

GLOSSARY

(From the Collection of The National WWII Museum, 2002. 069.136.)

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Axis Powers: Term given to the military alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II. The Axis also included Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

Bushido: An ancient Japanese warrior code exalting death over surrender, which the nation's wartime leaders reinterpreted to justify mistreatment of enemy prisoners.

Casualty: An individual who is killed or injured during a military engagement.

China-Burma-India (CBI): Armed conflict in this second front in the Pacific war began in 1931 when expansionist Japanese forces invaded Manchuria; full-scale war ignited between Japan and China in July 1937, then spread to British-controlled Burma and India, both of which were strategic locations for supplying and supporting the Chinese in their fight against Japan.

Colony: A country or area subject to the full or partial political control of another country, generally one located far away.

Coral Sea, Battle of the (May 7–8, 1942): In the first battle in which naval forces fought without their ships ever coming within sight of each other, the US Navy checked a major Japanese offensive for the first time in the war despite major losses on both sides.

Feudal State: A hierarchical political system in which feudal lords wield power over lower-ranking vassals based upon the former's ownership of land and the limits they place upon vassals' access to it.

Fission: The splitting of the nucleus of an atom, which triggers the release of tremendous amounts of energy.

Guadalcanal, Battle of (August 7, 1942–February 8, 1943): The first major US amphibious landing in World War II, which targeted a strategic airfield site on the island and ignited a ferocious struggle marked by seven major naval battles, three major land battles, and almost continuous air combat; for the victorious Allies, it was the first vital step in driving back the Japanese in the Pacific theater.

Hiroshima: On August 6, 1945, the crew of the American B-29 bomber *Enola Gay* delivered the world's first atomic attack, striking this Japanese city with a single uranium bomb, decimating it, and ultimately killing about 140,000 and wounding many more.

Imperialism: A system in which one nation or empire extends its authority over other countries and/or acquires colonies outside of its borders.

Island Hopping: A term describing the US military strategy in the Pacific of bypassing heavily fortified islands in order to seize lightly defended locations with air bases that could support the next advance.

Isolationist: In foreign policy, a term relating to a nation's unwillingness to become involved in matters beyond its borders.



Kamikaze: Japanese for “divine wind,” a term referring to suicide pilots who deliberately crashed their planes into Allied ships, inflicting terrible damage. First employed in the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines, the kamikaze attacks tested sailors’ nerves as Allied fighters and naval gunners fought desperately to shoot down approaching planes.

Midway, Battle of (June 4–7, 1942): In the first major US victory against Japan, US carrier aircraft dealt a devastating blow to the Japanese navy, destroying four aircraft carriers and turning the tide in the Pacific war.

Nagasaki: The American B-29 *Bockscar* dropped a second atomic bomb on this Japanese city on August 9, 1945, destroying large parts of the city and ultimately killing about 70,000.

Natural Resources: The native wealth of a country, including assets such as land, forests, mineral deposits, and water.

Market: Any place or system in which people gather to buy and sell goods.

Potsdam Conference: The meeting of Allied leaders in a suburb outside Berlin, where they issued to Japan a final ultimatum known as the Potsdam Declaration, warning Japan to surrender unconditionally or face “prompt and utter destruction.”

Propaganda: Information that is widely disseminated by a government or another entity in order to advance or undermine a specific cause, group, nation, etc.

Rape of Nanking: Term referring to Japanese soldiers’ massacre of between 100,000 and 200,000 helpless Chinese military prisoners and civilians and the rape of tens of thousands of Chinese women following the capture of the Chinese city of Nanking (now Nanjing).

Sovereignty: A state or community’s independent governmental authority over its territory.

Stimson Doctrine: Under this policy established by Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson after Japanese forces invaded Manchuria in 1931, the United States refused to recognize the new Japanese regime in Manchuria or any other forced upon China.

Trinity: Name of the test site in the New Mexico desert where Manhattan Project engineers and scientists successfully detonated the world’s first atomic weapon on July 16, 1945, introducing a terrifying new age of nuclear warfare.

V-J Day (September 2, 1945): Celebration of the signing of surrender documents by a Japanese delegation aboard the battleship USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, formally ending World War II.