

Free essay on the second world war

[War, World War 2](#)



The Second World War is the largest in the history of humanity war unleashed by Nazi Germany, Italy and militaristic Japan. During the war, there were involved 61 countries with a population of 1.7 billion people. Military operations were conducted in 40 states, as well as at marine and ocean theaters.

World War II was the most bloody and brutal military conflict in human history and the only one in which the nuclear weapons were used. The dates of the start and end of the war are among the most significant for the entire civilized world (Rees, 2008).

The causes of the World War II became the imbalance of power in the world and the problems triggered by the outcome of the First World War, in particular the territorial disputes. Winning the First World War, the USA, England, France concluded the Treaty of Versailles, which was not profitable for the loosed countries. At the same time, the policy of appeasement adopted in the late 1930s by Britain and France made it possible for Germany to dramatically increase its military capabilities, which accelerated the transition of the Nazis to the active hostilities (Keegan, 1997).

The members of the anti-Hitler bloc were the USSR, the USA, France, England, China, Greece, Yugoslavia, Mexico, etc. Germany was supported by Italy, Japan, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, Finland, China (Wang Jingwei), Thailand, Finland, Iraq, etc. Many states-participants of the Second World War did not conduct operations at the fronts, but helped by the providing with food, medicine and other necessary resources (Horner, 2002).

Researchers identify the following main stages of the Second World War:

- the first phase from September 1, 1939 to June 22, 1941: the period of blitzkrieg of Germany and European allies;
- the second phase from June 22, 1941 to about the middle of November, 1942: the attack on the Soviet Union and the subsequent failure of operation Barbarossa;
- the third stage from the second half of November, 1942 till the end of 1943: a radical change in the war and the loss of Germany's strategic initiatives. At the end of 1943 at the Tehran conference, which was attended by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, it had been decided to open a second front;
- the fourth stage lasted from the late 1943 to May 9, 1945. It was manifested by the capture of Berlin and by the Germany's unconditional surrender;
- the fifth stage from May 10, 1945 - September 2, 1945: the battles were conducted only in South-East Asia and the Far East; the United States first used the nuclear weapons (Keegan, 1997).

Therefore, the start of the Second World War was on September 1, 1939. On this day, the Wehrmacht suddenly started aggression against Poland.

Despite the response declaration of war by France, Britain and some other countries, Poland was not provided with the real help. Already on September 28, Poland was invaded. The peace treaty between Germany and the USSR was signed on the same day. Received, thus, a reliable rear, Germany started preparations for the war with France, which surrendered in 1940, June 22. Nazi Germany began large-scale preparations for war on the eastern front with the USSR (Horner, 2002).

Operation Barbarossa was already approved in 1940. Soviet senior management received reports of an imminent attack, but the fear of provoking Germany, and assuming that the attack would be made at a later date, do not knowingly led to the embattlement of the border units (Rees, 2008).

The major battles of the Second World War, which had the great importance for the history of the USSR, are the followings (Rees, 2008):

- Battle for Moscow from September 30, 1941 to April 20, 1942, which was the first victory of the Red Army;
- Battle of Stalingrad from July 17, 1942 to February 2nd, 1943, which marked a radical change in the War;
- Battle of Kursk from July 5 to August 23, 1943, which resulted in the largest tank battle of World War II - near the village of Prokhorovka;
- Battle for Berlin, which led to the surrender of Germany.

However, the important for the progress of World War II events took place not only at the front of the USSR. Among the operations conducted by allies it should be noted: the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 that caused the US entry into the World War II; opening of a second front and the landing of Normandy on June 6, 1944; the use of nuclear weapons on 6 and August 9, 1945 to strike Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Rees, 2008).

The results of the Second World War horrified everyone. Hostilities put on the brink the very existence of civilization. During the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials, the fascist ideology was condemned, it was punished a lot of war criminals. In order to prevent in the future the possibility of a new world war,

at the Yalta Conference in 1945, it was decided to establish the existing United Nations Organization (UNO). The results of the nuclear bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki led to the signing of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It must be said that the consequences of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are felt till today (Horner, 2002).

The economic consequences of the Second World War were serious too. For Western countries, it turned into a genuine economic disaster. The influence of Western Europe has decreased significantly. At the same time, the US was able to maintain and strengthen its positions. One more consequence of the Second World War, in which the socialist camp was defeated, became the Cold War. The significance of the Second World War for the Soviet Union was enormous. The defeat of the Nazis determined the future of the country's history. According to the results of peace treaties, the Soviet Union significantly expanded its borders. In some European countries it was established the communist regimes. The victory in the war did not save the Soviet Union from the mass repressions ensuing in the 50ies (Horner, 2002).

Works Cited

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Keegan, John. The Second World War. London: Pimlico, 1997. Print.

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