

The evolution of the Szekler flag in the last four centuries

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Abstract

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Szekler (Hungarian: Székely) Community was planted by the Hungarian kings in a compact territory, Szeklerland (Terra Siculorum), in southeastern Transylvania, to defend the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary. The Szekler coat of arms was created in the fifteenth century. In 1659, the National Assembly of the Principality of Transylvania (created in 1571) legitimised another symbol: right, a sun with a face; left, a crescent moon. When used in a coat of arms, these elements were placed on an azure field. Szekler military troops had different flags and some early seventeenth century examples are presented in this paper. After the First World War, Transylvania became part of Romania. After the Second World War, repressed by the communist regime, the Szeklers used a red-black flag inspired by the traditional design of Szekler doorposts. After the Romanian Revolution of 1989, the Szekler National Council in 2004 adopted a flag similar to those used four centuries ago. In 2009, the Congress of Szekler Local Councils declared the to be the flag of Szeklerland. This flag is blue with a golden fess, the upper stripe charged with a star and crescent moon.

In Romania several domestic scandals have centred around the raising of the Szekler flag in Szeklerland,¹ Transylvania, in the past thirteen years. There has also been a diplomatic dispute between Romania and Hungary regarding the raising of the Szekler flag in Hungary. Further, in 2016 a diplomatic furore blew up when the US Ambassador to Romania appeared in a photo with the Szekler flag.



The Szekler flag

In the following paper, let's see who the Szeklers are, where Szeklerland is, what their coat of arms looks like, what flags they took to war four centuries ago, and what has changed since, and what flag represents their current pursuit of autonomy.

¹ Hungarian, *Székelyföld*; Romanian, *Ținutul Secuiesc*; Latin, *Terra Siculorum*.

The Szeklerland

The origin of the Szekler population is not clear.² Several theories have been proposed in the course of history, but I do not wish to engage in these now.³ One thing is certain: they are a military ethnic group of light cavalry, who joined the Hungarian conquerors and absorbed the language and culture of the Hungarians.⁴

The kings of Hungary settled the Szeklers in Transylvania to defend the eastern part of the country. In the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Szeklers populated south-eastern Transylvania. In a compact area, they organised themselves into seats, in a similar way to the Saxons also settled by the kings of Hungary, mainly in southern Transylvania.⁵



The former Kingdom of Hungary showing the modern state in white

In the period when Szeklerland belonged to the Hungarian Kingdom, the Szeklers enjoyed privileges: they were obliged to fight for the defence of the country's borders; in return, they did not pay tax, except when the king was crowned or married, and on the birth of the heir apparent. On such occasions they had to deliver oxen (cattle).⁶

After the battle of Mohács (1526), Hungary was divided into two. After the Ottoman Turks occupied the capital, Buda, in 1541, Hungary was divided into three parts: the west remained the Hungarian Kingdom under Habsburg rule; the central part came under the Ottoman Turks; and in the east the Principality of Transylvania was formed.⁷ Szeklerland was part of the latter.

² Hungarian, *Székely*; Romanian, *Secui*; Latin, *Siculi*.

³ Zoltán Kordé, 'A székelyek mint a magyarsághoz csatlakozott katonai segédnép', in Ákos Egyed (ed.), *Székelyföld története I* (Székelyudvarhely: Haáz Rezső Múzeum, 2016), pp. 117-21; Elek Benkő, 'A székelyek "magyar" eredetéről', in *ibid.* pp. 122-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ József Benkő, *Erdély* (Sepsiszentgyörgy: Székely Nemzeti Múzeum, 2014), p. 184; Elek Benkő, 'Székelyek a középkori magyar királyságban', in *Székelyföld története I*, pp. 129-73.

⁶ Ákos Egyed, 'Az adómentesség és az "ökörsütés"', in *Székelyföld története I*, p. 366.

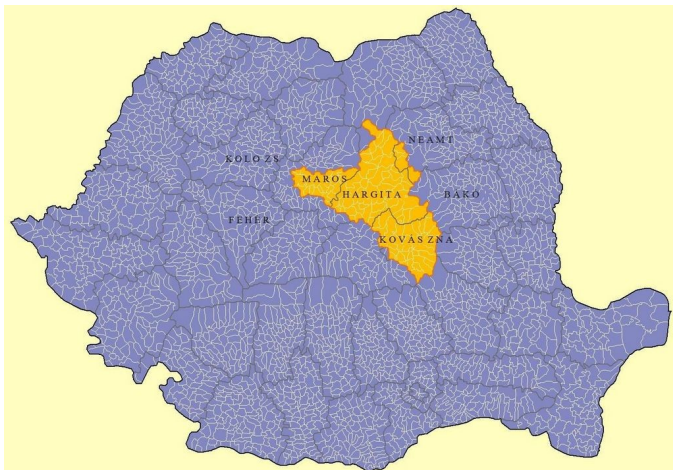
⁷ Teréz Oborni, 'A mohácsi csata és következményei', in *Székelyföld története I*, pp. 488–503.

During the period of the Principality of Transylvania, numerous battles were fought in Transylvania. Sometimes the Szeklers fought for the Turks against Habsburg supporters, sometimes for the Habsburgs against the Turks. When they were not expressly defending the borders against Turkish and Tartar invasions, they took part in several domestic battles. The Transylvanian princes gradually restricted the rights and freedom of the Szeklers.⁸

Transylvania's annexation by the Habsburg monarchy in 1690, the defeat of Francis II Rákóczi's War of Independence in 1711, and developments in military technology removed the need for the light-armed Szekler troops. The de facto abrogation of their rights and privileges began at this time, to be completed *de jure* in 1848.⁹

Under Habsburg rule, Hungary and Transylvania (including Szeklerland) were governed separately. After the Austrian-Hungarian compromise in 1867, Transylvania became part of the Hungarian Kingdom within the Dual Monarchy. After the First World War and the treaty of Trianon, Transylvania (including Szeklerland) became part of the Kingdom of Romania.

After the Second Vienna Award, the territory of Szeklerland, together with Northern Transylvania, was annexed back to Hungary for a short time. But after the Second World War it once again became part of Romania. And today, Szeklerland, together with Transylvania, remains part of Romania.



The Szeklerland (Székelyföld) in Romania

The symbols of the Szeklers

The Szekler community had a coat of arms that has survived in several places from the late fifteenth century or early sixteenth century: for example, the ceiling of the Reformed church in Székelydálya/Daia or the predella of the former Gothic altar in the Roman Catholic church of Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc.¹⁰ However, it did not have

8 Teréz Oborni, 'A székelyek országrendisége és a szabadságjogok', in *Székelyföld története I*, pp. 34-107.

9 Ákos Egyed, *A székelyek rövid története a megtelepedéstől 1918-ig* (Csíkszereda: Pallas-Akadémia, 2006), pp. 181-249.

a single flag that represented the entire population or territory of Szeklerland.¹¹



'Old' Szekler coat of arms: left, Székelydálya/Daia;
right, Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc

The Szeklers had military flags indicating different infantry and cavalry troops. These included devices that distinguished between units raised by different seats and towns, similar to those carried by the troops of Transylvanian princes or nobles.

Fortunately for posterity, many military flags were drawn and painted over 400 years ago, and these drawings have survived in the archives.¹²

During the Long Turkish War or Thirteen Years War (1593-1606), sometimes known in Europe as the Fifteen Years War to include the Bihać campaign of 1591-2, the military flags captured by the Habsburgs and their allies were taken to the imperial court.¹³

At the battle of Goroszló (3 August 1601), Habsburg mercenaries led by Georgio Basta and the troops of Michael the Brave, former Prince of Wallachia, defeated the army of Sigismund Báthory, Prince of Transylvania.

The flags captured in the battle were sent to the court of Emperor Rudolph II in Prague, where they were placed on public display.

10 Attila István Szekeres, 'Stema comunității secuiești', in Attila István Szekeres (ed.), *Simboluri istorice secuiești* (Odorheiu Secuiesc: Centrul Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale Harghita, 2017), pp. 17-23; Attila István Szekeres, 'The Sun and Crescent in the Seal of the Szekler Community', in *Acta Siculica 2014–2015 – A Székely Nemzeti Múzeum Évkönyve* (Sepsiszentgyörgy: Székely Nemzeti Múzeum, 2015), pp. 117-29; Attila István Szekeres, *Székely jelképek* (Sepsiszentgyörgy: Háromszék Vármegye, 2013), pp. 9-12; Attila István Szekeres, 'A székely címer', in János Mihály (ed.), *Jelképek a Székelyföldön. Címerek, pecsétek, zászlók* (Csíkszereda: Hargita Megye Tanácsának Műemlékvédelmi Közszolgálat, 2011), pp. 15-28.

11 János Mihály, 'Secuui sub steaguri', in Szekeres, *Simboluri istorice secuiești*, pp. 149-51.

12 Sándor Mika, 'Erdélyi hadi zászlók 1601-ből', *Turul: A Magyar Heraldikai és Genealógiai Társaság közlönye*, XI, 1 (1893), pp. 9-12.

13 Ibid.



*Captured flags shown in 'The Allegory of the Battle of Goroszló, 1601',
Hans von Aachen (1552-1615)*

Georg Puchner, an engineer officer of Christian II, Prince-Elector of Saxony was there and drew for his lord the 110 captured military flags symbolising victory.¹⁴ The pages were included in a codex preserved by the Saxon Royal Library, Dresden (today, the Saxon State and University Library, Dresden).

Nearly a third of the flags, 36 of 110, bear the heraldic device of the princely family, the three wolf's fangs of the Báthory coat of arms.¹⁵



Transylvanian flags in the first Dresden codex

Infantry colours from towns such as Kolozsvár/Cluj, Brassó/Braşov and Segesvár/Sighişoara are apparent, as are two Szekler colours. An infantry colour comprises a white field with the devices of the old Szekler coat of arms, similar to that described and illustrated above.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 11.



Szekler infantry colour, 1601

There is also the cavalry standard of Moses Székely, Prince of Transylvania, killed in the battle of Brassó/Braşov (1603). This is a blue-white-blue flag with a forked tail, bearing the monogram Z. M. (i.e. *Zekel Moses*) in blue on the white stripe.



*Cavalry standard of
Moses Székely, 1603*

The Dresden library also contains another flag codex.



Transylvanian flags in the second Dresden codex

The codex is undated and unattributed, but the flags are similar to those described above. They originate from this period and the drawings seem also to be the work of Georg Puchner.¹⁶ The codex displays drawings of 190 flags, both Turkish and

¹⁶ Mika, *Erdélyi hadi zászlók*, p. 11.

Transylvanian. The Turkish flags may be those captured by Habsburg supporters during the siege of the fortress of Győr (1594), while the Transylvanian flags – which include 27 Báthory flags – may come from the battles of Sellenberk/Şelimbär (1599) and Brassó/Braşov (1603).¹⁷

The codex also displays a Szekler infantry colour comprising an azure rectangle cut by a central white horizontal stripe. On the white stripe are an eight-pointed star, a crescent moon, a second star and a saltire, all in gold.



Szekler infantry colour, 1603

Another painting by Hans von Aachen, *The Allegory of the Battle of Brassó* [Braşov] shows Moses Székely's flag with its monogram, with a portrait of the deceased prince placed between the letters.¹⁸



The Allegory of the Battle of Brassó (Braşov), Hans von Aachen (1552-1615); Székely's flag appears left of centre

The painting also includes a different Szekler cavalry standard: a fork-tailed pennon, white-blue-white, whose central blue stripe displays a white crescent moon between two eight-pointed gold stars.



Szekler cavalry standard, 1603: reconstruction

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Mihály, 'Secuii sub steaguri', p. 155.

These three colours are the prototypes of the modern Szekler flag.



Top, three Szekler military colours, 1601-3; below, the modern Szekler flag

Similar symbols can also be seen in certain churches in Szeklerland.¹⁹

In 1659 the Transylvanian Diet codified the seals of Transylvania's estates.²⁰ Article 3 of the law enacted by the Diet of Szászsebes/Sebeş/Mühlbach (24 May–15 June 1659) states: 'four seals should be cut accordingly to the four bigger estates of the country, namely that of the Transylvanian counties, then the second that of the Szekler community's, the third that of the Saxon nation, the fourth that of the part of Hungary annexed to Transylvania.'

'The seals,' it continued, 'should look as follows: the Transylvanian counties should have half of an eagle carved as their sign on the seal, with the inscription "*Sigillum comitatum Transylvaniae*".²¹ The Szeklers should have a half moon and a sun, with the inscription: "*Sigillum nationis Siculicae*".²² The Saxons should have seven towns, with the inscription: "*Sigillum nationis Saxonicae*".²³ The part ['Partium'] of Hungary annexed to Transylvania should have four rivers and the double cross, with the inscription: "*Sigillum partium Hungariae Transylvaniae annexarum*".²⁴

Thus the symbols of the Szekler 'estates', the sun and crescent moon, were officially instituted at this time. Three of the four seals – for the Transylvanian counties, the

19 Szekeres, 'The Sun and Crescent', pp. 118-19; Szekeres, *Székely jelképek*, pp. 15-17; Szekeres, 'A székely címer', p. 21.

20 Sándor Szilágyi, *Monumenta Comitativa Regni Transsylvaniae. Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek, XII. kötet (1658–1661)* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1887), pp. 291-310.

21 The seal of the Transylvanian counties.

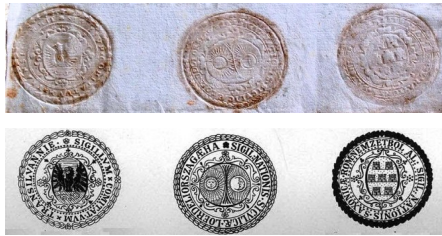
22 The seal of the Szekler nation.

23 The seal of the Saxon nation.

24 The seal of the Partium, the part of Hungary annexed to Transylvania.

Szeklers and the Saxons were made in the same year.²⁵ However, the fourth seal was not, the Partium having fallen under Ottoman control in 1660.

The Szekler and Saxon seals were quickly lost, but new replacements were carved in 1661.²⁶ The seals of the three Transylvanian 'estates' – Transylvanian, Szekler and Saxon – were used jointly upon the documents thus authenticated.²⁷



*The seals of the three estates of Transylvania:
Transylvanian, Szekler and Saxon*

The seal matrix of the Szekler nation was cast in silver, then carved.²⁸ In the centre is an ellipse surrounded by a Baroque scroll; within the ellipse is (dexter) a sun in splendour and (sinister) a crescent moon with a human face. Around the rim of the matrix is incised an inscription in Latin and Hungarian: 'SIGIL. NATIONIS SICULICAE. LO ERDELIORSZAGAE HA'.

The Latin text 'SIGIL[lum] NATIONIS SICULICAE' means the seal of the Szekler nation. The Hungarian text is a fragment that is continued on the Saxon seal matrix. On the latter, the Latin text 'SIGIL. NATIONIS SAXONICAE' (i.e. seal of the Saxon nation) adjoins the Hungarian fragment 'ROM NEMZETBOL AL'.

When combined the two fragmentary Hungarian texts read 'LO ERDELIORSZAGAE HAROM NEMZETBOL AL', which can be further decoded as 'TRANSYLVANIA'S REUNION OF THREE NATIONS'. We can see from this alone that the seals were conceived to be used collectively.

This was a very significant moment because it codified in law the Szekler symbols – the sun paired with the crescent moon.

25 Sandor Pál-Antal, *Történelmi szimbólumaink. Székelyföldi pecsétek* (Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2014), pp. 36; Jenő Zepeczaner, A székely nemzet pecsétje, in *Jelképek a Székelyföldön*, pp. 76.

26 Sandor Pál-Antal, *Történelmi szimbólumaink. Székelyföldi pecsétek* (Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2014), pp. 36; Jenő Zepeczaner, A székely nemzet pecsétje, in *Jelképek a Székelyföldön*, pp. 76.

27 Romanian National Archives, Harghita County, F. 251; 'Molnár István' City Museum, Cristuru Secuiesc, seal collection, registry no. 61.

28 National Museum of Transylvanian History, Cluj Napoca, Collection of Medieval History, registry no. F3900. The register gives its weight as 31.9g. According to my measurements it is 35.3mm in diameter and 3.8mm thick.



Left, the Szekler seal matrix, 1661; right, the Szekler seal

After the Ottoman Turks were expelled and the Principality of Transylvania was annexed to the Habsburg Empire, the controversies concerning military flags ended.

When in 1848 the parliaments of Hungary and Transylvania decided in favour of the reunification of their two states, they had to fight for their independence from the Austrian Empire.

In 1848–9, the Szeklers also joined the War of Independence and like the Transylvanian Hungarians generally used the red-white-green flag.²⁹



*Flag of the guardians of
Sepsiszentgyörgy, 1848:
original*

At the same time, Transylvanian Romanians, who opposed reunification with Hungary, began to use the blue-yellow-red tricolour, but in horizontal stripes instead of the vertical pattern that later became the official flag of Romania.

After their defeat in the War of Independence, Transylvanians were unable to fly their flags until after the Austrian-Hungarian compromise of 1867; already unified with Hungary, the Szeklers then used the Hungarian tricolour.

In 1876, during the administrative reform carried out in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the seats were abolished and transformed into counties. The county flags included their respective coats of arms. The sun and moon, as the symbols of the Szeklers, also featured on the coats of arms of the counties of Szeklerland.³⁰

The coat of arms of Háromszék County contains both the old and the new Szekler

²⁹ János Mihály, 'Magyar nemzeti színek a Székelyföldön 1848–1849-ben', in Mihály (ed.), *Jelképek a Székelyföldön*, pp. 193-206.

³⁰ Mihály, 'Secuui sub steaguri', pp. 165-8.

coat of arms. Its flag is blue and is preserved in the Szekler National Museum.³¹ The field of the coat of arms is also azure, but has faded on the surviving flag.



*Flag of Háromszék County, 1896:
original*

The flag of Udvarhely County is gold and blue, with the coat of arms. A reconstruction can be seen in the image below. In the second and third quarters of the coat of arms, both sun and moon are visible.³²



*Flag of Udvarhely County, 1907:
reconstruction*

The flag of Csík-Gyergyó-Kászonszék County is blue and red, with the coat of arms. Again, a reconstruction can be seen on the image below. The first and second quarters of the coat of arms contain the sun and crescent moon. The letters patent from 1793 mention specifically that the sun and crescent moon are the symbols of the Szeklers.³³



*Flag of Csík County, 1896:
reconstruction*

31 *Ibid.*, p. 167.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 166-7.

33 '*Luna crescent argentea Sole ex insigni Siculorum desumta*', cited in Sándor Pál-Antal, 'Csík-Gyergyó-Kászonszék címeres pecsétje', in János Mihály (ed.) *Címer és pecsét a Székelyföldön* (Székelyudvarhely: Hargita Megyei Hagyományőrzési Forrásközpont, 2012), p. 110.

After their defeat in the 1848–9 War of Independence, in protest against Austrian oppression, many settlements in Szeklerland made and used community seals including the sun and crescent moon until the end of the First World War.

We maintain a record of over 60 seals of this kind.³⁴



Three seal matrices of communities in Szeklerland

Claiming the use of symbols

By the Paris Peace Treaties which ended the Second World War, Northern Transylvania, including Szeklerland, was annexed to Romania.

Soon after, under pressure from the Soviet Union, communist power was installed in the country. In this period, some residents of the former Csíkszék region created their own flags as a sign of resistance. However, they did so covertly, sharing the secret only with reliable friends.

Although these flags were hidden rather than displayed, they served nonetheless to reinforce a sense of national identity.

Inspired by the colours of the local Szekler women's folk costume, the flag became red and black. Embroidered on it were the Szekler symbols, the sun and crescent moon, or the Szekler coat of arms displaying the two Szekler symbols on an azure field.³⁵

34 Szekeres, 'The Sun and Crescent', p. 120; Szekeres, *Székely jelképek*, pp. 30-31; Szekeres, 'A székely címer', pp. 26-7; János Szócs, 'Csíkszéki falupecsétek a Csíki Székely Múzeumban', in Hunor Boér (ed.), *Acta – 1998, II* (Csíkszereda–Sepsiszentgyörgy: A Csíki Székely Múzeum és a Székely Nemzeti Múzeum évkönyve, 1999), pp. 125-45.

35 My personal experience.



Red and black Szekler flag

After communist rule was overthrown in the December 1989 revolution, and it seemed that total freedom had arrived, these flags emerged. The enthusiasm prevailing in the country also spread among the Hungarians. On holidays they raised the red-white-green flag, and in some places also the red-and-black flag. Such an occasion was 15 March, the holiday of the entire Hungarian nation, as well as the date of the Csíksomlyó Pentecostal Pilgrimage.

The Hungarians of Romania hoped for the re-establishment of their rights, including the right to use their own symbols, but their hopes were quickly dashed. The red-and-black flag did not spread throughout Szeklerland but was used only in the former Csíkszék, where it can still be seen in churches and during various events.



Commemoration with red and black Szekler flags

The Szekler community has a twofold identity, Hungarian and Szekler, each reinforcing the other.

On the basis of their traditional autonomy, and following the example of other Western European subnational groups,³⁶ the Romanian Hungarians who constitute c.75-80 per cent of the Szeklerland population claimed a territorial and cultural autonomy which the Romanian authorities refuse to recognise.

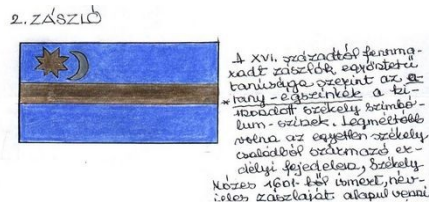
In 2003 the Szekler National Council (SzNC) was established as a grassroots initiative, with the aim of reinforcing the struggle for autonomy.³⁷

In 2004, the organisation adopted its own symbols.³⁸ Ádám Kónya (1935-2008), a vice-president of the Szekler National Council, and former director of the Szekler National Museum, designed the symbols: the coat of arms, the flag and the gonfalon. These were accepted by the general meeting.

36 See, for example, South Tyrol in Italy, the Åland Islands in Finland, etc.

37 Erzsébet Simó, 'A Székelyföldet megilleti a területi autonómia – Megalakult a Székely Nemzeti Tanács', *Háromszék* (27 October 2003).

38 Erzsébet Simó, 'A Székely Nemzeti Tanács – Elfogadta a Székelyföld autonómiastatútumát', *Háromszék* (19 January 2004).



Szekler National Council: coat of arms and flag, designed by Ádám Kónya, 2004



Szekler National Council: gonfalon, designed by Ádám Kónya, 2004

At mass events such as holidays and protests, an increasing number of people appeared with the flag of the Szekler National Council, expressing Szekler identity and claiming their autonomy. They also raised it on buildings, private and public. The Romanian authorities protested against the use and raising of the Szekler flag, but prohibition only provoked further resistance. The SzNC coat of arms was not used, however.



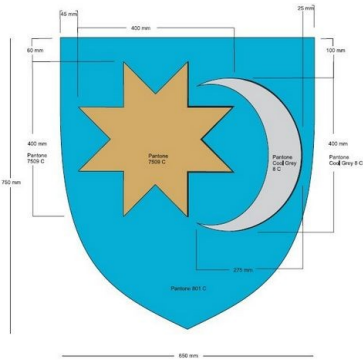
Protestors wave the flag of the Szekler National Council

On 5 September 2009, the Congress of Szekler Local Councils, held in Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc, decided to adopt the coat of arms of the Szekler National Council, and its highly popular flag, as the symbols of Szeklerland.

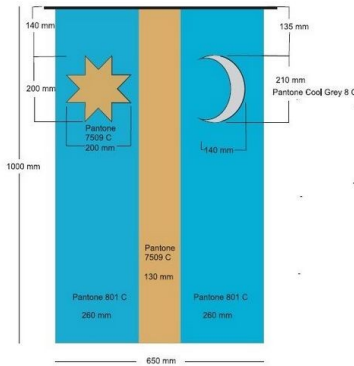
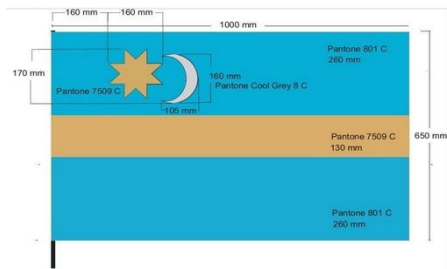
They did so without seeking specialist advice,³⁹ so Kónya's existing designs were adopted using the same colour codes and proportions.⁴⁰

39 The designer Ádám Kónya had died in 2008. During preparations for the congress, it was suggested that as a specialist, I should be requested to confirm that these symbols were correct. However, no consultation took place.

40 http://sznt.sic.hu/hu-sic/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=84&Itemid=21&lang=hu [accessed 17.3.2017].



*The symbols of Szeklerland:
official specifications of the
coat of arms, flag and gonfalon
adopted in 2009*



I disapprove of their failure to respect heraldic and sigillographic tradition. In 1659 the Transylvanian Diet codified in law that the Szekler symbols are the sun and crescent moon, as shown below. The sun's rays are oriented to the four cardinal points, and the sun and moon are on the same level.

If Konya's pattern with an eight-pointed star is to be used it should respect this alignment.



Szekler coat of arms



Szekler flag with sun and moon

The Szekler flag with the eight-pointed star has spread and multiplied since 2009. Its use is still prohibited but more and more flags emerge.



Indeed, the Szekler flag flew from the Hungarian Parliament in February 2013, despite Romanian protests, as a sign of solidarity with the Szekler community.⁴¹

Hans G. Klemm, the US Ambassador to Romania, visited Szeklerland in September 2016 and triggered another diplomatic row. He was presented by local leaders with a Szekler flag and subsequently pictured in the press.⁴²

I note that the flag presented to Ambassador Klemm displays the sun and crescent moon (seen in reverse in the photo above). As a heraldist, I will do my utmost to see that the Szekler flag and coat of arms (not used at present) gradually revert to the symbols codified in 1659, with the sun instead of the star and both celestial bodies placed on the same level.

41 <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-14235305-steagul-secuiesc-arborat-parlamentul-ungariei-vicepremierul-maghiar-folosirea-simbolurilor-etnice-constituie-drept-fundamental.htm>; http://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/steagul-secuiesc-arborat-parlamentul-ungariei-1_511e4b5600f5182b85654047/index.html; <https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/externe/mapamond/steagul-secuiesc-a-fost-arborat-pe-parlamentul-ungariei-mae-isi-exprima-profundul-regret-44801>; <http://jurnalul.ro/stiri/externe/steagul-secuiesc-este-arborat-pe-cladirea-parlamentului-ungariei-636838.html> [all accessed 18.3.2017].

42 <https://www.antena3.ro/politica/ambasadorul-sua-la-bucuresti-s-a-fotografiat-cu-steagul-secuiesc-la-o-intalnire-cu-liderii-maghiari-376632.html>; <https://revista22.ro/70256340/steagul-secuiesc-si-noile-critici-la-adresa-ambasadorului-american-la-bucuresti.html>; <https://www.click.ro/news/national/ambasadorul-sua-la-bucuresti-s-pozat-cu-steagul-secuiesc>; <http://evz.ro/ce-spune-mae-despre-fotografia-lui-hans-klemm-cu-steagul-tinutului-secuiesc.html>; <http://www.romaniajournal.ro/update3-us-ambassador-hans-klemm-photographed-with-the-szecklerland-flag-claims-politeness/> [all accessed 20.3.2017].



The Szekler flag flies from the Hungarian Parliament building



The US Ambassador (second left) poses with the Szekler flag

Finally, I emphasise that the bans imposed by the Romanian authorities have succeeded only in turning the flag initially used as a symbol of identity by the Szekler National Council into a widespread Szekler flag that represents the struggle for autonomy of the minority Hungarian national community in Romania.

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