

# Petru Maior: Intellectual Itinerary Blaj–Rome–Vienna

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Palazzo Ferratini (Rome),  
headquarters of the Pontifical Urban College  
for the Propagation of the Faith.

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Palazzo\\_di\\_Propaganda\\_Fide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palazzo_di_Propaganda_Fide).

**I**N *THE History of Modern Romanian Civilization* (1924–1925), the literary critic and historian E. Lovinescu developed the theory of synchronism in a sociological interpretation of the birth of modern Romania. With reference to the religious union, Lovinescu stated:

*It is almost superfluous to mention that, from a cultural point of view, the entire 18<sup>th</sup> century is dominated by the act of union of a part of the Romanians in Transylvania with the Latin Church. However deceived were the political hopes placed in this act and whatever was Austria's diplomatic game in Transylvania, its cultural importance dominates the entire union question: through the connection with our nation's very origin, with Rome, our national consciousness was strengthened.<sup>1</sup>*

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According to the historian Mathias Bernath, “the religious union fulfilled the function of an access gate for the Western spirit . . . created the premises for Romanian education and, consequently, the intellectual strata supporting the ‘nationalization’ in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>2</sup> The union opened the Romanians’ access to colleges in Transylvania and to universities in Europe, marking—according to sociologist George Em. Marica—the first step towards the Romanians’ westernization.<sup>3</sup>

Whenever the researchers noted the impact of the religious union on the Romanian society in Transylvania, the role of the intellectual elite trained in the universities of Central and Western Europe considered the representatives of the Transylvanian School as a landmark, a correct manner of evaluation, since they were the founders of modern culture. Through their contribution, the Western cultural influences on Romanian culture can be quantified to the greatest extent, for they were the interpreters of the spirit of the time in what the Romanian people’s interests were concerned.<sup>4</sup>

Following the ratification of the diplomas proclaiming the Romanians’ union with the Church of Rome and the birth of the Greek Catholic Church, the clergy’s attachment to the new church could only be achieved through education and culture. In a memorandum addressed to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Congregatio de Propaganda Fide), Cardinal Leopold Karl von Kollonich, one of the union’s artisans, referred to the causal link between the extraordinary ignorance of those priests and bishops (*nimia eorum sacerdotum et episcoporum ignorantia*) and the “instability” (*inconstantia*) of the Orthodox in Hungary, whom he endeavored to bring to the true faith.<sup>5</sup>

On their own initiative or inspired by the union’s promoters, the representatives of the Romanian elite, led by the bishops, also formulated, in most union documents, the desideratum of the Romanians’ access to schools. The Declaration of the union, resulting from the February 1697 synod, states in its point three: “The Uniate Romanian laypeople should be admitted to any position like the other Transylvanian nations’ laypeople, and their children should be accepted in Latin schools and have the right to gain scholarships.”<sup>6</sup> The establishment of schools was discussed since the first years in the life of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church. The document issued on 7 April 1701, “Juramentum et reversales Episcopii Atanasii,” at point 11, provided for the establishment of a Romanian-Latin school alongside the bishop’s residence in Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár, Weißenburg): “Schola Walachico latina Albae erigatur, satagam. Magistrus Scholarum eligam callentes linguam Walachicam et Latinam.”<sup>7</sup> In the 19 March 1701 second union diploma, in article 8, there is another reference to schools, to the opening of educational institutions in Alba Iulia, Hațeg (Hátszeg, Wallenthal), and Făgăraș (Fogaras, Fogarasch): “Et ut unitarum filii

majus incrementum scientiae valeant haurire, desideramus, ut Albae, Hațeg et in Fogaras Oppidis, scilicet in praeatlacta Transilvania existentibus, scholas instituant, et ut templa, ubi plures fuerit Valachi valeant erigere, annuimus.”<sup>8</sup> The Synod of 8 June 1702 decided that five youths, the most gifted ones, should be sent to the “high schools” of Vienna, Trnava, and Rome, “ad artium liberalium studia et ad sacras literas diligentur informandi.”<sup>9</sup>

The Greek Catholic elite’s desiderata were only partially fulfilled. Because of the war, the plans to send young Romanians to colleges in Trnava and Rome could not materialize in the first two decades of the century. Instead, the Romanians’ access to Catholic colleges was allowed in Transylvania, in Cluj (Kolozsvar, Klausenburg), Bistrița (Beszterce, Bistritz), Alba Iulia, Brașov (Brassó, Kronstadt), and other places. In 1703, 45 Romanian students were studying at St. Joseph’s Jesuit College of Cluj, coming from the thin layer of Romanian nobility in Transylvania.<sup>10</sup> Only one Romanian studied in Rome, Ioan Giurgiu Pataki, “the prototype of the young Romanian educated in Jesuit schools,” whose career (as a future bishop) gives us the image of the possibilities of the Greek Catholics’ cultural evolution.<sup>11</sup> He studied at the Catholic College in Cluj and was sent by his master, István Csete, to study at the Collegium Pazmanianum in Vienna. The rector of the college subsequently supported him to study in Rome. He studied there between 1705 and 1710, with brilliant results, becoming dean of the students coming from Hungary and Transylvania, and prefect of the Congregation. On 16 August 1710 he defended his doctorate at the Gregorian University, as the first Romanian to gain a doctorate in philosophy.<sup>12</sup>

The sending of young people to Rome resumed after 20 years. The document signed on 21 August 1738 by Emperor Charles III, based on which the Greek Catholic bishopric received the Blaj (Balázsfalva, Blasendorf) domain, provided that 972 florins coming from the annual income of the believers be assigned for the support of three young Romanians in the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide in Rome. Hence, in 1740, the Bishopric of Blaj sent to Rome three young men, Silvestri Kalliany (Caliani), Petrus Aaron, and Gregorius Major.<sup>13</sup> The three young men studied at the Gregorian University as interns at the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide, an institution subordinated to the Propaganda Fide Congregation, a Vatican department, which was meant to propagate Catholicism with era-specific means. Founded in 1627 by Pope Urban VIII, the college was considered a genuine world university of Catholicism. The studies lasted for five years, out of which two were dedicated to the study of philosophy and three years to theology. After three years of studies, Grigore Maior, the future bishop, defended his doctorate in philosophy (1743), with a thesis on Newtonian principles, entitled: “Conclusiones ex universa philosophiae selectae quae sacrae Congregationi Eminentissimorum ac Reverendissimorum D.D.

Sanctae Romana Ecclesiae Cardinalium de Propaganda Fide Gregorio Maior S. Basilii Magni, Monachus Transylvanus, Venerabilis Collegii Urbani de Propaganda Fide Alumnus D.D.D.<sup>14</sup> His thesis was supervised by Father Thomas Le Seur, of the Order of Friars Minor, lecturer in philosophy at the Urban College de Propaganda Fide and Inquisition consultant.

Francisc László, Alexiu Mureșan, Sabatiu Metz, Iacob Aaron, Vasile Keresztesi, Ambrozie Sadi, Ieronim Kalnoki, Partenie Iacob, and the brothers Benedict and Spiridon Fărcaș studied at the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide beginning with 1753.<sup>15</sup> In 1774, Bishop Grigore Maior recommended Gheorghe Șincai, Petru Maior and Ioachim Pop to study in Rome.

**P**ETRU MAIOR, the nephew of Bishop Grigore Maior, was 14 years old at the time he left for Rome, since according to most of his biographers he was born in 1760.<sup>16</sup> N. Iorga, Atanasie Marian Marienescu, Maria Protase, and Laura Stanciu support this date. Instead, Nicolae Albu suggests the year 1756 as his birthdate.<sup>17</sup> Dimitrie Popovici,<sup>18</sup> Al. Piru<sup>19</sup> and Pompiliu Teodor<sup>20</sup> have opted for the year 1761. The transcript of his study records in Rome mentioned 1760 as his year of birth.<sup>21</sup> Mezőkapus (Căpușu de Câmpie, Feldtor, Maros/Mureș County) was designated as the place of birth, contradicting the opinion that he was born in Târgu-Mureș (Marosvásárhely, Neumarkt), as suggested by some of his biographies. It is certain, nevertheless, that his father was a Greek Catholic archpriest of Târgu-Mureș, and that he came from a noble family, Maior of Dicio-Sânmartin (Dicsőszentmárton, Tárnäveni, Sankt Martin).

As his Roman transcript of study records indicates, Petru Maior was not born in Târgu-Mureș, but he definitely attended the first school years here, most likely at the Roman Catholic gymnasium. That he studied at the Catholic gymnasium is demonstrated by the fact that in his will he gave a scholarship foundation worth 7,200 florins to this boarding school.<sup>22</sup> We can also assume that a Greek Catholic priest would not have sent his son to a Reformed gymnasium (it was Gheorghe Șincai who studied at the Reformed gymnasium in Târgu-Mureș).

The Catholic gymnasium was founded by the Jesuits in 1702, in the house of Simion Boer of Berivoi, a Catholicized Romanian, and supreme captain of the Făgăraș district.<sup>23</sup> Among the first members of the Diet was Francisc Boer of Berivoi, the future secretary of Bishop Ioan Giurgiu Patachi. Alongside the Jesuit teachers of the gymnasium we find Nicolae Talian (1713), Gheorghe Zăicici (1714), Palcovici (1746), Gheorghe Apostol (1757–1758), Ioan Vlasici (1764–1766) and Paul Ribici (1767), possibly of Romanian origin. Romanian students were a constant presence at the Catholic gymnasium. Between 1782 and 1895, 12,618 young people studied at the gymnasium, of whom 7,860 were Roman Catholics, 808 of other religions, and 395 Greek Catholics.<sup>24</sup>

Petru Maior had studied for three years at the Catholic college in Târgu-Mureș, where he acquired knowledge of geography, history, grammar, languages, Greek and Latin, arithmetic, spelling and calligraphy. The city, the people, and the memory of his years of study forever bound him to Târgu-Mureș, and he later decided to buy a house and spend his old age there.<sup>25</sup>

After completing his studies in Târgu-Mureș, he went to Cluj, to the Jesuit gymnasium, later the Piarist school, at least according to the Roman transcript of study records, which indicates that he attended high school in Cluj.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately, the Cluj transcript of records drafted by the Jesuits was lost, the history of Maior's studies being difficult to piece together. We do not know for how long he studied in Cluj, but undoubtedly, before he left for Rome, he attended school in Blaj for a while.

In Blaj—where his uncle, Grigore Maior, was bishop—Petru Maior met Ignatie Darabant, general vicar and professor of poetics. “At the behest of my elders, I embraced the monastic life,” Maior later confessed, as in 1774 he joined the Great Monastic Order of Saint Basil, taking the name of Paul.<sup>27</sup>

Monastic status was a condition for gaining a scholarship in Rome. Thus, at the recommendation of Bishop Grigore Maior and Vicar Ignatie Darabant, Petru Maior together with Gheorghe Șincai and Ioachim Pop were sent on a scholarship to the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide in Rome, traveling via Timișoara (Temesvár, Temeschwar), then Vienna, where they made a stop, and from there to Florence and finally to Rome. The encounter with the former capital of the Roman Empire is described by Șincai, impressed by the monumentality of the city, especially by Trajan's Column: “I myself have often contemplated this column.”<sup>28</sup>

Undoubtedly, the studies of Petru Maior and his colleagues in Rome, carried out between 19 November 1774 and 4 April 1779, represented a unique experience, which they would remember for a lifetime.

According to a 1742 ordinance of the Court of Vienna, communicated to the Pontifical Urban College through the Apostolic Nuncio of Vienna, the young people of the empire who were attending the college were directed towards studies in theology, ecclesiastical debates, common law, and Greek.<sup>29</sup> In the Pontifical Urban College, the fundamental topics were Ecclesiastical and Profane History, the History of the Council of Trent, Catechism, Moral and Scholastic Theology, Dogmatic Theology, Speculative Scholasticism, Liturgy, and the Arabic, Syrian, Latin, Greek, Illyrian, and Chinese languages. They were taught by professors such as: Carol Bonomi, who replaced Antonio Monforti at the Department of Dogmatic Theology, Tommaso Gabrini, a lecturer in theology, who taught oratory, Francesco Angelo Spaziani, who also taught theology, Girolamo da Chiavani, who was a lecturer in philosophy and theology, Michel

Galeasi, who taught eloquence; grammar was taught by Francesco Battistini, Illyrian was taught by lecturer Giuseppe Luigi Assemani, Arabic and Syrian languages were taught by Emmanuel Valdivieso, Francesco Maria di Capranola taught Philosophy, Greek was taught by Francesco Cutié, and Raphael Vernanza and Ignatio Ballarini taught the Hebrew language.<sup>30</sup> At the end of their studies, the alumni took the graduation exam, in the presence of four lecturers and of the secretary of the college, following an oral exam on subjects drawn at random; for those aspiring to a doctorate, the requirements were more demanding. According to the *Romanus Pontifex* bull, the alumni of the Pontifical Urban College had the right to defend their doctorate at the end of their studies, like any graduate of a university-level institution.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, no documents have been preserved attesting to the fact that Petru Maior completed his studies with a doctorate, as it happened in the case of Gheorghe Şincai, who defended his doctorate, in both theology and philosophy, at St. Thomas Academy.

The years spent in Rome meant for Petru Maior the chance to study in the great libraries of the Vatican and of the Pontifical Urban College. Founded in 1627, the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide had an impressive library. For a while, Gheorghe Şincai was the custodian of the College's library, and we can consequently imagine that Petru Maior was among those who frequented the library under the guidance of his older colleague. He was also able to get accustomed to the intellectual life of Rome. Gheorghe Şincai also enjoyed the trust and friendship of Stefano Borgia, the secretary of the congregation, being invited to the dinners given by him, on which occasion he met the Italian intellectual circles. No information has been preserved as to whether the protection granted by Stefano Borgia to Gheorghe Şincai also affected Petru Maior, but it is assumed that this was the case. In a letter sent by Peter Maior to Rome on 13 October 1803, in which he paid homage to the personality of Stefano Borgia, on the occasion of his appointment as prefect of the congregation, Maior showed much warmth, admiration, and gratitude to Borgia:

*Under such a leader as Stefano Borgia . . . not only I, who had the good fortune to know him personally, with his wisdom, knowledge and immense erudition and unfeigned piety, but also those who heard only of his fame can hope, certainly, for the whole happiness of the churches. Hence, full of joy and filial devotion, I make it known to Your Eminence and the Holy Congregation that I am now in the Kingdom of Hungary . . .*<sup>32</sup>

While studying in Rome, as indicated by his later letters, but especially by his belief and argumentation in the *Procanon* (1783), Maior became familiar with the theological disputes of his time which involved the Catholic Church. While

studying in Rome, it is presumed that Petru Maior got into contact with the Gallican ideas, a current which contested the right of popes to interfere in secular affairs and supported the primacy of the Council within the Church. Here he probably discovered the work of Francisco de Vitoria, considered to be the founder of a second scholasticism, the one who set, before Hugo Grotius, the foundation for the right of the gentes. He developed Thomas Aquinas' thesis, which stated that divine mercy does not change the order of nature, instead it completes it. Likewise, he could become acquainted with the work of the Jesuits Juan de Mariana and Francisco Suárez, who proved in their works the rights of the peoples to remove an authority which did not lead according to the precepts of wisdom and divine justice, contravening the law of nature.<sup>33</sup>

Indisputably, in Rome, Petru Maior and his colleagues were educated in the spirit of fidelity towards the Church, of pride in belonging to Catholicism. Almost one year after beginning his studies, on 15 August 1775, Petru Maior, Gheorghe Șincai, and Ioachim Pop took an oath of admission in the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. In this way, they committed, once returned to their motherlands, to militate for the spread of Catholicism and send annual reports to the congregation in this regard.

After five years of studies dedicated to philosophy and three years to theology, the congregation, in a letter to Bishop Grigore Maior, took credit for the excellent education of the young monk (Paul) Petru Maior. Replying to a letter that Maior and Șincai had sent from Vienna, Stefano Borgia renewed "his distinguished expectations" which they had awakened at the Sacred Congregation "through their fruitful talent and beautiful mores." Referring directly to Maior, Borgia spoke of "the excellent impression that the leadership had about his piety and zeal."<sup>34</sup>

In the spring of 1779, the three graduates of the Pontifical Urban College de Propaganda Fide were preparing to leave Rome. They only had 50 crowns for their voyage back to their motherland. Consequently, they approached Giuseppe Maria Cardinal Castelli, the college prefect, requesting him to supplement the sum, but without any result. They went to Vienna, hoping to acquire the necessary means to continue their voyage home, and visited the Councilor István Koszta. The latter, noticing that Maior and Șincai had studied canon law for a relatively short time, proposed that they should stay for one year in Vienna.<sup>35</sup>

The rhetorical knowledge of canon law was, it seems, only a pretext to continue their studies in Vienna. As theology and philosophy graduates in Rome, it is assumed that Maior and Șincai had a good command of canon law. The purpose behind keeping them in Vienna was, according to Maria Protase, their training in matters pertaining to Court politics, regarding the relationship between state and church. Considering the importance of the Vienna Court's re-

forms for Transylvania, as well as the role the church played in the Romanians' national life, the two Propaganda Fide graduates were, obviously, directed towards the study of canon law. Revisiting this field did not increase their knowledge, but it helped them assimilate the new canon law, taught at the University of Vienna.<sup>36</sup> As he later admitted, "Returning [from Rome] to Beciu [Vienna], I lingered for one more year, in which I learned the Codex that is called *Jus Canonicus*."<sup>37</sup> In Vienna, the two students were to attend the Normal School of St. Anne and the Sancta Barbara seminary. At the Normal School, Petru Maior and Gheorghe Şincai became acquainted with the new didactic methods introduced in the empire's elementary education. Thus, they attended courses in methodology and catechetics taught by the pedagogue Johann Ignaz von Felbiger,<sup>38</sup> the knowledge thus acquired becoming particularly useful later as teachers in Blaj or, for Petru Maior, as an archpriest in Reghin.

In their intellectual training, Sancta Barbara seminary played a crucial role. It was decided that Maior and Şincai would remain at the seminary, receiving 300 florins for the upkeep for one year.<sup>39</sup> Sancta Barbara seminary was the central institution for Greek Catholic education in the empire. Known as *Collegium Graeco-Catholicum ad Sanctum Barbaram*, it was opened on 15 October 1775 with twenty scholarship holders, from the following 5 bishoprics: 5 from Munkács (Mukachevo), 4 from Făgăraş, 4 from Oradea (Nagyvárad, Großwardein), and 4 from Lemberg (Lviv).

One year after the opening, the number of scholarships was increased, nine scholarships being allotted to the Făgăraş Bishopric, and six to the one in Oradea. The scholarship amounting to 300 florins every year, was awarded for five years, covering the alumnus's accommodation, board, and clothing.<sup>40</sup> As college interns, the young men were to learn the German language and study Theology at the University of Vienna.<sup>41</sup> The schedule was quite strict, the interns being forbidden from reading foreign books and being rarely permitted to leave the seminary.

From 1780, Sancta Barbara seminary came under the Hungarian Chancellery in Vienna, as it had the duty of solving the political issues for the Greek Catholics and Orthodox in Hungary and other annexed territories. A new statute was drafted, titled *Regium Generale Seminarium, Graeco Catholicum*, with a strong focus in the idea of reestablishing the unity of the Catholic Church, by converting the schismatics (the Orthodox), the most efficient method to reach this goal being proper education and preparation for the Greek Catholic priesthood.<sup>42</sup>

In the space of nine years, between 1775 and 1784 (when the seminary was closed), 41 Romanians studied at Sancta Barbara, including, besides Petru Maior and Gheorghe Şincai, Samuil Micu, Ioan Budai-Deleanu, Samuil Vulcan, Ioan Corneli, Ioan Nobili, etc.<sup>43</sup> Among the Romanians, Samuil Micu held the

position of vice-ephemerius, and Iacob Aron became studies prefect, replacing the Croatian Josaphat Bastasich.

Petru Maior and Gheorghe Șincai, as former students in Rome, remained in Vienna, at the Sancta Barbara seminary, to further study canon law, founded on ecclesiastic history and Biblical exegesis. The new canon law was to judicially regulate the relation between the prerogatives of the state and those of the church. Furthermore, of major importance for Maior's intellectual training were the "political science" and "state science" courses, proposed by Joseph von Sonnenfels, one of the artisans of the Josephine reforms, politician and intellectual of great notoriety. His courses included as bibliographic recommendations works by Montesquieu, Rousseau, Mirabeau, Turgot, David Hume, etc. In Vienna, Maior established a fruitful friendship with Samuil Micu, through whom he could become acquainted with the libraries owned by the Transylvanians Alexandru Fiscuti and Ștefan Salcivai, where he read works by classics such as Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Tit Livy, Suetonius, Tacitus, but also Hugo Grotius, Christian Wolff, Ludovico Antonio Martini, Luigi Muratori, Claude Fleury, François Fénelon and others, also grammar and philosophy works. As indicated by Șincai's *Elegy*, he could also consult the books owned by the bibliophile Andreas Hadik, president of the War Chancellery. In Vienna, Petru Maior managed to meet the famous historians Dániel Cornides and József Benkő, as well as Franz Josef Sulzer.<sup>44</sup> During his time in Vienna, Petru Maior could also further study the work of Justinus Febronius (Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim), the Enlightened German theologian who rose against the pope's unlimited power. The influence of Febronius' work is eloquent in Maior's writing, especially in the *Pro-canon*, where he debates three fundamental problems of the relationship between papacy and laity: 1) he rejects the pope's infallibility and pleads for the council's authority; 2) the relation between the pope's power and that of the emperor; 3) the option for spiritual freedom and abolishing the pope's absolute authority.<sup>45</sup>

After five years in Rome and one year in Vienna, Petru Maior returned to Blaj, where he was appointed as a teacher at the *Scholae altiores*, where he taught metaphysics. The next year new courses in logic, natural law, and then canon law were added. In 1785 he was appointed archpriest in Reghin (Szászrégen, Sächsisch-Regen), where he would stay for 23 years, during which he gathered important documents for the history of the church. It was probably here that he drafted the *Protopopadichia* (The power of the archpriests),<sup>46</sup> a work marked by a Jansenist and Gallican spirit. In 1808, with assistance from Samuil Vulcan, he received a position as censor at the Buda Printing House. He thus had the opportunity to publish a large part of his work as a historian and philologist, firstly *The History of the Beginnings of the Romanians in Dacia* (1812) and then *The History of the Romanian Church* (1813).

FOR ALMOST half a century, Maior's work would become the main historical landmark in the formation of the national consciousness, founded on the idea of the purely Roman origin of the Romanian nation. *The History of the Beginnings of the Romanians in Dacia* represented, we believe, a turning point, equaling from a cultural standpoint the birth of the nineteenth century for the Romanians. Later voices were critical of the Transylvania School's exaggerations on the issue of the Romanian people's origin and language. Some statements were indeed clearly exaggerated. But by proclaiming the illustrious origin of the Romanian people, Petru Maior, Gheorghe Șincai and Samuil Micu only followed the spirit of their time.

*At the dawn of the modern world the "origin" enjoyed an almost magical prestige. To have a well-established "origin" meant, actually, to avail oneself of a noble origin. "We are the descendants of Rome"—proudly repeated the Romanian intellectuals from the seventeenth and the nineteenth century. The consciousness of the Latin origin was accompanied by a sort of mystical partaking of Rome's glory.<sup>47</sup>*

We can therefore state that through the contacts with the currents of thought and spirit of the era, Petru Maior and the intellectuals of his generation laid the ideological foundations for the national movement, and they prepared the Romanians' entrance into modernity. □

## Notes

1. E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației moderne*, vol. 1, *Forțele revoluționare*, edited, introduction and chronological table by Z. Ornea (Bucharest: Minerva, 1992), 14.
2. Mathias Bernath, *Habsburgii și începuturile formării națiunii române*, translated by Marionela Wolf, foreword by Pompiliu Teodor (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1994).
3. George Em. Marica, *Studii sociologice*, edited by Gheorghe Cordoș and Traian Rotariu (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația Culturală Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 1997), 237.
4. Keith Hitchins, *Conștiință națională și acțiune politică la românii din Transilvania 1700–1868*, edited and introduction by Pompiliu Teodor, translated by Sever Trifu and Codruța Trifu (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1987), 30–61.
5. Bernath, 85.
6. Octavian Bârlea, "Biserica Română Unită și ecumenismul corifeilor renașterii culturale," *Perspective* (Munich) 5, 3–4 (1983): 10.
7. Ioan Marin Mălinaș, *Situația învățământului bisericesc al românilor în contextul reformelor școlare din timpul domniei împărătesei Maria Tereza (1740–1780), a împăraților*

- Iosif al II-lea (1780–1790) și Leopold al II-lea (1790–1792)* (Oradea: Mihai Eminescu, 1994), 23.
8. *Ibid.*
  9. Zenovie Pâclișanu, “Istoria Bisericii Române Unite Partea I-a, 1697–1751,” 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, *Perspective* 17, 65–68 (1994–1995): 162.
  10. Zoltán I. Tóth, *Primul secol al naționalismului românesc ardelean 1697–1792*, translated by Maria Someșan and Ana-Cristina Halichias, biographical study by Gyula Dávid, afterword by Adrian Cioroianu (Bucharest: Pythagora, 2001), 169.
  11. *Ibid.*, 65.
  12. Beáta Szlavikovszky, *Magyarországi diákok itáliai egyetemeken, 1526–1918* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2007), 96.
  13. Francisc Pall, “Știri noi despre primii studenți români trimiși de la Blaj la Roma,” *Apulum* (Alba Iulia) 17 (1979): 469–476; see also Iacob Mârza, *Școală și națiune (Școlile din Blaj în epoca renașterii naționale)* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1987), 74; Szlavikovszky, 102, 103.
  14. Grigore Maior, *Institutiones Lingvæ Valachicæ. Lexicon Compendiarium Latino-Valachicum*, edited, introduction, notes and index by Alin-Mihai Gherman, foreword and abstract by Iacob Mârza (Alba Iulia: Universitatea “1 Decembrie 1918,” 2001), XV. For Grigore Maior’s Ph.D. thesis, see also Károly Köllő, *Confluente literare: Studii de literatură comparată româno-maghiară*, translated by Francisc Pap, foreword by Adrian Marino (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1993), 23–44.
  15. Ioan Chiorean, “Rolul instituțiilor de învățământ superior din Roma în formarea elitei intelectuale din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea,” in *Interferențe istorice și culturale româno-europene*, edited by Grigore Ploeșteanu (Târgu-Mureș: Mica Doris, 1996), 49–56.
  16. Maria Protase, *Petru Maior: Un cititor de conștiințe* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1973); Serafim Duicu, *Pe urmele lui Petru Maior* (Bucharest: Sport-Turism, 1990); Laura Stanciu, *Biografia unei atitudini: Petru Maior (1760–1821)*, foreword by Iacob Mârza (Cluj-Napoca: Risoprint, 2003); Atanasie Marian Marienescu, “Viața și operele lui Petru Maior,” *Analele Academiei Române* (Bucharest), 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., 7 (1882–1883): 39–77; N. Iorga, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea (1688–1821)*, vol. 2, *Epoca lui Petru Maior: Excursuri*, edited by Barbu Theodorescu (Bucharest: Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, 1969).
  17. Petru Maior, *Scrisori și documente inedite*, edition, introduction, notes and indexes by Nicolae Albu (Bucharest: Ed. pentru Literatură, 1968), V.
  18. D. Popovici, *Studii literare*, vol. 1, *Literatura română în epoca “Luminilor,”* edited by Ioana Em. Petrescu, afterword by Aurel Martin (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1972), 65.
  19. Al. Piru, *Literatura română premodernă* (Bucharest: Ed. pentru Literatură, 1964), 65.
  20. Pompiliu Teodor, “Petru Maior,” in *Istoria literaturii române*, vol. 2, *De la Școala Ardeleană la Junimea* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1968), 57; Dumitru Ghișe and Pompiliu Teodor, *Fragmentarium iluminist* (Cluj: Dacia, 1972), 182.
  21. Szlavikovszky, 111.

22. Ladislau Gyémánt, *Mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania între anii 1790 și 1848* (Bucharest: Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1986), 347.
23. Traian Popa, *Monografia orașului Târgu-Mureș* (Târgu-Mureș: Tip. Corvin, 1932), 279–281. See also Remus Câmpeanu, *Intellectualitatea română din Transilvania în veacul al XVIII-lea* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1999), 182–185.
24. Popa, 280.
25. Duicu, 280.
26. Szlavikovszky, 111.
27. Protase, 23.
28. Mircea Tomuș, *Gheorghe Șincai: Viața și opera* (Bucharest: Ed. pentru Literatură, 1965), 34.
29. Duicu, 39.
30. Stanciu, 107.
31. Protase, 25.
32. *Ibid.*, 27.
33. Camil Mureșanu, *În templul lui Ianus: Studii și gânduri despre trecut și viitor* (Cluj-Napoca: Cartimpex, 2002), 88.
34. Protase, 35.
35. *Ibid.*, 38.
36. *Ibid.*, 58.
37. Petru Maior, *Răspunsul la cărtirea, carea s-au dat asupra persoanei lui Petru Maior, autorului Istoriei ceii pentru începutul românilor în Dachia* (Buda, 1814), 15.
38. Johann Ignaz von Felbiger (1724–1788) is known for his activity as a reformer in education. He authored the state law of 6 December 1774, known under the name of *Allgemeine Schulordnung für die deutschen Normal- Haupt- und Trivialschulen in sämtlichen Kaiserl. Königl. Erbländern*, a law which greatly contributed to the modernization of education throughout the entire monarchy. Later, in 1777, it was completed with the *Ratio Educationis totiusque rei literariae per Regnum Hungariae et provincias eidem adnexas*, and in 1781 with the *Norma Regia pro scholis Magni Principatus Transilvaniae*.
39. Tóth, 274.
40. Ioan Chiorean, “Rolul Vienei în formarea intelectualității românești din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea,” in *De la umanism la luminism: Lucrările simpozionului, Sovata, 3–5 iunie 1994*, edited by Ioan Chiorean (Târgu-Mureș: Mica Doris, 1994), 93–110.
41. Constantin Mălinaș, *Contribuții la istoria Iluminismului românesc din Transilvania: Ioan Corneli 1762–1848* (Oradea: Biblioteca Județeană “Gheorghe Șincai,” 2003), 16.
42. Tóth, 78.
43. Lucia Protopopescu, *Contribuții la istoria învățământului din Transilvania 1774–1805* (Bucharest: Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, 1966), 226.
44. Protase, 64.
45. Stanciu, 142.
46. *Ibid.*, 141. Laura Stanciu argues that Maior had written the *Protopopadachia* in Vienna.

47. Mircea Eliade, *Aspecte ale mitului*, translated by Paul G. Dinopol, foreword by Vasile Nicolescu (Bucharest: Univers, 1978), 171.

**Abstract**

Petru Maior: Intellectual Itinerary: Blaj–Rome–Vienna

Petru Maior (1760–1821) is one of the great personalities of Romanian culture. The Romanians' national consciousness based on the recovery of the Romanian people's historical memory and the idea of the Romanian language's Latin origin owe a lot to the great scholar. The itinerary of his education in Transylvania's Catholic colleges, and his studies in Rome and Vienna allowed him to become acquainted with 18<sup>th</sup> century culture, the spirit of the time, integrating his work in the great cultural movement of the Enlightenment, inaugurating the Romanian cultural dialogue with Europe.

**Keywords**

religion, Catholic colleges, Roman origin, national consciousness