

THE CHANGES OF THE CIVIC COATS OF ARMS ON THE TERRITORY OF SZEKLERLAND AFTER THE UNION OF TRANSYLVANIA AND ROMANIA¹

SZEKERES ATTILA ISTVÁN²

MODIFICĂRI ADUSE STEMELOR ADMINISTRATIVE DE PE TERITORIUL ȚINUTULUI SECUIESC DUPĂ UNIREA TRANSILVANIEI CU ROMÂNIA³

REZUMAT

După Primul Război Mondial și Tratatul de Pace de la Paris, Basarabia, Bucovina de Nord, Transilvania, Țara Crișurilor, partea de sud a Maramureșului și în parte Banatul s-au unit cu România, formând – colocvial – România Mare. Pentru a arăta noile schimbări și pe plan heraldic, în anul 1921 s-a modificat stema țării. Articolul III al Legii pentru fixarea stemei Regatului României, întregit cu țările surori unite (L. nr. 3573 din 23 iulie 1921) prevedea înființarea pe lângă ministrul de interne a unei „comisiuni consultative heraldice” pentru alcătuirea stemelor unităților administrativ-teritoriale. Stemele tuturor județelor au fost fixate în anul 1928 prin decret.

În urma unificării administrative a țării din 1925, pe teritoriul Ținutului Secuiesc fostele comitate Ciuc, Odorhei și Trei-Scaune și-au păstrat teritoriul și denumirea, din comitatul Mureș-Turda, care îngloba fostul scaun secuiesc Mureș, s-a format județul Mureș, iar din comitatul Turda-Arieș, care avea în componență fostul scaun secuiesc Arieș, s-a format județul Turda. Dintre stemele județelor doar stema celor Trei Scaune a rămas neschimbată, celelalte suferind modificări, unele chiar drastice. Totodată au fost modificate și stemele orașelor, acte care au devenit oficiale în perioada 1930-1936, majoritatea în anul 1934.

Cuvinte cheie: stemă, Ținutul Secuiesc, Transilvania, România, Trei-Scaune, Ciuc, Odorhei, Mureș, Turda, Arieș.

A SZÉKELYFÖLDI KÖZIGAZGATÁSI CÍMEREK MÓDOSÍTÁSA ERDÉLYNEK ROMÁNIÁVAL VALÓ EGYESÜLÉSÉT KÖVETŐEN⁴

¹ Conference presentation at the 4th IHW Conference on Heraldry and Vexillology, organized by the Polish Heraldic and Vexillological Institut in Cieszyn, September 6-8, 2018.

² Heraldist, PhD in history, associated member of the International Academy of Heraldry, president of the Transylvanian Heraldic and Vexillological Association – Sfântu Gheorghe; e-mail: attila@szekeres.ro; <https://www.szekeres.ro>.

³ Varianta în limba română a comunicării a fost prezentată cu ocazia celui de-al 18-lea Congres Național de Genealogie și Heraldică organizat de către Institutul Român de Genealogie și Heraldică „Sever Zotta” la Iași în perioada 10-12 mai 2018.

⁴ A magyar változat bemutatott az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület sepsiszentgyörgyi fiókszervezete által a Magyar Tudomány Napja Erdélyben 17. fóruma keretében Határtalan tudomány – Tudomány határok nélkül címmel szervezett konferencián, Sepsiszentgyörgyön 2018. november 8-án.

ÖSSZEFOGLALÓ

Az első világháborút és az azt lezáró Párizs környéki békeszerződéseket követően az Erdéllyel, a Bánság egy részével, a Körös-vidékkel, a történelmi Máramaros déli részével, Észak-Bukovinával és Besszarábiával kibővült Román Királyság, a köznyelvben ún. Nagyrománia jelképeiben is jelezni kívánta a változást. Elsőként az ország címerét bővítették. Az impériumváltáskor az Erdély dél-keleti részén elterülő Székelyföld területén az 1925-ös közigazgatási szabályozás során a vármegyék megyévé változtak, kisebb területi módosítással. Megmaradt Háromszék, Csík és Udvarhely neve (Trei Scaune, Ciuc, illetve Odorhei), Maros-Tordából egyszerűen Maros (Mureș), Torda-Aranyosból Torda (Turda) lett.

A Román Királyság összes, szám szerint 71 megyéjének címerét 1928-ban fogadták el. A megyeszékhelyek címerét nagyrészt 1930-32 között, más városokét 1936-ig, zömmel 1934-ben fogadták el királyi rendelettel. A jelképeket a Heraldikai Konzultatív Bizottság állította össze. Elvként határozták meg, hogy a Kárpátokon túli részeken kiiktatták a „magyar történelmi hagyományokra vonatkozó elemeket, helyettük másokat, a román nép múltjából ihletetteket illesztettek be”. Mindenhonnan eltüntették a vörös-ezüst sávozást, mely Magyarország címerében szerepel. Viszont Háromszék megye címerét teljességében megőrizték.

Kulcsszavak: címer, Székelyföld, Erdély, Románia, Háromszék, Csík, Udvarhely, Maros, Torda, Aranyos.

After the World War I, the Kingdom of Romania or Greater Romania in the common language, extended to include Transylvania, part of Banat, the Criș region, the southern part of the historical Maramureș, Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, intended to indicate the change in its symbols as well.

The country coat of arms

First the country coat of arms was augmented. King Ferdinand I of Romania appointed a coat of arms committee to draw the new symbol. The members of the committee either did not reach a common agreement or the monarch did not like the result; the composition of the committee was changed. However, no solution was obtained in this way either. Finally, on the proposal of art historian, country museum inspector general Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaș⁵, with the approval of Minister of the Interior Constantin Argetoianu⁶, the king had heraldist József Sebestyén Keöpeczi⁷ appointed to create the new coat of arms⁸. The coat of arms of the country was adopted in three versions: greater, middle and small coat of arms. The law unanimously adopted by the Senate⁹ and the House of Representatives¹⁰, promulgated by the king,

⁵ 1872-1952.

⁶ 1871-1952.

⁷ 1878-1964. See: Szekeres Attila István, *Keöpeczi Sebestyén József, a címerművész [József Sebestyén Keöpeczi, the heraldic artist]*, Tortoma, Barót, 2014.

⁸ Al. Tzigara-Samurcaș, *Memorii III (1919-1930). Lupta vieții unui octogenar [Memories III (1919-1930). The Life Struggle of an Octogenarian]*, București, Editura Meridiane, 2003, p. 92-93.

⁹ On 18 July 1921.

¹⁰ On 20 July 1921.

was published in the *Official Gazette* on 29 July 1921¹¹. On the same day, the heraldic drawing of the greater coat of arms, with the signature of its author, J. Sebestyén de Keöpecz, appeared on the front page of the daily paper entitled *Universul*¹². The heraldic drawings of all the three versions appeared in the *Official Gazette*, however, without signature. The heraldic drawing of the greater coat of arms, with the author's signature, was also presented in the December issue of the journal entitled *Ilustrația*¹³.

The first clause of the law adopting the country coat of arms describes the symbol¹⁴: the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Romania, complemented with the unified sister countries, consists of three superimposed escutcheons.

The great escutcheon: in field Azure, a crowned eagle displayed Or and membered Gules holding in its beak a cross pattée Or with a sharp point at the lower limb, holding in its dexter talon a sword and in its sinister talon a sceptre Or ending in lily – the heraldic eagle of Romania, the symbol of the Romanian kingdom.

On the breast of the eagle there is an escutcheon quarterly, with the symbols of the unified sister countries:

In dexter chief the coat of arms of the principality of the old Wallachia: in field Azure, an eagle Or and membered Gules, holding a cross in its beak, flanked by a sun Or in dexter chief and an crescent of the last Or in sinister chief.

In sinister chief the coat of arms of the old principality of Moldavia (including Bessarabia and Bukovina): in field Gules an aurochs head Sable with a five-pointed star Or between the horns, a five-petalled rose Or on the dexter and a decrescent Or on the sinister¹⁵.

In dexter base the coat of arms of the Banat including the old Romanian Banate of Severin: in field Gules an ashlar bridge on two arches Or (Traian's bridge) issuant from water, thereon a lion rampant Or.

In sinister base the coat of arms of the Grand Principality of Transylvania (including the Criș region and parts of Maramureș): party per fess with a fillet Gules in the middle, an Or beaked eagle Sable issuant from the fess, in field Azure, with a sun Or on the dexter and a decrescent Argent on the sinister. In the base of the quarter, in field Or, seven towers Gules (four and three) with double gables, two windows and gates shut.

Dobruja's coat of arms entrée en point: in field Azure two dolphins urinant respectant Or.

The inescutcheon quartered Argent and Sable is the coat of arms of the ruling Hohenzollern dynasty.

The Romanian steel crown is displayed atop the great escutcheon.

¹¹ Law no. 3.578 dated 23 June 1921: *Lege pentru fixarea stemei României, întregit cu țările surori unite* (Law on the establishment of the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Romania complemented with the unified sister countries), published in the *Official Gazette* (hereinafter: OG) no. 92 issued on 29 July 1921, 3.569-3.573.

¹² *Universul*, XXXIX, no. 169/29 July 1921, front page.

¹³ *Ilustrația – Revistă ilustrată enciclopedică*, vol. X, II, no. 9, December 1921, p. 2.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ There is an aurochs head figuring in the description, but a bison appears in the drawing. Moldavia's traditional heraldic beast is the aurochs, but after the animal became extinct, according to Polish sources, it was referred to as a bison's head.

The supporters of the escutcheon are two lions Or standing on arabesque Or. Beneath the escutcheon the collar and star of the Order of Carol I is displayed. On a banderole Azure with fringes Or the motto of the Hohenzollern dynasty is displayed in Latin letters Or: *Nihil sine Deo*¹⁶.

All these are placed on a pavilion¹⁷ Purple with fringes Or and ermine lining. A royal crown Or ornamented with precious stones is displayed atop the pavilion.

The second clause of the law defines the forms of the country coat of arms and their usage¹⁸. The symbol described above is the Greater Coat of Arms, the version without the mantle is the Middle Coat of Arms, while the Small Coat of Arms consists of the three superimposed escutcheons with the royal steel crown displayed atop the great escutcheon.

The third clause stipulates the establishment of the Consultative Committee of Heraldry¹⁹.

The fourth quarter of the coat of Arms of the Romanian Kingdom displays the coat of arms of the Grand Principality of Transylvania, as the symbol of one of the „sister countries”. The title of Grand Principality was awarded by Queen Maria Theresa and the coat of arms of Transylvania was augmented accordingly²⁰. The document issued on 2 November 1765 does not describe the coat of arms itself – which was widely known –, only the crown placed atop the escutcheon. There is also a painting of the coat of arms: escutcheon with fillet Gules in the middle, in chief Azure a dexter-looking eagle Sable with spread wings issuant from the division, flanked by a sun-in-splendour Or on the dexter and a personified decrescent Argent on the sinister. In the base, in field Or, seven towers Gules appear, divided four and three. Contrary to the traditions, the moon appears in an inverted position, as a decrescent²¹. In the Romanian coat of arms there appear the elements of Maria Theresa’s coat of arms, together with the decrescent.

¹⁶ Nothing without God.

¹⁷ Actually a mantle appears instead of a pavilion.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ MNL OL, A 57 – *Hungarian Chancery Archives, Libri regii*, vol. 47, 372-374.

²¹ József Keöpeczi Sebestyén mentions that as part of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, the coat of arms of the Hungarian Kingdom containing the symbol of Bosnia – a modification elaborated by himself on the Hungarian side (on the Austrian side the unified coats of arms were created by the Austrian artist of heraldry Hugo Gerard Ströhl) –, displays the version donated by Maria Theresa, replacing the older version that contained the increscent. This may be the reason why the Romanian coat of arms also displays a decrescent.

The coat of arms of Transylvania displaying the eagle issuant, the sun, the decrescent and the seven towers has been in use since 1580²². The official description of the elements of the coat of arms and of their meanings appeared in 1659²³.

Administrative coats of arms between the two World Wars

At the change of administration Szeklerland, situated in the south-eastern part of Transylvania, was divided into five counties: Háromszék, Csík, Udvarhely, Maros-Torda, and Torda-Aranyos Counties – the last one including the former Aranyos Seat. In the Romanian Kingdom enlarged with new territories the problem of the administrative-territorial units was reglemented in 1925²⁴. The counties mentioned above continued existing with minor territorial modifications. The names of Háromszék, Csík and Udvarhely counties were translated into Romanian (Trei Scaune, Ciuc and Odorhei), the name Maros-Torda was changed into Mureș and Torda-Aranyos into Turda.

County coats of arms

The coats of arms of the 71 counties of the Romanian Kingdom were adopted in 1928²⁵. The symbols were created by the Consultative Committee of Heraldry. The town coats of arms were adopted between 1930 and 1936, most of them in 1934, with Royal Decrees.

The Decree adopting the county coats of arms also informs on the principles the Consultative Committee of Heraldry followed during the elaboration of the coats of arms²⁶. Their purpose was to follow both the indications of the late King Ferdinand and the traditions of heraldry. As far as the regions beyond the Carpathians are concerned, they adopted the coats of arms that had been used during the Hungarian administration, removing the elements that referred to Hungarian historical traditions, and replacing them by new ones that evoke the past of the Romanian people. The barries Gules and Argent, as part of the Hungarian coat of arms, were also removed.

²² According to our present knowledge the coat of arms of Transylvania with all its component parts first appeared on the commemorative lead coin issued in 1580 by Christopher Báthori, Voivode of Transylvania (cf. Szekeres A.I., *A székely címer* [The Szekler Coat of Arms], in Mihály János (ed.), „Jelképek a Székelyföldön – Címerek, pecsétek, zászlók [Symbols in Szeklerland – Coats of Arms, Seals, Flags]”, Miercurea Ciuc, 2011, 15-28; Idem, *Székely jelképek* [The Szekler symbols], Háromszék Vármegye, Sepsiszentgyörgy, 2013; Idem, *Te Sun and Crescent in the seal of the Szekler community*, in „Acta Siculica 2014-2015”, A Székely Nemzeti Múzeum Évkönyve, Sepsiszentgyörgy, 2015, p. 117-129; Idem, *Stema comunității secuiești* [The coat of arms of the Szekler community], in Szekeres A.I., Pál-Antal Sándor, Mihály János, *Simboluri istorice secuiești* [Historical Szekler symbols], Centrul Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale Harghita, Odorheiu Secuiesc, 2017, p. 11-70.

²³ Szilágyi Sándor (szerk.), *Monumenta Comitalia Regni Transilvaniae. Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek XII. (1658-1661)*, Budapest, 1887, 291, p. 310.

²⁴ *Royal Decree no. 2.465* issued on 25 September 1925, published in „OG” No. 220 on 7 October 1925.

²⁵ *Royal Decree no. 2079* issued on 1 August 1928, published in „OG” No. 222 on 6 August 1928, 8.278-8.283.

²⁶ *Memoriu asupra stemelor județelor*, 8.282-8.283.

After the presentation of the general principles, the text provides detailed explanation on the modifications carried out on the coats of arms, grouping them into regions. In the present paper only the counties that administered parts of the Szeklerland are highlighted, all belonging to the „territories beyond the Carpathians”. As far as Ciuc County is concerned, they retained the old coat of arms with two modifications: in the second field the Hungarian double cross was changed into a simple cross, and in the third field the guard-houses standing on the Romanian border were replaced by a Roman eagle.

The Hungarian soldier was removed from the second field of Mureş County's old coat of arms²⁷.

As far as Odorhei and Trei Scaune Counties are concerned, the old coats of arms were adopted without modifications.

As far as Turda County is concerned, they replaced the old coat of arms, which displayed King Saint Ladislaus of Hungary²⁸, with another one representing Horea's national revolt²⁹.

This part also contains the names of the Committee members that signed the document: M. Seulescu (president), Const. Moisil, I.C. Filitti, Al. Crăsnaru, Virg. Drăghiceanu, Z. Păclişanu (members), Iuliu Tuduceanu (secretary).

All the county coats of arms had escutcheons of mediaeval French shape.

The coat of arms of Odorhei County

Escutcheon quartered Argent and Azure. In the first and the fourth fields five small crosses Azure are displayed in saltire, while the second and third fields display a three-towered castle Argent, the middle tower is taller with a cross Argent on the top flanked by decrescent Or on the dexter and sun Or on the sinister³⁰.

According to the description the coat of arms symbolises the faith battles fought by the inhabitants of the county and the castles for defence. It is the heraldised³¹ old coat of arms³².

The coat of arms of the former Udvarhely County resembles the one in use before 1876 symbolising Udvarhely Seat, but the latter displays five Byzantine crosses Gules instead of Azure in the first and fourth fields Argent. In the field Azure of the second and third quarters a double cross Or is displayed on each of the taller middle towers of the three white buildings with three towers Gules, while the sun flanking them on the dexter is Or and the crescent on the sinister is Argent.

²⁷ Actually, it is about the second field of the coat of arms of Maros-Torda county. The so-called Hungarian soldier is King Saint Ladislaus.

²⁸ See the previous footnote.

²⁹ The inescutcheon of the coat of arms of the town of Turda was changed: the barry of Gules and Argent was changed into the Romanian tricolour in Turda county's coat of arms.

³⁰ In the documents found in the Archives there is also another representation of the coat of arms where the cross on the castle displayed in the second and third fields is Or, the castle stands on soil Vert, the sun and the crescent appear in different order: the sun on the dexter and the crescent on the sinister.

³¹ The term „heraldisation” does not appear in the dictionary. It refers to the correction of the mistakes concerning the rules of heraldic design.

³² *OG*, no. 222/1928, p. 8.280.

The coat of arms of Ciuc County

The first field of the escutcheon quartered Argent and Gules displays a sun Gules, the second field displays a crescent Argent lying below a cross Or, the third field shows an eagle Sable holding a bolt of lightning Argent in its talon, while the fourth one shows four fir trees Vert atop four mounts Sable. The inescutcheon displays the Virgin Mary with the child Jesus in her lap sitting on a throne placed on crescent Argent lying on a globe Sable in field Azure.

The description is followed by the following remark: it symbolises that the Romanian realm has taken root in this county rich in forests, patronised by the Virgin Mary. The modified old coat of arms.

Compared to the coat of arms of the former Csík County and to the coat of arms of Csík, Gyergyó and Kászón Seat, which was in use before 1876, it can be remarked that the new coat of arms preserved the original quartered escutcheon with the inescutcheon, but in the first quarter the sun Or in field Azure was replaced by sun Gules in field Argent, the field Gules of the second quarter remained unchanged, but the double cross was changed into a simple Latin cross. The houses and barriers symbolising the border crossing points at the Gyimes and Piricske passes and the three rivers flowing on the flanks of the mountains (the Mureș, the Olt and the Târnava Mare) displayed in the third quarter were replaced by a Roman eagle Sable holding a bolt of lightning. The fourth quarter was rightly „heraldised”, colour was not put on colour. The figure of the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus in her arms in the inescutcheon was displayed according to the traditions of eastern Christian iconography.

The coat of arms of Trei Scaune County

Armoured arm Argent holding a sword Argent with heart Gules stabbed on the blade in field Azure, flanked on the dexter by sun in splendour Or and on the sinister by crescent Argent surrounded by three six pointed stars Or.

Explanation: the old coat of arms of the county³³.

The old coat of arms of Háromszék County was actually preserved.

The coat of arms of Mureș County

Tree fruited with apples Or standing on mount Vert placed on escutcheon Gules with two narrow bars Or. Over the tree an eight-pointed star Or is displayed.

According to the official explanation the coat of arms symbolises a county rich in fruit, crossed by the two Târnava rivers. The modified old coat of arms³⁴.

The coat of arms was inspired from the dexter side of the coat of arms of the former Maros-Torda County, which had been in use since 1878. The dexter side of the coat of arms – King Saint Ladislaus standing on soil Vert scattered with coins Or, holding in the dexter hand a flag Or and Azure and in the sinister hand a mace lowered to the ground in field Gules – was fully removed. The field of the new coat of arms is Gules instead of Azure, the three bars Argent were replaced by two fesses Or, and the six-pointed star was replaced with a star with eight rays. The county was named after river Mureș, but in the coat of arms – according to the explanation –, only the two Târnavas are presented.

³³ *OG* no. 222/1928, p. 8281.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

The coat of arms of Turda County

Escutcheon Or with inescutcheon parted per fess Azure, Yellow (Or) and Gules hanging from eradicated oak tree Vert³⁵.

According to the explanation: the coat of arms symbolises the idea of national unity planted into the Romanians' hearts by the great Ruler – Prince Michael the Brave –, assassinated near Turda³⁶.

The coat of arms of the county was inspired neither from the coat of arms of Torda-Aranyos County, nor from that of Maros-Torda County, but – probably due to a misunderstanding –, from the coat of arms of the town of Torda, renewed and enforced by royal donation in 1911. The olive tree standing on mount Vert was replaced by eradicated oak tree, and the inescutcheon displays the Romanian national colours (Gules-Or-Azure) instead of the Gules-Argent bars of the Árpád dynasty. The Hungarian coat of arms was transformed into a Romanian symbol.

Town coats of arms

Similarly to the county coats of arms, the coats of arms of towns were adopted with Royal Decrees, however, no longer with one single Decree, but grouped. From among the coats of arms in Szeklerland, the coat of arms of Târgu Mureş was the first to be legalised among the coats of arms of twenty county towns in 1930³⁷. The coats of arms of Miercurea Ciuc and Odorheiu Secuiesc were adopted with a Royal Decree specifying the coats of arms of thirty-five county towns and two other towns, also in 1930³⁸. The coat of arms of Sfântu Gheorghe was adopted together with the coats of arms of sixteen county towns and one other town in 1931³⁹. The coats of arms of Gheorgheni and Târgu Secuiesc were adopted with a Royal Decree legalising the coats of arms of fifteen towns in 1934⁴⁰.

Similarly to the county coats of arms, the coats of arms of towns were uniformly represented in triangular escutcheons; Argent mural crown was used to indicate the rank of the settlement. In the case of big county towns a mural crown with seven towers, in the case of smaller county towns a mural crown with five towers, and in the case of other towns a mural crown with three towers was placed on the escutcheon.

The coat of arms of Târgu Mureş

Armoured arm Argent holding a sword with hilt Or and blade Argent stabbed through heart Gules in escutcheon Azure; in dexter chief of the escutcheon a scale in balance Or can be seen. A mural crown with seven towers is lying on the escutcheon.

³⁵ In the description the word „yellow” is used, while in the drawing preserved in the Archives tincture Or appears.

³⁶ OG no. 222/1928, 8281.

³⁷ Royal Decree no. 5.857 issued on 29 July 1930, published in „OG” no. 171 on 2 August 1930.

³⁸ Royal Decree no. 2.935 issued on 11 August 1930, published in „OG” no. 186 on 21 August 1930, 7.090-7.092.

³⁹ Royal Decree no. 2.856 issued on 3 August 1931, published in „OG” no. 182 on 8 August 1931.

⁴⁰ Royal Decree no. 3236 issued on 28 November 1934, published in „OG” no. 279 on 3 December 1934.

Explanation: the old coat of arms, complemented with the symbol of the old legislation seat of the town⁴¹.

The old coat of arms of the town was slightly modified, the sword stabbed not only a heart but also a bear's head; the balance in dexter chief appeared as a new element.

The coat of arms of Miercurea Ciuc

In escutcheon Or three roses Gules with stem and leaves Vert grow from heart Gules. A mural crown with five towers is lying on the escutcheon.

Explanation: the heraldised old coat of arms⁴².

According to the tradition, in the coat of arms of the town three blue forget-me-nots grew from the heart and transformed into roses. The field of the escutcheon was Argent.

The coat of arms of Odorheiu Secuiesc

Armoured arm Argent holding a sword Argent stabbed through heart Gules in escutcheon Azure, surrounded with four six-pointed stars Or. A mural crown with five towers is lying on the escutcheon.

Explanation: the heraldised old coat of arms⁴³.

In the former coat of arms the sword stabbed a crown, a heart and a bear's head.

The coat of arms of Gheorgheni

In the first field of the escutcheon split with Azure and Gules there floats a torn-out fir tree Argent, in the second field a torn-out oak Or. A mural crown with three towers is lying on the escutcheon.

Explanation: it symbolizes the richness in forests of the area⁴⁴.

In the field Azure of the former coat of arms there appeared a fir tree Vert standing on triple mount Vert, with a sun-in-splendour Or on the dexter and a personified crescent Argent on the sinister.

The coat of arms of Târgu Secuiesc

In field Azure, on soil Vert, a cart transporting three wheatears is pulled forward by two horses next to each other⁴⁵. The outer horse is ridden by a man with a hat, raising his whip. The entire heraldic charge is Argent. A mural crown with three towers is lying on the escutcheon.

Explanation: the old coat of arms.

In the coat of arms of the town conferred by Franz Joseph I in 1909 there appeared the cart pulled by two horses in field Azure, on soil Vert, but it had a coating Or, just like the three wheatears, which have to be represented with Or from the start, and the postman blowing the horn on horseback. The escutcheon is divided, in the

⁴¹ *OG no. 1930/171*, p. 6.287.

⁴² *OG no. 1930/186*, p. 7.091.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *OG no. 1.934/279*, p. 7.634.

⁴⁵ In the official coat of arms description it appears incorrectly that the cart is pulled by the horses towards the left, as the coat of arms is always described from the angle of the knight holding the shield, thus the cart is moving forward, that is towards the right.

field Gules of the escutcheon chief there appeared a cannon Or, alluding to the battles of 1848-1849, to Áron Gábor's cannon casting in Kézdivásárhely.

The coat of arms of Sfântu Gheorghe

In escutcheon Azure castle wall Argent with gables and three towers, out of which the two peripheral ones are also with gables, the pointed top Gules of the middle one ends in a cross Argent. The castle gate and the windows of towers are closed. In dexter corner there is a sun Or, in sinister corner there is a crescent Argent. The heraldic charge is lying on a terrace Sable. In the base corner of the escutcheon there is a medal Or with the image of Christ and the circumscription „Christus spes mea”⁴⁶. The escutcheon is covered by a five-towered mural crown Argent.

Explanation: the heraldised old coat of arms⁴⁷.

In the archival material of the Consultative Committee of Heraldry⁴⁸ from the Central Historical Department⁴⁹ Bucharest, of the National Archives of Romania, in the case of Sfântu Gheorghe the file contained the heraldic painting submitted by the town administration⁵⁰. The Consultative Committee of Heraldry sent a questionnaire to the territorial-administrative units, inquiring about the local heraldic and sigillographic traditions⁵¹. The town administration of Sfântu Gheorghe submitted its claim, requesting the former official coat of arms unchanged. The annexed heraldic painting is the identical copy of the coat of arms designed by mayor Ferenc Gödri, conferred to the town by Franz Joseph I in 1897⁵². The Consultative Committee of Heraldry modified the coat of arms. Not only were the escutcheon and the crown endowed with the shape uniform in the country; according to the explanation, the coat of arms was „heraldised”. The expression should refer to the correction of heraldic mistakes, however, in our case we experience a high degree of encroachment. The triple mount Vert was replaced by a terrace Sable, conferring the coat of arms a mournful impression. We can see by no means the tower of the fortified church as in the former coat of arms, but the onion dome tower characteristic of Orthodox churches. There is a cross on it and not a sphere as on the Reformed church. The tower clock is also missing, instead, a closed, round window can be seen. I highlight this because we are on the Eastern border of Western Christianity and culture, to the East and to the South – beyond the Carpathians –, there are no tower clocks. The image of Christ was placed into the medal, which can be explained with the circumscription „Christus spes mea”,

⁴⁶ „Christ is my hope”.

⁴⁷ *OG 1931/182*, 6.626.

⁴⁸ Fond 3 - *Comisia Consultativă Heraldică*, inventory number: 1.066.

⁴⁹ Serviciul Arhivelor Naționale Istorie Centrale.

⁵⁰ Dossier no. 70 – *Trei Scaune* – file Háromszék, document no. 1: coat of arms painting on cardboard, with a reference number on its back: 8.041/1931.

⁵¹ Maria Dogaru, *Din heraldica României* [From the Heraldry of Romania], Bucharest, Editura JIF, 1994, p. 90.

⁵² Painted on cardboard with water-based paint, it is an identical copy of the coat of arms figuring in the deed of gift preserved in the Székely National Museum (historical department, inventory no. 1.919/47), painted by Ernst Krahl. This drawing is slightly more vivid in its colours than the one figuring in the deed of gift. Based on the style of the inscription below it it is highly probable that it was painted by József Sebestyén Keöpeczi.

however, a representation of Christ known in Orthodox iconography was applied. To sum up, the coat of arms of the town was orthodoxised.

Conclusions

After the change of power the references to Hungary were removed from the coats of arms, what is more, the coat of arms of Turda County was entirely Romanianised, however, more to the East, Szekler symbols were still preserved.

The coat of arms of Trei Scaune County was preserved in its entirety, it was only edited in accordance with the template of the age. The coat of arms of Udvarhely Seat, then County mostly survived into the coat of arms of Odorhei County, the sun and the moon pair in any case, only in reverse order. The coat of arms of Csík, Gyergyó and Kászón Seats, then Csík County was partly transposed into the coat of arms of Ciuc County, but the sun – albeit not with coating Or but Gules –, and the moon crescent remained. In the case of Mureș County, the apple tree as well as two straight lines instead of the three wavy lines – the rivers Mureș, Târnava Mică and Niraj –, survived from the 1753 coat of arms of the former Maros Seat into the 1878 coat of arms of Maros-Torda County. After the change of power Târgu Mureș preserved its old coat of arms, slightly altered and augmented, but the heraldic charge of the old Szekler coat of arms survived. Odorheiu Secuiesc preserved its old coat of arms also in the interwar period, with a slight modification. At the change of power the coat of arms of Sfântu Gheorghe conferred in 1897 was roughly modified, however, the pair of the sun and moon crescent in field Azure survived. To sum up the changes in the coats of arms of territorial-administrative units, it can be stated that the old Szekler coat of arms survived from the symbol of the former Háromszék Seat into the coat of arms of Trei Scaune County and it also survived in the coats of arms of Târgu Mureș and Odorheiu Secuiesc. The sun-moon pair forming the new Szekler coat of arms survived in the coat of arms of Sfântu Gheorghe and it also figured in the coat of arms of the former Ciuc County.

Although indirectly, the sun-moon pair symbolizing the Szeklers, as part of the coat of arms of Transylvania, was included in the coat of arms of Romania sanctioned by law in 1921, and also in the coat of arms of the country adopted in 1992 and augmented in 2016.

List of illustrations:

Fig. 1 – The greater coat of arms of the Kingdom of Romania – 1921. Painting by József Sebestyén Keöpeczi (National Archives of Romania, Central Historical Department – Bucharest, Fond 3, *Consultative Committee of Heraldry*, I 1.066/1).

Fig. 2 – Heraldic drawing of the greater coat of arms of Romania on the front page of the „Universul” daily paper (29 July 1921) with the signature J. Sebestyén de Keöpecz.

Fig. 3 – The small coat of arms of the Kingdom of Romania – 1921. Painting by József Sebestyén Keöpeczi (I 1066/1).

Fig. 4 – The coat of arms of Udvarhely Seat – 1757 (Hungarian National Archives, MNL OL, B2, *Acta Generalia*, no. 101/1757).

Fig. 5 – The coat of arms of Udvarhely County – 1878 (apud Hoppál Dezső, *A történelmi Magyarország vármegyéinek címerei*, Budapest, Cartographia, 2001, 137).

Fig. 6 – The coat of arms of Odorhei County – 1928 (I 1.066/47).

Fig. 7 – The coat of arms of Csík, Gyergyó and Kászon Seats – 1793 (MNL OL, B2, *Acta Generalia*, no. 1.123/1779).

Fig. 8 – The coat of arms of Csík County – 1878 (Hoppál, 45).

Fig. 9 – The coat of arms of Ciuc County – 1928 (I 1.066/22)

Fig. 10 – The coat of arms of Háromszék Seat – 1832 (on the headquarters of the Seat, photo: Szekeres Attila István).

Fig. 11 – The coat of arms of Háromszék County – 1878 (Hoppál, 63).

Fig. 12 – The Coat of arms of Trei Scaune County – 1928 (I 1.066/70).

Fig. 13 – The coat of arms of Maros-Torda County in the Libri Regii – 1878 (MNL OL, A57, K19, 68/465).

Fig. 14 – The coat of arms of Mureş County – 1928 (I 1066/43).

Fig. 15 – The coat of arms of Torda-Aranyos County in the Libri Regii – 1878 (MNL OL, A57, K19, 68/505).

Fig. 16 – The coat of arms of Turda County – 1928 (I 1066/72).

Fig. 17 – The coat of arms of Marosvásárhely – 1616 (Romanian National Archives, Mureş County Department, *Primăria Tg. Mureş, Scrisori privilegiate*, no. 25/1616 – photo: Pál-Antal Sándor).

Fig. 18 – The coat of arms of Târgu Mureş – 1930 (I 1066/43b).

Fig. 19 – The coat of arms of Csíkszereda – reconstitution (by Szekeres Attila István).

Fig. 20 – The coat of arms of Miercurea Ciuc – 1930 (apud Maria Dogaru, *Din heraldica României*, Bucureşti, Editura JIF, 1994, pl. XXXVII, f. 158).

Fig. 21 – The coat of arms of Székelyudvarhely – reconstitution (by Mihály János).

Fig. 22 – The coat of arms of Odorheiu Secuiesc – 1930 (I 1066/47b).

Fig. 23 – The coat of arms of Gyergyószentmiklós – 1890 (apud Hugo Gerard Ströhl: *Österreichisch-Ungarische Wappenrolle*, Verlag von Anton Schroll & Co, Wien 1890).

Fig. 24 – The coat of arms of Gheorgheni – 1934 (apud Maria Dogaru, *op. cit.*, pl. XXXVII, fig. 159).

Fig. 25 – The coat of arms of Kézdivásárhely – 1909 (Hungarian National Archives, MNL OL, A57, K19, 71/1014).

Fig. 26 – The coat of arms of Târgu Secuiesc – 1934 (apud Maria Dogaru, *op. cit.*, pl. LXXXII, f. 337).

Fig. 27 – The coat of arms of Sepsiszentgyörgy – 1897 (Székely National Museum, Historical Department, 47-1919).

Fig. 28 – The coat of arms of Sfântu Gheorghe – 1931 (apud Maria Dogaru, *op. cit.*, pl. LXXXII, f. 336).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

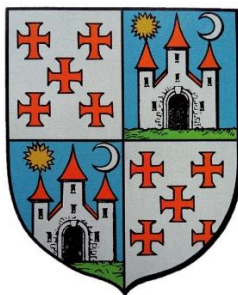


Fig. 5

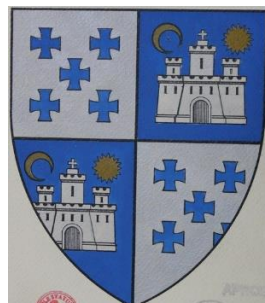


Fig. 6



Fig. 7

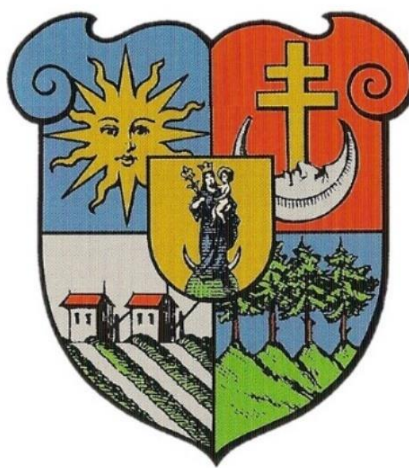


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

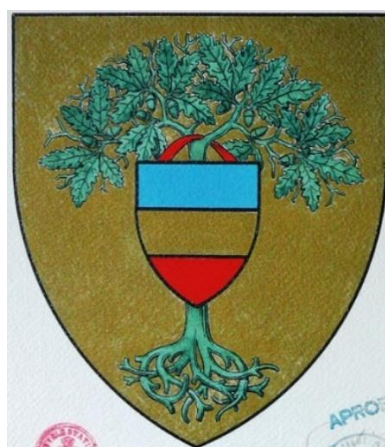


Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 19

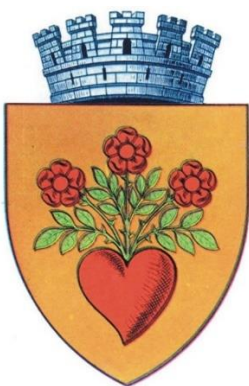


Fig. 20

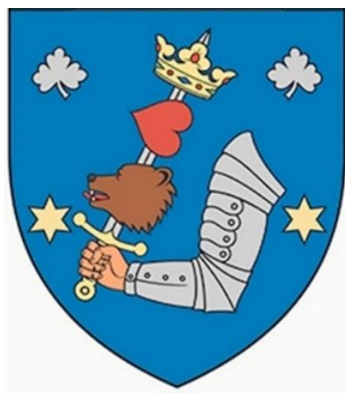


Fig. 21



Fig. 22

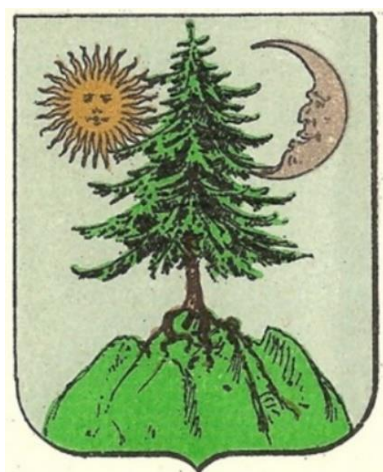


Fig. 23



Fig. 24



Fig. 25



Fig. 26



Fig. 27



Fig. 28