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## DOCTORAL (PhD-) DISSERTATION

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COATS OF ARMS AND SYMBOL USAGE OF MILITARY AND PARAMILITARY  
FLAGS AT THE TWENTIETH CENTURY'S OF HUNGARY

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## DOCTORAL THESIS – SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION

### The flags – as symbols and symbol carriers

More theories exist in connection with the development of flags; some link it to China, while others bind it to the ancient Rome. Debate a decision is not this dissertation's aim, but it is conceivable and in addition can be imagined the usage at both continent took shape independently from each other. More probable that Roman roots are disposal of the European usage. Formation may have matured from vexillum which was used as a military sign for the Roman legions' differentiation and for units' management in a fight or battle than accordingly spread in civil life afterwards. Most of the church's flags are standing very near to this and made with a crossbar solution until these days. The first flag owners were kings, magnates, secular and church leaders and then ulterior lower level groups of the social ladder were settling down consequently the using of flags.

Important criterion in addition with the flags -similarly to the coats of arms- to specify owners (users) identity unambiguously. For this due the phylogeny of flags tallies a lot to the coats of arms phylogenies. At the beginning of initial times plain colours and artless design with the passing time became increasingly more complicated in the concern of coats of arms, flags and various logos. Primarily it can be bound to that more and more parties used it, so it was all necessary to be able to mark the diverse of groups and additionally distinguish them from others.

The flag simultaneously relates and characterizes. It associates that group of people who “stood under an identically similar jack”. Furthermore distinguishes this group simultaneously from others, literally from those who have selected a dissimilar ensign. Taking a look at a flag could belong to even a community of children, one of the sports clubs, mark of a colony or country or anybody else, at a first glance identifies the ones lining up behind it. Though for the exterior observer only one flash in order to know it owes between them or neither.

Nowadays flags, coats of arms and logos constitute inseparable part of our everyday life, even if it is subconscious and we have not been awarded about this theory. We can establish which fans we have seen at a sportscast based on the flag, a flag signals our favourite dress shop already from far away, and in a department store flags (or its similar task providers e.g. molino's or boards) indicates exactly where the products on sale could be find.

Cultures and social values change from time to time and symbols also modify with them. Disappearing ideas and values with eternal validity exist and constant symbols join them for long time. We can not be sure these symbols really mean the same for an observer in these days, than other ones centuries or millennia away. There are ages as well when ideas, symbols and flags arise and fall so quickly. There are some symbols beside which appearance not at all or only minimally converts, but their semantic content have been transformed radically though.

The regimental standard plays the most important role in an army's life. The standard not only a principal military symbol, but a symbol carrier excessively. The symbols which can be hit on the flag, coats of arm and other motives signal it clearly and unmistakably for the observer, that the given corps belongs to the military force of which country, and what the most important holinesses for him. Till the beginning of the twentieth century it was possible to find out about numerous flags who is the majesty to the flag belongs to. In many countries, like this in Hungary, the soldiers put the oath down onto the flag through centuries. Related feelings to a flag had been expressed by Imre Szilágyi, an Roman Catholic parson at the Royal Hungarian soldier infantry regiment of Cegléd, at his flag consecration feast on 19 September, 1920. the way like this: "What is that flag? What is it for the soldier? The flag is a symbol. Symbol for togetherness, sign for the native land and icon for patriotism." The commander of the second Royal Hungarian mixed brigade composed so in 1938 about the flag: "The flag is the national ideals' impersonators, the representative of the all country in all time and age, holy reality living quasi and the largest legal entity after holy crown of Hungary."

One of the soldiers' principal tasks were the respect of the flag, protecting it in a battle so it should be in our days moreover. That was the possible largest shame for all of the members of a regard if they lost their flag in a battle. Cause of it the crew's decimation and the corps's dispersion could be happened habitually. Well-known it by nearly everybody as a frequent scene of the doomsdays of a war of independence, when in 1848-49, before the capitulation the battalions' officer corps and his crew cut the corps's flag into pieces in order not to manage to get onto the enemy's hand. These shreds after a long time hiding reappeared as national relics after 1867. It has been accommodated in the collective national remembrance for these days so. There was not as well-known known but as exactly similar flag dismemberment in the First World War too. The Hungarian soldiers setting off for the captivity for the posterity saved more flags on a similar manner before they have been sending to Przemysl. The acquisition of the enemy's flag between

the most outstanding combat actions owed. Acting like this for an executive soldier opened the road for up rise, acquisition and tall honours.

The most complex knowledge has to be at his disposal in order for somebody to be able to process a flag with the claim of the completeness. It is necessary to be experienced in the heraldry, the symbol systems, the art history, mainly the eighteenth century and in the case of earlier flag, and in the different textile techniques. At the twentieth century abundant archival sources stands for the researcher's provision in the case of flags examination, although it is strongly necessary to be skilled at processing. It is consequential and negligible to know the political background of the examined era, which is particularly important around the case of the obscure times. Emerges from this dissertation for instance, how large the significance whether a crown had been put onto the flag or not.

### Hungarian state and military symbol systems in the twentieth century

At the twentieth century in Hungary's history there were multiple turning points that brought replacing state and military symbols fully or partly within a few years. The official state of coats of arms –the most important national symbol– and the establishment of it's fate were so important questions at the period of the political transformation after defeated World War I and II and closing the nearly 5 decade-long communist rules. This was being effective naturally though symbols, like this onto the establishment of the military one with appearance of the regimental standard. These three turning points, 1918-1920, 1945-1949 and 1989-1990 modified the nation's life quasi in all segments. It would be possible to classify 1956 here as the fourth actually considering change of the state symbols. Natural process, that the political changes brought the change of the official state and national symbols in all cases.

However the 3 Hungarian state symbols changes in the twentieth century differ from each other in a lot. At the first one - discounting the Hungarian Soviet republic's short period - one of the half of an existing symbol system were leaded out from the practice. The another half was kept with centuries-old traditions and were accepted by the society's majority. Despite it was necessary to keep in mind legitimacy of the symbols and respect continuously. The 'system of rules' tried to reach it by struggling along with the methods of education and upbringing.

The second symbol change brought new, symbols without traditions and antecedents entirely. Old ones have been wiped off, were prohibited from the usage of the previous symbols and were pursued in addition. The dictatorship tried violent devices to make the new symbols accepted under the possible shortest time, what was not an easy matter. All of the areas of life were permeating about politics and the state ones (and party ones) were there everywhere together with their symbols. Despite this or thanks to that the symbols turned into the first “public enemy” in the course of protesting against the system.

At the third symbol change as the usage of the previous symbols had to come to an end definitely not a totally new introduction followed it. New symbols occurred from the old ones and they came into sight from the Hungarian national symbols' millennial repository again onto the head of table of the state symbol system. A debate was proceeding about barely which era of the national past it is necessary to reach back for “old-new” symbols. Since the re-usage of any symbols of the previous eras presupposes the acceptance of its state political and ideological line.

The Hungarian military force used altogether only 9 different types of regular regimental standards at the 20. Century reclusive the transitional eras uncontrolled - irregular flags. All of the flags adaptation could be linked and added to a social or political exchange. The first one can be connected to the mount of the Hungarian Royal Army 1869 M after the compromise in 1867, which survived the next big change and stayed in usage until 1938. In the twentieth century the very first flag regulate appeared in 1920, which were observed by the 1938 one. From the part of our seed we enumerate this still to the symbol change of the period after the WWI, since only at this time -20 years after the First World War- were replacing the still used ones among 1869 M flags with I. József Ferenc signs assumed on them.

The next new era change happened more quickly although it lasted until 5 years so. The military symbols of the communist system getting the full power gradually after the World War II and were fixed definitively by 1950. At this time the country and the army systematized political affiliation to the official expectations adequately representing 1950 M regimental standard of the age. In 1949 two other ones preceded this level and finally the system reached the stage of the solution in three steps within one and a half years after 4 years of “inactivity”. The 1956 revolution and war of independence if political transformation not too, but yielded symbol change - in first circle only with a makeshift – so the appearance of the regimental standard changed again in 1957. This

coat of arms change on the flag was “sanctioned” in 1976 only, definitively and ultimately with the introduction of a new flag. The very next symbol change came true much more quickly and solely in one step, when in 1989-1990 the People’s Republic has been transferred to Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian People's Army was transfigured to the Hungarian Defence Force though.

The most important objective of this dissertation is acquainting that military symbols, primarily the changes of the regimental standard how followed the changes of official state symbols. Additional aim of my thesis, while the decision makers judged it to be sufficient in all eras at the official military force the coats of arms and the representation of the national colours to a broadcasting of the most important political message, till then - as opposed to - the paramilitary organisations made an effort on the level of the symbols message’s more detailed and more accurate composing. The paper also shows the semantic content of the state and military symbols carried by way of the regimental standard related to the flag rites and can be interpreted only collectively. Besides manages an important political, ideological meaning the dedication of the flag for instance the procession list of invited ones, text of the festive speeches, feasts processions and additionally the manner of usage too.

## The sources of the research work

Most few historians deal with the research of the military flag in Hungary despite his central role played in the military symbol system. No one dwindling for these few researchers appeared in his writing. The vexilology receives slight attention unworthily between the auxiliary sciences of the history. It is possible to mention it as a counterexample how examined and well published the military uniforms and the area of honours. Fundamentally similarly to the flag both are the scene of representation of the all-time state and military symbol systems.

From among the museologists and historians dealing with the military flags needed to raise anyway Zoltán Kerekes and Györgyi Cs. Kottra, both of them were leaders of Ministry of National Defence, Institute and Museum of Military History, Military Museum’s flags collection. Other researchers also published writings dealing with flags but these related rather to national colours and story of the state flag than with military

flags. From among them definitely worth to emphasize Bernát Kumorovitz L., Iván Bertényi and Attila Pandula. It is necessary to mention two types yet between the bibliography substances, in which we may find related additives with the regimental standards before 1945. One the latter one corps stories, the other one became popular though in two decades it after 1990 likewise the expense of popular reminiscences, diaries. We may face detailed descriptions in both types the flag consecration - in connection with initiation feasts.

Beside slight number of literature sources first basis of my dissertation completion were the Ministry of Defence, Military History Institute and Museum, Military History Archives and Record Office's document substances were preserved mainly in History Archives of Military. All-time Ministry of Defence documents appear with largest weight between the sources, primarily the presidency (Presidential Class) documents, but can be found between them different other organizational units (e.g. classes, staff managements) documents. Unfortunately corps' documents substance was left in a slight quantity of the era before 1945, so these may have come up limitedly as a source so. It made the overview of the team substances after 1945 unnecessary, that (theoretically) all flag grant needs to be traced in the ministerial documents, since an event like this may have happened to a permit only. The regularity was as highly ordered in the eras around as it was necessary to send off speeches being over on the feast yet having permitted beforehand. One direction of the continuation of research work may be the examinations of the documents commandership with different levels and corps naturally arises in connection with the organization of the feasts that certainly did not reached higher forums.

The dedication of the flag was an important event, primarily in the life of the smaller communities. It is necessary to mention among the settlement documents sources what National Archives of Hungary and its County Member Institutions and also City Archives preserve. In connection with the flag grants of the era after 1945 can be found sources on the "civil side", between the documents of factories transmitting flags, firms, cooperative farms. This source group may be suitable for us to obtain information concerning formal contacts between the army and the civil society. It is necessary to mention the publications among the potential sources, primarily local and county newspapers and in newer times urban TV and radio's substances. For a dedication of the flags, if it hasn't had a news value at national level - particularly, when events like this happened so often within several months - with outstanding significance anyway on a local level. Worthy to mention the newsreel uptakes and film archive of Military History

Archives as possible sources, primarily in connection with the dedication of the flag feasts.

The research of twentieth century's military flags cannot be imagined without regulations. The army's bulletin (of National Defence, Edictal) was the official journal in all of the past century and our days too. All orders, instructions and measures appeared and were published in this that had concerned to the military force, members, armament and equipment. In the bulletins can be found all -within the examined era- official description of a regular regimental standard and in many cases its scaled drawing. Many related regulations legible in the bulletins, started from the regulation of the announcement, dedication of flag feasts and programmes until the description of the flag-bearing cupboards. Additional important written sources of the topic own record office substances the Ministry of Defence, Military History Institute and Museum and the aids of the museum's flag collection (personal records, inventory and other registers).

The meaning in case of the paramilitary flags accordingly grows the weight of non military archives sources and its quantity. Although the documents of the organisations between the two World Wars remained fractionally, important additives are implied in connection with the flags. The bigger part of document substance belongs to the National Leading of Workers' Guard can be found at National Archives of Hungary as unprocessed source-material.

Beside documents the most important source-group of my dissertation, obviously the flags themselves. Properly since 1935 the "Military Museum" protects the Hungarian military flags extracted from the "system". (It was conveyed at this time from Ludovika Academy the already out-of-use 1869M Hungarian soldier's flag.) Later on was fixed in the regulations already that if regimental standards getting out from the usage for some kind of reasons (e.g. exchange of a flag, proprietor a corps's ceasing without a legal successor) it is necessary to deliver it into a museum. Thanks for this action it can be said twentieth century's Hungarian military flags mostly remained in a big quantity.

Military regimental standards differ somewhat from fate of paramilitary organisations' flags. As opposed to the official flag nothing regulated its fate "after a usage", existence were only a potential possibility. In the case of pieces before 1945 it's a miracle that some pieces remained soundly since the new system pursued everything that could be brought into a context with the idealism of the pre-war era. Many paladins, veterans and valiant's flags, which have not been dragged away to the West in 1945, sacrificed in religious holy institutions, on private persons' attics or in cupboards deep

inside abiding the communist dictatorship's half century. From among these – compare to their original number of pieces – Military History Museum does not preserve a lot, but on the other hand even numerous can be found in possession of private persons and in other public collections. The Workers Guard's corps flags been transported to the Military History Museum after the organisation's dispersion. However we may not claim that all pieces achieved into the museum because of the velocity of submission and disorganisation, it may occurred even to private persons hold.