. The Visit of Gerald Ford, President of USA (Bucureşti - Sinaia, 2-3 August 1975); 16. The Visit of L. Brejnev (Bucureşti, 22-24 November 1976); 17. Warsaw Pact Meeting (Bucureşti, 25-26 November 1976); 18. The Visit of N. Ceauşescu in USA (12-17 April 1978); 19. The Works of 32 Sessions of CAER (Bucureşti, 27 June 1987); 20. Interviews at the Voice of America with Exiled Romanian Personalities; 21. Correspondance between Mircea Carp and Mihai I; 22. "Transatlantic Conversations" - M. Carp, M. Rateş (Free Europe 1993-1994); 23. Personal documents, autobiographies, photocopies, press reactions; 24. 22 cassettes with Voice of America and Free Europe emissions, a short-reel film by USIA about the visit of Richard Nixon, President of USA in Bucureşti in 1969.²

¹ "Lucian Blaga" CUL, Cluj, Special Collections. The Mircea Carp Donation, Mss. 6083, Dss. Personal Documents. Autobiographies, f. 9-12

² Ibidem, Mss. 6086, Dss. Numbered Inventory. Convention (21 September 1995), f. 2-3

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This donation is interesting mainly for researchers of various aspects of Romanian communism. It also stimulates the reconstruction of the life of a journalist. It is also important from the viewpoint of the history of press and radio.

This brief description does not aim to evaluate the collection but hopefully it will bring readers' attention to a new topic of research.