

Causes of WWII

F. Fascism (Militarism Japan, Germany, Italy)

A. Appeasement

R. Remilitarization

E. Economic Depression

T. Treaty of Versailles



All of these things built up and culminated with....

Hitler's invasion of Poland.



Germany's Invasion of Poland

- At 4:45 a.m August 31, 1939 some 1.5 million German troops invade Poland all along its 1,750-mile border with German-controlled territory.
 - This was an enactment of Hitler's idea of *Lebensraum* (Living space) for the Aryans.
- Simultaneously, the German *Luftwaffe* bombed Polish airfields, and German warships and U-boats attacked Polish naval forces in the Baltic Sea.
- Hitler claimed the massive invasion was a defensive action, but Britain and France were not convinced.
- On September 3, they declared war on Germany, initiating World War II.





The Nazi-Soviet Pact

- Hitler's only real concern was that a sudden German invasion of Poland might alarm Stalin and trigger a war with the Soviet Union.
- The Soviet Union (under Stalin) was also seeking to expand their territory, but was unsuccessful in negotiations.
- Hitler saw his opportunity and entered into secret negotiations with the Soviet Union.
- Hitler and Stalin put aside their dislike for one another and agreed to both invade Poland for their own personal gains



Invasion and Capture of Poland

- Poland mobilized late, and political considerations forced its army into a disadvantageous deployment.
- Despite fighting tenaciously and inflicting serious casualties on the Germans, the Polish army was defeated within weeks.
- On 17 September 1939, the Soviet Union (Russia) invaded Poland from the east, sixteen days after Germany invaded Poland from the west.
- After heavy shelling and bombing, Warsaw surrendered to the Germans on September 27, 1939.

What have we seen in the *Pianist*?



<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/invasion-of-poland-fall-1939>

Blitzkrieg- "Lightning War"

- method of offensive warfare designed to strike a swift, focused blow at an enemy using mobile, maneuverable forces, including armored tanks and air support
- Germans were hoping for a quick victory, so they employed these fighting tactics.
- Blitzkrieg tactics required the concentration of offensive weapons (such as tanks, planes, and artillery) along a narrow front.
- These forces would drive a breach in enemy defenses, permitting armored tank divisions to penetrate rapidly and roam freely behind enemy lines, causing shock and disorganization among the enemy defenses.











Comparing and contrasting

How is this style of fighting
similar and different from
what we saw in WWI?
Examples?

All out War

- On September 3, 1939, in response to Hitler's invasion of Poland, Britain and France, nation declare war on Germany.
- President Roosevelt again declared neutrality for the Americans.
- Britain's response, it was initially no more than the dropping of anti-Nazi propaganda leaflets—13 tons of them—over Germany.
- They would begin bombing German ships on September 4, suffering significant losses.
- They were also working under orders not to harm German civilians. The German military, of course, had no such restrictions.
- France would begin an offensive against Germany's western border two weeks later.

World War II in Europe 1939–1941



Alliances of WWII

Formation of the Axis Powers:

- ❖ Japan
- ❖ Italy
- ❖ Germany

Formation of the Allied Powers:

- ❖ Britain
- ❖ France
- ❖ Russia
- ❖ The US (after 1941)