



14th International Lab Meeting
15th Edition of the International Summer School

European Ph.D. on
Social Representations and Communication
At the Multimedia LAB & Research Center, Rome-Italy

Social Representations in Action and Construction
in Media and Society



"Cultural and cross-cultural
approaches to social representations:
The implications of the globalised/localised cultural scenario"

24th - 29th August 2009

http://www.europhd.eu/html/_onda02/07/16.00.00.00.shtml

Key Lectures

European Ph.D

on Social Representations and Communication

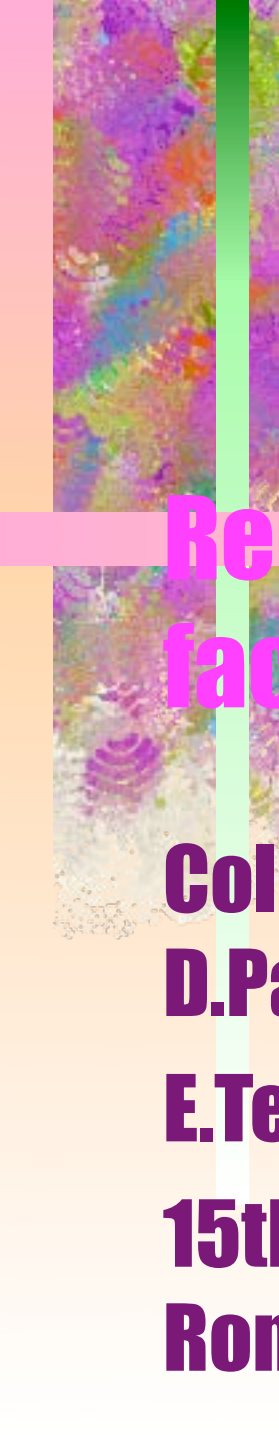
International Lab Meeting Series 2009

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Remembering WW2: socio-cultural factors of collective memory

Collective level analysis with 22 nations

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Remembering WW2: socio-cultural factors of collective memory



Collective level social psychology

- **Nations, institutions and groups as units of analysis**
- **Data are percentages or means at national level**
- **Individual construct ↔ Collective construct**
- **Group mean attitudes= norms**
- **Group mean beliefs=social representations**
- **Group mean values= subjective culture**
- **Group mean emotions= emotional climate**

Collective level social psychology

- **Similar processes**
- **▶ Nation with individualistic values have higher mean of positive affect (emotional climate)**
- **→ Subjects with higher self-direction and stimulation values report higher wellbeing**
- **At collective and individual level context and persons emphasizing autonomy reinforces wellbeing**
- **Usually r's are strong at collective level**
- **– r between income and well being $r=.60$ vs $r=.15$**

Collective level social psychology

- **Different processes**
- **▶ Nation with higher mean of positive affect (emotional climate) show lower national agreement with prowar behavioral intention**
- **individualistic and postmaterialistic cultures, that deemphasize “heroic narratives”, has a more positive emotional climate and low national identification and prowar attitudes**
- **→ Subjects with higher positive affect report higher behavioral intention to fight in a war**
- **inside nations, “happy” persons are usually more conservative and more socially integrated – “patriot”**



Values, ideology and war

- **Exposure to modelling of successful aggression, reinforces violent behavior (Berkowitz, 2000)**
- **Persons sharing hierarchical (Power) and collectivist values (Tradition, Conformism) report more positive attitude towards war (Cohr et al, 2004)**
- **What are the relationship between historical experience, culture and aggression at collective level?**

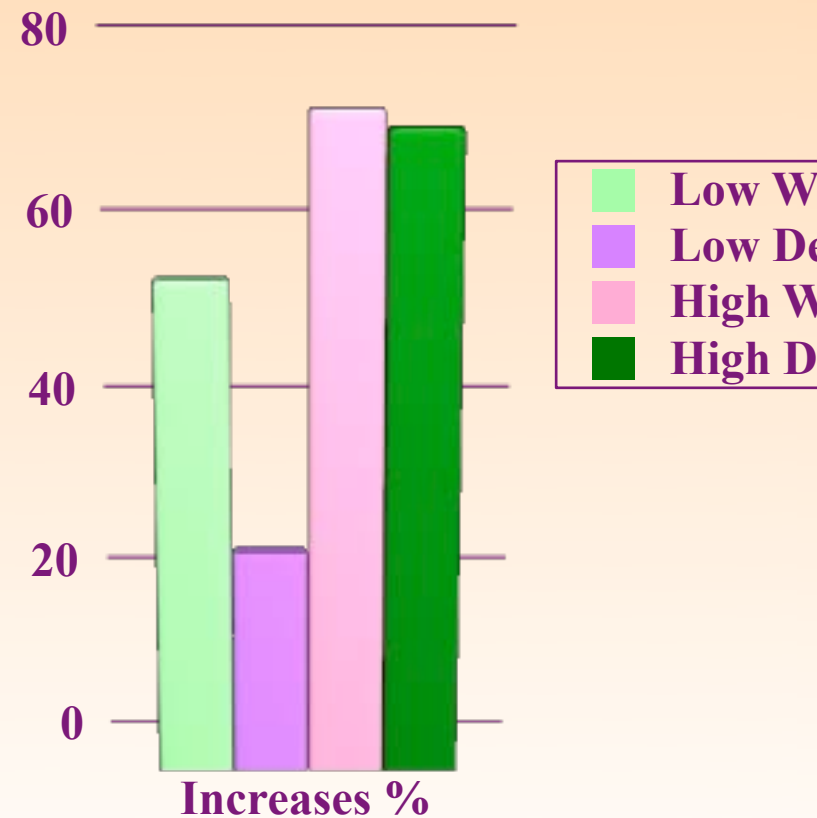


Influences of War: legitimization of violence

- **Archer & Gartner (1984) classical study**
 - ▶ **found that**
- **a) Participation in Wars (WW1, WW2 and secondary Wars)**
- **b) High casualties**
- **c) To be a victorious nations**
- **→ → Related to Post-war years Increase in homicides**

Increases in Homicides by high/low casualties and victorious/defeated

- **Relative increase (% nations high post war homicide) was**
 - ▶ **unrelated to**
 - **Worsened economic conditions**
 - **Social disorganization (higher in winners)**
 - **Not limited to veterans**



Archer & Gartner Explanation

- **Legitimization of violence: → violence regarded as justifiable mean**
- **▶ Idealized and positive image of war (justice of nation's cause, courage, epic battles, heroism, soldier's virtues, inhumanity of enemy)**

Vicarious collective learning as explanation: learning from a just





Explanation

- **Idealized image**
- **→ More credible to civilians and people not involved - with indirect contact with real war**
- **Popularity of war was negatively related to actual involvement in WW2 (Stouffer, 1948 quoted in Collins, 2004)**

Cultural factors

- **Hofstede's PDI Hierarchical values correlates with an index of internal political violence - asymmetrical social relations fuel intense political conflict and legitimize violence (Hofstede, 2001)**
- **Hofstede's PDI and Schwartz's Hierarchical values correlates negatively with a culture of peace and positively with disposition to fight in a war (Basabe & Valencia, 2006)**

Values Power Hierarchy



Cultural and attitudinal factors

- **Schwartz's Power hierarchical value is related to Social Domination Orientation**
- **SDO is associated to support military retaliation (e.g. Iraq War) and less concern for intergroup violence (Cohr et al, 2005; Moya & Morales, 2005; Pratto et al, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001)**



Cultural factors

- **Popularity of war could be associated to cultures emphasizing the use of power, including collective violence, to attain national goals**
- **SDO, PDI and Hierarchical values at collective level should be associated to remembering and a more positive evaluation of WW2**

Remembering War: legitimization of violence

- **Nations as units of analysis**
- **a) Percentage mentioning WW2 as an important event in World History**
- **WW2 Rating Negative 1 ↔ Positive 7 – Liu et al 2005, plus Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, India and Poland - 22 convenience samples**

Remembering War: legitimization of violence

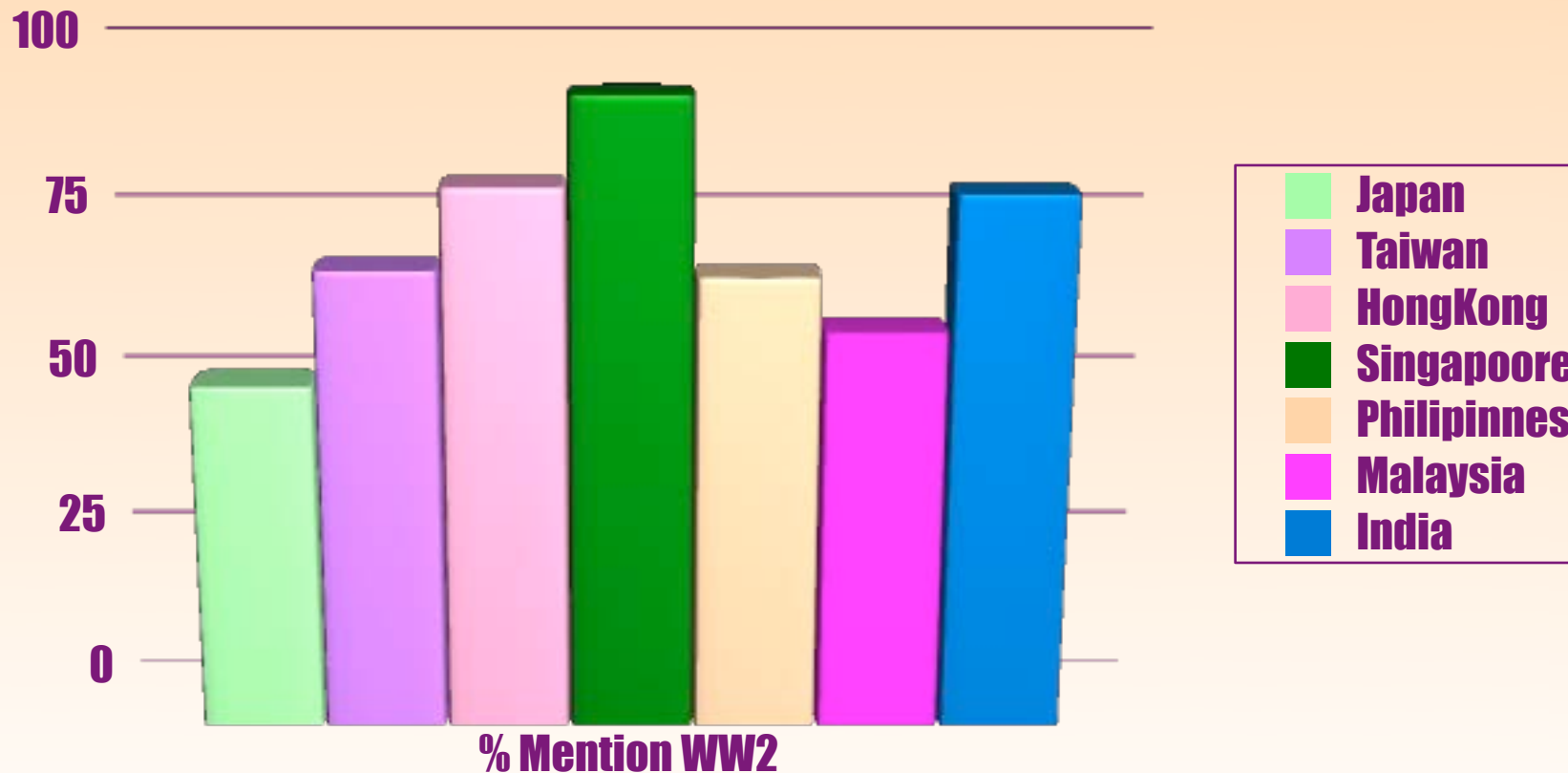
- **Nations as units of analysis**
- **b) Death toll casualties WW2 (Wikipedia)**
- **Death by inhabitants involvement index**
- **and Domestic Political Violence 47-77 (Van der Vliert, 1998)**
- **Index of internal political violence**



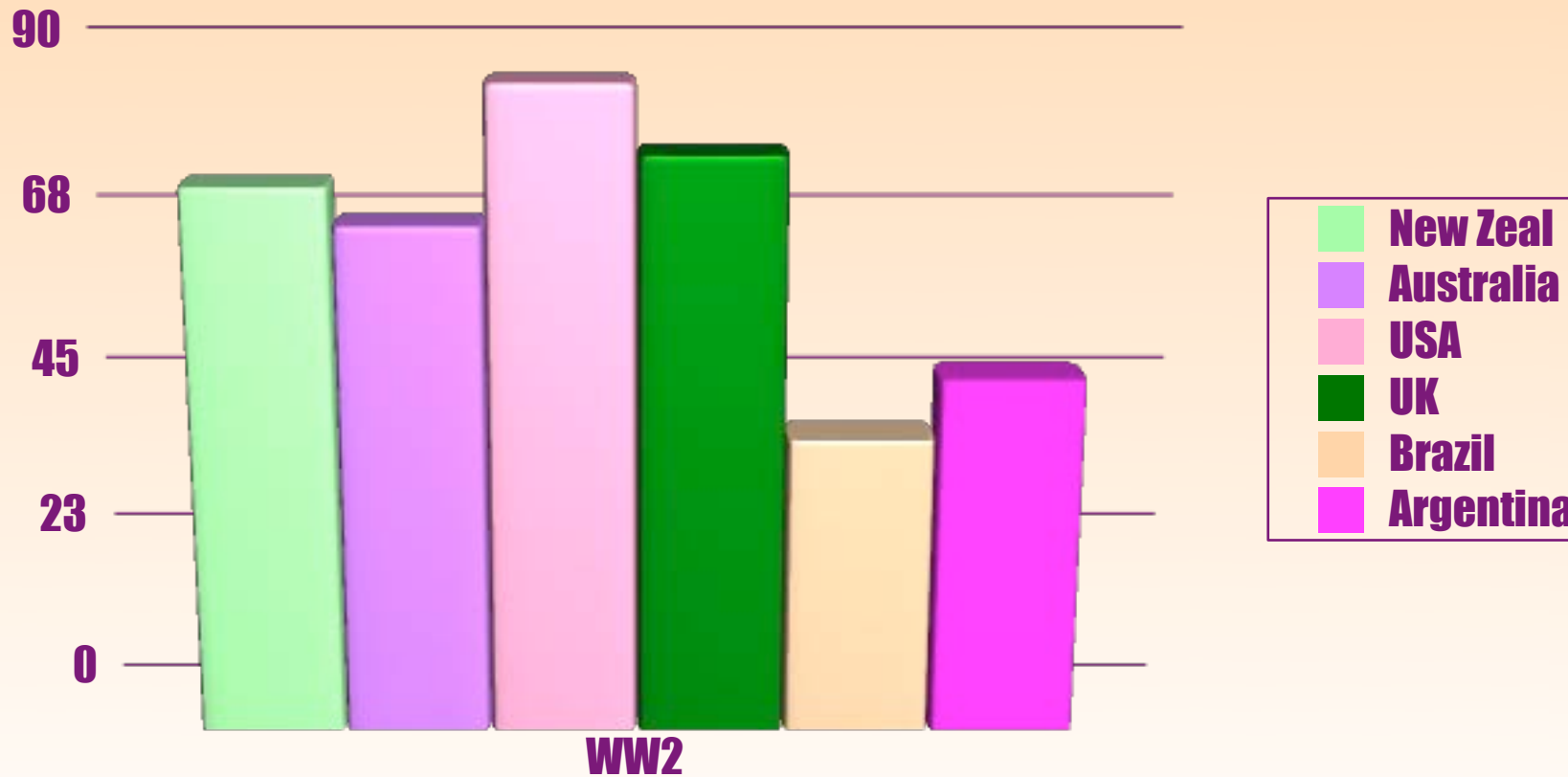
Remembering War: legitimization of violence

- **Nations as units of analysis**
- **c) Experience in WW2 Winner (direct fighting Allied) neutral or defeated nation (Axis)**
- **Axis, Germany, Japan, Hungary, “Neutral”, Spain, in fact pro-fascist, Portugal dictatorship pro-UK, Argentina philo-fascist, allied last day WW2, all others allied, excluding Brazil**

Percentages mention WW2 as an important event in World History: Asian Nations



Percentages mention WW2 as an important event in World History: Anglo-Saxon and



Percentages mention WW2 as an important event in World History: European Nations



Remembering War: legitimization of violence

- **Nations as units of analysis**
- **e) SDO - 12 convenience samples (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001; Cohrs et al, 2005; Mendoza, 2005)**
- **f) Hofstede (2001) Power Distance, Schwartz (1994) Conservatism, Hierarchy and Autonomy and Inglehart (2004) Materialist and Post-Materialism Values**
-

Remembering War: legitimization of violence

- **Nations as units of analysis**
- **g) Will to fight for the nation in a War**
- **– World Value Survey 2000-2003**
- **- 18 nations random sample**



WW2 meaning in social representations

- **In Anglo-Saxon and Russian collective memories WW2**
- **the last good war or**
- **Great Patriotic War (Neal, 2004, Wertsch, 2002, Emelyanova, 2002)**
- **In Asian memories:**
- **anti-colonialist and independence war (Liu et al, 2005)**

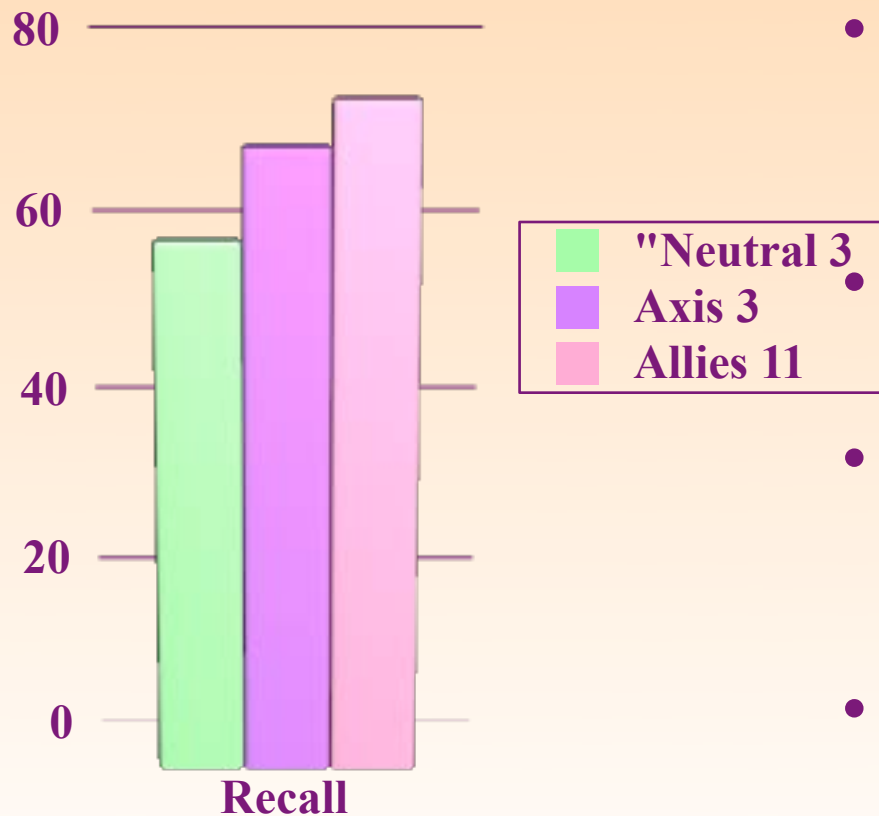


WW2 meaning in social representations

- **Propaganda, movies, comics, popular books emphasize heroism, epic battles**
- **Cost for families, enormous casualties, suffering, cowardice, treason, crimes of war, civil war, were glossed over – in USA, URSS and in Asia (Wertsch, 2002; Neal, 2004)**



Recalling WW2 related to casualties



- Percentage mentioning WW2 correlates (Spearman) with Death toll (N=20) $r = .56, p < .01$
- Allies and Axis higher recall WW2 than "neutral" nations
- Allies evaluate WW2 more positively $M = 2.59$ than losers $M = 1.48$

Recall and evaluation WW2 related to be victorious and willing to fight a



- Percentage mentioning WW2 correlates (Spearman) with to be a victorious nation in WW2 (N=20) $r = .30, p < .10$
- Willing to fight (WF) for the nation (N=18) $r = .63^{**}$
- to be a WW2 victorious nation correlates with positive evaluation, $r(19) = .66,^{**}$ and WF $r(19) = .63^{**}$

Grand father's legacy



Main results

Free recall or percentage mention WW2 was related to

- **Death toll or casualties: higher involvement in war produces more salience on collective memories - not effect on evaluation**
- **To be “Victorious” nations or allies that wins the war: collectivities remembers positive moral lessons and events - heroes and just causes – also related to a more positive evaluation**

Main results

Free recall or percentage mention WW2 and positive evaluation was related

- **To percentages willing to fight for the nation in a war**
- **- willing to fight is also related to “win” WW2 and to death toll**
- **Similarly to Archer, but three generations later: highly involved and victorious nations legitimize war in public opinion- opposite for losers**



Winner
In War

+ Recall
+ Evaluation



Willing To
Fight



Explanation: collective vicarious learning

Idealized and positive image of war (justice of nation's cause, courage, epic battles, heroism, soldier's virtues, inhumanity of enemy) is (relatively) hegemonic in victorious nations

- More credible to generation not involved**
- Collective vicarious learning: victorious nations learn to new generations the legacy of just Wars**



Explanation

Idealized and positive image of war (justice of nation's cause, courage, epic battles, heroism, soldier's virtues, inhumanity of enemy) is not hegemonic in defeated nations

- **“Losers” nations conceal more negative aspects of WW2 but did not reinforces a positivistic view of “national warriors” - even is polemic social representations emphasize “normality” and decency of the German Army...**
- **Defeated nations remembers in-group suffering legacy of war, learn to new generations the negative effects of Wars as social catastrophes**

Main results: direct internal violence excluded

Free recall or percentage mention WW2 as an important event for world history was

- **Related negatively to Domestic Political Violence $r(20)=-.33, p<.08$**
- **DPV was unrelated to willing to fight in a country, $r(17)=.10, n.s.$**
- **DPV was related negatively to post-materialism $r(17)=-.41, p<.06$ and Schwartz Autonomy, $r(15)=-.44^*$**
- **DPV was related to SDO $r(12)=.61^*$**

Main results

WW2 evaluation of WW2 was related

- **positively to DPV, $r(19)=.34, p<.08$**
- **negatively to post-materialism $r(17)= -.31, p<.10$**
- **Positively related to PDI $r(19)=.43^*$**
- **Related to Schwartz Hierarchy $r(14)=.41, p<.07$ and Conservatism, $r=.53^*$**
- **SDO trend $r(12)=.31, p<.16$**

- **Evaluation positively related associated to PDI and Hierarchy**



Potential explanations

Societies focused on expressive individualism and related post-materialist values minimize “Big nationalist narratives”

→ social representation of war shifted from emphasis on heroes and courage, to focus on victims, suffering and negative effects

Higher recent internal political violence made less salient Great Wars - “Civil Wars” focus attention in internal violence

Genocide and massacre : victim's narrative



Main results: Culture beliefs

Percentages willing to fight for the nation in a war

- related to PDI, $r(18)=.49$, Schwartz's Hierarchy $r(13)=.42$, Conservatism, $r=.81$, Autonomy, $r=-.80$,
- Inglehart Materialism $r=.52$ and Post materialism, $r=-.50$, all $p<.05$
- SDO $r(11)=.63$
- and also to recall WW2 and + evaluation



Culture and willing to fight

Societies sharing hierarchical values

- **Support obedience to political leadership**
- **Reinforces social domination between nations orientation and by this token pro-war orientation**
- **Materialist or scarcity societies reinforces nationalist defensive ideologies**



Conclusions

Remembering WW2

- ► **Is related to three generations old direct involvement in WW2, to be a victorious nations and reinforces pro-war opinion**
- ► **Is related to Hierarchical societal cultural values and beliefs**
- **Willing to fight is higher in societies “remembering Just Wars”, but also in Materialist and hierarchical socio-cultural values**

For discussion: culturalist explanation?

Remembering WW2

- **is lowest in Japan than in Germany - culturalist explanation “guilt” culture versus “shame” culture**
- **However historical pride is similar and lower in Japan (23%) and in Germany (17%) than in Austria (53%) and in Hungary (49%) both last countries being highly involved as axis forces in WW2**
- **but they were politically “absolved”**



For discussion: current institutional factors

Remembering WW2

- associated to involvement and success**
- interpreted as symbolic learning by means of formal education, commemorations and informal mass media narratives (movies...)**
- alternative explanation: not collective learning, but, institutional constraints and international context - no Army in Japan, German Army with limitations to act in foreign countries**

Articles and book chapters

- **Available (Free....)**
- **Site web**
- **www.ehu.es/pswparod**
- **Spanish, english and french**
- **Thank you**
- **Good night or day and good luck....**