

MIKLÓS ZRÍNYI
NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY
Doctoral Council

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**CHANCES AND LIMITS OF MISSION
COMMAND**
presented through a military historical example
(Operation „Spring Awake” March 1945)

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Executive Summary

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BUDAPEST
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„Together with the order people gets a ticket naming the final railway station. But the most compliant track can be chosen just by the traveller.”

(Heinz Guderian, 1888-1954)

Stating of problem and the aim of the work

Hungary has been member of the NATO since 1999. This period brought significant changes into the task- and leadership system of the Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF). Its structure was changed as well. The HDF switched over from a conscript system to a professional voluntary system. The complicated new challenges arising opposite to HDF need the modernization of its service culture and inwardness. The essential condition of this new inwardness is a modern command theory which can provide the HDF's interoperability towards NATO too. This command theory is the Mission Command, is known as „Auftragstaktik” (mission-type tactics) too.

„Auftragstaktik” represents a capstone command and control doctrine in the German armed forces dating back to the early 19th century. Its roots can be found in the Prussian military reforms beginning in 1808, following Prussia's disastrous defeats by Napoleon.¹

Mission Command subsumes the following concepts: individual initiative, independent

¹ Keithly, David M. and Ferris, Stephen P. : Auftragstaktik, or Directive Control, in Joint and Combined Operations, in: Parameters, Autumn 1999, p. 118-33.

decisionmaking, and thinking leaders reaching decisions on their own accord. In short, a commander would specify to subordinates **what** to do, not **how** to do it.

The subordinate leaders then implement the order independently. The subordinate leader is given, to a large extent, the planning initiative and freedom which allows flexibility and speed in execution. But Mission Command is more than giving a mission to a subordinate and allowing him to execute it. Rather, it is the superior's duty to provide all resources to carry out the mission.

Strictly speaking the German word is something of a misnomer. It is not a tactic per se (and certainly not limited to tactical level). It is more of a method of tactical leadership. By the proper German designation it is command philosophy, which determines the system of the whole Bundeswehr (German Armed Forces) from high command (strategic level) down to squad (tactical) level.

After the World War II (WW II) – till the '90s – the Hungarian armed forces operated by strict principles of so-called order-type command, which is a way of the centralized military command. It allowed only minimal independence to subordinates and preferred the unconditional execution of orders.

However we recognized, it is necessary to change our military leadership, but we have a lot of problems during the practical realization. We tried to find the right way of thinking, but we have to fight old methods and confirmed habits day by day. So it is very important to vote for a modern approach of command and to begin its enforcement in the whole system of HDF.

Fist of all, the changes need to know the clear theoretical basics and to treat the practical examples continuously. We have to see not only the chances of the new type command, but also its limits as well.

The **main aim** of my work is to point at the necessity of the Mission Command in HDF and to present the main principles and requirements, as well as the practical established limits of Mission Command. During this action I call the military history to help, because it can expressively present these principles by way of its examples.

My military historical example is the operation „Spring Awake” („Frühlingserwachen”) in March 1945. It was the last German „grand attack” („Großoffensive”) during the WW II, which can clearly show the chances and limits of the German „Auftragstaktik”.

Structure of the dissertation

My dissertation is built as follows:

Introduction:

Actuality and Hungarian scientific literature of the matter, used methods, structure of the work and the scientific goals;

Chapter 1:

Main principles of mission-type and order-type command;

Chapter 2:

Developed situation and operational plans of opponents in Hungary (March 1945);

Chapter 3:

Balance of forces and preparatory measures;

Chapter 4:

Happening of the operation in different directions from the main effort;

Chapter 5:

Happening of the operation in the direction of main effort;

Conclusion:

Importance of the operation, appearance of Mission Command during the operation, scientific results and suggestions for using of dissertation;

*Appendices**Employed sources**Publications list***Adopted Researching Methods**

- Researching of primary historical sources in the German Military Historical Archive (Freiburg/GER) and in the Hungarian Military Historical Archive (Budapest/HUN),
- Collecting, organizing and treating of the primary historical sources (from Bundesarchiv / Militaerarchiv in Freiburg/GER, Military Historical Archive in Budapest/HUN) regarding Operation “Spring Awake”;
- Collecting, organizing, reorganizing, treating of the old and new English, German, Hungarian as well as Russian secondary sources of the matter;
- Participation in scientific conferences and competitions in order to gauge the actual

- acceptability of my researching results;
- Define the connections between organization, equipment, tactical methods, events of the operation and the Mission Command;
- Analyse connection between the type of command and the success during the operation.

Scientific Goals

My scientific intentions are as follows:

- Present the difference between the principles of the mission-type and order-type command; point to chances of Mission Command, which can be used in the modern manoeuvre warfare and during the unsymmetrical warfare; as well as explore the Mission Command's limits, which can it hinder in its operation;
- Expand national scientific knowledge with new elements of matter;
- Redraft the main connections of "Spring Awake" on operational level;
- Give a new style, expressive military historical example, which is useful for the modern military leader training and education;
- Attest the Mission Command's necessity to change of service culture in HDF.

Main Publications

1. Assault of Budapest 1944-45 (diploma work), Lajos Kossuth Military College, Szentendre 1988

2. Heavy Tank Sd.Kfz.182. Kingtiger (Panzer VI. B) harcokosi. In: Haditechnika 96./3., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p. 44-48.
3. Panzerfaust 3. In: Haditechnika 97./3., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p. 30-31.
4. Kingtigers in Hungary. In: Hallgatói közlemények – hadtörténelmi különszám, ZMNE, Budapest 1998., p.125-150.
5. Experiences in Bundeswehr. In: Hallgatói közlemények – TDK különszám, ZMNE, Budapest 1998., p.71-102.
6. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part I. In: Haditechnika 2000./2., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.58-60.
7. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part II. in: Haditechnika 2000./3., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.93-96.
8. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part III. In: Haditechnika 2000./4., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.84-87.
9. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part IV. In: Haditechnika 2001./2. HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.65-70.
10. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part V. In: Haditechnika 2001./3., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.85-89.
11. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part VI. In: Haditechnika 2001./4., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.73-77.
12. Kingtigers in Hungary. Part VII. In: Haditechnika 2002./1., HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.75-80.
13. Die Möglichkeiten und die Grenzen der Auftragstaktik – Operation „Frühlingserwachen” –

- Ungarn 1945. – diplom work, year-CD LGAN2000;
Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr, Hamburg 2002.
14. What is the Mission Command? In: Magyar Honvéd 2003/21, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2003., p.2-4.
 15. Birth of Mission Command – Auftragstaktik. In: Magyar Honvéd 2003/35, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2003., p.2-5.
 16. Peacekeeping Training. In: Honvéd altiszti folyóirat, XVI. évfolyam, 2004/4. szám, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2004., p. 13-16.
 17. Historical experiences of Mission Command. In: Hadtudomány 2004/2, Magyar Hadtudományi Társaság, Budapest 2004., p.77-89., and <http://www.zmne.hu/kulso/mhtt/hadtudomany/2004/2/2004-2-8.HTML>
 18. Path of History. In: Aranyas, 2004/6 SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2004., p.63.
 19. Forced March – The German Infantry in 1944-45. In: Aranyas, 2004/6 SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2004., p. 66-71.
 20. Tigers, Panthers and Leopards – German Tank Museum in Munster. In: Aranyas, 2004/10 SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2004., p.58-60., and In: http://www.hadakutjan.hu/fegyverek_tigrisek_parducok_leopardok.php
 21. Soldiers with stars - A Soviet Infantry in 1944-45. In: Aranyas, 2004/10 SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2004., p.66-70. and In: http://www.hadakutjan.hu/fegyverek_csillagosok_katonak.php;
 22. Auftragstaktik – The German way of Mission Command. In: Honvéd Altiszti Folyóirat, XVI.

- Évfolyam, 2004/2. szám, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2004., p.32-38. and <http://vorosmeteor.hu/szakirodlom/03/041027.pdf>
23. Auftragstaktik – The German Mission Command and its historic roots. In: Kard és Toll 2004/2, ZMNE, Budapest 2004, p.30-38.
 24. Military archeologists - In: Haditechnika 2004/3. HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.51-52.o., and: <http://www.haditechnika.hu/ARCHIVUM/200403/040313.htm>
 25. New German conception for IFV's – Puma. In: Haditechnika 2004/4. HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.18-22., and <http://www.haditechnika.hu/ARCHIVUM/200404/040405.htm>
 26. Psychological training for fighting in Bundeswehr. In: Honvéd Altiszti Folyóirat, XVI. Évfolyam, 2004/4. szám, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2004. p.46-55.
 27. ATF-2 Dingo In: Haditechnika 2004/6. HM Technológiai Hivatal, Budapest, p.18–21., and: <http://www.haditechnika.hu/Tipus/Dingo.htm>
 28. The Hungarian light infantry during the WW II. In: Regiment, 2005/I. SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2005., p.12-15.
 29. Light Infantry and light riflemen. In: Új Honvédségi Szemle 2005/2., HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2005., p.81-89.o. and http://www.hm.gov.hu/hirek/kiadvanyok/uj_honvedslegeszi_szemle/konnyugyalogosok_konnyuloveszek
 30. Birth of a new branch – The light riflemen. In: Regiment, 2005/I. SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2005. p.16-19.
 31. Kosovo Force Nr. 12. In: Regiment, 2005/III. SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2005. p.20-25.

32. Near to Budapest – Operation Konrad-1. In: Regiment, 2005/IV. SkyBear Bt., Budapest 2005., p.45-47.
33. Relief operations for Budapest. In: Elsodort város, volume I., PolgART Kiadó, Budapest, 2005., p.297-349.
34. Experiences of a contingent commander. In: Új Honvédségi Szemle 2006/6, HM Zrínyi Kommunikációs Szolgáltató Kht., Budapest 2006., p.81-85. and http://www.hm.gov.hu/hirek/kiadvanyok/uj_honvedsegi_szemle/egy_kontingensparancsnok_tapasztalatai
35. The Sd.Kfz.171 Panzerkampfwagen V "PANTHER" In: <http://gportal.hu/gindex.php?pg=811663&nid=182399&PHPSESSID=4d2916d26a10cda9355a754b06606bb3>
36. Winning of peace – The 2nd HUN PRT in Afghanistan, Part I. In: Regiment, 2008/I. Regiment Militária Kft., Budapest 2008., p.18-23.
37. Winning of peace, Part II. – The 2nd HUN PRT in Afghanistan In: Regiment, 2008/II. Regiment Militária Kft., Budapest 2008., p.55-59.
38. Soldiers of Saint László. In: Regiment, 2008/III. Regiment Militária Kft., Budapest 2008., p.13-15.
39. Exercise „Direction of Deployment 2008” In: Regiment, 2008/IV. Regiment Militária Kft., Budapest 2008., p.32-35.
40. Training from bottom-view. In: Sereg Szemle 2008/3., MH ÖHP, Székesfehérvár 2008., p.5-13.
41. (With Tamás Kazup together) The AIRSOFT. In: Sereg Szemle 2009/1., MH ÖHP, Székesfehérvár 2008., p.39-44.o.

42. Troops arrangement – Training of HUN PRT-6. In: Regiment, 2009/I. Regiment Militária Kft., Budapest 2009., p.46-49.
43. Chances and limits of Mission Command. In: Sereg Szemle 2009/2. MH ÖHP, Székesfehérvár 2009., p.30-44.
44. The self-confident commander and the training. In: Sereg Szemle 2009/3.. MH ÖHP, Székesfehérvár 2009., p.17-22.
45. (together with Zoltán Bárány) Chances and limits of Mission Command Part I. In: Honvédségi Szemle July 2009, HM HVK, Budapest 2009., p.17-22.

Scientific Competition Papers:

46. Assault of Budapest 1944-45, Scientific Competition Work (SCW) for National Scientific Conference of Students (NSCS), Budapest 1988 – tactical section – extra prise
47. Experiences in the Bundeswehr, SCW for Scientific Conference for Students (SCS) of MZNDU, Budapest 1998 – tactical section – I. prise
48. Kingtigers in Hungary, SCW for NSCS, Budapest 1998 – section of military history - II. prise
49. Features of the German armoured troops during the counterattack at lake Balaton, SCW for NSCS, Budapest 1999 – section of military history - extra prise
50. Military historical examples for operational planning, Competition for Doctrine Development organized by General Staff of HDF, 15.10.2003. – III. prise
51. Auftragstaktik, in other words Mission Command – Competition of National Association for Doctoral Candidates, 2004.04.19.

52. Auftragstaktik – Roots of the German Mission Command. – presentation in Conference „Sword and quill” of MZNDU – Budapest – MZNDU, 28.05.2004. – extra prize of Hungarian Military Science Association (HMSA)

Scientific Presentations:

53. Die Möglichkeiten und die Grenzen der Auftragstaktik – Operation „Frühlingserwachen” – Ungarn 1945. – Presentation in German language at the Historical Scientific Circle in War College of the Bundeswehr – Hamburg, 11.07.2002.
54. Operation Konrad 1 – Staff Ride at the US-HUN EX „Iron Strike”, Tata 17.02.2003.
55. The „Kuruc” cavalry during the Rákóczi Independence War – Cientific Conference „Cum deo pro patria et libertate” – Balatonkenese 22.05.2003.
56. Army of Rákóczi, Conference organized by „Honvéd” Cultural Association, Jánoshalma – Honvéd Kaszinó, 18.12.2003.
57. (Together with Dr. Lajos Négyesi) Ligth Infantry in the Hungarian Military History. – Presentation at the Light Infantry Seminar organized by GS of HDF, Tata 11.02.2004.
58. Gleam an fall of „Auftragstaktik” – Presentation at the „Military Historical Afternoon” of the Hungarian Military Historical Institute and Museum, Budapest 14.02.2004. and in:
<http://panzerkeil.dre.hu/hd/hdfolap.htm>
59. (Together with Dr. Lajos Négyesi) History of the Hungarian Light Infantry, Presentation at the „Military Historical Evening” organized by Historical Section of HMSA, Budapest 27.04.2004.

60. Operation „Spring Awake” – at the „Military Historical Afternoon” of the Hungarian Military Historical Institute and Museum – Budapest 19.04. 2007

CURRICULUM VITAE

Lieutenant Colonel LIPPAI, Péter

Personal data:

Name:	Lippai, Péter
Rank:	Lt.Col.
MOS:	Infantry officer
DOB:	07 Oct 1966
POB:	Miskolc (HUN)
Marital status:	Married
Children:	5

Civilian Education:

1985-1988	Lajos Kossuth High School, Debrecen, Hungary
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Military Qualification:

2000-2002	Command Academy of Bundeswehr, 43 rd High Command and General Staff Course of Land Forces, Hamburg, Germany.
1997-1999	Miklós Zrínyi Defence University, Tactical and Operational Department, Budapest, Hungary
1985-1988	Lajos Kossuth Military Academy, Mechanised Infantry Department, Szentendre, Hungary

Courses:

2009	Course Against Suicide Bomber, NATO Centre of Excellence – Defence Against Terrorism, Ankara, Turkey
2007	ISAF PRT Course, NATO School SHAPE, Oberammergau, Germany
2005	Specialized English language course in military terminology, Budapest, Hungary - STANAG 3333 exam
2003	Specialized English language course in military terminology, Budapest, Hungary
1997-98	Specialized English language course in military terminology, Budapest, Hungary
1996-97	Course for COM MECH INF COY Germany
1996	German language course specialized in military terminology, Budapest, Hungary - STANAG 4343 exam
1992-93	German language course specialized in military terminology, Budapest, Hungary
1991	Course for COM COY Hódmezővásárhely, Hungary

Military Career:

01 Apr 2009 - Dep COS, Hungarian Defence Forces
(HDF), 5th István Bocskai Infantry
Brigade, Debrecen, Hungary

2007-2009	Chief G7, HDF, 5 th István Bocskai Infantry Brigade, Debrecen, Hungary
2007	Chief G3, HDF, 25 th György Klapka Infantry Brigade, Tata, Hungary
2004-2007	COM 25-1 LAI Bn, HDF, 25 th György Klapka Light Infantry Brigade, Tata, Hungary
1996-1997	COY COM, Lajos Kossuth Military College of HDU ZMNE, Szentendre, Hungary
1994-1996	COY DCOM, Lajos Kossuth Military College, Szentendre, Hungary
1991-1994	COY COM, HDF 5 th István Bocskai Mechanized Infantry Brigade, Debrecen, Hungary
1990-1991	COY COM, HDF János Damjanich Mechanized Infantry Brigade, Nyíregyháza, Hungary
1988-1990	Platoon leader, 5 th Independent Air Assault Battalion, Szolnok, Hungary

Other military experiences (Practice in Troops)

2003 (2 month)	G6 SO, HDF JSLF, Székesfehérvár, Hungary
2002 (1,5 month)	J6 SO, HDF J6, Budapest, Hungary
1998 (1,5 month)	G3 SO HDF, 5 th István Bocskai Mech. Inf. Brig.

Missions

- COM Hungarian Guard and Security Battalion (HGSB-12), Pristina, Kosovo, 2005
- COS Hungarian Provincial Reconstruction Team (HUN PRT-2), Pol-e Khumri, Afghanistan, 2007

Promotions:

20 Aug 1988 1LT
 20 Aug 1993 CPT
 20 Aug 1998 MAJ

 01 Aug 2004 LTC

Decorations:

Golden Service Medal, 2008
 Silver Service Medal, 2005
 Officer Service Medallion
 2nd. degree
 Officer Service Medallion
 3rd. degree
 Medal for foreign missions,
 Afghanistan, 2007
 Medal for foreign missions,
 Kosovo, 2005
 NATO Medal Afghanistan
 2007
 NATO Medal Kosovo, 2005
 Medal for flood-protection
 2006

Language Skills:

- German Advance Level „C” specialized in military terminology
- German STANAG 4343
- English Advance Level „C” specialized in military terminology
- English STANAG 3333