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**Alternative Educational Materials**

**The Second World War**

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**Alternative Educational Materials**

**WORKBOOK 4**

# **The Second World War**

Edited by

**KREŠIMIR ERDELJA**

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**CHRISTINA KOULOURI**

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## Introduction

According to the historian Mark Mazower, “no experience was more crucial to the development of Europe in the twentieth century [than the Second World War]... it was a struggle for the social and political future of the continent itself... We cannot hope to understand the subsequent course of European history without attending to this enormous upheaval and trying to ascertain its social and political consequences. The years of Nazi occupation, followed by the chaos of the immediate post-war period, sundered human ties, destroyed homes and communities, and in many cases uprooted the very foundations of society.”

Although historians take a number of factors into account when examining the events that lead up to World War II; namely that, after World War I, the populations of the countries that had lost believed that they had been treated unjustly by the victors, that democracy in many European countries was fragile and that the international economic crisis of the 1930s struck the continent severely. However, the aggressive imperialist policy of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Japan is considered to be, by almost all historians, the main cause of World War II.

The focus of this collection of historical sources has been chosen through geographically defined parameters and is limited to the region of South-East Europe. Unlike Mussolini, in whose plans for the expansion of the Italian Empire, the Balkan territory was an essential, if not major part (the Italian army invaded Albania in 1939 and Greece towards the end of 1940), this region didn't stand high on Hitler's list of priorities, at least not where the potential engagement of the German army was concerned. Bearing in mind the great Nazi plans for expansion to the east and the occupation of greater swathes of territory, a military operation in South-East Europe would have meant an unnecessary expenditure of men and resources. Diplomatic pressure on the countries intimidated (or impressed) by the strength of the German Blitzkrieg should have been enough to ensure German supremacy and collaboration. Matters seemed to be developing in that direction at first: German control was established over the Hungarian and Romanian resources through diplomatic pressure, and Bulgaria and Yugoslavia entered the Tripartite Pact at the beginning of 1941. Political orientations, the reopening of accounts by extreme nationalists and the fears of war or communism led these Balkan countries to shift from a position of neutrality to a pro-Nazi stance.

Albania was left to Italy, and Greece was finally placed under Nazi control. Hitler's military operation became inevitable after Mussolini's failure to subjugate Greece and the British decision to send troops. When the armed forces staged a successful coup in Belgrade overthrowing the government that had signed Yugoslavia into the Tripartite Pact a few days earlier, Hitler ordered the Wehrmacht to invade it along with Greece. Simultaneously, and to some extent, prior to the coup, a portion of the population expressed their frustration through public demonstrations towards the preparations made by Yugoslavia to enter the Tripartite Pact and, later on, towards the act itself. These events carry both symbolic and moral significance by providing us with the first example of public opposition towards the decision of a government to join the Tripartite Pact. In addition to the moral and symbolic importance of these public protests, the unprecedented events had military ramifications. According to some historians, Hitler's decision to attack South-East Europe was actually a nervous reaction to these protests. To a certain extent, this reaction changed the direction of World War II by delaying the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union. Therefore, a hypothetical question can be asked: what course would the war have taken had German troops arrived in Moscow in September 1941 and not in November 1941?

By the middle of 1941, all of the Balkan States except for Turkey were either under Nazi occupation or allied to the Nazis. Yugoslavia was fragmented: Croatia (with Bosnia-Herzegovina as one of its regions) became a puppet-state of the Axis powers, while the rest of the country was divided into occupation zones under Italian, Ger-

man, Hungarian and Bulgarian rule. Greece was also divided into three occupation zones under Italian, German and Bulgarian rule. The fact that Turkey tried to retain its neutrality by signing the Turkish-German Amity Treaty in June 1941 suggests that it had adopted a position leaning towards the Axis powers.

Hitler's racial beliefs and the idea of industrialising mass murder led to the killing of five to six million European Jews by the end of the war. Other ethnic groups such as the Roma and the Slavs were also included in Hitler's racial policies, but the systematic nature of what he called the "Final Solution" demarcates the Nazi approach to "the Jewish Problem" from the general treatment of minorities making it a case apart, worthy of separate examination. In the Balkans, as in other European countries, the Nazi occupation brought to the surface and deliberately exploited the tensions simmering between different ethnic groups and offered some minorities the opportunity to avenge their oppression or redress grievances. Thus, the Independent State of Croatia, for example, which won independence by becoming a puppet-state of the Axis powers and was ruled by an extreme nationalist party, the Ustasas, persecuted the Serbs and Jews. This phenomenon was not limited to one area; elsewhere too, extreme nationalist groups embarked on programmes of demographic "engineering". The Nazis and those supporting them in the Balkans led to a transformation of the ethnic composition of the area. The Jewish population dropped from 856,000 in 1930 to under 50,000 in 1950. After the war, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans were expelled from Yugoslavia and deported from Romania, while Slavs and Albanians fled northern Greece.

By the end of the 1930s, right-wing dictatorships had replaced democratic governments everywhere in the Balkans and the Communist parties had been banned. But Balkan dictatorships differed from the fascist regimes in that mass parties failed to survive in the region, perhaps with the exception of the only real grassroots movement and fascist appeal in the region – that of Codreanu in Romania. The devastating shock of total war and the flight of some heads of state into exile swept away the pre-war political elites. The Nazi occupation underlined the inability of the state to protect its civilians from violence, malnutrition and deprivation. The shock of living under a regime of unprecedented and systematic violence coupled with the intensity of suffering and destruction which struck civilians over the six-year period, profoundly transformed all European societies, but particularly those of South-Eastern Europe, where the Nazi policies of expropriation and reprisals led to terrible conditions. Thus, it was mainly hunger and terror that initially drove many to fight against the Nazis, but these spurs to action were later supplemented by ideological and political considerations. In addition to their military importance (although different in each country), resistance movements had an enormous political and moral impact. An egalitarian and morally elevated vision of the post-war world and the goal of a fairer distribution of wealth were shared by the majority of resistance movements. Resistance movements, however, were fragmented, and under the conditions of uncertainty and ideological confusion which the war produced, infighting ensued within almost every group, often to the point of civil war. As resistance movements burgeoned after 1943, they provoked reprisals by collaborationist militias thereby inciting another sort of civil war in many countries. However, by 1944, mass resistance movements, dominated by communists, seemed ready to take over power once the Nazis withdrew in many countries.

Powers outside of the South-East Europe region, however, were working towards their own ends, and despite the growing strength of the resistance, had other plans for the Balkans which held little regard for the self-determination of the States or people. In October 1944, at the same time as these mass movements were poised to take power, Churchill and Stalin agreed on postwar spheres of influence in South-East Europe. Greece was to come under British control; the rest, with the exception of Yugoslavia for which the deal was 50:50, would be left to the Soviet Union. The Greek communists were finally defeated after a long civil war (1946-1949). In Yugoslavia and Albania, communist partisans quickly seized power. Bulgaria and Romania suffered under the occupation by Soviet troops who imposed communist regimes. By the end of the 1940s, the division of Europe into two zones was complete and wartime enmities had been transmuted under the pressure of the Cold War.

From today's perspective, it is obvious that World War II was much more than a series of battles and diplomatic negotiations (although unfortunately, this is very often the main, and sometimes the only, impression that students get from their textbooks). Apart from the military component, World War II displayed some of the characteristics of religious, ethnic and racial conflict. As mentioned previously, in some countries this led to civil war. The conflict between the resistance movements and the collaborationist forces who often propagated Nazi methods, cruelty and ideology was often a causative element. Such examples can be also found in South-East Europe and thereby, in this collection of historical sources. This, however, does not mean that we may, even for a minute, forget who the main villains were, neither can we allow them to abnegate responsibility for the evil done to the Balkan nations and peoples. The Nazi accountability for starting the war and, thereby, its consequences, cannot be diminished, not to mention, disputed. However, bearing in mind the criminal character of the Nazi regime that started the war, the fact remains that the political elites in many countries leaned towards the Nazis. It is evident that many among these elites exploited the opportunity (under Hitler's cover) to settle old disputes with their neighbours, revise the order installed by the Versailles Treaty, dispose of an "embarrassing" minority, or enlarge their own lands and accumulate assets. It is also apparent that these elites did not suddenly appear out of nowhere, nor could they have emerged from a vacuum. There were open, as well as, hidden Nazi sympathisers in most of the countries of the region along with levels of tacit consent for Nazi ideology, and a latent predisposition towards racially divisive philosophies. When a country either joined the Tripartite Pact, or was occupied by Nazi-Fascists, sympathisers would seize the opportunity to show their loyalty to the Nazi regime and their acceptance of the foundations of Nazi ideology. This uncompromising consent paved the way for the Nazis and contributed to the ensuing brutality .

Our intention here is to provide students with a multi-layered presentation of World War II. Consequently, a comparatively small number of sources within this Workbook deal with war operations. In taking this approach, we had no intention of minimising the military importance of the resistance movements in South-East Europe, nor the great contribution made by the region in the overthrow of Fascism and Nazism. Our aim was rather to shed light, at least partially, on the aspects of life during war which are not often presented in students' textbooks in accordance with the wishes and suggestions of the teachers who use them when teaching. Namely, it is well known that in most textbooks in South-East Europe, political history is given pre-eminence and this is generally the case with World War II. Other aspects that are at least equally important and definitely more interesting to students, such as, for example, everyday life, the status of women and children, cultural life, the echo of the war on literature and the other branches of art, love in wartime, and so on, are mostly neglected and we find only traces of them.

This collection contains sources from 11 countries of South-East Europe. This has its advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage in collecting historical sources conceived as such, is that it enables students to gain a multi-perspective insight into this historical period. The view of a certain historical period, from two or more different points should be, not only interesting, but also explicitly useful. Students are offered the opportunity to read and analyse how the same problem, incident or process is/was looked upon in their regional neighbourhood.

On one hand, through the analysis of the sources, students will find striking similarities, in many cases, of poverty, famine, uncertainty, and of the great suffering that marked the whole of South-Eastern Europe during that period. On the other hand, they will also come across some opposing and contradictory sources which treat the same issue from completely different points of view or in a quite different way from the one found in their textbooks. In such cases, our suggestion is not necessarily to ask students to judge which source is correct, truthful or at least closest to the truth. It will be sufficient for us to see students becoming aware of the fact that some historical incidents and processes are not unambiguous, as they might be presented in their

textbooks. Namely, in some countries of South-East Europe, the teaching of history (and history textbooks have this conception) is subsequently based on the notion of a single truth, so it is an exception for students to have contradictory sources. With this in mind, we are aware that among those teachers and students who may be unaccustomed to finding contradictory, opposing sources in their textbooks and/or history teaching in general, a collection of sources based on a multi-perspective approach might provoke a certain disorientation, even rejection. We are, however, of the opinion that without a multi-perspective approach there is no real, high quality study, comprehension and knowledge of history. Without this approach, the latter becomes merely data memorisation.

Nevertheless, the collection of sources conceived in this way has a significant defect. Taking into consideration the fact that in the restricted area of this collection there are textual and visual materials from 11 countries of South-East Europe, it is obvious that it does not provide a complete picture of World War II. To expect it to do so would be pretentious at the very least. We were aware of this since the very beginning of this project, it was therefore necessary to make a selection of topics, e.g. choose only some of the numerous aspects of World War II, and neglect others, though not any less important, by not mentioning them. Besides choosing topics which are seldomly presented in textbooks, the other significant criterion concerning the selection of sources was a methodological one. We tried to include as many sources as possible which could provoke some sort of emotional reaction in our students (anger, shock, sympathy, admiration, laughter...). Common people's destinies – tragic, heroic, funny – often give us a better, more lifelike picture of cruel times than proclamations, political statements or diplomatic reports. The latter are, however, a part of this collection and we naturally have no intention of depriving them of their value.

In short, our intention is to offer our students and fellow teachers a somewhat different multi-perspective view on a gloomy period of our history, hoping that this collection of sources will also lead to a better understanding because, in spite of transparency and the simplicity of the events in World War II, (where the moral component - the obvious distinction between good and evil is concerned), some South-East European countries still create artificial doubts on this matter given that the leading roles in most of the resistance movements were held by communists. In addition, in both world and European history, the Western perspective has marginalised the role played by South-East Europe in World War II and has sometimes subordinated it to long-lasting stereotypes on the region. We think that this collection of documents will contribute to a more comprehensive discernment of our history as part of the history of humanity.



## Chronology

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe		
1939	April		7 Italians invade Albania. 12 Albanian Constituent Assembly proclaims the Personal Union with Italy and Victor Emanuel III as King of Albania. The Italians set up a puppet fascist government under Shefqet Verlaci and soon absorbs Albania's military and diplomatic service into that of Italy.		
		23	Soviet-German "Ribbentrop-Molotov" Pact includes a secret agreement to future Soviet occupation of Romanian Bessarabia.		
	September	1	Germany invades Poland.	7	Romania declares its neutrality.
		3	Britain and France declare war against Germany.	15	Bulgaria declares its neutrality.
		17	Soviet Union invades Poland.		
	October		19	Turkey, France and Britain sign the Ankara Treaty to aid one another if they were attacked by a European power in the Mediterranean.	
1940	February		15	New royalist government of Bulgaria led by Professor Bogdan Filov.	
	April	9	Germany invades Denmark and Norway.		
	May	10	Germany invades Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg; Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain.		
		12	Germany invades France.		
	June	10	Italy declares war on Britain and France.	26-27	Romania cedes Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, subsequent to a Soviet ultimatum.
		22	France signs armistice with the Axis powers.		

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1940	August		<p>10 Antisemitic law in Romania.</p> <p>30 Under German and Italian pressure, Romania surrenders northern Transylvania to Hungary.</p>
		<p>13 Italy invades Egypt.</p> <p>27 Japan joins the Axis Alliance.</p>	<p>4 Ion Antonescu is appointed President of the Council of Ministers of Romania.</p> <p>6 Charles II abdicates in favor of his son Michael I; the <i>de facto</i> ruler of Romania is 'Conducator' Ion Antonescu.</p> <p>7 Craiova agreement. Rumania returns South Dobruja to Bulgaria.</p>
	October		<p>12 The German Army enters into Romania as "military advisors".</p> <p>28 Italy invades Greece using Albania as a base.</p>
	November	<p>5 Roosevelt reelected US President.</p> <p>11 British defeat Italian fleet at Taranto.</p> <p>20 Hungary joins Axis Alliance.</p>	<p>Bulgaria refuses to join the Axis, to attack Greece and to sign a guarantee pact with the USSR.</p> <p>14 Greek troops counter attack on the Albanian front taking all major towns in Southern Albania from the Italians within a month.</p> <p>23 Romania joins the Axis Alliance.</p> <p>25 Turkey declares Martial law in a zone covering Istanbul, Edirne, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ, Çanakkale and Kocaeli.</p> <p>30 Blackout starts in Istanbul.</p>
	December	<p>9 British troops begin to drive the Italians out of Egypt.</p>	<p>Pro-fascist bills are voted by the Bulgarian Parliament: Bill for the Organization of Bulgarian Youths and the Antisemitic Bill for the Protection of the Nation.</p> <p>19 Assistance materials sent from Turkey to Greece via Kurtuluş (Independence) Cargo Boat.</p>

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1941	January	19 British invade Eritrea	20 Bulgarian Cabinet votes for signing the Tripartite Pact. 21-23 Iron Guard (fascist) rebellion in Romania, defeated by General Antonescu.
	February		8 Germany and Bulgaria sign military pact. 17 Bulgarian-Turkish declaration of neutrality.
	March	11 U.S. starts supplying war materials to Britain and other allies. 24 Rommel commences first offensive in Libya.	1 Bulgaria joins the Axis; German armies enter Bulgarian territory. 24 Turkish-Russian Declaration: in case Turkey is attacked by a third party, Soviet-Russia shall maintain its neutrality. 25 Yugoslavia joins the Axis Alliance. 27 Following mass protests, Yugoslav government overthrown in a military coup d'état.
	April	11 German siege of Tobruk begins. 13 The Soviet Union and Japan sign a five-year non-aggression pact.	Failed attempt for a pro-British coup by the leftist Agrarians in Bulgaria. 6 Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece. 10 Creation of the Independent State of Croatia (ISC), a puppet state under German/Italian domination. 11-15 Hungarian army occupies Bačka in Northern Serbia (Vojvodina). 17 Yugoslav army surrenders. 19 Bulgarian army enters Macedonia, South Eastern Serbia and Aegean Thrace. 23 Greece signs an armistice with Germany. 30 Ante Pavelić issues several decrees on race in the Independent State of Croatia.

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1941	May	27 Bismarck sunk; Roosevelt proclaims national emergency because of events in Europe and Africa.	<p>12-13 A group of officers and soldiers of the Second Army, headed by Colonel Dragoljub Mihailović start organising a guerrilla movement on Mt Ravna Gora.</p> <p>17 Failed assassination attempt on King Victor Emanuel III by the young revolutionary Vasil Laçi (1922-1941) in Tirana.</p> <p>18 Pavelić and Mussolini sign agreement in Rome: ISC surrenders most of the Croatian coast to Italy.</p> <p>21-31 The Battle of Crete. The Greek cabinet and the King leave the country and settle in Cairo; Greece is divided into three occupation zones controlled by the German, Italian and Bulgarian armies.</p> <p>31 Removal of the swastika from the Acropolis: first symbolic act of resistance.</p>
		<p>22 Germany, Italy and Romania attack the Soviet Union; Turkey declares its neutrality.</p> <p>26 Finland declares war on the Soviet Union.</p>	<p>5 A spontaneous uprising against the violence of the Ustasha authorities begins in the vicinity of the town of Gacko, Herzegovina.</p> <p>18 Turkish-German Amity Treaty of Friendship and non-aggression signed.</p> <p>22 The first Yugoslav Partisan unit established near Sisak (Croatia), uprising in Croatia begins.</p> <p>24 Bulgarian Communists start armed resistance.</p> <p>25 Turkish-German Treaty ratified unanimously by the Turkish National Assembly.</p> <p>29 Mussolini decrees a "Greater Albania".</p>
	June		

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1941	July	12	Britain and the Soviet Union sign a treaty assuring British aid to the Soviets.
		24	Japan occupies French Indochina.
		26	U.S. halts trade with Japan.
	September	7	Partisan uprising in Serbia begins.
		13	Partisan uprising in Montenegro begins.
October	22	Partisan uprising in Slovenia begins.	
	27	Partisan uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina begins.	
November	8	Germans lay siege to Leningrad.	
	19	Germans capture Kiev.	
December	8	Germans lay siege to Leningrad.	
	19	Germans capture Kiev.	
October	17	Hideki Tojo becomes Prime Minister of Japan.	
	11	Partisan uprising in Macedonia begins.	
November	18	British launch offensive in Libya.	
	8	Communist party of Albania founded.	
December	5	German march to Moscow halted.	
	7	Japan bombs Pearl Harbor.	
December	8	Japan declares war on the U.S.A. and Britain.	
	11	Germany and Italy declare war on the U.S.A.	
December	12	The Independent State of Croatia declares war on the U.S.A. and Britain.	
	13	Bulgaria declares war on the U.K. and U.S.A.	

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe	
1942	January	21	Rommel's Afrika Korps launches counteroffensive in Libya.	
	February	15	Singapore captured by Japan.	EAM decides to form armed guerrilla groups (National Popular Liberation Army - ELAS).
	June	4-6 21	Battle of Midway. Rommel captures Tobruk.	
	July			The armed section of EDES is formed.
	August	12	Churchill and Stalin meet with U.S. and Free French Representatives to discuss the creation of a Second Front.	German occupation forces "solve the Jewish question" in Serbia by killing almost 90% of the Jewish population by the end of summer 1942.
		13	General Montgomery takes command over the British forces in Egypt.	25 First issue of <i>Zëri i Popullit</i> ('The Voice of the People'), a periodical representing the Albanian communist movement's ideology).
		19	Allied cross-channel raid on Dieppe ends in disaster.	
	September	22	Germans reach the centre of Stalingrad.	A British task force lands secretly in Greece. 16 Conference of Peza: creation of the Albanian Antifascist National Liberation Front.
	October	23	Montgomery's forces attack at El Alamein, Egypt.	Creation of the political organization "Balli Kombëtar" in Albania, with an anti-communist programme.
	November	8	First major Allied invasion takes place in Morocco and Algeria.	12 Introduction of the Turkish Capital Tax.
		13	Tobruk retaken by British.	25 Dynamiting of the Gorgopotamos railway bridge (Greece) by joint British, EAM and EDES guerrilla forces.
19		The Soviets launch a counteroffensive in Stalingrad.	26 In Bihać (Bosnia and Herzegovina) Partisans establish their highest political body - AVNOJ (Antifascist Council of Peoples Liberation of Yugoslavia).	
1943	January	31	General Paulus surrenders the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.	

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1943	March	5	Allied bombing of the Ruhr begins.
		5	A general strike in Athens prevents the conscription of Greek workers. March-May: Bulgarian society successfully opposes the “ <i>Final solution</i> ” and the deportation of Bulgarian Jews. March-June: deportation of about 50,000 Jews from Thessaloniki to Auschwitz.
	June	13	Axis forces defeated in Tunisia; African campaign concluded.
	July	14	In Otočac, Partisans establish the highest political body of Croatia – ZAVNOH (Antifascist Council of Peoples Liberation of Croatia).
		10	National Liberation Army of Albania formed.
August	5-17	Huge tank battle at Kursk on the Eastern Front: Soviet victory.	
	9	Allies land in Sicily.	
September	25	Mussolini is overthrown and arrested, succeeded by Pietro Badoglio.	
	2	Mukje Agreement between the National Liberation Army of Albania and Balli Kombëtar signed. It is rejected only a few days later by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania (CPA) and the National Liberation Council.	
September	28	Bulgarian King Boris III dies in Sofia; proclamation of King Simeon II.	
	3	Allies land on the Italian mainland across the Strait of Messina	
	8	Italy surrenders to the Allies.	
	12	Mussolini freed by the SS and taken to Germany.	
September	8	Partisan units temporarily capture Split (Croatia) and an enormous Italian supply depot located there.	
	9	Election of a Regency in Bulgaria: Prince Kiril, Professor Filov and General Mihov.	
	9	October 10 - Yugoslav Partisans disarm ten Italian divisions, two divisions join the Partisans.	

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1943	September		<p>17 British-American military mission to Yugoslav Partisans arrives in liberated territory in west Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p>20 ZAVNOH proclaims reunification of the territory occupied by Italy with Croatia and Yugoslavia.</p>
		<p>13 Italy declares war on Germany.</p>	
	November	<p>7 Kiev liberated; German defenses on Dnieper begin to crumble.</p> <p>28 December 1 - Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin meet in Teheran to plan the invasion of France; Yugoslav Partisans recognized as Allies</p>	<p>20 King Zogu's followers headed by Abaz Kupi found the "Legaliteti" Party which aimed at re-establishing the Zogu's monarchy after the war in Albania.</p> <p>25-26 Partisans establish ZAVNOBiH as the leading political institution for Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>29 In Jajce (Bosnia and Herzegovina), AVNOJ establishes the Partisan government (NKOJ – National Committee of the Liberation of Yugoslavia).</p>
		<p>December</p> <p>24 Eisenhower called upon to direct the invasion of Europe.</p>	<p>7 Roosevelt, Churchill and İnönü meet in Cairo.</p>
1944	January	<p>27 The Soviets defeat the Germans at Leningrad.</p>	<p>Formation of a Gendarmerie in Bulgaria to fight the armed resistance.</p> <p>8 Churchill, in his letter to the president of NKOJ (Yugoslav Partisan government), states that Britain will stop sending aid to the Chetniks. From this point on, all help is given exclusively to Partisans.</p>
		<p>March</p> <p>15 Japan invades India.</p>	<p>10 EAM sets up the Political Committee for National liberation (PEEA), a second Greek administration parallel to the official government in Cairo.</p>
	May	<p>9 The Soviets recapture Sevastopol.</p> <p>18 The Germans withdraw from Monte Cassino.</p>	<p>A convention in Lebanon leads to an agreement on the formation of a Greek national coalition government with G. Papandreou as Greek Prime Minister.</p>



Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1944	May		<p>Deportation of more than 100,000 Jews from (Hungarian-ruled) Northern Transylvania to the German extermination camps.</p> <p>24 The Albanian communists at the Congress of Përmet, elect a National Liberation Antifascist Council as the highest legislative body and form a Committee with the attributes of a provisional government.</p>
	June	6 D-Day, Allied landings in Normandy.	1 New royalist government created in Bulgaria, led by Ivan Bagryanov.
	July	20 An attempt on Hitler's life fails. 25 Allies begin breakout from Normandy.	
	August	15 Allied landings in southern France. 25 Paris liberated.	<p>2 Turkey resolves to discontinue relations with Germany; First Assembly of ASNOM (Antifascist Assembly for Liberation of the Macedonian people) which was proclaimed the supreme legislative and executive people's representative body of the Macedonian State.</p> <p>12 Churchill and Tito meet in Naples.</p> <p>23 Coup d'état in Romania: King Michael supported by a coalition of the major parties and communists arrests Antonescu and his government; Romania surrenders to the Soviets.</p> <p>26 Bulgarian Prime Minister Bagryanov proclaims neutrality, makes first attempts to negotiate with the USA and the UK in Ankara and sends a delegation to Cairo.</p> <p>29 Yugoslav King Peter II disowns Draža Mihailović and recognizes Tito as leader of the resistance in Yugoslavia.</p>

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe	
1944	August		30 Pavelić prevents coup d'état in the Independent State of Croatia and remains loyal to the Axis powers.	
	September	3	Brussels liberated.	Beginning of the fighting for the liberation of Serbia by partisan and Red Army units.
		19	Armistice between Finland and the Allies.	
25		The Allies break through the Gothic Line in Italy.		
October		2	The Germans crush a revolt in Warsaw while the Soviet armies pause and refit a few miles away; the Allies penetrate the West Wall into Germany.	2 A government of pro-Russian political parties is appointed by the Bulgarian regents, led by Konstantin Muraviev (first government formed from the political parties since May 1934).
		9	Churchill-Stalin "Percentage agreement" in Moscow.	3 Formation of a new Greek national coalition government under G. Papandreou.
				5 The Soviet Union declares war on Bulgaria. 8 The Red Army enters Bulgaria; Armistice between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria; Bulgaria declares war on Germany. 9 Communist takeover in Bulgaria - government of the Fatherland front led by Kimon Georgiev (leader of the Zveno party) dominated by the Communists. 12 Romania signs an armistice with the Allies: acknowledges Soviet rule of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina and the supreme authority of an Allied Control Committee, dominated by the Soviets.
		2	The Germans crush a revolt in Warsaw while the Soviet armies pause and refit a few miles away; the Allies penetrate the West Wall into Germany.	5 British forces land in Greece.
				8 Bulgaria starts war operations against Germany.
				12 The German army leaves Athens.
				14 The British enter Athens.
				18 Greek government enters Athens
				20 Belgrade liberated by the Soviet Red Army and Yugoslav Partisans.

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe
1944	October	23	The Allies recognise Charles de Gaulle as the temporary head of the provisional French government.
		23	Anti-Fascist Committee of National Liberation becomes the Provisional Democratic Government of Albania, with Enver Hoxha as Prime Minister.
		25	Transylvanian territory is freed of the Hungarian Army by allied Romanian and Red Army.
		28	Armistice between the Antifascist coalition and Bulgaria.
	November	7	Roosevelt wins fourth term as U.S. President.
		13	Partisans liberate Skopje.
		29	Albania liberated from the Germans.
	December	15	U.S. landings on Mindoro, Philippines.
		3	EAM organises a demonstration in Athens which ends in bloodshed; fighting between EAM-ELAS and the government forces aided by the British begins.
1945	January	17	Warsaw occupied by the Soviets.
		19	Germany in full retreat on the Eastern Front.
		20	Hungary signs an armistice with the Allies.
			About 70,000 ethnic Germans from Romania are deported to the USSR.
	February	4-11	Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin meet at Yalta.
		8	The Allies launch a major offensive to reach the Rhine.
		13-14	Allied firebombing destroys Dresden.
		19	U.S. landings on Iwo Jima.
			Signing of the Agreement of Varkiza on organising general elections and a plebiscite about the monarchy in Greece, the disbandment of guerrilla organisations and the surrender of ELAS arms.
		23	Turkey declares war on Germany and Japan.
	March	3	Finland declares war on Germany.
		9	U.S. firebombs Tokyo.
		22	General Patton crosses the Rhine at Oppenheim.
		23	General Montgomery crosses the Rhine north of the Ruhr.
		6	The Soviets impose the appointment of a coalition government in Romania led by Petru Groza, but controlled by the Communists.
		7	Provisional Government of Democratic Federative Yugoslavia formed with Tito as Prime Minister and Partisan domination over the members of the Exile Government (23:5).

Year	Month	World	Southeast Europe		
1945	April	12	Roosevelt dies, Harry S. Truman becomes President of the USA.	6	Sarajevo liberated.
		23	The Soviets enter Berlin.	14	Communist-dominated Government of Federative State of Croatia created.
		25	U.S. and Soviet forces meet at the Elbe River; the San Francisco Conference on the United Nations begins.	15	At Bleiburg, Yugoslav Partisans kill a number of prisoners of war (Ustasas and some Chetniks and Slovene Domobranci) and civilians, and the rest are taken on "The Way of the Cross" where most did not survive.
		28	Mussolini executed by Italian Partisans.	28	USA recognises Tito's Provisional Yugoslav Government.
		30	Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.		
	May	1	Berlin surrenders to Soviet forces.	2	Yugoslav Partisan army enters Trieste creating a tense partition (later into Zone A & B) between Italy and Yugoslavia.
7		Germany formally surrenders.	6	Pavelić and his government and a large number of soldiers and civilians flee from Zagreb towards Austria.	
			8	Partisans liberate Zagreb.	
	June	5	The Allies divide Germany into four occupation zones.	10	AVNOJ becomes the Provisional People's Assembly of Yugoslavia.
26		The United Nations Charter is signed by representatives of 50 countries, United Nations established.			
	July	17	August 2 - Churchill, Stalin and Truman meet at Potsdam to plan for peace in Europe and the final assault on Japan.		
	August	6	Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.		
9		Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.			
14		Japan surrenders.			

Map 1: World War II, 1939-1942



