

# **Saint Anthony the Great - A Simple and Uneducated Monk?: Dismantling a Controversial Cliché**

**PhD Lecturer DANIEL LEMENI,  
University of Timișoara,  
daniel.lemeni@e-uvv.ro**

## **Abstract**

This paper explores the relationship between St. Antony the Great and his education as it appears in two essential texts: *Vita Antonii* and his *Epistles*. In this sense, we divided this paper into two sections: in the first part ("St. Antony the Great and the Antique Late Cultural Tradition") we will point out that Abba Antony was a wiser monk characterized by a wide knowledge. Briefly, etimologically, he was a "gnostikos". In the second, we will promote a new vision of the figure of St. Antony the Great. More exactly, in our opinion Abba Antony was a lettered monk, because Athanasius's image of St. Antony as "an unlettered monk" is false. As we know, Samuel Rubenson has argued that Antony was a literate and educated monk. Therefore, our major premise is that St. Antony the Great was a literate and a theologically educated ascetic.