
**LIBRARIES AND BOOK COLLECTIONS OF THE TEACHERS OF
BLAJ DURING THE ENLIGHTENMENT***

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Abstract: The purpose of the article is to present the book collections owned by the Transylvanian intellectuals of the eighteenth century in close connection with the cultural European trends of that time. Throughout the investigation, the author seeks to demonstrate a continuous interest of the Transylvanian scholars for the European values during the Enlightenment period. The analysis revolves around the book collections owned by the teachers in Blaj, since they played a crucial role in shaping the future Transylvanian intellectuals.

Keywords: Enlightenment, Transylvania, Blaj teachers, intellectuals, book collections

During the Enlightenment, printed books and the occupation of writing influenced several compartments and structures of intellectual Europe, and a genuine “industrial revolution” in points of dimension and depth of the processes was noticed at the level of society¹. Indeed, an overview of the dissemination of printed books in eighteenth-century Europe shows, amongst other things: the existence and functioning of networks for the distribution of European books, either printed or handwritten, especially by the activation of book fairs; a diversification of book fairs in various cultural or academic centers on the continent, with unsuspected consequences on communication amongst readers and the enriching of their spiritual horizon; a soaring number of libraries and book collections at private and institutional levels, owing to the social quality of printing; economic prosperity, emphasis on and diversification of the cultural preoccupations for the educated social categories, as a result of the trade with encyclopedic

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¹ Cf. Frédéric Barbier, *Lumières du Nord. Imprimeurs, libraires et “gens du livre” dans le Nord au XVIII^e siècle (1701-1789). Avec la collaboration de Sabine Juratic et de Michel Vangheluwe*, Genève, “Droz,” 2002. See also: Albert Labarre, *Histoire du livre*, Paris „PUF,” 1985; Michel Vernus, *Histoire du livre et de la lecture: de l’invention de l’imprimerie à nos jours*, Dijon, Éd. Biblesst, 1995; Roger Chartier, *L’Ordre des livres. Lecteurs, auteurs, bibliothèques en Europe entre le XIV^e et le XVIII^e siècle*, Aix-en-Provence, “Alinea,” 1992 ; idem, *Lecturi și cititori în Franța Vechiului Regim*. Translated from French by Maria Carpov, București, “Meridiane,” 1997, etc.