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“THE SACRIFICED ARMY” – THE HUNGARIAN 2ND ARMY BETWEEN MEMORY AND HISTORY*

The fate of the Hungarian 2nd Army has a significant role in the Hungarian memory. The army was sent to the Eastern Front in 1942 suffered one of the great defeats of the Hungarian military history during the Soviet counter-offensive in January 1943. During the past almost 80 years, different narratives have emerged about it were evolved in the Hungarian public. In the paper the author shall analyse the most significant elements of these narratives.

Firstly, there will be examined the genesis and underlying causes of the decision to send the 2nd Army to the Eastern front. The author counter a popular post-war myth that the Hungarian leadership sent out the Hungarian soldiers and labour servicemen with the intention of sacrifice that it could limit Hungary's involvement in the German war effort. Although the Hungarian military leadership discriminated against various social groups (primarily of individuals of Jewish descent, non-Hungarian nationalities) in military service, they did not aim to destroy them. Similarly, the higher proportion of reserve officers and lower social classes (peasantry, workpeople) in the army was misinterpreted.

In the second part of the paper the author will examine the interpretations of the defeat in January 1943. As a part of this topic there will be shown how the public opinion and survivors overstated the loss data and the temperature conditions of “the Russian winter.” In addition, the author scrutinize the fighting and withdrawal in January 1943 from the viewpoint of the military discipline. Finally, he analyse the interpretations of two orders. The army commander, Colonel General Jány wrote in his order on 24 January that “the 2nd Army has lost its honour.” Although later he withdrew this order, it became the symbol of the barbarity and betrayal of the Hungarian military elite against the Hungarian soldiers. It received a different opinion on the order of the commander of the III Corps of 1 February 1943, in which Major General Stomm disbanded his formation - which was unprecedented in Hungarian history.

Keywords: *Second World War, Hungarian History, Military History, Memory, The Hungarian 2nd Army.*

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«ЖЕРТВЕННА АРМІЯ»: 2-а УГОРСЬКА АРМІЯ МІЖ ПАМ'ЯТТЮ ТА ІСТОРІЄЮ

Доля 2-ї Угорської королівської армії відіграє значну роль у пам'яті угорців. Відіслана в 1942 році на Східний фронт армія під час радянської контратаки зазнала одну з найнищівніших поразок, що тільки мали місце в історії Угорщини. Протягом останніх майже 80 років в угорській громадськості з'явилися різні наративи стосовно неї, найважливіші з яких є предметом аналізу у пропонованій статті. Насамперед автор аналізує генезис та основні причини рішення про відправлення 2-ї Угорської армії на Східний фронт. У цьому контексті автор заперечує поширений у повоєнний час міф, згідно з яким угорський уряд пожертвував 2-ю Угорською армією та особами, що виконували примусові роботи, задля обмеження участі країни у військовій діяльності німців. Хоча під час військової служби угорське військове керівництво дискримінувало певні суспільні групи (насамперед осіб єврейського походження, осіб, які не належали до угорської національності), однак не мало на меті їхнє знищення. Подібно до цього неправильно був тлумачений і факт більшої частки офіцерів запасу та нижчих соціальних класів (селянство й робітничий клас) в армії.

У другій частині статті автор розглядає трактування поразки, що мала місце в січні 1943 року. В рамках цієї теми він досліджує, як громадськість та ті, що вижили, завищували дані про втрати, а також температурні умови «російської зими». Окрім цього, автор досліджує бої, а також відступ, що мав місце в січні 1943 року, з погляду військової дисципліни. У підсумку він аналізує інтерпретації двох різних наказів. Командувач армії, генерал-полковник Яні, у своєму наказі від 24 січня писав, що «2-га армія втратила честь». Незважаючи на те, що згодом Яні скасував цей наказ, останній став символом варварства та зради угорською військовою елітою своїх солдатів. Інакше був оцінений виданий III корпусом наказ від 1 лютого 1943 року, яким генерал-майор Стомм розпустив свою військову частину – подібний крок був безпрецедентним в історії Угорщини.

Ключові слова: Друга світова війна, угорська історія, воєнна історія, пам'ять, 2-га Угорська армія.

The activities, but most importantly the disastrous defeat of the Hungarian 2nd Army on the Eastern front has become the most significant event concerning the memory of the Hungarian Army in the Second World War. Due to the heavy losses, it was branded as “second Mohács”¹ or a “Hungarian apocalypse”². It was etched in the collective memory of Hungary for several factors. Firstly, because of the magnitude (more than 200,000 men) and the geographical coverage (from 9 military districts 6) of the mobilisation, it affected a significant part of the Hungarian society. Secondly, the casualties it suffered (more than 120,000 soldiers and labour servicemen) significantly exceeded the losses in other operations during the campaign against the Soviet Union in 1941³ or the casualties of the Hungarian Occupation Group⁴. January 1943 is the deadliest period for the Hungarian Honvéd Army in the Second World War⁵.

After 1945, the tragic role of the 2nd Army in the Second World War was heavily used by Communist memory politics. It was politically more useful to depict a whole army fighting 2500 km far from the Hungarian border as a mortal sin of the Horthy-system than the Army’s battles in Western-Ukraine and Hungary between 1944 and 1945 in protecting Hungary proper from Soviet advances⁶. As the activities of the 2nd Army are embedded in mainstream narratives of the Second World War, that is into the battle of Stalingrad as the turning point of the war, the story of the occupying Hungarian forces or the battles on Hungarian territory between 1944 and 1945 exist receded into oblivion.

In this paper study, I provide a critique of the most prevalent myths relating to the 2nd Army⁷. The first section provides a brief overview of the various interpretations of the fate of the 2nd Army in the literature, which centred around a common victim theme, where fallen Hungarian soldiers are viewed as passive victims, and where the official version of the war mirrors the Soviet narrative about the war.

The second part of the paper examines the main narratives about the activity of the 2nd Army. Here, I reflect on the Hungarian military and political elite’s decision to sacrifice the 2nd Army for political reasons and show the recurring contradictions concerning the withdrawal of the Army in January 1943. I conclude that these authors left military considerations out of their analysis. I posit that the condemnation of the Horthy-system prevailed instead of a thorough investigation of the Honvéd Army. The role of the commanding officers during the withdrawal was ignored or denounced, therefore the retreat was depicted as panic without military order even though a significant part of the Hungarian soldiers retreated in an orderly fashion.

The memory of the Hungarian 2nd Army

The true magnitude of the defeat of the 2nd Army was concealed from the Hungarian public. The Horthy- propaganda wanted to prepare the population for the expected loss⁸, but they did not want to demoralize them by sharing the devastating proportion of the defeat. This is why very few works were allowed

to be published between 1943 and 1944 about the 2nd Army’s operations. In contrast, proportionately more publications appeared about the battles in 1941, and the Directorate of the General Staff called upon the soldiers to submit their memories about the operation of 1941⁹. Apart from some random plaques connected to particular units¹⁰, there was no official memorialization of the fallen soldiers.

Thus the post-war public had to interpret the 2nd Army’s activity on the Eastern Front based mainly on the war crimes trial of the 2nd Army’s commander and two major works on the “Don Bend.”

1) The most pervasive myths about the Don Bend appeared during the people’s tribunal case against Colonel General Gusztáv Jány in 1947¹¹. Similar to trials in other countries, the aim of the Hungarian people’s tribunals’ were politically motivated. Their main task entailed crafting an official narrative of the history of the war and convicting the Horthy-system in the eyes of the public. Though prosecutions were launched against several Hungarian generals, it was the Jány-trial which was aimed at condemning the operations of the Army on the Eastern front.

The indictment depicted the 2nd Army’s operations – and the Hungarian Army’s operations in general – as a sacrifice for “German imperialism” by the Hungarian political and military leadership. Based on the communist class struggle theory, the army officers serving the Horthy-system had fought a battle not only against the Soviet Union but against the “Hungarian nation” as well. The atrocities committed against conscripted members of the military labour unit and the punitive measures against private soldiers were depicted as an all-encompassing terror of the “Horthy officers”¹². This is why – until recently – the fallen soldiers of the 2nd Army are not remembered as an army fighting the Red Army or being occupational forces using anti-partisan warfare against the Russian civilian population¹³, but an army sacrificed by the Hungarian military leadership for political reasons.

2) After this trial, the story of the 2nd Army was declared taboo and vanished from scholarly and public view. Although a source publication about the 2nd Army was allowed to be published in 1958¹⁴, and a documentary film entitled *Halálkanyar (Death Bend)* was made in 1961, the story of the Army was brought to the public fore by *Requiem egy hadseregért (Requiem for an Army)*¹⁵, a book written by István Nemeskürty in 1972. The focus of this volume was on private soldiers instead of the guilt of the commanders. This conceptual change, however, did not result in a considerable change of how the tenets of the entire operation were seen.

3) Sándor Sára’s 25-episode-long documentary series (*Krónika – A 2. hadsereg a Donnál*)¹⁶ had a transformative effect on the public perception of the 2nd Army. In the softening political climate of the Kádár-system, the director set off to record the reminiscences of the participants in 1979 with the help of the so-called populist (népi) movement (e.g. poet Sándor Csoóri). More than 50 survivors were given voice, but due to political sensitivities, the project was stopped and the full documentary was only shown after the change of the regime in 1990¹⁷.

It showed the story of the 2nd Army and Gusztáv Jány's role in a more nuanced way, but the suffering of the soldiers and the lack of military preparedness still remained a central element of the narrative.

Although these interpretations were the product of scholars under the political pressure of the Hungarian state-socialist state, the Hungarian public's view of the events about the activities and the 2nd Army has not significantly changed in the past 30 years. This is in stark contrast with the treatment of the German 6th Army in German literature¹⁸. The sacrificial status of the 2nd Army had not been called in question. Whereas the trial of Gusztáv Jány and the *Krónika* documentary series had already included the pieces of information about the activities of the 2nd Army as an occupational force and the Hungarian atrocities against the local population in the army's rear area these considerations have not received much attention.

I underline two significant factors of these interpretations.

My point of departure – similarly to the German way of dealing with the past¹⁹ – is the changing meaning of sacrifice. The death of the soldiers of the Hungarian Army until 1945 meant an active and reasonable sacrifice. After the war, the fallen soldiers became victims and passive participants.

The invasion of the USSR and subsequent battles were portrayed by the Hungarian propaganda as the “protection of the thousand-year-old borders”, a “crusade against Bolshevism”²⁰ and a “fight for a New Europe”²¹. In the declarations and speeches of the Hungarian political leadership²² after the defeat, the classic military virtues – e.g. fulfilling one's duty and military honour – became the most important. Although some interpretations published after 1945 construed the defeat of the 2nd Army as an active and reasonable sacrifice because it created the conditions for the military resistance (the Hungarian Legion were recruited from Hungarian prisoners of war in the Soviet camps)²³, the soldiers were still shown as the endurers of the “Horthy-fascism”²⁴.

Secondly, the victim-interpretation concocted by the socialist state system and the official, Soviet interpretation of the war left no room for parallel or conflicting opinions. While the suffering of the private soldiers was allowed to be represented in literary works, the regime's fear of the formation of a hero cult banned the setting of memorials and holding commemorations. This interpretation also disqualified any research or publication on the destiny of the prisoners of war, of whom – similarly to the POWs of the German 6th Army – a considerable part had already died in Soviet captivity²⁵.

„Army slated to death”

The motive of the “army slated to death” appeared in the indictment against Gusztáv Jány: “Before the start, he had appeared before Adolf Hitler [...] and offered the life of 150,000 people in order to prove the Hungarian stance toward German fascist imperialism”²⁶.

This political narrative was so powerful and widespread that it found its way in István Nemeskürty’s book in 1970s as well. According to him, the sacrifice of the Army had two purposes: it ensured that Horthy’s could become vice-regent, and assisted in removing the enemies of the system (poor peasants, left-wing opponents, the ethnic minorities and the Jews)²⁷.

The sending of the 2nd Army to the Eastern Front was not a result of any of these factors, instead it was necessitated by the change of Germany’s strategical aims in 1942 and the decreasing leeway of Hungary to stay out of the war. Although Hungary joined the war against the Soviet Union without German request on 27 June 1941, both the military and political leadership made an effort to minimize the participation of the Hungarian Army in the war after the failure of the German blitzkrieg. This led to the removal of the pro-German Chief of the Honvéd General Staff, Colonel General Henrik Werth, who pressed the Hungarian government for a more robust involvement of the full Hungarian Army on the Eastern Front. The new chief of General Staff, Colonel General Ferenc Szombathelyi, considered the German victory impossible and therefore strived to minimize the participation of the Hungarian Army in the war. At the meeting between Hitler and Horthy in September 1941, the Hungarian leader accomplished to offer only 5 brigades to be sent to the Eastern front. However, the defeat of Moscow in December 1941 changed the intention of the Germans. Hitler sent a letter to Horthy on the last days of 1941 in order to request more troops. The size of the Hungarian forces was negotiated in Budapest with Keitel in January 1942. During these talks, the Hungarians wanted to minimize the amount of these troops, and they successfully negotiated a smaller force than the original German demand: 3 corps (III, IV, VII) with 9 light infantry, and 1 armoured divisions²⁸. (App. I.)

The idea of an army with insufficient and mismatched equipment occurs as a recurring critique in all three previously mentioned major narratives. The Army had been preparing for a war with small neighbouring states (Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslav Kingdom), not against a great military power in extreme weather conditions. With this said, it is ironic, that the Army was equipped with the best Hungary could offer and Germans heavy weapons. However, instead of 3, each (light) division had only 2 regiments, which showed the limited opportunities of the Hungarian Army. It is worth noting that most of the German divisions did not have 3 regiments either after the military defeats in late 1941²⁹.

As for the composition of the army at, the end of January 1942 two factors were considered. On the one hand, reservists were called in not only from the 3 corps recruiting areas but from the whole area of the country except for the military districts along the border of Romania. The mobilization was aimed at affecting the population in a balanced way and wanted to minimize the proportion of younger recruits³⁰. The reason for this was that the Hungarian state was afraid of being attacked by Romania while the Hungarian forces were fighting on other

fronts (just like in the First World War). Therefore, the young generation was drafted only as reservists³¹.

This partial conscription created massive dissatisfaction. This was the base argument of István Nemeskürty, i.e. the members of the Army were chosen from the “expandable rungs of the population” (poor peasants, older men, Jews and the members belonging to various ethnic groups). However, the Hungarian mobilization system did not differ from the practices of other armies. The call-in affected mainly the less educated part of the society, who could not be used in the military economy. However, undermining Nemeskürty’s main argument, the ethnic minorities were not overrepresented in the draft. Their maximum proportion reached 20%, which was below their nationwide average ratio³². It is also worth emphasizing that the 7% casualty rate among ethnic minorities³³ is due to the fact that these non-Hungarian soldiers were used mostly in the rear area owing to their lack or insufficient knowledge of Hungarian, but most importantly, that they were considered “unreliable”.

The institutional discrimination affected mainly the Jews – and the ones of Jewish descent – since they could not serve in the Army’s armed corps as of summer 1941. Along with people considered politically left-wing, ethnic minorities and members of Christians who refused service in the armed service, the Jews had to serve in special labour squadrons wearing civilian clothes. As the result of bad treatment, insufficient food and frequent atrocities against them, Jewish labour servicemen suffered disproportionately. If any group, they could be considered the most “sacrificial” of any groups. As data shows, an army soldier had one and a half times more chance to return home alive than a labour serviceman³⁴.

However, depicting the labour service system within the 2nd Army as a “mobile killing site” (“mozgó vesztőhely”)³⁵ is overly simplistic. Even though labour servicemen suffered from food shortage, cruel and sometimes sadistic commanders (including strict and discriminatory of military justice)³⁶, the War Department tried to improve their situation on the front from autumn 1942 onwards³⁷. The collapse of the Army under Soviet pressure had catastrophic consequences for labour battalions. Their food and clothing supply was cut first. Unarmed Jewish labour servicemen already in dire conditions were much more vulnerable to Soviet captivity and exposed to marauding Hungarian and German soldiers. Although Hungarian units committed mass murders against labour servicemen³⁸, the withdrawal meant also that these labour servicemen were left without their Hungarian guards, and so fell prey more easily to German units or armed Ukrainian citizen soldiers³⁹. Owing to atrocities against Hungarian soldiers and labour servicemen by the German and Romanian army, in February 1943, the use lethal force was introduced by the Hungarian army command against members in “foreign armies”⁴⁰.

It is a recurrent theme that a so-called “second-rate” officer corps was sent to the front⁴¹ because – according to Nemeskürty – the first class officers were saved from for purpose and retained to a war to come with Romania⁴². In the same way as

in the other armies, the majority (60–65 %) of the officer was reservist⁴³. The high-ranking officers regarded the high rate of the reserve officers as a problem, but their judgement changed after the war. The examined works also argued that the reserve officers recruited from lower white-collar workers (e.g. teachers, civil servants) gave better performance than regular officers. Apart from researching the upper echelon of the Hungarian military leadership⁴⁴, there has been no meaningful research on the officer corps of the Hungarian Army in the Second World War⁴⁵. Hence, it is hard to determine scientifically the performance of the officer corps on the Soviet Front.

Nevertheless, the performance of the regular officer corps was determined by the state memory politics. Whereas them as an enemy, many of the white-collar workers, who served as reserve officers, later became “fellow travellers of Socialism”. The limitation of this narrative is clearly palpable by the fact that although the high-ranking officers already appeared in the *Krónika* documentary series, these officers were sentenced or interned in the 1950s and were monitored by the Hungarian secret service after their release, so they could not speak about their war experiences freely⁴⁶.

The deficiencies of the officer corps arose not from their moral unfitness but from the conditions of the Treaty of Trianon, which restricted the strength and weaponry of the Hungarian Army and therefore a significant part of the staff officers carried out administrative tasks and did not have any field duty in the pre-war period. They were also affected by the frequent changes of commanders and the relatively high average age of staff officers (45-50 years old)⁴⁷. This is also confirmed by the fact that the causality rate of regular officers in the battles of 1942 was higher than the reserve officers⁴⁸.

The sacrificial army theme examined in detail

Casualties and temperature

The battle over the number of casualties had already started during the war. The first official information published at the end of January 1943 did not contain any data about the losses citing the lack of insufficient information. However, it condemned “alarmism” among the population and rumours spread by hostile propaganda. It stated that “it is a mere propaganda lie that the «2nd Army was destroyed»”⁴⁹.

The Directorate of the General Staff, based on the reports of losses in May 1943, estimated the casualties at 42.000 killed, 28.000 wounded and – based on official Soviet POW report – 26.000 prisoners of war⁵⁰. After the war, larger numbers started to circulate. During the Jány trial, the press described the former commander as the killer of “200,000 Hungarian soldiers”,⁵¹ “150,000 Hungarian footsoldiers”⁵² and “140,000 Hungarians who died near Voronezh”.⁵³ Nemeskürty, continuing this tradition, highlighted that “150,000 people died during two weeks”.⁵⁴

Besides the loss, the weather conditions appear as a recurrent theme. The extremely cold weather caused the death of countless soldiers, who were deprived

of proper clothing and became weak. The temperature given as -45 and -50 degree Celsius seems to be, however, an exaggeration cited in the memoir literature and by the press. This is true, in spite of the fact that – as my research shows – there was a significant difference between the temperature data in the reports of the 2nd Army High Command and the Voronezh Front. (App. II)

The panic and the military order

The soldiers' role as passive victims is largely based on the disintegration of the military order. The literature above is unequivocal about the “panic” that gripped the entire Army. However, if the panic-stricken escape had been the only reaction to the attack, hardly anybody would have been able to avoid Soviet captivity.

In the background of the panic centred analysis two basic factors lie. On the one hand, most of the soldiers of the infantry divisions exerting organized resistance perished or were captured, so two-thirds of the survivors came from artillery, combat engineer troops or the supply forces⁵⁵. More importantly, the main reason is more political than scientific: an organized withdrawal theme would have needed a revision of the enemy image of the “Horthyst army officer”.

The narratives about the withdrawal do only reflect upon the cruelty of commanding officers against their units but fail to mention how this vigorous stance keeping the units and sub-units together increased the opportunities of survival. This contradiction is best highlighted by the treatment of Colonel Kornél Oszlányi, the commander of the 9th Light Division by István Nemeskürty. This division thwarted the Soviet attacks for 12 days in January 1943 in order to back up the withdrawal of the rest of III and IV Corps and the German troops of Siebert Corps Group. The most critical period was the morning of 17 January, when Soviet troops broke through the 6th Light Division's switch line lying southwards from the 9th Division, and the withdrawing division collapsed on the other day⁵⁶. Reacting to this situation, Oszlányi organized the division's – and at the same time the corps' – southern front line, and directed the withdrawing troops towards the front line “in person and in the most vigorous way”. Nemeskürty depicts this scene as if Oszlányi had wanted to impress Lieutenant General Friedrich Siebert (the commander of the Siebert Corps Group) by rushing half-frozen and straggling soldiers to fight. He described Oszlányi as German-friendly, as opposed to Marcel Stomm, the commander of III Corps⁵⁷. However, Nemeskürthy failed to take into account that his vigorous defence aided the withdrawal of the Hungarian troops and may have contributed to the survival of thousands of soldiers.

His panic-focused depiction of the withdrawal does not reflect on facts that contradict his narrative. On the one hand, the Hungarian units on the front lines showed comparatively strong resistance. For example, the 40th Soviet army lost almost half of its armoured vehicles during the 4-day battle⁵⁸. Also those units, which remained unified and under responsible and continuous command with

their cadre of officers intact, withdrew with fewer losses. Thirdly, many of the descriptions describing the withdrawal – as military historian Lóránd Domrándy pointed it out – contained vivid factual descriptions of events of people, which they could not have possibly experienced or could have not been privy to facts owing to their low rank or post⁵⁹.

The defeat was ascribed to Jány, the overall commander of the 2nd Army. The public opinion deduced not only Jány’s alleged pro-German existence from Jány’s German origins, but used the stereotype of a blindly obedient officer catering to his German counterparts. Military historiography considers 15 and 16 January 1943 as turning points in the battle⁶⁰, when Soviet troops tore III Corps apart from other parts of the Army, and when the VII Corps started to get encircled. Withdrawing the VII Corps would have probably decreased the loss, but in order to do this, Jány should have refused to obey the military orders not only from Army Group B and Hitler but the Hungarian War Department as well⁶¹. The people’s court disregarded the obedience to lawful military orders and considered the execution of any of their implementation as war crime⁶².

The interpretations of two orders

In analysing the performance of the upper military leadership it is worth taking a look at the historical narratives of two Hungarian Army commands during the collapse.

Jány’s Order of 24 January 1943

After German Army Group B had excluded the 2nd Army controlling the front line on 24 January, Jány – having experienced a nervous breakdown – issued an order blaming his subordinates for the disastrous defeat. In his order of 24 January, he wrote: “the 2nd Army has lost its honour,” and “this panic-stricken flight is so despicable and ignominious that both our German allies and the fatherland despise us”⁶³. Though Jány finally withdrew and denounced his harsh words in his order on 31 March – praising the heroic struggles of the 2nd Army instead⁶⁴ –, it caused irreparable harm to the morale of the officer corps.

The 24 January order further stated that the “military order and the discipline must be restored in the strongest possible way, if necessary with recourse to summary executions [felkoncolás⁶⁵] on the spot.” After the war, Jány was depicted by the press as “the executioner of the Don,” who did not care about his soldiers. The Jány verdict described the former commander whose “entire soul had been possessed by the devil of cruelty” who had been intent on this from the earliest period of the formation of the 2nd Army⁶⁶.

It is necessary to put the summary justice issue in context. As Keegan wrote, “the strongest fear with which every commander lives – stronger than his fear of defeat or even of mutiny – is that of his army reverting to a crowd through some error of his making”⁶⁷. Hungarian Army Regulations made it possible for the

commanders to use summary justice in a battle situation when a soldier disobeys a direct order⁶⁸, hence Jány's order was not unlawful on its face according to the existing military regulations.

Based on the scant documentation of surviving court martial proceedings, some Hungarian soldiers had already been sentenced to death because of abandoning one's place in front of the enemy during the battles in August and September 1942⁶⁹. Further research is needed to ascertain the proportion of the charge cowardice of those 20 soldiers who were executed by the Army's field military tribunals by the end of 1942⁷⁰.

Before issuing the said order, it had already been urged by the command of the 2nd Army – mainly by Major General Gyula Kovács – to use violence against panicking soldiers. On 15 January, he ordered senior staff officers of the III and IV Corps to restore military discipline with the following words: “In this situation, you need to act as common hangman!”⁷¹ “You cannot be too much of a skinner!”⁷² The instructions for the reorganisation of the routed troops of the 2nd Army included also these compelling measures⁷³.

When the Russians broke through Hungarian held lines, several sub-unit commanders resorted to this extreme measure. Even before the Soviet offensive on 9 January, the 23rd Infantry Regiment ordered that “anyone who takes a step back is a dead man”.⁷⁴ In the first days of the Soviet attack, several battalion and regimental commanders threatened fleeing soldiers with brandishing their sidearm in front of them⁷⁵. On 14 January, the III Corps went as far as organising special units to stem the flow of fleeing soldiers by force⁷⁶.

The Chief of the Honvéd General Staff, Ferenc Szombathelyi's role is contradictory as well. Although he was intent on curbing the radicalization of the officer corps and their close relationships towards the Germans, he urged in August 1942⁷⁷ and in February 1943 as well to use the “most cruel measures” against soldiers abandoning their post or duty both during the struggle for the⁷⁸.

As Hungarian military scholarship has not analysed this issue thoroughly⁷⁹, it is still unknown how Jány's command radicalized his corps officers and how many soldiers were executed on account of this order⁸⁰.

Stomm's Order of 1 February 1943

In Nemeskürty's volume, Major General⁸¹ Marcel Stomm's order of 1 February 1943⁸² was used as a more human example of solving an already precarious military situation. As the Soviet attack separated Stomm's III Corps from the other two corps of the 2nd Army, it was subordinated to the neighbouring German 2nd Army's Siebert Corps Group. During the withdrawal, the German military leadership took advantage of the apparent proximity of this Hungarian unit to the Soviet troops. Stomm's forces were ordered to engage the enemy while shielding the withdrawing German troops. However, they did not get equal treatment by far. These Hungarian units were viewed as second-rate allies in every aspect, from

billeting and rationing to the use of roads. Advancing Soviet units encircled these Hungarian and German units, which fought the fiercest and longest battles in the Olim Valley at the end of January. On 31 January, General Siebert ordered III Corps to break out of Soviet encirclement towards the northeast, but Stomm disobeyed⁸³. He considered it utterly unfeasible (considering the conditions of his troops, lacking appropriate heavy weaponry and resupply), so he – in an unprecedented manner in Hungarian military history –, disbanded his corps on 1 February. In his order to his troops he wrote: “I have to say, that from this point on, it is every man for himself, for I am unable to give you food, ammunition, and any executable task”.

Analysing Stomm’s order from a humanitarian point of view it is understandable that a mentally and physically exhausted commander, who was humiliated by the Germans, could not take any further responsibility for his troops. However, from a military perspective, it might be considered a serious mistake.

Stomm believed that the only way to rescue his soldiers was to break out in small groups through Soviet encirclement. However, the order did not contain clear instructions, he referred only to historical precedents: “In the history of the Hungarian nation, it occurred multiple times in similar situations, that (our soldiers) made incredibly long distanced breakout breakthrough under the leadership of bold commanders”.

His decision is still being disputed by military historians. Some of these authors construe Stomm’s command as “leaving his troops on their own”. Others emphasize that he gave a non-detailed order for the breakout⁸⁴. Nevertheless, a significant problem with the order is that it did not designate an assembly area for the troops at all.

Though some small groups managed to sift through Soviet lines – in contrast to the members of the corps staff which was captured by the Soviets in a matter of days –, they were more vulnerable to the attacks of partisans and the Germans’ high-handed behaviour than the units, in which the officers maintained the order.

To measure the rationale of this order, it is worth mentioning, that the rest of the 9th Light Division, with the leadership of Colonel Zoltán Farkas, successfully managed to break out on the southwest flank following German troops, a feat at the time considered unmanageable. Moreover, it was not only Jány who gave strict orders but also commanders involved in the successful break-out. Colonel Frigyes Vasváry, the commander of the 20th Infantry Regiment reported a “series of summary executions [felkoncolások] and public executions by shooting”.⁸⁵ He summarized his experiences tersely: “In case of panic, the commander should intervene mercilessly! When panic breaks out, it is only the submachine gun that should «speak!»”⁸⁶

Though Stomm’s order had a severe demoralizing impact on his soldiers – it is characteristic that it did not even reach many of his sub-units –, it did not have a negative effect on the soldiers’ self-esteem. While Jány referred to his soldiers as “bastards fallen to animal standards”, Stomm said goodbye to his subordinates as “the heroic sons of the Hungarian Home”.

In later literature, this disbanding was pictured as the harbinger of nascent Hungarian antifascist military resistance to the Germans in the 1970s because it was Stomm who sought to set up an anti-Nazi corps (Hungarian Legion) out of Hungarian POWs.

Summary

In this paper, I analysed previous literature and provided a reinterpretation of the 2nd Army's defeat in the Hungarian military and memory politics. The memory of the defeated army was shaped by a dual narrative: the passive sacrificial role of the Hungarian soldiers and the official Soviet interpretation of World War II. First, I debunked the recurrent myth that the army was sent to the Eastern Front with the sole purpose of unavoidable annihilation. I thoroughly examined the underlying facts concerning the sending and setting-up of the 2nd Army, and debunked that they were "sentenced to death". Then, I analysed previous narratives about the withdrawal. These, besides exaggerating the losses and temperature figures, used an all-encompassing panic narrative, which, I showed was more orderly and organized. I also pointed out that the evaluation of the 2nd Army's actions have been deformed by the way previous scholars jettisoned the internal logic and rules of the military profession, and labelled every order as "sinful" hence criminal. As the main example, I contrasted Jány's 24 January and Stomm's 1 February order.

Appendix

Appendix I

Battle of order of the Hungarian Royal 2nd Honvéd Army

III Corps

- 6th Light Division (from II Corps)
 - 22th Infantry Regiment
 - 52th Infantry Regiment
- 7th Light Division
 - 4th Infantry Regiment
 - 35th Infantry Regiment
- 9th Light Division
 - 17th Infantry Regiment
 - 47th Infantry Regiment

IV Corps

- 10th Light Division
 - 6th Infantry Regiment
 - 36th Infantry Regiment
- 12th Light Division
 - 18th Infantry Regiment
 - 48th Infantry Regiment
- 13rd Light Division (from V Corps)

- 7th Infantry Regiment
- 31st Infantry Regiment

VII Corps

- 19th Light Division
 - 13rd Infantry Regiment
 - 43rd Infantry Regiment
- 20th Light Division
 - 14th Infantry Regiment
- 23rd Infantry Regiment
 - 23rd Light Division (from VIII Corps)
 - 21st Infantry Regiment
 - 51st Infantry Regiment

1st Field Armoured Division

- 1st Motorized Rifle Brigade
- 30th Armoured Regiment

1st Air Group

Appendix II

Temperature data during the battles in January 1943

	The daily report of the main staff of the Voronezh Front ⁸⁷		The daily reports of the Hungarian 2 nd Army ⁸⁸
	10:00	22:00	
13 January 1943	-20 – -25		-16
14 January 1943	-20 – -25	-18 – -21	-24
15 January 1943	-20 – -25	-17 – -19	-33
16 January 1943	-23 – -29	-20 – -26	-32
17 January 1943		-19 – -25	-32
18 January 1943		-18 – -23	-36
19 January 1943	-14 – -17	-14 – -16	-19
20 January 1943	-15 – -17	-12 – -15	–
21 January 1943	-12 – -17	-8 – -11	-23
22 January 1943	-12 – -15	-19 – -21	-19
23 January 1943	-15 – -23	-7 – -12	appr. 0
24 January 1943	-6 – -7	-16 – -20	-18
25 January 1943	-21 – -26	-16 – -23	–
26 January 1943	-19 – -22	-16 – -19	–
27 January 1943	-22 – -28	-14 – -19	-18
28 January 1943	–	-18 – -22	-12
29 January 1943	-18 – -23	-13 – -18	-9
30 January 1943	–	-10 – -15	-5
31 January 1943	-9 – -13	–	-8

* I would like to thank Ádám Gellért for providing useful insights and refining the text.

¹ Lajtos Á. Emlékezés a magyar 2. hadseregére 1942–1943. Budapest: Zrínyi, 1989. P.225; Nemeskürty I. Requiem egy hadseregért. Budapest: Magvető, 1972. P. 263. The phrase refers to the battle of Mohács on 29 August 1526. This defeat of the Hungarians against the Ottoman army led to the disorganisation of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.

² Csoóri S. "A magyar apokalipszis". *Tiszatáj* 14, no. 10 (October 1980). P.5–31.

³ 855 killed, 2,522 wounded, 766 sick, 257 missing, 20 captured. Viktor Andaházy Szeghy. A magyar királyi honvédség részvétele a Szovjetunió elleni támadásban 1941. Június–December. Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale, 2016. P. 181.

⁴ 542 killed, 1146 wounded, 114 missing (until end of June 1942). János Bús, Péter Szabó. Béke poraikra... Dokumentum-émlékkönyv a II. világháborúban, a keleti hadműveletek során elesett magyar katonákról és munkaszolgálatosokról. Budapest, Varietas '93, 1999. P.21.

⁵ Ungváry K. A magyar honvédség a második világháborúban. Budapest: Osiris, 2005. P.478–479.

⁶ Olasz L. A Don-kanyar és a történelmi emlékezet. *Hely, identitás, emlékezet*. Eds. Z. Bögre, A. Keszei. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2015. P.432.

⁷ For reasons of space, the myth of István Horthy's death in the operational area of the 2nd Army is not dealt with in this paper. István Horthy, the son of the Regent Miklós Horthy and the Deputy Regent from January 1942, served as a reserve fighter pilot. His unit, 1/1 Fighter Squadron was supporting the Hungarian Second Army in summer 1942. On 20 August 1942, his aircraft crashed and the Deputy Regent died. Although the investigation of the flying accident established that the design problems of the aircraft and the pilot's possible mistakes caused it, several people doubted its circumstances. Some interpreted the accident of the pro-English politician as the assassination of the German secret services. Others explained the accident with the alleged drunkenness or hangover of the pilot. See Bern A. Horthy István halála és a német titkosszolgálatok. *Modern Magyarország*, 2013. 2, No.1. P.165–181; Olasz L. A kormányzóhelyettesi intézmény története, 1941–1944. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2007. P.287–360; Olasz L. Horthy István kormányzóhelyettes halála. *Mítoszok, legendák, tévhitek a 20. századi magyar történelemről*. Ed. I.Romsics. Budapest: Osiris, 2005. P.234–278.

⁸ Joó A. (Ed.). „...a háború szolgálatában” Főszerkesztői értekezletek 1942. szeptember 22.–1943. augusztus 25. Budapest: Napvilág–MTI, 2007. P.136–139, 149, 154; Kádár G. A Ludovikától Sopronköhidáig. Budapest: Magvető, 1978. Vol. 2. P.492–493.

⁹ Tábori Újság 1. No. 16 (24 December 1941). P.2.

¹⁰ For instance, the plaque of 38/II battalion were unveiled in the yard of the barrack of this unit in Pélmónostor on 16 August 1943. *Dunántúl* (17 August 1943). P.5.

¹¹ Budapest City Archives / Budapest Főváros Levéltára (later, BFL) XXV.1.a 2613/1947.

¹² About this enemy image: Fóris Á. A Szovjetunió elleni háború képe a háború utáni felelősségre vonásban. *Háborúk és békék: hagyomány és megújulás a szláv népek történelmében és kultúrájában V.: a 2015-ös tudományos felolvasóülés anyaga*. Eds. T. Szabó, S. Szili. Szombathely: Szláv Történelmi és Filológiai Társaság, 2015. P.78–91; Pihurik J. Katonadolog 1945–1962. A „horthysta katonatiszt:” bűnbak vagy ellenség? *Bűnbak minden időben. Bűnbakok a magyar és az egyetemes történelemben*. Eds. G. Gyarmati, I. Lengvári, A. Pók, J. Pók. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz–MTT–ÁBTL, 2013. P. 456–472.

¹³ About the atrocities of the Hungarian 2nd Army against the local population: Fóris Á. A magyar 2. hadsereg megszálló tevékenysége a Szovjetunióban – Adalékok a magyar partizánellenes politikához a keleti fronton. *Háborúk és békekötések a 18–20. századi orosz-szovjet történelemben. Konferenciakötet*. Ed. Z. Máté. Pécs: MOSZT, 2014. P.287–304; Szabó P. Keleti front, nyugati fogság. A magyar honvédség a második világháborúban és azután, 1941–

1946. Budapest: Jaffa, 2018. P.30–57; Ungváry K. Magyar megszálló csapatok a Szovjetunióban, 1941–1944. Esemény–elbeszélés–utóélet. Budapest: Osiris, 2013. P.312–326.

¹⁴ Horváth M. (Ed.). A 2. magyar hadsereg megsemmisülése a Donnál. Budapest: Zrínyi, 1959.

¹⁵ Nemeskürty. Requiem egy hadseregért.

¹⁶ The textbooks of the documentary film-series were published twice: Pergőtűz: Krónika a 2. magyar hadsereg pusztulásáról. Budapest: RTV-Minerva, 1983; I. Raffai, G. Tál (Eds.). Hol vannak a katonák? Szemelvények a Don-kanyart megjártak vallomásaiból és korábbi hadijelentésekből. Veszprém: Új Horizont, 2005. The manuscript of Krónika: Military History Archives, Budapest / Hadtörténelmi Levéltár (later, HL) TGY 3948–3949.

¹⁷ Studies about the documentum-film serie: Dombrády L. Emlékezés egy negyedszázad előtti Krónikára. A magyar 2. hadsereg katonáinak vallomása az 1943. januári harcokról és a történeti realitás. *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 124. 2011. No. 2. P.546–564; Sárközy R. Lenyomatok – a Don kanyar emlékezetének filmes narratívája. *Búvópatakok – A feltárás*. Ed. János Rainer M. Budapest: OSZK, 1956-os Intézet Alapítvány, 2012. P.166–207.

¹⁸ Boll B., Safrian H. Auf dem Weg nach Stalingrad Die 6. Armee 1941/42. *Vernichtungskrieg Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941-1944*. Eds. H. Heer, K. Naumann. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1997. P.260–296; Hettling M. Täter und Opfer? Die deutschen Soldaten in Stalingrad. *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*. 1995. 35. P. 515–531.

¹⁹ Koselleck R. Die Diskontinuität der Erinnerung. *Deutsche Zeitschrift Für Philosophie* 47. 1999. No. 2. P.215–216.

²⁰ E. g. „The Hungarian crusaders started out.” Quoted in A. Molnár, P. Szabó (Eds.). Utóvédként a Donnál Volume 3. Újabb dokumentumok a 9. könnyű hadosztály történetéhez 1942–1943. Zalaegerszeg: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Zala Megyei Levéltár, 2017. P. 49–50.

²¹ Speech of Gábor Vajna representative in the Lower House, 21 November 1942. *Képviselőházi napló, 1939. Volume XVI*. (1942. november 20.–1943. április 12.). Budapest: Athenaeum, 1942 P.74.

²² E. g. Miklós Kállay prime minister’s speech. Quoted in The Hungarian National Archives National Archives of Hungary, Budapest / Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltár K 428, The daily news of the Magyar Távirati Iroda, 1 May 1943

²³ Nemeskürty. Requiem egy hadseregért. 268–288.

²⁴ E. g. „The Hungarian soldiers by Don fall victim to same cruelty as the hundred thousands of the Jews were sent to the gas chambers in Auschwitz”. Rekviem. Mártír művészek, tudósok emlékezete. *Népszabadság* (1 March 1970)

²⁵ The number of the Hungarian prisoners of war in the Soviet camps reduced from 31299 to 3258 between February and December 1943. É.M. Varga (Ed.). Magyar hadifoglyok a Szovjetunióban. Dokumentumok (1941–1953). Moszkva–Budapest: ROSSZPEN–MKTTK, 2006. P.9.

²⁶ BFL XXV.1.a 2613/1947. 1947. Nü.10205/1.sz. The indictment of Public Prosecutor’s Office of Budapest, 30 August 1947.

²⁷ Nemeskürty. Requiem egy hadseregért. 28–30.

²⁸ Dombrády L. Army and Politics in Hungary 1938–1944. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2005. P.384–395.

²⁹ Ungváry. A magyar honvédség a második világháborúban. 158.

³⁰ Szabó P. A 2. magyar hadsereg felszerelése és fegyverzete a frontra kivonulása idején, 1942 április-május. *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 98. 1985. No. 3. P.616–642.

³¹ Dombrády. *Army and Politics in Hungary 1938–1944*. 397–418.

³² Szakály S. Vita Nemeskürty Istvánnal. *Mozgó Világ* 10. 1984. No. 3. P.43.

³³ Szabó P. Nemzetiségek a magyar királyi honvédségben 1938–1943. Nemzetiségi hadkötelesek a mozgósított alakulatokban (1941 közepétől 1943-ig) II. Rész. *Palócföld* 24. 1990. No. 1. P.52.

³⁴ Ungváry K. Mítoszok a Don-kanyarról. *Index.hu*. 13 January 2013. URL: https://index.hu/tudomany/tortenelem/2013/01/17/mitoszok_a_don-kanyarrol/ Of the appr. 68,000 killed and missing Hungarians in January and February 1943, appr. 21000 persons were Jewish servicemen.

³⁵ Sallai E. *Mozgó vesztőhely*. Magvető, Budapest, 1979.

³⁶ 303 Jewish servicemen were executed by the 2nd Army between May 1942 and 12 January 1943. Szabó. *Keleti front, nyugati fogság*. 135–136.

³⁷ Randolph L. Braham. *The Hungarian Labor Service System 1939–1945*. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977. P.40–42.

³⁸ Rozett R. *Conscripted Slaves. Hungarian Jewish Forced Laborers on the Eastern Front during the Second World War*. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2013. P.161–163.

³⁹ Rozett. *Conscripted Slaves*. 166–167; Szabó. *Keleti front, nyugati fogság*. 159. HL II. 1453. The documents of the Hungarian 2nd Army 12. box 277. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 421. Report about the Jewish servicemen's execution by GFP, 1 March 1943.

⁴⁰ HL II. 1453. 12. box 223. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 381. Behaviour against the violence of the members of foreign army, 19 February 1943.

⁴¹ E. g., Private Lajos Herencsár promoted this viewpoint in *Krónika*.

⁴² Nemeskürty. *Requiem egy hadseregért*. 30–40; In *Krónika*, Private Lajos Herencsár promoted this viewpoint.

⁴³ Szabó P. *Don-kanyar A magyar királyi 2. honvéd hadsereg története (1942–1943)*. Budapest: Corvina, 2001. P.20.

⁴⁴ Szakály S. *A magyar katonai elit 1938–1945*. Budapest: Magvető, 1987.

⁴⁵ János Rainer M. published a book about in the career of the officers commissioned in 1939, but this book does not focus on their battle achievement. János Rainer M. *Századosok*. Budapest: Osiris, 2018.

⁴⁶ Sárközy. *Lenyomatok*. 186–187.

⁴⁷ Szabó. *Don-kanyar*. 20–21.

⁴⁸ Vincze L. A bolsevizmus elleni háborús veszteségeink mikénti tagozása. *Magyar Katonai Szemle* 13. No. 6 (June 1943) P.440–443.

⁴⁹ Pécsi Napló (31 January 1943).

⁵⁰ 2862/M. hdm. 3. vkf. 43. V. 5. Casualty report. 5 May 1943. Szabó. *Don-kanyar*. 382–383.

⁵¹ *Világosság*. (26 September 1947)

⁵² *Szabad Föld*. (5 October 1947)

⁵³ *Szabad Nép*. (30 September 1947)

⁵⁴ Nemeskürty. *Requiem egy hadseregért*. 286.

⁵⁵ Ungváry. A magyar honvédség. 196.

⁵⁶ HL II. 1453. 22. box, No. 2. Annex of the report of the 9th Light Division, 834.; Molnár, Szabó., Utóvédként a Donnál, 16., 22., 32.

⁵⁷ Nemeskürty. Requiem egy hadseregért. 197–200.

⁵⁸ Kornis P. A Voronyezsi Front osztrogozsszk-rosszosi támadó hadművelete a 2. magyar hadsereg IV. és VII. hadtestének megsemmisítésére (1943. január 13–17.). *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 29. 1982. No. 4. P.608–609; Számvéber N. A hídfőcsakáktól a szovjet áttörésig. A magyar 2. hadsereg harci teljesítménye a Don mentén, 1942–43. *Rubicon* 29. 2019. No.1. P.68.

⁵⁹ Dombrády. Emlékezés egy negyedszázad előtti Krónikára. P.560–562.

⁶⁰ Szabó. Don-kanyar. 221–238.

⁶¹ Colonel General Szombathelyi’s order to holding of the defence position by Don, 27. December 1942. Horváth. A 2. hadsereg megsemmisülése a Donnál. 121.

⁶² BFL XXV.1.a 2613/1947. Nb.IV.2613/1947/2. Judgement of the Budapest People’s Court, 4 October 1947.

⁶³ S. Szakály (Ed.). Három dokumentum a 2. magyar hadsereg doni katasztrófájáról. *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 28. 1981. No.4. P.639.

⁶⁴ Ungváry. A magyar honvédség a második világháborúban. 202.

⁶⁵ Literally to put someone to the end of his sword.

⁶⁶ BFL XXV.1.a 2613/1947. 1947. Nü.10205/1.sz. The indictment of Public Prosecutor’s Office of Budapest, 30 August 1947.

⁶⁷ Keegan J. Face of Battle. London: Jonathan Cape, 1976. P.173.

⁶⁸ Szolgálati szabályzat a m. kir. honvédség számára. Budapest: Honvédelmi Minisztérium, 1931. P.39. (7. § Conduct in action); Harcászati szabályzat Volume 2. Budapest: Honvédelmi Minisztérium, 1939. P.77–81. (21. § Conduct in action).

⁶⁹ HL IV.71. 337. box, The court martial of the IV Corps H 47/1942; IV. Court martials during the Second World War 19. box, HL IV. The court martial of the 13rd Light Division H 95/1942, H 96/1942.

⁷⁰ Szabó. Keleti front, nyugati fogság. 254.

⁷¹ Major General Kovács’ phone call with Colonel Jenő Sárkány, the chief of staff of the III Corps. HL II. 1453. 12. box 8. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 180. Major General Kovács’ phone calls on 15 January 1943.

⁷² Major General Kovács’ phone call with Major Géza Bodiczky, the operations section chief of IV Corps. HL II. 1453. 12. box 9. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 180. Major General Kovács’ phone calls on 15 January 1943.

⁷³ HL II. 1453. 12. box 77. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 212. 259/2.hds.I.a.43.I.18.sz. The order to the organisation of the troops in the Oskol River Valley; 103. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 244. 284/2.hds.I.a.43.I.22.sz. The reorganisation of the Hungarian Army in the rear area.

⁷⁴ HL II. 1453. 29. box 37/23.gy.epk.43.I.9. Defend measures, 9 January 1943.

⁷⁵ E. g. 54/III Battalion: Ungváry, *A magyar honvédség*, 192.; 35th Infantry Regiment: HL II. 1453. 22. box 69. 35th Infantry Regiment’s action report.

⁷⁶ Major General Kovács’ phone call with Colonel Jenő Sárkány, the chief of staff of the III Corps. HL II. 1453. 12. box 8. 2nd Army War diary, app. No. 180. Major General Kovács’ phone calls on 15 January 1943.

⁷⁷ 588./M. hdm. 1. vkf.–1941. The order of the Chief of the Honvéd General Staff, 17 August 1942. Szabó, Don-kanyar, 364.

⁷⁸ Szombathelyi's memorandum to Miklós Horthy, 12. February 1943. Raffai, Tál, *Holvannak a katonák*, 330.

⁷⁹ The brief summary: Ungváry. A magyar honvédség. 199–203.

⁸⁰ During my research work, I have not found a document about the number of executed soldiers yet.

⁸¹ Stomm Marcel was promoted to lieutenant general on 1 February 1943, but he signed the analyzed order still as major general.

⁸² Stomm M. Emlékiratok. Budapest: Pallas, 1990. P.133–134.

⁸³ About the III Corps' combats in January 1943: Szabó P. A magyar 2. hadsereg III. hadtestének, védelmi harctevékenysége és visszavonulása, 1943. január 15.–február 15. *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 105. 1992. No. 1 (March). P.111–131.

⁸⁴ Perjés G. Áldozatok és hősök. Szabó Péter Don-kanyar című könyvéről. *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 108. 1995. No. 2 (June). P.71.

⁸⁵ HL II. 1453. 29. box, 65. The summary report about the combats of the 20th Light Division.

⁸⁶ HL II. 1453. 21. box, Colonel Zoltán Farkas' report about the combats of the 22th Infantry Regiment (13 January – 14 February 1943), 22.

⁸⁷ Kornis P. A Voronyezsi Front támadó hadműveletének előkészítése a német „B” hadseregszoport déli szárnyának (2. magyar hadsereg, 8. olasz hadsereg részei) szétzúzására (1943 január). *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 29. 1982. No. 3. P.445.

⁸⁸ HL II. 1453. 11. box Daily situation reports of the Hungarian 2nd Army.

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