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Doctoral Studies in Humanities

Summary of doctoral dissertation

Air operations of Polish Air Force over Poland during World War II

During my doctoral studies I conducted research of the Polish Air Forces operations during the Second World War. It was result not only of my interest, but also conviction that in historical publications are major gaps, connected with title of my doctoral dissertation. What is more important, most of recent publications, created by historians, should be corrected and reinterpreted.

Operations of Polish Air Force over Poland, took place during the September Campaign, and from August 1944 to the end of World War II, when Polish units participated in fight in cooperation with Soviet Air Force, operating over Polish territory in parallel with the advancing Red Army.

The first work, devoted to this issue, was monography of Army „Lodz” Air Force - commanded by col. pil. Waclaw Iwaszkiewicz - published in 2018 (P. Rapiński, *Army Lodz Air Force*, Łódź 2018, ss.332). Army Lodz Air Force was including III/6 Fighter Squadron, 32nd Recon Escadrille, 63th and 66th Observer Escadrille and 11th Liaison Platoon. The monography discusses the operations of all units included in the Army Lodz Air Force, as well as other Polish Air Force units operating in Lodz area during the September Campaign. That's the reason why I included informations about Border Defence Corps (Korpus Ochrony Pogranicza) Escadrille, which was created as a result of excluding a flight of fighters from III/6 Fighter Squadron; and Bomber Brigade which was part of Commander-in-chief air units. In book there are also informations about airmen serving in „Army Lodz” Air Force units during the September campaign.

Another work is monography about two observation escadrilles, from Army „Lodz” Air Force (P.Rapiński, *Mosquito and chameleon. Lwow's Observation Escadrilles During the Times of Peace and War*, Oświęcim 2019, ss. 265). Book is showing, as far as its possible history of observation escadrilles from 6th Air Regiment from Lwow. Both escadrilles were

assigned to Army „Lodz” Air Force during the September Campaign. Monography is presenting not only the period of the September campaign, but also the formation and peacetime existence of both units, assigned to VIth Observation Squadron. As well as in the previous work, in the las chapter of the book contains biographies of airmen serving in the Lwow’s observer escadrilles. It’s the first work about such units – the earlies studies included only book of prof. Andrzej Olejko, about 56th Observer Escadrille during the September campaign.

The third book, concerning the period of the September campaign, is a monography about Lwow’s III/6th Fighter Squadron, which was also a part of Army „Lodz” Air Force (P. Rapiński, *Flying Ermines. Lwow’s Fighter Escadrilles During the Time of Peace and War*, Zabrze – Tarnowskie Góry 2021, ss. 420). This book is devoted to operations of fighter escadrilles from Lwow’s 6th Air Regiment before the outbreak of World War II and during the September campaign, Same as in previous publications, book included a chapter about history of airmen serving in the squadron.

The las book - included in my doctoral thesis, is devoted to Polish Air Force operations over polish territory during the last months of Second World War - is the 4th Mixed Aviation Division, part of the so-called Polish People's Army (P. Rapiński, *Inhospitable Sky. 4th Mixed Air Division 1944 – 1945*, Oświęcim 2019, ss. 340). The division was containing three regiments – 1st Fighter Regiment „Warsaw”, 2nd Night Bombers Regiment „Cracow” and former soviet 3rd Air Assault Regiment. The staff of the unit consisted Poles without former air training and Soviet officers, some of them had polish roots. Later the Russians where replaced by the Poles. Monography presents operational duty of the unit, during four operations – fights in Warsaw area in late summer 1944, Vistula–Oder offensive in January 1945, liberation of Pommerania in early spring 1945, and battle of Berlin in April and May 1945.

Mentioned publications shows Polish Air Force in two different moments of it’s history – in day of fall in September 1939, when Polish Air Force was realizing it’s own operational ideas with polish airplanes and in days of bitter triumph, when Polish Air Force became dependent from the Soviet Union in tactical, operational and logistical aspects.

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