

### World War II on Social Media. The case of Twitter

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#### ABSTRACT

World War II is a historic event that shaped the modern world. During the war, states from all continents became involved in the conflict. After the end of the war, the borders of most European countries were defined, with the conditions that ended World War II. Therefore, World War II is a fact whose knowledge is necessary for understanding the history of the modern world. The pedagogical value of war teaching becomes valuable, as, as with similar war events of the past, they help to avoid their recurrence in the future. The spread of the use of the internet has contributed so that knowledge is not only transmitted by the teacher in the classroom or from books, but the most common source of non-scientific information is the internet. In particular, Social Media is the most widespread place for the exchange of knowledge and information. This paper examines the possibility of utilizing social media accounts, specifically twitter, accounts that deal with the history of World War II. A thorough research is carried out on the above twitter accounts, where research criteria determine the content, usefulness and reliability of the relevant accounts.

**Keywords:** *World War II, Social Media, Twitter, ICT.*

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#### Introduction:

There are countless social media accounts dealing with the historical period of World War II. Twitter could not be an exception. However, the reliability and scientific validity of most of them is doubtful. Indicatively, some accounts that have been examined and meet some scientific reliability criteria will be mentioned. These accounts can be used to teach the history of World War II in secondary schools. Students can use the accounts to gather information about the season but also to see pictures, maps and articles that refer to historical events. The use of Twitter accounts in university classrooms for research can be done to a limited extent, as few posts are historical sources for research and writing historical studies.

#### Objectives-theoretical framework:

The use of social media has expanded to a large part of the population. More and more users are trying to use social media not only for personal or entertainment purposes but also to learn and be educated [1]. However, with this use of social media [2] and especially Twitter, many questions and doubts arise [3] as to how reliable the information provided in such accounts is [4], [5], [6]. But how objectively historical facts are presented on Twitter accounts, many will wonder. In recent years there has been a tighter control and distrust of social media posts [7]. This is partly a legitimate concern because accounts are now being used for political or governmental purposes.

The same problem is faced by those who want to use Twitter [8] for educational or scientific purposes [9]. There is always the fear of using historical sources and articles that are not credible or serve other purposes. Such intentional or unintentional mistakes can occur when one refers to a relatively recent war where there are still historical memories and strong national feelings.

Using twitter is considered safer than other social media [9], [10], such as facebook. Despite the objections and objections that some teachers may still have [11], Twitter can be used with relative safety and persuasion for didactic purposes in the lesson of the history and in particular the history of the Second World War. Teacher may have already researched the accounts referred to in World War II and identified those accounts that he or she considered reliable. Many scientists now accept the use of Twitter in school classrooms as credible and useful [12]. A necessary condition is the previous examination by the teacher of all the accounts that will be used and the preparation of the students for the correct use of Twitter in the context of the history lesson [13]. After all, Twitter is already used by students [14] in courses at universities around the world [15],[16]. The basic tools of the teacher should be the careful examination beforehand of all possible dangers and the teaching to the students of the correct use of Twitter [17] in the context of the history lesson [18].

#### World War II on twitter:

First, the accounts that record the general history of World War II will be recorded, without specifying the history of a particular country or side of the wars. The account entitled World War 2 History includes rich photographic material of the time. It contains mainly photos from the war zones and protagonists of the war. It does not contain historical analyzes or articles from the print or electronic press. The value of the account lies in the excellent photographic material it offers to the historical researcher of World War II.



Figure 1: World War 2 History.

A second account is WW2 History. And this account contains rich visual material for the researcher, as it contains not only photos, but also maps, statistical tables and propaganda posters of the time. The account managers also post some, but few, articles and researches of historical scientists.



Figure 2: WW2 History.

The Second World War account is a very interesting but also useful account. This account, unlike the previous two, contains almost every form of historical material, such as photographs, representations of battles and weapons of the time, book presentations that refer to the history of World War II, but also articles and analyzes by historians and military analysts on the events of the war.



Figure 3: Second World War.

The World War II History account is a personal account of historian Scott Lyons. Thus, this particular historian of military history has more freedom and posts what he deems to be of interest to the scholar of the history of World War II. It therefore includes articles and studies by third parties on the internet, movies about the war, book presentations, and news from the World Wide Web about the war.



Figure 4: World War II History.

### Accounts recording daily evolution of WW2:

A special account is WWII Today, which is managed by the National WWII Museum, which is a museum based in New Orleans, USA. and is thematic, as it aims to preserve the historical memory of World War II. It is an original account, as it records the history of the war daily, as in a diary. It also includes videos from the recordings of the time. Of course, it focuses on the American perspective of the war, as it mainly records the participation of the USA. at the war.



Figure 5: WWII Today.

Another account that records the war developments, exactly 80 years ago, on a daily basis is World War 2 stories from 1940. It deals mainly with the participation of England in the war and mainly with the Battle of Britain. Also reports on war and publishes photographs of all fronts where British soldiers were involved.



Figure 6: World War 2 stories from 1940.

### Accounts associated with a warring state:

Another thematic account is China in WW2. The account is managed by Peter Harmsen, a historical researcher and author of related books. It is a specialized account, because it records China's participation in the war. Contains photos, articles and studies from newspapers and magazines, posters and postcards of the time. It is a specialized account of China's participation in World War II.



Figure 7: ChinainWW2.

One last U.S. account is World War II History. It contains a chronology of World War II, but focuses on U.S. involvement. At the war, It has the form of a diary (timeline) and records daily the events of the war.



Figure 8: World War II History.

### Publication of human stories:

In addition to the cruel and inhumane side of World War II, there are Twitter accounts that feature human stories and non-heroic events. These accounts are extremely useful for recording the personal stories of war protagonists as well as unknown soldiers. Are valuable tools for those who want to highlight the anti-war side and the brutality of war?

One such account is WWII Stories, which records oral histories and interviews with participants in World War II. Also, relevant videos are published and there are references to books related to the war. The account is based in Oxford and was established in 2010.



Figure 9: WWII Stories.

Another similar account dealing with the personal stories of soldiers who fought in World War II is WWII Memories. And this account is based in England. The purpose of the account, according to its administrator, is to highlight the stories of prisoners of war and soldiers who participated in the war.



Figure 10: WWII Memories.

### Specialized accounts:

There are also accounts that deal with a specific purpose, for example, the National WWII Museum account, which aims to honor U.S. soldiers who fought and were killed during World War II.



Figure 11: National WWII Museum.

Another niche account is Live tweets from 1942. The account manager is Alwyn Collinson based in England. records events and publishes images, maps and articles about World War II. does not refer to the participation of a particular state but records information of general interest.



Figure 12: Live tweets from 1942.

### Conclusion:

Taking into account the above, we can conclude that there are remarkable accounts on twitter for World War II, which contain valuable material for the researcher of the historical phenomenon. The visual material that is published is very rich, while on the contrary the articles and studies contained can be considered much more limited. Therefore, the accounts can be used to record the historical phenomenon and extract rich visual material of any kind. However, they can be used sparingly for large scientific studies.

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