

Academic sociability in the interwar period - the example of “Andrei Şaguna” maial festivity of Braşov settlers in Cluj¹

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Abstract: The following article is a dual-purpose research. On the one hand, it illustrates one of the ways in which the Romanian academic and intellectual elites became involved in the public life of the city of Cluj, and even of Transylvania, in the first half of the twentieth century: On the other hand, the present study highlights the way in which the networks of alumni and teachers contributed to the geographical and social transfer of a cultural holiday with multiple and long-lasting meanings.

The ‘Maial’ of the Braşov settlers in Cluj, which we will further analyze in detail, is a public event directly related to the educational world: Originally, the maial designates a country festivity or celebration in honor of spring, organized by students in middle school or high school. Of Austrian origin, the Maial ceremony spread in Transylvania during the 19th century, becoming very popular in the Romanian educational environment. The foundation of the Romanian University of Cluj in 1919, as well as the entry into the local academic body of a large number of graduates of the prestigious Andrei Şaguna High School in Braşov, led to the embrace and adoption of the Maial festivity at the university level as well, since 1927. With the help of prosopography and other methods of historical investigation, we are therefore documenting the place and role of different generations of alumni, educated at the schools in Braşov, in creating/ shaping the scientific and social identity of the Cluj Alma Mater.

Keywords: academics in public life; feast of the Maial; cultural transfers; alumni networks; Romanian University of Cluj after 1927

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In May 2021, on the blog of the Depozitul de artă gallery (which aims to “value established or unjustly marginalized artists of Romania during the 19th and 20th centuries, active in Transylvania even after 1918”)(Vădeanu, 2021)² an article was published which, starting from a painting by the Braşov lawyer Costi Sotir, displayed new data and especially many unique photos, regarding an important social event in interwar Cluj – The Maial of the Romanians of Braşov. Considered “the moral craftsman and tireless coordinator of the interwar Maials, between 1927-1939 (...), Costi Sotir, also called Nenea Costi” (Vădeanu, 2021), convincingly illustrates through his connections with the academic world of Cluj a certain type of social solidarity, based on a common educational path, prestigious and at the same time selective, which was validated, as we will see, at the age of professional maturity. Bearing remarkable documentary value, these images successfully conclude a series of researches that we undertook a decade ago, regarding the aforementioned custom, an example of the functioning and organization of the social relations of the Romanian Transylvanian elite from the first half of the 20th century. Such a network of alumni is commonplace in Western Europe, and the discovery of these typologies in Central and Eastern Europe can stimulate reflection on the synchronicities and gaps between modern and contemporary models of social organization in Europe.

The involvement of the elites (especially intellectual and academic ones) in the public life of cities and/ or villages therefore remains a topical issue, which deserves further research and can later contribute to the realization of a complete socio-cultural image of interwar Romania. The subject is all the more important when the research’s area of investigation concerns a province like Transylvania, long included in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and united with Romania only in December 1918, at the end of World War I. In the aforementioned region, the Romanian elites frantically built in the interwar period the important public institutions of their national identity - and which had been

² More regarding this topic to be found in Ina Vădeanu (2021), „Maialul braşovenilor la Cluj (1927-1939) și întemeietorul acestuia, av. dr. Costi Sotir”, available online at <https://depozituldearta.wordpress.com/2021/05/01/maialul-brasovenilor-la-cluj-1927-1939-si-intemeietorul-acestuia-av-dr-costi-sotir/>

previously denied to them by the imperial power. The University - namely the Romanian University founded in Cluj in 1919 - is such an institution. In that process, the Romanian community (and its political and intellectual elites, the "educational realm") sought to rely on existing community traditions, customs of folk origin that had prestige in the belief of Romanians.

The maial ritual, which we will analyze in detail below, is a public event directly related to the educational sphere, which has enjoyed a long tradition in Transylvania: Originally, the Maial designates a country holiday or party in honour of spring, organized by students in middle school or high school. As its name suggests, this event mainly takes place in May, when nature announces through flowers and leaves the season of its rebirth: spring. Of Austrian origin, the Maial ceremony spread in 19th century Transylvania, becoming very popular in the Romanian educational environment. Since the Romanians of imperial Transylvania did not have a university in their own language until the end of World War I, the secondary schools were the ones that consolidated the national feeling, forming the elites of the community and promoting its ideals.

The Maial festivity of "Andrei Şaguna" High School

One of the oldest maials was that of the students from the Orthodox (that is to say Romanian - since the Romanians made up the majority of the Orthodox population in Transylvania) High School in Braşov. The foundation of this confessional school of the Romanian community takes place in 1850, when the first 6 classes (four for boys and 2 for girls) of the Romanian Gymnasium start functioning. The foundation stone of the building specially designed to house the new institution was laid on September 17/29, 1851, in the presence of bishop Andrei Şaguna³ (Bârseanu, 1902, p. 45-82). Initially, the educational activity unfolded only at a limited level, namely in the so-called "small or lower gymnasium", with only 4 classes/ training steps. However, in 1862 the operating license for the upper cycle was obtained – i.e., the equivalent of today's high school. From then on, the courses were held

³ More about the context and stages of the establishment of the Romanian gymnasium to be found in Braşov in Andrei Bârseanu (1902), *Istoria şcolilor centrale române greco-ortodoxe din Braşov*, Braşov: Tipografia Ciurcu et comp, p. 45-82.

for a period of 8 years. The right to organize matriculation exams, namely the baccalaureate, was granted to the school of Braşov in 1866, when both the Transylvanian government authorities and Andrei Şaguna, who became the Metropolitan bishop of the province, approved the organization of the first exam for 8th grade high school graduates (Bârseanu, 1902, p. 147-157). Following the steps taken by the government of the Kingdom of Romania, in the autumn of 1869, a natural sciences middle school of three classes and a commercial school of three classes as well were established next to the Romanian gymnasium. These three institutions together formed The Romanian Greek Orthodox Central Schools in Braşov (Bârseanu, 1902, p. 185-189). At the beginning of the 20th century, shortly after the unification of Transylvania with Romania, the Braşov central schools received the official title of Romanian high school, and since 1922 they took the name of Andrei Şaguna, in memory of the hierarch who played a decisive role in their foundation.

The celebration of the Braşov maial has a tradition almost as long as that of the Romanian gymnasium in the city, being introduced at the initiative of archpriest Ioan Popazu since 1853-1854, becoming in time a ceremony with strict rules, dedicated to graduates (Negulescu, 2008). The testimony of one of the most famous students of the Brasov gymnasium, from the 1895 promotion, Sextil Puşcariu (philologist, professor at the Romanian University of Cluj, in the interwar period - and prestigious personality of Romanian culture) brings important clarifications related to the role and place of the maial in the life of the schoolchildren of Braşov:

while the name 'gymnasium' given to the high school with eight grades, according to the German model, was a kind of degradation, that of 'student' given to 'middle schoolers' and 'merchants' of the four - to commercial three - last classes, was a promotion, for in fact this appointment was suited only to academics. The students formed a «coetus», that is, an organization with habits preserved by use, which we held dear and which were also imitated according to those in force at German universities, with small local adaptations. Only the 'prefect' of the eighth grade and the 'subprefect' of the third commercial class were officially appointed by the principal on the occasion of the festive opening of the school year (in St. Sophia). Being a prefect was the highest honor a student could receive, for that was the official

recognition of a 'primus inter pares'. (...) There were two student festivities each year, 'Poiana' and 'Maialul'. (...) Before the 'exitus', that is, the celebration through which the 'maturing students' said goodbye to student life, was the trip to Stejeriș, called 'Maial', although it was held mainly in April or June, when the weather in Brașov was more stable than in May. This party was more solemn than the autumn one, but precisely because of this, it was also less intimate. (...) The 'Maial' ritual was about the same as the 'Poiana', but the schedule was busier. The wine barrels were received with more solemnity; when the principal's arrival was announced, a delegation of students came forward, led by the prefect, holding a 'logos' and inviting him to participate in the order. The principal responded and promised to join the students later. Between the two orders, the people moved to dancing, gliding hard on the arena with the grass torn after the first performances of 'învârtita'. (...) The «Clou» were the 'căluș' and the 'bătuta', performed by students in national costume.

(Pușcariu, 1977, p. 302-306).

The importance of the maial celebrated by the students from "Andrei Șaguna" High School increased with the passage of time, turning into a distinctive ritual of the educational environment of Brașov, still taking place in the present day. In its long existence, however, the maial from Brașov has known several stages of development which have influenced the public life of other Transylvanian communities. As it will further be seen, the festivity was "exported" to Cluj, in the new Romanian university environment created in the 1920s, and transformed into a celebration for the Romanian students there.

The Maial of the Brașov residents in Cluj – the "migration" of a cultural celebration

The interwar period represents the time interval in which the maial of the students from "Andrei Șaguna" High School became, more strongly than before, an element of recognition of the former graduates from the Romanian gymnasium from Brașov. After the Union of Transylvania with Romania (1918), the graduates spread in different parts of the province and joined, in the vast majority of cases, the local elite, benefited from the favourable conditions to exert their influence in

the forefront of public life, both in economic fields as well as in the cultural-artistic ones. Their efforts have fully contributed to the process of Romanianization of this newly united province with the country, changing the balance of power at the top of the social pyramid in various Transylvanian settlements.

Cluj was one of the cities that attracted a large number of Braşov intellectuals after 1919, especially due to the fact that, by establishing the Romanian University, the city assumed the role of cultural capital of Transylvania. The example of Sextil Puşcariu, who played a decisive role in the establishment of the University of Cluj, even becoming its first rector, is edifying, especially since he was not long in being followed by many other “Andrei Şaguna” High School graduates, who held positions of great responsibility in the city.

The change of the demographic structure of Cluj in favor of the Romanian population is also proven by the statistical data, as well as by the prosopographic studies which we carried out, especially for this study, on the population of “Andrei Şaguna” High School graduates established in Cluj. Thus, if in 1920, Cluj had a total population of 85,509 people, of which 29,644 were Romanians, 42,168 were Hungarians, and 10,638 were Jews, in 1930 the city registered a total of 103,840 inhabitants, of which 37,029 were of Romanian nationality, 48,271 of Hungarian nationality, and 13,094 were of Jewish ethnicity (Varga, 1998-2002)⁴.

The increase of the number of Romanians in Cluj during the first interwar decade was also due to the contribution of the aforementioned graduates from Braşov, who constituted one of the most important “colonies” in the city.

Thus, out of the total of the 868 students who graduated from the “Andrei Şaguna” High School between 1900-1925 (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1925, p. VII), we managed to reconstruct the fact that a number of 76 people had settled in Cluj by 1925, i.e. a percentage of 8.76%. Of these 76 former graduates of the Romanian high school in Braşov, 15 worked at the University of Cluj, namely: Onisifor Ghibu, Gheorghe Giuglea, Victor Stanciu, Emil Ţeposu,

⁴ For the year 1930, we used the data that recorded the nationality, and not the mother tongue of the inhabitants of Cluj, since between the two types of statistical records there are small differences.

Ioan Goia, Nicolae Popoliță, Emil Pop, Valeriu Bologa, Alexandru Lupan, Iosif Pușcariu, Gheorghe Sglimbea, Valeriu Pușcariu, Sabin Manuilă and Teofil Dragomir held various positions in the academic hierarchy, from preparatory to full professor, and Ioan Enescu was employed as a librarian at the Italian Language University Seminar. At the same time, we must mention the fact that in 1925, 40 young people from the Brașov promotions between 1900-1925 were students and doctoral students in Cluj at the University of Cluj; at the Academy of Higher Commercial and Industrial Studies; at the Academy of Higher Agronomic Studies or in technical higher education (*Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Șaguna”...*, 1925, p. CXXXI-CXLIII).

For a more accurate look, the distribution by generations of the aforementioned graduates from the period 1900-1925 who settled in Cluj can be traced in the table below⁵:

No.	Graduation Year from “Andrei Șaguna” High School	Name of the graduate	Position / Profession exercised in Cluj in 1925
1	1900-1901	Aurel Savu	Lawyer
2	1901-1902	Onisigor Ghibu	University Professor
3		Constantin Martinovici	Forestry Engineer
4	1902-1903	Gheorghe Giuglea	University Professor
5	1903-1904	Victor Stanciu	University Professor
6	1905-1906	Ioan Motoc	Lawyer
7	1907-1908	Eugen Iosif Goga	Editor (Journalist) at <i>Țara Noastră</i>
8		Valeriu Pușcariu	Assistant at the Institute of Speleology

⁵. The data from the yearbook of “Andrei Șaguna” High School were verified and completed with those from the yearbook of the University of Cluj from the interwar period, especially the ones referring to 1920-1925, but also other data from the press of the time. We must mention that the number of “Andrei Șaguna” High School graduates established in Cluj from the 1900-1925 promotions could be even higher than the one identified so far, but not all of the entries offer details about the career followed after graduation.

No.	Graduation Year from "Andrei Şaguna" High School	Name of the graduate	Position / Profession exercised in Cluj in 1925
9	1908-1909	Sebastian Bornemissa	Editor (Journalist)
10		Emil Colbazi	Doctor
11		Iosif Puşcariu	Doctor, Lecturer at the Ophthalmology clinic between 1922-1924
12		Victor Stănilă	Doctor
13		Alexandra Țândărău	Director of the Cultural House
14		Emil Țeposu	Doctor, Assistant Professor at the Surgical Clinic
15	1909-1910	Gheorge Mureşanu* (his name is spelled Murăşanu in the "Andrei Şaguna" High School yearbook)	?
16	1910 – 1911	Valeriu Bologa	Doctor, Assistant Professor at the Institute of the History of Medicine
17		Ioan Goia	Doctor, Associate Professor
18		Iosif Indrieş	Artist, Cluj Opera
19		Eugen Savu	Lawyer
20	1911-1912	Ioan Clopoşel	Journalist at <i>Societatea de Măine</i>
21		Nicolae Popoliţă	Doctor, Assistant Professor the ENT Clinic
22		Gheorghe Popoviciu	Doctor
23		Sabin Manuilă* (his name is misspelt in the Şaguna Annuary as Mămulă!)	Lecturer, the Institute of Hygiene and Social Hygiene

No.	Graduation Year from "Andrei Şaguna" High School	Name of the graduate	Position / Profession exercised in Cluj in 1925
24		Romul (Vespasian) Bălosu	PhD Student
25		Cornel Reca	?
26		Eugeniu Dobrotă	?
27	1912-1913	Gheorghe Sglimbea	Doctor, Assistant Professor at the Dermatological Clinic
28	1913-1914	Ioan Gherghel	Teacher
29	1914-1915	Florian Cocian	Candidate for Lawyer
30		Teofil Dragomir	Doctor, Assistant Professor at the Neurological Clinic
31		Alexandru Lupan	Doctor, Assistant Professor at the Pasteur Institute in 1922-1923 and univ. preparatory at the gynecological clinic in 1923-1924
32		Emil Pop	Assistant Professor at the Botanical Institute
33		Emil Popovici	-----
34		Aurel Voina	Doctor
35		Florin Voina	-----
36	1917-1918	Nicolae Dancu	PhD Student in Law
37		Eugen Herţea	PhD Candidate in Law
38		Mihail Iacob	Law student
39	1918-1919	Gheorghe Bănuţiu	Teacher, Cluj National Theater
40	1919-1920	Fabiu Bercan	PhD Student in Law
41		Ioan Enescu	Librarian, Italian Language Seminar

No.	Graduation Year from "Andrei Şaguna" High School	Name of the graduate	Position / Profession exercised in Cluj in 1925
42		Octavian Nicola	Graduate, Commercial Academy
43		Vasile Nicolescu	PhD Student in Medicine
44		Ioan Runceanu	PhD Student in Medicine
45	1920-1921	Alexe Nan	Pharmacy Student
46		Ioan Tanislau	Chemistry Student
47		Aurel Vaida	Medical Student
48		Eleonora Baiu	Pharmacy Student
49		Ecaterina Tanasache	Philology Student
50	1921-1922	Ioan Bădiţoiu	Student at the Commercial Academy and the Faculty of Law
51		Ioan Ban	Philology Student
52		Nicolae Macrea	Science Student
53		Aurel Nistor	Student at the Commercial Academy
54		Ştefan Popa	Law Student
55		Cornelia Oana	Philology Student
56		Elena Coleşiu	Pharmacy Student
57		Dumitru Căprioară	Medical Student
58	1922-1923	Nicolae Râmboiu	Student at the Commercial Academy
59		Gheorghe Russu	Law Student
60		Dumitru Ursianu	Law Student
61		Virgil Voicu	Law Student
62		Ioan Ducariu	Technical School Student
63		Iosif Mailat	Student at the Commercial Academy
64		Melania Runceanu	Philology Student
65		Steliana Comşia	Philology Student

No.	Graduation Year from "Andrei Şaguna" High School	Name of the graduate	Position / Profession exercised in Cluj in 1925
66		Viorica Marcu	Philology Student
67	1923-1924	Octavian Boş	Law Student
68		Ioan Haller	Law Student
69		Emil Popoviciu	Law Student
70		Virgil Popianos	Law Student
71		Gheorghe Puiu	Medical Student
72		Cornel Runcean	Law Student
73		Ionel Stănescu	Philology Student
74		Dumitru Pascu	Medical Student
75		Victor Taus	Law Student
76		Vasile Velican	Agronomy Student

There were also many graduates of the respective high school from the generations before 1900 who had settled in Cluj, but in their cases the prosopographic identification is more difficult, considering our sources. Among those we managed to find in Cluj, after the Union of Transylvania with Romania, figure: Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică - from the 1885 promotion -, Gheorghe Iuga - from the 1889 promotion, Valeriu Moldovan - from the 1894 promotion, Sextil Puşcariu - from the 1895 promotion -, Marius Sturza - from the 1895 promotion -, Iosif Popovici - from the 1896 promotion -, Ioan Minea - from the 1897 promotion -, Ioan Lupaş - from the 1900 promotion (Bârseanu, 1902, p. 564-577) (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1925, p. 5-164). All of them were professors at the University of Cluj, thus increasing the ranks of intellectuals from Braşov who contributed to the construction of an academic institution essential for the Romanian culture of the province. Special mention should be made of Dr. Constantin Sotir, a graduate of “Andrei Şaguna” High School in 1888, who then proceeded to study law at the University of Budapest, up to a doctoral level (Bârseanu, 1902, p. 571), and which we later find in Cluj, actively involved in all cultural activities carried out by the people of Braşov.

The second large category of Romanians from Braşov settled in Cluj consists of former members of the teaching staff of the “Andrei Şaguna” High School who, after 1918, moved to the capital of the new Romanian province, attracted by the new public institutions founded here by the Romanian state since 1919. We find them either in higher education institutions or in various Romanian high schools. In this regard we count the following: Nicolae Bogdan – who became teacher and director at the “Regina Maria” Girls’ High School, Aurel Ciortea - who was the first rector of the Academy of Advanced Commercial and Industrial Studies in Cluj, Constantin Lacea – German language teacher also at the Academy of Advanced Commercial and Industrial Studies and rector of this institution since 1936, Gheorghe Dima - organizer and director of the Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Art in Cluj, which bears his name today (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1925, p. XCVI-CXVIII).

We must emphasize the fact that throughout the interwar period the number of Braşov residents settled in Cluj increased constantly, from year to year, according to our estimation, reaching a number of about 250-300 people.

The first attempts of manifestation on the Cluj public stage of this important community of “Andrei Şaguna” High School graduates were also related to an event in the life of the Romanian Orthodox High School in Braşov, namely the 75th anniversary of the school’s existence. With this occasion, the Cluj culture magazine „Societatea de mâine” published in its issue of June 21, 1925, a call for some of the 1912 graduates from that very high school, who were at that time in the city of the university. The authors – namely Ion Clopoşel, Dr. Gheorghe Popovici, Dr. Sabin Manuilă, Dr. Nicolae Popoliţă, Dr. Eugeniu Dobrotă, Cornel Reca, drd. Vespasian Bălosu, asked their promotion colleagues “to try their best to participate in the jubilee celebrations from June 25-29, occurring with that occasion and a consultation of ours concerning public duties (s. n.- A.- M. Stan)” (Societatea de mâine, 1925, p. 428).

Indeed, the festivities on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the existence of the Romanian Orthodox “Andrei Şaguna” High School, held between June 27 and 29, 1925, were particularly lavish, exceeding the strict borders of Braşov and turning into a cultural event for the whole of Transylvania, reflecting the importance of the Romanian community of the province, in many aspects. The local and central press

widely depicted the conduct of the ceremonies in its articles, emphasizing the value of the school activity of the institution of Braşov (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1929, p. 66-91). The celebrations were also a good occasion to remember the contribution of the High School graduates to the development of Romanian elites of the province, but also of the Old Kingdom, through the voice of Professor Ioan Lupaş, who made a first list of former High School students who had managed to “lay a foundation stone or a few grains of sand in the different areas of our culture...” (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1925, p. 95-96). On the same occasion, their essential contribution in the founding of the University of Cluj and, implicitly, the intellectual strength of the Braşov community that had settled in Cluj were highlighted: “The Romanian University of Upper Dacia was not built in Braşov, but two former professors of this school, Mr. Goldiş and Mr. Branişte, were the ones who took care of its creation in Cluj, immediately after entering the ancestral heritage, and two High School students from Braşov, Ghibu and [Puşcariu] were given the opportunity to establish and organize it” (Anuarul Liceului ortodox român „Andrei Şaguna”..., 1925, p. 26).

In a short time, the impact of the 1925 holiday led to the establishment of a society of the people of Brasov in Cluj, who reproduced in the city on the Someş the traditions of the academic life from the “alma mater” from which they stemmed. Benefiting from higher education, they thus contributed to the approximation of the traditions of the Romanian community in Braşov by the (academic) elites of Cluj, the capital of the province, the university-city, the center of the new Romanian administration in Transylvania.

Thus, it was decided that “once a year, the Maial should be celebrated, thus awakening the memories of youth” (Realitatea ilustrată, 1927, p. 1). The first ceremony of the Maial (organized by the people of Brasov settled in Cluj) took place on May 8, 1927, and those who hosted the party were Professor Sextil Puşcariu, General Dănilă Pap and the mayor of Cluj at that time, Vasile Osvadă (Realitatea ilustrată, 1927, p. 1): The Romanian university, army and administration thus symbolically joined hands to assert the national identity of the Transylvanian world. The date was not chosen by chance, because on the same occasion the 75th anniversary of the composition of the Romanian dance “Romana” was celebrated. Gathered in the forest of Hoia, which will become the

traditional meeting place for the Maial of the Braşov citizens settled in Cluj, the participants danced lively until the evening. Along with Sextil Puşcariu, elected prefect of the inaugural Maial in 1927, the presence of Dr. Costi Sotir was noted, who guided the 12 couples who adventured to perform the dance “Romana”, and organized the other artistic moments of the day (Gherghel, 1933, p. 80-81). Costi Sotir remained the “master of ceremonies” of the maials from Cluj for a long time, as an enthusiastic teacher of Romanian dances, especially from the area of Braşov. Among the organizers of the first maial of the people of Braşov settled in Cluj we must mention Gheorghe Mureşanu - promotion 1910 - who, in his capacity as cashier of the society of the people of Brasov in Cluj, financially supervised the organization of the festivity. More importantly, Gh. Mureşanu came up with the initiative of “compiling the first list of former students from the Central Schools in Braşov in Cluj” (Gherghel, 1933, p. 80-81), an initiative which we do not know if it was successfully carried out.

The maial of the Braşov people settled in Cluj continued in the following years, imposing itself as a local tradition and bringing in the public life an atmosphere of social and national cohesion, characteristic of the education received at “Andrei Şaguna” High School. The atmosphere in which the maials from Cluj took place during the interwar years is particularly well captured by Sextil Puşcariu:

Three decades after my last maial as a student in Braşov, I started the series of maials in Cluj. For the people of Braşov moved in large numbers to the capital of Transylvania, when the new Romanian life brought by the Union demanded that all the cities of Transylvania be harnessed to the cart that took us stormily to a new and proud country. (...). Then the people from Braşov settled in Cluj remembered their old maials. Buying hats and canes, asking the ladies to sew their ‘ribbons’ and cockades, choosing their prefect, sub-prefect, cantor loci, fux-maior, barrelmaker; the eternally young Costi Sotir, in fact belonging to the 1888 promotion!, arranger and initiator in the subtleties of ‘Romana’, publishing an occasional newspaper with memories from the gymnasium, entitled ‘Gaudeamus Sigismund’, wandering the streets of Cluj in a compact group the night before and singing student songs, with music in the lead, like in the old time, the people of Braşov felt young again. “There is no better life than that of the student” in front of the Universităţii and “Gaudeamus igitur’ at the She-wolf in the square, and the departure

following the flag, the fux-maior gathering in the park his fuchsias – university students -, the welcoming of the barrel, the salute of the former professors and the ‘hora trocărească’, ‘Romana’ in traditional costume and ‘călușarul’ and ‘bătuta’ – none of the moments of the old program were forgotten.

(Pușcariu, 1977, p. 307)

As expected, the maial came to include not only the former graduates of the Brașov highschool, but also opened up to the intellectuals from Cluj and to all the other Brașov residents settled in the city, as well as to the students from the local high schools and secondary schools. The custom was established that before going up to the Hoia forest, the group of those who were celebrating the maial should be photographed in the center of Cluj, or in the Union Square, as is the case with the maial from June 5, 1933 (Gazeta ilustrată, 1933, p. 114), or even in front of the statue of the Capitoline Wolf, a symbol of Latinity.

The 1936 edition of the Brașov maial from Cluj was a special one, because it marked ten years since this public cultural celebration was successfully inaugurated in the city. Thus, on May 2, 1936, the society of the people of Brașov from Cluj gathered in a special meeting to establish the program of the tenth maial. The organizers – among which we shall mention univ. Prof. Marius Sturza, univ. Prof. Valeriu Bologna, Ștefan Peneș, Augustin Bena, Gheorghe Mureșan, engineer inspector Zeicu, Dr. V. Gligore, Ioan Ghergel, Ștefan Suci, Grigore Vlădăreanu, Cornel Runceanu, Nicolae Râmboiu, assistant Tanislau etc. – decided that the celebrations should last for two days, namely May 16 and 17, 1936. In order to increase the splendor of the ceremonies, invitations to participate in the Cluj maial were sent both to the “Andrei Șaguna” High School from Brașov, and to the organizations of the people of Brașov settled in Târgu-Mureș, Oradea, Sibiu, Timișoara. Aceștora aveau să li se alătore elevii tuturor școlilor secundare din Cluj. They would be joined by students from all secondary schools in Cluj. It was also decided that the jubilee be “filmed by the Fotofilm Cluj house, the film becoming the property of the Brașov Society, which is to finance it” (Națiunea română, 1936). What was originally a local celebration of a community “ignored” by the imperial power, was now consecrated as a celebration comprising Romanians from the entire province of Transylvania.

In the same assembly of May 2, 1936, the election of those who would fulfill the most important roles in the maial ceremony was made, resulting in: prefect - Sextil Pușcariu (replaced when needed by prof. Marius Sturza), subprefect - Ștefan Peneș, chief arranger - dr. Costi Sotir, high school senior engineer - fuchsmajor - Gheorghe Mureșanu, territorial commander: Colonel Stoica, loci cantor I - eng. Manase D, loci cantor II - Augustin Bena, in charge of barrels I - eng. Alexandru Chițu, in charge of barrels II - Corneliu Runceanu. In addition, Professor Augustin Bena, the rector of the Cluj Academy of Music, compiled and published in a pamphlet the most beautiful student songs of the maial, and Valeriu Bologa undertook publishing the maial's magazine, which would include "interesting articles concerning the student life in Brașov, then jokes and funny little stories, as well as photos from previous maials" (Națiunea română, 1936).

Of course, following such careful planning, the jubilee turned out to be a success. The ceremonies began on the evening of May 16, 1936, when a delegation from Brașov laid a wreath at the graves of former teachers of "Andrei Șaguna" High School, Pandele Dima and Gheorghe Dima, located in the Central Cemetery in Cluj. Then, there was a "retreat" on the main streets of the city in the sound of military music, in the company of a delegation from the schools of Brașov, led by principal Ioan Moșoiu. The next day, on May 17, "a huge convoy was formed, led by secondary school students" from Cluj, with whom the guests from the "Șaguna" high school lined up, as well as representatives of the people from Brașov settled in Târgu- Mureș, led by professor N. Sulică (in his turn he was a graduate and teacher of the Brașov high school, who had left the city after 1919). They all went to the forest of Hoia, where all the stages of the maial took place: "the national dances, both the ones performed by the students of the different secondary schools, and the ones performed by the people of Brașov were extremely beautiful. The other points in the program, such as the famous 'baptism of the foxes and the little foxes', caused a great deal of laughter. The 'order' was excellently organized, did not last long, and unfolded in perfect discipline. The two leaders, professors Sextil Pușcariu and V. Bologa (= Mocu) conducted the 'order' with skill and verve." (Gherghel, 1936, p. 81).

As previously mentioned, a part of the convoy, more precisely the one formed by the "column of the people of Brașov, was filmed, together with several other scenes from Stejeriș (Romana, the baptism of the foxes,

the order)” (Gherghel, 1936, p. 81). The documentary directed by Ștefan Miezkowski and Fekete Laszlo later played in the cinemas in Cluj, demonstrating both the importance of the festival in the cultural life of Cluj, as well as the scale and local popularity of this event.

The festivity continued to be organized until the outbreak of World War II, when the new socio-political conditions put an end to a tradition that had become an integral part of the public scene of the city on the Someș. At the time of its interruption, the feast of the Cluj maial had already come to be recognized and recorded echoes up to the level of the central press in Bucharest. Since 1937, detailed reports of this event have been published in the newspaper “Timpul”. The articles highlighted in particular the artistic and cultural value of the “Romana” dance, an indispensable component of the ceremony (Gherghel, 1937, p. 76).

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