

The Apologies Project: Small Wins Ways to Reduce Militarizing Memories

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Collective historical memories often fuel military conflicts, especially memories of historical humiliations. National history can become personal memory, motivating wars of revenge or seizure of territory. “Remember the Alamo.” National governments promote the patriotic passions of mythic history via school curricula, memorializing holidays, public rituals, and mass media. Hence, national governments are unlikely to correct historical beliefs or apologize for historic wrongs, especially in societies with militaristic values (eg, USA, UK, Israel, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Japan, Turkey). The Apologies Project is conceived to encourage local groups and local governments 1) to research their nation’s historic wrongs; 2) to make public apologies to the national or ethnic groups who suffered those wrongs; 3) to memorialize apologies with monuments, plaques, scholarships, or other enduring markers; and 4) to make these activities public via website and other media presentations.