

RADIOGRAPHY OF MILITARY UNITS FROM BAI A MARE GARRISON FROM 1990 TO 2005

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Military life is marked by vocation, dedication, loyalty and professionalism. The Baia Mare Garrison is one of the places where such soldiers and representatives of the entire corps of personnel categories in the Romanian army can still be found and who marked the period of 1990-2005. In the context of the last years, 2020-2025, marked by challenges to peace, especially in the Black Sea Emergent Zone, the need to affirm the principle and reality of training is reaffirmed, the ability to operate with professionalism the entire package of capabilities specific to each military unit for men to restore peace, by arming the entire professional of the personnel we have. This scientific approach presents the military structures in the Baia Mare garrison through a documentary analysis.

Keywords: military units; Baia Mare; readiness; training; military personnel;

POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO THE 20TH CENTURY

On 14 May 1955, a new political-military bloc was established, the Warsaw Pact organization. The signatories of this treaty were the countries under the direct influence of the Soviet Union, forming the European communist bloc: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Bulgaria, Albania, and Romania. Although the "*Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*", known historically as the "*Warsaw Pact*", had been conceived as a strictly defensive security organism, the alliance was created as a response to the emergence of the Western military alliance NATO in 1949 and to the inclusion of West Germany in NATO in 1955.

Between 1962 and 1968, a series of international events led to the weakening of the Pact and to Romania's increasingly pronounced "*dissent*" within it. Among the most significant events were: 1962 – Albania's formal withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact (its official withdrawal occurred in 1968); the coalition of China, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Albania during the Sino-Soviet conflict; Romania's firm reaction in 1965 when it practically issued its "*declaration of independence*", demanding the cancellation of Albania's exclusion from the treaty; the severe crisis caused by the placement of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba (1962) without the knowledge or consent of the Pact members, followed by Romania's formal distancing from this action before U.S. authorities (Corneliu Mănescu, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, drafted a letter delivered to U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, expressing Romania's position); the USSR's attempt to expand the Pact in 1963 by including the Mongolian People's Republic as a full member; the attempts to reject military integration processes within the organization and the breach of the Treaty's fundamental principles; attempts to subordinate the Romanian and Bulgarian naval fleets to the Black Sea Fleet Command; Romania's refusal to allow Soviet troops to transit its territory or to concentrate Romanian troops in Bulgaria for joint exercises in 1964; the proposals advanced in 1966 by Romania regarding the de-Sovietization of the Pact's leadership; Romania's refusal to sign the "*Moscow Declaration*" of 9 June 1967 concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict known as the "*Six-Day War*", as Ceaușescu opposed the Soviet position condemning Israeli aggression and promising increased support for Arab states.

These events, among many others, strengthened Romania's reformist position within the Pact. They also contributed to the drafting of the well-known document "*On the Action Program of the Czechoslovak People's Army*," also known as the "Klement Gottwald Academy Memorandum," initiated by the rector of the Military Academy in Prague and another senior officer. The memorandum, supported by Poland, Hungary, and Romania, along with the civil actions of the group "*Charter 77*," constituted some of the key elements that triggered the Warsaw Pact's military intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968. The invasion took place without convening – even formally – the Political Consultative Committee, which would have allowed consultation with all member states.

It is telling that Romania was neither asked to participate in nor informed about the preparation of the intervention – Soviet leaders being fully aware of Romania's stance within the Pact.

The period following the Czechoslovak crisis marked the beginning of the development of Romania's national military doctrine, with a specific content aligned with the political-military context within the Warsaw Pact. Military historians argue that an immediate intervention in Romania following that in Czechoslovakia would have caused major international complications, amplified by global public opinion and detrimental to the Soviet Union's image. Moreover, Romania's territory was much larger, no Soviet troops were stationed on its soil, and no Pact exercises were being held there, making surprise aggression unlikely. Soviet intelligence networks had been uncovered since 1962, and their activity was monitored and counteracted by Romanian counterintelligence.

Given the limited access to Moscow's archives, evaluating the Kremlin's intentions toward Romania during the Czechoslovak crisis remains extremely difficult, if not impossible (Betea, 2009, p. 38).

In terms of geopolitical and geostrategic positioning within the Warsaw Pact, the Romanian Army was assigned two strategic defensive directions: the Greek–Turkish and the North-Italian. Consequently, Romanian military units were primarily deployed between the Carpathians and the Danube, in central and western Romania.

The events of the summer of 1968 provided Romania with guidance in defining its future political and military position within the Pact and toward the Soviet Union. As required, the military doctrine had to be strictly defensive, distinctly different from the Soviet one. Under the circumstances, national defense could be ensured only by Romania's own forces.

On 11 September 1968, during a meeting of Romania's political-military leadership, important decisions were adopted to prevent a possible invasion

by Warsaw Pact forces. Measures for improving the distribution and structure of Romania's armed forces were approved.

As a result, Romanian military authorities began defining a unique defense doctrine without precedent within the Pact, which – combined with Romania's foreign and military policy – emptied Romania's membership of the Pact of its military substance, even though Romania never formally requested withdrawal. Substantial changes were made to the structure, equipment, endowment, and training of the national defense system. Romania's military ties with the Pact gradually diminished. Nonetheless, the political posture toward the Soviet Union, defined by *"intransigence – compromise"*, did not diminish the Kremlin's vigilance regarding a potential Romanian *"defection"*.

A relevant account is provided by General Anatoly I. Gribkov, former Chief of Staff of the Pact's Unified Armed Forces (1976-1989), who stated: *"Gradually and in secret, troop deployment was revised. The divisions with the highest combat capability were deployed near the Soviet border toward the so-called 'Focșani Gate' and near the border with Bulgaria. Later, the Hungarian direction – Transylvania's disputed territory – was reinforced."* (Gribkov, 1998).

The international developments and the armed intervention in Czechoslovakia beginning on the evening of 20 August 1968 triggered strong reactions from the Romanian government and corresponding military measures. The Minister of the Armed Forces, General Ion Gheorghe, ordered: *"If we are attacked, we will retaliate."* (Documentary Report No. 248/23.07.1998, UNCMRR, p. 3), an order communicated down to unit commanders.

"At the level of the 3rd Army, a defense and intervention plan was drafted for the main northern and northwestern directions, while reservists were mobilized between 21-24 August 1968, nearly doubling combat capacity. In a matter of days, patriotic guard battalions and companies were formed and armed. Each county established the command staff for the patriotic guards."

Furthermore, due to the weaker military presence in the Transylvanian lowlands and hills, the Council of Ministers' Decision No. 1991/13.09.1968 established the creation of the 81st Mechanized Division on 1 October 1968, subordinated to the 3rd Army, with its command in Dej. It included: Regiment 221 Mechanized in Bistrița, Regiment 223 Mechanized in Dej, Regiment 4 Mechanized in Zalău, Regiment 230 Tanks in Baia Mare, Regiment 612 Antitank Artillery in Baia Mare, Regiment 313 Artillery in Șimleu Silvaniei, Battalion 422 Engineers in Satu Mare, Division 55 Anti-Aircraft Artillery in Dej, Battalion 424 Signals in Dej, Battalion 87 Engineers in Dej, Company 302 Supply and Transport in Șimleu Silvaniei, Platoon 283 NBC Defense

in Dej, Platoon 368 Anti-Aircraft Command in Dej, Company 394 Traffic Control in Dej, Workshop 925 Artillery in Șimleu Silvaniei, Workshop 345 Tank and Auto Repair in Baia Mare.” (Armata a 4-a “Transilvania”, vol. IV, 1945-1999, p. 156).

Through these historical and political-military considerations, we place within the events of the late 20th century the moment and significance of establishing in Baia Mare, in autumn 1968, alongside other units in northwestern Romania, the 612 Antitank Artillery Division, the 230 Tank Regiment, and the 345 Tank and Auto Repair Workshop, as well as other military units in Maramureș County.

MILITARY UNITS IN MARAMUREȘ¹

Before the Great Union of 1918, more than 10,000 men from Maramureș fought in the Austro-Hungarian Army, most of them enlisted in Infantry Regiments 85, 5, and 12, stationed in the Sighet garrison. They fought on the fronts in Galicia, Serbia, Ukraine, and Italy, in the major battles of Lemberg, Doberdo, Manilowa, and Piave. Throughout the entire conflict, the Austro-Hungarian Army included three generals (Ioan Boeriu, Gheorghe Domășneanu, Dănilă Papp), 15 colonels, and 12 lieutenant colonels of Romanian origin.

Through Ministerial Decision No. 40 of 26 January 1919, the Territorial Command 6 Cluj – named in wartime the 20th Infantry Division – was established in Transylvania. Subordinated to it were several newly established military units, including those deployed in Maramureș County [Col. (r.) Ioan Bota, President of the Maramureș County Branch of the National Association “*Cultul Eroilor Regina Maria*”, *Prezențe ostășești pe meleaguri maramureșene* – unpublished manuscript).

The 88th Infantry Regiment/Regimentul 88 Infanterie Sighet

Established on 6 June 1919, based on Battalion 3 of Regimentul 81 Infanterie Dej, deployed in the Sighet garrison, headquartered in the barracks on Tokoly Street (today, Dragoș Vodă Street). Its mission was to participate in the defense of the newly established borders of the Romanian state. The regiment was relocated to Careii Mari in 1921 and disbanded on 26 October 1938.

The 52nd Infantry Brigade/Brigada 52 Infanterie Sighetu-Marmației

Established on 16 August 1919 under Ministerial Decision and War Minister Order No. 2593 of 26 January 1919. It consisted of Regimentul 103 Infanterie (Satu Mare) and Regimentul 104 Infanterie, the latter being on the Tisa front at that time. The Brigade operated in Sighet until 1923, when its personnel were transferred to Regimentul 88 Infanterie, headquartered in Careii Mari.

¹ Col. (r.) Ioan Bota, president of the Maramureș County Branch of the National Heroes Cult Association “*Regina Maria*”.

The 103/104th Infantry Regiment/Regimentul 103/104 Infanterie Sighet

Established based on General Staff Order No. 5170 of 6 September 1920. Beginning 1 October 1920, it unified with Regimentul 103 Infanterie. It had its Headquarters and 1st Battalion in Sighetu Marmatei, and the 2nd Battalion in Satu Mare. It remained in Sighet until July 1923, when it was disbanded, with its personnel absorbed into Regimentul 88 Infanterie Careii Mari.

5 Mountain Cannons Division/Divizionul 5 Tunuri Munte

Established through Royal Decree No. 1674 of 12 April 1923, using personnel and equipment from Divizionul 2 Artilerie Munte (Codlea, Braşov County). Relocated to Sighetu-Marmatei, it became subordinate to Divizia 2 Vânători de Munte and was stationed in the Dragoş Barracks. Its structure included: commander, deputy commander, mobilization officer, adjutant, cashier, clothing NCO, and multiple batteries and support sections.

The division took part in numerous exercises, including the 1934 Royal Maneuvers in Câmpeni and the major 1936 maneuvers in the Sighet–Vadu Izei–Berbeşti–Călineşti–Budeşti area. It left Sighet after the territorial losses of 1940 and settled in Aiud by 5 September 1940.

The 5th Mountain Hunters Group/Grupul 5 Vânători de Munte

Established in 1925 in Sighetu-Marmatei, comprising Battalions 9 and 10, under Brigada 2 V.M. In 1937, Colonel Leonard Mociulschi became commander. The group established a permanent ski training center at Lutoasa in the Maramureş Mountains, near the Vaser Valley.

Between 1939–1940, the group was deployed in defensive positions along the north-western border (Vârful Stog-Halmeu), undertaking intense fortification work and countering Hungarian infiltration attempts. The retreat ordered after the Vienna Award of 30 August 1940 deeply affected the troops, as recorded in the historical log of Battalion 8 V.M.

After WWII, a Mountain Troops Training Center was established in Borşa in January 1949, subordinated to Battalion 14 V.M., training hundreds of officers, NCOs, and soldiers until its disbandment later that year.

The 27th Mountain Battalion/Batalionul 27 Vânători de Munte “Bogdan Vodă”

Following the approval on 9 November 1973 of the plan for reorganizing and equipping the Romanian Army (1976–1980), Brigada 1 Vânători de Munte was established on 1 January 1977, headquartered in Bistriţa. Batalionul 27 Vânători de Munte was created in Borşa, in a former military medical facility transferred in 1953. The battalion received its Battle Flag in summer 1978.

Between 1978–1989, the battalion achieved notable results in combat training, alpine and ski instruction, and mountain warfare skills. Between 1990-2005, it continued to perform successfully, with an increasingly mature and stable cadre. In 1992, it was awarded the honorific title “*BOGDAN VODĂ*”. On 7 July 1997, marking its 20th anniversary, it received a new Battle Flag through Presidential Decree No. 301/1997.

The 9 Radiolocation Company/Compania 9 Radiolocație Vișeu de Sus

A subunit subordinated to the Romanian Air Force Staff, tasked with aerial surveillance of the northern region of the country, operating radars from Vârful lui Dan.

THE BAI A MARE GARRISON

The 7th Border Guard Regiment/Regimentul 7 Grăniceri Baia Mare

After the Great Union of 1918, one of the Romanian state’s first measures was establishing major border guard units to protect the north-western frontier. Through Royal Decree No. 1559 of 7 May 1931, Regimentul 7 Grăniceri was established in Baia Mare, with its sectors secured by battalions stationed in Sighet and Oradea, under Brigada 4 Grăniceri. The regiment guarded 452.594 km of borders (with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary).

It was organized with its command structure and several specialized services, including mobilization, security and intelligence, firing training, logistics, and depot companies. The first commander was Lt. Col. Ionescu Vasile. The regiment established its headquarters on Episcopul Pavel Street No. 10 (today the Maramureș County Archives). Its strength was 1,900 soldiers.

In 1932, under a secret order, units of the regiment participated in maintaining public order in Baia Mare, Arad, and border sectors. On 10 May 1933, it received its Battle Flag in a ceremony in Bucharest attended by King Carol II.

Between 1935-1937, the regiment was commanded by Colonel Petrescu Gheorghe, later honored by the City of Baia Mare in 2006. In 1938, the Corps of Border Guards reorganized into Border Guard Groups, creating Grupul 7 Grăniceri Pază in Baia Mare.

After general mobilization on 27 June 1940 and the Vienna Award, Grupul 7 Grăniceri relocated to Cluj, then other garrisons. Border Guard troops returned to Maramureș on 1 January 1946, reestablishing Regimentul 7 Grăniceri Pază in Baia Mare.

Between 1949-1960, the regiment was resubordinated several times. In 1969, a commission proposed relocating border posts deeper into Romanian territory

to avoid direct Soviet observation. New posts were built mostly along the Vaser Valley.

After the regiment's disbandment, the Sighet Border Guard Battalion was subordinated to Brigada 5 Grăniceri Oradea.

The County Military Centre/Centrul Militar Județean Maramureș

After 1918, a County Military Center functioned in Sighetu Marmației. Following the administration's withdrawal from Northern Transylvania, the structure was disbanded. After territorial reorganization in 1950, Comisariatul Regional Maramureș was created, with several subordinate district commissariats.

On 17 February 1968, under Law No. 2/1968, the Centrul Militar Județean Maramureș was established, subordinated to the First Deputy of the Minister of Armed Forces and Chief of the General Staff.

On 15 January 1990, under Order MC 3/1990, the Comandamentul Militar Județean Maramureș was established, incorporating Civil Defense and Patriot Guards Staffs and an intelligence office. The structure reverted to Centrul Militar Județean in 1994 and underwent several organizational changes until 2007.

During this period, a Soviet military commissariat and regional military prosecution office also functioned in Baia Mare until Soviet units withdrew in 1958.

The Civil Protection Inspectorate/Inspectoratul de Protecție Civilă Județean

Between 1952–1978, civil defense operated under the Local Anti-Aircraft Defense Staff, subordinated first to the Ministry of Interior and later to the Ministry of Defense. From 1978-2006 it functioned as the County Civil Protection Inspectorate.

The inspectorate responded to major floods (1970, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000), landslides (1980, 1999), radioactive contamination following the Chernobyl accident (1986), and the technological accident at S.C. AURUL S.A.

Following the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, Romania strengthened its territorial defense, established new units, and mobilized reservists. In this context, Divizia 81 Mecanizată was created, including several units stationed in Baia Mare: Regimentul 230 Tancuri, Atelierul 345 Reparații Tancuri și Auto, and Divizionul 612 Artilerie Antitanc.

The 230th Tank Regiment/Regimentul 230 Tancuri

Established in 1968, the regiment initially shared the same barracks with two other newly created units. By 1971, construction of the new barracks was completed. In 1974, work began on the new artillery barracks, completed in 1976. Around the same time, the 345 Technical Repair Section's facilities were completed.

Initially organized with two battalions, a third tank battalion was added in 1969. In 1970, the regiment moved to the new barracks, and the tank training range

and automated firing range (Arieșul de Pădure) were completed, largely through soldier labor.

On 1 November 1990, the regiment received the honorific title *“Pintea Viteazul”*.

On 1 September 1994, it transformed into Brigada 230 Infanterie Moto *“Pintea Viteazul”*, subordinating multiple battalions and artillery divisions. It was disbanded on 30 June 2003 under national army restructuring plans.

Section 345 Military Technical Repair/Secția 345 Reparații Tehnică Militară

Established in 1968, subordinated to Divizia 81 Mecanizată, structured with a command element, technical and financial offices, tank, auto, artillery, signals, and special equipment workshops, and evacuation teams. It was resubordinated to Corpul 7 Armată *“General Nicolae Șova”* (1994-2000), then Brigada 230 Infanterie Moto *“Pintea Viteazul”* (2000–2003), and disbanded on 1 April 2003.

Antitank Artillery Division 612/Divizionul 612 Artilerie Antitanc

Established on 1 October 1968, subordinated to Divizia 81 Mecanizată, and awarded its Battle Flag on 15 December 1968. In 1969, it became Regimentul 612 Artilerie Antitanc, initially organized with two divisions, later three.

It moved to its new barracks on Bulevardul Unirii on 12 February 1976. In 1979, it became subordinated to the 3rd Army (later 4th Army). In 1990, it received the honorific title *“Maramureș”*.

In 1994, it was reassigned to Corpul 7 Armată *“General Nicolae Șova”*, and on 1 September 1994 became Brigada 612 Artilerie Antitanc. In 1996, it received a new Battle Flag through Presidential Decree No. 111.

It underwent multiple reorganizations between 2002–2008, transitioning from brigade to regiment to division to battalion. In 2007, it received the honorific title *“Maramureș”*. Since 1 January 2022, under Order M-0225/2020, the unit became Batalionul 813 Infanterie *“Maramureș”*, subordinated to Brigada 81 Mecanizată *“General Grigore Bălan”*.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS

The strategic and tactical military vision aligned with Romania’s national defense doctrine generated highly capable military structures such as those presented above. Their equipment, but especially the quality of their human resources, decisively contributed to fulfilling their missions. Soldiers from Maramureș have consistently demonstrated professionalism, preparedness, and the moral qualities of the authentic Romanian serviceman – a legacy carried forward by today’s active military personnel (2025).

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