

## THE SETTLEMENT OF THE PIARIST ORDER IN CLUJ

**Abstract:** Due to their religious character, denominational schools were known as promoters of moral and ethical values, producing, throughout the centuries, thanks to their methods and educational programs, many scholars and men of culture. The schools of the Piarist Order were part of this category of institutions. In this study we intend to present the settlement of the Piarist Order in Cluj, a multiethnic and multicultural town, which for many centuries has been considered the cultural, educational and political centre of Transylvania. The research of the educational institutions of the Piarist Order can be extremely rewarding for any researcher, especially since many aspects of its organization and activity are almost unknown in Romanian historiography. In order to know the circumstances in which the Piarist Order settled in Cluj we relied on archival sources that have been little researched so far.

**Keywords:** Transylvania, Piarist Order, Jesuit Order, education and teaching in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, school of the Piarist Order in Cluj (1776)

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Our research has sought to answer questions about the manner and circumstances in which the Piarist Order settled in Cluj. This was a monastic order with prevalently educational goals in a society that was subject to change and in which the element that most obviously underwent mutations was political power. In the second part of the 18th century the Habsburg Empire began to secularize education, which brought about major political, cultural, educational changes, bringing about an overall change of mentality.

All these changes influenced the activity of monastic order, including that of the Piarists. However, their ultimate goal, namely to educate children regardless of their social, ethnic or religious background – in keeping with the heritage and mission of the order's founder, Joseph of Calasanz – did not change, but was merely modernized. In this process, the order showed much wisdom, diplomacy and innovative spirit. Thus, in order to be accepted as teachers, the monks had to acquire double qualifications: first they would study theology and then they would attend a faculty in which they specialized. All this led to exceptional results in time.

In all the territories they settled in, the Piarists showed a lot of sensitivity and understanding towards the local population. They successfully integrated themselves into these communities and became the representatives of the culture of the region in question. Thus, thanks to their settlement in the Hungarian province and their immersion in the Hungarian culture in Transylvania, the Piarist monks were the representatives par excellence of the Hungarian civilization here.

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### A presentation of the Piarist Order

The Piarist Order (*Ordo Clericorum Regularium Pauperum Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum*)<sup>2</sup> was founded by Joseph of Calasanz at the beginning of the 17th century, relying on the principle that “the people must acquire a religious education for a practical.” This principle is found in *Breve relatione del modo che si tiene nelle Scuole Pie per insegnar li poveri scolari*, the foundational treatise of the Piarists’ pedagogy.<sup>3</sup> Calasanz’s goal was to educate the youth through *pietas et litterae*, i.e. through faith, culture and science because only through all of these together could one achieve notable results: a cultivated youth, capable of facing the challenges of daily life.

On 8 March 1617, Pope Paul V granted permission for the activity of the congregation, under the name *Congregatio Paulina Pauperum Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum*.<sup>4</sup> Its recognition as a monastic order came from Pope Gregory XV, under the name of *Ordo Clericorum Regularium Pauperum Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum*, on 18 November 1621. The papal bull of 31 January 1622 recognized and accepted the Constitutions of the Order,<sup>5</sup> necessary for its functioning, and appointed Joseph of Calasanz as General of the Order (*praepositus generalis*).<sup>6</sup>

All monastic orders were formed on the basis of three promises: poverty, chastity and obedience. In addition, the Piarists also promised to educate the people. The inscription of the first school they set up is significant: *Scholae piae*, indicating the religious and free character of the education carried out by these monks.<sup>7</sup> Education was free in the Piarist schools, allowing access even to students with a more precarious material situation; they received books and school supplies, and the very poor also received food thanks to charitable people.

The first school organized by the Piarists was a primary school, this priority being maintained over time. Secondary education was organized later. Its model was borrowed from the Jesuits and developed according to the founder’s conception and the requirements of the time. The primary cycle lasted three years and the emphasis was laid on the acquisition of reading, writing and mathematical skills.

In the secondary cycle, which lasted five years, there occurred changes of a practical nature because the purpose was to educate the citizens of the future society. Thus, in addition to studying Latin, Piarists were interested in teaching natural sciences, the history of the nation, geography and philosophy.<sup>8</sup> Here become visible the differences between the curriculum requirements of the Jesuits and those of the Piarists. It has often been argued that by comparison with Jesuit Order, the Piarists focused more on studying and teaching the hard sciences, which is true only insofar

<sup>2</sup> Puskely Mária, *Szerzetesek*, Székesfehérvár, 1990, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Borián Tibor, Koltai András, Legeza László, *Piaristák*, Mikes Kiadó, Budapest, 2007, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Giovanni Ausenda, *A piarista rend története*, Szeged, 2003, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ausenda, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Borián, Koltai, Legeza, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Patay József, “A piarista rend keletkezése és elterjedése” in *A kolozsvári piarista öregdiákok emlékkönyve*, Kolozsvár, 1992, p. 12; Mészáros István, *Az iskolaiügy története Magyarországon 996-1777 között*, Budapest, 1981, p. 309.

<sup>8</sup> *A kolozsvári római katolikus főgimnázium emlékalbuma 1579-1929*, Kolozsvár, 1930, p. 11; Karl János, “A piarista iskola” in *A kolozsvári piarista öregdiákok emlékkönyve*, Kolozsvár, 1992, p. 24.

as the humanities studied in the Jesuit schools were supplemented with science disciplines. Even though the system of values and requirements changed over time, sciences were studied alongside the humanities, always maintaining history and geography, the mother tongue, Latin and German in the curriculum, depending on the historical period. For students belonging to the other nationalities, there was the possibility to study their own mother tongue (Romanian, Serbian, Ukrainian, etc.). The merits of the Order are indisputable, because in those areas where there were no schools, they managed, for several centuries, to educate several generations of youth.

The Piarists schools spread rapidly in Italy, Spain, in the German space and in Poland.<sup>9</sup> In 1646 the Order was reduced to a Congregation by Pope Innocent X, depriving it of the voting right and the right of novitiate. Only Pope Clement IX recognized the Piarists once again as a monastic order, solemnly reinstating their rights in 1669.<sup>10</sup>

### **The settlement of the Piarist Order in Transylvania, Partium, Maramureş and Banat**

After taking over political power in Transylvania, the Habsburg Empire used Catholicism to consolidate imperial power in the Principality. As a result, the Habsburgs supported the expansion of the influence exerted by the Catholic Church through various methods, such as the use of legislation or authoritarian power, on a case by case basis. What was achieved thus was an intermingling between State, Church and political life, as a superior form of strengthening imperial power.<sup>11</sup> In this process, Roman Catholic religious orders played a particularly important role.

In the 18th century, there were already three Piarist provinces in the Habsburg Empire: Czech (1634), Hungarian (1721)<sup>12</sup> and Austrian (1751).<sup>13</sup> Their development was strongly influenced by the political and historical events in the Central European space. The evolution of these three provinces was quite different (if we also take Galicia into account, we can talk in fact of four regions of this kind, but in 1878 Galicia was already on the verge of disappearing).

These provinces comprised numerous monasteries, primary schools, gymnasiums and high schools, where the teaching was done by the Piarist monks, on the basis of the principles set forth by Joseph of Calasanz. On the territory of Hungary, the activity of the Piarist Order was recognized by King Charles III, in 1715, under Law no. 102.

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<sup>9</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Borián, Koltai, Legeza, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Ludovic Báthory, István Csucsuj, "Recatolicizarea Transilvaniei în secolul al XVIII-lea," in *Națiune și europenitate. Studii istorice in honorem magistri Camilli Mureşanu*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 2007, p. 124.

<sup>12</sup> Szöllősy Károly, *Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia összes szerzetes rendjeinek történeti és statisztikai rajza*, vol. II., Arad, 1878, p. 18., Ausenda, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Szöllősy, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

The Piarist centres in Transylvania were legally subordinated to the Hungarian provincial.<sup>14</sup> The Piarist centres were located near a church (for divine service), a school for pedagogical and didactic activity and a cloister, respectively next to a convent for students. Depending on the material situation of their supporters, these centres were equipped with libraries, school offices, an astronomical observatory and other facilities for state-of-the-art teaching and pedagogical activities.

In 1736 the Transylvanian Diet officially recognized the activity of the Piarist Order. The effective recognition of the Order occurred, however, only in 1741, when the Chapter of Alba Iulia received notification from the king about the resolution of privileged estates.<sup>15</sup> At first, Transylvanian society, where the Protestants represented the majority, received the Piarist monks with distrust and restraint, being aware of the role they had played in the process of Catholicization. This opinion changed in time, thanks to the excellent training and the free education offered to all categories of children, regardless of their ethnic, religious or social background.

As regards the geographical space, we can notice the settlement of the Piarist Order both in Transylvania (in the towns of Bistrița, Cluj, Mediaș), Partium (Carei), Maramureș (Sighetu Marmăției) and Banat (originally in Sântana, then transferred in Timișoara).

In general, their settlement in a specific region was carefully thought out and reviewed by the General of the Order, who, with the help of assistants and the General Chapter, reached the important decisions.

The Piarists often answered the calls coming from some monarchs, being considered by the latter as agents of civilization who implemented the Catholic cult, spreading West European culture and the Austrian policy.

Thus, at the request of King Charles III of Habsburg, the Piarist Order sent monks to Sighetu Marmăției (1732) and Oltenia (1736), for the purpose of establishing centres that would support the imperial policy. In 1776, Empress Maria Theresa demanded the Piarist Order to take over the heritage of the Jesuit Order and the centre in Cluj. In 1788 Joseph II transferred the members of the Piarist Order from Sântana to Timișoara.

We also know that there existed initiatives coming from some local representatives who, regardless of their origin and social status, had a common purpose: to educate the people. Thus, the military commander of Transylvania, Count István Steinville, called the Piarists to Bistrița,<sup>16</sup> in 1717, Count Sándor Károlyi to Carei,<sup>17</sup> in 1725, and Comes Jakab Bibics and his wife Margit Tomeján la Sântana in 1750.<sup>18</sup>

The founders of these schools, regardless of origin and social status, had a common purpose: to form educated young people, who, in turn, would also promote

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<sup>14</sup> Patay József, "A piarista rend Erdélyben," in *Az erdélyi katolicizmus múltja és jelene*, Dicsőszentmárton, 1925, p. 501.

<sup>15</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

<sup>16</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

<sup>17</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

<sup>18</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 505.

this mentality. The founders included: the military commander of Transylvania, Count István Steinville (Bistrița), Count Sándor Károlyi (Carei), King Charles III (Sighetu Marmăției), Comes Jakab Bibics and his wife Margit Tomeján (Sântana), Queen Maria Theresa, who demanded that the Piarists should come to the former School of the Jesuits, and Joseph II, who transferred them from Sântana to Timișoara.

The schools supported by the Piarists accepted students belonging to any ethnicity, since neither belonging to a different nationality than the Hungarian one, nor belonging to a different religion than Roman Catholicism was an obstacle in the face of education. For students belonging to other nationalities, such as German, Romanian and Serbian students in Banat, Romanian, Ukrainian and German students in Maramureș, or Romanian and German students in Transylvania, there were organized courses in their native language, which the students were entitled to attend. In terms of religious affiliation, students belonging to other denominations than Roman Catholicism were bound to attend religion classes. These classes could be organized on the premises of the school by the representatives of their own religious denominations or in the churches of the denominations or in the denominational schools of the other confessions. At the end of the semester, the representatives of the religious denominations forwarded the grades of each student, which were recognized and listed in the students' grade reports by the monks.

In the process of reorganizing Catholic religious education, an important role was played by the Jesuits, whose order was abolished in the Austrian Empire by order of Empress Maria Theresa, in 1773. After the dismantling of the Jesuit Order, the Imperial Court took control of the education system, reforming it in accordance with the requirements of the state. According to these, education and the education system needed to become practical, varying in accordance with the social status of the subjects, utilitarian, rationalist and moralizing.<sup>19</sup> In the 18th century, a large part of the Transylvanian school network gradually came under the control of the Piarists,<sup>20</sup> recognized for the merits obtained in education over the course of time. The Piarists' settlement in the towns of Transylvania –Bistrița, Medias and Cluj – had the same goal, namely educating the youth. This process was, however, hampered in the Saxon regions by their inhabitants, who were mostly Protestants and regarded the newcomers as promoters of the imperial policy and the Catholicizing process. Thus, in some localities, the Piarist monks' situation was compromised from the very outset.

In Banat, the political and the social factors interacted in a fortunate manner, even though the hostile Protestant environment hampered the activity of the Piarist monks. The conquest of Banat by the Austrians was recognized in 1718, under the Peace of Passarowitz,<sup>21</sup> which was followed by the organization of a new province known as the “Banat of Timișoara,” directly subordinated to the emperor, for security

<sup>19</sup> *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III. (*De la 1711 până la 1918*), Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 126.

<sup>20</sup> Marton József, “Formația clerului greco-catolic în școlile catolice (sec. XVIII)” in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis*, Serie Historica, 10/II, 2006, p. 128.

<sup>21</sup> Francesco Grisellini, *Încercare de istorie politică și naturală a Banatului Timișoarei*, Timișoara, Editura Facla, 1984, p. 121.

reasons. The Catholicization of Banat was carried out by settling large groups of Catholic Swabian colonists (the Mercy plan), which resulted in a gradual increase in the number of believers belonging to this confession. The settlement of Magyars and other nations in Banat was banned until 1778, when the region was incorporated into Hungary. The settlement of the Piarist Order in Sântana in 1750, in a hostile region, was supported by the imperial policy and the generous foundation of the Bibics family, but in 1788, following the imperial reorganization, the members of the Order were transferred to Timișoara.

In Sighetu Marmăției, in the heart of Maramureș, a geographical region closely related to Transylvania through its history and culture, the settlement of the Piarists was initiated by the imperial power. Politically and culturally, the history of Maramureș was marked by the imperial order of 31 December 1732, whereby Maramureș and the other lands that formed Partium were removed from Transylvania and attached to Hungary, after Maramureș ceased, in 1708, to be a major captaincy and to have a comes of its own.<sup>22</sup> This imperial decree was elevated to the rank of law in 1733, by the Transylvanian Diet.<sup>23</sup>

After the Peace of Satu Mare, Count Sándor Károlyi purchased a huge estate in Satu Mare County, at Carei, but due to lack of manpower, in 1712, he requested the Hungarian Chancellery permission for bringing and placing Swabians in his unpopulated villages.<sup>24</sup> For educating the population, it was decided to found a school and settle a monastic order. Bringing the Piarists was aimed at civilizing the Roman Catholic youth, which had increased in number, after the colonization of the estate.<sup>25</sup>

The multiethnic Transylvanian character can be found in the centres that were founded, with students coming from different ethnic groups, such as: Hungarians, Germans, Romanians, Ruthenians, Jews, Serbs, who belonged to different religious denominations, such as the Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Orthodox, Mosaic and Protestant denominations. Through the synod held at Cluj-Mănăstur, the Uniate Diocese of Transylvania decided that Greek Catholics should be entitled to enrol their children only in Catholic schools.<sup>26</sup> Even though Piarist schools represented Catholic culture par excellence, they provided students with the opportunity to learn alongside Latin, German or Hungarian also their mother tongues, which differed from one area to another. In Sighet teachers were employed to teach Ruthenian and Romanian; at Carei, in order to meet the demands, the Piarist monks brought a German orator for their Swabian pupils and a Romanian orator for the Romanian parishioners at the school in Sântana. In the centres from Cluj, Carei and Sighet, Romanian was studied as a special subject matter for a long time. In a first phase the teachers employed by Piarist schools also ensured the religious education of the pupils, but afterwards the

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<sup>22</sup> Varga Rozalia, *Școala și societatea în Maramureșul istoric în perioada interbelică* (PhD Thesis), Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 32.

<sup>23</sup> Alexandru Filipescu, *Istoria Maramureșului*, București, 1940, p.153.

<sup>24</sup> Dorel A. Silaghi, *File din istoria orașului și cultelor din Carei*, Carei, 2004, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Silaghi, *op.cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> Remus Câmpeanu, "Un efect spectaculos al unirii religioase: integrarea elitelor românești din Transilvania, Partium și Banat în sistemul catolic de învățământ în prima jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea" in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis*, Serie Historica, 6/II, 2002, p. 129.

higher religious authorities of each denomination sent their representatives to the schools in Sighet, Carei and Timișoara for the religious education of their children. In Cluj, students attended the religion classes organized by each denomination separately, outside the premises of the school, and it was here that they received the qualifications and grades at the end of each semester.

These schools were organized with great difficulty, and their maintenance was even more difficult. Financial difficulties became apparent at the time when the order was forced to close the gates of the school in Bistrița (1878).<sup>27</sup> Some schools were the victims of imperial reorganization, as was the case of the school in Mediaș (1789),<sup>28</sup> which was closed by Joseph II, and that in Sântana (1789),<sup>29</sup> which was transferred to Timișoara.

### **The school of the Piarist Order in Cluj (1776)**

The beginnings of Catholic education in Cluj are closely related to István Báthory, Prince of Transylvania and King of Poland, who, under the diploma of 17 July 1579,<sup>30</sup> decided the establishment of a college in the former Benedictine Abbey of Cluj-Mănăștur. The Prince decided that the new College should be placed outside the city, in Cluj-Mănăștur, due to the opposition of the estates, the majority of which were Protestant.

The Diploma talked about the arrival of the Jesuit monks who would educate at least 20 youth at the Prince's expense and about the books received for the organization of a library. The Jesuits became owners of villages and communes nearby: Cluj-Mănăștur, Baci, Chinteni, Tibru, Băgara and Leghia,<sup>31</sup> also having a pond at Sic. The educational activity was to be supported from the money and products coming from these properties.

Zsigmond Báthory, the king's grandson, donated the Jesuits half of the village Macoviște and peasants for the defence and maintenance of the College.<sup>32</sup> The Jesuit monks also levied the tithe from the inhabitants of Cluj. The grains that were left after feeding 35-40 people were sold.<sup>33</sup>

The Jesuits fulfilled the expectations of the founder, even though the townspeople opposed them over time. The material basis necessary for the operation of the centre was ensured, in time, by these properties, which came to be used by the Piarist monks after the departure of the Jesuits.

In September 1773, based on the papal bull of 21 July 1773 (*Dominus ac*

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<sup>27</sup> Ausenda, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>28</sup> Ausenda, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>29</sup> Patay, *op. cit.*, p. 505.

<sup>30</sup> Veress Endre, *Epistolae et acta Jesuitarum Transylvaniae temporibus principum Báthory (1571-1613)*, I. (1571-1583), Kolozsvár, Fontes rerum Transylvanicarum, 1911, doc. no. 25, pp. 76-78.

<sup>31</sup> Kapronczay Károly, *Báthory István iskolaalapítási törekvései*, în *Magyar Pedagógia*, no. 3, 1976, p. 255.

<sup>32</sup> Lucian Periș, *Le Missioni Gesuite in Transilvania e Moldavia nel Seicento*, Cluj-Napoca, 1998, p. 28.

<sup>33</sup> Periș, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

*Redemptor Noster*), Maria Theresa decided the abolition of the Jesuits' Order.<sup>34</sup> In order not to unbalance the educational and confessional field, the members of the former Order were allowed to continue their pedagogical and religious activity as priests or teachers until the arrival of the Piarists.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the operation of the school was maintained by Maria Theresa, because education reform was underway.

The situation of the year 1774 is known from the statistic that Baron László Kollonitz, the Transylvanian Bishop, sent to Empress Maria Theresa. Thus the lower secondary school cycle was organized in the building of the academy, while the upper secondary school cycle was held in an old building, on the site of which the future higher gymnasium was to be erected. The teaching activity was ensured by 15 former Jesuit monks, who educated 557 students.<sup>36</sup>

The empress reserved an important role for the Academy in Cluj. The aim was to reorganize it after the model of the University of Vienna,<sup>37</sup> so that the Transylvanian youth could learn in their own country and not abroad. This role of the centre from Cluj can be found in its name, "Universitas," which was already operational in 1774, when Maria Theresa demanded the organization of the Faculty of Law and, one year later, of the Institute of Medicine<sup>38</sup> (*Institutum Medico-Chirurgicum*, with a Department of Surgery, Anatomy and Obstetrics), alongside the Faculties of Philosophy and Theology. The faculties were equipped with textbooks used at the University of Vienna and with the right of election of the Rector. Ioan Piuaru-Molnar was trained in this Institute of Surgical Medicine.<sup>39</sup>

In 1775 the number of pupils decreased and material difficulties arose; all of these called for urgent measures. On 7 June 1776, Maria Theresa notified the Gubernium, by order no. 717, that the school would be taken over by the Piarist Order,<sup>40</sup> whose members would begin the teaching activity in the school year 1776-1777. By order no. 1,280,698 of 12 September 1776, the empress informed the Gubernium about the appointment of the new rector of the Piarist centre, in the person of István Pállya,<sup>41</sup> and about its official inauguration, on 15 October 1776.

The Piarists obtained the nobiliary convent (*Convictus nobilium*) built in 1735,<sup>42</sup> the Szent József /St. Joseph convent (*Seminarium Bathorianum, Aporianum*,

<sup>34</sup> György Lajos, *Fejezetek Mártonfi József erdélyi püspök (1746-1815) életrajzából*, (red. Fejér Tamás) Budapest, METEM Könyvek, 68, 2009, p. 43; Fináczy Ernő, *Az újkori nevelés története*, Budapest, 1927, p. 325; Mészáros, *op. cit.*, p. 631.

<sup>35</sup> N. Dávid Ildikó, "A kolozsvári egyetem építészeti oktatása a XVIII. század végén," in *Művészet és felvilágosodás*, Budapest, 1978, p. 303; Remus Câmpeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>36</sup> Erdélyi Károly, "A kolozsvári róm.kath.főgymnasium története," in *A kegyes tanítórendiek vezetése alatt álló kolozsvári róm. kath. főgymnasium éresítője az 1897-8. tanévről*, Kolozsvár, 1898, p. 84.

<sup>37</sup> N. Dávid, *op.cit.*, p. 304.

<sup>38</sup> Jakó Zsigmond, "Négy évszázad a művelődés szolgálatában," in *Korunk*, 7-8, 1979, p. 550.

<sup>39</sup> *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, tom. I., *Constituirea României moderne (1821-1878)*, București, 2003, p. 340.

<sup>40</sup> Jakó Zsigmond, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> A copy of order no. 1280.698, of 12 September 1776, I found in the Archive of the Roman-Catholic Status in Transylvania, Fund: Piarist Order. VII/1.b., box 1, Document on properties 1749-1862.

<sup>42</sup> Today it lies on M. Kogălniceanu St. (and also extends on Universităţii St.).



*Seminarium Sancti Josephi Pauperum*),<sup>43</sup> built in 1724-1728,<sup>44</sup> the monastery with the Báthory coat-of-arms and the church of the Jesuit Order, built in 1718-1724 in Baroque style.

The school functioned in two buildings, one near the church (with two storeys, completed in 1752-56) and the other near the monastery (reconstructed in 1817-21).

The contract for supporting the 19 monks (*rector, regens*, four *subregens*, three *exhortator*, nine teachers for the academy and the gymnasium and one teacher of German) stipulated an annual payment of 1,900 forints for maintenance, 2,600 forints for clothing and other personal needs and 3,900 forints for modifications, restructuring and furniture.<sup>45</sup> Along with these buildings, the Piarist Order also gained the heritage inherited from the Jesuits: the library, the typography, the astronomical observatory and several offices and school laboratories, a paper mill and a printing press, which became the most important typography of the Catholics in Transylvania, and a pharmacy established in 1731-32, which supplied the inhabitants of the city with medicine.<sup>46</sup> The Piarists continued the tradition of the Jesuits, *Sodalitas Mariana* (Congregation of St. Mary), which was very popular among the youth through the regular meetings and activities it organized, offering the youth a framework of manifestation, granting scholarships to the less affluent students and organizing various activities, such as staging theatre performances or organizing various trips.

By order no. 2626. E. 30 of 16 February 1775, Empress Maria Theresa decided – in the spirit of the law *Ratio Educationis* – the enrichment of the library with books of theology, law and philosophy from the Jesuit funds.<sup>47</sup> Several years later, Rector István Pállya returned from Vienna with the promise of the annual enrichment of the library with the latest volumes. The library activity was regulated by order no. 815 of 13 August 1778, which provided for the organization of the library, and order no. 1199 of 2 December 1778, which stipulated that the librarian should be aided by two of the best students.<sup>48</sup> The library was taken over by the Piarist monks in 1776. It was equipped with about 6,000 books, collected with great care over the decades and kept intact at the request of Empress Maria Theresa, as it was supposed to serve as the University's library. Here were preserved the volumes sent by the founding prince, along with unique books, incunabula and manuscripts.

Their dating can be achieved easily on the basis of the notes in the books. The oldest book in the library is the book of the Polish Jesuit, the preacher at the court of the founding prince, Piotra Skarge, written in Polish, with the title *De vitis Sanctorum* (Wilnie, 1579), which was catalogued by the school in Cluj in 1580: *Inscriptus Catal.*

<sup>43</sup> Balanyi György, Biró Imre, Biró Vencel, Tomek Vince, *A magyar piarista rendtartomány története*, Budapest, 1943, p. 77.

<sup>44</sup> Today it lies on Universităţii St.

<sup>45</sup> Vass József, "Az erdélyi rom. katolikusok fő-tanintézete Kolosvárat," in *A kolosvári rom. kath. nyilvános teljes gymnasium évkönyve 1856-1857*. Kolosvár, 1857, p. 18.

<sup>46</sup> Varga Júlia, *A kolozsvári jezsuita gimnázium és akadémia hallgatósága 1641-1773 (1784)*, Budapest, 2007, p. 28.

<sup>47</sup> György Lajos, *A kolozsvári római katolikus Lyceum-könyvtár története (1579–1948)*, Budapest, 1994, p. 81.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 86.

*Collegii Claudiopol. Societatis Jesu. Anno 1580.*<sup>49</sup>

Another extremely valuable old book is and that of Guilhelmus Duranti, *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (Norinbergae, 1481), which was donated to the Jesuit College in 1595, by Ferenc Nagy of Zádori. On the first pages is found not only the text referring to the donation, but also how it was taken into ownership: *1595 Franciscus Nagii de Zador 13 die Maii donat Collegio Societatis Jesu. Collegii Soc. Jesu Claud. 1595.*<sup>50</sup>

Maria Theresa chose the Piarist Order for the school in Cluj because of their flexibility and the results they had achieved in the other centres of the empire.

In 1776, Empress Maria Theresa demanded that Bishop László Kollonitz should settle the situation of the Jesuits (after the Order was dismantled, they continued teaching), who had to leave, within three months, not just the college but also Cluj.<sup>51</sup> By presenting the merits of some Jesuit monks – as were, for example, the mathematician Miklós Benkő, the physicist Ferdinánd Hartmann or the polyglot József Mártonfi – the bishop had tried to postpone the inevitable, i.e. to adopt tough measures against those very valuable people, who had for years trained generations of young Transylvanian men.

The arrival of the Piarists was documented briefly in *Historia Domus* of the centre in Cluj<sup>52</sup> and by the parish priest from Cluj Mihály Benkő in the letter sent to the bishop on 17 October 1776. In this letter it is recounted that the initial intention was to have a sumptuous ceremony for receiving the Piarists, but this was done in more modest circumstances, before a much smaller crowd, because the population of Cluj sided with the Jesuits, thanks to their exceptional educational activity. Eventually, the reception of the Piarists was organized in modest conditions, in the middle of the summer, during the holiday period, when the students were away at home.<sup>53</sup>

The didactic activity of the Piarists in the centre from Cluj began on 20 November 1776.<sup>54</sup> Students studied in the two buildings of the school, which housed the library and the pharmacy, in the vicinity of the monastery and the church. Alongside the study of Latin language and literature, there were also introduced hard sciences, especially mathematics and natural sciences, but also history, geography, music, philosophy and technical drawing.

In the following decades, the Piarist centre became the most important centre of

<sup>49</sup> Jakó Klára, *Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár története és állományának rekonstrukciója 1579–1604*, Szeged, 1991, p. 122. (Today it is found in the Library of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, C. 55297)

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 88. (Today it is found in the Library of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Inc. C. 11)

<sup>51</sup> György Lajos, *Fejezetek Mártonfi József erdélyi püspök (1746-1815) életrajzából*, p. 62.

<sup>52</sup> *Historia Domus Claudiopolitanae (Historia Domus Clericorum Regularium Pauper M[at]re] Dei Scholarum Piarum Claudiopolitanus ab anno 1776 ingressus ordinis in hanc Civitatem)* in the Archive of the Roman-Catholic Status in Transylvania, Fund: Piarist Order. VII/1.a., box 3, *Historia Domus 1776-1841*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> György, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>54</sup> *Historia Domus Claudiopolitanae*, p. 3.

Catholic education in Transylvania. In comparison with the education promoted by the Jesuit monks, which focused on Latin language and literature and was characterized by a dogmatic mood, memorization and formalism, the education practised by the Piarist monks was more flexible, eclectic and modern, keeping up with the changes in the fields of humanities and sciences.

The Piarist Order continued its activity in the following centuries, offering Transylvania and European culture outstanding personalities, such as Cardinal Péter Pázmány, the historiographer Péter Apor, the writer Kelemen Mikes, and the historians Gheorghe Șincai and Petru Maior. The Piarists continued their activity at Cluj until the mid-20th century, when the communist power decided to ban the monastic orders and nationalize the school.

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**Figure no. 3.** Page with the text of the manuscript concerning the donation of Guilhelmus Duranti's book *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* to the library of the Piarist College, by Ferenc Nagy of Zádor, in 1595.



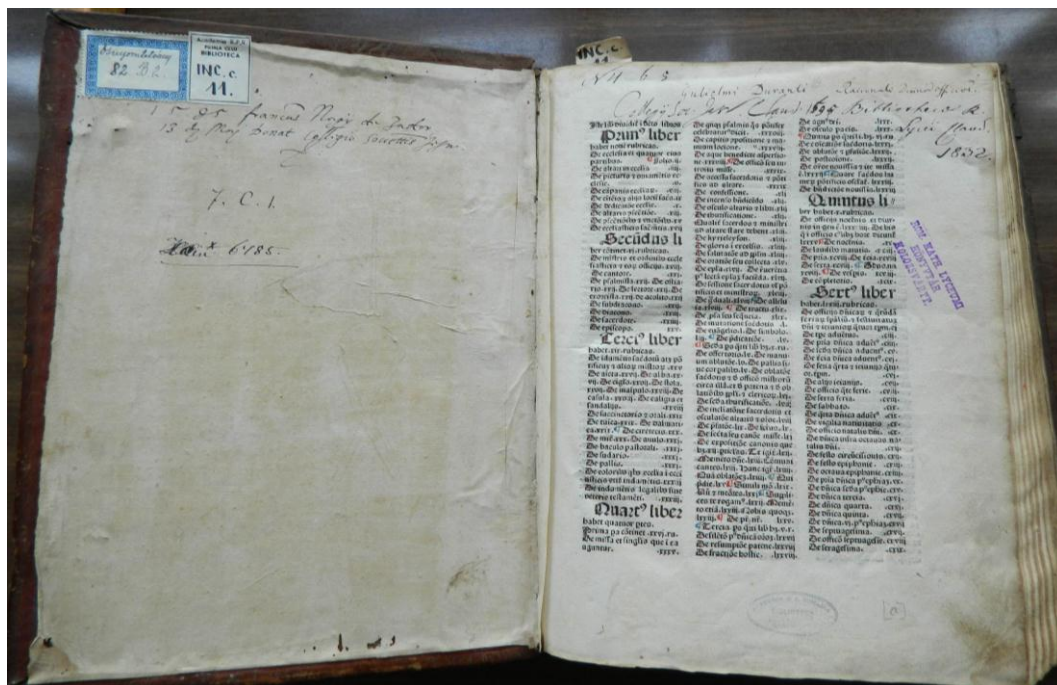


Figure no. 2.

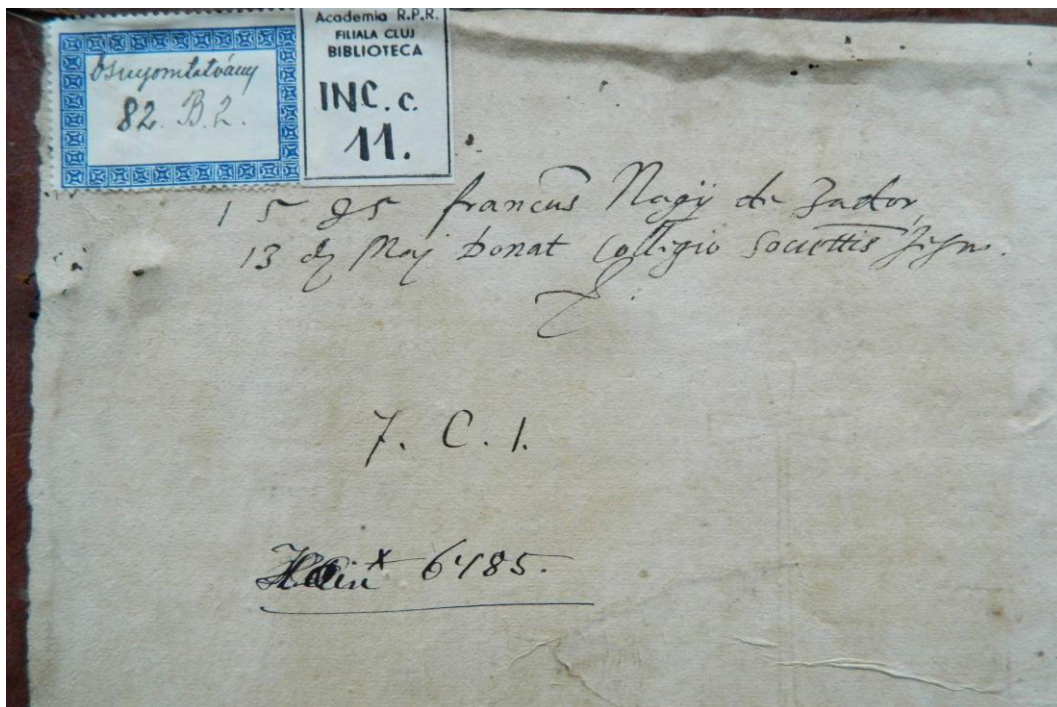


Figure no. 3.