Memorials, social representations and collective memory of political repression in Russia

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The hypothesis that a commemorative monument contains traces of the memory of the event to which it refers appears to be banal. It is because it contains these traces, even being in the design state, this very monument was chosen to commemorate the event in question. In the present research it has been assumed that the analysis of a corpus of monument projects could help to overcome the difficulties associated with the analysis of a single monument by highlighting regularities in materialization of the event memory by the artists. If it were possible to detect such regularities, then they could be considered as traces of the event in the memory of the artists. And if such regularities exist, it is also questionable to what extent they are recognized by the public. In order to address these issues, we have reviewed a corpus of photographs of the monument projects proposed for a competition organized by the Moscow City Council in collaboration with the Gulag Museum in 2015 to commemorate the victims of political repression. Theoretical frameworks that have been chosen for this research are those of collective memory and social representations.

1 History

The political terror that took place in Russia from 1917 till 1953 is one of the most terrible and painful periods in the Soviet history. There were several waves of terror. The Russian society is still divided in terms of the attitudes towards these events and towards the main political figures responsible for the terror. The struggle with real and imagined enemies started after the October Revolution in 1917. The terror was legalized on the 5^{th} of September, 1918 when the decree *About the red terror* was signed by the Council of people's Commissaries (Yakovlev, 2003).

Both in case of Holocaust and the political repression in the Soviet Union people would be executed or repressed not for the actions they had committed, but for the fact who they were (Applebaum, 2003). However, in case of Holocaust the enemy was clearly defined, and in case of the Soviet repression the category was not stable or absolute. There was even constructed a new category to name people against whom the repression were directed – *the enemy of people*, but more new groups were being defined as the enemies at different historical moments. More than 70% of victims of the Stalin's terror were *ordinary people* and not a part of the Soviet's elite, or members of the Communist party (Cohen, 2010). So called Great Terror corresponds to the period of 1936-1938. 1.7 million of people were arrested during only 17 months (1937-1938), more than 700 000 of them were killed and 300-400 thousands were sent out to Siberia, Kazakhstan or other remote places of the Soviet Union.

There was created the system of mass terror which was based on the idea of conspiracy. According to it the country was full of hidden enemies, traitors and saboteurs who wanted to destroy the young Soviet state. For each arrested person NKVD (The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) was searching for a group of conspirators, so it was like a geometric progression where ten arrests leaded to hundreds of others, thousands arrests resulted in millions more (Cohen, 2010). Being isolated, scared, tortured the arrested people made false confessions.

The special rhetoric alike in case of Holocaust was created and used in order to dehumanise the enemies (Applebaum, 2003). Lenin and Stalin blamed some imagined enemies – saboteurs or agents of foreign countries – for the economic hardships in the Soviet Union, in the late 30s Stalin called the opponents an impurity from which the Communist party must be cleaned.

More than sixty years passed since Khrushchev's speech about the personality cult (of Stalin) and the rehabilitation process initiation, but the total number of repressed people is still uncertain (from 5 to 30 million (Etkind, 2013) or as Cohen says (2010) – it varies from 12 to 20 million of victims only during Stalin's era from 1929 till 1953). The rehabilitation process ceased during the Brezhnev's era, when the subject of political repression was out of the public discourse again, and the rehabilitation process was reinitiated by a grandchild of the repressed person – Mikhail Gorbatchev – in the late 80s.

As Etkind says (2013) the Holocaust was a destruction of the *Other*, whereas the Soviet terror was directed towards own people (innocent citizens), it was like a suicide. This specificity of the situation in Russia complicates functioning of the mechanisms that should work in a society that has lived through such a catastrophe.

2 Collective memory and social representation

It is to the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1950), that we owe the term of *collective memory*. Analyzing the formation of individual memory this author emphasizes primarily the eminently social character of the human subject. Then he deduces that most of our experiments take place in the *social frameworks* that we share with others (social belongings, social practices, language, etc.). Social frameworks are also

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benchmarks that we use when we recall an event. So that individual memory is necessarily affected by the seal of social inserts. Collective memory can be defined as the product of the convergent activity of individuals who remember the past as members of a group or a community. This work of recollection is not a mere restitution. It is a reconstruction in the present (Fraïssé, 2008), that aimed to make the past comprehensible at the time of its actualization and compatible with the social identity of the group. That is to say that with the image that this group wants to maintain of itself. From this point of view, the collective memory of a group maintains a distant relation with the factual reality of the past insofar as it rests on mechanisms of selection and transformation (Bartlett, 1932) that allow its adjustment to group identity.

In his writings on collective memory, Halbwachs (1950) repeatedly uses the notion of representation. When he proposes examples illustrating his purpose, we find the expressions such as *representation of an event* or *representation of the past*. At the time when Halbwachs wrote it, he only had the notion of *collective representation* (Durkheim, 1898). This notion presupposes the existence of world views shared by all members of a society, but Halbwachs attempts to explain that different groups that constitute a society carry different collective memories. Since the theory of social representations (Moscovici, 1961) had not yet been formulated, Halbwachs could not see that the collective memory he tried to theorize about was very close to the phenomenon of social representation and that the two notions could be easily assimilated (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Wagoner, 2015).

Initially Moscovici (1961) defines social representations (SRs) as *universes of opinion* related to objects in the social environment of individuals. The content of a SR can be expressed in terms of information, opinions or beliefs shared by members of a group about a given object (Moliner, Rateau & Cohen-Scali, 2002). These constructions are the result of the socio-cognitive processes that individuals use to understand their social environment and to give it meaning. They are also the result of different communication processes (interindividual and collective) that lead to the emergence of consensus among social groups. According to Moscovici, among the main processes involved in the emergence of a SR, is the *anchoring* process that responds to a principle of cognitive coherence. When a SR emerges within a social group, it necessarily enters the cognitive universe that precedes it. In other words, a social group develops a new representation by ensuring that it remains compatible with its pre-existing SRs, norms and values.

According to Abric (1987), SRs are the result of a process of collective reconstruction of reality. This work is carried out with respect for the pre-existing history, norms, values and beliefs of the social group (anchoring process). It is also realized with the concern to maintain a positive social identity of the group. We can think that the *representations of the past* of which Halbwachs was talking may also be SRs.

3 SRs and images

The theory developed by Moscovici (1961) is based on several concepts that establish explicit links between the SRs and the images. We have seen above that according to Moscovici, anchoring is a major process in the emergence of the SRs. Besides

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this process, the author also evokes a process of *objectification* that responds to a desire to reduce uncertainty. This process consists of transformation of beliefs and opinions into information. In such a way that these beliefs and opinions appear no longer as the product of cognitive activity of the person who carries them, but as the reflections of objective external reality. Moscovici points out that the process of objectification associates a concrete image with an abstract meaning, while the anchoring process injects meaning into an unfamiliar figure. It leads him to write that « Representation = image / meaning; in other words, that it equates every image to an idea and every idea to an image » (*op.cit.*, p. 63).

We find this concern for the image-forming aspect of the SRs in the notion of a *figurative nucleus*, which originates in the observations made by the author during his interviews on the theme of psychoanalysis. In many cases abstract notions of psychoanalytic theory are evoked by individuals as concrete things having their own existence. This is the case for the notions of *complex* or *unconscious*. The figurative nucleus is therefore conceived as a structure that aggregates concepts that are initially abstract (in the case of psychoanalysis), or unfamiliar (in the general case), and finally objectified.

At the cognitive level, one obviously thinks about the notion of *mental image*, as it has been studied by experimental psychology (see in particular Denis, 1989). Mental images are defined as « mental evocations of previous perceptual experiences » (Denis, 1989, p. 40) and numerous works (Paivio, 1971) show that each word can be associated with an *imagery value*, which reflects its ability to evoke mental images in the reader or listener. We know that when words refer to aspects of the social world, they also carry visualisation. Some studies suggest that the expression of a SR can be accompanied by a process of mental imagery (Moliner, 2008; Cohen & Moliner, 2017). In the same direction, a research by Wagner, Kronberger and Seifert (2002) suggests that some elements of a SR can be considered as an *image belief* because they are directly linked to visual information. To put it another way, it seems that when individuals express themselves about an object of the SR, they only are not simply mobilizing a particular lexicon. They also activate a repertoire of mental images. We can therefore assume that these repertoires of mental images constitute a link between the SRs and the images.

4 Images, SRs and collective memory

Many art historians were interested in the analysis of images. Panofsky (1967) is the one who formulated the methodological proposal that has the most direct link to the SRT. His idea concerns with the formalization of three fundamental notions that constitute the basis of *iconology* is explained in the chapter by Moliner (see this volume).

He we underline that according to Panofsky, the choice of motives that illustrate a theme obeys to « … underlying principles that reveal the basic mentality of a nation, period, class, religious or philosophical conviction » (*op.cit.*, p. 20). Thus it seems that it might be interesting to transpose the iconological method to the study of SRs. The application of this method to the analysis of a corpus of images relating to a

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given theme could inform us about the SR that the producers of these images have about this theme. And when this theme corresponds to an event of the past, it could inform us about their collective memory about this theme.

5 Study 1: The memory of the victims of political repression. Forms and motives

The corpus was initially composed of 336 photographs of monument projects. These projects were developed by the Russian artists, sculptors and designers in response to the competition organized by the Moscow City Government and the Gulag History Museum in 2015. The theme of the competition was the memory of political repression victims. The corpus of photographs was reduced to 329 because of the poor quality or duplication.

5.1 Results

5.1.1 Inventory of forms

329 photographs were analyzed in terms of forms that they represented. 24 categories of forms were identified (see Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency of forms appearance (categories presented in at least 10% of photos).

Forms	%
Human form (person or group, whole body or its' part)	46,50%
Autonomous space (monument defines a space where one can walk)	40,43%
Inscription (text, names, dates)	27,96%
Block (stone or other material supporting an object or placed inside the monument)	27,05%
Opening (door, window, opening in the wall or in the ground)	23,71%
Wall	23,40%
Various forms	21,28%
Spacer grid	19,45%
Vertical alignment (poles, tree trunks etc ...)	18,84%
Panel (wall delimiting space or supporting images or inscriptions)	18,24%
Barbed wire fence	13,37%
Christian cross	12,46%

The category *various forms* is combined of forms which could not be the subject of any independent category, because of their infrequency.

5.1.2 Identification of motives

In order to identify co-occurrences of forms (motives) only the categories of forms present in at least 10% of the photographs are retained and submitted to Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The KMO index is mediocre (0.51) that could be explained by the creativity and the great diversity of the monument projects. The

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Bartlett's test is significant ($p < .0001$). We can therefore conclude that, although the correlations between the categories of forms are weak, but they are not all null.

Table 2. PCA (varimax rotation) on forms appeared at least in 10% of projects

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Vertical alignment	-0.006695	**-0.809238**	-0.168854	-0.071795	0.032384
Barbed wire fence	0.133110	**-0.646271**	0.275707	0.138209	-0.106398
Block	0.237220	0.032526	-0.030965	**0.645981**	0.198716
Cross	0.041598	-0.139058	0.250045	0.082743	**0.691873**
Human form	0.347436	0.227159	**0.649261**	0.115143	-0.175694
Spacer grid	-0.081165	0.189005	-0.184243	-0.055777	**0.661978**
Inscriptions	-0.185819	-0.209833	**0.727939**	-0.174384	0.189348
Wall	**-0.793066**	0.127096	0.230227	0.041082	-0.094134
Opening	**-0.651990**	0.196229	-0.082472	0.094962	0.238689
Panel	0.262571	0.077857	0.017119	**-0.797722**	0.181494
Autonomous space	**-0.593715**	-0.165354	-0.222435	-0.136528	-0.054128
% Variance	16.34%	11.89%	11.10%	10.72%	9.79%

The PCA extracts 5 factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1 (Table 2). These 5 cumulative factors account for 59.84% of the total variance.

The first factor reunites the categories *wall*, *opening* and *autonomous space*. These three categories correspond to the prison motive. The artists who chose this motive propose monuments in the form of enclosed spaces where visitors can walk.

The second factor integrates two categories: *vertical alignments* and *barbed wire fence*. Combination of these two categories refers to camps motive, where, the artists chose to represent the fences of the Gulag camps.

The third factor combines the categories: *human form* and *inscription*. This association refers to the victims motive.

The fourth factor is a bipolar one. It contrasts the *bloc* category with the *panels* category. On the *bloc* pole, there are monuments where space is dotted with blocks of stone. On the opposite pole, the space of the monuments contains panels that, in the most cases, bear inscriptions. Since there is only one category of strongly saturated forms on each pole of the factor, we conclude that this factor does not reveal any motive.

The fifth factor reunites the categories *cross* and *grid*. The association could correspond to a metaphorical combination of prison and victims motives. Indeed, the form *grid* can be seen as a metaphor for the prison (a metonymy) and the form *cross* evokes a human form. However, it should be noted that by choosing this latter form, the artists may thought about the religious reference that it implies. Thus the analysis reveals that three motives are present in the participating projects: prison, camps,

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and victims. Table 3 presents the frequency of occurrence of these motives in the corpus, depending on whether each motive is shown completely or partially[1].

Table 3. Frequency of complete or partial appearance of motives

	Prison	**Camps**	**Victims**
Complete	5.47%	8.21%	16.11%
Partial	21.28%	15.20%	30.70%
Total	26.75%	23.41%	46.81%

It is observed that the victims motive is the most frequently presented in the projects. In total this motive appears completely or partially in 46.81% of the projects. These three motives appear completely or partially in the majority of projects. 90 projects (27%) show one of these three motives completely, 185 projects (56%) show one of these motives partially. 246 projects (74%) show one of these motives partially or completely. We can conclude that the collective memory of political repression in Russia is organized around three elements: the victims, the prison and the camps. But with the artists who proposed the monument projects, it is the victims motive that predominates. This should not be surprising given the fact that the competition tender explicitly stated that the projects presented should commemorate the *victims of political repression*. The camps motive and prison motive also illustrate the theme of repression.

5.1.3 Age effect

The website that displaced the monument projects had no indications about the artists' age, but with the assistance of the Gulag museum we got information about age of 80 artists. First of all we verified that the distribution of the three previously identified motives was the same in this subgroup as in the whole sample.

The mean age of the 80 artists is 47,5 (from 22 to 88 years old), for the further analysis we have considered the two extreme quartiles of the age distribution by constituting a group of artists whose age is between 22 and 33 years and a group of artists whose age varies from 67 to 88 years. By comparing the mean scores of the three motives in the projects presented by the artists in these two groups, we found that the older artists used the victims motive more often in comparison with the young ones (M=0.52, SD=0.41 vs M=0.25, SD=0.33, t=2.37, p=.02). However, there is no significant difference between the two groups in case other motives. The obtained result could be explained in the two following ways:

1) The older artists use the victims motive more often, because their age group is closer to the *epoch of the catastrophe* (Etkind, 2013), to the victimized people in comparison with the younger artists.

[1] A motive is shown completely when all the forms that compose the motive are visible. It is shown partially when at least half of the forms are visible.

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2) The older artists use the victims motive more often, because they are more conformist than the younger ones. They therefore more respect to the competition's theme.

6 Study 2: Recognition of the motives

6.1 Method

A total of 106 students of psychology, educational sciences, and the language from a university volunteered in the study (90 women, 16 men, M_{age}=18.95 years, SD_{age}=1.36). None of the participants had a victim of the repression in their family. We analyzed whether the motives revealed in Study 1 would be recognized by the participants.

The study took place at a computer pool of the University. Participants were presented with eight photographs of the projects in a random order (each of the three motives was illustrated by two photographs of projects; the last two projects did not represent any motives – were called as neutral motive) and were asked to evaluate to what extent (from 1= 'not at all'to 10= 'very much') each project represented the memory of the victims of political repression. Then they had to associate a word or an expression that came to their mind as a reaction to each project photograph. We have chosen two photographs for each motive. One photograph presents the motive in rather an analogical style, while the other one presents the motive more in the metaphorical style. Finally, participants were asked to report their sex, age, level of education. They were also asked to indicate whether they have a victim of political repression (1917 to 1953) in their family and to precise the family ties with the victim.

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Representativeness scores

The scores of the representativeness for all the photographs of the same motive are significantly correlated ($p < .02$). A representativeness score for each type of image (prison motive, camps motive, victims motive, and neutral motive) was calculated for each participant. The representativeness scores were not significantly affected either by the photographs presentations' order, or by the sex of the participants.

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) carried out according to a plan in repeated measurements has revealed a significant effect of the motive type ($F(3, 315) = 43{,}178$, $p < .0001$). The LSD test confirms that the differences in scores between the four motives are all significant. It was found that the victims motive was considered as the most representative, then the other two motives, successively: the camps motive and the prison motive, and finally, the neutral motive (See Figure 1). In terms of the SRT we can assume that for the participants the representation of political repression is objectified by the figure of the victims. That could explain why the representativeness score of the photographs showing the victims motive is the highest one.

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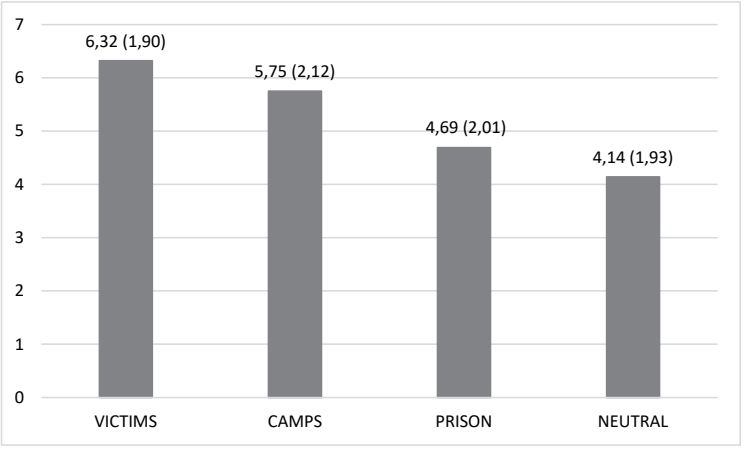


Figure 1. Mean and standard deviation for the four types of images according to the motives

6.2.2 Verbal associations

Adjectives, verbs, adverbs and names expressed by the participants were analysed. In order to have an overview of the verbal associations, we considered all words that were produced by more than 5% of the participants for, at least, one of the three motives. We found that for the victims motive the most frequent associations (liberty 22%, memory 11%, pressure 9%, monument 8%, power 7%, and oppression 6%) were semantically the closest to the theme (memory of the victims of political repression). The camps motive has been clearly identified by the participants (liberty 17%, cage 8%, prison 8%, way 7%, iron 7%, wire 6%, prohibition 6%, confinement 6%, despair 5%). It does not elicit associations that are semantically linked to the theme of political repression. The prison motive does not appear to be correctly identified. It was revealed that there are only four associations evoking the confinement (isolation 7%, walls 7%, cage 5% and limitation 6%). On the other hand, the other words associated with this motive refer rather to the form or to the style of the monuments shown on the photographs (box 9%, art 6%, monument 5%, modern 5% and cube 5%). For 6% of the participants, the prison motive refers to a term associated with the competition theme (memory), and 6% of the participants also indicate that this motive evokes *nothing* for them.

The results suggest that the motive used more frequently by designers (the victims motive, see Study 1) is the one that reveals the closest verbal associations to the theme of commemoration. It seems that the three motives led to rather contrasting verbal associations. It can therefore be assumed that the participants interpreted these three motives quite differently. The motive of the victims seems to have been interpreted in terms of memory of oppression. The camps motive seems to have been interpreted in terms of confinement. The prison motive seems to have given rise to ambiguous interpretations, oscillating between the theme of confinement and that of artistic production.

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7 Study 3: Generation effect

In this last study, the key question was whether the representativeness of monuments showing the victims motive was evaluated in the same manner in group of individuals who have victims in their families and in group of individuals who have no victims among their family members. Indeed, we may think that this factor constitutes an important *social framework* for collective memory. The events of the repressive period had family repercussions for individuals who had victims in their families. Therefore it can be assumed that the memory of these events was transmitted to them in a family setting. It can also be assumed that the age of individuals is a factor in this problem. A priori, elderly people who have victims in their families are more likely to have close ties with these victims (i.e. parents, grandparents). Young people are more likely to have more distant ties (great grandparents). In the first case, the social framework of memory is close, probably it is loaded with affects, and in the second case it is less proximate.

The situation is quite different for people who have no victims in their families. For them the probability that the memory of the events of political repression was transmitted to them in a family setting is low. This memory was transmitted to them in an institutional setting such as school and university, or by mass media. We can therefore think that, whatever their age, the memory of events linked to repression was transmitted to them in the similar manner, without particular affect.

Following these considerations we expect to find out an interaction between the age of individuals and the fact of presence/ absence of a victim in their families. More specifically, it is supposed that among people who have victims in their families, we should observe differences in the evaluations of representativity of monuments showing victims in terms of age: the older persons evaluate these monuments as more representative than the younger ones. On the contrary, age should not play any role in individuals without a victim in their family.

7.1 Method

To test our hypothesis, a total of 171 participants (117 women and 54 men, from 23 to 81 years old, mean age 49 years, sd=13 years, median age=48 years) was recruited through snowballing. Of these participants, 98 had a victim in their families and 73 had not. As in the Study 2, participants were asked to participate in an online study and the procedure was exactly the same.

7.2 Results

7.2.1 Age of participants and family relationship to victims

As a first step, we wanted to verify that among participants who have victims in their families, the oldest participants were those with the closest family relationship to the victim. For this purpose we assigned a family link score to each participant with a victim in their family. This score is significantly correlated with the participants' age ($r=.62$, $p<.01$). Thus, as it might be expected, the older the participants with a victim in their families, the closer family ties to a victim they have.

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7.2.2 Age of participants, presence of a victim in the family and evaluation of the representativeness of the monuments

In order to test the hypothesis, the sample was divided into two age groups (<= than the median and > than the median). Four sub-groups were formed as a matter of their age group and the presence or absence of a victim in their families.

The evaluations of representativeness of the two monuments showing the victims motive were transformed into a single score. This score was subjected to ANOVA (Age group: Youngest vs Oldest x Victim: Yes vs No). The ANOVA shows an effect of the age group factor (F1-167=13.55, p<.001). Overall, the younger participants consider monuments as more representative than the older ones (M=5.28, SD=0.19 vs M=4.27, SD=0.18). But there is also an interaction at the marginal significance level between age group and the presence/absence of victims in the family (F1-167=3.41, p=.06). Among participants who have no victims in their families, the representativeness score does not differ significantly as a matter of age group (see Figure 2). On the other hand, among participants who have victims in their families, it was found that the older participants consider the monuments as less representative than the younger participants (F1-167=17.91, p<.001).

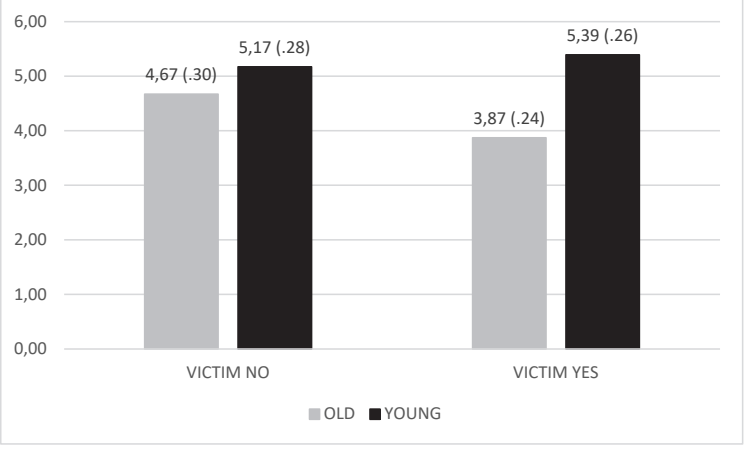


Figure 2. Mean and standard deviation for representativeness of victim motive by age of participants and presence of victims in family

This result is confirmed by the correlation analysis between the family tie score and the monuments' representativeness score (r= -.29, p<.01). Thus, the closer the family tie with a victim, the less representative the monuments showing the victims motive are deemed to be. These findings run counter to our hypothesis since we thought that participants with close victims (the older participants) would find these monuments more representative than participants with distant victims (the younger participants).

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7.2.3 Connotations of verbal associations relating to monuments showing the victims motive

We compared the associations produced by the younger and the older participants by counting the number of participants who produced a negative association about at least one of the two monuments. These verbal associations with negative connotations relate either to the aesthetics of the monument or to its lack of meaning. In the youth group, there were 9 participants in this case (19% of the participants). Among the elderly, there were 22 (41%). It therefore appears that the descendants of victims are significantly more likely to make negative judgments about monuments showing the victims motive (Chi-square=5.84, p=.01).

8 Discussion

In Study 1 it has been shown that in response to the theme of the competition, the majority of artists had used the victims motive for their monument proposals. This study reveals that the older artists used this motive more often than the younger ones. To interpret these results, a conformity effect can be applied, since the theme of the competition explicitly mentioned the victims of political repression. In this sense, it can be assumed that the older artists would have been more conformist than the younger ones. But these results can also be interpreted by considering that it is more likely that the older artists have victims in their own families or immediate surroundings. In this sense, their memory of events would be more marked by the memory of these victims they may have known.

In study 2, it was found that the students considered the victims motive as the most representative of political repression. Put in perspective with Study 1, this result suggests that artists probably chose the right motive (that of the victims), to address a young population without family ties to victims of repression. This result also suggests that the evaluations of monuments showing the victims motive done by young people are independent of these people family history.

In Study 3, it was found that the evaluations of representativeness of monuments done by participants without family ties to victims did not differ by age. But among participants with family ties to victims, we found that the oldest participants did not judge monuments in the same way as the youngest ones. However, contrary to our hypothesis, the older participants saw the monuments as less representative than the younger participants. These results are accompanied by one observation: among participants with a victim in their families, there were the older participants who produced more negative verbal associations with monuments showing the victims motive in comparison with the younger participants.

Taken together the results of the three studies raise two important questions. How is it possible that descendants of victims, with close family ties to these victims, produce such negative overall responses about memorials showing the victims motive? At the same time, how is it possible that young individuals, without a victim in their

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families, consider these monuments as more representative than the close descendants of victims? [2]

We can try to answer these questions by formulating a hypothesis. It could be indeed that, in Russian society, the figure of the victims imposed itself as a hegemonic representation (Moscovici, 1988) associated with the period of repression. The advantage of this hegemonic representation would lie in the fact that it calls for compassion and memory, but also in the fact that it would make any comparison between the past and the present impossible. How can we talk today about political repression if this term is associated in the collective memory with millions of victims? The hegemonic nature of this representation would therefore explain the results that we observed in studies 1 and 2 of this research. But it may also explain those we obtained in Study 3. In fact, the descendants of the victims of political repression today constitute a minority in Russia. Yet this minority finds itself confronted with a hegemonic representation that justifies compassion and commemoration. But these descendants probably aspire more, as it has been observed in other countries (Jodelet, 2012), namely, an official recognition of responsibility and a request for forgiveness from the Russian state. Perhaps it is this discrepancy that allows us to understand the responses of the descendants in our study.

Finally, this work has proved the value of the method of image analysis that we have implemented. Apart from the fact that this method can be applied to a wide range of corpuses (drawings, photographs, paintings), it allows to extract motives from a corpus of images by reducing the subjectivity of the analyses.

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[2] There is a significant difference between the representativeness scores produced by the 106 participants in Study 2 and those produced by the 52 descendants of victims in Study 3 ($M=6.32$ vs $M=3.87$, $t=7.65$, $p<.001$).

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