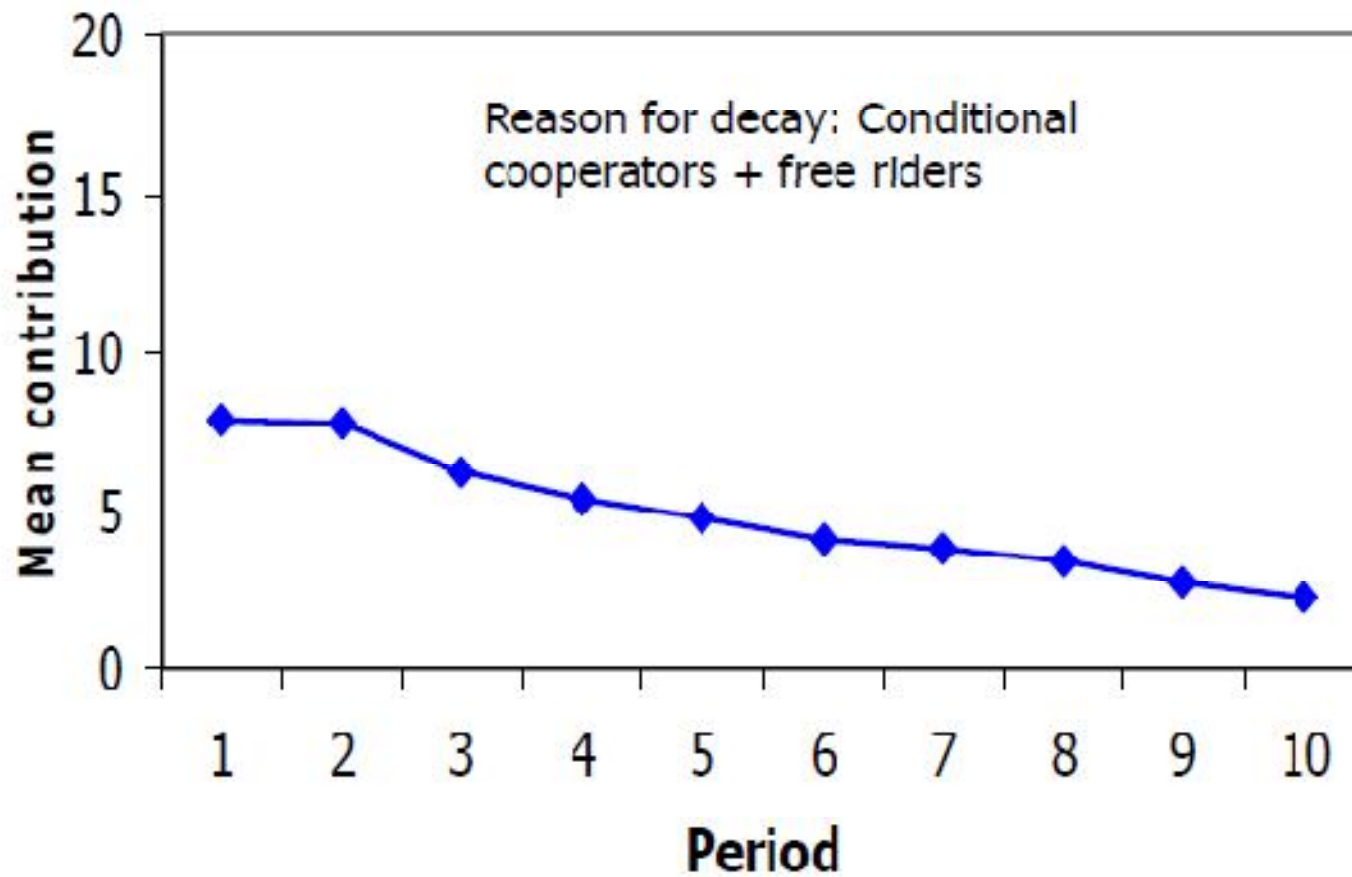# Xenophobia in the Lab

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Xenophobia is a reaction against *foreigners* (however these may be defined)

Typical outcome

Fischbacher, Gächter, Fehr (Econ Letters 2001; Fischbacher & Gächter (2008)
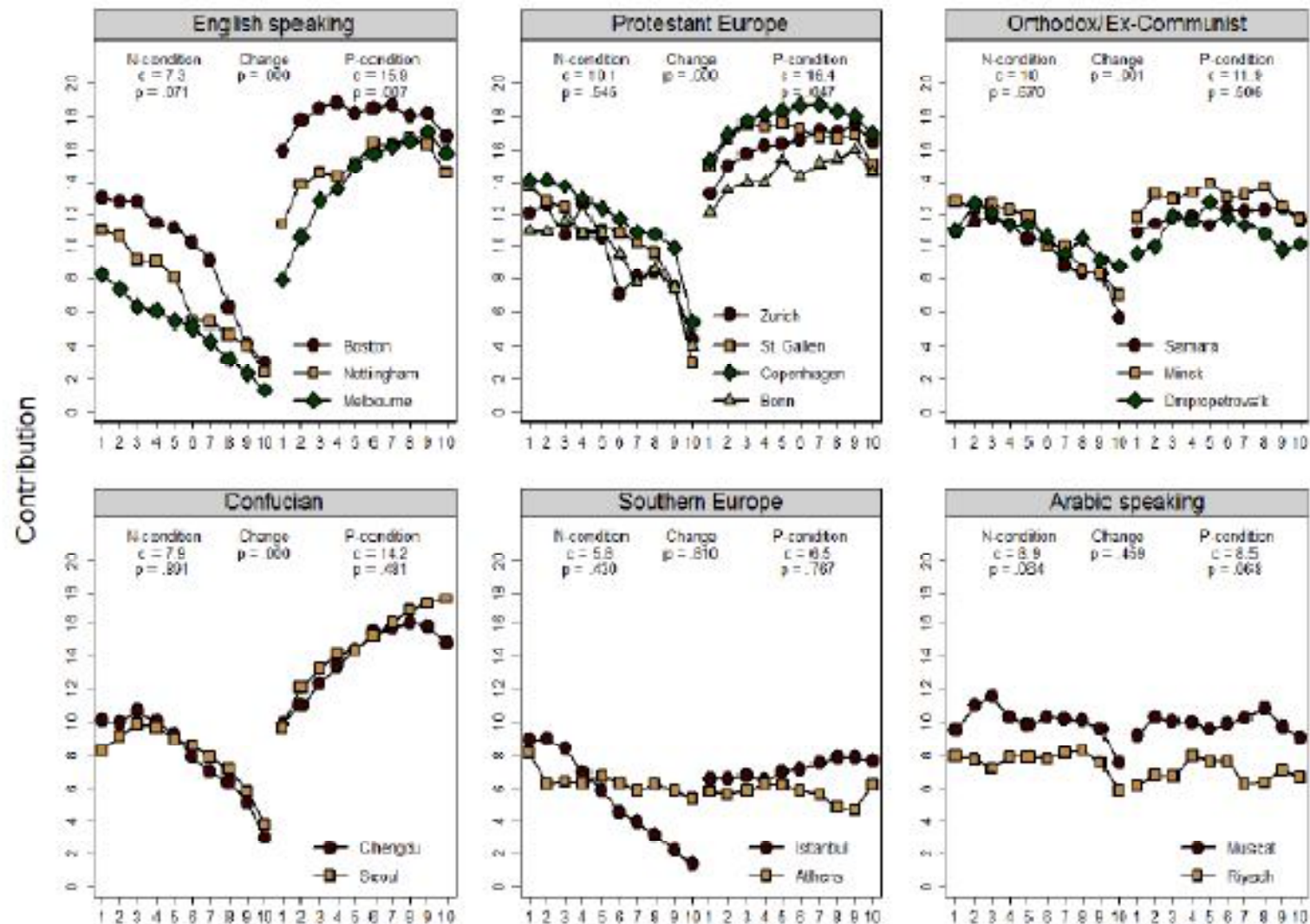
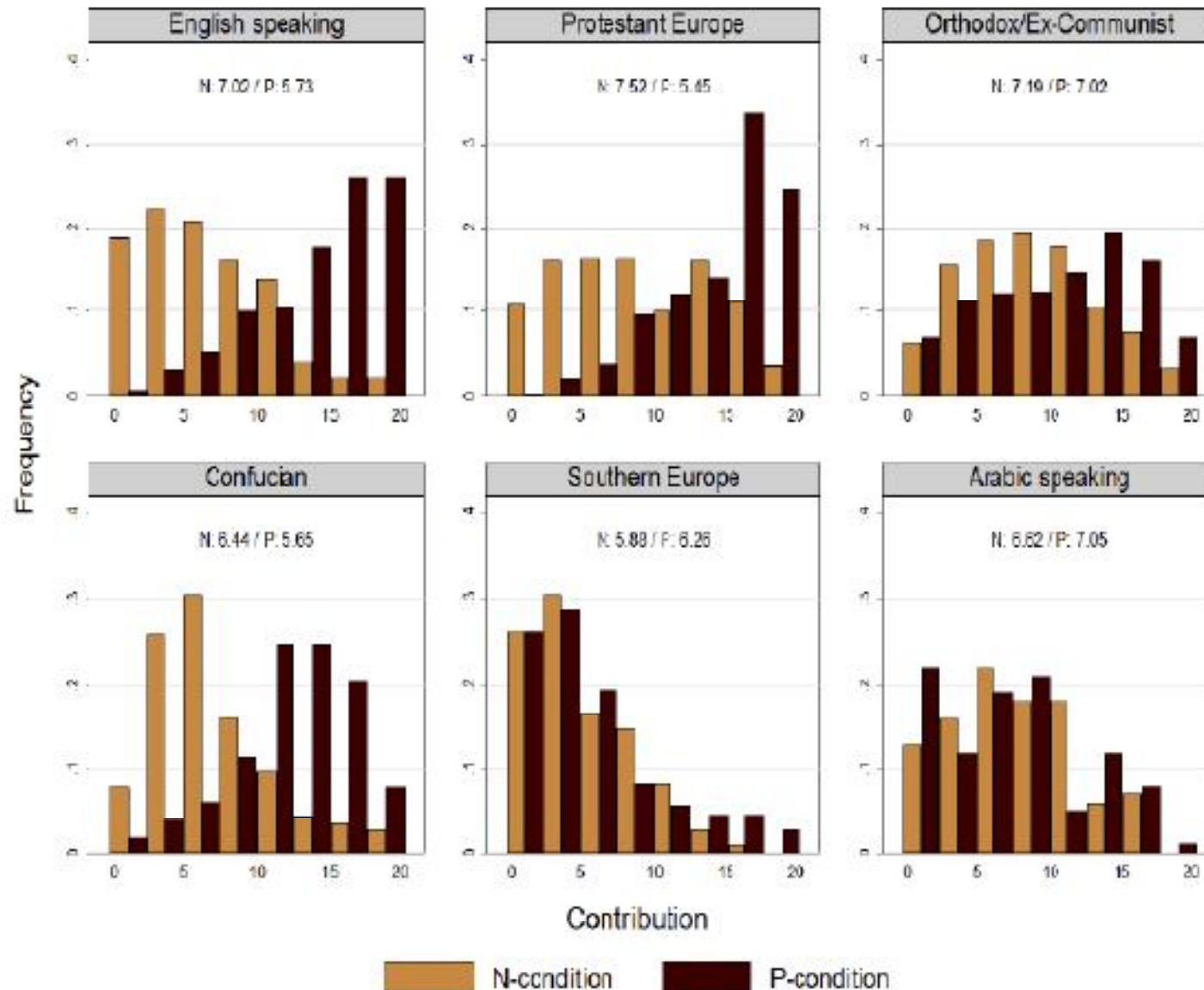# Altruistic punishment (in Zurich)
Fehr & Gächter *Nature* 2002

Cultural influences on cooperation levels
Gächter, Herrmann & Thöni (2010); Data from Herrmann et al. 2008
Cultural areas according to Baker and Inglehart, *Am Soc Rev* 2000 and Hofstede 2001

Distribution of individual average contributions

- Hitler blamed the Jews for the "stab in the back," that allegedly caused Germany to lose World War I and he disseminated the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. According to Hitler, the Social Democrate were Jews ("I gradually became aware that the Social Democratic press was directly predominated by Jews"), the communist were Jews ("the Jewish doctrine of Marxism") and so on.

- Ukrainian pogroms in 1905 were held under the slogans like "Russia is falling, kill Jews who want to rule you".

- 2010, Japan. The crisis hardened tension in Japanese society. Japanese nationalists held several violence acts against Koreans, Chinese, etc.

- Russia, the end of XX, the beginning of the XXI cent. Violence (supported by the police) against Caucasians. 87 people killed in 2008, 92 – in 2009 (analytical centre "Sova") because of being of "wrong" nationality, more than 400 are injured every year.

Sources of conflicts

(1) *Migration* (a reaction to an increasing number of migrants, including both asylum seekers and so-called economic migrants);

(2) *Socio-economic changes* (particularly in reaction to economic recession and unemployment);

(3) *Social structure* (the influence of age and a lower level of education);

(4) *Globalization* (a reaction to supranational institutions and the commercialization of culture);

(5) *Nationalism* (increasing in times/periods when national integrity is under threat, after the end of the Cold War, during the intensive process of integration into the EU, under the impact of globalization);

(6) *Right-wing movements* (become stronger when faith in democratic institutions is shaken; movements stimulate talk of foreigners as a threat);

(7) *Uncertainty* (a factor which cuts across the others, linked with the sense of existential and emotional threat; fear of an 'influx' of foreigners, taking away jobs and introducing a different culture; overall, this is stronger in post-communist countries).

It all can be united into a fear of possible threat

Hatred and violence stem from "seeing oneself under attack" (Baumeister, 1995)

Most of these events were happening during economic recessions or natural disasters.

This provides us with an alternative economic explanation of the connection between lynching and economic downturns noted by Hovland and Sears (1940).

Japan and Germany after the WWII – no anti-American or anti-European or anti-soviet hysteria because of fast economic growth

Evidence on Group Punishments

- ## Evidence for greater in-group punishments
  - ☐ Shinada, Yamagishi, Ohmura (2004)
    - cooperators punished in-group rather than out-group members, punishment is related to negative emotions (fear, anger, unfairness)
    - non-cooperators punished out-group cheaters more strongly than in-group cheaters, not related to negative emotions

- ## Evidence for greater out-group punishments
  - ☐ Carpenter & Matthews (2002)
    - 50% of the participants punished outside the group at least once – mostly because of social reciprocity

Research Questions

- **Test**
  - What subjects believe about compatriots and foreigners when apparent contributions are low but could be due to bad shock or actual low contribution?
  - How willing are subjects punish in group and out group when they don't know their real contributions?
  - How willing are subjects to retaliate against in group and out group after receiving improper punishment?
- **Does nationalism increase contributions and punishment?**
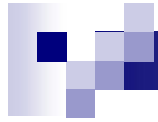
Setup

- 10 round public goods game with private shocks to contributions.
- 8 subjects
  - Symmetric 4 against 4 groups
  - Asymmetric 3 against 5
- Subjects can contribute at only two levels H=2L or L.
- Group benefit is 2xcontribution.
- Punishment costs to the punishers
- Points system with a unique conversion rate for each country.

Predictions

- We expect different legal cultures to punish differently with imperfect information:
  - Countries where punishing the innocent is of greater concern will punish less with noise (Western Countries).
  - Countries where not punishing the guilty is more important will punish more (China).
- Punishment of out group will always be greater.
- Counter punishments will escalate to higher levels than with no groups.
- There will be more antisocial punishments due to:
  - More free riding.
  - Punishment by low contributors of exante high contributors.
- Minority groups are disproportionately likely to be punished.

Thank you for your attention!