

Collective Memory of World War II: Six Countries, Six Histories

Ruth A. Shaffer

Washington University in St. Louis

As a portion of a larger project conducted by:

Henry L. Roediger, III¹, James V. Wertsch¹, Sharda Umanath², and Magdalena Abel³

¹Washington University in St. Louis

²Claremont McKenna College

³Universität Regensburg

Abstract

This project examined collective memory of World War II among three former Allied and three former Axis countries. Collective memory within a country consists of “shared” memories that reflect similar beliefs about and interpretations of the past that typically promote a positive view of the country in question (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). In order to assess collective memories for WWII, participants in each country provided a list of ten events of greatest importance to the war; the extent of their knowledge about the war and of specific events; allocations of responsibility to their home country for effort in the war; allocations of responsibility for winning the war to various Allied countries; and their degree of agreement with opinion statements concerning WWII. Results of the general knowledge and recognition tests indicated that accuracy for questions concerning WWII varied considerably among people in the six countries, with Russians being most knowledgeable. In addition, people in most countries exhibited greater knowledge of events on the fronts of the war in which their country played the largest role; self-focus when selecting events most important to the war; and greater agreement with opinion statements reflecting well on their country than with statements unrelated to their country. Evidence of collective memory’s selectivity was further found in self-evaluations of the percentage of responsibility for the war effort in the Allied and Axis sides of the war. In both cases, collective responsibility surpassed 100%, even considering only three countries per side. Importantly, for all countries, self-evaluations of percentage of responsibility far exceeded the average of the evaluations given that country by people in other countries. Thus, although some similarities exist globally in collective memories for WWII, the way in which the war is conceived and evaluated is quite different depending upon where in the world a person lives.

Keywords: Collective memory, World War II

The individual calls recollections to mind by relying on the frameworks of social memory. In other words, the various groups that compose society are capable at every moment of reconstructing their past...Society can live only if there is a sufficient unity of outlooks among the individuals and groups comprising it. (Halbwachs, 1941/1992, p. 182)

A Definition of Collective Memory

This paper seeks to examine the above “unities of outlook”—or collective memory—in countries around the world. Before doing so, however, it is important to understand further what is meant by “collective memory” and to appreciate the many components that underlie and accompany its usage. In endeavoring to provide a characterization of collective memory, I draw extensively on the ideas of Henry L. Roediger, III, James V. Wertsch, Jan Assmann, James W. Pennebaker, and Jay Winter, among others.

Collective memory is frequently conceived of as “a form of memory that transcends individuals and is shared by the group” (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). As has been noted in the literature, this concept can be easily confused with that of “strong” collective memory, which is an entirely different notion (Wertsch, 2008c). Whereas strong collective memory points to a shared memory as resulting from subconscious and even “biological” processes, collective memory, as it will be understood in the present project, assumes no such thing (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995, p. 125). The shared memories here are neither spiritually nor physically shared or accessed; rather, they are “shared” in the sense that many group members have access to a common cultural environment and possess similar beliefs about and interpretations of the past (Wertsch, 2008c; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Assmann, 2008). With respect to the collective memory of a nation, this past refers to the histories assigned by members of the collective.

However, to leave the definition of collective memory here would be to ignore several fundamental features of collective memory, ones that are of great relevance to the present project.

To begin with, collective memory can be characterized by its role in identity formation (Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997; Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995; Russell, 2006; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). In the context of the nation, this process includes distinguishing one's nation from others with an eye toward providing a positive view of the home nation as well as raising its level of importance (Crawford and Foster, 2007; Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). For example, when asked to provide the percentage of all of world history for which a participant's native country is responsible, average percentages provided within the 30 countries examined ranged from eleven (Switzerland) to 61 (Russia) percent per country (Roediger, Zaromb, & Liu, in prep). If a nation could be said to have "self esteem," collective memory would serve to inflate it (Paez & Liu, 2011).

The process of creating collective memory involves selecting both what to include and how to include it in an understanding of the nation's past (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). It involves emphasizing events that elevate a nation's virtue and deemphasizing—or even overlooking entirely—events that undermine it (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Roediger, Zaromb, & Butler, 2009; Wertsch 2008b). Understandably, omissions in collective memory have been studied to a lesser degree than have inclusions, likely due to their elusive nature; however, these "collective silences" can be just as meaningful as the inclusions and therefore merit further examination in the current project (Dessingué & Winter, 2015; Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997).

In addition to differing emphases on events, collective memory reflects differing interpretations (and even distortions) of events in ways that typically promote a positive current

view of the nation (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). All of this is not to argue that people, cultures, and nations consciously “lie” about their past (although this surely happens at times), creating events out of thin air or denying that events took place; indeed, the alterations that take place are often subtle and unconscious (Lambert, Scherer, Rogers, & Jacoby, 2009; Wertsch, 2008b). Instead, it is to say that what we consider to be our nation’s past invariably comprises much more (and less) than what actually happened.

The question then arises: What factors create these emphases, omissions, and distortions observed in collective memory? One answer is that collective memory is shaped by (and reflected in) a great number of factors: other people, such as friends, family, clergy, and politicians; media, such as television, the Internet, and other technologies; art and monuments, such as commemoration statues and museums; and schooling, such as history classes (and textbooks) (Roediger et al., 2009; Paez & Liu, 2011; Wertsch, 2008c; Dudai, 2004; Assmann, 2008; Blatz & Ross, 2009). Differing combinations of these factors result in individuals being members of different collective memory groups (of which the nation, of primary interest here, is only one) (Russell, 2006; Dudai, 2004). Moreover, the factors listed above are only a few of many that contribute to and reflect the collective memory of a group and have served as modes of studying collective memory.

The final factor mentioned above—history education—deserves further elaboration. Prior research has shown that it is necessary to understand the differing “motives” behind the makeup of history and collective memory (Wertsch, 2008b; Wertsch and Roediger, 2008). Indeed, Wertsch and Roediger (2008) have articulated their differentiation through the idea that while, in an ideal world, “history aspires to provide an accurate account of the past,” collective memory study does no such thing (p. 320). Likewise, the focus of the current project is not

interested in historical truth per se. Although it will be argued that a systematic comparison of collective memories from around the world of a single global event may in fact lead to a more accurate portrayal of the past by allowing for the fusion of multiple views on the subject, this is not the only (or indeed central) factor motivating this study. Instead, this paper will examine collective memory in several countries in an attempt to find, not the true history as it exists in the folds of time, but the true history as it exists in the minds of members of various collective memory groups—in this case six former Allied and Axis nations.

Schematic Narrative Templates

If collective memory, theoretically speaking, differs from history, and if a collective memory's creation and preservation does not solely rely on historical fact for its structure (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008), then what provides organization to the collective memory of a group (Wertsch, 2008c)? Further, if contributions come from a wide range of factors (i.e. acquaintances, leaders, TV, the Internet, school), each with a slightly different perspective, what finally determines which events will be emphasized, deemphasized, misrepresented, or “silenced” in a group's collective memory? The answer, in short, appears to be the “schematic narrative template” (Wertsch, 2008c, p. 123).

“Schematic narrative templates,” as proposed by James Wertsch, provide an overarching, “simplified” story with which a group identifies (Wertsch, 2008c, p. 123; Wertsch, 2008a, p. 60). Wertsch (2008c) argues that these stories do not speak of specific events but, instead, speak of broad generalizations about the group, which make them effective devices for remembering, even if unintentionally used, a wide array of events or moments in a group's history. As events in history are debated and recorded (or left unrecorded) in the collective memory of a people, this underlying idea about the identity of the country as a whole and the national script to which all

events must adhere plays a role in determining which things will be included in the nation's collective memory (Wertsch, 2002). Indeed, events that counter these "schematic narrative templates" are often overlooked (Wertsch, 2008b, p. 142). Therefore, the different (even contradictory) collective memories observed from country to country are due, in part, to the influence of these "schematic narrative templates" (Wertsch, 2008b).

Why Study Collective Memory of WWII in Six Countries?

The above insight leads to a further question: Why concern ourselves with these divergent portrayals of the past and each nation's overarching narrative template(s)? In order to address this question, I will first pose another: Why focus on the collective memory of WWII? The answer is a simple one: WWII left a large and seemingly indelible mark on many countries around the world and remains highly relevant today (Liu et al., 2005; Paez et al., 2008; Paez & Liu, 2011). This point will be elaborated later. For now, it is simply important to note that events (such as WWII) that lead to a substantial modification in national identity or policy show an increased likelihood of remaining in the nation's collective memory (Paez & Liu, 2011; Paez et al., 2008; Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997). Thus, for its impact on many countries around the world and its subsequent ubiquity in portrayals of the past (Liu et al., 2005; Paez et al., 2008; Paez & Liu, 2011), WWII provides an effective space for the study of cross-national differences in collective memory. Perhaps, more to the point, while events of WWII may have profoundly involved people in different countries, leading to general agreement regarding the war's importance in history, interpretations of and emphases on events of the war nevertheless differ in significant ways (Liu et al., 2005; Roediger et al., 2009; Paez et al., 2008), providing insight into the collective memories and, by extension, narrative templates used in countries around the world (Wertsch, 2008c). Indeed, it has been noted that collective memory works "in the service

of the present” (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008, p. 320). In other words, a nation’s collective memory of the past relies greatly on its current identity and desires (Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997); and, thus, a better understanding of the collective memory of an important event of the past may shed light on the schematic narrative template(s) used currently in the various countries of interest (Wertsch, 2008c; Pennebaker & Gonzales, 2009).

I will now pose the initial question again: Why examine divergent portrayals of history and narrative templates from different countries around the world? As has already been noted, each nation’s general portrayal of WWII likely reflects attempts at identity building rather than attempts at providing historical truth (Roediger et al., 2009; Pennebaker & Gonzales, 2009). Thus, in examining many of these partisan perspectives of WWII, it may be possible to extract a more realistic account of the war. This understanding is potentially important for many reasons, not the least of which is, as the old adage reads, “history repeats itself.” If this observation is even partially true, it would be useful to arm ourselves with the best understanding possible of what actually happened and who is culpable (rather than what we would like to believe happened and who we would like to believe is culpable) in order to prepare for the future and, hopefully, avoid repeating past mistakes (Paez & Liu, 2011). While it is clearly hoping for too much to suggest that this project will discover WWII as it truly occurred, it is nevertheless the case that taking even small steps toward furnishing a more accurate and “inclusive” depiction of the war are welcome (Roediger & Wertsch, 2015; Paez & Liu, 2011, p. 117).

Perhaps of greater relevance to the current aims of this project is the understanding it may provide for current interpersonal and international relationships (Roediger & Wertsch, 2015; Liu & Hilton, 2005). With respect to interpersonal relationships, knowledge of differences in various recollections of history can help illuminate interactions between people of differing collective

memory groups. A greater awareness of the fact that our “history” as we know it often reflects self-interest and national identity building may facilitate increased sensitivity and consideration in these relationships (Paez & Liu, 2011; Liu & Hilton, 2005).

Perhaps of more significance, with respect to international relationships, a thorough examination of the disparities that exist between various countries in their interpretations of WWII may shed light on tensions and resentments that still exist, perhaps framing international relations in the present (Dudai, 2004; Roediger & Wertsch, 2015; Paez & Liu, 2011; Blatz & Ross, 2009; Liu & Hilton, 2005). If revealed, these resentments have the potential to be addressed. Indeed, Blatz and Ross (2009) and Paez and Liu (2011) have examined the efficacy of attempts to make amends for prior injustices in alleviating current tensions and heralding more positive relationships, finding that, if done appropriately, these attempts can succeed. Importantly, such amends are both more likely to be attempted and more likely to be successful if there exists a deeper understanding of the resentments present in the current collective memory of a nation (Liu & Hilton, 2005). Additionally, a greater understanding of the differing schematic narrative templates used and corresponding identities embraced in countries around the world may illuminate the various pressures that citizens place on their leaders and on each other to conform to these narratives (Liu & Hilton, 2005, make a similar argument with regard to “charters”; Wertsch, 2008b). These schematic narrative templates may both expose the ways in which a country views itself with respect to the rest of the world and anticipate responses of particular countries to various contemporary events (Roediger & Wertsch, 2015; Paez & Liu, 2011; Liu & Hilton, 2005; Wertsch, 2008b). An action that appears to be of little importance to one nation may speak directly to another nation’s identity and create conflict in unforeseen ways (Wertsch, 2008b).

Collective Memory of WWII in Writings in Six Countries

Although there remains much to be learned about collective memories of WWII around the world, a great deal of research has been conducted on this topic. This section will consider research that seeks to gain insight into differing collective memories of WWII through high school history textbooks. Discussion in this section rests on Crawford and Foster (2007) and their study of history textbooks of Germany, Japan, the United States (U.S.A.), and the United Kingdom (U.K.); Nicholls (2006) and his study of Italy, Japan, and the U.S.A.; Pingel (2000) and his study of Germany; and Wertsch (2002) and his study of Russia. This section does not aim to provide an exhaustive exposition of research on descriptions of WWII in history textbooks around the world; rather, it aims to provide a few examples of collective memory research of WWII in history textbooks in the six countries of interest in order to provide background on the issue and offer country-specific predictions and overarching expectations for collective memories of WWII.

Before examining the collective memories of WWII as reflected in history textbooks, it is important to note that, although efforts were made above to differentiate historical and collective memory study, the differentiation of history as revealed in history textbooks from collective memory proves less useful (Roediger et al., 2009; Blatz & Ross, 2009; Wertsch, 2002). Indeed, the works of scholarship just cited argue that the ways in which history textbooks are produced (although this varies from country-to-country) is a process that speaks for itself in explaining why these texts provide profound insights into the collective memories of the countries in which they originate.

Briefly, political interests, rather than attempts to portray history neutrally, appear to inform the production of history textbooks (Crawford & Foster, 2007). Indeed, Crawford and

Foster (2007) argue that “the process [of creating history textbooks] is one of telling and not telling...what powerful elites decide is significant” (p. 8). These textbooks typically serve to morally elevate the given country and to delineate a society that can be distinguished from others (Crawford and Foster, 2007). Significantly, representations of history provided in these textbooks are not confined to the classroom and may subsequently inform a large portion of the citizenry’s understanding of their country’s past (Roediger et al., 2009). I will now turn to prior literature examining the content of these textbooks, beginning with the three former Axis and three former Allied countries and ending with a discussion of the implications of these findings, future questions, and several concerns.

Germany. Pingel (2000) traces history textbook instruction in West Germany from WWII’s end through the reunification of East and West Germany, finding marked shifts in the ways in which National Socialism and the Holocaust were treated in schools. Whereas textbook coverage of the Holocaust was nearly non-existent in the period immediately following the war (with the exception of one influential textbook) and was limited merely to “a few sentences” through the 1950s, coverage was revised dramatically in the 1960s, not only increasing in breadth, but, in addition, changing in quality, providing pictures and first-hand accounts of the horrors that had occurred (p. 193). However, according to Pingel, it was not until the 1980s that textbook depictions of National Socialism and the causes of the Holocaust were adjusted from a discussion of Adolf Hitler’s responsibility to the social and economic factors that contributed. Pingel additionally discusses the “current” (late 1980s and early 1990s) state of affairs in history textbooks, noting (and taking issue with) the lack of analogies drawn between the Holocaust and current events of a related nature both within Germany and around the world. Problematically, according to Pingel, the lack of analogy imposes “distance” in examinations of the topic of the

Holocaust (p. 202). In direct answer to Pingel's concern, Crawford and Foster (2007) emphasize the high degree to which analogies are now drawn between the Holocaust and current events, such as the treatment of Turkish immigrants in Germany (specifically, by comparison with their findings regarding textbooks in England).

Italy. History textbooks in Italy take a different approach from those in Germany in discussing the war at large and the culpability of its citizens, as is evidenced by findings in Nicholls (2006). Similar to discussion in German history textbooks before the 1980s (and by contrast with discussion in current German history textbooks), examinations of accountability for Italy's actions during WWII do not extend beyond its leader, Mussolini. Further, the Italian textbooks emphasize the primary accountability of Germany (as well as Japan) and downplay Italian accountability by branding the Italian army as useless (at least, until the Resistance began). Nicholls argues, "the [Italian] textbooks give the overwhelming impression that, in spite of Mussolini's expansionist ambitions, the wartime population of Italy made neither good soldiers nor good fascists" (p. 47).

Japan. In a similar vein to that of Italian textbooks, Crawford and Foster (2007; chapter six) find that coverage of WWII in Japanese textbooks avoids extending guilt to Japanese citizens for some of Japan's questionable or belligerent actions. However, instead of discussing the culpability of Emperor Hirohito (which would parallel Italy's discussion of Mussolini), Japanese textbooks emphasize both the lack of knowledge among Japanese citizens of the time as to these events (the authors specifically highlight this through descriptions of the Nanjing Massacre in 1937) and the fact that these actions do not stand out as particularly egregious within the context of WWII at large. In an additional contrast to Italian textbook descriptions, according to Nicholls (2006), Japanese textbooks do not downplay Japan's importance to the

overall trajectory of the war. Indeed, Nicholls argues that portrayals of the war often reflect “a solo effort” for Japan (p. 45). Additionally, for the purposes of the current project, it is important to note that portrayals of Japan as a victim of both the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. (in dropping the atomic bombs and forsaking their neutrality treaty, respectively—both without allowing enough time for Japan to respond to the Potsdam Declaration) pervade much of the discussion (Crawford and Foster, 2007) and that, in general, Japanese textbook descriptions emphasize aspects of WWII that involved the U.S.A. and China (Nicholls, 2006).

U.K. In their discussion of WWII history textbook coverage in the U.K. (in particular, in England), Crawford and Foster (2007; chapter nine) examine depictions of the efforts and actions of countries that were a part of the British Commonwealth during WWII, within the context of the roles they are known to have played in the war. The authors argue that, whereas descriptions abound regarding England’s role in the war and the ways in which the war affected England, similar topics are not discussed with regard to other countries in the Commonwealth (e.g. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand). (An examination of the authors’ findings regarding the immense roles played by countries in the Commonwealth is beyond the scope of this paper; however, it should be noted that English history textbooks conspicuously do not consider these in their exploration of WWII.)

Russia. With regard to history textbooks in Russia, Wertsch (2002; chapter five) provides a comparison of textbook coverage of WWII from before and after the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., examining both the influence of what the author calls “narrative dialogicality” between the textbooks of the different periods (“narrative dialogicality” here referring to the ways in which “the voices of Soviet texts seem to be ‘present invisibly’ ... in post-Soviet Russian texts”) and the influence of schematic narrative templates (p. 90, 91). Although accounts

regarding WWII from the two time periods differ in some regards (the author discusses both the shift from discussion of support for the Communist Party to that for “the Russian motherland” and the [perhaps sporadic and haphazard] inclusion of information that does not reflect well on “the Russian motherland”), the fundamental narrative (or schematic narrative template) remains consistent (p. 111). Critically for the current project, Wertsch (2002) presents a narrative template in which Russia is victimized by “alien forces” but, by the rallying of its good people, resists attack and becomes victorious (p. 93). With this template in mind, the author examines history textbook coverage of WWII, finding that primary emphasis is given to Russia’s contributions to the “Great Patriotic War.” Specifically, the author finds that the coverage implies that other Allied powers became meaningfully involved in the war only after D-Day (1944) and that the U.S.S.R. deserves primary credit for defeating Germany.

U.S.A. With respect to U.S.A. textbook treatments of WWII, Crawford and Foster (2007; chapter seven) discern the following salient aspects of the textbooks they examine: idealism, benevolence and power, unity and patriotism, and nationalistic perspectives (pp. 130-137). In their discussion of these overarching themes, the authors observe that textbook descriptions portray the U.S.A. as having “generously” participated in WWII “for a higher purpose” (p. 131, 130). Nicholls (2006) highlights similar findings, noting the pervasiveness of the idea that “the United States is...a timelessly benevolent nation, the universal and singular defender of democracy, peace and justice in the world” (p. 48). In addition, Crawford and Foster note that most attention is given to events that began in 1941 (the attack on Pearl Harbor), rather than 1939 (the invasion of Poland), and which took place in the Pacific and Western, rather than the Eastern, fronts (the latter finding of which directly contrasts with findings regarding recent textbook coverage in Russia as discussed above)—placing the U.S.A. in the limelight.

Implications and concerns. The preceding discussion provides a brief background of potential collective memories of WWII in the six countries of interest; it also compels several questions concerning the extent to which results obtained from actual people will mirror those obtained from textbooks. Specifically, in Germany, will the Holocaust prove central to discussions of WWII, and will knowledge of specific details of the Holocaust prove evident? Further, will the Holocaust be examined as a product of the nation's social and economic environment or as a result of Hitler's leadership? In Italy, will examination of collective memory from individuals similarly reflect an avoidance of accountability and a focus on Mussolini as the central cause of Italy's collaboration with Hitler? In Japan, will collective memory reflect Japan's importance to the war, its victimization through the actions of the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., and its emphasis on aspects of WWII that involve the U.S.A. and China? Will responses in the U.K. reflect greater knowledge of and importance to England's wartime function than to that of, for example, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada (although there were many countries in the Commonwealth, responses will be obtained in particular regarding these three countries)? Will responses from Russia adhere to the known Russian schematic narrative template and exhibit greater interest in aspects of the war occurring on the Eastern front? Finally, in the U.S.A., will responses reflect less interest in the Eastern front and a greater emphasis on the (supposedly) defining and magnanimous role of the U.S.A. in the war?

Although these textbooks provide profound insights into the collective memories of each of these countries, further examination is necessary for several reasons. First, the extent to which this topic has been investigated using textbooks in each country differs in both the questions being asked and the degree to which questions have even been asked. Second, and perhaps more importantly, as has been discussed above, a range of factors shapes collective memory, with

history education being only one of these factors (admittedly a substantial one). And, third, as was also discussed above, due to the ways in which history textbooks are produced (often with a high degree of government involvement), they may reflect a more singular view of collective memory than that which exists in reality (or, perhaps not!). Because a complete embodiment of the collective memory of a nation is perhaps not reliably obtained from the examination of history textbooks exclusively, it is important to ask questions of collective memory in other ways. Further understanding of collective memory in these countries will come from studies that examine collective memories for WWII in actual individuals, rather than in textbooks.

Collective Memory of WWII from Individuals in Six Countries

Although the history textbook coverage addressed above would suggest that WWII holds a primary place in the collective memories of countries around the world, it is possible that the collective memories of people at large (by contrast with those of governmental agencies) do not reflect its importance. Liu et al. (2005) addressed this question by asking people in twelve countries (of which Germany, Japan, Great Britain, and the U.S.A. hold particular interest to the current study) what they regard as “the most important events in world history” (p. 175). Critically, the authors found that WWII was endorsed to a greater degree than other events in every country examined. Additionally, whereas in Japan and Great Britain the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki comprised a major event, separate from and in addition to WWII as a whole, this was not the case in either the U.S.A. or Germany. The question then arises whether the absence of this event from the top ten events in the U.S.A. and Germany results from its lack of importance (which, according to a study that will be discussed later, seems unlikely, at least in regard to the U.S.A.) or, instead, from its strong association with WWII at large. Whereas 86% and 68% of the U.S.A. and German participants, respectively, submitted WWII in their answers,

only 52% did so in Japan. Is it possible that the difference with regard to emphasis on the atomic bombs lies in those participants in Japan who did not list WWII but, perhaps instead, listed the atomic bombs? These data are not available, so we can only speculate as to the answer to this question. Of additional concern, although this study exposes the great importance of WWII in collective memory in four of the six countries of interest, the degree to which these findings extend to the other countries of interest is unknown. Further, as the authors note, whereas *emphasis* on WWII may similarly be reflected in countries around the world, *interpretations* of the war may nevertheless differ significantly.

In an extension of Liu et al. (2005), Paez et al. (2008) examined data from the same twelve countries, with the inclusion of an additional ten countries (one of which was Russia). The researchers asked similar questions of the participants, and 92% of Russian participants provided WWII as a primary event in the history of the world. The authors additionally explored the ways in which WWII appraisal (from “very negative” to “very positive”) and outcomes (winning verses losing countries) influenced the degree to which participants would endorse their own engagement in hypothetical future wars, finding that reduced negative appraisal of and outcomes from WWII (as was found for the U.K., U.S.A., and Russia, relative to responses from Germany and Japan) predicted greater support for such hypothetical conflicts. While the above studies contributed to our understanding of WWII’s importance to countries around the world, the varied opinions regarding the war’s valence, and the impact of collective memory of WWII on current thinking, they did not explore the (country-specific) rationale behind WWII’s inclusion as an important event in any given country.

Two studies, Scott and Zac (1993) and Schuman, Akiyama, and Knauper (1998), address this very question. Specifically, the authors asked that participants in the U.K. and U.S.A. (Scott

and Zac, 1993) and Germany and Japan (Schuman et al., 1998) provide what they perceive to be the most important events since 1930 (since 1940 for the German sample). Importantly, each study included a follow-up question, asking that participants indicate their rationale for choosing the given event (as will be discussed later, the wording of this follow-up question in Schuman et al. [1998] introduced difficulties in the interpretation of their findings). Both studies, as with the two studies discussed above, found that WWII was endorsed often in each country of interest. In examination of the follow-up question, Scott and Zac (1993) found that, although both the U.S.A. and U.K. samples provided “winning the good war” as an explanation for WWII’s importance, the U.S.A., to a much greater degree than the U.K., additionally provided what the authors called “patriotism” and a more positive outlook regarding the war (p. 329, 328).

More unexpected were the findings with regard to Germany and Japan. Schuman et al. (1998) note that prior collective memory research would argue for the preeminence of the Holocaust and the atomic bombs in discussions of WWII’s importance to Germany and Japan, respectively. However, in contrast to the prior literature, the authors found this to be the case in neither country, with participants endorsing personal reasons to a larger extent than the Holocaust and the atomic bombs, respectively. The authors then draw a distinction between studies that seek to examine collective memory in culture (such as those that examine history textbooks, the Internet, and monuments, to name a few) and those that directly study individuals, implying that there may be greater validity in the latter form of study in finding the “true” collective memory. Although this argument may be reasonable when attempting to answer *some* questions regarding collective memory, it is perhaps unnecessary to draw such a distinction between the efficacy of the two kinds of research and may be premature to conclude that neither

the Holocaust nor the atomic bombs give importance to WWII in individuals in Germany and Japan, respectively.

Specifically, Schuman et al. (1998) ask the following question after participants identify an important event: “What was it about [the event] that makes it seem especially important to you?” Although this question need not preclude an answer of either “the Holocaust” or “the atomic bombs” in Germany and Japan, it does seem to bias the participant against responding with explanations that may be more generally acknowledged and perhaps encourages more individual, self-relevant responses that were “especially important to *you* [emphasis added]”—which is exactly what the authors found (the authors actually discuss a similar issue in a footnote, maintaining their finding’s validity by citing another research project that produced similar results; however, this project used a wording that may be similarly problematic). Thus, it remains unclear the degree to which the true collective memory in both Germany and Japan exhibits similarities to findings in studies of history textbook coverage (and others not discussed in this paper) or to Schuman et al. (1998), in which individuals were asked directly. This question will be explored in the current project. Of additional significance, none of the studies discussed up to this point deeply address the specifics of collective memory for WWII, above and beyond explanations of the war’s importance and general depictions of the event as a whole.

Zaromb, Butler, Agarwal, and Roediger (2014) do just that. The authors examined the U.S.A., exploring collective memory for the Civil War, WWII, and the Iraq War in both a younger and an older adult sample of Americans (with average ages of 20 and 76, respectively) in an effort to reveal the contents of collective memory for these wars in the two populations of interest and shed light on broad patterns in collective memory. Participants provided their opinions as to what constituted the ten major events of each war as well as their appraisals of

each event (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”), among other measurements. Critically for the current project, with respect to WWII, the events that were endorsed by more than half of the older adult sample were the same ones as those listed by more than half of the younger adult sample: the attack on Pearl Harbor, D-Day, and the dropping of the atomic bombs (it is worth noting, however, that the authors additionally found a considerable amount variety in the events listed by participants in the two groups). The authors argued that what makes these three events special (and further evidence of collective memory’s use of schematic narrative templates) is their adherence to a storyline involving a structured chronology—“the beginning, turning point, and end of Word War II, respectively, from the American perspective”—rather than a random collection of time points (p. 389). Of additional significance, the authors found that older adults (by comparison with younger adults) reflected both a more positive outlook on the war and a greater “U.S.-centrism” (in particular, with regard to the atomic bombs). The authors speculated that some of the discrepancies observed between the two age groups reflect the degree to which the war was lived (as in the case of the older age group) rather than merely studied (as in case of the younger age group). While this study is one of a very few to examine perceptions of events of WWII, it analyzes only one country—the U.S.A. This leads to the question: To what extent will this study’s findings regarding the structure of collective memory for WWII extend to other countries? And which important events of WWII will be endorsed in other countries?

The final study to be discussed here, Wertsch (2002) (as portrayed in Zaromb et al. [2014]), provides insight into differences that exist in what are considered to be the most significant events of WWII in the Russian and U.S.A. collective memories. Specifically, the author found that students from the two countries gave entirely divergent answers to the

question: What are the most important events that occurred during WWII? High school students in the U.S.A. endorsed the attack on Pearl Harbor, D-Day, the atomic bombs (each of which, as is discussed by the authors in Zaromb et al. [2014], were confirmed to be central in the study discussed above), the Battle of Midway, the Battle of the Bulge, and the Holocaust. High school students in Russia, on the other hand, endorsed the German attack on the U.S.S.R., the Battle of Moscow, the Battle of Stalingrad, the Battle of Kursk Salient, the Siege of Leningrad, and the final Battle of Berlin.

The Current Project

Although research has examined collective memory of WWII in several countries around the world through the analysis of written sources and other cultural objects, less work has been done on international comparisons of the contents of collective memory of WWII using people as subjects (Wertsch & Roediger, 2015). Some research has been conducted that compares subsets of countries in collective memory for WWII; however, different studies have asked different questions and have had different foci, making quantitative and systematic comparisons of countries across the various studies difficult. Further, as has been discussed, a great deal of the research that exists does not directly ask individuals about their views of WWII (Schuman et al., 1998). While examinations of collective memory through individuals and through objects each provides its own set of advantages and disadvantages and, thus, may both prove necessary, it is important to note when inconsistencies between the two forms of research arise and to explore these inconsistencies further in order to gain a sense of collective memories as they actually reside in the countries of interest.

The current project seeks to address these issues by asking over 100 people in the six countries of interest (Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.K., Russia, and the U.S.A.) an array of

questions regarding their perspectives of WWII. Specifically, subjects will provide their view of the ten most important events of the war; the extent of their knowledge regarding several aspects of the war (through a multiple choice test) and regarding events of the war (through an event recognition test); their view of their own country's degree of responsibility for winning or losing the war; their view of each Allied country's relative responsibility for winning the war; and, finally, the degree to which they agree or disagree with several opinion statements regarding the war.

The current project will ask a number of questions, many of which grow out of prior research. Will participants in each country reveal the quintessential qualities of collective memory in their responses? In particular, will perspectives reflect a high degree of "nation-building" and emphasis on the events and contributions of the country from which responses come? Will participants in particular countries exhibit this pattern to a greater extent than others? Of particular interest are both the degree to which participants assign responsibility to their own country and the degree to which responses from each of the former Allied countries (regarding their own country's contribution) align with responses from each of the other five countries when it comes to Allied contributions. Will the collective memories revealed here align with research that does not survey people directly?

Further questions of concern to the current study will be raised. Which, if any, interpretations of WWII will prove to be "universal" (at least among the six countries of interest)? Which country-specific differences will become apparent in perspectives on the most important events of the war and in the degree to which participants endorse specific interpretations of events of the war? Will each country produce a version of the war that is clearly distinct from the others, or will certain countries share numerous features in their

collective memory of WWII? Which, if any, countries will exhibit the most “world-wide” representation of the war (that is, have the most in common with the each of the other countries of interest)? Conversely, which countries will exhibit the most atypical perspectives on the war (having the least in common with the other countries of interest)?

We make several predictions regarding collective memory in the countries of interest. First, we expect that each country will reveal the work of collective memory, in that events emphasized as important (or even recognized as having happened), responses to interpretation questions, and perceptions of responsibility for victory or loss in the war will unequivocally reinforce a positive image of the country from which the responses emanate, in some cases at the expense of other countries of interest. A notable exception to this may be in responses in Germany, where some of the prior literature as discussed above would suggest the opposite. Indeed, research with history textbooks suggests that issues concerning the Holocaust, for example, are not avoided but rather discussed at length in Germany. Second, prior literature as discussed above would suggest that there may not exist even a small collection of events of WWII that are interpreted as highly important to the war in each of the countries of interest. It is more likely that responses to the event recognition test will reveal a collection of similarly *recognized* events. Third, although we predict that each country will exhibit its own narrative regarding key events of the war and contributions to the war effort, this may be true to a greater extent in the cases of Russia and Japan. In particular, prior literature has suggested that the emphasis on events of the war in Russia and Japan lie more exclusively on the Eastern and Pacific Fronts, respectively, and that accepted interpretations deem Russia and Japan to be primary contributors to their respective sides of the war (again, we predict this pattern to be evident to some extent in *every* country of interest). Finally, as is evidenced in each of the

predictions above, contrary to research that draws a distinction between studies that examine collective memory in culture and individuals (Schuman et al., 1998), we anticipate that, in addition to the findings discussed above, this project will (at least in part) replicate prior findings in research examining collective memory in texts and objects in each of the countries of interest.

Methods

Participants

Participants in this study included 800 people across six countries: Germany ($n = 133$, mean age [M] = 26.8, $SD = 8.9$, female participants [F] = 41, other [O] = 1), Japan ($n = 122$, $M = 22.4$, $SD = 8.9$, $F = 70$), Italy ($n = 148$, $M = 37.2$, $SD = 15$, $F = 67$), the U.S.A. ($n = 136$, $M = 35.3$, $SD = 18.4$, $F = 31$, $O = 1$), the U.K. ($n = 124$, $M = 46.7$, $SD = 19.6$, $F = 53$), and Russia ($n = 137$, $M = 27.9$, $SD = 9.1$, $F = 59$, $O = 1$). Participation was voluntary and subjects received no payment. Participants were recruited in a non-randomized fashion, through personal connections and the help of researchers and friends in each of the six countries of interest. Additional demographic information collected includes citizenship, highest level of education completed, native language, languages fluently spoken, the country with which the participants identify, and both the state or province and country in which the participant grew up and in which the participant currently lives.

Materials and Procedure

This project assessed knowledge of and perspectives on events of WWII in each of the six countries of interest (Germany, Japan, Italy, the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia). Materials included Qualtrics questionnaires that were completed on computers outside of an experimental setting. The questionnaires were written and answered entirely in English and were self-paced, typically taking between fifteen and 30 minutes to complete. The questionnaires distributed to

participants in each of the six countries differed only when necessary in order to accurately identify a given event of the war (this was due to the fact that the names of some events differ between countries).

The questionnaire consisted of a demographics section followed by five sections that assessed knowledge of and perspectives on WWII (See the Appendix for the complete English version of the questionnaire):

Most important events of WWII. Participants were asked to list in any order what they considered to be the ten most important events of WWII. If they were not able to provide the name of a particular event in English, participants were instructed to supply the name they typically use in referring to the event, along with a short description of the event.

Two experimenters coded responses in this section with the following procedure: First, the experimenters separately classified all events listed by participants in a given country. This involved categorizing each response as a specific event of WWII. Next, the experimenters compared their event categorizations, debating and providing a categorization for responses in which the two categorizations had diverged. Finally, proportions were calculated as to the number of times each event was listed in a given country in order to obtain a list of events most often endorsed in each country.

General knowledge of WWII. Participants completed fifteen four-alternative forced choice questions on facts of WWII. Questions concerned aspects of the Eastern, Western, and Pacific fronts of the war, in addition to the war in general (e.g. “What year did WWII end?” with answer choices 1945 [correct answer], 1948, 1944, and 1951). After each question, participants provided confidence ratings (on a four-point scale ranging from “I’m guessing” to “I’m very confident”) for their answers.

Event recognition. Participants completed a 40-item yes/no recognition test in which they were to respond “yes” only to items that occurred during WWII. The test comprised 20 target items from WWII (e.g. “Battle of the Bulge”) and 20 lures, twelve of which were events that occurred during WWI (e.g. “Sinking of the Lusitania”) and eight of which were made up events (e.g. “Operation Submarine”).

Contribution to the war effort. This section consisted of two parts. First, participants indicated their country’s contribution to the victory (in questionnaires distributed in the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia) or loss (in questionnaires distributed in Germany, Japan, and Italy) of WWII by providing a percent responsibility to their country (using a slider ranging from one to 100 percent). Second, participants (in all six countries) were asked to allocate percent contributions for victory to each of the former Allied nations. Specifically, participants provided percentages for France, New Zealand, the U.S.A., China, the U.S.S.R., Britain, Australia, Canada, and “other countries” that were not listed separately. A total percentage appeared at the bottom of the page, allowing participants to alter their responses to each former Allied country until overall contributions totaled 100%.

Opinion statements. Participants provided the extent to which they agreed or disagreed (using a slider ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”) with 21 opinion statements regarding the causes of, events in, and contributions to the war (e.g. “The consequences of the Treaty of Versailles in 1918 were the major reason for Hitler’s rise to power”).

Upon completing the survey, participants were asked whether or not they had looked up answers or information during their participation (and, if they had looked up answers, to provide

information concerning what they looked up and when they looked it up) and how difficult they found the survey (on a seven-point scale from “Very Difficult” to “Very Easy”).

Results

Knowledge of WWII

Knowledge of WWII was assessed through the General Knowledge Test (comprising fifteen four-alternative forced choice questions concerning facts of WWII) and the Event Recognition Test (comprising 40 yes/no recognition questions, including 20 events of WWII and 20 lures [events of WWI and made-up events]).

General Knowledge Test. Figure 1 displays average accuracy on the general knowledge test in each country of interest. Average accuracy was calculated for each subject, and total averages were obtained for each country. As revealed in Figure 1, the performance of Japanese participants was lowest of the six countries of interest (at 0.67). Although differences were found among the five other countries of interest, in each case accuracy remained high (ranging from 0.86 to 0.96). Thus, the low accuracy of Japan’s participants stood out in this analysis. (For full statistical information, see Figure 1.)

Event Recognition Test.

Hits. Figure 2 displays hit rates on the event recognition test in each country of interest. Hit rates were calculated for each subject, and average hit rates were calculated for each country. Results indicated that participants in Russia possessed substantially greater knowledge of events of the war than did participants in the other countries of interest (with an average hit rate in Russia of 0.84 and average hit rates in the other five countries ranging from 0.63 to 0.70). By contrast, hit rates indicated that participants in Japan possessed somewhat less knowledge of events of the war than did participants in the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia. This difference,

however, was not as pronounced as that found in Japanese participants' accuracy results on General Knowledge test. Of course, accuracy in event recognition must also take into account the extent to which participants in each country endorsed lure events (both made-up events and events from WWI) as occurring during the course of WWII. Analysis of the false alarm (FA) rates follows. (For statistical information concerning event recognition hit rates, see Figure 2.)

False Alarms (FA). Figure 3 displays combined FA rates (WWI and made-up events) on the event recognition test in each country of interest. FA rates were calculated for each subject, and average rates were calculated for each country. Results of the FA analysis comported with the results of the hit rate analysis above: participants in Russia endorsed fewer FAs than did participants in all other countries of interest; and participants in Japan endorsed more FAs than did participants in the U.K. In addition, participants in Italy and the U.S.A. endorsed more FAs than did participants in the U.K. These results, in combination with those discussed above concerning event recognition hit rates, suggest that knowledge of events of the war was greatest in Russia (as indicated by high hit rates and low FA rates) and least in Japan (as indicated by slightly lower hit rates and slightly higher FA rates). (For statistical information concerning event recognition FA rates, see Figure 3.)

Hits - FAs. For comparison, figure 4 displays a putative "accuracy" score on the event recognition test within each country of interest by subtracting average FA rates from average hit rates in each country. Although recognition test accuracy is often calculated in this way, the calculation in this project must be interpreted with the caveat that items in the present recognition test (WWII events, WWI events, and made-up events) were, by definition, not counterbalanced across subjects as targets and lures (i.e. WWII events were always targets and WWI and made-up events were always lures). Thus, the current recognition test did not take the

standard form. However, an examination of the average “accuracy” scores here make clear the trend toward greater knowledge of the war as a whole in Russia and lesser knowledge of the war as a whole in Japan. (For statistical information concerning event recognition accuracy, see Figure 4.)

Figure 1.

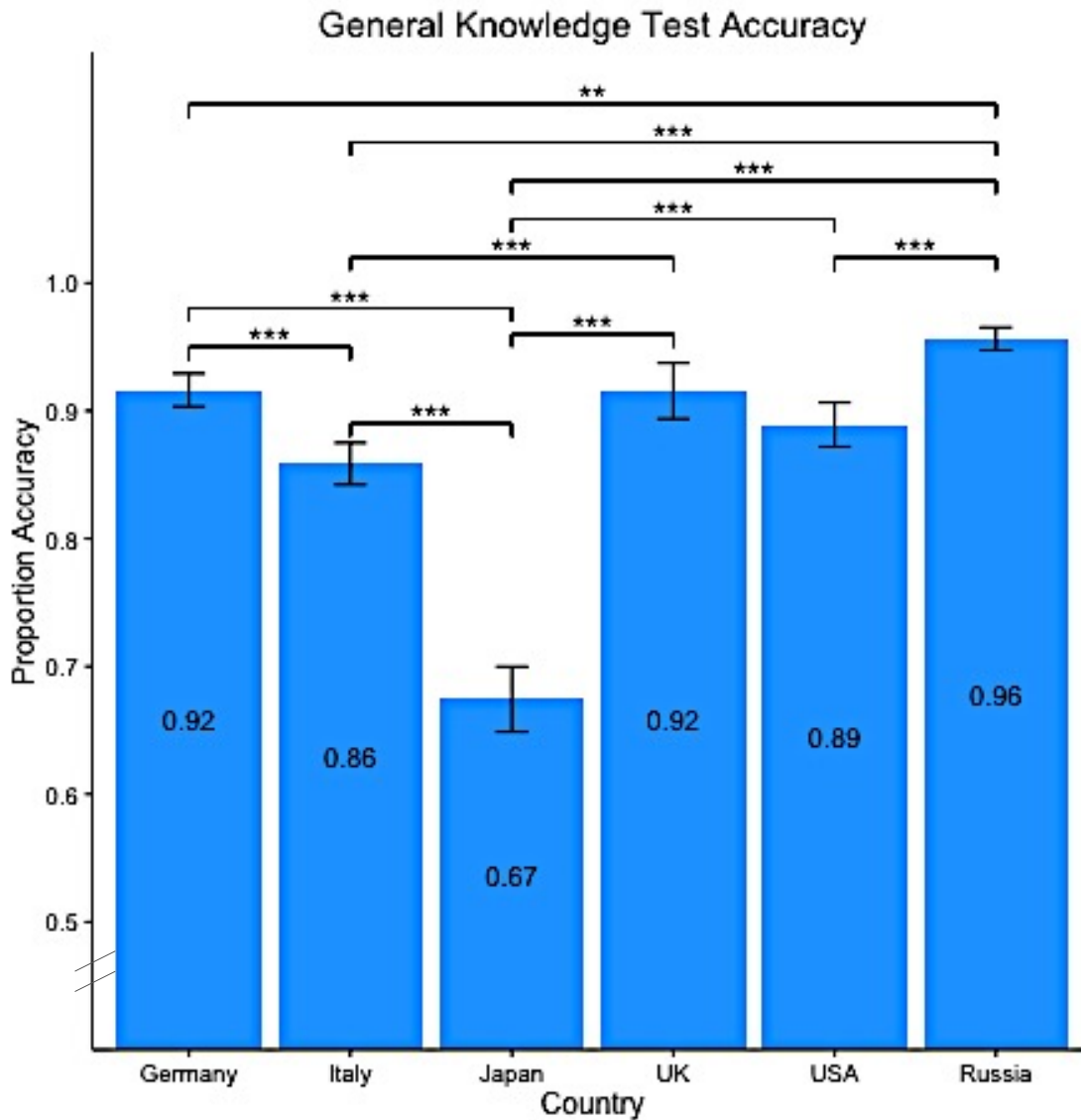


Figure 1. Average accuracy on the General Knowledge Test, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.005$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average accuracy differed significantly among the six countries, $\chi^2(5) = 294.86$, $p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed significantly greater accuracy in Russia ($M = 0.96$, $SD = 0.05$) than in Germany ($M = 0.92$, $SD = 0.08$), $z = -3.62$, $p < 0.005$, Italy ($M = 0.86$, $SD = 0.10$), $z = -7.99$, $p < 0.001$, Japan ($M = 0.67$, $SD = 0.14$), $z = -15.57$, $p < 0.001$, and the U.S.A. ($M = 0.89$, $SD = 0.10$) $z = -5.32$, $p < 0.001$; significantly greater accuracy in Germany than in both Italy, $z = 4.25$, $p < 0.001$, and Japan, $z = 11.96$, $p < 0.001$; greater accuracy in the U.K. ($M = 0.92$, $SD = 0.12$) than in both Italy, $z = -5.48$, $p < 0.001$, and Japan, $z = -13.01$, $p < 0.001$; and greater accuracy in both Italy and the U.S.A. than in Japan, $z = 8.12$, $p < 0.001$, and $z = -10.40$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. All post hoc p values are Bonferroni corrected. No other comparisons were significant.

Figure 2.

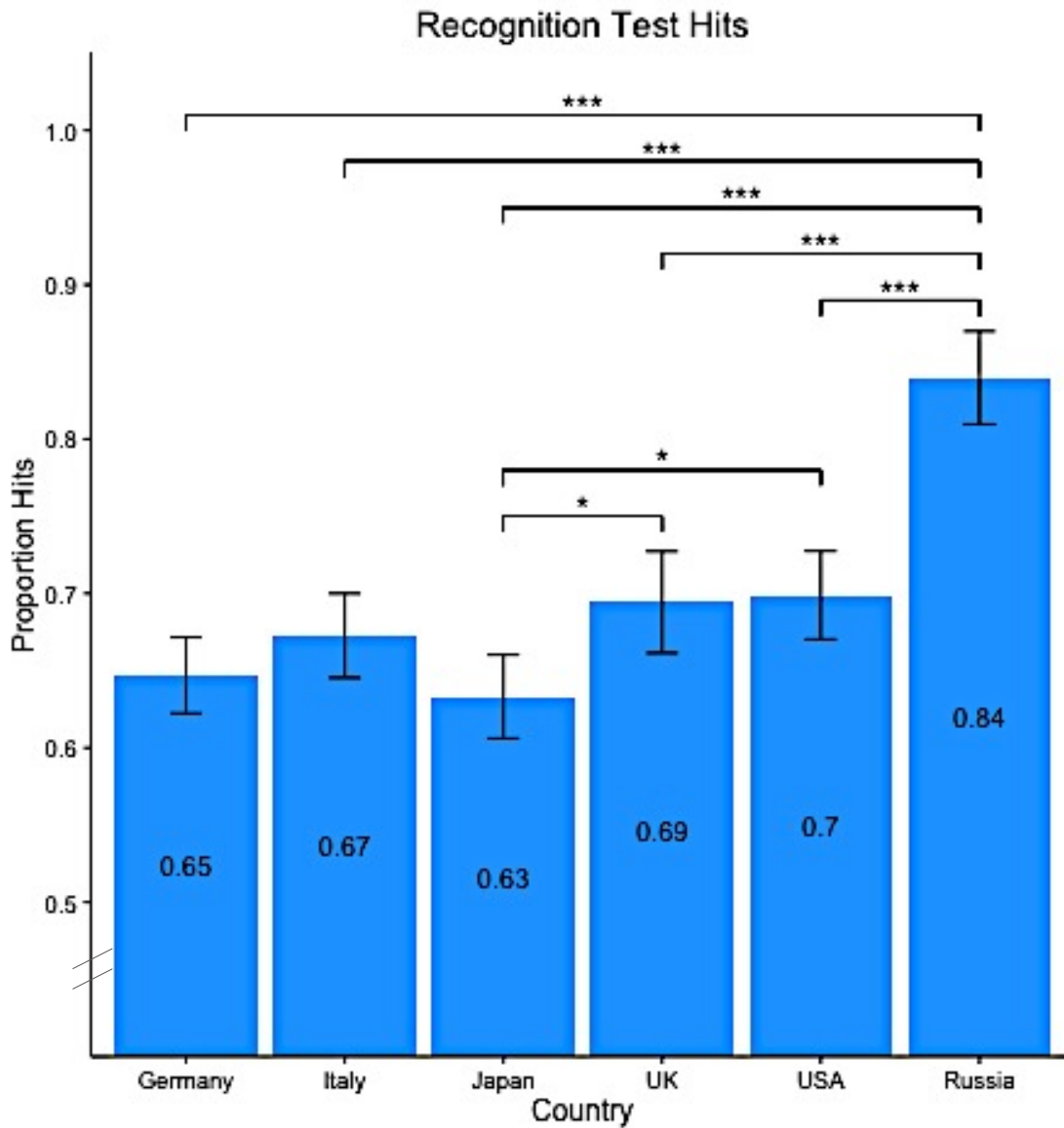


Figure 2. Average hit rates on the Event Recognition Test, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$; * = $p < 0.05$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average hit rates differed significantly among the six countries, $X^2(5) = 122.09, p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed a significantly greater hit rate in Russia ($M = 0.84, SD = 0.18$) than in Germany ($M = 0.65, SD = 0.14$), $z = -9.37, p < 0.001$, Italy ($M = 0.67, SD = 0.17$), $z = -7.88, p < 0.001$, Japan ($M = 0.63, SD = 0.15$), $z = -9.38, p < 0.001$, the U.K. ($M = 0.69, SD = 0.18$), $z = -6.26, p < 0.001$, and the U.S.A. ($M = 0.70, SD = 0.17$), $z = -6.58, p < 0.001$; and significantly greater hit rates in the U.K. and the U.S.A. than in Japan, $z = -3.05, p < 0.05$, and $z = -2.98, p < 0.05$, respectively. All post hoc p values are Bonferroni corrected. No other comparisons were significant.

Figure 3.

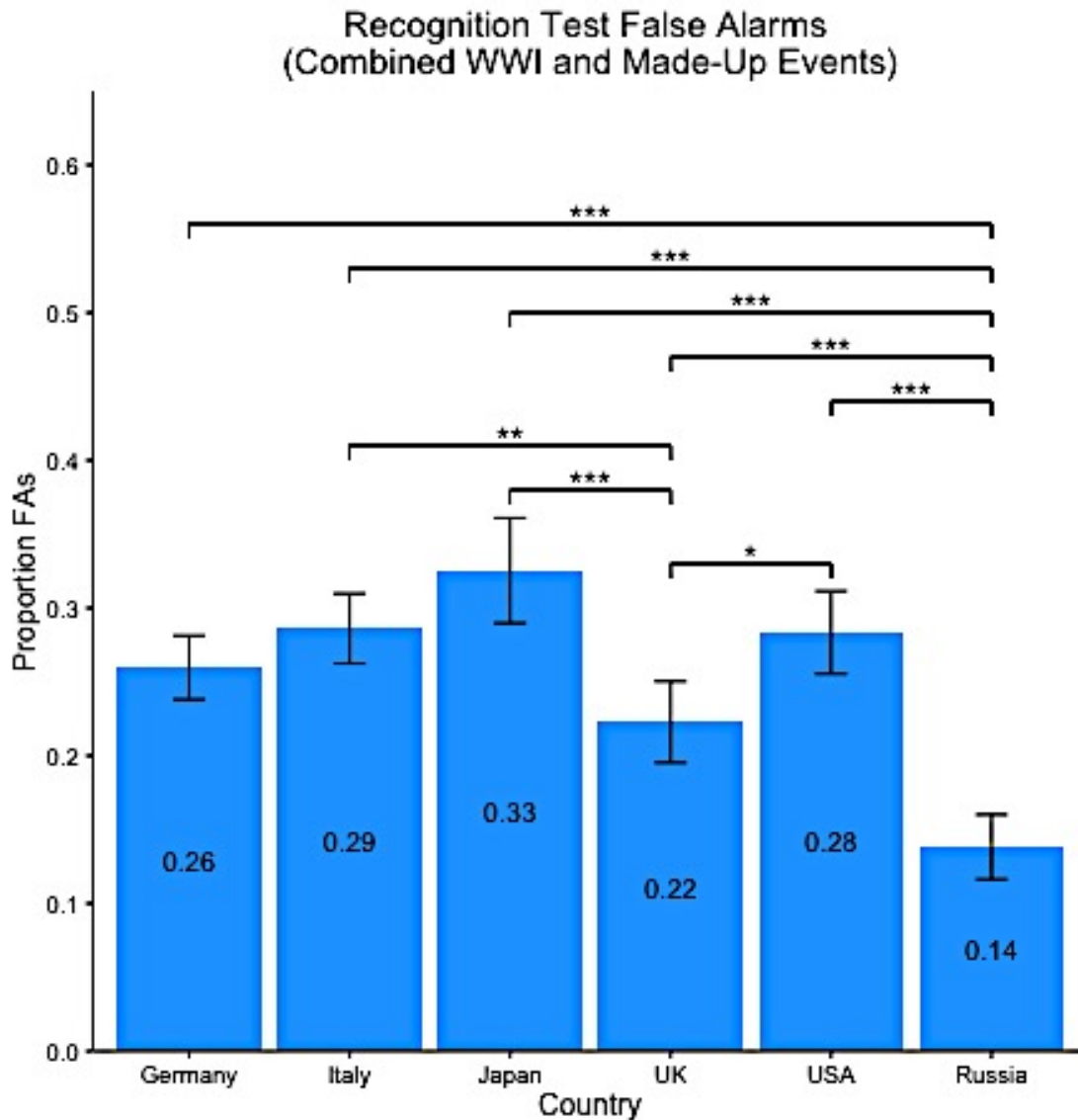


Figure 3. Average false alarm rates (combined WWI and made-up events) on the Event Recognition Test, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.005$; and * = $p < 0.05$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average proportion FAs differed significantly among the six countries,

$\chi^2(5) = 109.26, p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed significantly fewer FAs in Russia ($M = 0.14, SD = 0.13$) than in Germany ($M = 0.26, SD = 0.13$), $z = 6.95, p < 0.001$, Italy ($M = 0.29, SD = 0.15$), $z = 8.33, p < 0.001$, Japan ($M = 0.33, SD = 0.20$), $z = 8.74, p < 0.001$, the U.K. ($M = 0.22, SD = 0.15$), $z = 4.54, p < 0.001$, and the U.S.A. ($M = 0.28, SD = 0.17$), $z = 7.75, p < 0.001$; and significantly fewer FAs in the U.K. than in Japan, $z = 4.10, p < 0.001$, Italy, $z = 3.47, p < 0.005$, and the U.S.A., $z = -3.01, p < 0.05$, respectively. All post hoc p values are Bonferroni corrected. No other comparisons were significant.

Figure 4.

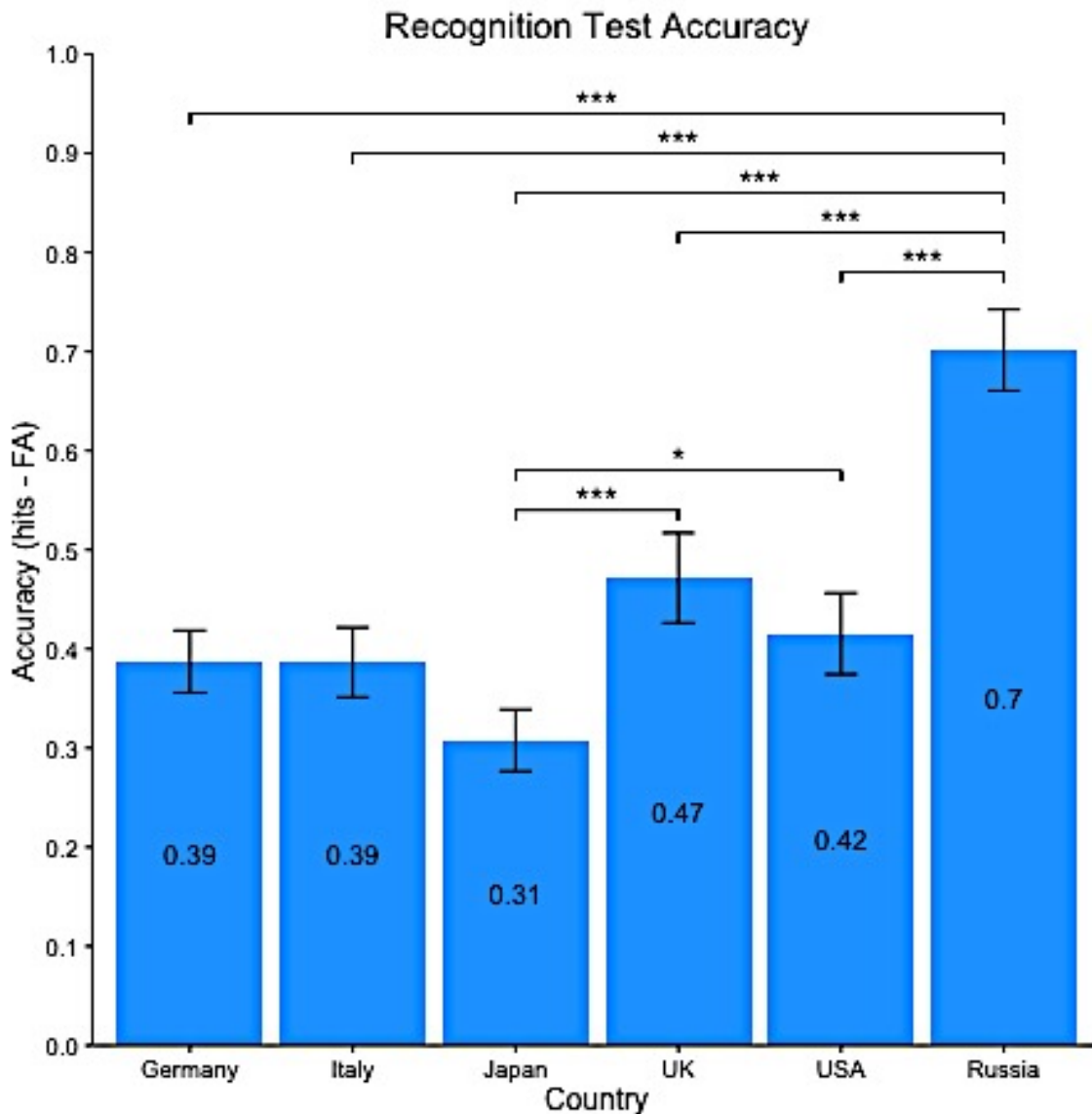


Figure 4. Average accuracy (average hits – average FAs) on the Event Recognition Test, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$; * = $p < 0.01$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average accuracy differed significantly among the six countries, $X^2(5) = 164.53$, $p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed significantly greater accuracy in Russia ($M = 0.70$, $SD = 0.24$) than in Germany ($M = 0.39$, $SD = 0.18$), $z = -9.42$, $p < 0.001$, Italy ($M = 0.39$, $SD = 0.22$), $z = -9.34$, $p < 0.001$, Japan ($M = 0.31$, $SD = 0.17$), $z = -11.70$, $p < 0.001$, the U.K. ($M = 0.47$, $SD = 0.25$), $z = -6.46$, $p < 0.001$, and the U.S.A. ($M = 0.42$, $SD = 0.24$), $z = -8.63$, $p < 0.001$; and significantly greater accuracy in the U.K. and the U.S.A. than in Japan, $z = -5.13$, $p < 0.001$, and $z = -3.31$, $p < 0.01$, respectively. All post hoc p values are Bonferroni corrected. No other comparisons were significant.

Quintessential Collective Memory

National collective memory creation involves emphasizing events that elevate the nation's virtue and deemphasizing events that undermine it (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Roediger et al., 2009; Wertsch 2008b). Further, collective memory reflects differing interpretations of events in ways that tend to promote a positive current view of the nation in question (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). In this project, evidence of collective memory's "quintessential" impact on the histories remembered around the world was examined via lists of the fifteen events of greatest importance to WWII as seen by people in each of the six countries of interest; via accuracy on questions in the General Knowledge and Recognition tests as a function of both direct involvement in the events in question and the front (Western, Eastern, or Pacific) on which the event occurred; via differences in allocation of responsibility for victory or loss of WWII; and via degree of agreement with opinion statements depending upon whether or not greater agreement would reflect well on a given country.

Important Events of WWII

Event Lists. Table 1 shows the fifteen events endorsed most often as important to WWII in each country of interest. Particular attention was given to those events endorsed by over 50% of the respondents in a given country. These events consisted of 1) for the U.K.: D-Day (75%), the Attack on Pearl Harbor (66%), and the German Invasion of Poland (53%); 2) for the U.S.A.: the Attack on Pearl Harbor (91%) and D-Day (82%); 3) for Russia: the Battle of Stalingrad (93%), the Battle of Kursk (74%), D-Day (67%), the Battle of Moscow (63%), the Siege of Leningrad (63%), the German Invasion of the U.S.S.R. (60%), and the Battle of Berlin (59%); 4) for Germany: the German Invasion of Poland (71%) and D-Day (62%); 5) for Italy: D-Day (74%), the Attack on Pearl Harbor (66%), and the atomic bombings (general; not specific to

Hiroshima or Nagasaki) (55%); and 6) for Japan: the Attack on Pearl Harbor (74%). In examining these lists, it became clear that D-Day and the Attack on Pearl Harbor are “universally” agreed upon as important to WWII (discussion of the many “universals” in depictions of WWII in the current project will be provided later). Additionally, the lists of events endorsed by over 50% of the respondents in each country are limited (at about two or three events), with the exception of Russia, in which eight events were endorsed by over 50% of the respondents. Thus, there may exist greater unity in Russia than in the other five countries of interest when it comes to events regarded as most important to WWII.

Self-Relevance. Figure 5 depicts the proportion of each country’s top fifteen events that were relevant to the home country. Events were coded as relevant if the given country was directly involved in the conflict (or event at large). The number of top fifteen events that directly involved the home country was greatest in Germany and Japan (each at 12 of 15 events), followed by Russia and the U.S.A. (at 9 and 8 of 15, respectively), and, finally, by Italy and the U.K. (each at 6 of 15). These results likely suggest one of two things: 1) that collective memories in Germany and Japan display a greater degree of self-focus than do those in the other countries of interest, or 2) that events of the war that occurred in Germany and Japan are typically agreed upon as being of greater importance than those that occurred in the other countries of interest, leading to greater proportions of self-relevant events in Germany and Japan and smaller proportions of self-relevant events in the other four countries of interest. The following section seeks to untangle these two possibilities.

Idiosyncratic Events by Self-Relevance. If each country’s top events list contained a large number of events that involved Germany and Japan and smaller numbers of events that involved Italy and the U.K., the above results could occur without suggesting that collective

memories in Germany and Japan have a greater degree of inflated self-focus than do those in other countries. Indeed, the results could have less to do with “cultural narcissism” and differing collective memories in each country of interest (Zaromb et al., 2014, p. 397), and more to do with the fact that there exists global agreement as to the importance of particular events to the war (events that involve Germany and Japan to a greater extent than other countries of interest). In order to address the possibility that more *agreed upon*, important events of WWII tend to involve Germany and Japan, we calculated the proportion of each country’s top fifteen events that were idiosyncratic to its list (i.e. events that were listed by only a single country). These proportions are displayed in Figure 6, broken into idiosyncratic events that are self-relevant and those that are not (using the same criterion as above to determine relevance). Thus, the examination of “cultural narcissism” (Zaromb et al., 2014, p. 397) here comes only from events that were not generally agreed upon as being highly important to the war.

No country contained more than one idiosyncratic event (of the top fifteen events) that was not directly relevant to the home country. The number of events that were directly relevant to the home country were: in Japan, 6 of 7 idiosyncratic events; in Russia and Italy, 5 of 5 and 6 idiosyncratic events, respectively; in Germany and the U.K., 4 and 3 of 4 idiosyncratic events, respectively; and in the U.S.A., 1 of 2 idiosyncratic events. These results suggest that, when not referring to events commonly acknowledged as important to WWII (i.e. events in more than one country’s top events list), the collective memories in most countries display a great deal of self-focus. Interestingly, the results at hand indicate that this may be most pronounced in Japan and least pronounced in the U.S.A.

Table 1.

Event	UK	%	USA	%	RUSSIA	%
1	D-Day	75	Attack on Pearl Harbor	91	Battle of Stalingrad	93
2	Attack on Pearl Harbor	66	D-Day	82	Battle of Kursk	74
3	German Invasion of Poland	53	The Holocaust	46	D-Day	67
4	Battle of Dunkirk	44	Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	43	Battle of Moscow	63
5	Battle of Britain	42	German Invasion of Poland	38	Siege of Leningrad	63
6	The Holocaust	36	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	33	German invasion of USSR	60
7	VE Day	34	Fall of France	26	Battle of Berlin	59
8	Battle of Stalingrad	31	VE Day	23	Atomic bomb dropped (General)	43
9	Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	30	German Invasion of USSR	22	Attack on Pearl Harbor	39
10	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	25	Bombing of London	20	German Invasion of Poland	39
11	German invasion of USSR	24	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Nagasaki	19	VE Day	31
12	USA entered the war	23	Battle of Midway	19	Fall of France	19
13	Bombing of UK -- The Blitz	21	Battle of Stalingrad	18	Siege of Sevastopol	18
14	Death of Hitler	20	Battle of Britain	18	Battle of Britain	16
15	Decoding of Enigma	20	Battle of the Bulge	18	Yalta Conference	15
	GERMANY	%	ITALY	%	JAPAN	%
1	German Invasion of Poland	71	D-Day	74	Attack on Pearl Harbor	74
2	D-Day	62	Attack on Pearl Harbor	66	Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	48
3	Attack on Pearl Harbor	50	Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	55	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	40
4	VE Day	47	The Holocaust	49	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Nagasaki	36
5	Battle of Stalingrad	46	German Invasion of Poland	47	Potsdam Declaration	36
6	Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	38	Allied Invasion of Italy	24	Air Raid on Tokyo	33
7	The Holocaust	38	Italian partisans / Italian resistance movement	24	Battle of Okinawa	31
8	Liberation of Concentration Camps	29	Pact of Steel (Alliance between Italy and Germany)	23	Tripartite Pact / Berlin Pact	29
9	Reichskristallnacht (Night of the broken glass)	26	Concentration Camps in Germany	22	Battle of Midway	26
10	Death of Hitler	25	Liberation Day in Italy (April 25, 1945)	22	The Holocaust	26
11	Stauffenberg's assassination plot against Hitler	23	Battle of Stalingrad	21	Surrender of Japan	21
12	Fall of France	22	Death of Hitler	20	Battle of Iwo Jima	17
13	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	20	Surrender of Italy	18	German Invasion of Poland	16
14	German invasion of USSR	20	Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	17	New War Technology	16
15	Hitler was Führer in Germany/ Hitler's Dictatorship	18	Battle of Berlin	16	Japanese Use of Kamikaze Troops	15

Table 1. For each country of interest, lists of the top fifteen events most often endorsed as important to WWII (and corresponding percent endorsement). Particular attention is given to those events endorsed by over 50% of the respondents in a given country (bolded).

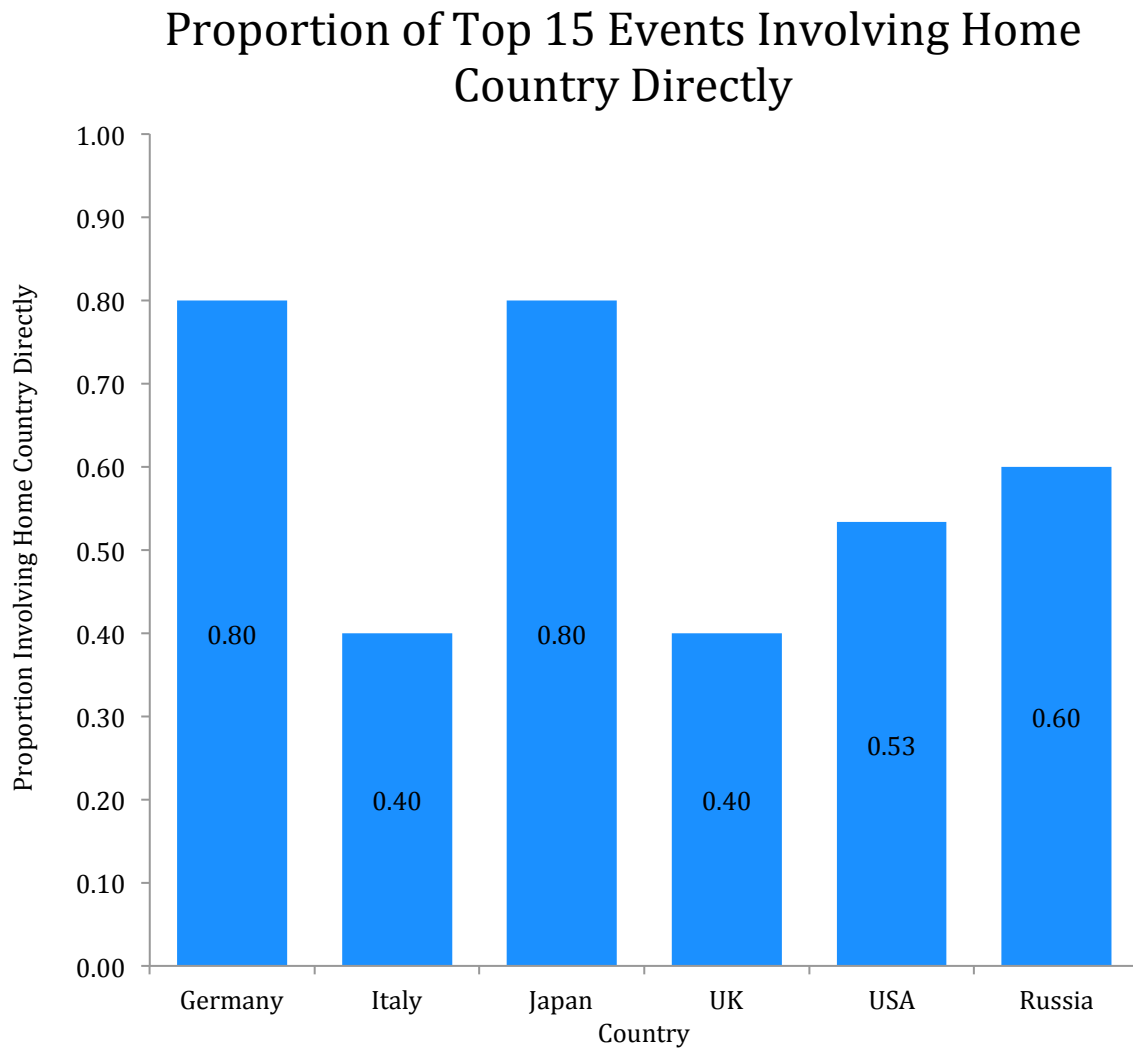
Figure 5.

Figure 5. Proportion of the top fifteen events in each country in which the home country was directly involved.

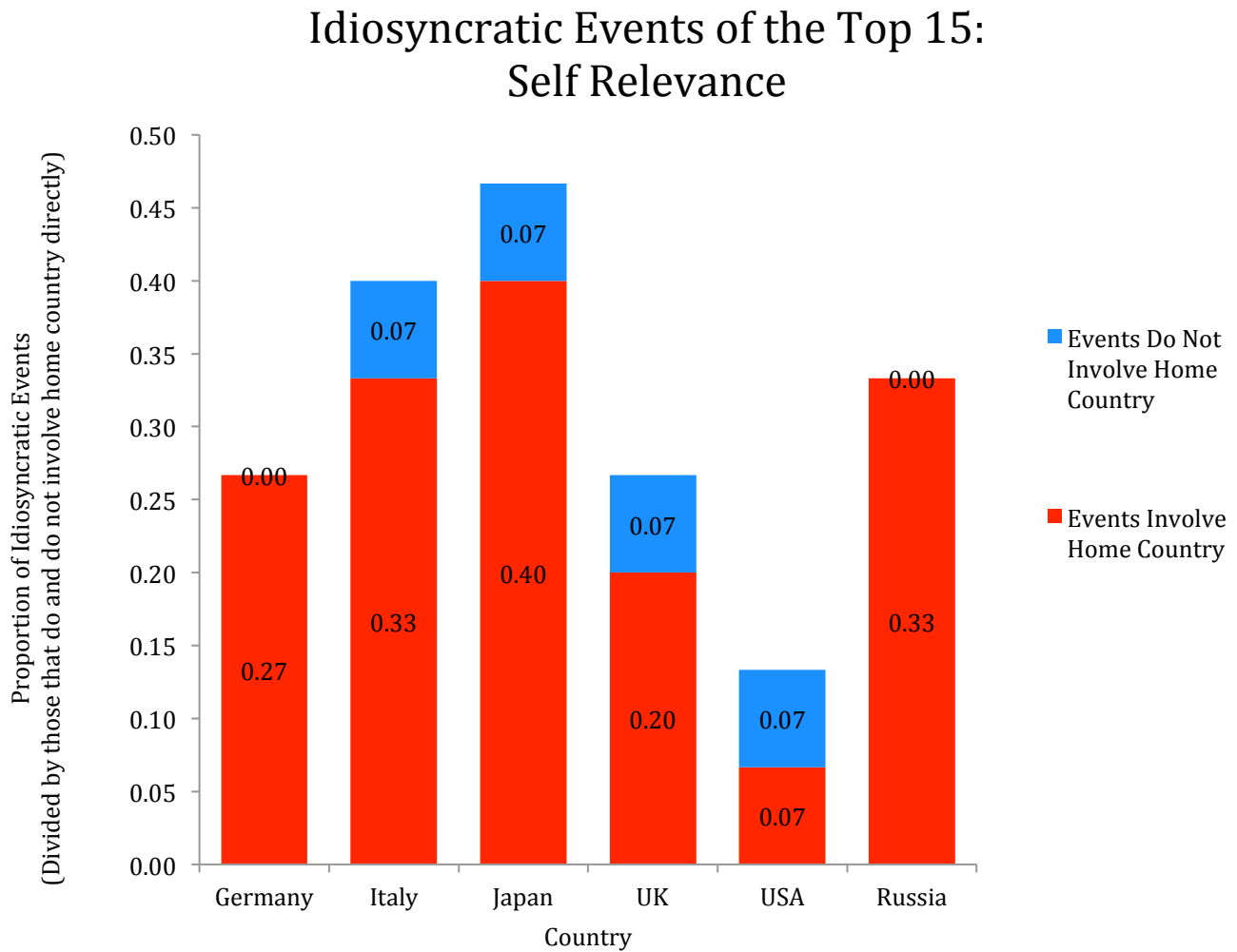
Figure 6.

Figure 6. Proportion of top fifteen events that are idiosyncratic to each country. Each country's proportion of idiosyncratic top fifteen events is divided into those that are self-relevant (red) and those that are not (blue).

General Knowledge Test.

Self-Relevance: Primary Involvement. Figure 7 displays average accuracy on the general knowledge test, calculated for subjects in each country for questions that involved events or facts in which the home country was directly involved and for those in which it was not directly involved. Although greater accuracy occurred in Germany and Italy for questions involving the home country than for questions that did not, this finding was most conspicuous in Japan, in which accuracy for questions concerning Japan reached 0.92 and accuracy for other questions reached only 0.59. This result helps explain Japanese participants' low overall general knowledge test accuracy noted above. (For full statistical information, see Figure 7.)

Self-Relevance: Fronts of the War. Figure 8 displays average accuracy on the general knowledge test, calculated for subjects in each country for questions involving the Western, Eastern, and Pacific Fronts of WWII. Again, most prominent in examining the results of this analysis was the large discrepancy in accuracy found in Japan for questions concerning the Pacific front, on the one hand, and for questions concerning the Western and Eastern fronts, on the other. Specifically, for questions concerning the Pacific front, accuracy in Japan was comparable to the other countries of interest at 0.92. However, for questions concerning the Western and Eastern fronts, accuracy in Japan paled by comparison (with accuracy scores at 0.7). Surprisingly, accuracy in Russia was greater for questions concerning both the Western and Pacific fronts than for those concerning the Eastern front. However, this surprise was mitigated by the fact that performance in Russia was near ceiling for questions concerning each of the three fronts (at 0.95 accuracy for questions concerning the Eastern front and 0.98 accuracy for questions concerning the Western and Pacific fronts). (For full statistical information, see Figure 8.)

Figure 7.

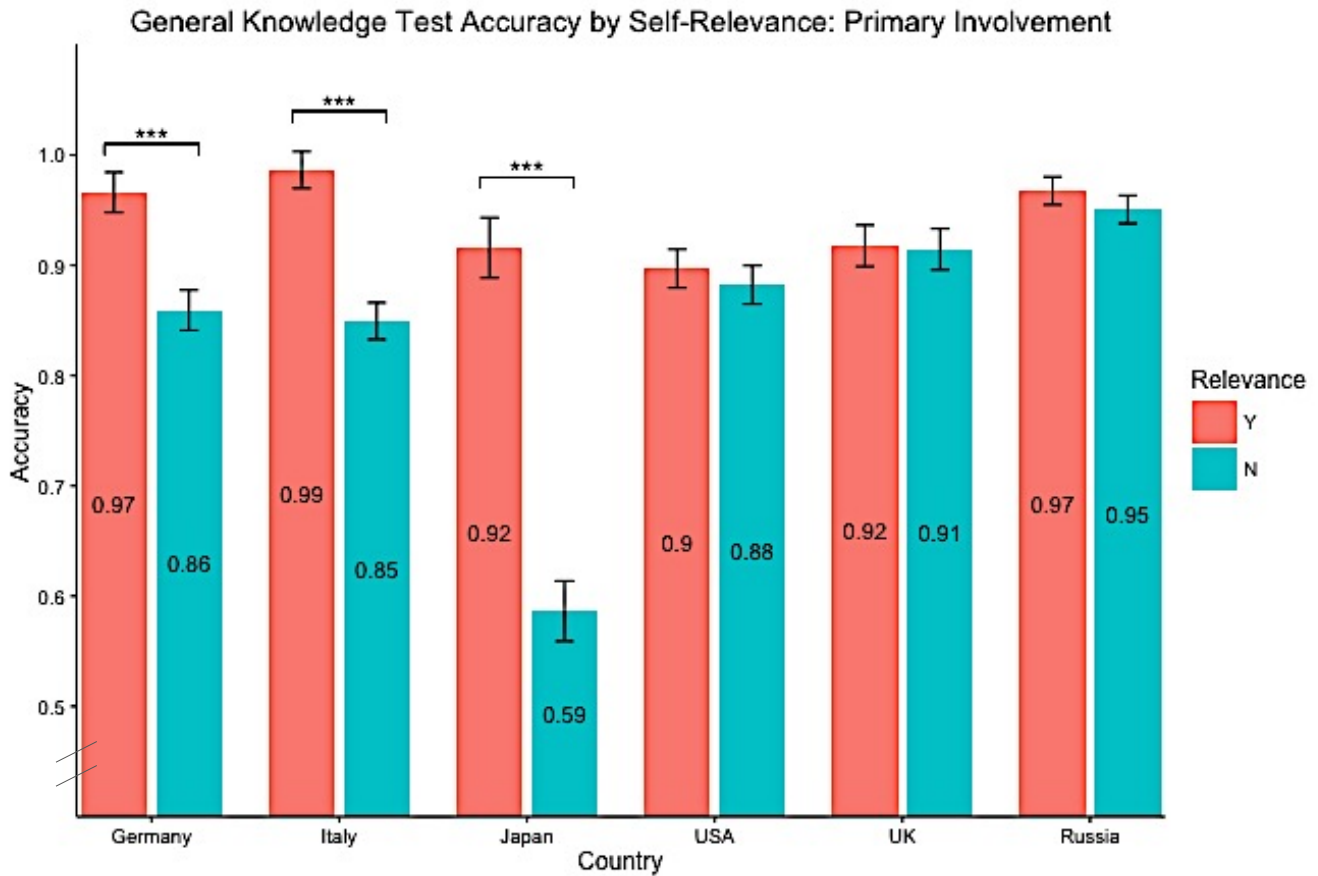


Figure 7. Average accuracy on the General Knowledge Test by self-relevance (yes / no) using normed 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$.

Wilcoxon signed rank tests with continuity correction found that average accuracy was significantly greater for questions that involve events or facts in which the home country was directly involved in Germany ($M = 0.97$, $SD = 0.06$), Italy ($M = 0.99$, $SD = 0.12$), and Japan ($M = 0.92$, $SD = 0.15$), than for those in which the home country was not directly involved ($M = 0.86$, $SD = 0.14$; $M = 0.85$, $SD = 0.11$; and $M = 0.59$, $SD = 0.18$, respectively) ($W = 4008$, $p < 0.001$; $W = 7750$, $p < 0.001$; and $W = 7359$, $p < 0.001$, respectively). No significant differences were found in the U.S.A., U.K., and Russia.

Figure 8.

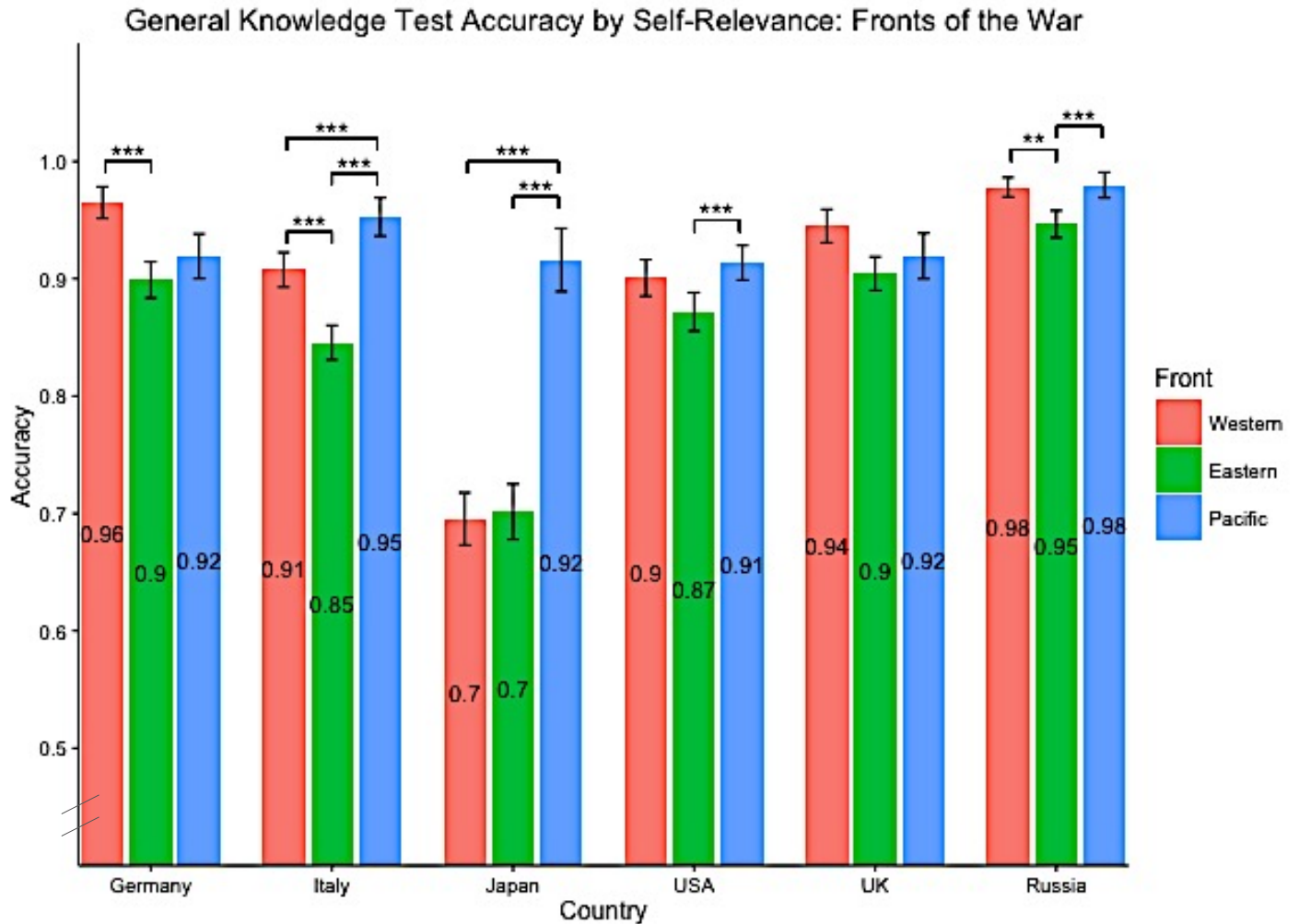


Figure 8. Average accuracy on the General Knowledge Test by front of the war (Western, Eastern, and Pacific) using normed 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.005$.

Friedman rank sum tests confirmed significant differences in accuracy as a function of front of the war in each country of interest (Germany: $\chi^2(2) = 32.28$, $p < 0.001$; Italy: $\chi^2(2) = 61.52$, $p < 0.001$; Japan: $\chi^2(2) = 117.64$, $p < 0.001$; USA: $\chi^2(2) = 16.56$, $p < 0.001$; UK: $\chi^2(2) = 9.89$, $p < 0.01$, and Russia: $\chi^2(2) = 29.40$, $p < 0.001$). Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Germany confirmed significantly greater accuracy for questions involving the Western Front ($M = 0.96$, $SD = 0.07$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.90$, $SD = 0.10$), $p < 0.001$. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Italy confirmed significantly greater accuracy for questions involving the Pacific Front ($M = 0.95$, $SD = 0.10$) and Western Front ($M = 0.91$, $SD = 0.12$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.85$, $SD = 0.12$), as well as significantly greater accuracy for questions involving the Pacific Front than the Western Front, $p < 0.001$ for all comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Japan confirmed significantly greater accuracy for questions involving the Pacific Front ($M = 0.92$, $SD = 0.15$) than both the Eastern Front ($M = 0.70$, $SD = 0.19$) and Western Front ($M = 0.70$, $SD = 0.18$), $p < 0.001$ for both comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for the U.S.A. confirmed significantly greater accuracy for questions involving the Pacific Front ($M = 0.91$, $SD = 0.14$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.87$, $SD = 0.13$), $p < 0.001$. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Russia confirmed significantly greater accuracy for questions involving both the Pacific Front ($M = 0.98$, $SD = 0.07$) and the Western Front ($M = 0.98$, $SD = 0.06$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.95$, $SD = 0.07$), $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.005$, respectively. All post hoc comparison p values were Bonferroni corrected. No other comparisons reached significance.

Recognition Test.

Self-Relevance: Primary Involvement. Figure 9 displays average hit rates on the recognition test, calculated for subjects in each country both for events in which the home country was directly involved and for events in which the home country was not. In a similar vein to results of the general knowledge test, hit rates in Germany and Japan were greater for events in which the home country was directly involved than for those in which it was not directly involved. The same was true for participants in Russia, in which the hit rate for self-relevant events was the highest numerically among all countries (at 0.96) and in which the hit rate for events in which Russia was not involved was lower and comparable to those of other countries (although still somewhat high at 0.78). (For statistical information, see Figure 9.)

Self-Relevance: Fronts of the War. Figure 10 displays average hit rates on the recognition test, calculated for subjects in each country for events involving the Western, Eastern, and Pacific Fronts of WWII. As before, participants in Japan displayed much greater hit rates for events that occurred on the Pacific front than for events that occurred on the Western and Eastern fronts. In addition, participants in Germany and, to some extent, Italy displayed greatest hit rates for events on the Western front, least hit rates for those on the Pacific front, and hit rates in between for those on the Eastern front (although the difference in hit rates for questions concerning the Eastern and Pacific fronts in Italy was not significant). Participants in the U.K. displayed a similar pattern of results, showing greater hit rates for events on the Western than on both the Eastern and Pacific fronts. Participants in the U.S.A. similarly displayed greatest hit rates for events on the Western front but, by contrast, displayed greater hit rates for questions on the Pacific than Eastern front. In a further contrast, participants in Russia displayed greatest hit rates for events on the Eastern front, lowest hit rates for events on the Pacific front, and hit rates

in between for events on the Western front. Thus, in each country, event recognition hit rates suggest that participants knew more about the front(s) of the war directly relevant to their home country (i.e. in displaying greater hit rates for those fronts). (For full statistical information, see Figure 10.)

Figure 9.

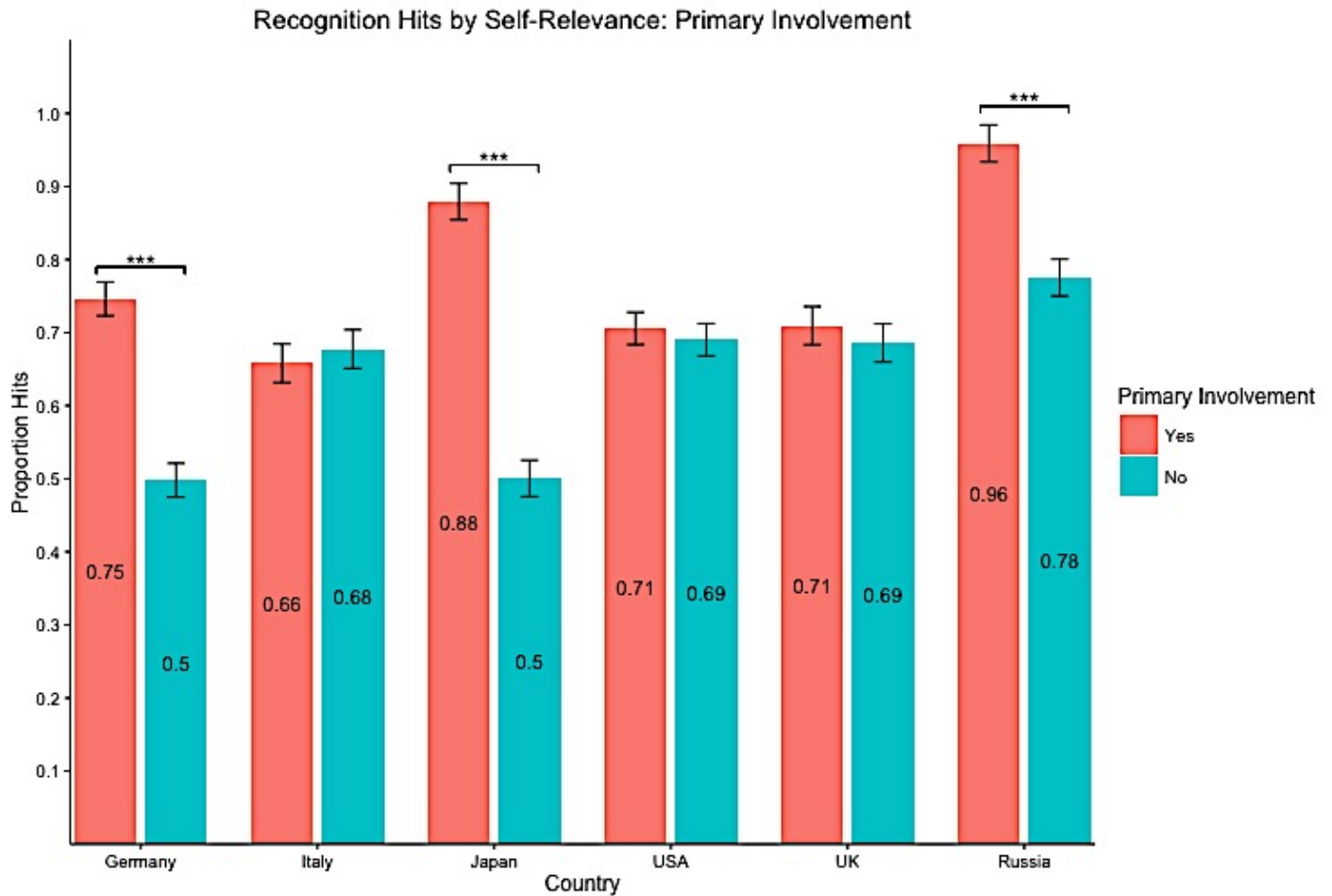


Figure 9. Average accuracy on the Recognition Test by self-relevance (yes / no) using normed 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$.

Wilcoxon signed rank tests with continuity correction found that average hit rates were significantly greater for events in which the home country was directly involved in Germany ($M = 0.75$, $SD = 0.15$), Japan ($M = 0.88$, $SD = 0.16$), and Russia ($M = 0.96$, $SD = 0.13$), than for events in which the country was not directly involved ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.19$; $M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.19$; and $M = 0.78$, $SD = 0.23$, respectively) ($W = 7869.5$, $p < 0.001$; $W = 7242$, $p < 0.001$; and $W = 5046$, $p < 0.001$, respectively). No significant differences were found in Italy, the U.S.A., or the U.K.

Figure 10.

Recognition Hits by Self-Relevance: Fronts of the War

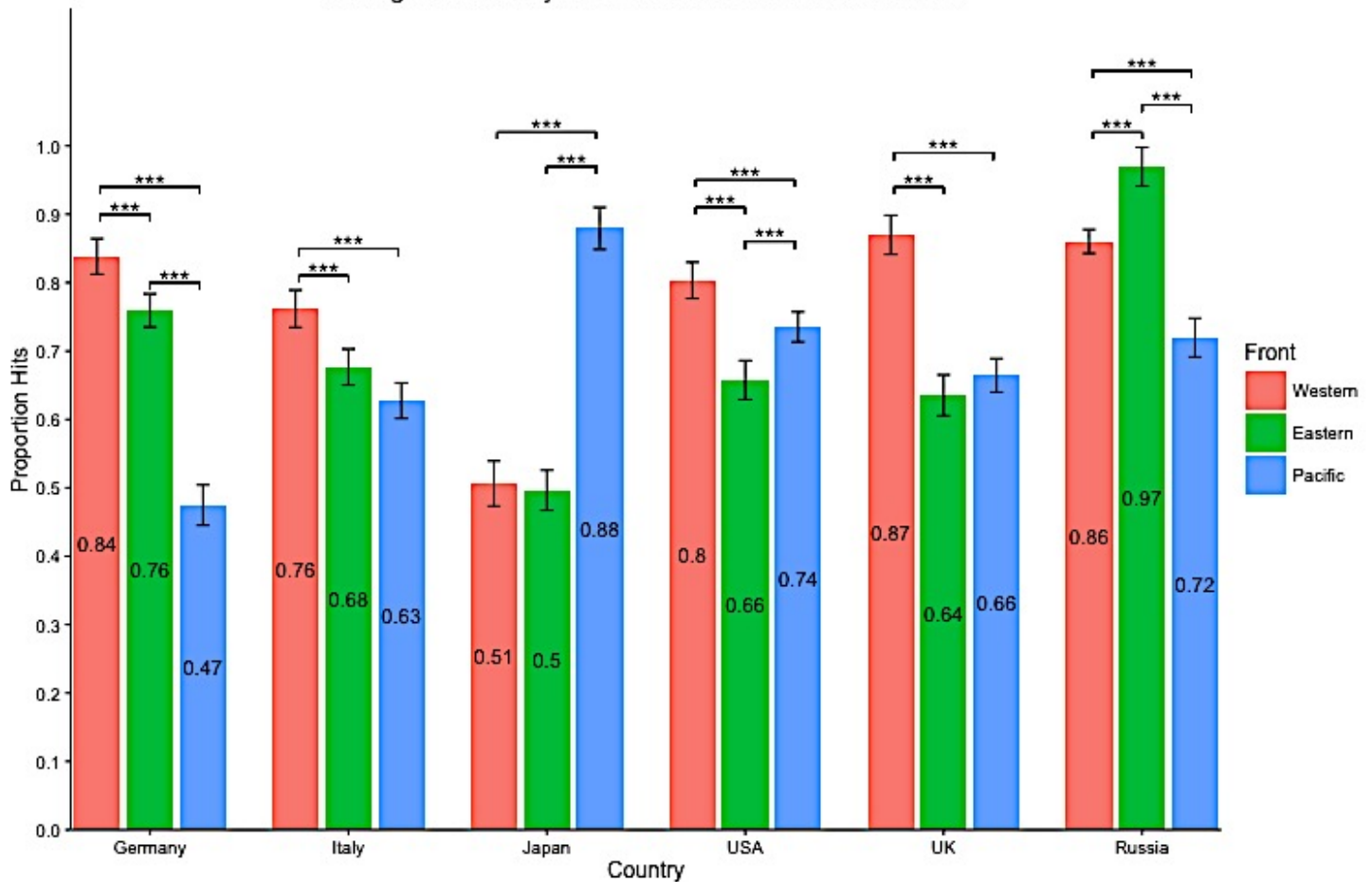


Figure 10. Average accuracy on the Recognition Test by front of the war (Western, Eastern, and Pacific) using normed 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$.

Friedman rank sum tests revealed significant differences in hit rate as a function of front of the war in each country of interest (Germany: $\chi^2(2) = 151.51$, $p < 0.001$; Italy: $\chi^2(2) = 48.57$, $p < 0.001$; Japan: $\chi^2(2) = 139.12$, $p < 0.001$; USA: $\chi^2(2) = 58.21$, $p < 0.001$; UK: $\chi^2(2) = 100.35$, $p < 0.001$, and Russia: $\chi^2(2) = 136.02$, $p < 0.001$). Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Germany confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Western Front ($M = 0.84$, $SD = 0.17$) than both the Eastern Front ($M = 0.76$, $SD = 0.17$) and Pacific Front ($M = 0.47$, $SD = 0.21$), as well as significantly greater recognition for events on the Eastern Front than the Pacific Front, $p < 0.001$ for all comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Italy confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Western Front ($M = 0.76$, $SD = 0.20$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.68$, $SD = 0.20$) and Pacific Front ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 0.23$), $p < 0.001$ for both comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Japan confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Pacific Front ($M = 0.88$, $SD = 0.16$) than both the Eastern Front ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.24$) and Western Front ($M = 0.51$, $SD = 0.25$), $p < 0.001$ for both comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for the U.S.A. confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Western Front ($M = 0.80$, $SD = 0.20$) and Pacific Front ($M = 0.74$, $SD = 0.20$) than the Eastern Front ($M = 0.66$, $SD = 0.21$), as well as significantly greater recognition for events on the Western Front than the Pacific Front, $p < 0.001$ for all comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for the U.K. confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Western Front ($M = 0.87$, $SD = 0.21$) than the Pacific Front ($M = 0.66$, $SD = 0.22$) and Eastern Front ($M = 0.64$, $SD = 0.23$), $p < 0.001$ for both comparisons. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for Russia confirmed significantly greater recognition for events on the Eastern Front ($M = 0.97$, $SD = 0.13$) and Western Front ($M = 0.86$, $SD = 0.21$) than the Pacific Front ($M = 0.72$, $SD = 0.27$), as well as significantly greater recognition for events on the Eastern Front than the Western Front, $p < 0.001$ for all comparisons. All post hoc comparison p values were Bonferroni corrected.

Percent Responsibility.

Former Allied powers: Self-evaluations. Figure 11 displays average self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the winning side of the war, calculated for the U.K., U.S.A., and Russia. Results indicated greater attributed percent responsibility in Russia than in the U.S.A. and the U.K. Importantly, overall responsibility for the Allied side of the war totaled significantly over 100% (at 181%) among these three former Allies alone. (For statistical information, see Figure 11.)

Former Allied powers: Self-evaluations vs. Evaluations by Others. Figures 12, 13 and 14 display percent responsibility attributed to the U.K., the U.S.A., and Russia. Percent responsibility was analyzed for each country in three ways. First, average self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war were obtained from participants in the U.K., the U.S.A., and Russia. Second, participants in each country allocated percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war to eight former Allied countries (of which the U.K., the U.S.A., and Russia were three). Thus, for this analysis we obtained average self-evaluations of percent responsibility from participants in the U.K., the U.S.A., and Russia when participants were required to consider the contributions of other Allied powers. Finally, for comparison, we obtained an average percent responsibility given to the U.K., the U.S.A., and Russia by the five other countries of interest (i.e. no self-evaluations were included). In each comparison, as prior literature on the self-focus of collective memory would suggest, self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war in each of the former Allied countries of interest far exceeded the average percent responsibility allocated to them by participants in the five other countries of interest. (For statistical information, see Figures 12, 13, and 14.)

Former Axis powers: Self-evaluations. Figure 15 displays average self-evaluations of

percent responsibility for the losing side of the war, calculated for Germany, Italy, and Japan. Self-evaluations of responsibility were greatest in Germany, least in Italy, and in between in Japan. Interestingly, although the combined percent responsibility for the Axis side of the war did not reach that of the Allied side, it remained high (at 140%). (For statistical information, see Figure 15.)

Figure 11.

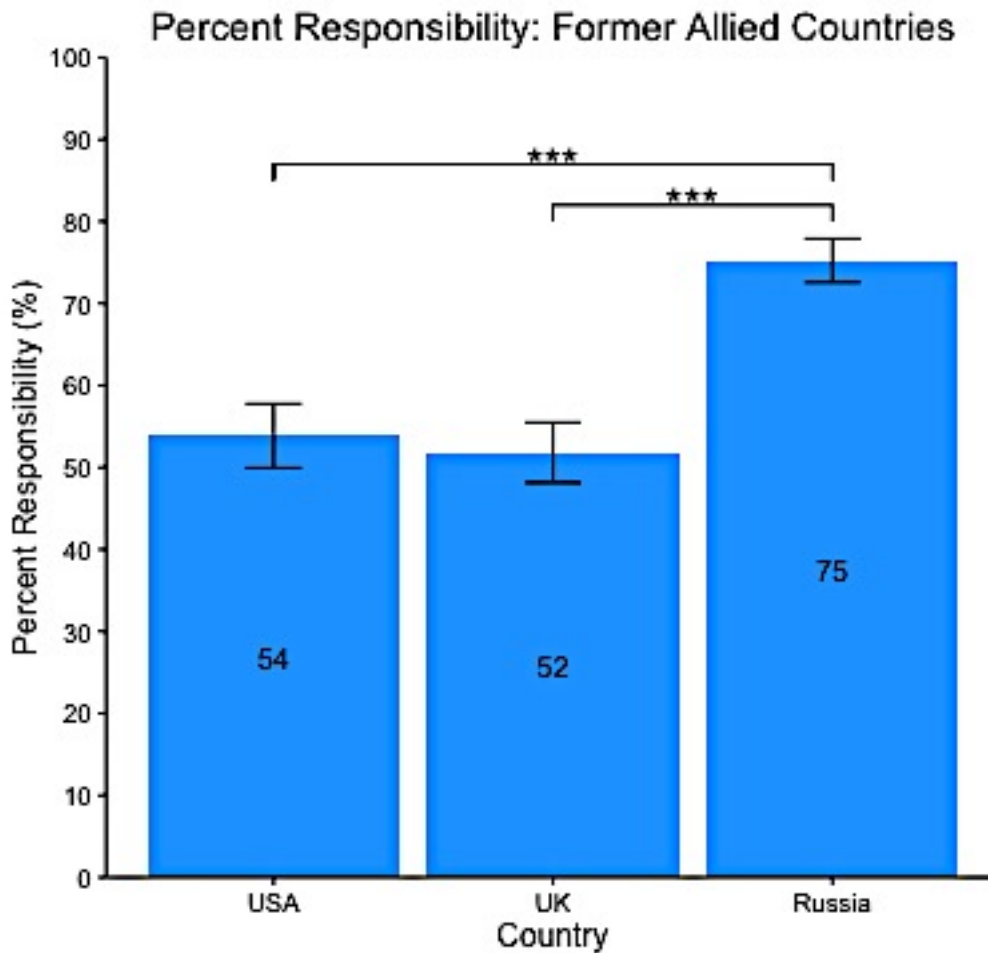


Figure 11. Self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the winning side of the war according to the U.S.A., U.K., and Russia, respectively, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average percent responsibility differed significantly among the three countries, $X^2(2) = 88.99, p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed significantly greater attributed percent responsibility in Russia ($M = 75.23, SD = 15.60$) than in the U.S.A. ($M = 53.85, SD = 23.08$), $z = -7.68, p < 0.001$, and the U.K. ($M = 51.81, SD = 20.51$), $z = -8.54, p < 0.001$. Post hoc p values were Bonferroni corrected.

Figure 12.

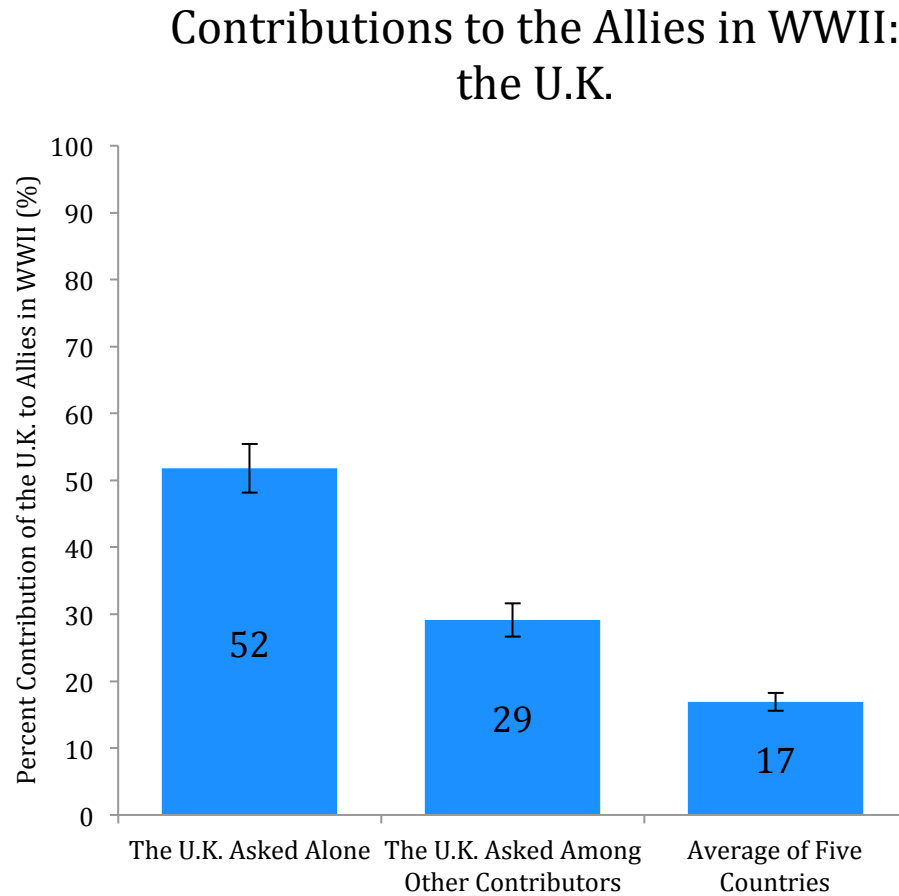


Figure 12. Average percent responsibility of the U.K. for the Allied side of the war according to the U.K. when asked for a percent responsibility alone, the U.K. when asked for percent responsibility among other Allied countries, and the average of five other countries' (the U.S.A., Russia, Germany, Italy, and Japan) views of the U.K.'s contribution, using 95% confidence intervals (and, for "others," an average of the confidence intervals for the five countries).

Fisher-Pitman Permutation Tests revealed significantly greater percent responsibility for the U.K. when asked alone ($M = 51.81$, $SD = 20.51$) than for the average of five other countries ($M = 17.08$, $SD = 9.15$), $z = -20.64$, $p < 0.001$, as well as significantly greater percent responsibility for the U.K. when asked with others ($M = 29.15$, $SD = 14.06$) than for the average of five other countries, $z = -11.10$, $p < 0.001$.

Figure 13.

Contributions to the Allies in WWII: the U.S.A.

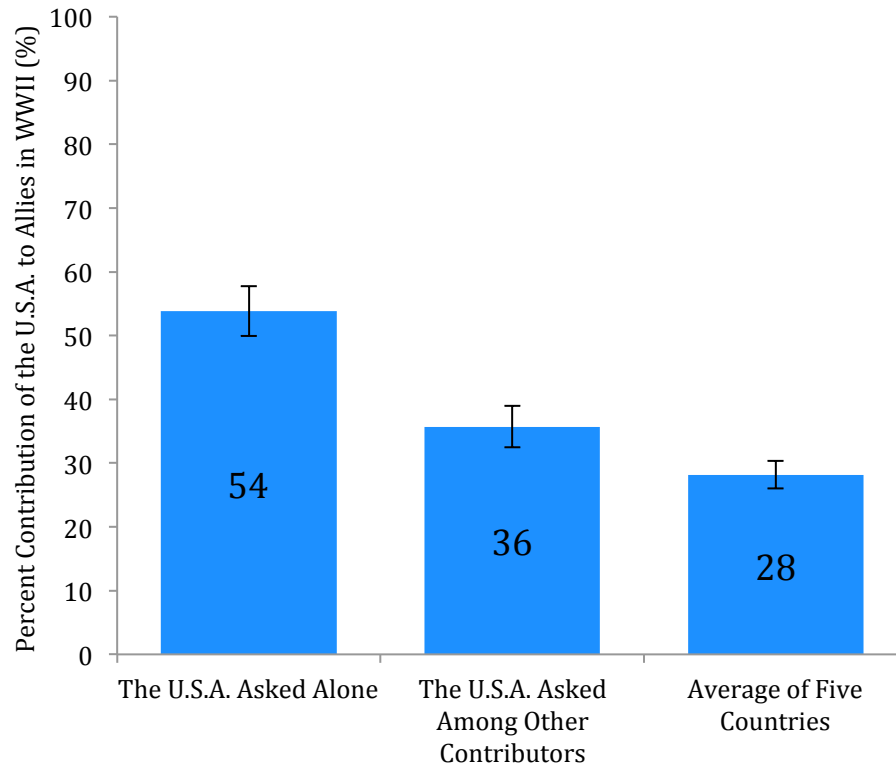


Figure 13. Average percent responsibility of the U.S.A. for the Allied side of the war according to the U.S.A. when asked for percent responsibility alone, the U.S.A. when asked for percent responsibility among other Allied countries, and the average of five other countries' (the U.K., Russia, Germany, Italy, and Japan) views of the U.S.A.'s contribution, using 95% confidence intervals (and, for "others," an average of the confidence intervals for the five countries).

Fisher-Pitman Permutation Tests revealed significantly greater percent responsibility for the U.S.A. when asked alone ($M = 53.85$, $SD = 23.08$) than for the average of five other countries ($M = 28.38$, $SD = 15.76$), $z = -13.69$, $p < 0.001$, as well as significantly greater percent responsibility for the U.S.A. when asked with others ($M = 35.71$, $SD = 19.06$) than for the average of five other countries, $z = -4.69$, $p < 0.001$.

Figure 14.

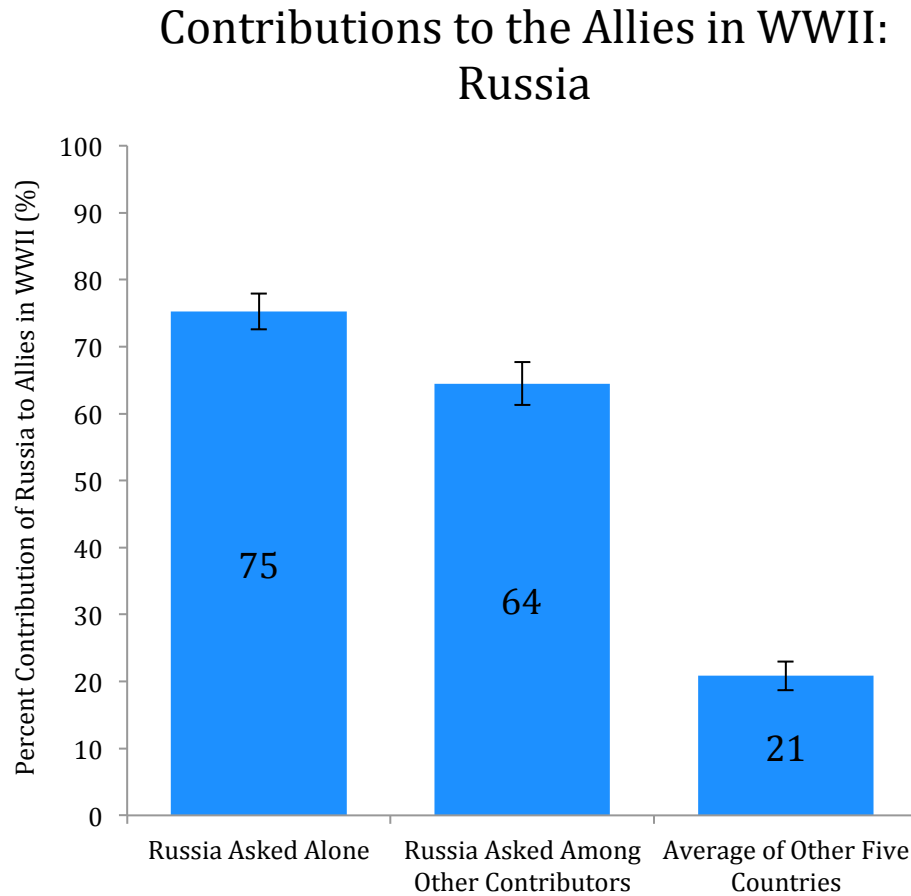


Figure 14. Average percent responsibility of Russia for the Allied side of the war according to Russia when asked for a percent responsibility alone, Russia when asked for percent responsibility among other Allied countries, and the average of the five other countries' (the U.S.A., the U.K., Germany, Italy, and Japan) views of Russia's contribution, using 95% confidence intervals (and, for "others," an average of the confidence intervals for the five countries).

Fisher-Pitman Permutation Tests revealed significantly greater percent responsibility for Russia when asked alone ($M = 75.23$, $SD = 15.60$) than for the average of five other countries ($M = 20.81$, $SD = 12.63$), $z = -23.61$, $p < 0.001$, as well as significantly greater percent responsibility for Russia when asked with others ($M = 64.49$, $SD = 18.87$) than for the average of five other countries, $z = -21.39$, $p < 0.001$.

Figure 15.

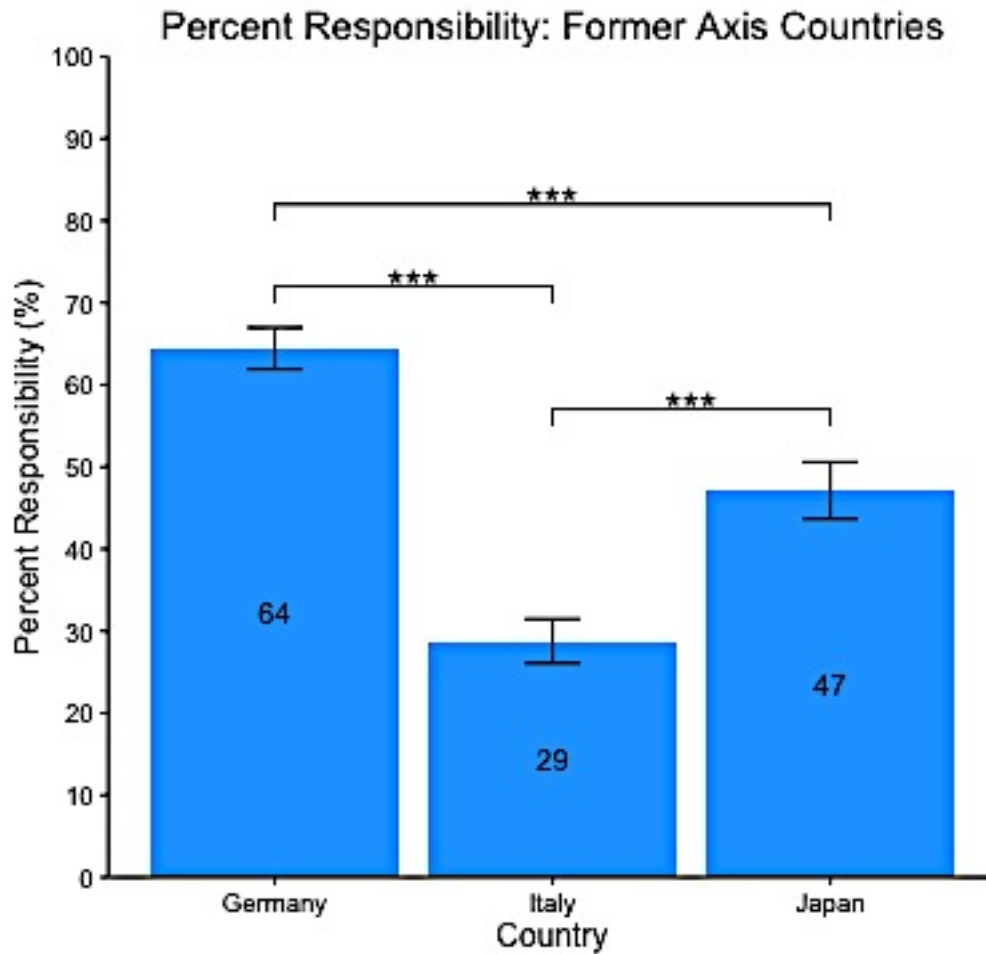


Figure 15. Self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the losing side of the war according to Germany, Italy, and Japan, using 95% confidence intervals. *** = $p < 0.001$.

A Kruskal-Wallis test found that average percent responsibility differed significantly among the three countries, $X^2(2) = 182.85, p < 0.001$. Post hoc tests confirmed significantly greater attributed percent responsibility in Germany ($M = 64.44, SD = 14.78$) than in Japan ($M = 47.13, SD = 19.36$), $z = 6.02, p < 0.001$, and Italy ($M = 28.78, SD = 16.61$), $z = 13.49, p < 0.001$, as well as significantly greater attributed percent responsibility in Japan than in Italy, $z = -7.02, p < 0.001$. All post hoc p values were Bonferroni corrected.

Opinion Statements. Figure 16 displays the average agreement with questions in the opinion statement section, calculated for subjects in each country for statements in which agreement would reflect well on the participant's home country and for statements that were less relevant to the home country. For example, the opinion statement, "The resilience of the people living in London during Germany's frequent bombings contributed heavily to the Allies remaining strong, recovering, and achieving final victory," would be classified as reflecting well on the U.K. and as less relevant to the other countries of interest. Opinion statements that reflected well on the home country elicited greater agreement than did opinion statements that were less relevant to the home country in Russia, the U.K., and Italy. By contrast, opinion statements that reflected well on the home country in Germany elicited greater disagreement than did questions that were less relevant to Germany. Thus, participants in only three of the six countries of interest exhibited evidence of the "self-enhancing" qualities characteristic of collective memory, with the greatest effect evident in the case of participants in Russia. (For statistical information, see Figure 16.)

Figure 16.

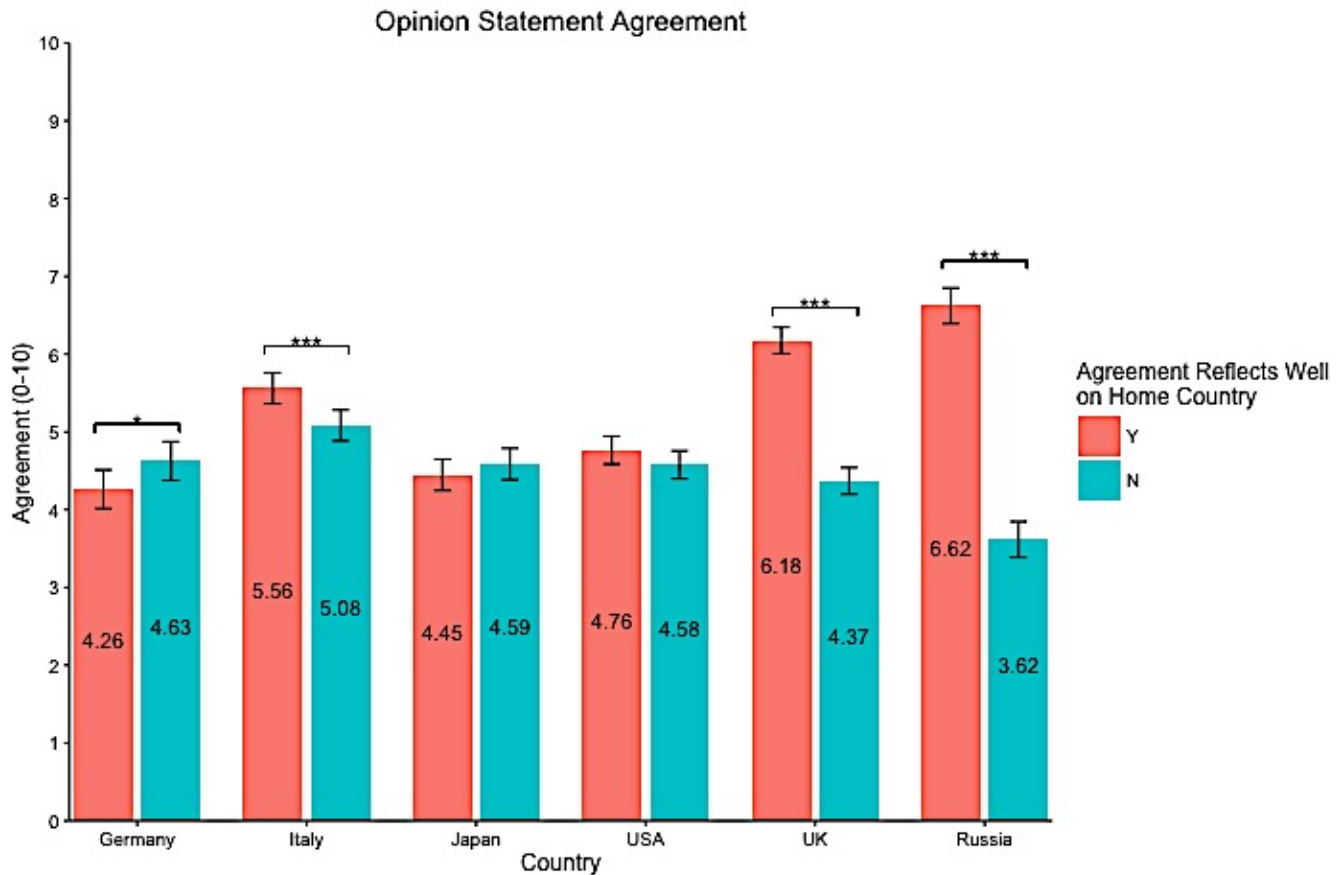


Figure 16. Average agreement on the Opinion Statement Test by whether or not agreement would reflect well on the home country, using normed 95% confidence intervals *** = $p < 0.001$; * = $p < 0.05$.

A Wilcoxon signed rank test with continuity correction found that average disagreement was greater in Germany for questions in which agreement would reflect well on the home country ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 2.10$) than for questions that were less relevant to Germany ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.16$), $W = 3415$, $p < 0.05$. Conversely, Wilcoxon signed rank tests with continuity correction found that average agreement was significantly greater for questions in which agreement would reflect well on the participant's home country in Italy ($M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.85$), the U.K. ($M = 6.18$, $SD = 1.89$), and Russia ($M = 6.62$, $SD = 1.84$), than for questions that were less relevant to the home country ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.09$), ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 1.39$), and ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.27$), respectively ($W = 7148$, $p < 0.001$; $W = 6964.5$, $p < 0.001$; and $W = 8657.5$, $p < 0.001$, respectively). No significant differences were found in either Japan or the U.S.A.

Country Comparisons

In order to provide an overarching comparison of responses in the six countries of interest, a similarity measure was calculated between each pair of countries by averaging similarity measures obtained for each section of the questionnaire. With respect to the lists of fifteen events endorsed most often as important to WWII, one point was added to each pair of countries' similarity measure for each event shared by the two countries. An additional point was added if the event was listed by a similar percentage of the sample in both countries (specifically, if the event was similarly listed by more than 50% of the sample or 50% or less of the sample in both countries). Thus, there were 30 possible points that could be obtained for a given pair of countries. A similarity measure was calculated for each pair of countries by dividing the total number of points shared by two countries by the 30 points possible in order to obtain a proportion.

For the remaining four sections (the General Knowledge Test, Recognition Test [including only WWII target events], Allied Percent Responsibility Allocation [not including each country's allocation of percent responsibility to their own country when asked *without* the other Allied options], and Opinion Statements), similarity measures were obtained from responses in the following way. First, we calculated average accuracy or responses in each country for each question. Second, we calculated the absolute value of the difference between each pair of countries on average accuracy or responses for each question. Third, for each of the four questionnaire sections separately, we averaged the differences calculated in step two in order to obtain an overall difference value for each pair of countries for each of the four sections. Fourth, in order to obtain a measure of similarity (rather than difference), values from step three were subtracted from 1 (in the General Knowledge and Recognition Test sections), subtracted

from 100 and divided by 100 (in the Percent Responsibility section in order to obtain a proportion value), and subtracted from 10 and divided by 10 (in the Opinion Statement section in order to obtain a proportion value). Fifth, the comparison values for the five sections (all now consisting of similarity values between 0 and 1) were averaged together to produce an overarching similarity value for each pair of countries. Last, in order to better see the differences in similarity between the various pairs of countries graphically, the comparison values were scaled so that the lowest value would be quite low (at 0.02). This involved subtracting 0.64 from each comparison value, which had the effect of amplifying and highlighting the observed differences (0.64 was chosen in order to leave the lowest value, originally 0.66, at 0.02 after subtraction). These comparison values were then graphed using a spring-embedded layout (see Figure 17), which used the comparison values to distribute the six countries of interest visually (with closer countries, as well as darker and thicker lines between them, indicating greater similarity between two countries). In examining the spring graph, it is important to note that the relationships between countries observed indicate only relative differences in similarity among the various pairs of countries and do not indicate the magnitude of the similarity or differences seen. For example, Japan may not be *highly* isolated in its responses, but it is the *most* isolated of the six countries. Table 2 provides the un-scaled values (with no subtraction of 0.64) for comparison.

Upon first glance these scores may seem overly simplistic in illuminating the extent to which each of the countries relate to one another, using only a single value to provide the degree of similarity between each pair of countries. However, it is important to note that a variety of measures were taken into account in creating these scores (e.g. events listed as most important to WWII, accuracy on each individual General Knowledge test question, recognition hit rates for

each target event of WWII, allocations of percent responsibility to eight former Allied countries, and degree of agreement [or disagreement] with opinion statements about the war). Thus, the differences observed between countries in their relationships to one another rely on a wide range of qualitatively different measures, providing a broad evaluation of similarity in collective memories for WWII among the six countries of interest. Further, these comparison values provide an *objective* measure of similarity, rather than relying on subjective examinations of similarity that may be more vulnerable to the biases of the experimenters.

Visual inspection of the spring graph (see Figure 17) indicates that the U.S.A. is most similar to other countries in its average accuracy and responses to questions, with Japan and, to some extent, Russia being more isolated in their responses. The greatest similarity value exists between the U.S.A. and the U.K. and the least similarity value between Japan and Russia. Average (un-scaled) similarity to other countries totaled: for the U.S.A. (.83), the U.K. (.82), Germany (.81), Italy (.80), Russia (.76), and Japan (.73). These numbers give only an average of the overall measure of similarity of each of the six countries to the other countries and, as a result, hide specific similarities and differences among the various countries of interest. (See Table 2, Figure 17, and the Discussion section for further comparison information.)

Table 2.						
	Germany	Italy	Japan	USA	UK	Russia
Germany	1.00					
Italy	0.83	1.00				
Japan	0.71	0.75	1.00			
USA	0.86	0.84	0.78	1.00		
UK	0.86	0.84	0.73	0.88	1.00	
Russia	0.79	0.75	0.66	0.79	0.79	1.00

Table 2. Un-scaled comparison values for each pair of countries. Comparisons were based on similarity in Top 15 Events Lists, General Knowledge Test accuracy, Recognition Test accuracy (hits rates), allocations of Allied Percent Responsibility, and Opinion Statement responses.

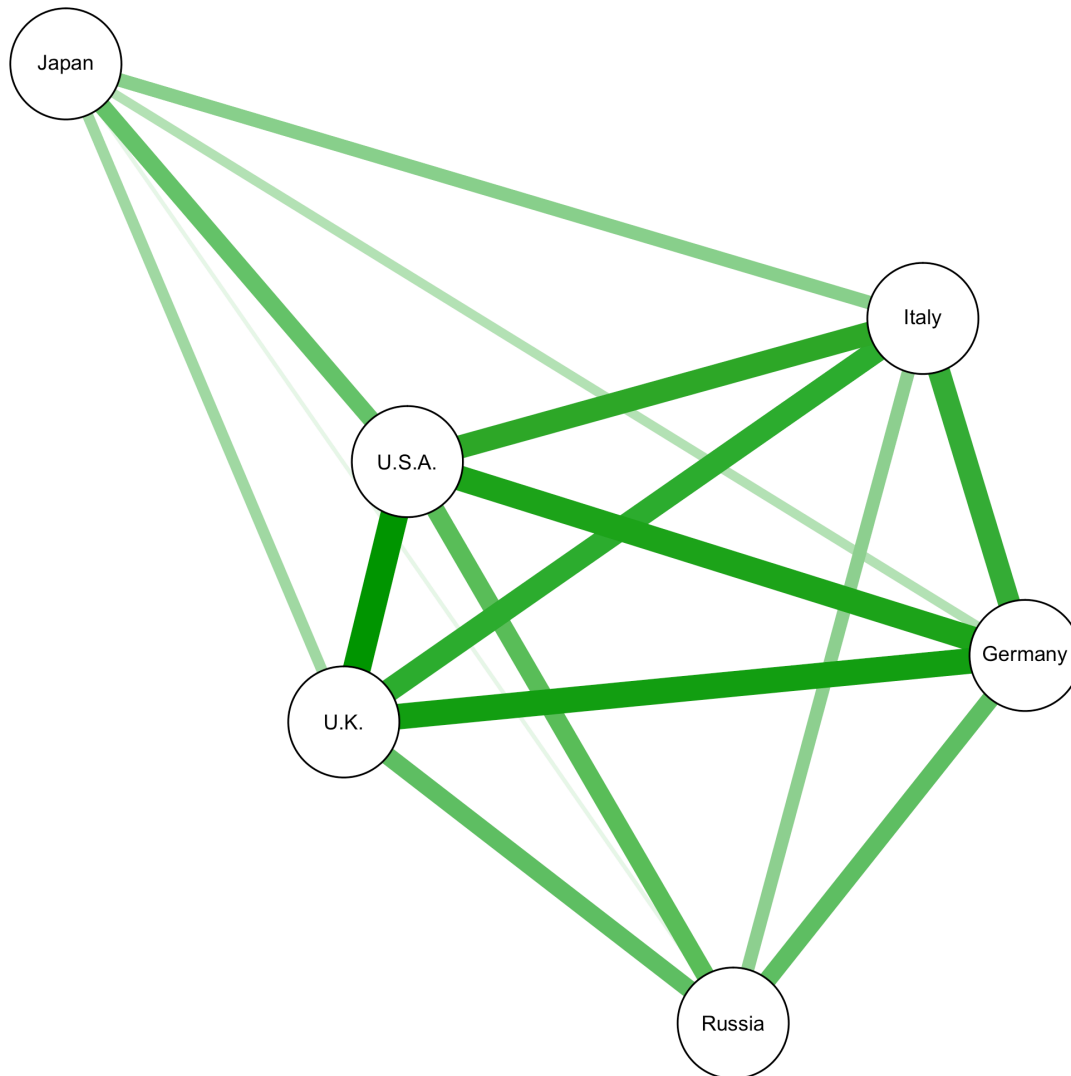
Figure 17.

Figure 17. Spring-embedded graph displaying scaled comparison values (0.64 subtracted from the un-scaled values) for each pair of countries. Comparisons were based on similarity in Top 15 Events Lists, General Knowledge Test accuracy, Recognition Test accuracy (hits rates), allocations of Allied Percent Responsibility, and Opinion Statement responses. Darker and thicker lines indicate greater similarity. This graph shows only relative similarity among the six countries, not the magnitude of any differences in similarity. See Table 2 for un-scaled values. R package used for this graph: qgraph (Sacha Epskamp, Giulio Costantini, Angelique O. J. Cramer, Lourens J. Waldorp, Verena D. Schmittmann and Denny Borsboom).

Global WWII

The following section examines similarities that exist in collective memory for WWII in the six countries of interest.

Important Events of WWII. Although both the top fifteen events lists and event recognition test accuracy differed in several ways among the six countries of interest, several points of overlap are apparent. The following events of WWII emerged when looking only at events listed by at least 25% of the respondents in at least three of the six countries of interest: 1) the German invasion of Poland, 2) the attack on Pearl Harbor, 3) the Battle of Stalingrad, 4) D-Day, 5) VE Day, 6) the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, 7) the dropping of the atomic bomb (in general; and not specific to Hiroshima or Nagasaki), and 8) the Holocaust (see Table 3). The event recognition test reiterated these results. Average hit rates were similar among all countries (within 0.2 of each other) for three events in the recognition test: 1) the German invasion of Poland ($M = 0.96$, $SD = 0.08$), 2) the attack on Pearl Harbor ($M = 0.98$, $SD = 0.01$), and 3) the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ($M = 0.99$, $SD = 0.01$). The means reported here indicate average accuracy among the six countries of interest (see Table 4).

The general knowledge test results further supported the above findings. Average accuracy was similar among all countries (within 0.2 of each other) for four questions on the general knowledge test: 1) “What country attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor?” (Correct answer: Japan; $M = 0.98$, $SD = 0.03$); 2) “What country dropped the atomic bomb during World War II?” (Correct answer: the United States; $M = 0.97$, $SD = 0.02$); 3) “In what year did World War II end?” (Correct answer: 1945; $M = 0.93$, $SD = 0.06$); and 4) “Who was the leader of Germany during World War II?” (Correct answer: Hitler; $M = 0.98$, $SD = 0.04$). As above, the

means reported here indicate average accuracy among people in the six countries of interest (see Table 5).

Allocation of Allied Responsibility. With respect to ratings of percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war, all six countries gave similar ratings (within 10% of each other) for France ($M = 9.13$, $SD = 3.23$), China ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.51$), Canada ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.96$), Australia ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.15$), New Zealand ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 1.06$), and “Other countries” ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.73$). Means here indicate average responses among the six countries (see Table 6). Interestingly, allocations of percent responsibility to the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union for the Allied side of WWII did not elicit ratings within 10% of each other from all six countries of interest. Potential reasons for this finding will be considered in the Discussion section.

Opinion Statements. Three opinion statement questions elicited similar responses (within 1 point of each other on a scale of 0-10) in the six countries of interest: 1) “The French officials who cooperated with Germany did so only in an attempt to protect their citizens” ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.29$); 2) “Japan was the most successful country in World War II in terms of briefly capturing and occupying the largest territories of the world” ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.45$); and 3) “Italy’s military contributed less to the Axis war efforts because the people didn’t think Mussolini’s goals were worth fighting for” ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 0.37$). The means reported here indicate average responses among the six countries (see Table 7). Notably, because the response scale ranged from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (10), each of the above questions elicited “middle of the road” responses (with a slight, overall tendency toward disagreement) in the six countries of interest. There were no questions in which all countries strongly agreed or

strongly disagreed within 1 point of each other. Thus, it is worth questioning the extent to which *any* strongly held interpretations of WWII exist globally.

Table 3.		
Important Events Global Agreement		
Event	Number of countries in which 25% listed the event	Date
German Invasion of Poland	5	1939
Attack on Pearl Harbor	6	1941
Battle of Stalingrad	3	1942-1943
D-Day	5	1944
VE Day	3	1945
Atomic Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima	3	1945
Atomic Bomb Dropped (General)	6	1945
The Holocaust	5	Throughout

Table 3. Events from the top events lists that were endorsed by 25% or more of the respondents in at least three of the six countries of interest, ordered by date. The second column indicates the number of countries in which at least 25% of the respondents endorsed the event as important to WWII.

Table 4.		
Recognition Test Global Agreement		
Event	Mean	SD
German Invasion of Poland	0.96	0.08
Pearl Harbor	0.98	0.01
Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki	0.99	0.01

Table 4. Events from the event recognition test that elicited similar hit rates in the six countries of interest. Similarity was operationalized as having average hit rate scores within 0.2 in each of the six countries. Means (and standard deviations) were calculated by averaging the mean hit rate scores for each of the six countries (and taking the standard deviation of the means for the six countries).

Table 5.

General Knowledge Test Global Agreement

Question	Correct Answer	Mean	SD
What country attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor?	Japan	0.98	0.03
What country dropped the atomic bomb during World War 2?	United States	0.97	0.02
In what year did World War 2 end?	1945	0.93	0.06
Who was the leader of Germany during World War 2?	Hitler	0.98	0.04

Table 5. Questions from the general knowledge test that elicited similar average accuracy in the six countries of interest. Similarity was operationalized having average accuracy scores within 0.2 in each of the six countries. Means (and standard deviations) were calculated by averaging the mean accuracy scores for each of the six countries (and taking the standard deviation of the means for the six countries).

Table 6.		
Percent Responsibility Global Agreement		
Country	Mean (%)	SD (%)
France	9.13	3.23
China	2.96	1.51
Canada	2.90	0.96
Australia	2.53	1.15
New Zealand	1.93	1.06
Other countries	4.00	1.73

Table 6. Allies from the percent responsibility section that received similar attributed responsibility for the winning side of the war in each of the six countries of interest. Similarity was operationalized as having received responsibility scores within 10% of each other in each of the six countries. Means (and standard deviations) were calculated by averaging the mean responsibility score for each of the six countries (and taking the standard deviation of the means for the six countries).

Table 7.		
Opinion Statements Global Similarity		
Question	Mean (0-10)	SD (0-10)
The French officials who cooperated with Germany did so only in an attempt to protect their citizens.	4.41	0.29
Japan was the most successful country in World War 2 in terms of briefly capturing and occupying the largest territories of the world.	4.06	0.45
Italy's military contributed less to the Axis war efforts because the people didn't think Mussolini's goals were worth fighting for.	4.80	0.37

Table 7. Opinion statements from the opinion statement section that elicited similar average degree of agreement in the six countries of interest. Similarity was operationalized having average agreement within 1 point on a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) in each of the six countries. Means (and standard deviations) were calculated by averaging the mean agreement scores for each of the six countries (and taking the standard deviation of the means for the six countries).

Discussion

This project sought to examine similarities and differences in collective memory for WWII in three former Allied (the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia) and three former Axis (Germany, Italy, and Japan) countries. By comparing in each of the countries of interest events endorsed as most important to WWII, general knowledge and event recognition accuracy, allocation of responsibility for the Allied and Axis sides of the war, and responses to opinion statement questions, we aimed to gain an understanding of the differences that exist globally in collective memory for WWII, identify common ground in the many depictions of the war, and examine patterns of self-interest in collective memory that transcend nationality. In this discussion we will begin by exploring the extent to which knowledge of the war differs among the six countries and the extent to which responses uphold prior understandings of the nature of collective memory. In the process, we will analyze the degree to which our results parallel those in prior literature on collective memory for WWII obtained from history textbooks and human subjects. We will end with a discussion of the overarching relationships that exist among the six countries in their views of WWII and offer a putative “global” version of the war.

Knowledge of the War

Our results indicate that knowledge of the events of and facts surrounding WWII is greatest in Russia and least developed in Japan. Specifically, general knowledge test accuracy, recognition test hits, and recognition test false alarms (FAs) (all from sections in which questions can be objectively answered) supported this claim. Whereas participants in Russia showed significantly greater accuracy on the general knowledge test, significantly greater hit rates for events of WWII on the event recognition test, and significantly fewer FAs on the event recognition test than did participants in the other countries of interest (with a few minor

exceptions), participants in Japan displayed the least accuracy in the aggregate. Participants in the U.S.A., the U.K., Germany, and Italy scored similarly in accuracy and finished between participants in Russia and Japan.

In interpreting the present results in light of the prior literature using human subjects, it becomes clear that previous differences in the extent of agreement within the countries of interest concerning the relative importance of WWII to “world history” (Liu et al., 2005, p. 173; Paez et al., 2008) align with current differences in the degree of knowledge about the war. Specifically, although Liu et al. (2005) and Paez et al. (2008) found that WWII was endorsed as important more often than any other event in every country they examined, the percentage of the sample that endorsed WWII as important in each country differed considerably: Russia (92%), the U.S.A. (86%), the U.K. (77%), Germany (68%), and Japan (52%). Our findings, while exploring different issues (i.e. objective knowledge concerning, rather than perceived importance of, WWII), are consistent with this pattern, with Russia displaying the greatest accuracy, Japan the least accuracy, and the U.S.A., the U.K., and Germany finishing in between. Although this similarity may appear unsurprising, it is important to note that our sample was obtained in 2015 and 2016, whereas data from Liu et al. (2005) and Paez et al. (2008) was obtained in 1996, 1997, 2002, and 2005 (depending on the country in question). Thus, over the course of nearly twenty years, the relationships among the countries of interest concerning the differing importance of (and corresponding degree of knowledge relating to) WWII remained relatively unchanged. While prior literature demonstrated that WWII holds a preeminent place in the collective memories of Germany, Japan, the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia, no such information was available for human subjects in Italy (Liu et al., 2005; Paez et al., 2008). However, the high degree of alignment found between the relative importance of WWII (as presented in Liu et al.

[2005] and Paez et al. [2008]) and the degree of knowledge concerning the war (as presented in the current study) would suggest that WWII is likewise of primary importance in Italy (likely in the same league as in Germany, the U.S.A., and the U.K., owing to its similar degree of general knowledge in the present study).

The current study also finds that data from Japan indicates either the presence of a general knowledge of the war that falls below those of other countries or, as might be expected from research using history textbooks, a high degree of knowledge of specific aspects of the war (i.e. those on the Pacific front) at the expense of others (Nicholls, 2006). Neither possibility can be ruled out by the results examined in this discussion thus far. However, findings from Liu et al. (2005) suggest that the latter possibility is more likely. Specifically, Liu et al. (2005) demonstrate with human subjects that, whereas in the U.S.A. and Germany, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was not endorsed as a major event of world history in addition to WWII as a whole, it was in Japan and Great Britain. Although it is impossible to tell whether those in Japan who endorsed the atomic bombs also endorsed WWII or if they were different sets of participants, the possibility that some participants endorsed the atomic bombs as a discrete event, without endorsing WWII, seems probable. Further discussion of this possibility and related findings from the present project will be discussed below.

Quintessential Collective Memory

Importantly, collective memory is characterized by its role in positive identity formation (Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997; Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995; Russell, 2006; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). With respect to the nation, its creation involves choosing both what to include and the way in which to include it in an impression of the nation's past (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). As discussed before, it involves emphasizing events that elevate a nation's virtue and

deemphasizing (or overlooking) events that undermine it (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Roediger et al., 2009; Wertsch 2008b). Prior literature would suggest that every country, to some extent, observes these standards in creating its past; and this section will explore the extent to which these ideas apply to the current project in each of the six countries of interest, as well as the extent to which prior findings concerning collective memory in history textbook coverage of WWII (and human subjects) are upheld.

Differing emphases. The present findings concerning the fifteen events endorsed most often as important to WWII in each country of interest indicate that events deemed important to the war in a given country serve to reinforce that country's significance to the war. For example, in Germany and Japan, twelve of the fifteen events endorsed most often involve Germany and Japan, respectively. In a similar vein, nine and eight of Russia and the U.S.A.'s respective fifteen events endorsed most often involve Russia and the U.S.A., respectively. Both the U.K. and Italy appear to emphasize their importance to the war to a lesser degree; they are directly involved in only six of their fifteen events. These numbers and their implications for the degree to which a given country enhances the importance of its contribution, however, may be misleading. Although the importance of particular countries to the war must always be subjective to some extent, differences in importance can, in some cases, be more objectively characterized. For example, whereas the relative involvement of the U.K. and U.S.A. in the war may be up for debate, it is likely accepted that Germany was more involved in shaping the war's direction than was Italy. For this reason, it is possible that, for example, Germany's twelve and Italy's six self-relevant events from their respective lists of main events reflect a general agreement that a greater number of important events of the war involved Germany than Italy. In

this case, the differences stated above would have little to do with collective memory's tendencies to inflate "self-importance" and more to do with a consensus as to historical truth.

To combat this issue, we conducted the same analysis looking only at *idiosyncratic* events from the fifteen events endorsed most often in each country. These events were, by definition, *not* agreed upon as important to WWII. When looking only at these events, traces of collective memory's influence became evident. Although most countries produced several idiosyncratic events that were self relevant (with Japan, Russia, and Italy in the lead at six, five, and five of their respective fifteen events), no country produced more than one idiosyncratic main event that was not directly self-relevant. Indeed, all of Russia and Germany's idiosyncratic events were self-relevant. Of note, the U.S.A. yielded the least isolated fifteen events, producing only two idiosyncratic events, one self-relevant and one not; and similar results were found in the U.K., with three idiosyncratic events, two self-relevant and one not.

Evidence of collective memory's influence extends beyond the fifteen events endorsed most often as important to WWII, however. Indeed, its influence can be seen in the accuracy scores for both general knowledge and event recognition test questions. When examining accuracy as a function of whether or not each country of interest was directly involved in the event (in the recognition test) or in the issue referred to by the question (in the general knowledge test), Germany, Japan, Russia (for the recognition test), and Italy (for the general knowledge test), displayed greater accuracy for self-relevant questions and events than for those less relevant. Notably, this result with respect to Italy hinges only on a single question (for the general knowledge test) and, thus, may not be a reliable indicator of collective memory's influence in Italy.

Beyond emphasizing specific events in which the country was directly involved, prior literature on collective memory of WWII suggests that countries emphasize information concerning specific *fronts* of the war. In particular, prior research examining history textbook coverage has emphasized this fact with respect to Russia and the Eastern front (Wertsch, 2002, chapter five), the U.S.A. and the Pacific and Western fronts (Crawford and Foster, 2007, chapter seven), and Japan and the Pacific front (Crawford and Foster, 2007, chapter six; Nicholls, 2006). In order to examine the extent to which these findings were confirmed in the current project, we analyzed accuracy as a function of whether general knowledge test questions and recognition test events concerned the Western, Eastern, or Pacific fronts of the war. Although questions on the general knowledge test showed a slight tendency toward greater accuracy for questions concerning the Pacific front among many of the countries (excluding Germany and the U.K.), this was most pronounced in Japan, where accuracy for questions concerning the Pacific front (0.92) was over 20% greater than accuracy for questions concerning the Western and Eastern fronts (0.7 for both). Although it was surprising that accuracy in Russia was greater for the Western and Pacific fronts than for the Eastern front, it is worth noting that Russia's accuracy for questions concerning the Eastern front was numerically the highest among the six countries (at 0.95). Finally, accuracy in the U.S.A. and Italy followed a similar pattern to one another, being numerically highest for questions concerning the Pacific front, followed by the Western front, and lowest for the Eastern front (although no significant differences were found in the U.S.A. concerning the Western front).

Problematically for the analysis above, accuracy on the general knowledge test for questions concerning the various fronts may be influenced by the relative difficulty of the questions, rather than the extent of a given country's knowledge of the fronts. By contrast,

because event recognition test questions for each front were of the same form (simple yes/no recognition questions), results for this section are likely more indicative of the impact of front on accuracy. Results of this analysis for the event recognition test found that Germany, Italy, the U.S.A., and the U.K. showed greater recognition of events of the Western front than those of the Eastern and Pacific fronts. Germany also displayed greater accuracy for events of the Eastern than of the Pacific front. By contrast, the U.S.A. also displayed greater accuracy for events of the Pacific than of the Eastern front. As prior literature correctly predicted, Russia was the only country in which accuracy was greatest for events of the Eastern front (with greater accuracy additionally for events of the Western than of the Pacific front). Further, Japan was the only country in which accuracy was greater for events of the Pacific front than for events of the Western and Eastern fronts, again displaying a large discrepancy in accuracy (at 0.88 for events of the Pacific front and 0.51 and 0.50 for events of the Western and Eastern fronts, respectively). These results, in combination with those above concerning general knowledge test accuracy in Japan, provide an answer to the question posed in the beginning of the discussion concerning the extent of Japan's knowledge of the war at large. These results suggest that knowledge of the war in Japan is relatively high for events and information involving the Pacific front and relatively low for those of the Western and Eastern fronts, rather than being moderately below average for each front.

Evidence of collective memory's self-focus and self-enhancing qualities in the six countries of interest was found indirectly by examining both events listed as important to the war and patterns in general knowledge of the war. However, collective memory's characteristic traits were further uncovered when directly asking participants in the six countries for self-evaluations of their home country's impact on the war. For each of the three former Allied powers (the

U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia), self-evaluations of percent contribution to the Allied side of the war exceeded 50%. This finding was most robust in Russia, in which participants on average attributed Russia 75% credit. Notably, according to the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia, the three former Allies together provided 181% credit for the Allied side of the war. These numbers became slightly more reasonable when asking the three countries to provide self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war along with that of several other former Allied countries. Although percent responsibility decreased somewhat in each country, Russia's average self-evaluation remained above 50% responsibility, at 64%. Further, the total percent responsibility of the three former Allied countries combined remained a noteworthy 129%. For comparison, it is helpful to note the average percent responsibility attributed to each of the three countries by the six countries of interest (in each case, excluding the home country's result). These totaled 28%, 21%, and 17% for the U.S.A., Russia, and the U.K., respectively. Although the average percent responsibility attributed to a given country (by the five other countries) cannot be taken as a factual account of the contribution of the given country to the Allied side of the war, it does provide a barometer by which to compare each country's self-evaluation. Notably, the largest discrepancy occurs for the perceived contribution of Russia to the Allied side of the war, in which Russia attributes 64% responsibility to itself, whereas others attribute to it merely 21% responsibility.

The results of the above Allied percent responsibility analyses additionally provide a context in which to examine prior hypotheses concerning collective memory of WWII in the U.K. Specifically, prior literature using history textbooks has suggested that, whereas there are a great number of descriptions regarding England's role in the war and the ways that the war affected England, similar topics are not discussed in England with respect to other countries in

the Commonwealth (like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand) (Crawford and Foster, 2007, chapter nine). Interestingly, however, with respect to the percent responsibility attributed to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand for the Allied side of the war, the U.K. provided numerically greater percent responsibility to each country (at 4%, 4%, and 3%, respectively) than did the other countries of interest. Problematically, however, these numbers pale by comparison with the U.K.'s designation of its own percent responsibility for the Allied side of the war (at 29% in the corresponding question). Thus, although the U.K. may better depict than the other countries of interest the importance of Commonwealth countries to the Allied side of the war, the score may still be an underestimation.

Self-evaluations of percent responsibility for the Axis side of the war were also telling. Whereas Germany attributed itself 64% responsibility, Japan attributed itself 47%, and Italy 29%. Although the total percent responsibility for the Axis side of the war does not reach that of the corresponding Allied percentage (181%), it is still remarkably high (at 140%). Interestingly, these results correspond to prior literature on history textbooks in which Italy downplays its accountability while Japan does just the opposite (Nicholls, 2006).

Differing interpretations. Beyond self-focus, collective memory is evident in differing interpretations of events (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). In order to analyze this aspect of collective memory and its presence in the current data, we examined the degree to which participants in various countries agreed and disagreed with various statements of opinion. Below we briefly discuss findings concerning agreement as a function of whether or not agreement reflects well on the home country and findings from specific opinion statements in order to examine the ways in which biases found in history textbooks manifest themselves with human subjects.

In an analysis of the opinion statement section, we found evidence that interpretations of events showed a tendency in some countries toward positive opinions of the home country. Specifically, statements in which agreement would reflect well on the home country elicited greater agreement in Russia, the U.K., and Italy than did statements that would not directly reflect positively or negatively on the home country. By contrast, we found less agreement in Germany for these statements, as well as no differences in agreement in Japan and the U.S.A.

Of particular interest in this section are responses to specific opinion statements and the ways in which these responses inform prior literature with history textbooks. With respect to Italian textbooks, Nicholls (2006) argued that discussions of Italy's accountability with respect to WWII do not extend beyond its leader. Surprisingly, responses in Italy to the statement, "Italy's military contributed less to the Axis war efforts because the people didn't think Mussolini's goals were worth fighting for," showed numerically lower levels of agreement (or ambivalence, at 4.6 [$SD = 2.5$] on a scale from 0-10, 0 indicating strong disagreement and 10 indicating strong agreement) than that of several other countries. By contrast, the statement, "As Churchill is sometimes quoted, Italy could be considered 'the soft underbelly' of the Axis powers," elicited numerically highest agreement in Italy (at 6.7 [$SD = 2.2$]). Thus, although it appears that participants in Italy on average (and in each of the five other countries to some extent) were equivocal with respect to the idea that Italy did not contribute to the war due to its lack of support for the ideals of its leader, on average participants from Italy (as well as the five other countries of interest) supported the idea that Italy was the least inflammatory or dangerous of the Axis powers.

With respect to interpretations of the war in Germany, Pingel (2000) argues that current textbook depictions of National Socialism and the causes of the Holocaust explore contributing

social and economic factors. Indeed, average responses to the opinion statement, “The economic consequences of the Treaty of Versailles in 1918 were the major reason for Hitler’s rise to power,” support this claim, indicating agreement in Germany (at 6.3 [$SD = 2.7$]), along with the other countries of interest. Although only a single question, the consensus achieved suggests that economic factors are, indeed, considered central to the rise of National Socialism in Germany.

In their study of the U.S.A., Crawford and Foster (2007; chapter seven) discern descriptions of “benevolence and power” in the textbooks they examined (p. 131). The authors also argue that most attention is given to events that began in 1941 (the attack on Pearl Harbor), rather than 1939 (the invasion of Poland). Our findings support the idea that collective memory reflects the U.S.A.’s “benevolence and power” during the war (Crawford and Foster, 2007, p. 131): the U.S.A. showed the greatest agreement numerically among the six countries (at 6.3 [$SD = 3.0$]) with the statement, “The reason the United States dropped the atomic bomb on two Japanese cities was to end the war.” However, although it is perhaps true that most attention is given to events that began in 1941 (the attack on Pearl Harbor), rather than 1939 (the invasion of Poland), it is not the case that participants in the U.S.A. on average agreed with the statement, “The attack on Pearl Harbor can be considered the real starting point of World War 2.” The average responses displayed a strong disagreement with the statement (at 2.13 [$SD = 2.3$]), as did responses in four of the five other countries. By contrast, participants in Japan agreed with the statement, with an average response of 5.25 [$SD = 2.6$].

With respect to collective memory in Russia, Wertsch (2002) argues that it is suggested that the U.S.S.R. deserves primary credit for defeating Germany. The present data support this finding, providing high agreement (and numerically the greatest agreement among the six countries) to the statements, “The main field of battle in the war was the eastern front, between

Germany and the Soviet Union,” “The Battle of Stalingrad was a major turning point in the war,” and “The Battle of Kursk was a major turning point in the war,” at 8.8 [$SD = 1.7$], 8.5 [$SD = 1.8$], and 7.0 [$SD = 2.4$] respectively. (Of note, by contrast, average responses in Russia to the statement, “World War II ended with the Battle of Berlin,” indicate disagreement with the statement, at 3.3 [$SD = 3.7$], suggesting some acknowledgement of the contributions of other Allies in ending the war).

Stories of the war. This section examines the collective “stories” provided by each of the countries in their list of main events. It will also explore events that are routinely endorsed in each country and the extent to which events provided in the lists align with and inform questions of prior literature comparing collective memory in textbooks and human subjects. As Wertsch (2008c) notes, the utilization of a common “narrative” may be most pervasive in Russia, a finding that is supported by the present results. Specifically, in Russia seven out of fifteen events were endorsed by over 50% of the participants. By comparison, in the U.K. and Italy only three events were endorsed by over 50% of the participants, in the U.S.A. and Germany only two events were endorsed by over 50%, and in Japan only one event. Thus, although utilization of a common “story” is found in each country of interest to some extent, in the current project it may be most so in Russia, as prior literature would predict (Wertsch, 2008c).

In comparing prior findings from human subjects in both the U.S.A. and Russia to the current study, it becomes clear that a strong consensus is achieved. Each of the six events outlined by Wertsch (2002) as being most important to WWII in Russia were endorsed as important by over 50% of the Russian participants (with the addition of “D-Day” in the current Russian sample). Likewise, in the U.S.A., two of the three (from Zaromb et al. [2014]) and six (from Wertsch [2002]) events found to be those most important to WWII in prior literature were

endorsed as important by over 50% of the participants in the U.S.A., with all three and six events found in prior literature present in the U.S.A.'s events list.

The present results additionally afford us the opportunity to address a distinction made in Schuman et al. (1998) between studies that seek to examine collective memory in culture (such as those that might examine history textbooks, among other things) and those that directly study individuals. Specifically, the authors argued that there may be greater validity in the latter form of study in finding "true" collective memory. In drawing this conclusion, the authors noted that, although prior collective memory research argues for the preeminence of the Holocaust and the atomic bombs in WWII's importance to Germany and Japan, respectively, results from their study when asking human subjects revealed that participants endorsed personal reasons to a larger extent than the Holocaust and the atomic bombs. Problematically, however, it remained unclear the extent to which this finding reflected "true" collective memory or simply the phraseology of the authors' question (see the Introduction for further details). Fortunately, the results at hand speak to this discrepancy. Although the single event endorsed by over 50% of the participants in Japan does not consist of "the atomic bombings" and instead is "the attack on Pearl Harbor," three of the four events most often endorsed as important to WWII that follow are "the dropping of the atomic bombs (general)," "the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima," and "the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki" at 48%, 40%, and 36%, respectively, suggesting that the importance of the atomic bombings remains in the collective memory of Japan and that prior literature examining collective memory through history textbooks should not be discounted. The portrayal of Japan as a victim (as argued for by Crawford and Foster [2007; chapter six] and argued against by Schuman et al. [1998]) is further suggested by the next

important event, “the Potsdam Declaration,” (tied with “the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki” at 36%).

With respect to the finding of Schuman et al. (1998) concerning Germany and the Holocaust when asking human subjects directly, the current findings suggest that, although the Holocaust may not be the central “important event” of WWII in Germany, the structure of the question in Schuman et al. (1998) may have exaggerated this finding. In the current project, although the percent of the participants in both Italy (49%) and the U.S.A. (46%) that endorsed the Holocaust as an important event of WWII exceeded that of Germany (38%) and six events in Germany were endorsed by a similar or higher percent of the participants than was the Holocaust, the Holocaust remains endorsed by over one-third of the participants in Germany as an important event of WWII. It may thus be premature to argue that its importance exists primarily in German history textbooks.

Overarching Comparisons

This section briefly examines the degree of similarity between pairs of countries in both knowledge of WWII and in their relationships to other countries. A comparison score was calculated between each pair of countries among the six countries of interest, resulting in fifteen comparison scores (see the Results section for information concerning the calculation of comparison scores). Further, the differences between each pair of countries on their comparison scores to other countries were obtained (here called *relationship*, rather than *comparison*, scores). For example, the relationship score between Germany and Japan was calculated by obtaining the absolute value of the difference between Germany’s and Japan’s comparison scores with Italy, the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia. These four difference scores were then averaged together and subtracted from 1 to obtain a single relationship score between Germany and Japan.

This permitted examination of the degree to which patterns of similarity with other countries align between each pair of countries (or the extent to which two countries share similar relationships to the other countries of interest).

Notably, the U.K. and U.S.A. shared the highest comparison score numerically (at 0.88) among the fifteen comparisons and additionally shared the second highest relationship score (at 0.98) among the fifteen pairs of countries, following Germany and the U.K. (at 0.99).

Interestingly, although Japan shared its highest comparison score with the U.S.A. (at 0.78), Japan and the U.S.A. shared the lowest relationship score (at 0.87), meaning that their degrees of similarity to other countries were the most different among the fifteen pairs of countries. (It is worth noting, however, that among the comparisons between the U.S.A. and the five other countries of interest, the U.S.A.-Japan comparison score was least [again, at 0.78], with other U.S.A.-country comparison scores ranging from 0.79 to 0.88.) Of further interest, Japan and Russia, on average, displayed the least similarity to other countries (and to each other, with a 0.66 comparison score). This was found both when averaging the five comparison scores for each of Japan and Russia (obtaining 0.73 and 0.76, respectively) and when examining relationship scores (with the nine lowest relationship scores consisting of the nine pairs of countries that included Japan and/ or Russia, with scores ranging from 0.87 to 0.96). On the other end of the spectrum, although Germany's average comparison score was third highest among the six countries (at 0.81), three of the four highest relationship scores were between Germany and other countries (the U.K. at 0.99, the U.S.A. at 0.97, and Italy at 0.97).

It is worth noting, however, that higher similarity between a pair of countries in the extent of their relationships to other countries does not imply the existence of higher similarity in their responses to questions or opinions on events of the war. For example, while Russia and

Japan display the same comparison score with Italy (at 0.75), the reasons for their degree of similarity could be quite different (i.e. the responses from participants in Russia and Japan could differ from those in Italy to the same *degree*, but in different ways). Thus, the corresponding relationship scores merely depict similarities between pairs of countries in the *extent* (and not the quality) of their relationships with each of the other countries of interest and should, therefore, be interpreted with caution.

A “Global” WWII

This section will discuss a putative “global” version of WWII that exists among the six countries of interest. To arrive at this version we first examined the fifteen events endorsed most often as important to WWII in each country of interest, finding that eight events were endorsed by at least one-quarter of the participants in at least three of the six countries: 1) the German invasion of Poland, 2) the attack on Pearl Harbor, 3) the Battle of Stalingrad, 4) D-Day, 5) VE Day, 6) the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, 7) the dropping of the atomic bomb (in general; and not specific to Hiroshima or Nagasaki), and 8) the Holocaust. Interestingly, with the exception of the Holocaust, these events follow a pattern reminiscent of that discussed by Zaromb et al. (2014). In their study participants from the U.S.A. provided opinions as to the ten major events of WWII (among two other wars). The authors found that the events endorsed by more than half of the sample provided evidence for collective memory’s use of schematic narrative templates (through the events’ adherence to a storyline involving a structured chronology [“the beginning, turning point, and end of World War II”] rather than a random collection of time points [p. 389]). Our results likewise found such a pattern: the war’s “beginning” (the German invasion of Poland and, according to some, the attack on Pearl Harbor); “turning point(s)” (the Battle of Stalingrad and D-Day); and “end” (VE Day, the

dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and the dropping of the atomic bomb [in general]). Notably, the Holocaust, although clearly deemed important to WWII in five of the six countries of interest, was not confined to a particular time point within the war and therefore did not fit within this pattern. Thus, among all events endorsed as important in the six countries of interest, including, for example, the Battle of Britain, the Fall of France, the Battle of Moscow, Stauffenberg's assassination plot against Hitler, the Allied Invasion of Italy, and the Air Raid on Tokyo, the events in the present analysis that were discrete in time and that emerged as "globally" agreed upon important events fit into a "beginning, turning point, and end" pattern that could, as was found in Zaromb et al. (2014), delineate a "narrative" for the war (Zaromb et al., 2014, p. 389).

This finding was reiterated to some extent with our recognition hit and general knowledge accuracy results. Specifically, "globally" recognized events and accurate answers concerning general knowledge of WWII (accuracy from all countries within 0.2 of each other) pertained primarily to events at the beginning and end of the war, including the German invasion of Poland and Pearl Harbor ("beginning" events) and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the year in which WWII ended, asked as a general knowledge question ("ending" events). In addition, one general knowledge question concerning information that could not be discretely assigned a time point in the war elicited universally high accuracy ("Who was the leader of Germany during World War II?"). Beyond conforming in large measure to the "beginning, turning point, and end" pattern discussed above, these recognition and general knowledge "global" findings additionally corroborated our findings concerning the events known and regarded as important to WWII in the six countries of interest.

As to universal allocations of responsibility for the Allied side of the war to various former Allied powers (the U.S.A., Britain, the Soviet Union, France, China, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as an “Other countries” option), all six countries provided average percentages within 10% of each other for France, China, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and “Other countries” (averages ranged from 1.93% to 9.13%). The three former Allied countries that did not receive “global” agreement in allocation of responsibility were also the only three countries whose self-evaluations in the present analysis were taken into account in the “global” version of the war (the U.S.A., the U.K., and Russia). Upon first glance it appears as if “global” agreement on the responsibility of a given country is impossible if the country’s own vote is counted because the country’s self-evaluation far exceeds in percentage terms that given to it by the others. Although it is true that each country’s allocation of responsibility to itself exceeds that of the average of the five other countries of interest (and, in the case of the U.K. and Russia, numerically exceeds each of the five countries’ allocations individually), it is not the case that simply removing a given country’s allocation of its own responsibility leaves “global” agreement among the other countries of interest. Indeed, in order to obtain agreement for responsibility of the U.S.A., scores from both the U.K. and Russia would have to be removed. Likewise, with respect to the perceived responsibility of the U.K., it would be necessary to remove either the U.K.’s and Russia’s scores or Japan’s and Russia’s scores. In the case of Russia, by contrast, only Russia’s score would have to be removed in order to achieve universal agreement within 10% as to the responsibility of Russia for the Allied side of the war.

Although simply removing the country’s self-evaluation does not in each case leave the rest of the countries with global agreement as to the responsibility of a given country, we believe that, in the case of the other Allied countries mentioned in the questionnaire (France, China,

Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), self-evaluations would be the main source (or, at least, a large source) of disagreement in the percent responsibility of a given country. We expect this because evaluations of the responsibility of these former Allied countries by the six countries of interest here are universally low. In order for a “global” agreement to persist with the addition of responses from other countries (like France, China, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), each country would have to limit its self-evaluation of responsibility to an exceedingly low number. This seems unlikely given the phenomenon of “national narcissism” found in Roediger et al. (in prep), in which participants in 30 countries provided the percentage of all of world history for which their native country was responsible, with average percentages ranging from eleven to a staggering 61 percent. An ongoing larger project that includes these former Allied countries in addition to the six discussed here could bring more clarity to this issue.

Finally, it is worth noting that opinion statements concerning the motivations and impacts of various countries as well as the importance of and meaning behind specific events of WWII elicited similar degrees of agreement in all six countries of interest on three occasions (the motivation of French officials in collaborating with Germany, the success of Japan in obtaining territory, and the contributions and motivations of the Italian military during the war), each of which received neither strong agreement nor strong disagreement by the six countries of interest. Thus, although several opinion statements elicited strong agreement or disagreement by various countries of interest, no opinions were *universally* strong in one direction or another. Perhaps, with respect to interpretations of the war, no strong and universally agreed upon positions exist.

Limitations and Future Directions

This project sought to examine collective memory for WWII in six countries around the world. Although we obtained large samples in each country of interest (over 100 participants per

country), the samples were not obtained in a randomized fashion. Questionnaires were distributed online (through personal connections and the help of researchers and friends in each of the six countries of interest), and the distribution did not control for the age of the participant, the region within a given country in which the participant lived, or the context in which the questionnaire was completed (i.e. mandated in a university class or by choice). Whereas information concerning the first two issues above (age and region) was obtained, we cannot ascertain which participants completed the questionnaire as a result of a class assignment, as a favor to the experimenters, or simply for fun.

A further limitation is that the questionnaire was written and completed in English, requiring that participants in each country speak English. This facet of the questionnaire served to narrow the potential recruits in each country in which English was not the primary language, as well as perhaps bias the samples toward people who may have had more extensive interactions with people in English speaking countries. Further, using English might have potentially drawn attention to the nationality of the experimenters on the project, creating a demand characteristic in which participants responded with a more U.S.A.- or U.K.-centric version than they would have otherwise (in order to satisfy the perceived expectations of the experimenters). This limitation makes our findings all the more interesting given that great differences were found among the six countries of interest, even considering that our sample may be less diverse than a random selection might have been. However, such a limitation could conceivably account for the relative centrality of the U.S.A. and U.K. in responses found in the current project.

Finally, although care was taken to ensure that several perspectives were addressed and all fronts of the war were discussed in the questionnaire, we cannot be sure that all aspects of the

war were addressed evenly or that biases were completely absent from the questions asked. Combatting this issue in part, participants provided their opinions as to what the most important events of WWII were before completing the remainder of the questionnaire.

Future directions for the current project would seek to address the above issues. In particular, a randomized sample (or, at least, a sample in which all participants completed the survey in the same context, such as through coursework or at home) and questionnaires created and completed in languages vernacular to each country of interest would perhaps further corroborate the present accounts of collective memories in each of the six countries of interest. Further, in order to avoid bias in the creation of the questionnaire, a future questionnaire might request question contributions from people in each of the various countries of interest. While this project addressed collective memory for WWII in six countries, a larger project that examines collective memory of the war in eleven countries (Australia, Canada, China, France, New Zealand, and the six countries discussed in this paper) is currently underway. This larger project will allow for a better examination of a “global” version of the war, a more nuanced analysis of the interactions among various countries around the world, and a more extensive evaluation of “national narcissism” globally (Roediger et al., in prep).

References

- Assmann, J., & Czaplicka, J. (1995). Collective memory and cultural identity. *New German Critique*, (65), 125-133.
- Assmann, J. (2008). Communicative and cultural memory. In A. Erll & A Nunning (Eds.), *Cultural memory studies: An international and interdisciplinary handbook* (109-118). Berlin/NY: de Gruyter.
- Blatz, C. W., & Ross, M. (2009). Historical memories. In P. Boyer & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Memory in mind and culture* (223-237). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crawford, K. A., & Foster, S. J. (2007). *War, nation, memory: International perspectives on World War II in school history textbooks*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Dessingué, A. & Winter, J. M. (2015). Remembering, forgetting, and silence. In A. Dessingué & J. M. Winter (Eds.), *Beyond memory: Silence and the aesthetics of remembrance* (1-12). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Dudai, Y. (2004). *Memory from A to Z: Keywords, concepts, and beyond*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On collective memory*. (edited, translated, and with an Introduction by L. A. Coser). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1941/1952)
- Lambert, A. J., Scherer, L. N., Rogers, C., & Jacoby, L. (2009). How does collective memory create a sense of the collective?. In P. Boyer & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Memory in mind and culture* (194-217). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Liu, J. H., Goldstein-Hawes, R., Hilton, D., Huang, L. L., Gastardo-Conaco, C., Dresler-Hawke, E., ... & Hidaka, Y. (2005). Social representations of events and people in world history across 12 cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*(2), 171-191.
- Liu, J. H., & Hilton, D. J. (2005). How the past weighs on the present: Social representations of history and their role in identity politics. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 44*(4), 537-556.
- Nicholls, J. (2006). Are students expected to critically engage with textbook perspectives of the Second World War? A comparative and international study. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 1*(1), 40-55.
- Paez, D. R., Liu, J. H., Techio, E., Slawuta, P., Zlobina, A., & Cabecinhas, R. (2008). "Remembering" World War II and willingness to fight: Sociocultural factors in the social representation of historical warfare across 22 societies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 39*(4), 373-380.
- Paez, D. R., & Liu, J. H. (2011). Collective Memory of Conflicts. In D. Bar-Tal (Ed.), *Intergroup conflicts and their resolution: A social psychological perspective* (105-124). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Pennebaker, J. W., & Banasik, B. L. (1997). On the creation and maintenance of collective memories: History as social psychology. In J. W. Pennebaker, D. Paez, & B. Rimé (Eds.), *Collective memory of political events: Social psychological perspectives* (3-19). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pennebaker, J. W., Gonzales, A. L. (2009). Making history: Social and psychological processes underlying collective memory. In P. Boyer & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Memory in mind and culture* (171-193). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Pingel, F. (2000). National socialism and the Holocaust in West German school books. *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, 11-29.
- Roediger III, H. L., Zaromb, F. M., & Butler, A. C. (2009). The role of repeated retrieval in shaping collective memory. In P. Boyer & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Memory in mind and culture* (138-170). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Roediger III, H. L., & Wertsch, J. V. (2015). Past imperfect. *New Scientist*, 228(3043), 30-31.
- Roediger III, H. L., Zaromb, F. M., & Liu, J. H. (in prep). Data on national narcissism in 30 countries.
- Russell, N. (2006). Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs. *The French Review*, 79(4), 792-804.
- Schuman, H., Akiyama, H., & Knauper, B. (1998). Collective memories of Germans and Japanese about the past half-century. *Memory*, 6(4), 427-454.
- Scott, J., & Zac, L. (1993). Collective memories in Britain and the United States. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 57(3), 315-331.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2002). *Voices of collective remembering*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2008a). Blank spots in collective memory: a case study of Russia. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 617(1), 58-71.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2008b). Collective memory and narrative templates. *Social Research*, 75(1), 133-156.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2008c). The narrative organization of collective memory. *Ethos*, 36(1), 120-135.
- Wertsch, J. V. (2009). Collective memory. In P. Boyer & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Memory in mind and culture* (117-137). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wertsch, J. V., & Roediger III, H. L. (2008). Collective memory: Conceptual foundations and theoretical approaches. *Memory*, *16*(3), 318-326.

Zaromb, F., Butler, A. C., Agarwal, P. K., & Roediger III, H. L. (2014). Collective memories of three wars in United States history in younger and older adults. *Memory & cognition*, *42*(3), 383-399.

Appendix

The Complete Questionnaire (English Version):

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please answer the following demographic questions about yourself.

Age: _____ (in years)

Sex: Male Female Other

Citizenship: _____

Highest level of education completed: _____

Native Language: _____

What other languages do you speak fluently? _____

With what country do you most identify yourself? _____

Where did you grow up? (State/Province, Country) _____

Where do you currently live? (State/Province, Country) _____

PART II: 10 MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS OF WORLD WAR 2

In the spaces provided below, please list the **TEN** most important events of **World War 2**, in your opinion.

You may list them as they come to mind, in any order.

When listing the event, you *do not* need to describe the event in detail. Please just provide the name or a short label.

For non-native English speakers, if you cannot think of the English name, please respond in your native language and provide the name you know. If you can, please also give a short description of the event you are referring to in English.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

PART III: GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

You will now be asked 15 general knowledge questions about World War 2.

For each question, please choose the best answer among the four alternatives provided and rate how confident you are in your answer.

When did World War 2 begin?

1914

1918

1939

1941

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

In which concentration camp did the most deaths occur?

Treblinka

Dachau

Auschwitz

Buchenwald

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

What country lost the most lives in World War 2?

Soviet Union Germany United States Japan

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

What country attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor?

China Germany Japan Italy

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

On what Japanese city was an atomic bomb dropped *first*?

Hiroshima Tokyo Nagasaki Kyoto

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

What country dropped the atomic bomb during World War 2?

Britain China Soviet Union United States

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

Who was the leader of Britain during most of World War 2?

Chamberlin Churchill Montgomery Attlee

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

Who was the leader of the Soviet Union during World War 2?

Trotsky Khrushchev Stalin Lenin

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

During the Holocaust, the Nazis killed millions of what group of people in concentration camps?

Muslims Homosexuals Gypsies Jews

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

The firebombing of what German town was a major cause of civilian deaths during the war:

Frankfurt Dusseldorf Stuttgart Dresden

How confident are you in your answer? 0 - I'm guessing 1 2 3 - I'm very confident

Who was the leader of Germany during World War 2?

Franco Bismarck Himmler Hitler

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

In what year did World War 2 end?

1945 1948 1944 1951

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

In which German city did major war crime trials take place after the war ended?

Berlin Dresden Nuremberg Munich

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

Who was the leader of Italy during World War 2?

Franco Balbo Badoglio Mussolini

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

Which four nations occupied Germany after the end of World War 2?

USA, France, Soviet Union, Britain

Soviet Union, France, Italy, Netherlands

USA, Soviet Union, France, Spain

Britain, France, USA, Spain

How confident are you in your answer? 0 (I'm guessing) – 3 (I'm very confident)

PART IV: WORLD WAR 2 EVENTS

Below, you will be given a series of events that may or may not have occurred during World

War 2.

You will be asked to decide whether each event occurred during World War 2. Please decide whether each of the following events took place during World War 2.

Please decide whether each of the following events took place during World War II.

If you are not sure, please just guess.

Battle of Leyte Gulf
Battle of Britain
Battle of the Bulge
German Invasion of Poland
Battle of Midway
Battle of Verdun
Yalta Conference
Battle of Ypres
Japanese Invasion of Siberia
German Invasion of Portugal
Battle of Kursk
Battle of Sydney
Battle of Guadalcanal
Siege of Edinburgh
Lisbon Conference
The Dardanelles Campaign
Operation Barbarossa
Siege of Leningrad
Pearl Harbor
Battle of Stalingrad
Battle of Tannenberg
Summit of the West
Battle of Salt Flats
Treaty of Versailles
Battle of El Alamein
Battle of Moscow
Battle of Jutland
Battle of Berlin
Battle of the Somme
Operation Submarine
Battle of Okinawa
Battle of the Marne
Battle of Gallipoli
D-Day
Sinking of the Lusitania
Battle of Iwo Jima

Bombing of Hiroshima/Nagasaki
The Russian Revolution
The Holocaust
Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

**PART V a): CONTRIBUTION OF OWN COUNTRY TO EITHER VICTORY OR LOSS
OF WORLD WAR 2**

(The questionnaire given in each country contains the name of the country, rather than “your country,” in the following questions.)

Version 1 (shown to countries formerly on the Allied side):

In terms of percentage, what do you think was your country’s contribution to the victory of World War 2?

In other words, how responsible was your country for the victory of the war?

Percent Responsible (slider from 0-100%)

Version 2 (shown to countries formerly on the Axis side):

Germany, Italy, and Japan fought on the same side for six years during World War 2. What percentage of the war effort was provided by your country?

Percent Responsible (slider from 0-100%)

PART V b): CONTRIBUTION OF ALLIES TO THE VICTORY OF WORLD WAR 2

In terms of percentage, how much do you think each of the following countries contributed to the Allied victory of World War 2?

In other words, how responsible was each country for the Allied victory of World War 2?

Please enter a value next to each country.

France %

New Zealand %

United States of America %

China %

Soviet Union %

Britain %

Australia %

Canada %

Other countries %

Total % (The sum of the percentages entered above)

PART VI: STATEMENTS ABOUT WORLD WAR 2

Below, you will be provided with a series of statements.

Please move the slider to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the content of each statement.

Placing the slider in the center at the 5 position on the scale indicates that you neither agree nor disagree.

The Battle of Kursk was a major turning point in the war.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

China's efforts against the Japanese in the war in the Pacific were critical to the Allied victory.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

World War 2 ended with the Battle of Berlin.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The Battle of Stalingrad was a major turning point in the war.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The work of British code breakers played a crucial role in the defeat of Germany.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The Battle of Britain, the air war over Britain, was a major turning point in the war.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The main field of battle in the war was the eastern front, between Germany and the Soviet Union

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

Italy's military contributed less to the Axis war efforts because the people didn't think
Mussolini's goals were worth fighting for.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The reason the United States dropped the Atomic bomb on two Japanese cities was to end the
war.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The economic consequences of the Treaty of Versailles in 1918 were the major reason for
Hitler's rise to power.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

D-Day, the Allied invasion of France, determined the outcome of the war.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

Germany would probably have won the war if Hitler had left the planning of battles to his
generals.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

As Churchill is sometimes quoted, Italy could be considered "the soft underbelly" of the Axis
powers.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

Japan was the most successful country in World War 2 in terms of briefly capturing and occupying the largest territories of the world.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The French underground was decisive in the Allies' winning World War 2.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The resilience of the people living in London during Germany's frequent bombings contributed heavily to the Allies remaining strong, recovering, and achieving final victory.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The Allied invasion of Italy was a decisive military operation that put pressure on Germany.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

Japan's goal in World War 2 was to stop western imperialism.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The attack on Pearl Harbor can be considered the real starting point of World War 2.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The consequences of the Massacre of Nanking in China helped launch World War 2.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

The French officials who cooperated with Germany did so only in an attempt to protect their citizens.

Strongly Disagree -----Strongly Agree

Post-Survey Questions

Please answer the following questions.

Did you look up any answers or information about World War 2 while completing this survey?

Yes No

During what part of the survey did you look something up?

What did you look up?

Please be as specific as possible.

How difficult did you find this survey to complete?

Very Difficult

Difficult

Somewhat Difficult

Neutral

Somewhat Easy

Easy

Very Easy

Please provide any other comments you might have below:
