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The Historical and Religious Significance of Some Representations from the Current Arad Territorial Heraldry

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Abstract

This study presents the coats of arms from the current Arad territorial heraldry with their religious depictions and their meanings. The following coats of arms are described: the coat of arms of the Arad county and municipality, the coats of arms of Chișineu Cris, Ineu, Lipova, Nădlac, Pecica, Pâncota and Sântana towns and the coats of arms of the Cermei, Felnac, Frumușeni, Hălmațiu and Șiștarovăț communes.

Keywords

Coat of arms, Arad county, Arad municipality, town, commune, religious representations, significance

Since 1992, when the Parliament voted the coat of arms of Romania, under its known appearance, the Romanian heraldic phenomenon has been continuously reborn. As in other counties, within Arad county there can be seen a constant concern on behalf of specialists, to develop the new *territorial heraldry*¹, in which the county, municipality, almost all towns have adopted coats of arms, and the number of communal formalized ones increases from one day to the next. After having drafted the new coat of arms of the Arad county and municipality, as well as of some Arad towns, the early historical source searches containing elements to be included in these heraldic signs, developing communal coats of arms was gradually taken into account.

When developing all these heraldic emblems, mentioned above, the following were taken into account: the legislation of 1992² and 1993³ and the methodology of the National Commission of Heraldry, Genealogy and Sigillography of the Romanian Academy, also transmitted to the County Commission of Arad for the analysis of the emblem project proposals⁴. Among the coats of arms which were formalized after the County Commission review, the successive approval by the Cluj-Napoca Territory Bureau of Heraldry and the National Commission of Heraldry, Genealogy and Sigillography, approved by the Romanian Government, there are the coat of arms of the county, municipality and coats of arms of towns and communes that include an ecclesiastical symbolism. To prove the preoccupation of creating the Arad “territory armorial”, we present some emblems with religious representations, formalized following the actions of the County Commission of Heraldry within the Arad County Council.

¹ The terms “territorial heraldry” or “territory armorial” refer to all the coats of arms of counties, municipalities, towns and villages which symbolize, in a concrete form, historical traditions, economic and socio-cultural realities, specific to each administrative-territorial unit, see *Hotărârea de Guvern* nr. 25 din 16 ianuarie 2003, *privind stabilirea metodologiei de elaborare, reproducere și folosire a stemelor județelor, municipiilor, orașelor și comunelor*, în „Monitorul Oficial al României,” Partea I, nr. 64/2. II. 2003, p. 7.

² *Legea nr. 102*, în „Monitorul Oficial al României”, nr. 236 /24 septembrie 1992.

³ *Hotărârea de Guvern* nr. 25 din 16 ianuarie 2003, *privind stabilirea metodologiei de elaborare, reproducere și folosire a stemelor județelor, municipiilor, orașelor și comunelor*, în „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 64/2.II. 2003, pp. 7-8.

⁴ Through *Ordinul nr. 177* din 18. 03. 2003 *al prefectului județului Arad, Comisia județeană pentru analiza propunerilor de proiecte de steme ale județului, orașelor și comunelor* was constituted.

Although these coats of arms of administrative-territorial units are not ecclesiastical⁵, they include religious depictions as well, which we classify into two categories: 1) Coats of arms of iconographic type and 2) Coats of arms which feature heraldic figures: the cross⁶, the bishop's crook⁷, the church⁸ and the book⁹. The first category includes only the Sântana town coat of arms, where a holy figure is pictured (St. Anne), on the heraldic shield, without partitions. The latter includes those for which, besides the other heraldic mobiles from some shield partitions, in a distinct quarter, there are also artificial heraldic figures with historical and religious significance. In this regard, the cross accompanied by other heraldic figures is represented upright (the Arad County coat of arms, the coats of arms of the Ineu and Pâncota towns and those of the Cermei, Felnac and Frumușeni communes) or sometimes two intersecting crosses are depicted, the Orthodox cross and the Latin cross (the Pecica town coat of arms) or the intersecting orthodox cross and bishop's crook (the Lipova town coat of arms).

By extension, as these coats of arms are equipped with various heraldic mobiles taken from Christian symbolism, they can be included among the locality emblems with religious representations. To better learn the placing of these religious representations on the heraldic shield¹⁰, we describe below each emblem of this type and the meaning of the elements taken together. The criterion for the presentation of these emblems is the alphabetic one.

⁵ Regarding the Romanian ecclesiastical armorial, see Dan Cernovodeanu, *Evoluția armeriilor Țărilor Române de la apariția lor și până în zilele noastre (sec.XIII-XX)*, Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei, Brăila, 2005, pp. 325-335.

⁶ Regarding the symbol of the cross, see Ivan Evseev, *Dicționar de simboluri*, Editura Vox, București, 2007, pp. 101-108; Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant (coordonatori), *Dicționar de simboluri, mituri, vise, obiceiuri, gesturi, forme, figuri, culori, numere*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2009, pp. 301-307.

⁷ Regarding the bishop's crook, symbol of faith, pastoral jurisdiction and authority of heavenly origin, see Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

⁸ Regarding the symbol of the Church, see Ivan Evseev, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57; Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-149.

⁹ Regarding the symbol of the book, see Ivan Evseev, *op. cit.*, p. 69; Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-192.

¹⁰ Any shield of the emblem is essentially composed of a background or field and various heraldic figures being represented on it, see Marcel Sturdza Săucești, *Heraldica, Tratat tehnic*, Editura Științifică, București, 1974, p. 44. About the shield and its divisions, see Maria Dogaru, *Din heraldica României*, Editura JIF, București, 1994, pp. 23-25.

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The Arad county coat of arms¹¹ consists of a quartered triangular shield with rounded edges.

At the top, in the right quarter, on a blue field, there is a silver stronghold with three towers, with a conical roof and an open gate. At the top, in the left quarter, on a red background, there is a silver trefoil cross, surrounded by two branches of oak, with golden leaves and acorns.

At the bottom, in the right quarter, on a red field, there is a cluster of golden grapes and a silver vine leaf. At the bottom, in the left quarter, on a golden background, there are two blue wavy lanes (Fig. 1).

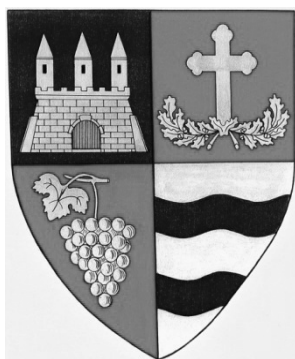


Fig. 1.

Significance. The stronghold evokes the role that fortifications had in defensive battles. The trefoil cross reminds us of the religious edifices that have been present for centuries in these lands, highlighting the ancestral faith and its contribution to the struggle for national unity. The bunch of grapes along with the vine leaf signify the old vineyard of Arad, while the wavy lanes symbolize the rivers that flow through the county, namely Mureș and Crișul Alb¹².

The Arad municipality coat of arms¹³ consists of a shield divided by a wavy narrow silver girdle. At the top, on an azure background, there are two silver fortresses with crenels, and above them, an arm in armor, holding a sword, all of the same metal. Above, on a white scarf, the slogan “VIA VERITAS VITA” is written in black letters. At the bottom, on a red background, an intersecting cross and a gold crook with a miter of the same metal being between them, out of which arise two silver omophorions which surround the crook and the cross. Everything is shaped around the contour of an open gold book. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown, consisting of seven towers with crenels (Fig. 2).

¹¹ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, Anul 173 (XVII), nr. 708 din 5 august 2005, p. 8.

¹² Augustin Mureșan, *Noua stemă a județului Arad*, în „Adevărul” (Arad), anul XVII, nr. 4622 din 14 septembrie 2005, p. 10; idem, *Noua stemă a județului Arad și semnificația ei*, în „Administrație românească. Studii și comunicări din Banat - Crișana (coordonatori: Doru Sinaci, Emil Arbonie), vol. VI, Vasile Goldiș University Press, Arad, 2013, pp. 523-526.

¹³ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, anul IX, nr. 490 din 12 octombrie 1999, p. 2.



Fig. 2

old Arad city emblem of 1834, the Heraldry Consultative Commission only preserved the fortress (renouncing the arm with the sword, the lit cannon balls and the gate of the city with a grid) for the municipal emblem of the interwar period, established in 1930¹⁴. The municipal insignia was used until 1948 when it was replaced on the seals and headers of the municipality with the emblem of the Romanian People's Republic¹⁵. The current municipal emblem conserves the following items from the interwar municipal one: the fortress with some modifications and the insignia of the episcopate, however the open book is also added.

The Chișineu Criș town coat of arms¹⁶ consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges, divided by a wavy silver fascia, the top being split. In the first quarter, on a blue field, there is a gold church, seen from the front, with two polygonal side aisles, with a closed gate, a tower with three windows, the lower being rectangular and the two upper ones being semi-circular, interposed by a pyramid-shaped roof with a flattened bulb and ending with a cross. In the second quarter, on a red field, there is a gold

¹⁴ „Monitorul Oficial”, nr. 171 din 2 august 1930. Dan Cernovodanu, Ioan N. Mănescu, *Noile steme ale județelor și municipiilor din Republica Socialistă România. Studiu asupra dezvoltării istorice a heraldicii districtuale și municipale românești*, în „Revista Arhivelor”, Anul LI, vol. XXXVI, nr. 1-2, 1974, p. 94, fig. 98; Dan Cernovodanu, *Știința și arta heraldică în România*, Editura științifică și enciclopedică, București, 1977, pp. 194-195. Augustin Mureșan, *Stema municipiului Arad instituită după 1918*, în „Curierul Aradului”, Arad, anul II, nr. 28 (68) din 11 februarie 1993, p. 2 și Maria Dogaru, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99, pl. XXIII, fig. 103.

¹⁵ Dan Cernovodanu, *Știința și arta...*, pp. 194-195.

¹⁶ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 170 din 29 martie 2013.

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cogwheel, half water mill wheel to the right and half industrial cogwheel to the left, flanked by an ear of wheat of the same metal. In the lower quarter, on a blue field, there is a silver lyre, partially overlapped by two laurel branches of the same metal. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown, made up of three towers with crenels (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3

Significance. The church evokes the faith which has been earnestly kept by the locals, as well as the existing buildings of this kind in the city¹⁷. The wavy silver fascia symbolizes the Crișul Alb river which flows through the city.

The cogwheel which is half mill wheel alludes to the water mills of the past, which used to be on the Crișul Alb river and Canalul Morilor¹⁸, large hydraulic works of the 19th century, in the vicinity, and the half of the industrial cogwheel refers to the town industry of building agricultural machinery and metalwork.

The grain signifies agriculture and use of agricultural products obtained by the townspeople, a traditional occupation taking into account that this town is situated in an area of plains. The lyre and the branches of laurel evokes the “Lyra” choral group established in 1931¹⁹ and refers to the cultural and artistic life of the town. The mural crown with three towers indicates that the locality has the status of a town.

¹⁷ Regarding the churches of the locality, see Pr. dr. Pavel Vesa, *Episcopia Aradului. Istorie. Cultură. Mentalități (1706-1918)*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2006, pp. 593-594.

¹⁸ About Canalul Morilor, see Ioan Godea, *Canalul Morilor din județul Arad, lucrare hidrotehnică de mare amploare din secolul al XIX-lea*, în “Ioan Zănea, Gabriel Moisa (coordonatori), *Istorie, economie, politică. Profesorul Mihai D. Drecin, la împlinirea vârstei de 65 de ani*”, Editura Universității, Oradea, 2009, pp. 271-279; Aurel Dragoș, *Cântecul de lebedă al morilor de pe Canalul József Nador*, în “Ziridava”, XXV/1, 2010, pp. 187-196; idem, *Istoricul “Canalul morilor Palatinul József al Crișului Alb din Comitatul Arad”*, Arad, 2011; Ioan Godea, *Canalul Morilor din „nobilul județ Arad”*, Brumar, Timișoara, MMXII, pp. 20-72.

¹⁹ A. Caciora, M. Timbus, *Cultura*, în „Aradul permanentă în istoria patriei”, Arad, 1978, p. 590.

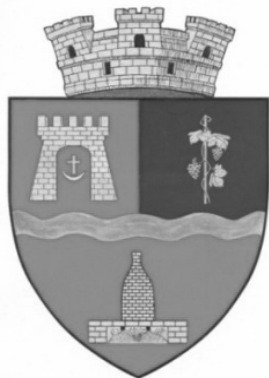


Fig. 4

The Ineu town coat of arms²⁰ consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges, crossed by a wavy gold fascia, the top part being split. In the first quarter, on a red background, there is the gate of a silver fortress with crenels, built in black, having a gold cross pressing on a silver moon crescent in the open gate. In the second quarter, on a blue background, a grape vine with two grapes, supported by a prop, all made out of gold. In the third quarter, on a red background, a mineral water spring taking the form of a bottle emerging from a silver building, built in black. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three towers with crenels

(Fig. 4).

Significance. The fortress gate alludes to the Ineu fortress²¹. The cross from the first quarter, located at the gate of the fortress, pressing on the crescent, signifies the defensive battles waged by Christian troops in the area, against the Ottomans. The wavy gold fascia symbolizes the Crișul Alb River that flows through the city. The vine refers to one of the secular occupations of the inhabitants. The construction built in the shape of a bottle represents the mineral water spring from Mocrea, located near the town. The mural crown with three towers indicates that the locality has the status of a town.

The Lipova town coat of arms²² consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges, divided in an inverted fork. At the top right, on a red field, there is a silver fortress, castellated, built in black, with two towers, three black windows and a gate, with a silver grille halfway up. Above the fortress there are a crossed trefoil cross and a bishop's crook, both golden. At the top left, on a blue field, there is a fountain of mineral water, made of silver, with two jets that spring, separated by a column of gas bubbles, all silver. At the top of the shield, on a golden field, there is a black boat with

²⁰ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 280 din 27. 04. 2012.

²¹ Sasu Ecaterina (1972), *Cetăți în stilul Renașterii din Țara Crișurilor*, în „Centenar muzeal orădean”, Oradea, 1972, pp. 543-546; Eugen Glück, *Contribuții cu privire la istoricul cetății de la Ineu*, în „Ziridava”, XIII, 1981, pp. 131-148; Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *Cetăți medievale din județul Arad*, Arad, 1999, pp. 53-55.

²² Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 280 din 27. 04. 2012

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a mast, having a blue flag on its upper side, floating on blue water. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three crenellated towers (Fig. 5).

Significance. The fortress evokes the medieval fortress of Lipova²³. The intersecting cross and crook represent the insignia of the episcopate of the old episcopal residence that existed in Lipova in the sixteenth century²⁴. The fountain signifies the mineral water springs of the area. The ship evokes the transports on the Mureș river in the Middle Ages and the salt trade, Lipova being an important port and customs for this product²⁵.

The mural crown with three embattled towers indicates that the locality has the status of a town.

The Nădlac town coat of arms²⁶ consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges, cut and split at the top. In the first quarter, on a golden field, there is a winged black raven, seen in profile, sitting on a green oak branch. The raven holds a silver ring with a red stone in its beak. In the second quarter there is a silver tower viewed from the front, with two windows. At the first window there is a black bugler blowing into a golden trumpet. On the right of the tower there is a bundle of golden wheatears. At the bottom, on the green field, there is a red wall with six rows of bricks, over which there is an open gold gate. Inside the gate, on a blue field, there is a silver caduceus. On top of the shield there is a wavy golden girdle. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three embattled towers (Fig. 6).

Significance. The raven with the ring in his beak symbolizes the family crest of Iancu de Hunedoara, who owned the great Nădlac domain, start-



Fig. 5

²³ Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-59; Adrian Andrei Rusu, *Castelarea carpatică. Fortificații și cetăți din Transilvania și teritoriile învecinate (sec. XIII-XIV)*, Editura Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, p. 523.

²⁴ Pr. dr. Pavel Vesa, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

²⁵ Géza Kovách, *Date cu privire la transportul sării pe Mureș în secolele X-XIII*, în „Ziridava”, XII, 1980, p.196; Mircea Timbus, Ioan Popovici, *Documente inedite despre navigația pe Mureș*, în „Studia Universitatis Vasile Goldiș”, Arad, nr. 5, 1995, pp. 351-361.

²⁶ “Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 13 din 9 ianuarie 2014.



Fig. 6

Augustin Mureșan, Călina Popovici, Ioan Popovici

ing from February 20th, 1451, as a result of a royal donation for his battle feats²⁷. The bundle of wheat ears refers to one of the basic occupations of the inhabitants, agriculture. The tower represents the local Evangelical Church, built between 1821 and 1822. The Baroque monument stands out through its bell tower, 54 meters high, which is related to a particular habit: every quarter of an hour a guard gives the signal with a brass trumpet, except for the hours when the bell tolls; if the watchman sees a fire, he puts up a black flag in that direction and a light at night²⁸; it was also used for letting commuters know when they should go to the train station. The time is currently announced by a bugler.

The stone wall also suggests that the town was a fortified center²⁹. The caduceus reveals the commercial activity of the town. The wavy girdle symbolizes the Mureș River, which flows through the territory of the locality. The mural crown with three embattled towers indicates that the locality has the status of a town.

The Pecica town coat of arms³⁰ consists of a split triangular shield with rounded edges. In the upper side, on a silver field, there is a fortress wall with a black Dacian banner above it. At the bottom, the shield is represented in a pale tripartite manner; in dextra, on a blue field, there is an arm with a scepter, all made of silver; in senestra, on a blue field, there are two intersecting crosses, a trefoil Orthodox one and a Latin one, both golden; on the top, on a green field, there are a golden loaf of bread and a wavy silver fascia. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three crenellated towers (Fig. 7).

Significance. The silver wall and the Dacian banner evoke the Ziridava Dacian fortification³¹, hypothetically located in the area. The arm with a

²⁷ P. Țiucra, *Pietre rămase. Contribuție la monografia județului Arad*, București, 1936; Dr. Peter Hügel, dr. Augustin Mureșan, Dan Demșea, dr. Horia Lascu, Virgil Șerban, Felicia Oarcea, *De-alungul frontierei*, Békéscsaba, 2005, p. 40

²⁸ Dr. Peter Hügel, dr. Augustin Mureșan, Dan Demșea, dr. Horia Lascu, Virgil Șerban, Felicia Oarcea, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁹ Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

³⁰ „Monitorul Oficial al României” Partea I, nr. 308 din 29 mai 2013, p. 10.

³¹ Ion Horațiu Crișan, *Ziridava*, Arad, 1978, p. 174.

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scepter refers to the uprising led by Pero Seghedinaț in 1735³². The two crosses signify the faith of the inhabitants and the loaf of bread signifies the fame of this product because of its quality, the famous “Pecica bread”. The wavy fascia symbolizes the Mureș River, which flows through the area. The mural crown with three embattled towers means that the locality has the status of a town.

The Pâncota town coat of arms³³ consists of a split triangular shield with rounded edges. At the top, on a red field, there is a silver fortress, built in black, castellated, with two lateral rectangular towers, with two windows. At the open gate there is a golden Greek cross which presses upon a crescent of silver. At the top of the shield, on a blue field, there is a silver pale part, with a black caduceus, flanked left and right by a vine with leaves and grapes, coiled around a prop, all made of gold. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three embattled towers (fig. 8).

Significance. The fortress gate symbolizes the Pâncota fortress, built in the 14th century³⁴. The cross and crescent evoke the defensive battles of the Christians against the Ottomans, which took place in the area in the 16th century. The caduceus signifies the commercial activity of the town. The vine represents the main occupation of the inhabitants, viticulture. The mural crown with three embattled towers means that the locality has the status of a town.

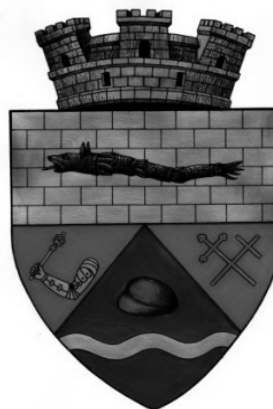


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

³² G. Kovách, *Stăpânirea habsburgică și destrămarea feudalismului*, în „Aradul permanentă în istoria patriei”, 1978, pp. 159-160.

³³ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, nr. 178 din 20 martie 2012.

³⁴ Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-66. Suzana Móre Heitel, *Abația de la Pâncota și vestigiile ei*, Editura Mega, 2006, pp. 9-10; Adrian Andrei Rusu, *op. cit.*, p. 528.



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

The Sântana town coat of arms³⁵ consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges. On the shield, on a blue background, there is a golden character with a halo around the head, viewed from the front, wearing specific clothes. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with three embattled towers (Fig. 9).

Significance. The stylized character depicts St. Anne, the origin of the name of the locality. The mural crown with three embattled towers means that the locality has the status of a town.

The Cermei commune coat of arms³⁶ consists of a split triangular shield with rounded edges. At the top, on a blue field, there is a silver book, flanked left and right by a golden oak leaf. At the top of the shield, on a red field, there are two crossed golden ears of wheat, and above them there is a trefoil silver cross. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with a crenellated tower (Fig. 10).

Significance. The oak leaves signify the many forests of the area and the wheat symbolizes the occupation of the inhabitants, agriculture. The book represents the circulation of old Romanian books in the area, such as “Cazania lui Varlaam”, prized and paid in kind by inhabitants of the village Șomoșcheș³⁷, which is nowadays part of the Cermei commune. The cross symbolizes the existence of a wooden church ever since the Middle Ages, before 1755³⁸.

³⁵ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, Anul XXIV, nr. 178 din data de 20 martie 2012.

³⁶ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, Anul XXIV, nr. 18, din 10 ianuarie 2012.

³⁷ A copy of the book „Cazania lui Varlaam” was bought in 1783, paid in kind, by the inhabitants of the Șomoșcheș village (Arad), vezi Florian Dudaș, *Vechi cărți românești călătore*, Editura Sport-Turism, București 1987, p. 64.

³⁸ Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *Biserici medievale din județul Arad*, Arad, 2000, p. 72.

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The mural crown with a crenellated tower signifies that the locality has the rank of commune.

The Felnac village coat of arms³⁹ consists of a triangular shield with rounded edges, cut by a wavy silver girdle. At the top, on a red field, there is a trefoil gold cross, flanked by two sheaves of golden wheat, which are crossed at the bottom. At the top of the shield, on a blue background, there is a silver battle axe, with a disc from the Bronze Age. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with a crenellated tower (Fig. 11).

Significance. The cross represents religious institutions within the locality⁴⁰. The ears of wheat symbolize the basic occupation of the inhabitants, agriculture, and their number indicates the number of villages of the commune. The wavy girdle represents the Mureş River. The axe refers to archaeological finds in the area, among which there was a bronze ax with a disc⁴¹. The mural crown with a crenellated tower means that the locality has the rank of commune.

The Frumuşeni commune coat of arms⁴² consists of a split triangular shield with rounded edges. In the upper field, on a silver field, there is a medieval mosaic, on a black background, consisting of 4 red plant elements, overlapping with a flower with cross-shaped gold petals. On the top of the shield, on a blue field, there is a wavy silver fascia. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with a crenellated tower (Fig. 12).



Fig. 11

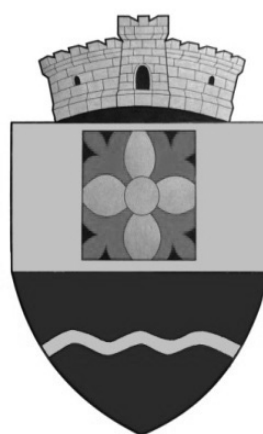


Fig. 12

³⁹ „Monitorul Oficial al României” Partea I, Anul XXVI, nr. 839 din aprilie 2014.

⁴⁰ Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *Biserici medievale...*, p. 91; Pr. dr. Pavel Vesa, *op. cit.*, p. 609.

⁴¹ *** M. Barbu, P. Hügel, G. P. Hurezan, E. D. Pădureanu, *Repertoriul arheologic al Mureşului inferior judeţul Arad*, Editura Orizonturi Universitare, Timişoara, 1999, p. 67 (Felnac, 1/a.).

⁴² „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, Anul XXV, nr. 193 din 5 aprilie 2013.



Fig. 13

Significance. The medieval mosaic represents one of the archaeological discoveries within the church of the Bizere monastery⁴³, located near the commune. The wavy fascia symbolizes the Mureș River, which flows through the commune. The mural crown with a crenellated tower means that the locality has the rank of commune.

The Hălmagiu commune coat of arms⁴⁴ consists of a split triangular shield with rounded edges, divided at the top. At the top, on the right, on azure, a silver church, seen from the front. At the top, on the left, in a golden field, there is an uprooted fir tree. At the bottom, on a red field, on a green terrace, there is a horseman in armor, holding a spear in his right hand, all made of gold. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with a crenellated tower (Fig. 13).

Significance. The silver building symbolizes the princely church from the 14th century⁴⁵. The fir tree has a double meaning, the forest wealth of the area and permanent regeneration. The horseman symbolizes the participation of the Romanian army, led by the ruler Moga and his sons, to the battle against the Turks at Câmpia Mierlei, in 1448. The mural crown with a crenellated tower means that the locality has the rank of commune.

The Șiștarovăț village coat of arms⁴⁶ consists of a cut triangular shield with rounded edges. At the top, on a blue field, on a green terrace, there is a wooden church, seen from the front, with a front door, a tower

⁴³ Ileana Burnichioiu, Adrian Andrei Rusu, *Mozaicurile medievale de la Bizere*, Editura Mega, 2006; Ileana Burnichioiu, „Ruinele mănăstirii Bizere. Cercetări vechi și noi”, în *Mănăstirea Bizere*, I, - ediția a II-a, revizuită și adăugită -, Editori: Adrian Andrei Rusu, Ileana Burnichioiu, Editura Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, pp. 37-45.

⁴⁴ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, Partea I, Anul XXV, nr. 193 din 5 aprilie 2013.

⁴⁵ Gheorghe Târcaș, „Biserica voievodală din Hălmagiu”, în *Mitropolia Banatului*, nr. 7-9 (iulie-septembrie), 1980, pp. 550-557; Adrian Andrei Rusu, George Pascu Hurezan, *Biserici medievale...*, pp. 97-107.

⁴⁶ „Monitorul Oficial al României”, nr. 747 din 25 octombrie 2011; Augustin Mureșan, *Stema comunei Șiștarovăț, județul Arad și semnificația ei*, în „Istorie, cultură și societate: volum omagial dedicat istoricului Stelean Ioan Boia” (coordonator), Vasile Goldiș University Press, Arad, 2014, pp. 109-111.

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with two windows and a pointed roof ending in a cross, all made out of silver. At the bottom, on a red field, there is a lime kiln, made of silver, running, inside which a red burning flame is seen on a black background. The shield is adorned by a silver mural crown with a crenellated tower (Fig. 14).

Significance. The church symbolizes the wooden churches in the villages of the commune and the inhabitants' ancestral faith. In 1802, the wooden church with the "Assumption of Mary" dedication was consecrated in Șiștarovăț, by Archpriest Ioan Mihailovici al Lipovei⁴⁷. The church is located on the hill east of the village. The lime kiln represents one of the occupations of the inhabitants, burning limestone, particularly in the Varnița village, which is part of the commune. The mural crown with a crenellated tower means that the locality has the rank of commune.

These coats of arms individualize the County and the city of Arad, as well as some Arad towns and communes. In addition to the various items they include, they also symbolize, in a concentrated form, the historical traditions as well as the economic, social and cultural specificities of these administrative territorial units, also comprising representations of historical and religious significance, attesting the ancient faith of the inhabitants of these lands.

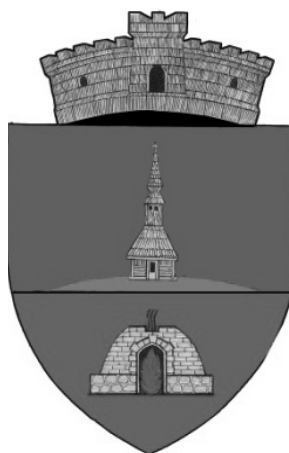


Fig. 14

⁴⁷ Preot Pavel Vesa, *Biserici de lemn de odinioară*, Editura Gutenberg, Arad, 1997, p. 70; Idem, *Bisericile de mir arădene între tradiție și modernitate*, Editura Mirador, Arad, 2000, p. 171.