

including this story adds to the enjoyable nature of the book. Sir Thomas would become a senior RAF leader during the heart of the Cold War. Including his father's story provides a bit of depth to the experiences that shaped the RAF's senior leadership during the Cold War.

As in his earlier *Boys* books, Pike includes a section of photographs. These include both stock RAF and personal photos and give the reader a sense of the aircraft included in the book. This is especially true for aircraft that American readers may not be familiar with.

*Cold War Boys* is not a history of the RAF during the Cold War. That never was Pike's intent. It is a "there I was" book focused on Cold War flying. The selection of stories is well curated to tell the story of flying during that period. As a personal preference, I would have liked to have seen a story or two about scrambling and escorting Soviet bombers as they attempted to penetrate NATO airspace. However, putting that personal preference aside, *Cold War Boys* is a thoroughly enjoyable and engaging read for both aviation fans and students of the Cold War looking to personalize the time period.

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**Modern South Korean Air Power: The Republic of Korea Air Force Today.** By Robin Polderman. Vienna, Austria: Harpia Publishing, 2021. Maps. Tables. Illustrations. Photographs. Appendices. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 253. \$59.95 paperback. ISBN: 978-1-950394-07-4

Robin Polderman is a Dutch aviation author, photographer, and researcher who has been studying certain air forces in the East Asian region for many years. In addition to the rich narrative, many of the excellent photographs in this book were taken by him.

Given Korea's history of being controlled by Japan until the end of World War II and then separated into North and South, it should come as no surprise that an air force didn't exist until after the war. The Republic of Korea (ROK) officially formed the ROKAF on October 1, 1949—a force with a handful of L-4 liaison aircraft and AT-6 trainers. With the Korean War, a force of 130 F-51s ultimately came in. These were the teeth of the ROKAF until 1955.

The association with the USAF was close during the war and continued afterwards. F-86 jets joined the ROKAF in 1955. As the Cold War pressed on, the Koreans received F-5, F-4, F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighters; C-123 and C-130 transports; and numerous other types. They built themselves into a first-class fighting force. With the founding of Korean Aerospace Industries in 1999, the ROK began to develop and field a number of excellent fighter, trainer, helicopter, and unmanned aircraft to its growing force structure and to the air arms of other foreign countries.

Polderman tells the story of the development, fielding, modernization, and operations of the formidable ROKAF in 8 chapters. The first covers the force's history. Next is a solid description of the markings, serial number system, and unit designations used by the ROKAF. This chapter also describes the organization of, and bases within, the air force. Chapter 3 is a long one and covers each of the 30 aircraft types in ROKAF service. The fourth chapter gives the same treatment to air-to-air and air-to-ground weapons, reconnaissance systems, and other armaments. The fifth chapter covers the ROKAF training syllabus and discusses the phases of flight training, training in specific weapon systems, Red Flag, and other operational exercises. They also have their own Fighter Weapons School and employ their own test pilots.

Chapter 6 looks to the future, as the ROKAF continues to modernize through 2035 with both new and upgraded systems. In Chapter 7, Polderman expands on his coverage of the indigenous industry that supports much of the ROKAF's operations and modernization. The final chapter is very important: a look at a troubled peninsula in a volatile region. This is an excellent review of the role the ROKAF plays. It compares the force with its counterparts in the region, and also looks at how it and the USAF interact.

With Polderman as writer and Harpia as publisher, this book is the definitive source on today's ROKAF. It is typical Harpia fare: superb hi-res photos, gloss paper, and excellent layout. The book should be mandatory reading for anyone interested in this nearly unstable part of the world and what the South Koreans will bring into any future conflict.

*Col Scott A. Willey, USAF (Ret), Book Review Editor, and former National Air and Space Museum docent*



**Ejército del Aire y del Espacio: The Spanish Air Force from 1939 to the Present Day.** By Pere Redón-Trabal. Warwick UK: Helion, 2023. Maps. Tables. Illustrations. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Pp. 74. \$29.95 paperback. ISBN: 978-1-915070-67-8

Redón-Trabal is a Spanish writer and journalist who specializes in military subjects, particularly ones that are aviation-related. Most of his published articles and books have appeared in Spanish. In this work on the history and status of the Ejército del Aire (EdA, or Spanish Air Force), he and the editors have done an excellent job of making a very-readable narrative in English.

The saga begins with a brief history of the air force. As in the US, military aviation grew slowly under several different names and organizations. Military air activity began in 1911. Spain maintained military aircraft throughout the First World War (the country was a neutral, so it had a very

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