

## **Abstract**

The dissertation thesis describes and analyses military service of Czechoslovak women in British army namely in ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) and WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) units. First Czechoslovak women joined British armed forces in mid 1941 and served directly on the British soil in the Army and Airforce bases. Other Czechoslovak women joined ATS and WAAF in the Middle East campaign since 1943. During the WWII more than two hundreds Czechoslovak citizens served in the auxiliary units.

The thesis describes the course of WAAF/ATS training, working set up and everyday life in the military with all pros and cons linked. The text further deals with the approach of the Czechoslovak exile institutions e.g. National Defence ministry, towards Czechoslovak women serving in the foreign army. One of the main topics is finding answer to question why Czechoslovakian women could serve only in the army of the allied state and if there were ever thoughts or plans for creation of similar unit directly with Czechoslovak foreign units.

This is being considered in the broader context of British environment and war policy. In order to achieve understanding of the Czechoslovak women situation the text further focuses on reasons behind creation/reinstating of women auxiliary units. The text describes organization, internal governance and major issues of the auxiliary units. The most pressing one was insufficient number of women candidates. Therefore, next topic covered is official government propaganda and its different forms. The propaganda was targeted to improve number of candidates, and improve perception of overall increased women participation in the war effort.

The second part of the thesis focuses on the situation the members of ATS and WAAF faced after the war ended. These chapters tackle the demobilization and repatriation as well as official recognition of the service by government and society (including the lack of it). The final parts of the thesis focus on the future of woman military service during the times of peace, political debates and connected laws that were passed in order to secure it. At last but not the least the thesis describes the evolution of women formerly serving in the British military living in the totalitarian Czechoslovakia.

## **Key Words**

Woman, Second World War, Auxiliary Services, British Army, Training, Organization, Resistance, ATS, WAAF, Czechoslovak Army, Great Britain, Middle East.