

## WWII VISION IN SOME ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

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**Annotation.** This research work analyzes documents describing the historical events of two countries from opposing political camps (the Republic of Belarus and the USA). It examines possible reasons for disagreements and tensions in the world and explores how the perception of history depends on the use of different documentation and textbooks.

**Keywords:** politics, World War II, history, education, vision, English language, English-speaking countries.

**Introduction.** Humanity, more than ever, needs mutual understanding and compromise. Armed conflicts are erupting all over the world. As we know from history, any war brings human casualties. This must be avoided.

To resolve any conflict, it is very important to understand the context of the situation. To do this, one needs to know the opinions of both sides. In politics, context can be described as the vision of history from one's own perspective.

In this study, I compared the views on a single event— World War II and its consequences— from countries of different political camps: the Republic of Belarus and the USA. The USA was chosen as a representative of English-speaking countries, and the Republic of Belarus as the country closest in culture and ideology to me (since I live here).

Of course, books are not the most frequently used or popular source of information these days. However, the internet is full of misinformation and conflicting opinions, and users are already aware of this. As a result, many people trust official sources because they consider them reliable. Competent politicians also use them to maintain their reputations.

What feels familiar to a person is usually what they have been taught since childhood and what is popular in society. Since almost everyone goes to school, it seems obvious that most people will accept the information from their textbooks as the truth. That is why we are using the school curriculum as a representation of the commonly accepted viewpoint.

**Main part.** I will compare two historical documents: History of Belarus in the Context of World History (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus) and Outline of U.S. History (Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State). The Belarusian textbook is considered the standard and is used in all schools in Belarus as a mandatory part of the curriculum. The U.S. Outline is based on a wide range of academic and research papers, and American textbooks also draw a lot of information from it. Politicians also use this work as an official representation of the U.S. perspective.

**The Beginning of the War.** The Belarusian textbook describes the USSR as unprepared for the German invasion, emphasizing the chaos and inability to mobilize in the western regions. For example, it states: «Due to the rapid advance of German troops, it was not possible to carry out mobilization in the western regions of the BSSR.» [2]

In contrast, the U.S. Outline portrays America as already mobilized and industrially ready, highlighting its massive wartime production. While Belarusians tend to view the war as a national tragedy, Americans see it as a heroic struggle against evil.

This difference is very clearly reflected in the cultures of both nations.

When facing threats similar to World War II, from one point of view, the goal is to prevent battles from happening again by maintaining a strong defense. From the other point of view, the goal is to destroy the threat as quickly and dramatically as possible, demonstrating power to the entire world.

**Main Actions of the War.** The Belarusian narrative focuses on the Eastern Front and the sacrifices of the Soviet peoples. The U.S. Outline, however, emphasizes the Pacific theater and battles in Western Europe, presenting the United States as a decisive force without whom victory would not

have been possible. The Soviet Union is mentioned only briefly, without acknowledgment of its critical role.

This also creates a different context. One country sees itself as a victim fighting for its freedom, while the other sees itself as a victorious hunter of evil. In the second case, a potential conflict seems less frightening; it could even be seen as beneficial if it brings re-sources, glory, and shows the world who is in charge and who should be feared.

Results and Treaties of the War. The Yalta agreements are seen in the Belarusian textbook as a necessary compromise that shaped the post-war order. The U.S. Outline, however, portrays the USSR in a negative light, accusing it of expansionism. It describes Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as aggressive and undemocratic.

For instance, the Outline mentions the agreements: «In February 1945, the three Allied leaders met again at Yalta... In return, the USSR would gain effective control of Manchuria and receive the Japanese Kurile Islands as well as the southern half of Sakhalin Island.» [1] However, it also frames Soviet ideology negatively: «The Soviet Communist Party under V.I. Lenin considered itself the spearhead of an international movement that would replace the existing political orders in the West, and indeed throughout the world» [1]

The U.S. Outline also emphasizes America's economic gains and strategic positioning during the war. It mentions the Lend-Lease Program as a tool for supporting allies while simultaneously strengthening U.S. influence.

The document reflects a confident, triumphalist American perspective, ready to lead the post-war world. A key example of this strategic thinking is the statement: «The United States gave the British Navy 50 'overage' destroyers in return for British air and naval bases in Newfoundland and the North Atlantic.» [1]

Even after peace treaties are signed, countries draw different conclusions. The USA sees itself as a nation with a duty to spread democracy around the world.

The Outline also mentions that the USA initially preferred an isolationist policy and did not want to interfere in other countries' politics, but it was President Roosevelt's speeches and Japan's aggression that led the public to support full-scale military operations abroad. The Soviet Union, in contrast, is portrayed as an evil force, similar to the Nazis, seeking global domination.

The USSR, on the other hand, viewed the treaties as quite successful and its own policies as peaceful. It saw the USA's further actions as aimed solely at expanding its influence, controlling the world, increasing its profits, and satisfying its ambitions.

Two powers both claim to be fighting for world peace, justice, and the equality of all races and peoples, yet they see each other as absolute evil.

**Conclusion.** By studying historical documents, we can see that countries pursue different goals and have different views of their past.

This is what leads to misunderstanding and conflict. Studying history without bias, recognizing the achievements and merits of other countries, accepting the mistakes of the past, and taking responsibility for wrongdoings will help humanity avoid unnecessary victims and suffering and live in a kind, mutually understanding, and prosperous world.

In this situation, each side sees only a desire for world domination in the other's worldview. At the same time, they justify their own actions as spreading the «right» ideas.

Perhaps we are just one step away from a bright and peaceful future. But I am left wondering: when will we finally take it?

Don't be like that! Respect other people's personal boundaries and respect others' opinions.

## References

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