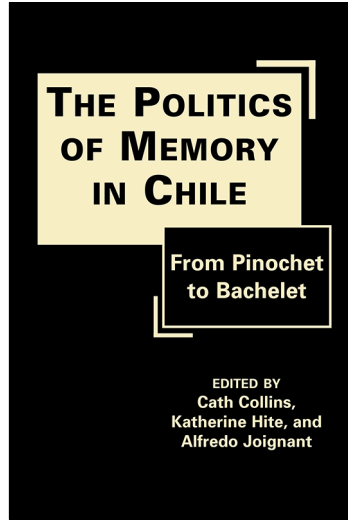


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The Politics of  
Memory in Chile:  
From Pinochet to Bachelet

edited by  
Cath Collins,  
Katherine Hite,  
and Alfredo Joignant

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# 1

## The Politics of Memory in Chile

*Katherine Hite, Cath Collins,  
and Alfredo Joignant*

This book examines Chilean politics and the nature of democratization in the country since 1990, with an emphasis on how the politics of memory about the recent past visibly shapes the country's political community in the present. The term "politics of memory" is most often associated with study of policies specifically designed to address the legacy of past atrocities—primarily, prosecutions, truth-telling, memorialization, and reparations. Several of this volume's chapters take up these issues in regard to Chile's military-led authoritarian regime of 1973 to 1990, presided over by Augusto Pinochet. Memory politics is also associated with what is commonly referred to as "transitional justice" literature, tracing the dynamic post-authoritarian interactions of particular political institutions, policies, and actors including the judiciary, the military, and human rights organizations. Transitional justice literature also often highlights the potential or actual influence of international actors and institutions on local power dynamics. Yet we suggest that the politics of memory is an equally and in some ways potentially more illuminating framework for study of human rights trajectories, given the heavy symbolic load that human rights policies carry and the fact that they often become vectors for broader political contestation.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, a politics of memory frame allows us to reach back in time, going beyond exclusive attention to human rights violations from the 1973–1990 dictatorship period to consider lived experiences of violence that mark distinct temporalities for distinct collectivities. It is clear, for example, from the works of Florencia Mallon and Claudio

Barrientos that Chile's indigenous Mapuche communities possess deep historical understandings of what constitutes trauma, as well as what constitutes continuity, in Chile.<sup>2</sup> For the Mapuche, dictatorship-era state violence was in some sense unsurprising and in another important sense hardly exceptional.<sup>3</sup> The Chilean right, for its part, consistently refers to the 1960s land reform and land takeovers that preceded the pre-coup Popular Unity government of 1970–1973 as a haunting traumatic memory, ushering in a polarized political climate that the right experienced as chaos and lived through in genuine fear.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the imprint of this period is so strong that, when the recently inaugurated national Museum of Memory and Human Rights was first announced, there were serious calls from the right for its narrative to begin in 1964, rather than 1973. For the right, the earlier date marks not only the origins but also the chronological beginning of the political violence at issue. Politics of memory studies heighten our analytical sensitivity to these distinct temporalities, and in general to the importance of timing and subjective periodization in understanding actor motivation and hence political processes.

We suggest that what is gained conceptually from study of the politics of memory is greater emphasis on the relations of both silence and voice to rebuilding a democratic polity. Collective memories are both foundational to and constitutive of collective political identities. These memories are experienced in intersubjective, often tension-ridden, relationship to others. For countries needing to work through atrocious pasts, reconstructing a rich, plural state and society might mean the cathartic airing of memories of conflict, in pursuit of the constitution or reconstitution of a public sphere in Arendtian terms. Alternatively, the recall and expression of conflictive memories may not simply be catharsis—something to be “gotten through”—but itself a perennial and healthy constituent of the new polity. The idea that there is any version of history that cannot be tolerated may, after all, itself lean toward the totalitarian.

This volume makes explicit and examines the appropriation of memory for varied political ends. We emphasize how key actors and powerbrokers politically deploy or react to distinct narratives of the past, an approach that distinguishes it from political learning literature in which the political class itself is the dependent variable. The political learning approach is undoubtedly important for examining the effects of memories of past political trauma on elites during democratization.<sup>5</sup> Yet a memory approach may recast questions such as “*what* is learned?” or “*is* it learned?” into “how are memories of particularly traumatic periods interpreted and utilized?” Such an approach guards against portraying

democratic politics as inherently or inescapably about moderation and compromise and also avoids a normative construction of democracy as a self-evident value or innate good that needs to be (re)learned. Instead, we can examine the active appropriation or instrumentalization of memories of both democratic and nondemocratic periods and show how each acts upon present-day politics.

One ought not perhaps even to expect the (re)construction of a public sphere to be straightforward. Powerful incumbents or ex-incumbents will resist particular versions of the past unfavorable to their self-images or interests. Conflictive memories can be perceived as destabilizing, while many may quite understandably not want to hear, much less be invited to relive, traumatic narratives.<sup>6</sup> Those who have reconciled themselves to a particular version may meanwhile be disturbed if internal contradictions are exposed.<sup>7</sup>

Let us place the dramatic run-up to the 2009 Chilean presidential elections in a politics of memory frame. Thirty-six-year-old congressman Marco Enríquez-Ominami renounced his Socialist Party membership and emerged as a viable independent presidential candidate. It was a major blow for the center-left Concertación coalition that had governed the country for two decades and that fielded former Chilean president Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994–2000) as its (finally unsuccessful) candidate. Enríquez-Ominami's campaign slogan was *Chile Cambió* (Chile Changed). This seemed to mean that the political leadership that sought in the 1980s to bring the dictatorship to an end, and in the 1990s to rechart a democratic course, had now accomplished its objectives and needed to step aside. Enríquez-Ominami called for open political debate, for loosening the grip of those at the top who monopolized the reins of power and stifled the emergence of new voices and ideas.

Enríquez-Ominami's harsh criticism of the political elite clearly resonated with many Chileans, even if they did not see him as ready to govern. Although a mainstream political alternative finally won the day, the desire for change was sufficiently strong to end two decades of Concertación ascendancy. The narrow second-round triumph of right-wing presidential candidate Sebastián Piñera also implied a preference for someone who was not, or not exclusively, a career politician.<sup>8</sup> Although Piñera's fortunes did not ride high for long, both the 2011 wave of popular, primarily student, discontent that contributed to Piñera's disapproval ratings and the subsequent fate of Enríquez-Ominami speak volumes about the generalized desire for "something different."

Enríquez-Ominami's emergence as a would-be popular hero did not, finally, last long beyond his unsuccessful presidential effort (although he did resurface in 2012, announcing another independent candidacy for the 2013 presidential race). Although his relative youth and readiness to dispense with politics as usual might have entitled him to expect a following among the disaffected student leaders who virtually monopolized the political agenda during 2011, the student movement's "antipolitics" stamp was so strong that overtures from established politicians were firmly and publicly rebuffed. In this respect, Enríquez-Ominami's complex personal history may in the end have served merely to reinforce the similarities with his fellow politicians—anecdotally, as one student remarked, "in the last analysis he's just another *hijo de* [son of]." <sup>9</sup> Born in 1973, only months before the Chilean military coup, Enríquez-Ominami has strong ties to two men who symbolize, respectively, revolutionary intransigence and post-transitional pragmatism. He is the son of famous left-wing revolutionary leader Miguel Enríquez, killed in 1974 during a shootout with military intelligence agents. The young Enríquez-Ominami subsequently grew up in exile in France with his mother Manuela Gumucio, daughter of a Christian Democrat senator, and Carlos Ominami, a former comrade of his father's. Ominami in effect adopted the boy—hence the second surname—and introduced him from an early age to political work, including campaigning and media strategy. <sup>10</sup> Despite the disorientation and even alienation he experienced on returning to Chile after a childhood and adolescence spent in Europe, Enríquez-Ominami ran for and won a Socialist Party congressional seat in the 2006 elections, in the same district in which his adoptive father was a senator. <sup>11</sup>

In the run-up to the 2009 polls the Socialist Party (PS) appeared to be unraveling at the seams. Party president Camilo Escalona was unable to prevent the resignation of several leading party stalwarts, two of whom went on to launch presidential campaigns of their own. Escalona refused Carlos Ominami's petition to the Socialists to be allowed to support both the Concertación's official candidate, Frei, and his own son in the campaign. "The PS has worked hard in coalition for thirty-five years," Escalona argued, "and this includes supporting one coalition candidate for the past twenty years." <sup>12</sup>

Escalona's assertion contrasts strongly with historical memories of the Socialist Party in the years preceding the long transition back to democracy initiated in 1990, memories of political intransigence and bitter divisions with the political center. Underlying Escalona's stalwart support for a single candidate not of his own party is a haunting memory of the three-way, left-center-right split in the 1970 presidential elections

that brought Salvador Allende to power. Acrimony between the Socialists and centrist Christian Democrats, in opposition, proved fatal to Allende's subsequent stormy three-year term. "Chile changed," said Marco Enríquez-Ominami, while Escalona might say "Don't be so sure" or "What changed is that we work in coalition, not in division." These are clearly distinct, generationally influenced claims of what has changed and what has not.

Thus if we look at the story about Marco Enríquez-Ominami in a politics of memory frame, we can observe how the candidate makes selective use of the memory of his revolutionary father in ways that might have been unimaginable a decade before.<sup>13</sup> One might argue that the predominant image of Miguel Enríquez circulating in Chile today has shifted notably away from the "terrorist" persona constructed by regime propaganda towards the left's memory of him as a "man of conviction" who died for his ideals.<sup>14</sup> If this transformation really has taken place, many factors are probably at work. They include the effect Enríquez-Ominami himself had on public opinion, as well as the resurgence of principled antiparty street politics so clearly visible in the 2011 student movement. Today a range of alternative memory narratives about the conflictive past is publicly surfacing.

Traumatic memories seem inevitably both to resurface and to trouble society when they do so. Calls to remember atrocious pasts and to bring perpetrators to justice can also raise other pressing concerns, including very immediate problems of ongoing violence and injustice. Impunity for past human rights violations may signal impunity for perpetrators of violence in the present, in which case demands to right past injustices will probably shade into demands for social justice in the here and now. In Chile, for example, the persistent advance of judicial investigations since 1998 has at different times called into question the presence of Pinochet-era regime collaborators in public office or academia,<sup>15</sup> the fitness of former members of illicit security services to continue to serve in the army, and the dictatorship-era service record of police officers accused of present-day acts of brutality. On a more systemic scale, 2011's social and student protests clearly represented at some level the rejection of persistent inequalities now seen not as unfinished business for the neoliberal model but rather as a direct consequence of it.

### **Political Science and the Politics of Memory**

Political scientists once steered clear of the study of memory. There seemed to be three principal reasons for this neglect. First, political

scientists saw memory as too subjective, properly the realm of psychology and accordingly difficult to measure, quantify, or operationalize in ways that could generate understanding of the actual practice of politics. Second, political scientists tended to hold that the aspects of memory relevant to social science belonged more properly to historians or sociologists. Sorting facts, debating validity, and accessing particularities were simply not the interests then driving the discipline. Third, those political scientists who did admit the importance of collective memories took the view that, since these were to be found codified in social and political institutions, it was more useful to study these institutions than to adopt memory as a direct object of study.

Despite these biases against the study of memory as a lens on politics, some political scientists have come to appreciate how a range of historical memories that powerfully influence politics in observable ways fall outside the rubric of institutional analysis. Both Alfredo Joignant's and Carlos Huneeus and Sebastián Ibarra's chapters for this volume powerfully illustrate how political memories—constructions of fact, myth, and interpretation that constitute, precisely, the *noninstitutionalized* dimensions of politics—provide rich seams of associations actively mined for purposes of contestation and palpably expressed through the media, public opinion, and political discourse. In contexts that involve transition from conflict, repression, and trauma, memories prove difficult to ignore politically. Memories are often mobilized by all actors, including the state, to challenge opponents.

One can imagine a continuum at one end of which civil and social conflict has been so extreme, with society so polarized, that there is little hope of reconstructing a viable national project inclusive of the formerly persecuted. Political elites in such a society would continue to appeal to the most negative images and sentiments of their particular, victorious, constituencies, portraying secession, banishment of the vanquished, or the resurgence of open conflict as the only possible futures. One might, for example, place the discourse of Slobodan Milošević at this end of the spectrum, given his determination to resuscitate a suppressed collective memory and channel it towards destructive ends.<sup>16</sup> Such resuscitation reflects the timeless quality of memory, particularly traumatic memory. This can be recalled, manipulated, and filtered through the current political moment to serve an array of political objectives, just as it can on occasion prove the genuine origin of current grievances.

At the other end of the continuum would sit a society that, despite experiencing a similar conflict, with clear winners and losers, had managed to arrive at an inclusionary national project featuring both a representative political society and a participatory civil society. Such an



outcome might occur, for example, where political elites have cast or recast political discourse into nonessentializing terms, some form of pardon and blame has been assumed or shared, and new political institutions grant freedom from fear and allow for a wide—through probably not unlimited<sup>17</sup>—range of political expression.

Framed in this way, memory can be deployed in the service of various political projects. As Alexander Wilde's chapter for this volume also signals, both classic and more contemporary works in sociology<sup>18</sup> and history<sup>19</sup> argue persuasively that memory is reconstructed over generations to fit (as well as to shape) particular social and political contexts. The first *transitóloga* to study this phenomenon deeply was Spanish political scientist Paloma Aguilar. Documenting the reinvention of political discourse during and after the Franco era in Spain, she traces the emergence of a progressively more consensualist elite interpretation of conflict that facilitated political transition.<sup>20</sup> For Chile, Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira have traced cycles of conflict and subsequent elite amnesia stretching back to the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> They record a recurring tendency to apply amnesty to perpetrators while subsequently expunging violent incidents from the official record. The myth of exceptionalist Chilean democratic and republican traditions is thereby preserved.

Common to these works are at least three arguments: first, that different generations are entirely capable of interpreting the same political events differently; second, that political ideology or partisanship continues to weigh heavily on current interpretations of past political events; and third, that in the aftermath of traumatic conflict, a substantial portion of both citizens and elites profoundly desire consensual collective memory images, crafted by the political class, that convey national unity and peace. Such consensual images may overcome ideologically driven memory divides, at least for a while. The studies also remind us that, though national political trauma may have occurred decades before, memories of it continue to influence politics at all levels.

Memories can also be powerfully enduring in spite of attempts by the dominant political discourse to shape them or blunt their force. 'Official memories' can feel far more imposed than embraced, and as Cath Collins and Katherine Hite's chapter for this volume emphasizes, grassroots memory mobilizing in countries like Chile often seems to be defined in direct opposition to the expressed views of state actors and institutions. Social historians of Chile document how individual and collective memories part dramatically and are not obviously reconcilable, generating the uneasy coexistence of radically incom-

patible memories of one single period or event: matter and antimatter, never to be brought together for fear of the destruction that would ensue.<sup>22</sup>

Through the 1990s, students of memory politics in Chile often commented on the “muffled” quality of public discussions of the past.<sup>23</sup> In a country with a highly institutionalized political party system, the fact that party leaderships retreated from memory politics relegated memory debates to the margins of public life. Alexander Wilde captured this marginalizing effect best in a seminal article on what he termed “irruptions” of memory in 1990s Chile in an otherwise seemingly silent, evasive political scenario.<sup>24</sup> He extends that analysis to the Concertación’s second decade in his chapter in this volume.

Interestingly, while opinion polls often indicate that human rights is relatively low on the list of Chilean citizens’ daily concerns, memoirs and other types of cultural production including documentaries, feature films, and theatrical accounts of the repressive past were, and are, avidly consumed. The beginnings of this renewed visibility were evident around the 25<sup>th</sup> (1998) and 30<sup>th</sup> (2003) anniversaries of the coup. TV footage from 1973 was aired extensively around these dates, and the LOM publishing house brought out a special “September Collection” dedicated to confessional biographies and other first-hand accounts. A steady stream of film productions<sup>25</sup> has more recently been complemented by two fictionalized TV series<sup>26</sup> directly or indirectly addressing 1980s repressive violence. The two series drew considerable ratings and much social comment. There is, then, a sense in which “human rights” as a polling question did not capture a broader, demonstrable interest in the political events of the dictatorship.

Carlos Huneeus’s long-running public opinion studies show a remarkable continuity in the political divisions underlying Chilean views of the coup, Pinochet, and the military’s human rights record.<sup>27</sup> The data indicate a strong intertwining of political affiliation with opinions regarding the past, and it is difficult to separate cause and effect. Do present-day political-ideological commitments determine citizens’ interpretations of the past, or have sharply differing memories of the past defined current political commitments?

Despite overall continuities in public opinion about the traumatic past, Huneeus also detects some shifts over time as well as along generational lines. For example, when asked in 1990 whether there had been a civil war-like situation in Chile in 1973, 41 percent of Chileans responded affirmatively. In 1999 this percentage dropped to 33 percent.<sup>28</sup> Asked in 2003 whether they would describe the coup primarily as the end of democracy or as the liberation of the country

from Marxism, 60 percent of young Chileans opted for the former. Those over sixty years of age divided almost evenly into two groups: 43 percent agreed with the majority youth preference while 41 percent preferred the description of “liberation from Marxism.”<sup>29</sup> The suggestion is that memories are malleable only to some extent, within the parameters of some basic continuities. Carlos Huneeus and Sebastián Ibarra provide a chapter for this volume that presents a deeper analysis of these trends.

### The Pinochet Effect

On 11 September 1998, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chilean coup (and, unbeknownst to all, the month that would precede Pinochet's arrest in London), Chile's *Televisión Nacional*, TVN, produced a "talking heads" exchange among four leading politicians, two from the right and two from the center-left. The first participant was Sergio Diez, Chilean ambassador to the Organization of American States during the dictatorship, and at the time of the television program a senator for the right-wing Renovación Nacional (RN) party. The second right-wing politician was Sergio Fernández, a former interior minister under the dictatorship and in 1998 a senator for the other leading rightist party, the Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI). Next was Gutemberg Martínez, a congressman and past president of the centrist Christian Democratic Party, Partido Demócrata Cristiano (DC). The fourth participant was Socialist Party (PS) senator Carlos Ominami, at that time campaign manager to PS presidential candidate Ricardo Lagos. The four panelist congressmen were asked to reflect on how Chileans should remember the 1973 coup and its aftermath, and suggest how the country might move toward reconciliation regarding the period. What follows is an excerpt from this conversation.

*TVN "Programa de Medianoche", broadcast 11 September 1998*<sup>30</sup>

Sergio Diez, RN: "It is important that we remember, we must understand, very calmly, what happened to us. I think that the departure point was verbal violence coming from the heads of the parties that became more and more violent. There were parties that incorporated, as part of their doctrine, the language and doctrine of armed struggle, from those like Corvalán [Communist Party leader], who incorporated the banner of armed struggle even *after* the victory of Allende. *All* the parties had, perhaps not exactly paramilitary units, we'll call them defense units . . . . We must be very careful, all of us

who have responsibility, to watch our words, for they become more important than the victory of our beliefs.”

Carlos Ominami, PS: “I agree that this was a particular moment, of social convulsion, of economic crisis . . . . I used violent language and I have been very self-critical. But what comes *after* is the systematic *practice* of violence. What comes after the actual 11th of September is a project *founded* on violence, when they bomb *La Moneda* [the presidential palace], when people are killed, when there are concentration camps . . . .”

Sergio Fernández, UDI (when asked if such violence was necessary): “We have to ask *why* we reached that point. The seeds of hatred began before. Unfortunately, they released things that could not be controlled. But clearly this came from *before*. [Here the interviewer interjects, “But was the repression necessary?”] We were in chaos, convulsion that had to be stopped, which was stopped, which allowed us to reach 1990 in which a peaceful transition could occur . . . .”

The television program then continued with previously recorded questions for the guests, including one from Communist Party leader Gladys Marín, directed to Sergio Diez. Marín asked Diez why, during his time as ambassador, he had denied the human rights violations that were occurring, including the disappearance of her own husband. Diez replied, as on other occasions, that he only had the information the government supplied to him.

Gutemberg Martínez then attempted to press Diez to admit the government had lied. Diez, evading the issue, shifted the conversation back to the underlying reasons for the 1973 coup and claimed that during his time as a senator in the Popular Unity period the political right had clear reasons to believe in the imminent possibility of a civil war. Ominami challenged this claim, while Sergio Fernández emphatically argued that the Popular Unity government had repeatedly violated the Chilean constitution after 1970.

Later in the program, a recorded question from right-wing columnist and ardent Pinochet supporter Hermógenes Pérez de Arce asked Ominami to clarify recent comments from presidential candidate Ricardo Lagos. These had been to the effect that one of Lagos’s self-imposed missions in office would be to “complete the inconclusive legacy of Allende”. An interviewer opened the question to all four panelists, not before rephrasing it in even starker terms as “whether Ricardo Lagos presents a destabilizing risk to Chile.” Diez, the first to respond, stated: “Lagos is untested . . . . The potential danger is

regarding his ability to manage, to lead [not just the country, but] his party, as we are not confident about some sectors of his party”.

In many ways, this conversation encapsulates a larger political struggle over memory, filtered through the lens of seventeen years of dictatorship and, at that time, eight years of post-authoritarian rule. The right depicts the left as unpredictable and a threat; the left reminds the country that it was the right who finally unleashed extreme violence.<sup>31</sup> The exchange perfectly demonstrated how thorny a task the four panelists found the reconciling of past and present, particularly when the past is “difficult,”<sup>32</sup> inconvenient, or denied. In such a context, repeated exhortations to “look forward” suggest not so much resolute vision as a desire to escape toward the future, thus rendering the past evanescent. The country stays eternally “in transit” somewhere between a guilt-ridden past and an uncomfortable, imperfect present.

Arguably, the image of the Allende government and subsequent coup that dominated the Chilean mass media pre-1998 was the one put forward by Diez and Fernández. These right-wing litanies held that violence, chaos, social convulsion, and crisis had their origins in the Popular Unity years before the coup when, according to their collective memory, angry left-wing leaders and activists had preached armed struggle, preparing the ground for a violent seizure of power.<sup>33</sup> According to this view, the Popular Unity government had repeatedly violated the Chilean constitution, and so memories should focus on *why* the coup was necessary, rather than on its subsequent effects. By this logic, the only important question about Ricardo Lagos’s 2000 presidential candidacy is whether he would be capable of managing his own party, and the country, better than Salvador Allende had done twenty-five years before.

Socialist senator Ominami, on the other hand, placed the locus of political memory in the violence and brutality of the dictatorship, whose possible “causes” must take second place to the moral outrage occasioned by its consequences. Ominami’s position throughout the broadcast was that the left, for all it had recognized its past errors, was not responsible for the violence of the coup and its aftermath.<sup>34</sup> He also defended Lagos as someone who had more than proven his leadership credentials.

Lagos himself, despite being the Concertación’s first Socialist president,<sup>35</sup> generally sought to downplay his associations with Allende and the pre-dictatorship Socialist Party during his campaign and the first part of his period in office (2000–2006). According to Socialist senator Ricardo Núñez, the Socialists were acutely conscious during this time of the need to prove their ability to govern:

We had to show we could govern well. And the countries that govern well are those that recognize the socioeconomic realities of their countries. And in the first years the economic success of the transition was spectacular. Because we had a budget surplus, 7 percent growth rates, we moved one million poor people out of absolute poverty, the market flourished, and we felt this had to be a constitutive factor of the Chilean transition. Political success, economic success. This required not returning to the past, not returning to '73.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, Pinochet's detention in London and subsequent return to Chile finally forced Lagos to confront the past more directly. Images of Pinochet returning triumphantly to Santiago from his 503-day UK detention just as Lagos assumed the presidency in early 2000 belied the Chilean and British governments' assertions that the dictator was too old and infirm to be prosecuted. The time had come for Lagos to take the offensive, however reluctantly, on the past. The administration opened the doors of the presidential palace to the public, and Lagos went on to take a much more vocal stance on the life and death of Allende through a series of symbolic and discursive acts around the thirtieth anniversary of the coup, in 2003. Lagos began publicly to cast, even to embrace, Allende as a fallen democrat committed to his country.<sup>37</sup>

One of the assertions commonly made by members of the Chilean executive during Pinochet's detention was that Chileans had "chosen" their handling of Pinochet for better or for worse. Foreign ministry officials, and high-ranking members of the 1994–2000 Frei Ruiz-Tagle administration that Lagos had replaced, implied that some kind of preexisting agreement had been struck with the right and the military about how transition and, in particular, questions of accountability were to be managed.<sup>38</sup> In ways analogous to the Spanish experience, there had been an attempt in the final years before the return to electoral democracy to craft consensus and perception of shared responsibility around issues including the fate of the former dictator. It is in this sense that Chile's redemocratization is often treated as a classic case of so-called pacted transition, with an underlying set of blueprints that the military and civilians, right and left, were to follow.

This effort to buy in all the major players was in one sense almost unnecessary in Chile, where the prevailing conditions of transition in fact left very little room for maneuver. Felipe Agüero questions the supposedly "negotiated" character of this transition precisely on these grounds, holding that Chile's changes were not so much pacted as dictated by the outgoing regime in accordance with its own 1980 Constitution.<sup>39</sup> Through a number of constitutional authoritarian enclaves, the transition conceded to the military as an institution, and to

Pinochet personally, substantial continued power and autonomy.<sup>40</sup> It was not until the late 1990s that the democratic government began to see success in rolling back some of the more significant enclaves, amending the constitution to better subordinate the military to civilian authority.<sup>41</sup> In addition, military generational turnover appears to have produced important shifts regarding dispositions toward the past. The 1998 retirement of Pinochet himself, finally vacating the position of army commander in chief, was without a doubt the single major turning point in this regard.

How much this process of gradual change was aided by the so-called Pinochet effect<sup>42</sup>—the putative impact of Pinochet’s London arrest and lengthy detention on the Chilean judiciary—is a moot point. Few would deny, however, that Pinochet’s detention and prolonged physical absence opened space for alternative memory voices. The detention reconfigured those actors and institutions previously most allied with the former dictator, including the Chilean military, the judiciary, and the right, and produced a post-seismic terrain when it came to prosecuting human rights violations. As the very title for Wilde’s chapter for this volume emphasizes, the year 1998 can be conceptualized as the opening of a new “season of memory.”

This new season poses an interesting paradox. Given the regime-dominated transition, impunity for past crimes was largely preserved through the 1990s. Issues about the legacy of violence were subordinated and to a large extent superseded from 1995 by a modernization agenda, seen by the Concertación as a neutral topic upon whose importance both left and right could agree. Since 2000, however, memory-related issues have resurfaced in notable and highly visible ways. The Chilean judicial system charged hundreds of former and active-duty military officers for crimes related to dictatorship-era human rights violations.<sup>43</sup> Many more are currently under investigation. These included, until his death in December 2006, former dictator Augusto Pinochet, whose family and estate are still under investigation for tax fraud and other financial irregularities.

During 2003 and 2004 an official truth commission on political imprisonment and torture, known popularly as the Valech commission, heard testimonies from tens of thousands of survivors. Its final report recommended reparations that would finally treat the thorny issue of survived political violence with the same seriousness as that of deaths and disappearances.<sup>44</sup> Both Alexander Wilde’s and Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira’s chapters for this volume explore the contours of this commission. In addition, and as Cath Collins and Katherine Hite’s chapter analyzes, monuments and memorials to victims of human rights

violations have sprung up across the country. In 2010 outgoing president Michelle Bachelet inaugurated the national Museum of Memory and Human Rights.

These redoubled efforts at prosecutions, truth-telling, reparations, and commemoration, almost all catalyzed by nonstate actors, represent a fundamental set of shifts in post-Pinochet Chile's official and unofficial narratives of its traumatic past. It could be argued that an initially subdued or even absent official narrative gave way, at least briefly, to one that visibly legitimated survivors as well as absent (dead or disappeared) victims of dictatorship-era human rights violations. In all these ways Chile at the close of the first decade of the new millennium seemed to be undergoing a veritable flowering of truth-and-justice initiatives.

On the other hand, neither prosecutions, public revelations, nor memorials seemed to capture sustained, as distinct from sporadic, national attention, while some of the symbolic advances mentioned above have proven themselves susceptible to reversal under a subsequent right-wing administration (2010–2014). Episodes such as Pinochet's 1998 detention, the 2003 commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the coup, and the charging and detention of the entire Pinochet family in October 2007 for financial crimes certainly made headlines at home and abroad. However, memory-related politics and policies seem to have failed to enter the majority public imagination in any sustained way. As the Collins and Hite chapter for this volume shows, it is difficult to find evidence for a real impact of private and public memory sites beyond the preordained constituencies of the already conscientized. As Collins explores in her chapter on the politics of prosecutions, a steady stream of court verdicts finding the same individuals repeatedly guilty of the same offenses has become almost routine news, and does not in any case prevent a "hard core" of individuals continuing to believe in the innocence of those convicted.<sup>45</sup>

When a right-wing candidate won the presidency in early 2010, demonstrators in Santiago's wealthiest districts openly celebrated what they believed would be the impending release of those who had tortured and kidnapped in the name of the state. Although their expectations have not to date been met, a clear renaissance of revisionist tendencies under the new government saw various ambassadorial appointments of high-level regime supporters or apologists (most of which had finally to be rescinded); a frontal assault on suspected cases of fraud in reparations programs, and, most starkly, official toleration of a district mayor's sponsorship of a high-profile event paying homage to a convicted multiple murderer.<sup>46</sup> Neighboring countries have begun to remove street



furniture and other installations that smack of obeisance to former authoritarians,<sup>47</sup> but in Chile the capital's most prominent uptown monument is to one of the dictatorship's chief ideologues. A statue of former junta member Admiral Merino has pride of place outside the country's main naval museum, and the remote Patagonian highway called the Carretera Austral continues to boast an imposing cast iron banner reading "Carretera Austral—General Augusto Pinochet." These developments and continuities raise important questions about how citizens receive, absorb, interpret, and appropriate the performative and communicational dimensions of public monuments, memorials, and gestures.

### The Politics of Prosecutions

For some time, dominant political science literature on transitions from military rule suggested that holding former repressors accountable through prosecutions was politically risky where outgoing powerholders retained political influence and/or military might. Yet where transitions are toward democracy, incoming regimes bear a legal and arguably also a moral responsibility for prosecuting human rights violators. Postponing or evading prosecutions may in fact weaken the legitimacy of new democratic institutions by suggesting there is no or little substantial difference between the new regime and the old. A sense that the new regime is relatively powerless to hold the old one to account may also contribute to a generalized decision to actively forget, or perhaps simply to become indifferent to, what is past.

By establishing a dramatic break from the violence of the previous regime, incoming elites can earn political legitimacy and attempt to avoid a premature democratic *desencanto*, or disenchantment. Argentina's televised junta trials, held shortly after the 1983 transition-by-collapse, were explicitly designed to convince citizens of both the potency and the right intentions of the new democratic polity. Carlos Nino, a chief architect of the policy on prosecutions, claimed that retroactive justice strengthened "the moral consciousness of society. . . [to] help overcome the corporatism, anomie, and concentration of power that all too long have been hallmarks of Argentine society."<sup>48</sup>

Much depends of course on whether citizens, as distinct from incoming elites, accept the need to perfect democracy in this quite specific way. In this sense the experience of Chile, with its highly controlled transition and still-popular outgoing authoritarians, is particularly instructive. Is it enough to break with former violence by quietly ceasing to practice it, or is it necessary also to forcefully and

immediately seek to punish it? Does the act of prosecution lose force if it is long postponed? In Argentina, after all, early trials backfired, generating counterpressures that threatened democratic stability and led, eventually, to pardons. In general, prosecutions of former human rights violators have become most far-reaching in the Southern Cone *after* transitioning countries have achieved a comfortable degree of democratic political stability. Chile may be the paradigmatic case, and accordingly the chapter by Collins in this volume discusses the causes and consequences of trials as a political, rather than a solely juridical, phenomenon.

### **Truth-telling**

Government-sponsored truth-telling processes are mainly intended to produce societal acknowledgment of past atrocities and to drive home the message of *nunca más*, never again. Nevertheless, government and/or United Nations-orchestrated processes of truth-telling are fraught with debate over political intent: which truths should be privileged and which downplayed, where remembering should begin, whether testimonies should be private or public, whether witnesses and/or perpetrators will be subpoenaed, and how findings will be deployed. Anthropologist Richard Wilson argues that official truth commissions attempt to craft narratives of the past that, in rendering the present more governable, “manufacture bureaucratic legitimacy” for the state.<sup>49</sup> Aspirations such as this one often, however, neglect to define the precise judicial status or consequences of truths thus revealed, and lack the necessary tools to engineer the genuine transformation of official pronouncement into social truth.

The backstory and immediate political fate of Chile’s first official truth commission report is an important illustration of the constrained approach to truth-telling that prevailed during the first decade of Chile’s transition. President Patricio Aylwin (1990–1994), the country’s first elected leader in the wake of the seventeen-year military regime, set the need to clarify the truth and do justice to the subject of human rights, as a moral exigency necessary for reconciliation, as a high priority on his program of governmental tasks.<sup>50</sup> As had happened in Argentina under Alfonsín, the Aylwin government in Chile established a blue-ribbon truth commission, the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation (Comisión Nacional sobre Verdad y Reconciliación, CNVR). Its mandate was to acknowledge and document individual deaths and disappearances (though not survivors of political imprisonment or torture) under the dictatorship. Denied subpoena powers,<sup>51</sup> the

commission gathered documentation—some official, though none of military origin—and heard testimony behind closed doors from relatives and witnesses. Commissioners also drew extensively on existing investigative work by major national human rights organizations, left-wing political parties, and labor unions.

In 1991, after working for nine months, the CNVR (known popularly as the Rettig commission after its chairman) produced a succinct interpretation of the country's recent violent past, a list of recognized victims,<sup>52</sup> and a series of recommendations for reparations for victims' families and for reforms to help establish a "human rights culture" in Chile.<sup>53</sup> In a neat illustration of the political importance of how the past is temporalized, the report's historical section sets Chile's radical domestic left against the backdrop of the Cuban Revolution. The first Chilean political grouping discussed is the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), a Cuba-inspired group that advocated violent socialist transformation and spurned electoral participation. The choice to frame Chile's political violence in a Cold War context is deliberate. Despite the fact that all systematic state-sponsored repression occurred under the dictatorship and not before, commissioners determined that it was in the interest of national reconciliation to begin with discussion of the radical left and show how revolutionary discourse had contributed to the violent overthrow of the Allende government. Although the report went on to stress that political polarization by no means justified subsequent attempts to physically eradicate the left, this choice of starting point was undoubtedly designed to appease the powerful Chilean right. Right-wing views were also guaranteed a direct voice in the commission's deliberations: to produce "political balance," commissioners were drawn equally from center-left and right-wing affiliations. They included the influential conservative historian Gonzalo Vial, who took part in the drafting of the historical section of the report.

Equally striking in any consideration of how the Rettig commission's terms of reference were shaped by the memory politics of the time is the fact that, although the report goes to great lengths to explain that only states have international human rights obligations *per se*, it also documents fatal political violence of unknown or leftist political origin.<sup>54</sup> Following general practice in such commissions at the time, and citing its own nonjudicial status, the report did not name alleged perpetrators. The commission appeared to view its role less as specific repudiation and more as meticulous recognition of the most heinous abuses, in a format underwritten by the state and with a solid, defensible methodological grounding. Interestingly, while the report discussed ways to prevent repetition, it did not provide a definition of or

blueprint for the “reconciliation” that was an integral part of its official title.

Officially receiving the report in a publicly televised speech, Aylwin issued an emotional public apology as head of the state to survivors and victims’ relatives. He exhorted the military to cooperate voluntarily with the search for further information and the judiciary to assume a proactive, human rights-minded agenda. Neither was to prove forthcoming under his four-year tenure. The politically motivated assassination just three weeks later of outspoken right-wing senator and Pinochet loyalist Jaime Guzmán moreover aborted plans to engage the public in a collective exploration of Chile’s past through public promotion and discussion of the Rettig commission’s conclusions.<sup>55</sup> These events reflected a correlation of forces in which Chilean military prerogatives remained firmly in place: the armed forces publicly dismissed the report in the strongest possible terms.<sup>56</sup>

By 1998 conditions were somewhat different. Pinochet’s detention signaled a new level of vulnerability for the military, leading to a major shift in the military institutional position with respect to truth-telling. While Pinochet and the Chilean right had been fortified in the 1997 congressional elections, Pinochet’s arrest destroyed their confidence. For the first time, and assisted by the comparative friendly relationship of the military to then defense minister Edmundo Pérez Yoma, the military as an institution engaged in limited cooperation with the government to discuss the whereabouts of the disappeared.<sup>57</sup> Known as the Mesa de Diálogo, the government-organized dialogue included top military brass, civilian officials, and human rights lawyers. The document finally produced by the military in 2001 as a result of the Mesa’s final agreement acknowledged approximately 200 cases of death and disappearance, and supposedly gave details of the final destination of remains.<sup>58</sup>

The testimonies of relatives of the dead and disappeared meanwhile began to gain new visibility, particularly in the television media. Relatives rallied in support of both Pinochet’s arrest and Chilean judge Juan Guzmán’s efforts to continue investigating him on his return.<sup>59</sup> Human rights associations found new space for their accounts and demands and, crucially, survivors began to become publicly and judicially visible for almost the first time. Sensing a changing wind, some relatively moderate Chilean right-wing leaders met publicly with relatives’ associations. Lagos’s Valech commission, discussed above, was largely a rearguard action to prevent these changes challenging the governing coalition’s moral monopoly in the human rights field.<sup>60</sup> It was also prompted by a civil society campaign pointing out the contradiction

of Chile's being represented on the UN Working Group on Reparations while its own survivors had received no individual recognition or reparation.<sup>61</sup> As discussed in the chapters by Alexander Wilde and by Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman, the Valech commission would mark a distinct turning point in truth-telling, after whose two separate iterations<sup>62</sup> the torture or political imprisonment of more than 38,000 victims would be officially acknowledged.

In the more immediate term of 1998 and 1999, Pinochet's arrest "fronted" the past to the present, sending ardent supporters and opponents into the streets to rally to his defense or to celebrate his detention. Emotions initially ran high, with pro- and anti-Pinochet rallies confronting one another in high political drama. Pinochet's arrest demanded a response, a public debate.<sup>63</sup> His arrest forced conversations and arguments among political and not-so-political citizens, between parents and children, in public and in private. Chileans questioned whether Pinochet would have ever been put on trial at home, whether it was right for the Spanish, in particular, to attempt to prosecute him, and whether the former dictator deserved to be lionized or demonized.

In terms of memory politics, there is no question that Pinochet's detention granted voice even to the former dictator himself: in a relatively rare direct address to the country, Pinochet sent an open letter from detention proclaiming his innocence. The arrest even altered Chile's exceedingly hamstrung media environment: satirical newspaper *The Clinic*, which survives to this day, was founded in the aftermath of the arrest in disgust at the "party line" toed by much existing media and is named after the London Clinic where Pinochet was served with a UK arrest warrant on 16 October 1998. The paper has become an important outlet for some serious alternative journalism alongside its more puerile elements, and to this day politicians of all stripes fear being lampooned on its irreverent and often vulgar front cover. In summary, truth-telling, like justice, has proved a drawn-out and complex process in Chile: the sporadic dispensing of "official truths," always disputed by the major players involved, has been complicated further by the addition of a layer of judicial truths. More recently, the return of right-wing government has seen the consecration of the idea of many simultaneous truths or even of an official line that can step back in important interpretive, if not factual, ways from previously sanctioned accounts.

### **Commemoration across the Political Spectrum**

Commemorations from above and below are proliferating throughout the globe. They are deployed politically toward a vast array of purposes.

States have always recognized the political value of dates, naming, funerals of important leaders, monuments, and memorials. Symbolic remembrance can convey national unity, a sense of overcoming violent legacies, a commitment to political stability, or the strengthening of democracy. State-sponsored commemorations can also seek to silence unsavory dimensions of the past. On the other hand, grassroots groups may find that commemorations can be both cathartic and useful assertions of political identity. Memorials increasingly represent fitful negotiations between states and societies to symbolically right wrongs, recognize loss, or assert subaltern historical narratives. Commemorations can be windows into a complicated history and politics of past and present struggle.

Since 2000 Chile has witnessed an explosion of commemoration and memorial-making of various kinds. The predominant form is civil society-driven activity, involving often prolonged and fitful struggles among and between relatively small numbers of actors at both local and national levels. A wide variety of civil society-driven groups press an almost equally varied universe of official bodies in efforts to have memorial projects recognized and realized. A central thread, and recurring theme, is the question of the “right relationship” between official and private initiatives and constituencies in the design, construction, and interpretation of memorials.

Political elites from across the ideological spectrum are coming to accept the inevitability of the continued unearthing of traumatic pasts. Accordingly, they increasingly recognize the strategic value of taking the offensive when it comes to symbolic representations of those pasts. In Chile presidents Lagos and Bachelet visibly allied themselves with successful memorialization initiatives. Bachelet continued the trend of rehabilitation of the figure of Allende begun by Lagos, and also made a series of high-profile memorial visits within her first few months in office. Nor has it been lost on the Chilean right that symbolic remembrance is a crucial political arena, as Alfredo Joignant’s chapter on the Pinochet funeral attests. While Pinochet’s 2006 death and funeral or the Guzmán memorial constitute more recent examples, the dictatorship’s renaming of a prominent thoroughfare as “September 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue,” in celebration of the coup, illustrated this early symbolic prowess. Nonetheless, the Collins-Hite chapter in this volume explores how the Concertación’s actions stopped deliberately short of identification with a single, bold memory statement or narrative. The relationship of a right-wing government from 2010 with this same symbolic arena has predictably been even more cautious.

## **Overview of the Volume**

Alexander Wilde's chapter, "A Season of Memory", addresses how and why issues of justice and memory derived from a receding period of the past became increasingly prominent into a second decade of democratic transition. The chapter examines the courts as a political arena; government and opposition political initiatives; the changing human rights community; the role of the media; major "irruptions of memory" in public events, and burgeoning memorialization as policy and practice. It shows how the court- and media-centered dynamic of this period changed the way political leaders dealt with human rights issues.

Cath Collins's chapter, "The Politics of Justice", examines the dramatic shift from virtual impunity in the early post-dictatorship years to a judicial scenario with one of the highest numbers of human rights case prosecutions of any country in the region. She explores how reviving pending justice demands in the courts, while apparently more fruitful than continued political lobbying, may in the end have consigned families and activists again to a secondary role as the particularities of the investigative process dictate a hermetic, behind-closed-doors approach where judicial politics can seem more important than the facts of a case and outcomes fail both to satisfy protagonists and prove meaningful to a broader public.

In their chapter, "Torture as Public Policy", Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman signal focal historical-political moments in which political torture was at its height against so-called enemies of the state. The authors also explore how torture was denounced, even if such denunciations never featured prominently in Chilean politics. As in their seminal work on the history of political amnesties in Chile, Lira and Loveman tease out how torture was used alternately as an instrument of suppression and of exposure during key moments of political and social conflict. Their work affirms the contention that alternative temporal frames, looking beyond and preceding 1973–1990, reveal new possibilities for inviting a broader public into the discussion of human rights violations. Moreover, Lira and Loveman make the strong case that torture of political prisoners is an ongoing reality in Chile.

Cath Collins and Katherine Hite's chapter, "Memorial Fragments, Monumental Silences, and Reawakenings in Twenty-First Century Chile", analyzes the processes of memorialization in the aftermath of the Pinochet regime as a lens into contemporary Chilean politics. The authors identify a range of grassroots memorial activists whose struggles to reclaim memory sites represent a new political, and in some cases antipolitical, repertoire. The chapter suggests that memorials and

museums can invite, but do not guarantee, a conversation among a broader public about conflict and tragedy, toward understandings of political difference. They can also become vital spaces for political activism as well as for societal soul-searching, not only about the past, but also about the present and future.

In his chapter, “The Pinochet Funeral: Memory, History, and Immortality,” Alfredo Joignant analyzes the intense, albeit brief, historiographical debate occasioned by Pinochet’s death in December 2006. The dictator’s death set in motion struggles over interpretation of his regime, legacy, and posterity. History became the material of vigorous commemorative battles, oscillating between the idea of immortality (an “active” memory transcending Pinochet’s death) and the notion that his death would mark the extinction of public memories about the regime. The death of Pinochet resuscitated a recurring assertion that Chile’s long transition had finally come to a close, as if the death of the dictator promised to eradicate any future “irruptions of memory.”

Drawing primarily from public opinion data, Carlos Huneeus and Sebastián Ibarra’s chapter, “The Memory of the Pinochet Regime in Public Opinion”, analyzes several specific dimensions of the Pinochet legacy in Chilean political culture. Huneeus and Ibarra examine what continuities remain in terms of a “divided Chile” regarding attitudes, memories, and judgments about the past. In addition, the authors examine how public opinion has shifted since the 1970s, as well as what these shifts and continuities mean for Chilean politics.

## **Conclusions**

Globally, in Latin America in general, and in Chile in particular, there has been no avoiding the sustained, occasionally small but steady stream of voices and demands keeping painful pasts alive. Elite-level silences seem mostly to hamper rather than to lead society’s efforts to come to terms with the past. In the case of Chile, both elite-level silences and rote-learned elite and nonelite responses have arguably exacerbated societal disaffection with post-transitional politics. Since political leaders are central to creating the norms, rules, and institutions that frame societal explorations of contentious issues, coming to terms with potentially difficult historical memories is in large part contingent upon the ways in which such memories are vocalized and articulated between elite and citizenry.

Human rights issues narrowly defined have, perhaps deliberately, not been central to the national political agenda over the course of the



Concertación's twenty-year rule and the center-right Alianza's interregnum to date. Nonetheless, as we have shown in this introductory chapter, the overarching memory "tropes" involved have been central to political thinking, instincts, and action over the same period. These tropes or memory debates have undergone several iterations over the years. In 1980s Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, and in 1990s Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru, cries to remember centered primarily on demanding that governments and societies recognize heinous human rights abuse and victims' suffering. Underneath these cries, memory debates were also tightly bound up in left-wing political-ideological positions dating back to equally potent memories of heady political victories, bitter political defeats, intense fractionalization, and even fratricidal conflict. However, memory discourse throughout the Americas is increasingly emphasizing agency over victimization, resurrecting commitments to social justice at the same time as it challenges the left to a full, not merely instrumental, commitment to rights standards. In this sense it has profound and important challenges to offer to past and current domestic and regional political agendas of both left and right. At a deeper level, it also raises the question of what can possibly become of the notion and praxis of reconciliation around a past that no one is actively willing to remember.

A richer collective reflection such as the one this volume seeks might instead produce, at least for Chile, a collective memory with clear and well-articulated reasons for defining Pinochet as more dictator than general, of violence as violations and not as "excess," and of a brutal coup rather than an inevitable and reluctant military intervention. In order to be successful, such a memory might well have to accept a certain amount of sleight of hand from Chile's "new right," prepared to adapt itself to this new environment if it is to be allowed to do so with a certain regard for proprieties. These would almost certainly include a reconciliation purchased by allowing the present-day right to be selective about which aspects of the Pinochet period they lay claim to, permitting them to continue defending the regime's economic, and many of its political and moral, legacies while marking a clear and somewhat artificial line around its now indefensible criminal elements.

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We thank Felip Agüero, Alfred Stepan, and Alan Angell for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

<sup>1</sup> As one example, a 2012 debate about the correct use of the terms "military government," "military regime," or "dictatorship" in school history texts both reprised and revived old left-right cleavages, with the right claiming the latter terms were unduly pejorative.

<sup>2</sup> Florencia Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailio and the Chilean State, 1906–2001* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); and Claudio Barrientos, “Emblems and Narratives of the Past: The Cultural Construction of Memories and Violence in Peasant Communities of Southern Chile, 1970–2000,” University of Wisconsin PhD thesis, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Anecdotally, the point is supported by an experience recounted to two of this chapter’s authors by a prominent human rights activist. Attempting to exhort an indigenous leader to take action over the probable underreporting of disappearances from Mapuche communities during the dictatorship, she was told: “Madam, for your information, we Mapuche have been disappearing more or less since the time of Pedro de Valdivia [i.e., since the Spanish conquest].”

<sup>4</sup> A very real “fear of barbarism” gripped Chile’s privileged class before and during the Popular Unity (Unidad Popular, UP) government presided over by socialist Salvador Allende. The strength of this fear should not be underestimated. It is not uncommon for even measured academic discussions of the period to prove emotive to the point of evoking anguished tears and impassioned pleas. In one example, chapter co-author Alfredo Joignant was invited in October 1999 to take part in a closed session of the government-sponsored Mesa de Diálogo roundtable. (See below and the following chapter by Alexander Wilde.) The Mesa’s assorted human rights advocates, military officers, government and church authorities gathered to hear a paper on the historical setting in which human rights violations had taken place. A prominent rightist historian broke down in tears at the session, recalling the tumultuous period preceding the military coup and reiterating that “we were very afraid.”

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Jennifer McCoy, ed., *Political Learning and Redemocratization in Latin America* (Miami: North-South Press, 1999), especially McCoy’s introductory chapter and the chapter by Manuel Antonio Garretón. McCoy develops a useful political learning framework recognizing a range of conceivable learning that can be gleaned from traumatic events. Garretón documents contrasts in learning between the political left and the political right. Based on interviews with members of the political class, Garretón argues that, whereas the left learned in a self-critical way from its past, the right continues to be triumphalist and shows little discursive evidence of normative change. See also Katherine Hite, *When the Romance Ended: Leaders of the Chilean Left, 1968–1998* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000). Her book argues that cognitive political orientations of individual political leaders change very little after traumatic political experience.

<sup>6</sup> Alfredo Joignant, “Los enigmas de la memoria: Entre el pasado muerto y la historia viva,” *Revista UDP. Pensamiento y cultura*, vol. 3, no. 06/07 (2008), pp. 27–30.

<sup>7</sup> Thus, for example, ongoing trials in Argentina have led to uncomfortable revelations about the extent of collaboration forced from some survivors after torture or prolonged imprisonment.

<sup>8</sup> Piñera, the candidate of the right-wing coalition, was a former senator and party leader but also a billionaire businessman with varied interests including a major television channel and LAN airline. Opponent Frei Ruiz-Tagle, although also previously in business, was unmistakably the continuity candidate, seeking a second term as scion of a traditional political family and son of another former president, Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964–1970).

<sup>9</sup> The phrase is particularly evocative in Spanish: *hijo de*, meaning “son of”, is also used as shorthand for the abusive phrase *hijo de puta*, “son of a bitch”. Currently, as is traditionally the case in Chilean politics, various prominent congressmen from both right and left are direct descendants of previous holders of high political office.

<sup>10</sup> The Enríquez-Ominami campaign website was a testament to media savvy, featuring a series of videos—available, of course, on YouTube—allowing followers carefully orchestrated glimpses of his daily routine and family life. The 2009 videos convey a telegenic, politically flexible politician who borrows a bit from the left, a bit from the right, and they offer a sharp contrast with the candidate’s earlier foray into the medium. The would-be filmmaker’s 2002 documentary, *Chile: Los héroes están fatigados* (“Chile’s Tired Heroes”), featured interviews with well-known former revolutionaries who went on to become champions of capitalism, and feels much more like the work of a young, disillusioned, and fairly alienated leftist.

<sup>11</sup> Carlos Ominami continued as a senator until March 2010, when the Socialist Party insisted he resign his post if he wished to continue actively supporting his son’s presidential ambitions.

<sup>12</sup> “Escalona: Enríquez-Ominami hace todo lo posible por socavar a la Concertación,” *El Mercurio*, 14 July 2009.

<sup>13</sup> A decade ago dictatorship-era language portraying 1970s left-wing leaders as “extremists” and “terrorists” was still largely in vogue, and politicians running for office shied away from any such associations.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Carlos Peña, “La adolescencia como política,” *El Mercurio*, 14 June 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Such as Emilio Meneses, who finally lost his senior post at Santiago’s Catholic University after Felipe Agüero publicly accused him of involvement in torture. See the chapter by Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman in this volume.

<sup>16</sup> For the playing out of old fears toward destructive ends in the former Yugoslavia, see Aryeh Neier’s *War Crimes: Brutality, Genocide, Terror and the Struggle for Justice* (New York: Times Books, 1998). See also Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> The question of whether to tolerate revisionism and denial will always be the Achilles heel of post-atrocity reconstruction, since these directly threaten the historical and/or moral injunction to remember.

<sup>18</sup> Most social science collective memory studies begin with Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980). Among sociologist Barry Schwartz’s works, see *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). See also Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins, “Social Memory Studies from ‘Collective Memory’ to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices,” *Annual Review of Sociology* (1998), p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944*, tr. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

<sup>20</sup> Paloma Aguilar Fernández, *Memoria y olvido de la Guerra Civil española* (Madrid: Editorial Alianza, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira, *Las suaves cenizas del olvido: Vía chilena de reconciliación política 1814-1932* (Santiago: LOM, 2000); *Las ardientes cenizas del olvido: Vía chilena de reconciliación política 1932-1994* (Santiago: LOM, 2000); and *El espejismo de la reconciliación política: Chile 1990-2002* (Santiago: LOM, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> Steve J. Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London 1998* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); and Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*. See also Julia Paley, *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Wilde, "Irruptions of Memory: Expressive Politics in Chile's Transition to Democracy," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 31, no. 2 (May 1999), pp. 473-500. See also Katherine Hite, "Breaking the Silence in Post-Authoritarian Chile," in Max Paul Friedman and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Partisan Histories: The Past in Contemporary Global Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 55-73.

<sup>24</sup> Wilde, *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Including *Estadio Nacional* (Carmen Luz Parot, 2002), *The Judge and the General* (Patricio Lanfranco and Elizabeth Farnsworth, 2008), *Calle Santa Fe* (Carmen Castillo, 2007), and the feature film *Machuca* (Andrés Wood, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> *Los 80* and *Los archivos del Cardenal*. The former aired on the mixed public-private 'Canal 13' station, the latter on national terrestrial channel TVN.

<sup>27</sup> Carlos Huneeus, *Chile un país dividido: La actualidad del pasado* (Santiago: Catalonia, 2003) and [www.cerc.cl](http://www.cerc.cl) (accessed 20 January 2013). For similarly segmented poll results, this time with a generational axis, see Jorge Manzi et al., "El pasado que nos pesa: La memoria colectiva del 11 de septiembre de 1973," *Revista de ciencia política*, vol. 23, no. 2 (2003), pp. 177-214. The intergenerational transmission of pro- and anti-dictatorship views is also graphically illustrated in *La memoria obstinada*, a documentary in which filmmaker Patricio Guzmán screens and discusses his own Allende-era films with Chilean schoolchildren and university students of the 1990s.

<sup>28</sup> Huneeus, *Chile un país dividido*, p. 43.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>30</sup> Video transcript, Katherine Hite's translation.

<sup>31</sup> These question marks over the potential danger posed by the left given its associations with the Popular Unity period were addressed head on by both the Concertación and the regime in their competing TV spots for the 1988 plebiscite campaign. The Concertación's "No" campaign opted for resolutely upbeat, positive messages, with a rainbow motif and liberal use of the Chilean flag to combat regime attempts to depict the left as antipatriots in thrall to a foreign ideology. Meanwhile, one of the most poorly regarded spots of an exceedingly lackluster "Yes" campaign purported to show the opposition's colorful dance troupe dressed in balaclavas and carrying Molotov cocktails. The voiceover to another Yes segment intoned: "In a country governed by the 'No' [brigade], fear will once again walk our streets [and] the first innocent victims could include a member of your family." Original video extracts, translation by Cath Collins.

<sup>32</sup> See the treatment of the notion of a "difficult past" in Robin Wagner-Pacifici and Barry Schwartz, "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial:

Commemorating a Difficult Past,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 97, no. 2 (September 1991), pp. 376-420.

<sup>33</sup> A fear difficult to understand rationally, since at least from 1970 these forces were already *in power*, having been legitimately elected.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. later comments by Jorge Arrate, former Socialist Party president and Concertación cabinet minister, pointing up the stark contrast between the “errores” (errors) of the left and the “horrores” (horrors) of the dictatorship. Opinion column “Errores, horrores: El golpe de Estado y los derechos humanos”, *El Mostrador*, 15 December 2004. Arrate went on to resign his Concertación affiliations, competing against Enríquez-Ominami in the 2009 presidential elections on an alternative leftist platform.

<sup>35</sup> The previous two Concertación candidates had been from the centrist Christian Democrat wing of the coalition.

<sup>36</sup> Author interview by Katherine Hite with Ricardo Núñez, Santiago, 25 June 2002.

<sup>37</sup> See Alfredo Joignant, *Un día distinto: Memorias festivas y batallas conmemorativas en torno al 11 de septiembre en Chile 1974-2006* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 2007).

<sup>38</sup> See “Chile’s Anger over Pinochet,” *BBC News*, 26 September 1999; “Pinochet Arrives in Chile,” *BBC News*, 3 March 2000.

<sup>39</sup> Felipe Agüero, “30 años después: La ciencia política y las relaciones fuerzas armadas, estado y sociedad,” *Revista de Ciencia Política*, vol. 23, no. 2 (2003), p. 258.

<sup>40</sup> Regarding the concept of authoritarian enclaves, see Manuel Antonio Garretón, *Incomplete Democracy: Political Democratization in Chile and Latin America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). On military prerogatives in transitions, see Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

<sup>41</sup> Although the incoming Concertación had managed to negotiate some changes in 1989, the 2005 version of the constitution is generally regarded as marking a final turning point, with the cumulative weight of accumulated minor modifications marked by the replacement of Pinochet’s signature by Lagos’s in printed copies of the text.

<sup>42</sup> See Naomi Roht-Arriaza’s book of the same title and the conference report “The Pinochet Effect: Ten Years on from London 1998”, electronically published by the Universidad Diego Portales in 2009 and available from the Publications section [www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos](http://www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos) (accessed 20 January 2013)

<sup>43</sup> As of mid-2012, 799 living former security service agents were under investigation or charges, or had been convicted, for at least one relevant offense. Around a dozen more had been acquitted of all outstanding charges, and a further thirty-one, now deceased, had been under active investigation or charges at some point since 2000. This latter group included Augusto Pinochet. See [www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos](http://www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos) (accessed 20 January 2013) for the most recent figures available.

<sup>44</sup> The commission’s official title was the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura). Like the Rettig commission before it, it was more commonly referred to by invoking its eponymous chairman, in this case senior Catholic cleric Monsignor

Sergio Valech. The work of the Valech commission was updated in 2005 and again in 2011, keeping the issue in the news and giving a final, and probably still incomplete, total of 38,254 recognized victims of torture or political imprisonment at the hands of state agents between 1973 and 1990.

<sup>45</sup> A November 2011 poll found that 11 percent of respondents (around 20 percent among right-wing voters) believed Miguel Krassnoff, a former secret police agent definitively convicted by the Supreme Court of twenty-seven murders or disappearances, to be innocent of any crime. (Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Contemporáneo, CERC, November 2011, see [www.cerc.cl](http://www.cerc.cl), accessed 20 January 2013).

<sup>46</sup> Miguel Krassnoff. The mayor involved was Cristián Labbé, a former member of military intelligence who served for a time as part of Pinochet's personal bodyguard. The 2011 event went ahead in an atmosphere of open and occasionally violent confrontation among attendees, police, and street protesters. See the chapter on memorialization in this volume for a fuller account.

<sup>47</sup> Thus in 2008 then-president Nestor Kirchner famously supervised the removal of portraits of the Argentine juntas from the main military academy. In December 2011 the names of dictators Videla (Argentina) and Méndez (Uruguay) were removed from the international Gualeguachú-Fray Bentos bridge, a joint public works project that had been completed in 1976 when the two were de facto heads of state.

<sup>48</sup> Carlos Nino, *Radical Evil on Trial* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 104.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 17-20. See also Sandrine Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002).

<sup>50</sup> Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia. 1989. "Programa de Gobierno." Santiago: Editorial Jurídica Publiley Ltda.

<sup>51</sup> The right refused to vote for the project, forcing Aylwin to set it up as a presidential commission. This status denied it legal powers to compel witnesses.

<sup>52</sup> The initial list numbered over 2,000, with subsequent additional investigation of unresolved cases bringing the officially recognized total to 3,197 by 1996. Subsequent minor revisions gave a final victim total of 3,216 in August 2011. The details and evolution of this figure can be obtained from [www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos](http://www.icsoc.cl/observatorio-derechos-humanos), section Publications (accessed 20 January 2013).

<sup>53</sup> *Report of the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation* (Notre Dame, IN: Center for Civil and Human Rights, Notre Dame Law School, 1993), tr. Phillip E. Berryman, vol. 1, pp. 48-49.

<sup>54</sup> A full 11 percent of the final victim total was initially attributed to these actors. As judicial investigations have advanced, this proportion has dropped (though by an as yet undetermined amount) since no judicial case has to date found anyone other than state actors responsible. The category nonetheless represents an important and often overlooked difference with the later Valech commission, which only acknowledged cases where state actor involvement could be proven.

<sup>55</sup> Guzmán was also subsequently adopted by the right as a "martyr" and presented—incorrectly—as a victim of human rights violation whose existence

could be used to demonstrate that there had been casualties on both sides. On Jaime Guzmán and the ideology of the *gremialista* movement to which he belonged, see Renato Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán: Autoridad y libertad* (Santiago: LOM, 2000) or Verónica Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate, *Nacionales y gremialistas: El 'parto' de la nueva derecha chilena, 1964-1973* (Santiago: LOM, 2008).

<sup>56</sup> Specifically, the Army declared that the report had “neither legal nor historical validity,” and the Navy called it a “serious threat to national security” (*Estudios Públicos* no. 41, 1991, Cath Collins’s translation). The Supreme Court, meanwhile, called it “an absurd critique . . . tinged with political passions” (*Estudios Públicos*, no. 42, 1991, p. 239, and cited in Loveman and Lira, *Las suaves cenizas del olvido*, p. 521, Cath Collins’s translation).

<sup>57</sup> Agüero, “30 Años Después,” pp. 261-264.

<sup>58</sup> See Wilde’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>59</sup> In 2003, the year of the thirtieth anniversary of the coup, opinion polling institute CERC found that 62 percent of interviewees said they had tuned in to national television coverage of the commemorations (Huneus, *Chile un país dividido*, p. 253).

<sup>60</sup> UDI figures forged close links with a small group of victims’ relatives in the north of the country and began to generate proposals for additional financial reparations.

<sup>61</sup> Beatriz Brinkmann, “Sin justicia no hay reparación”, paper presented at the international seminar, “Verdad, Justicia y Memoria a 21 años del Informe Rettig”, Santiago, Chile, 21 June 2012 and published in AFEP (eds.), *Con Verdad, Justicia y Memoria Otro Mundo es Posible*. (Santiago: Agrupación de Familiares de Ejecutados Políticos, AFEP; CINTRAS and Universidad de Chile, 2013), pp. 34-41.

<sup>62</sup> The Commission reported initially in 2004, with an appendix adding around 1,000 additional victim numbers and names in 2005. A second round held in 2011 added almost 9,000 names to give the final total of 38,254.

<sup>63</sup> As had notorious public confessions in earlier times, such as those of Osvaldo Romo in Chile or Adolfo Scilingo in Argentina. See Leigh Payne, *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).