

Kovács Mária, *A kolozsvári „Lucian Blaga” Központi Egyetemi Könyvtár 19. századi magyar nyelvű kéziratának katalógusa. Első kötet: történelmi és földrajzi kéziratok/ Catalogul manuscriselor maghiare din secolul al 19-lea din colecțiile Bibliotecii Centrale Universitare „Lucian Blaga. Volumul I: manuscrise de istorie și geografie, Editura Argonaut, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, 218 p.*¹

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In the last two decades, the Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca has rightfully regained its status as a cultural institution not only as a supporter of the educational process, but rather as an institution with its own research and training programmes. As autonomous library and information science research began, the main documentary, manuscript or old Romanian and European book collections were also reevaluated. The elaboration of research instruments was begun, traditional or electronic catalogues being compiled for the collections. These preoccupations have been continuous since the interwar period. This meant that, lately, modern formats have been adapted and promoted for describing and cataloguing bibliographic units (documents, manuscripts, old books, modern books). The significant effort to promote the library collections follows two paths. The first one is the elaboration of current bibliographies dedicated to didactic programmes or to general national bibliographical works, which review scholarly literature according to research domains, and which has brought national and international recognition to the bibliographical services of the Central University Library of Cluj. The second research direction focused on the elaboration of manuscript and old book catalogues, defining a preliminary field for research in the history of books, libraries, or reading. This type of

¹ The title in English: *The Catalogue of the 19th Century Hungarian Language Manuscripts of the Lucian Blaga Central University Library in Cluj. First Volume: Historical and Geographical Manuscripts.*

investigation directed at the history of books, to descriptive and analytic bibliographies has had a revival in the last few years. The questions how urgent it is to elaborate such works, and whether they are important only from the point of view of the history of the books, integrated in the general methodology and problems, may be debated. Nevertheless, to regain some areas of bibliographical research connected to the history of books still seems to remain greatly attractive for the Romanian researchers of this domain. The new methodological and thematic openings are only slightly assimilated; even the presentations and reviews of the main works from the second half of the 20th century and from the two decades of the present century have only sporadically drawn the attention of Romanian researchers.

The catalogue elaborated by Mária Kovács, a young researcher, belongs to this institutional research path of the library of Cluj. It is a research instrument for the investigation of the Hungarian culture of Transylvania in the 19th century, and it reveals the functions of manuscripts in the printed culture of the Modern Age in the eastern region of Hungary. The author arranged her work on the basis of an audacious plan. The context of the catalogue is conferred by the institutional evolution which framed the development of the present day manuscript collection of the University Library of Cluj from the Transylvanian Museum Society founded in mid-19th century to the University Library of the period of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, from after the Great Union of 1918, and World War II, up to the recent years. To this contributes the preface by Ákos Egyed as well as the author's introduction. Another register of analysis is the thematic one, issues of history and geography – the chosen fields indicated in the title of the work to which the catalogued manuscripts belong – being surveyed. The bibliographic description of the manuscripts is convincing and completely clarified; the model on which the definition of the format was based is honestly presented. Of course, the work would have been more prestigious if each description had contained a short bibliography of the editions made in case of some manuscripts in the course of time, as the young author herself acknowledges. Similarly, the Romanian and English translations of the introductory texts should have reached up, both stylistically and from the point of view of conceptual aspects, to the level of the author's performance in elaborating and editing the catalogue. For example, in the Preface the redundant and colloquial expression "În final nu pot să termin" (Finally, I cannot conclude) is used; or, both in the Romanian and the English text we read about the

Revolution (Revoluția) of Francisc Rákóczi II, the term “szabadságharc” (freedom fight) used by the author being thus mistranslated, since this anti-Habsburg movement has been fixed in the historical literature as the “Kuruc War” etc., revolution being a hardly applicable concept to these events.

The appearance of the catalogue, even with these few deficiencies, has the merit of illustrating a basic research path, which may seem at first arid, but on which significant future works will be based. The elaboration of such a scientific work at the level the young researcher has achieved brings to our attention an essence becoming more and more rare in the field of research in the last few years.

Translated by Ágnes Korondi