

PhD thesis
Authorial representation

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The evolution of the Hungarian military administration system from 1920 to the formation of the present organizational system as well as a possible structural arrangement

Subject Supervisor:

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1. Drafting the scientific problem.

During my work at the Replacement Centre, my university studies, and the researches I made for my university thesis I have learnt that the history of the regional military administration agencies has not yet been thoroughly processed. The works published dealing with this topic or presenting the work of military administration agencies were insufficient in quantity and concentrated on a narrow scope of field. However I hold the work of regional military administration agencies vital in the execution of the replacement activity. Hence, the processing and presentation of their history and accomplished tasks fit well into the line of military history researches and the processing of the history of certain military organizations or professional fields. In my opinion historical researches could and should basically be conducted based on authentic materials to be found in the Defence Ministry's Institute and Archives of Military History but studies and books published on this topic can not be avoided either.

In accordance with the 14/2004 (III. 24.) Parliamentary Resolution about long term system reconstruction of Hungarian defence forces the system of military replacement and recruiting should be adjusted to the new requirements and with effective operation the sufficient number quality of replacement should be ensured. Besides this in the Hungarian public administration more and more emphasis is put on the modernization of administration and the development of administrative regions. A governmental resolution has been passed about 'paperless' public administration and the development of the concept of electronic administration as well. The future structure and tasks of the Hungarian defence forces has made the examination of the structure of military administration agencies and their possible reconstruction and the production of feasibility studies more and more urgent.

Taking into consideration the above, I have come to the conclusion that processing the history of regional military administration agencies, the experiences acquired during the processing could and should be made useful in the shaping of the future task and structure of these organisations.

To sum up; my research has been concentrated on the following fields, problems:

- Classification and definition of the conceptual class of military administration
- Presentation of the history of the regional military administration agencies based primarily on archives researches
- Based on the experience gained during the research the drafting of a possible new, more rational organizational structure

2. Investigational aims:

I hold as the main aim of my research the authentic presentation or processing of the history, structural changes and tasks of regional military administration. Within this topic I had the following particular aims:

- to identify, describe the concepts connected to military administration and strongly related to my field of research. Among these I pay special attention to, clarify and separately examine the following concepts:
 - National defence administration;
 - Military administration;
 - Military public administration;

- to present the organizational changes of military administration agencies. During which I mostly rely on the documents to be found in the Institute and Museum of War History. I handle as eligible sources the publications on this topic, the PhD dissertations presenting the achievements of the field of research, studies.
- to examine the present structure and state of military administration system
- to present a suggestion about the directions of development of the regional military administration system structure.

3. Applied methods of research:

My research is primarily based on the processing of Archives of Military History documents referring to the special field of research. And also:

- I have studied and elaborated on the national technical literature related to the field of research, the legislation and the other means of state governing;
- I have examined the practical effectiveness of regulations in connection with the field of research;
- Application of personal experiences and professional knowledge;
- The processing and classification of the related documentation of the Institution and Museum of War History;
- Participation in the conferences related to the topic;
- Regular consultation from the field of military administration with:
 - ❖ Well-known specialists
 - ❖ Representatives of the Ministry of Defence, Chiefs of Staff Personal Department and the Operational and Training Department
 - ❖ Zrínyi Miklós Military Academy (ZMMA) Military History Department
 - ❖ Lecturers of ZMMA Military Force Organisation and Replacement Department
 - ❖ The expert of the Society of Military History

During my research my primary aspect was to strictly keep to the principles of military history research. That is objectivity, historical approach and providing evidence for my statements.

4. Description of accomplished investigations by chapters

1. Chapter: the classification of concepts connected to military administration

The concepts connected to defence administration have several times – taking into consideration the era and the political stability situation – been defined. Consequently in this chapter I just summarized and classified the designated topics. I paid more attention to the definition of regional military administration and military public administration during which process a refined the meaning and contents of these two concepts.

2. Chapter: The regional military administration between 1920. and 1945.

The significance of the period accounts for its examinational division. Accordingly I have divided this chapter into four parts and the summarized conclusions are divided respectively:

Part 1: The formation of regional military administration agencies started in 1919 after the formation of the counter-revolutionary government, more precisely after the appointment of Miklós Horthy to Commander-in-Chief. The basis for the organization was the regional division of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy though its reconstruction was started very soon. The reason primarily was the knowledge of the peace conditions or rather the ambition to preserve the military force and its ancillary and complementary organization for the times after the ratification of the peace accord. For these reasons were there quick reconstructions, renaming and the ‘civilianization’ of certain agencies.

Until the ratification of the peace accord the Hungarian military regional administration had 3 levels:

1. The authority of first instance was the district (city) registrations
2. The authority of second instance was the comitat (county) military headquarters
3. The authority of third instance was the Headquarters of Territory

By studying the activities of the regional military administration agencies the essence of their task and work can easily be seen : to provide the personnel and conditions for the basic tasks depriving from its basic functions. I would underline those tasks fulfilled among special circumstances which lasted from the knowledge of the rulings of the peace accord to the dissolution of regional administration agencies except for the Headquarters of Territory. After the finalization of the Home Defence Act, the agencies openly responsible for replacement and the registration of those liable for military service were terminated. On the other hand covert agencies conducted these tasks with very low effectiveness. It effected the provision of personnel and material.

At the same time the essence of military administration can be studied very well. From the middle of 1919 – only for a short period of time – two governments were functioning simultaneously. It was not clear who had executive power and neither of them could enforce their rulings entirely. To the weakness of central power also contributed the fact that neither of them obtained an armed force. This situation was exploited by Miklós Horthy when he declared himself independent of both governments and organized the National Army. He started to reorganize the civilian administration without hesitation and the establishment of local public administration. He appointed so called administrative commissaries, later government commissioners next to the Headquarters of Territories who were executing the administrative tasks. Government commissioners were functioning from the middle of August 1919 until the end of July 1920 at the beginning – for almost three months – absolutely independent of the Budapest government.

Examining the events of the period between 1919 and February 7. 1922 and studying the legislation and rulings concerning the home defence forces I revealed and verified:

- That the reconstruction and functioning of regional military administration agencies was vital in the foundation of the National Army;
- I clarified the tasks and organizational structure of replacement centres – comitat military headquarters – and statistical offices in the ever-changing legislation environment;

- Systematized the levels of regional military authorities of the era.

Part 2: Characteristic of the examined period are the increased presence and control of the Interallied Military Control Commission (SZKEB=IMCC from here), the introduction and functioning of the new replacement system and the accordingly forced initiation of measures and organizations originating from it. All these had a great influence on the workings and existence of regional military administration agencies. The peace accord clearly forbade their existence and functioning in the defence forces' order, which regulation had been balanced by certain reorganizations, re-naming and concealment. For a short period their functioning was ensured by different organizational measures but the effectiveness of their work in the period of concealment was gradually becoming lower and lower and from the years 1924-25 both overt and covert regional military administration agencies were terminated or their work was suspended by the public administrator agencies. The word 'suspension' is deliberately used here for in my point of view the organization itself did not cease to exist – though with a limited personnel – since from 1924 in each fiscal year the budget had an article assigning money for their purposes.

At the same time it had become evident that recruiting – as the new form of replacement – could not fulfil its roles the Royal Hungarian Defence Forces were struggling with permanent lack of sufficient numbers which could not be helped even with the introduction of 'K' recruiting. The military service liable population was unwilling to join the defence forces furthermore government boards did not really feel the accomplishing of recruiting tasks close to their responsibilities. These factors together worsened the effectiveness of recruiting. This could not be helped by an intensively increased propaganda and the meanwhile increased supply and welfare measures either.

Examining the events of the period I

- Revealed the process reorganizing, covering and organizational structure of regional military administration agencies;
- Verified the exact date of the termination of headquarters of territory and the beginning of the official jurisdiction of brigades of all arms;
- Presented the new order issued for the introduction of the new form of replacement, recruiting, and according to the new ruling the tasks of governmental boards;
- Proved that the public administrator services – although functioning within the frame of governmental boards – were in fact dealing with military replacement activities;
- Mentioned IMCC's activities and its reasons before finishing its work.

Part III: One of the most important moments of this period was the termination of direct military control when the IMCC left Hungary. Naturally it did not mean immediate initiation of military improvement programs, what's more the Defence Ministry cautioned about the even stricter obeying of concealment rules. Neither the Hungarian government nor the military leadership wanted the allied powers to re-establish direct military control because of the breaching of the peace agreement's rulings. The Defence Minister issued orders and

measures to ease the restrictions but was cautious to keep the appearance that the Hungarian armed forces and related organizational measures were firmly based on the peace accord.

The system of these concealment rules – mainly from the beginning of the thirties – significantly blocked the development of armed forces in terms of quality and numbers and finally with the Bled Agreement the home defence leadership got rid of this last yoke. From the ratification of the agreement the overt development of Home Defence could begin.

The regional military administration agencies – mainly as covert organizations – had continuously been maintaining their tasks in connection with replacement. The emphasis was basically not on the names but the accomplished tasks. The main difficulty had been caused by the intricate procedures and in some cases the complicated hierarchy of relations. Nearing the year 1939 with the restructuring of Teng organizations, later the organization of military headquarters and personnel selection centres it founded the possibility of establishing of unified replacement headquarters, the legislation background of which was provided by the March 19. 1939 Home Defence Act.

Part IV: The new system of regional military administration and the establishment of replacement headquarters was started with the ratification of the milestone 1939 Home Defence Act II. Article. As a result the task and structure of regional military administration cleared and the levels of military jurisdiction were formed. Parallel to this the new system of registration of those liable for military service supplied the growing needs of the military of personal, informational and other need-for-combat resources. Moreover also the regional military administration's significant task was to establish military administration in the returned parts of the country, and their work.

In this unit I:

- Presented the organizational changes of the regional (covert) military administration agencies;
- Revealed the preceding of the foundation of replacement headquarters and at the same time introduced the efforts accompanying the foundation of the replacement organization;
- Made it clear that the replacement headquarters could only be formed after the ratification of the Home Defence Act;
- Defined the exact date of the establishment of replacement headquarters and described the circumstances.

3.Chapter: the regional military administration system from 1945 to the formation of the present system

Analysing the history of regional military administration between 1945 and 1955 it can be seen that this period was eventful. Their organizational structure, official jurisdiction and their number were in the state of a permanent change. Between 1945 and 1955 – that is in ten years – the four-level military administration became through a number of changes two-level. Administrative agencies were completing their task among practically continuous reorganizations. This effected the quality of their work and blocked quality professional job. Nevertheless the sudden need for numbers together with the political leadership's cleansing efforts and the appointment of 'reliable' cadres diluted the personnel of the regional military administrative organizations. As in general IQ as in professional expertise uneducated people were appointed to the key replacement posts.

The year 1955 was a milestone in the history of regional military administrative organizations. The military public administration which was based on district headquarters and had decades of tradition had been terminated. The newly established system attempted to follow the system of civilian public administration. I had to do so, since the majority of the

tasks of the regional military administration demanded co-operation. Nevertheless there was one case where reorganization of the civilian administration was preceded by that of the military. The one-level regional military office system, the system of county replacement headquarters was formed before the termination of district offices. This system – with smaller reorganizations, expanding of tasks and in some cases deprivation of them – is practically unchanged. It has satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements prescribed by law and even the staff decrease of the nineties could not cause a serious trouble in its professional work.

The only confusion was caused by the formation program of the professional army and the civilian administrative reorganization efforts and the uncertainty caused by them. It became a situation difficult to handle because within the same organizations there were two subunits both responsible for fulfilling the military demand for personnel.

Taking into consideration the developments between 1945 and 1955, I;

- Presented the demanding job of regional military administration organizations for the good of the newly forming home defence;
- Showed the organizational and arrangement changes of the regional military administration organizations
- Up-to-dated the specific dates of the reorganization of regional military administration organizations, and the formation and reorganization of different level military offices
- Clarified the roles and tasks of demographical registration offices and lower level military registration

Furthermore, analysing the events after 1955, I:

- Introduced the circumstances of the termination of district headquarters, the process and the organizational period;
- Examined the new element of regional military administration: recruiting, which had not appeared as an independent element within the organizational elements of regional military administration;
- Presented the circumstances of the formation of county replacement headquarters and the formation of the present system.

4. Chapter: Military administration on the ‘returned’ parts of the country

The organisation of military public administration, providing the conditions for functioning and the organization of the introduction of civilian public administration presented great challenges for the regional military administration before the war.

All this in a period when the reorganization later the reconstruction of regional military administration (formation of replacement headquarters) was in progress. It is a fact however that the mistakes made by the military administration on the returned parts, and the ‘overheated’ individual ambitions in many cases hindered the process of military administration, and ruined its reputation.

Despite all this I hold a very important deed of this period the tasks completed by the military administration on the returned parts. The military public administration established by the regional military administration in Eastern-Hungary and Northern – Transylvania in three months, in the South in four months had created a situation where the civilian public administration could start its work without any hampering. Besides this the military public administration accomplished the military administration tasks as well, that is the registration, recruiting and the reception of those legible for military service.

In this unit I:

- Systematized the rhythm and tasks of the military public administration introduced in the returned parts of the country
- Introduced their organizational structure

5. Chapter: The system and changes of military registration from 1920 until today

In this chapter I paid special attention to and examined thoroughly and in details the condition, situation and changes of military registration. This was justified by the importance of the field. Since it is self evident that without a properly handled and maintained registration military replacement tasks can not be properly executed. Only the properly maintained and supported military registration can fulfil its destination.

The significance of it is shown by the fact that in all main organisational periods the organization of a military force started with the maintenance and organization of the registration. It was so after World War I and II after the ratification of the regulations of the Trianon peace dictate, then after achieving equality in armamentation. There is particular importance in the efforts under the concealment to maintain a public and military registration. There can not and should not be a reason found to waste or terminate the recently maintained military registration.

During the representation of the military registration system, I:

- Demonstrated the changes and the tasks of the registration personnel;
- Proved that the organisation of an army can not be fulfilled, the personnel can not be provided without the registration of those liable for military service;
- Cleared the system of registration in certain periods and the circle of those liable for military service;
- Drew attention to the basic fact that no army can be without accurate and properly appreciated military registration.

6. Chapter: One possible new organizational built-up and tasks of regional military administration

Regional military administration is facing thorough reconstruction. The voluntary (professional military force is not requiring the replacement system based on the philosophy of great demands of numbers based on the idea of a mass-army. The immediate and radical changing of the system is needed and inevitable. This reconstruction must be – in its each element – adjusted to the new requirements so the new types of challenges of the safety environment, the new kinds of tasks of the Hungarian Defence Forces and public administration changes related to home defence and within that regional military administration must be taken into serious consideration.

The new voluntary individual replacement system declared and by the end of 2004 introduced by the government, requires a brand new type of thinking and new techniques of execution from the professionals of this field. The creative multilateral professional is brought to foreground who applies the characteristics of human resource management.

I presented my proposal taking into consideration these at the same time underlying that on the first place I hold the region-based regional military administration organization the proper organizational system. I can only hope that this traditional administration system has a further future since it has proven that it has been able to adjust itself to all situations and circumstances and could fulfil its tasks in all cases.

In this unit, I:

- Presented the recent tasks of regional military administration
- Summarized the knowledge in connection with the regionalization of public administration, introduced the formation of the regionalization of regional military administration which has started with the foundation of recruitment centres
- Presented a proposal for the formation and organizational elements of a new system of regional military administration
- Mentioned the importance of the level of education of the future military administration professional.

5. Summarizing conclusions

Regional military administration organizations may be heading towards and about to experience the most significant changes of their long operation in the close future. This transformation differs from all previous ones, its gratitude and quality could be compare to the changes after the Trianon peace dictum. But still the difference is enormous: that time we acted under duress in the transformation of the military force and so in case of the military replacement headquarters, but today this is the free political will and with it of course the altered safety environment that provides motivation.

The present system of military replacement was organized to meet the demands of a mass-army, and its institutional organization finds it harder and harder to adjust to the altered circumstances. The organization of replacement headquarters has changed as well. The military leadership initiated for the meeting of personnel demands of the professional armed force, the recruiting organizations, which have been organized as organisational elements of county replacement headquarters as recruiting departments or offices.

If we examine the more than 80 year history of regional military administration organizations we can rightfully say that it has played a significant role in the maintenance of the armed force and the ensuring of personnel and material demands.

From their formation their task was practically unchanged though their means and methods have changed, adjusting all the time to the political and military environment of the age. To sum up and summarize the experiences I personally hold as most important, during their functioning the regional military administration organizations :

- Could only fulfil their tasks arm in arm with the civilian public administration
- Its organizational units – size and division – has always depended on the quantity and form of the task to be executed
- The minister of Defence has always had executive rights - though in agreement with the included ministers – on different civilian administrative and economic organizations
- Regional military administration organizations have only recently withdrawn from the home defence education of youth
- Always – except for the period of concealment - regional military administration organizations have had official jurisdiction
- Their role in their territory has always been significant their social and official activities – primarily in the circle of local inhabitants – has always been in the centre of attention
- The experiences of the all-voluntary, individual replacement system based totally on the rulings of the Trianon dictum – which so far has

been the only one in the history of Hungarian Home Defence – showed that it is only effective in case of a proper legislation, financial and social background

Over all these, it plays a significant role in the forming of the image of home defence. Moreover – since the Home Defence is becoming one of the greatest employers – as a territorial (deconcentrated) military administrative body, becomes a deciding factor on the labour market of the region, its role being increased in the decrease of unemployment.

7. Proposals

The combination of the tasks of regional military administration is overdue, its organizational system is out-of-date. In accordance with the by now final governmental decision the last conscript soldier will be dismissed in November 2004 so the organizational restructuring can not be delayed. An effective and well thought organizational transformation – which is followed by the identification of new tasks – must be initiated immediately. For the consolidated process of it I present a proposal hereby:

- ✓ A team of experts should be set up which would account for all to-be-done tasks taking into consideration all the present regulations
- ✓ In the professional part of the job should be included the established researchers of the field, the lecturers of the field from ZMNE, and the practical professionals who conduct regional military administration
- ✓ The team of experts should put forward a proposal on the creation of a new regional military administration organisation and its structure
- ✓ The new regional military administration organization's structure should align with the organization structure of public administration, and its number be relevant to its tasks
- ✓ The office and informatics infrastructure should be created in the view of the foreseeable developments in public administration, and the whole body should be integrated into the public system
- ✓ The achievements of regional military administration should be kept and used in the future organization building
- ✓ As the experiences of a traditional military organization the experiences should be taught in the frame of military education

8. New scientific results

On the bases of the research made in the topic of my dissertation its systematization and analysis in my PhD thesis I word the following scientific results:

- a) During an extensive research work I REVEALED the authentic history of regional military administration organizations, DEFINED its functioning phases and PROMPTED the changes at different levels of military authorities. Simultaneously I DEFINED the termination dates of district headquarters in the covert period, and the beginning of the official jurisdiction of brigades of all arms;
- b) I have REVEALED and PRESENTED and also precisely DEFINED the circumstances and the time of the formation of military replacement headquarters which are accounted for as the basic agency of regional military administration after the covert phase.
- c) In details REVEALED, INTRODUCED and ANALYSED the formation of the registration of those liable for military service, its changes and the

different registration systems of different time periods. I PROVED that the bases of military replacement and organization is an accurate continuously and well maintained military registration

9. The applicability of the dissertation

In my view my the applicability of my dissertation is as follows:

- a) The structure and tasks of regional military administration organisations – during the strategic overview of home defence – faces changes. With my proposal I demonstrate a possible new structure. During the consultations I would like to validate the experiences gained during my researches and the decades of work on the field of research.
- b) Besides this the history of regional military administration organizations could be fit into the education for example at the adequate department of ZMNE this way at
 - Military force organization and replacement-;
 - Law- and
 - Military history departments

Veszprém, August 4. 2004.

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