

Sergey Posokhov
(*V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University*)
ORCID: 0000-0003-1390-0625

Territorial Heraldry of the Kharkiv Region: Tradition and Innovation¹

Summary: The article traces the evolution of territorial heraldry in the Kharkiv Region (northeastern Ukraine). Emblem-making began here rather late — in the second half of the eighteenth century, although first references to local territorial coats of arms belong to the second half of the 17th century. It proceeded under the influence of long-established Western European tradition and according to rules developed within the framework of a centralized Russian Empire. During the Soviet period, such traditions and rules underwent a radical revision. This uneven historical background determined the uniqueness of the process of emblem-making in the era of Ukrainian independence. Today's territorial heraldry of the Kharkiv Region accommodates a rather heterogeneous mix of inherited features. Modern emblem-making has often been spontaneous and uncoordinated. The body of territorial emblems we have today is eclectic; its formation is still underway. The role of city emblems in the self-representation of communities remains insignificant.

Keywords: territorial heraldry of the Kharkiv Region, traditions of emblem-making in Ukraine, city coat of arms.

The city of Kharkiv is located in the east of Ukraine. It is the center of the Kharkiv Region (Oblast), which includes most of the area known in the 17th and 18th centuries as Slobidska Ukraine, or Slobozhanshchyna. The city traces its history to the middle of the 17th century, similarly to many other settlements in Slobidska Ukraine. It is understandable, therefore, that the local heraldic tradition began to develop in these lands only in the late-heraldic period of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The problem of Kharkiv's first coat of arms is complicated. No depiction of it has survived. Its appearance can only be surmised from a late 18th-century description, which states that a strained bow and arrow were pictured on it.² Some authors believe that this image appeared for the first time on the city seal.³ The choice of objects reminds us that initially Kharkiv was a fortress town sitting astride the routes of Crimean and Nogai Tatar raids. However, it appears that

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² *Материалы для истории колонизации и быта Харьковской и отчасти Курской и Воронежской губернии в XVI–XVIII ст.*, Харьков 1890, V. 2, p. 214.

³ И.Е. Саратов, *История харьковских гербов*, Харьков 2000, p. 41.

the coat of arms was not approved by the higher imperial authorities. This example in and of itself allows us to raise the question of tradition and innovation in emblem-making.

This first coat of arms of the city of Kharkiv is believed to have followed the heraldic tradition going back to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. That is why its attempted reconstruction (fig. 1) places the strained bow and arrow into a so-called Polish-style shield.⁴ However, as early as the 18th century, territorial heraldry became a subject of interest to the government of the emerging Russian Empire. An Office of Heraldry was established in 1722. Among its functions was the designing of emblems for regimental banners. Territorial and dynastic arms began to be developed there as well. S. A. Kolychev was appointed the first Master Herald. Painter Franz (Franciscus) Santi, a “Piedmont nobleman brought up in Paris,” was assigned to him as an aid. In a report, Santi declared his readiness to compose city coats of arms according to the European tradition.⁵ However, heraldic bearings for Slobozhanshchyna towns began to be designed only after 1734. They were commissioned to Johann Simon Beckenstein, professor of law at the University of Königsberg, who was invited to St. Petersburg to give classes to Russian students on, among other things, “heraldic science.” He produced 41 coat of arms designs for the five Sloboda regiments,⁶ including the Kharkiv regiment. The symbolism of one of the designs, for instance, was explained thus: “It is empty around Kharkiv, and for that reason it will do to place a tower in the middle of the shield.”⁷ We know that Beckenstein received from Ukraine five notebooks with drawings of regimental and company (sotnya) banners from the Prince A.I. Shakhovskiy. Some of these banners included coats of arms Beckenstein interpreted as Polish, but he considered their use inopportune.⁸ It is hard to say why he thought so. One likely possibility was the desire to overcome the “Polish tradition” in the relatively recently annexed lands. But perhaps Beckenstein simply saw this tradition as “outdated.” The drawings of many banners in the notebooks he received contained not only images of the double-headed eagle, but also those of saints, which, as we know, were characteristic of the early-heraldic, but not the late-heraldic period. That may be why Beckenstein observed that “images of saints may be used with more propriety on ecclesiastical, rather than military banners.”⁹ However, he also further noted that he had never specifically occupied himself with heraldry and his knowledge in this area was limited. Accordingly, he essentially went about creating new coats of arms based on his understanding of the “heraldic norm,” as well as the peculiarities of the regions that these emblems were to represent. This was in and of itself problematic, because the town descriptions he had at his disposal were apparently very superficial. In the end, the project was not completed at that time.

The first official coats of arms for Kharkiv and other towns in the region would appear only in 1781. The prominent Russian historian Prince M.M. Shcherbatov, who became head of the Office of Heraldry in 1771, was involved in their creation. His self-imposed charge was to make it “so that not foreign, but Russian heraldic bearings were looked upon as examples, without however departing from the general rules of this science.”¹⁰ He prepared drawings

⁴ See: Б.П. Зайцев, И.С. Саратов, *Герб Харкова*, “Український історичний журнал” 1980, № 11.

⁵ Quoted after: Н.А. Соболева, *Российская городская и областная геральдика XVIII–XIX вв.*, Москва 1981, p. 40.

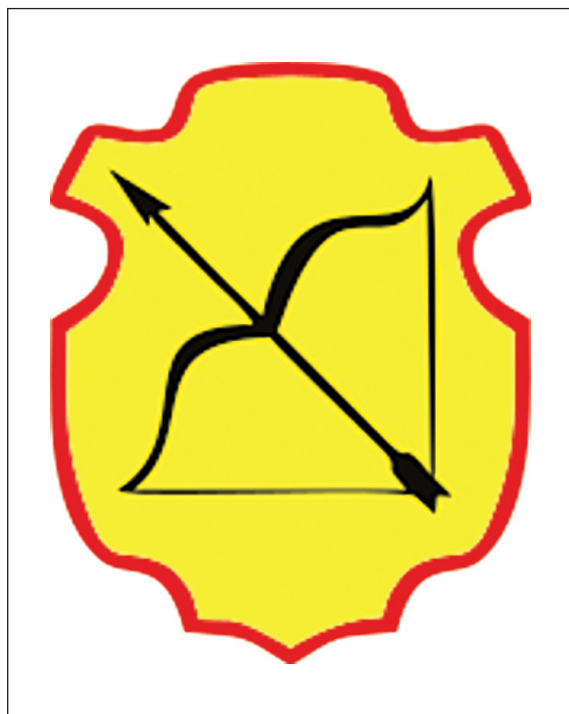
⁶ That is, they were offered a number of alternatives (these designs are preserved in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents). For instance, for the town of Sumy Beckenstein prepared 14 versions of a coat of arms.

⁷ See: *Материалы для истории императорской Академии наук*, Санкт-Петербург 1880, V. 2, p. 544.

⁸ Н.А. Соболева, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

⁹ See: *Материалы для истории императорской Академии наук*, *op. cit.*, p. 541.

¹⁰ Quoted after: Н.А. Соболева, *op. cit.*, p. 100.



1. The first coat of arms of the city of Kharkiv



2. Kharkiv's coat of arms

of coats of arms that were later elaborated by the Master Herald A.A. Volkov. On September 21, 1781 Catherine II wrote on the projects of coats of arms for Kharkiv and other towns of the Kharkiv Namestnichestvo, “To be thus.”

Kharkiv's coat of arms (fig. 2) was a French-style shield with a cornucopia and a caduceus — the staff of Mercury — depicted in its green field. We see how a rethinking of the city's significance was reflected in the symbolic vocabulary: from a frontier fortress to a center of trade. We should also note that the arms of the other fourteen towns of the Kharkiv Namestnichestvo¹¹ were newly created emblems and followed a system in which the upper part of a county (uezd) town's shield contained symbols associated with the capital of its namestnichestvo.¹² Thus in our case, the main elements of Kharkiv's coat of arms, the cornucopia and caduceus, were placed in the upper part of each shield, while the lower part was reserved for county town symbols: plums for Valky, pears for Zolochiv, a wolf for Vovchansk, a swan for Lebedyn, and so on. However, the arms of Izyum, Okhtyrka, and Chuhuyiv did not carry the Kharkovian elements, because they had previously been independent regimental towns.

Some scholars consider the late eighteenth century as the start of “a new era” in Russian heraldry. In the view of N.A. Soboleva, as a result of the measures carried out in the 1770s–1780s, the city coat of arms decisively moved from the purview of the military into the broader public sphere, and it was in this period that “the institution of the city coat of arms” finally took firm hold in Russia. It became an urban symbol in much the same sense as in Western European

¹¹ See: *Полное собрание законов Российской империи* (ПСЗРИ), т. 1, V. 21, Санкт-Петербург 1830, № 15 238, p. 272–274.

¹² The practice became common throughout the empire. This was done for the first time by the Master Herald von Enden for the Yaroslavl Namestnichestvo in 1778.

society. However, the historian further notes that the urban emblem-making of Catherine II represented a government-level effort at “camouflage, stemming from the intent to disguise the class essence of the reforms of 1775–1785,” and that this was an undertaking for which it would be difficult to find analogies in the history of European states.¹³ According to Soboleva, the institution of the coat of arms was used solely for the purposes of strengthening the idea of autocracy and boosting the prestige of Tsarist rule, and emblem-making was integrated into the policy of progressive centralization and bureaucratization of the government apparatus. This is how she explains the special interest the Russian government took in the seemingly outdated medieval institution of the coat of arms.¹⁴ Such a conclusion is quite consistent with the basic assessment given in Soviet historiography to the government policies and activities in tsarist Russia. However, this opinion can be accepted only in part. The introduction of the institution of the city coat of arms from above met with eminently positive reaction on the ground. Accordingly, today we have the right to ask questions about the extent to which this work of emblem-making fit the spirit of the Enlightenment, as well as about the possibility of linking the development of local self-government with this process and seeing in it a tension between centralizing and decentralizing tendencies.

Clearly, other factors besides politics influenced the evolution of emblem-making. We should certainly also take into account the heraldic tradition. Thus, the fact that the authorities of the Austrian and then Austro-Hungarian Empire allowed many Western Ukrainian cities and towns to continue to use their heraldic bearings from the era of the Polish Commonwealth was likely due to the existence in these lands of long-established city coats of arms. In the Russian Empire, on the other hand, until the eighteenth century most cities did not have them; they had to be created. That is why the last quarter of the 18th century is known in the history of Russian heraldry as a period of “mass emblem-making.”¹⁵ Quite naturally, in these circumstances a desire emerged to create a system of signs and develop rules for their use, which trend can be characterized by such words as “centralization” and “unification.”

This current in the development of territorial heraldry in the Russian Empire would become even more apparent in the middle and second half of the nineteenth century. In particular, in 1851 an imperial decree was issued, making it mandatory to depict the imperial crown on the arms of provinces, regions, and provincial cities, and a provincial city crown on the arms of county towns. In 1856 the Emperor Alexander II ordered Baron B. V. Koehne, who at that time headed the Department of Heraldry, to revise the provincial and local emblems and make the necessary corrections. Accordingly, a system was developed: the imperial crown was incorporated into the arms of most provincial cities and the capitals (Moscow and St. Petersburg), while Monomakh’s Cap was depicted on the arms of those ancient cities that once were centers of principalities (including Kyiv and Chernihiv).

Cities with a population of more than 50 thousand had the right to use a crown with five tines, and those with a population of less than 50 thousand — a crown with three tines. Decorations framing shields — oak leaves, the sashes of the Orders of St. Andrew, St. Alexander, and St. George — were also standardized. Industrial centers always used as decorations gold hammers, sea ports — oars, fortresses — banners, cities with mining industries — silver pickaxes, with developed agriculture — grape clusters, golden ears of wheat, and so on.

¹³ Н.А. Соболева, *op. cit.*, p. 88, 98–99, 106, 111.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 115.

¹⁵ В. Панченко, *Гербівник міст України*, Нью-Йорк 1996, p. 6.



3. The Coat of arms designed for the Kharkiv, approved by the Emperor Alexander II on July 5, 1878



4. The Kharkiv Province coat of arms as the official emblem of the province until 1917

The presence on a county coat of arms of elements from the arms of the provincial capital became obligatory; at the same time, the new rules prohibited the use of the all-imperial symbol — the double-headed eagle. Koehne also insisted that all non-heraldic figures be excluded from coats of arms. Among these were Kharkiv's cornucopia and caduceus. A new arms design for the city was approved by the Emperor Alexander II on July 5, 1878 (fig. 3). This coat of arms is described in *The Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire*.¹⁶ It is believed that the horse's head on it symbolized the horse stud farms in the province, the coins denoted trade, and the Bethlehem star (guiding star) represented the university — that is, desire for knowledge. The sash of St. Andrew served as a framing element. The design was poorly received by the Kharkiv public. On October 18, 1882, the Kharkiv provincial assembly of the nobility resolved to petition for the restoration of the old coat of arms with the cornucopia and caduceus. Only four years later, in 1887, by a decree of the new emperor Alexander III, the Kharkiv Province received its old emblem back, but with a remark that the imperial crown should be depicted above the shield and the supporters should be “like those on the 1878 coat of arms” (fig. 4). In this form, the coat of arms continued as the official emblem of the province until 1917. The affair with the return of the old coat of arms gives us a glimpse into the growing role of public opinion and gradual emergence of local identity in the region.

During the Revolution and in its wake, many symbols and emblems fell out of use, often purposefully knocked off buildings and monuments. Heraldry was declared an archaic science serving the interests of the old world. However, this does not mean that no symbols or emblems were used at all anymore. The so-called “revolutionary symbolism” — the five-pointed

¹⁶ ПСЗРИ, т. 2, V. 53, Санкт-Петербург 1880, № 58 684, p. 6–7.

star and sickle and hammer — spread far and wide in various forms. After some time, territorial symbols began to reappear as well. First, emblems were established for the republics that had emerged on the ruins of the Russian Empire, and then in 1923 they were followed by the State Emblem of the USSR. In 1924, a new emblem of the city of Moscow was unveiled, very indicative of the character of the new era insofar as it was oversaturated with “industrial elements” (in addition to the sickle and hammer, it boasted a cogwheel, anvil, weaving spindle, and dynamo machine). Of course, this and other similar “coats of arms” were only arms-like emblems, since their authors largely ignored the rules of heraldry. In any case, the process of the creation of new city emblems then ceased altogether for a long time.

Interest in territorial and urban emblems revived after the Second World War.¹⁷ As A. B. Hrechylo has suggested, perhaps an acquaintance with the European heraldic tradition during the war or the use of local coats of arms during the German occupation “stimulated” this renewed penchant to some extent. Thus, during the occupation of Kharkiv in 1941–1943, the local city government used the city’s old coat of arms with the cornucopia and caduceus on its official documents.¹⁸ Still, the rehabilitation of heraldry as a discipline and a mass creation of city emblems in the USSR would take place only in the 1960s. In Ukraine, the first city emblems were introduced at that time in Donetsk, Kyiv, Mykolayiv, and Odesa. These emblems necessarily contained elements of Soviet state symbolism: most of them incorporated a hammer and sickle and were done in red and blue. They often included the name of the city and had to reflect their cities’ distinguishing economic features and heroic revolutionary and military past. So, for example, the emblem of Odesa depicted the battleship *Potemkin* and the Gold Star of a Hero City.

A new emblem for Kharkiv was also created in the 1960s. A two-year long creative competition was held, and in December 1968 a design submitted by Professor Ye.P. Yegorov was approved. The emblem (fig. 5) represented a French shield, the upper part of which was red-and-blue, corresponding to the colors of the flag of the Ukrainian SSR, with a cogwheel depicted in it. The lower part of the shield was white; it held a golden ear of wheat entwined by the electron orbits of an atom. Thus the emblem included symbols of agriculture, industry, and science. We should note that during this period cogwheels and ears of wheat were placed on city emblems particularly often. Of course, wheat was not grown in cities, but this was clearly a reflection of the old ideological tenet about “the union of workers and peasants.” It is also notable that Kharkiv’s emblem looked quite laconic compared to many others. Thus, the emblem of Kramatorsk (1970) included a large cogwheel into which silhouettes of factory smokestacks, chalk mountains, trees, and other elements were inscribed. On the whole, A. Hrechylo concludes that the work of emblem-making in the 1960s–1980s proceeded spontaneously and did not have any systematic character; there was no coordination center that could provide advice on these issues.¹⁹

According to the statute of the emblem of Kharkiv, it could be used in the festive decoration of the city and depicted on machines and mechanisms, architectural structures, and goods produced by the city’s factories.

This design served as Kharkiv’s official emblem until 1995, when the city authorities decided to go back to the old 1781 coat of arms, that is, the one without the attributes of the Russian Empire. The decision was made after public discussions in the pages of periodicals and in a specially created provisional heraldic commission. Simultaneously, a city flag was adopted: a green

¹⁷ А. Гречило, *Українська міська геральдика*, К., Львів 1998, р. 124.

¹⁸ И.Е. Саратов, *op. cit.*, p. 179–180.

¹⁹ А. Гречило, *op. cit.*, p. 139.



5. A new emblem for Kharkiv, created in the 1960s



6. The regional coat of arms, created in the late 1990s

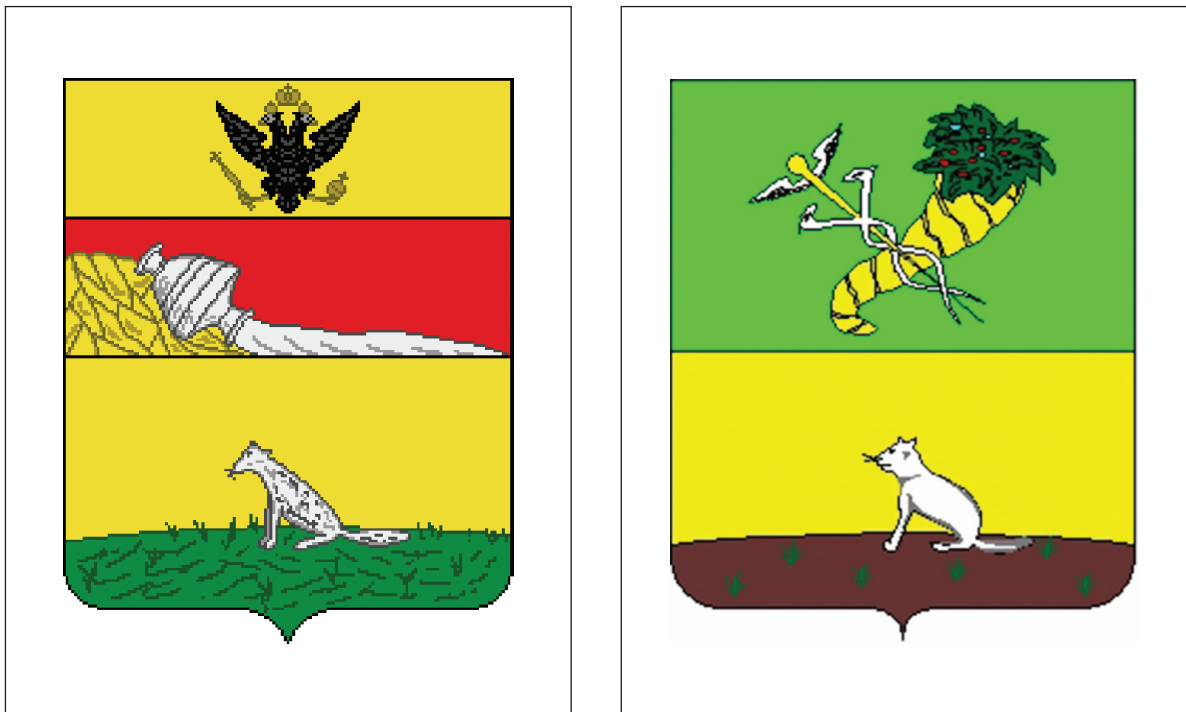
cloth with the city coat of arms in its center. We should mention that at one meeting of the heraldic commission a proposal was made to revive Kharkiv's first emblem (bow and arrow), but all six members of the commission supported the idea of returning to the 1781 coat of arms as the one that had been in use the longest and had a historically established form. Overall, these changes to the city's emblems were accepted positively by the community, although a small group of nationalist-minded residents organized a protest rally under the city council building.

A coat of arms for the Kharkiv Region was created a little later — in the late 1990s. In 1998, a session of the Kharkiv Regional Council resolved to hold a closed design competition, and in 1999 a new coat of arms was approved. In total, more than 200 proposals were submitted.²⁰ The winning design belonged to the artist S.A. Shaposhnikov.²¹ The regional coat of arms (fig. 6) represented a synthesis of pre-Soviet and Soviet symbolic elements²² and at the same time included some innovations connected with Ukraine's recently-gained independence. On the green field of a French shield were depicted a gold cornucopia and gold caduceus with silver wings and snakes. The shield was framed in gold, supported by gold oak leaves entwined with blue ribbon, and topped with a stylized image of a cogwheel with an ear of wheat on each side. The flag of the region was a two-by-three rectangular crimson cloth with the image of the regional coat of arms in its center.

²⁰ Unfortunately, we have not been able to locate these proposals.

²¹ The architect A.Yu. Leibfreid, author of a number of works on the history and architecture of Kharkiv, consulted on the project.

²² During the Soviet era the Kharkiv Region did not have an emblem of its own; elements of the city of Kharkiv's Soviet emblem were used.



7. Coat of arms of the town Kupyansk (1781, 1797)

During the same period, similar work of emblem-making began in the districts of the Kharkiv Region, and it continued until 2010. Considering that, starting in the 1990s, the creation of various coats of arms and emblems became a mass phenomenon and now there exist emblems for all levels of local self-government, A. Hrechylo has proposed that the term “municipal heraldry” be used instead of “city heraldry.”²³

In our case, the database “Kharkiv Municipal Heraldry” lists 50 coats of arms. The study of these images makes it possible to sketch out a rather contradictory process of emblem-making that has taken place during the years of Ukrainian independence. Even a superficial analysis of its history allows us to see a complex interplay between various traditions as well as obvious innovations marking the current period.

To date, only two towns in the Kharkiv Region have kept their Soviet emblems: the cities of Krasnohrad (1981) and Balakliya (1987). This can be explained by the neutrality of their imagery. In addition, the color scheme of Balakliya’s emblem turned out to be quite consistent with the new political realities.

As we have already noted, the period of Ukrainian independence represents a new era in emblem-making. Still, it is also part of a more general process. Cultural heritage, as before, has continued to exert its influence on new forms and determine the limits of innovation. The coat of arms of the town of Kupyansk (fig. 7) gives us a vivid glimpse into how this synthesis of tradition and innovation has unfolded for more than two hundred years.

²³ А. Гречило, *op. cit.*, p. 143 (footnote).



8. Coat of arms of the town Kupyansk (1970)

In studying the emblem-making of the 1990s and early 2000s in the Kharkiv Region, we can discern several directions in this process and some contradictions in the approaches of emblem creators to their work.

Thus, in some cases we witness a revival of historic forms. Such towns as Valky, Zolochiv, Izyum, and Chuhuyiv went back to their 1781 coats of arms. At the same time, the authors noticeably let their imagination roam free in creating district coats of arms. We see here a replay of what had happened with the emblems of the city of Kharkiv and Kharkiv Region. The Krasnohrad District now boasts a particularly lush coat of arms.

The majority of the region's modern emblems were created in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. More precisely, the process of emblem-making came in several waves. Namely, 8 coats of arms were designed and approved in the mid-1990s, including those for Kharkiv and the region; the period from 1999 to 2003 saw the creation of 31 coats of arms (out of which as many as eight were born in 2000 and seven in 2003); and the period from 2005 to 2010 — eight coats of arms (1–2 per year). The dates of three more are unknown.

Some emblem creators took into account the opinion of heraldists; moreover, the chairman of the Ukrainian Heraldic Society A.B. Hrechylo authored several of the coats of arms in our database. However, most of the rest were obviously designed by local historians, antiquarians, and officials with a rather vague idea of the rules of heraldry. These authors usually have remained unknown to the general public. Even when their names are mentioned in a historical note accompanying a coat of arms, it is now very difficult to establish who these people were. Sometimes entire organizations or firms are listed as authors. For example, a certain Design Image Company is named as the developer of the emblem of the Kharkiv District. Sometimes a discussion about authorship on the Internet is all we have, as is the case, for instance, with the Vovchansk District coat of arms.



9. Coat of arms of the town Kupyansk — variations of the image of the coat of arms (2000)

The emblems of the Kharkiv Region do not represent a system, although some common elements certainly are in evidence. For example, all the districts in the region have coats of arms, but not all of the district “capitals” have acquired them: Borova, Velykyi Burluk, and Derhachi remain armless. Sometimes the emblem of the district town serves as that of the entire district. Thus, the coats of arms of Kupyansk and the Kupyansk district are identical (it was the town’s coat of arms that was approved first in 2000, and the district emblem followed in 2002). Conversely, the arms of Lozova and the Lozova district have nothing in common save for a vine (*loza*). In this case, the district arms were approved first in 1999, and the town’s came rather later in 2009. In addition, we may note that Lozova’s coat of arms is composed according to the rules of heraldry, unlike the district’s, which can be explained by the ten-year chronological gap. But, significantly, there have been no attempts to make changes to these emblems in order to bring them into agreement.

A coat of arms often contains the name of its town or district and/or a date. There are 10 such coats of arms, that is, one fifth or 20 percent of the total. Moreover, the name (five cases) or the date (three cases) is sometimes placed inside the shield. In this, one can see a continuation of the Soviet-era tradition. More rarely, the name or date is inscribed on a special banderole — in three and two cases respectively.²⁴

The Ukrainian Heraldic Society, founded in Lviv in 1990, has tried to play a guiding role in the resurgence of territorial heraldry in Ukraine. Members of the Society and its chairman A. B. Hrechylo have repeatedly argued in the press and other public venues for the need to follow

²⁴ Sometimes both are present — for instance, on the coats of arms of the Krasnohrad District and the town of Shevchenkovo.

the rules of heraldry in emblem-making. Thus, concerning the shape of the shield, the following recommendations have been made:

The coat of arms properly employs a rounded shield. The choice of this shield style is due to two reasons: the historical one, since the study of the sphragistic material of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has shown that it was in such shields that most of the oldest Ukrainian city coats of arms were depicted on seals; and practical, since this shield is the most advantageous from the point of view of composition. Further, the rounded shield is the most common around the world today.

The author also notes that “the shield may be placed into an eclectic cartouche, which has a secondary, purely decorative value, even though it does have connections with the historical tradition characteristic of most of Ukraine’s regions.” Thus, in this case we may speak of an attempt to revive some heraldic traditions as all-Ukrainian. It is obvious, however, that Hrechlyo and many other members of the Ukrainian Heraldic Society have sought to continue the heraldic traditions of, more specifically, Western Ukraine. But according to Hrechlyo himself, of the total number of cities in Ukraine, 60 percent are located in the southeastern parts of the country, and only a few of them have had any emblems in the past.²⁵

Lack of coordination in the process of creating territorial emblems for the communities of the Kharkiv Region has led to the use of all kinds of shield types in new coats of arms. Sometimes it is even difficult to describe their shape (see for example the coat of arms of the town of Merefa or that of the Blyznyi District).

Among the emblems in our database, the overwhelming majority use shields of the so-called French style (38 + 5? = 43). Spanish-style shields, advocated by Hrechlyo, are significantly fewer in number (six plus one German shield?).

Supporters are mostly used in district and regional coats of arms: more often in the form of oak leaves (13 cases) or cereal ears (7), less often boughs of laurel (1) or pine (2), bunches of guelder-rose berries (2), or sunflowers (1). Often they are entwined with ribbons — this tradition originated as far back as the imperial era, and then continued throughout the Soviet times. In one case, the ribbon also entwines a bandura and a book (the Bohodukhiv District coat of arms). A single instance of using classic supporters — a Cossack man and woman — can be found on the coat of arms of the Krasnohrad District. In another case, the supporters take the somewhat exotic form of a hammer and adjustable wrench (the town of Lozova).

An important element of a territorial coat of arms from the point of view of tradition versus innovation is the crown. According to Hrechlyo, coat-of-arms shields are adorned with stylized crowns in order to stress their difference from other types of emblems. He also outlines the options:

Due to the fact that historically Ukrainian coats of arms did not reflect the difference between a city and a town, indicate population size, or point to some exceptional deeds or merits, the shape of the crown is the same for all communities: with three tines... The color of the crown may vary; for instance, gold for regional capitals, silver for others... brick-red for villages that once had town rights.²⁶

Some community leaders in the Kharkiv Region have heeded this call, which is reflected in the arms of such towns as Vovchansk, Barvenkovo, Bohodukhiv, Zachepylivka, and Lozova. Some of these were developed by Hrechlyo himself or based on his instructions (for example,

²⁵ А. Гречило, *op. cit.*, p. 147–148.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 161.

the coat of arms of the town of Lozova). However, there are only five coats of arms bearing a classic crown. In most cases, symbolic images of the sun, ears of wheat, books, or cogwheels are used instead. All these elements, of course, evoke Kharkiv's Soviet-era emblem. The author of the modern coat of arms of the Kharkiv Region (which apparently became the prototype for the district coats of arms) leaned towards the same tradition. We can observe a direct borrowing from the Soviet era in the emblem of the Kupyansk District, with its crown in the form of a winged wheel. There are some altogether unusual variations on the crown theme — an empty jug (the coat of arms of Nova Vodolaha), an optical lens (Izyum District), a gas rig (Valky District), or a roll of metal profile (Pechenihiy District). The crown of the Bohodukhiv District has a somewhat absurd appearance — it depicts God and an owl. The Dvorichna District chose for its crown Kharkiv's cornucopia and caduceus, and the Velykyi Burluk District's coat of arms is crowned with the coat of arms of the Kharkiv Region!

As for the stock of symbols that are used in the region's coats of arms, we may note the firm persistence of the stereotypes dating back to the emblem-making of the 1960s–1980s. In particular, there is a noticeable inclination to picture “the glorious past,” “happy present,” “martial traditions,” “labor achievements,” and “specifics of geographic location.” Thus we are faced with the same “old ills” in local heraldry: improper use of heraldic colors, detail overload, and frequent placement of state symbols on coats of arms. Incidentally, only six coats of arms in our database do not use state symbols in one form or another. As for the regional symbols, they are also represented in various form on most of the emblems (they are absent in only 18 cases). In 14 cases, regional symbols are placed in the upper half of the shield, as it was done in the 1781 system of territorial heraldry.

Only in seven cases do we witness a revival of previously existing heraldic bearings. On nine coats of arms there are symbols that are based on some long-standing heraldic tradition. Thus, more than half of the local emblems have no links to tradition, which quite simply has never existed. But this does not mean that there are no “traditionalists” among the region's emblem creators. This is evidenced by the images of sabers, bows and arrows, Cossacks, banduras, guelder-rose berries, embroidered towels, horseshoes, and crosses. Coats of arms with such objects are quite numerous — they add up to about a third of the total if we include newly created ones. However, based on the numbers alone, the “modernists” are in the lead. Thanks to them, we find on coats of arms a gas rig (Kehychivka District), a power station (Derhachi District), and the map outline of a district (Zolochiv District). Remarkable is not only the diversity of symbols, but also the high degree of detail they sometimes bear. Thus, in the description of the coat of arms of the Krasnokutsk District, it is specially noted that the cornucopia contains leaves of sweet cherry and an apple, pear, and sweet cherry fruit.

Concerning the enamels and metals used in coats of arms, we may note the predominance of gold (43 figures) and silver (22 figures). However, this is hard to calculate with any certainty because of the abundance of figures and dearth of full descriptions. Further, coats of arms are often depicted using half-tones.

To complete this analysis of Kharkiv territorial heraldry, we will turn briefly to those innovations that have arisen thanks to the politics of branding. For example, in April 2011, Kharkiv's tourism brand was officially unveiled. Before that, it had already been shown at the International Tourism Exhibition ITB Berlin held in Berlin in March of that year, where it came in sixth in the competition. Members of the Kharkiv branch of the Union of Designers of Ukraine took part in its development. The logo was based on the first letter in the name of the city; it symbolized a crossroads on which Kharkiv stood, and at the same time resembled a person with “arms

thrown up in joy.” The slogan was the phrase “Kharkiv: A Smart City.” It was also stated that SMART could be read as an abbreviation: a “social” and “modern” city, city of “art”, “research”, and “tourism”. The brand was supposed to be used at tourism expos. One more city brand appeared around the same time, tailored specifically to the EURO–2012 Football Championship. A few years ago, designers of 3Z Studio proposed their own logo for the city (project “Kharkiv Identity”). In their view, the existing coat of arms did not serve marketing functions. The new logo played on the idea of Kharkiv as “City X” (city of ideas, city of development, city of opportunities) and represented a transformed letter X.²⁷ However, if we analyze the practice of using various emblems and symbols in the self-representation of the cities and towns of the Kharkiv Region, we will see that coats of arms still very much predominate.

To sum up, a few observations can be made:

1. We can distinguish several periods in the development of Kharkiv territorial heraldry: mid-17th to mid-18th centuries; mid-18th century to 1917; 1960s to early 1990s; and mid-1990 to the present. Local emblem-making truly took off only in the late heraldic period (second half of the eighteenth century). Its development was interrupted in the first half of the twentieth century. It was revived in the 1960s, but at the same time there was a significant departure from the established heraldic tradition. The mass emblem-making of the late 1990s to early 2000s marked both a revival of some earlier traditions and a syncretism of tradition and innovation.
2. The struggle between tradition and innovation in the evolution of the region’s territorial heraldry is due to a number of factors. Among them are both political developments (movement towards centralization in the Russian Empire, revolutionary changes in the first half of the twentieth century, the liberalization of public life in the USSR in the 1960s, Ukraine’s independence in 1991) and socio-cultural phenomena (the development of regional identity and local self-government, the bureaucratization of governance, various civilizational influences). Of course, the evolution of territorial heraldry in the region was also influenced by the fact that at a certain point heraldry itself was declared “an obsolete discipline” and that many of the people involved in the work of emblem-making had no special training and little deference for its rules.
3. At the same time, it should be noted that the desire to “archaize” heraldry, which is widespread among the specialists in the discipline, often encounters resistance from the local public, which is inclined to see territorial symbols in its own way. In particular, there is a desire to find appropriate symbols not in the past, but in the present, and to choose imagery fitting the dynamic modern world.
4. The region’s body of territorial emblems is eclectic; its formation is still underway. The role of city emblems in the self-representation of communities remains insignificant. At the same time, we believe that the unification of local territorial heraldry through government action may harm the process of decentralization and the development of the institutions of civil society. In this matter, we should be thinking in terms of purposeful and consistent state policy, rather than urgent decisions.

²⁷ О.О. Мусієздов, *Міська ідентичність у (пост) сучасному суспільстві: український досвід*, Харків 2016, р. 161.

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Sergey Posokhov, Харьковская территориальная геральдика: традиции и новации. В статье характеризуется эволюция территориальной геральдики Харьковщины (северо-восточного региона Украины). Развитие герботворчества здесь началось достаточно поздно — во второй половине XVIII в., хотя первые упоминания о местных территориальных гербах относятся ко второй половине XVII в. Происходил этот процесс под влиянием уже давно сложившихся западноевропейских традиций и по правилам, которые были установлены в рамках централизованной Российской империи. В советский период такого рода традиции и правила подверглись радикальному пересмотру. Всё это обусловило своеобразие процесса герботворчества на новом этапе — в период независимой Украины. Современная территориальная геральдика Харьковщины несколько эклектично соединила в себе черты предшествующих эпох. Процесс герботворчества на этом этапе часто происходил спонтанно. Имеющаяся на сегодняшний день харьковская территориальная символика отличается эклектичностью, процесс ее формирования остается незавершенным. Роль городских гербов в ходе саморепрезентации городов остается незначительной.

Ключевые слова: территориальная геральдика Харьковщины, традиции герботворчества в Украине, городской герб.