Remembering the military dictatorships of Chile (1973), Argentina (1976) and Turkey (1980)

Working Group for Coups d'État and Processes of Memory and Reparations







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January 2022

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Archival Photos
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This preliminary report was supported by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Turkey Office.
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Acknowledgement
First and foremost, we would like to thank Emel Ataktürk, Hülya Deveci, İsmet Akça and Yektan Türkyılmaz for sharing their knowledge and comments with the authors of this report. We thank Feza Kürkçüoğlu, Ali Öz, İletişim Publishing House and SALT Research for opening their photo archives. We would not for us to complete the project without the help and support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Turkey Office and our program manager, Mert Onur. It was truly a pleasure working together. Likewise, we are grateful to the Museo de la Memoria in Rosario, Argentina, the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos in Chile, and the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability program of Columbia University for their unconditional support.

We humbly dedicate our work to the peoples of Chile, Argentina and Turkey whose names are not mentioned here, but who inspired this project and were targeted by the military Junta for their struggle against fascism.

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Introduction

This pre-report is drafted by the “Working Group for coups d’état and processes of memory and reparation”, a space to think about the memories and oblivions of the military regimes and dictatorships of Argentina in 1976, Chile in 1973 and Turkey in 1980. We are researchers and rights defenders in the fields of memory and oral history who came together more than a year ago aiming to build an international coalition between Argentina, Chile and Turkey to understand the military interventions and coups that drastically changed these countries in the 70s and 80s. We also aim to understand the similarities especially between the types of repression that Junta deployed during and after the coups as well as different paths of reconciliation. With this pre-report, our goal is to lay a foundation upon which we will draw attention to paths of reconciliation and comparative analysis of mechanisms of historical justice in the years of transition and memorialization practices.

In this pre-report, we aim to create a framework to shed light to the following questions:

How did these coups happen?
Which mechanisms of repression did they deploy?
How was the transition to democracy?
What memory policies exist today?

We are trying to create an interdisciplinary approach to take a critical view of the official narratives in our own countries and to reveal the power of testimonies. We will focus on oral history archives and their strengths and weaknesses, or in some cases their absolute absences with respect to historical justice. We will also consider in detail the creators or promoters of such oral history archives and the context in which they were born and developed. State institutions, human rights organizations and victim groups created the memory of the dictatorship in different ways and with different results. Oral history and testimonies play an important role in favor of those who are deliberately silenced or forgotten in this asymmetrical power between perpetrators and victims, especially when legal procedures and the judiciary are deprived of or fail to provide the expected results.

This project is planned in three layers:

1. In 2021, we will create a podcast series on military dictatorships and work with members from Argentina, Chile and Turkey elaborating the following:

    a. Pre-coup and coup history
    b. Specific type of repression
    c. Transition to democracy
    d. Memory, truth, justice/transitional justice – current state of democracy

2. In 2022, we look forward to visiting memory sites in Argentina and Chile hosted by members from these countries.

3. By the end of 2022, we will complete a report that will be published later, culminating the experiences and knowledge generated throughout the project.

Historical analysis of the coups in Argentina, Chile and Turkey requires more in-depth research and can be expanded beyond the scope of this project. With the following summaries, we aim to give a compact overview of the period in order for the Working Group to further analyze and elaborate the similarities and differences regarding the historical and transitional justice practices in the next phase.

PART 1: CHILE, 1973



1. The Political and Social Situation Prior to The Coup

The political situation in Chile during the 50s and 60s responded to the international context. In the first place, the post-war scenario defined by the ideological dispute between the capitalist and communist bloc gave rein to the Marshall Plan: the anti-communism efforts that became known as the Cold War were solidified in the years 1947 and 1948. The plan originated as a U.S. program to provide aid to Western Europe, as it was in destruction from WWII, mainly through infrastructural reconstruction and economic advice, but a stated goal of the Marshall Plan was to combat communism. This plan allowed for the U.S. to intervene in the affairs of the foreign nations. In 1949, in Cold War fear, the U.S. and European allies formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which was a unified command of the military with the goal of resisting Soviet presence in Europe. These events created the premises for which the U.S. used to invade and intervene in the affairs of nations in Latin America.

These actions were beginning to influence regional and national political blocs. In 1946, within the framework of the US National Security Doctrine, the School of the Americas was founded in Panama, a military training base with the mission to prepare Latin American nations to cooperate with the US to counter the influence of the leftwing movements. This took on a special attention after the Cuban Revolution in 1959, since Chilean military groups, that later integrated the state secret and repression agencies, were trained to stop these processes using repressive methods. Another example of the fight against the ‘internal enemy’ was the enactment in 1948 of the Law for the Permanent Defense of Democracy, known as the Damned Law, which was intended to outlaw the Chilean Communist Party. The law was active until 1958.

In order to prevent other Latin American countries from following Cuba’s example, John F. Kennedy proposed an economic aid program in 1961. Known as the Alliance for Progress, the idea was to improve sanitary conditions, access to education and housing, control inflation, and increase agricultural productivity through agrarian reform. If its implementation was carried out, the countries would receive an economic contribution from the United States, a contribution that was ultimately not made effective.

Thereby, the US government started to give endorsement to the presidential candidates that were willing to align with its interests. The bet in Chile, a country that stood out for its political stability compared to others in the region, was to support centrist leaders who were capable of implementing these reforms without internal political upheaval. However, many of these reforms promoted by center presidents did not meet the expectations of the population, such as the agrarian reforms of Alessandri (1962) or Frei-Montalva's (1967). Scholars speculate that reforms were considered insufficient for the citizenship, generating a shift to the left in the voters, in pursuit of greater social welfare.[1] The program also failed, due to the assassination of Kennedy. The subsequent US governments only focused on providing military cooperation to Latin American countries during the decade.

Along with this, insurgency movements of civilian or paramilitary guerrillas were a reality on the continent to gain political power in their respective countries. In other words, there was a state of political and social unrest. Though the Chilean case is somehow different, the insurgency movements did not have the organization of other groups such as the Montoneros in Argentina or the Tupamaros in Uruguay.[2] Many of the insurgency movements in Chile were formed after the coup.

While other Latin American countries were having governments in which insurgency movements took power, what was happening in Chile seemed unprecedented: the 1970 presidential election was around the corner and the candidates were Salvador Allende representing the Popular Unity, which was a collaboration of the socialists, communists, radicals amongst other leftwing ideologies; Jorge Alessandri running as Independent; and lastly Radomiro Tomic representing the Christian Democratic party.

Prior to the election, the United States' CIA published an anti-Allende propaganda hoping to passively intervene and discourage another leftwing government in Latin America. Despite their efforts, on September 4, 1970, Salvador Allende was elected as the president of Chile; drawing international attention, showing itself to be the peaceful and democratic way to socialism, a situation that attracted several left-wing foreigners who moved to Chile to experiment democratic socialism.

Allende was elected with 36% of the votes, Alessandri with 34%. Congress had to choose between the two highest majorities on October 24, 1970. Allende obtained 153 votes against the 35 for Alessandri. This was achieved mainly by the demands of the Christian Democrats, who offered their support to Allende with the condition of signing a reform to the Constitution of 1925, which aimed to ensure political and civil rights, strengthen private property by limiting expropriation and ensure the bases laws for the public force to have the guarantees to prevent paramilitarism, known as the "Pact of Democratic Guarantees". This pact was highly criticized by the leftwing sector.

Although the US operations at that moment ended in failure, the US proceeded to intervene and support the conditions for a military coup to take place in order to maintain theUS interest in Chile, through cutting credit lines, blocking Chile's accounts, pressuring financial institutions not to invest in the country, and even linking with local elites to

1 Mac-Clure, O., & Garretón, M. A. (2019). Revisitando la elección de Allende en 1970: Lo que revelan encuestas aplicadas en la época 1. Tempo Social, 31, 235-261.
2 Iglesias, A. P. (2009) Revolución y lucha armada:¿ una relación necesaria? El Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros y el Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria en sus inicios (1965-1973). Encuentros Latinoamericanos, 96.



Chile's President Salvador Allende

control public opinion through the press. This would be exposed with the declassification of CIA files in 1999, 2014 and 2017.

Some of the Popular Unity policies promoted expropriations, such as the agrarian reform. The political violence present in the streets between supporters and militants of the Popular Unity, against opponents, created an atmosphere of uncertainty. There were groups such as Patria y Libertad, a right-wing political and paramilitary organization that was financed by the US, or the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR). There were episodes of assassinations of politicians. This triggered the accusation that Allende broke the "Pact of Democratic Guarantees".

The government faced an economic crisis starting in 1972, due to the spending on social policies and the influence of the US against the government, which ended in the devaluation of the national currency. The problems derived from the inflation -which reached 3 digits- and the shortage of food made the cost of living more expensive. Then, the so-called 'colas', long queues of people waiting in front of supermarkets or supply points to get food became a problem, a situation that in 1973 fueled the discomfort of society in general.

During 1973, there were moments of tension experienced by the government, which could

3 Iglesias, A. P. (2009) Revolución y lucha armada:¿ una relación necesaria? El Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros y el Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria en sus inicios (1965-1973). Encuentros Latinoamericanos, 96.
4 https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v21
5 https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/chile/2014-05-22/what-really-happened-chile
6 https://www.ciperchile.cl/2017/11/09/nuevos-cables-de-la-cia-revelan-dinero-encubierto-para-una-radio-el-mercurio-y-la-dc/

be considered as significant institutional breakdowns. In the third and last speech that Allende made before Congress, in June of that year, he detailed 'the serious difficulties due to the payment of the foreign debt' that the public administration was going through and made an explicit recognition of the threat of violence and civil war.

Between June and September 1973, 68 sessions were held in Congress, and 23 of them dealt with matters related to the crisis. Congressmen from the opposition blocs, such as the right-wing National Party, constantly denied the Executive and government draft bills.

There were several protests against the Popular Unity from the elite as well as the mining and transport sectors. There were constant calls for 'cacerolazos', people rattling pans claiming for food. At the same time, there were massive demonstrations of support for Allende from the trade union groups, labor force and peasant movements.

News about possible arms trafficking by left-wing insurgency groups circulated in the media. Headlines like 'Popular Unity distributes weapons; The Ultras asked to set up an emergency zone' in the newspaper, La Prensa alluded that Movimieno de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) and MAPU asked the government to distribute weapons among civilians. It was alleged that between 12,000 and 15,000 submachine guns were distributed among the violent groups. On June 29th, a group of soldiers led by Colonel Souper, tried to carry out a coup, targeting the governance palace, La Moneda. This event was known as the 'Tanquetazo' and was suppressed by the Army Chief himself, Carlos Prats, and Generals Pickering, Sepúlveda, and Pinochet. In addition, after the event, a significant number of soldiers who were considered coup leaders were discharged. This episode would have given reasons to dismiss the possibilities of a coup and reinforce constitutionalism.

However, at the end of August 1973, the Senate pointed out the circulation of brochures that would incite subversion in the Armed Forces and the alleged participation of employees of the Food and Agriculture Organization in the subversive actions. Carlos Prats resigned as commander in chief, being succeeded on August 23rd by Augusto Pinochet, since he was considered professional and apolitical. Pinochet was Prats' own recommendation to Allende.

In addition, a day before Prats resigned, the Chamber of Deputies approved the "Agreement on the serious breach of the institutional and legal order of the Republic", in which the government was accused of having incurred in various violations such as applying economic and political control measures to later establish a totalitarian system, violate constitutional guarantees, violently repress opponents, and try to politically infiltrate the Armed Forces. The agreement called ministers and several soldiers, to put an immediate end to these situations. Opinion letters from professional associations of medicine and judiciary were added to this call.

Allende planned to call a plebiscite about his tenure in office. However, the parties and movements of the Popular Unity did not agree, as it was seen as a renunciation of the achievements made. The idea materialized on the night of September 10th, 1973, thanks to the efforts of Orlando Letelier, Minister of Defense and a member of the Socialist Party, who convinced other forces inside Popular Unity. On the morning of September 11, at an event that Allende had at the Technical University of the State, the government would officially and publicly announce the initiative to all citizens.

2. September 11, 1973

Practically, the coup was planned by the entire upper echelon of the Armed Forces, except Admiral Montero, but he was isolated and the Navy obeyed Vice Admiral José Toribio Merino. The same happened in the Air Forces, except for General César Ruiz, the head of the entity. But when he retired after the 'Tanquetazo', General Gustavo Leigh, who was opposing Allende, took his place. The Army was divided, but the balance was becoming more and more loaded towards the coup. In the police force, Carabineros, only two or three generals of low seniority conspired, including General César Mendoza. According to US documents declassified in 2017, it is revealed that the CIA counted among its Chilean agents, a senior Army officer and 4 others, belonging to the management of the newspaper El Mercurio, the Christian Democrats and the political world, ergo, people with access to trusted and confidential spaces. On September 7th, knowing the president's decision to call the plebiscite, Toribio Merino and Gustavo Leigh decide that the coup will be on September 11th because that day the army would be concentrated in Santiago.

On September 8th, General Arellano Stark requested General Pinochet's support, but he did not give a definitive answer. The following day, Allende informed the Commander-in-Chief and other generals that he had decided to call a plebiscite, in order to offer a solution to the crisis. That same day, the leaders of the coup had the support of Pinochet, reaffirming September 11th in the morning, to avoid any possibilities for the announcement of Allende.

Tuesday, September 11th, 1973 is a milestone that changed history. A moment in which the lives of millions of Chileans were cut short forever and the democratic transition towards socialism, this 'experiment' that was observed internationally, ended. The coup began at 6 AM when the first troop uprising occured in the port of Valparaíso and ended at 6 PM when the curfew was decreedi. Informed of the uprising, Allende went to the La Moneda Palace at 7:30 AM, which was guarded by Carabineros tanks. Military personnel began to carry out 'Operation Silence' which sought to silence the radio stations loyal to Popular Unity. The National Radio equipment was destroyed, and the radio station of the State Technical University was raided. The transmission towers of radio Corporación and radio Portales were bombed. In many radios that have been forced to cut down their transmissions, martial music or the military anthem began to broadcast.

After the first communiqué of the Military Junta was heard, employees of La Moneda Palace were leaving. There were attacks on the Palace by land around 8:30 AM. Allende remained in there, and around 9 AM, he addressed his last message to the country, through Radio Magallanes:

> *"Placed in a historic transition, I will pay for loyalty to the people with my life. And I say to you that I am certain that the seed which we have planted in the good conscience of thousands and thousands of Chileans will not be shriveled forever. They have strength, they can overwhelm us, but social processes do not stop, neither by crime nor with force. History is ours, and it's made by the people. Workers of my fatherland: I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seeks to prevail. Go forward knowing that, sooner rather than later, the great avenues will open again where free men will walk to build a better society. Long live Chile! Long live the people! Long live the workers!"*



La Moneda under the bombardment



General Augusto, Pinochet and the Coup Generals

At noon the bombardment on La Moneda began, which lasted for 15 minutes. Air Force Hawker Hunter planes, after flying over their target, attacked the government headquarters with rockets that destroyed facilities and set the building on fire. The bombing was broadcast and commented on by journalists from radio stations that had not yet been raided, such as Radio Balmaceda and radio Agricultura. It was also covered by foreign radios. Chilean and foreign photographers flock to downtown Santiago to record what was going on.

Military decrees began to be broadcast on the radio, indicating to the population that the power of the country was overseen the Military Junta and that they should submit to it or assume the consequences. The first dispatch called on citizens to stay at home and obey the military. Others directly called the government leaders and sympathizers to surrender voluntarily.

Throughout the day, the military attacked buildings and institutions related to the Popular Unity, such as the headquarters of the political parties and various embassies. Unions were also raided. They quickly began to transfer those who were detained in detention centers to other clandestine facilities throughout the country.

Around 2 PM, Allende was found dead with a weapon, thus presuming his suicide. At 6 PM, Pinochet assumed the presidency of the Military Junta, as agreed by the high command of the Armed Forces and Carabineros. The ceremony was held at the Military School and was broadcast on TV, officially commencing 17 years of civic-military dictatorship

With a high deployment of troops in the capital, Estadio Chile and the Estadio Nacional, both sport stadiums, were enabled as prison camps. That same day, about 5,600 people were arrested, of whom more than 600 were students.

The following day, international and national media covered what happened, showing photographs of the bombing and destruction of La Moneda, books being burned just as Nazis did, images of the Junta and of the prisoners waiting in the stadiums. The end of the long democratic history of the country was evident.

The Military Junta, or the association of the armed forces and police officers which came to power through the September 11th coup, was lead by

- General Augusto Pinochet, Commander-in-Chief of the army;
- Admiral Jose Toribio Merino, Commander-in-Chief of the navy;
- General Gustavo Leight, Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force,
- General Cesar Mendoza, General Director of Carabineros.

On November 12th of that year, the exercise of Legislative power was established through decree laws with the signature of all the members of the Junta (and of the respective ministers, if deemed appropriate). Similarly, the Executive power was carried out through supreme decrees and resolutions signed by Pinochet, therefore, ending the Rule of Law in the country. In 1981, by transitory provision of the 1980 Constitution, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army ceased to be a member of the Junta and became President of the Republic. The Military Junta Government remained in office until March 11th, 1990.

3. Social Support

Following September 11, official statements were quickly unleashed on different social and political sectors regarding the events. On September 12, the Christian Democrats publicly supported the coup, excluding 16 leaders from it. The National Party also offered its support and dissolved itself in the same year. A large part of its militants assumed public positions during the civic-military dictatorship.

The economic situation was widely used in newspapers and magazine leading articles to justify the coup. The press held an important role from the start of the dictatorship. Media either sided with the dictatorship, becoming its ally, distorting and falsifying information, or it served as opposition and, therefore, had to combat censorship of its publications and many times dealt with persecution of employees.

One of the first press cases that attracted a lot of attention and had a great effect on the population were the publications related to 'Plan Z', which spoke of an alleged leftwing plot to distribute arms and execute assassinations. It was about an auto-coup planned by the Popular Unity party financed by Cuba, in which they had created a list of names of people who should be eliminated. Newspapers like El Mercurio, La Tercera and Las Últimas Noticias posted fake news a week after the coup. The legitimacy of this plan was published by the military government in a book called 'Libro Blanco del cambio de gobierno de Chile' The White Book, at the end of October that year. This authorized the possibility of the Military Junta to govern by Decree Laws and Military rules with the support of the citizens.[7]

4. Specific Type of Repression

During this period, Chile was governed by rules and decrees dictated by the military authorities, not by Congress. Directly following the coup, the Military Junta made decisions regarding the internal control of the nation[8]:

- political parties are banned, so no opposition remianed
- the electoral registers are closed and burned
- unions and social organizations are closed
- censorship of media and press begins
- the National Congress is closed
- citizens are stripped of civil and political rights and freedoms
- And finally, security and repression agencies are created

Chileans recognize the presence of vehicles and armed forces as well as Carabinero personnel in their streets and in their neighborhoods. As soon as the military regime is implanted, massive raids begin. The troops burst into towns and buildings, and homes to detain people and burn books and documents. Using scare tactics, the Military Junta secured their power. Between 1973 and 1980, 3600 Decree Laws were proposed installing a new way of institutionalism.

One of the rules installed by the Military Junta that affected society the most was the curfew. It is installed at the national level and was implemented 15 of the 17 years of dictatorship, with some exceptions of time during the 1980s.

7 Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura (2004). Informe de la Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura. Gobierno de Chile
8 Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (1992). Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación. Gobierno de Chile



5. The Creation of Repressive State Apparatuses and Human Right's Violations

Despite other means of repressions, such as denying the right to peacefully assembly, oppression of speech and censorship, the main violations consigned by the Truth Commission were the following[9]:

- Execution
- Disappearance
- Political prison and torture
- Relegation, especially at the beginning of the period
- Exile, with no official number, but ranked between 200.000 to 1.000.000 (including forced migration)
- Persecution, home search and unlawful threat

Also, in the first months of the dictatorship, some executions were justified by a death sentence previously issued by a War Council, but in these processes, not the slightest degree of a fair trial was offered. Many executions carried out are called extra-judicial or extra-legal, meaning outside of any process.

Entire State apparatus was put at disposition to commit this violation. In 1974, DINA, the National Intelligence Direction was created, and its successor CNI, the National Center of Information

9 Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (1992). Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación. Gobierno de Chile

in 1977, both directed by general Contreras, part of the Army and right-hand man of Pinochet. The fundamental mission of the security and repression organizations was to persecute, detain, raid, torture, execute and disappear any supporters of Allende's government. Intelligence organizations were dedicated to the collection of information regarding the activities of opposers of the dictatorship. Many times, the information gathered was falsified or distorted in order to skew public opinion, instill fear in the population, and chastise those who opposed the dictatorship.

This procedure was not limited to Chile, other Latin American countries were experiencing similar situations. The synchronicity of coups in the region was related to Cóndor Operation, a campaign of State terrorism and political repression supported and financed by the USA. Cóndor was officially implemented in November 1975 by the top commanders of the dictatorship regimes of the South Cone, majority of whom were ex alumni of School of Americas in Panama, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia. This coordination developed intelligence operations to repress and exterminate revolutionary movements in each country. Documents that reveal the coordination were founded in Ausinción, Paraguay, in 1992, and are known as The Archive of Terror.

According to The National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation Report, the Rettig Report (1992), it is possible to establish 3 periods that characterize human rights violations in Chile:

- September 11th to December of 1973
- January 1974 to August 1977
- August 1977 to 1990

The first three months of the regime were characterized by violence and mass arrests. Of the total number of people who suffered political imprisonment and torture, 67% occurred in this period. Twenty percent occurred in the first three days. Fifty-seven percent of the total number of victims classified as disappeared or murdered occurred in those months.

The Junta was trying to exert control over the country quickly. They focused on arresting Popular Unity government authorities, political and union leaders, and militaries that were loyal to the Constitution. They also attacked marginalized populations in a sort of 'social cleansing'.

The detainees passed through 1,132 detention and torture centers throughout Chile. These were facilities of the Armed Forces, intendancies, sports centers, public buildings, estates, and prisons. Non-traditional spaces were used because they needed a lot of space to accommodate the amount of people detained. Overcrowding, disinformation and low possibilities to be in contact with families were the new normality for the prisoners. Additionally, a lot of the prisoners were awaiting sentences by a War Council, but as mentioned previously, fair trials were not offered.

Also, many people went into exile at this moment, quickly attracting the attention of international organizations that would later develop mechanisms of observance and denunciation of the crimes together with the exiles.

In this period, Carabineros were the main executors of repression together with the participation of civilians, especially in rural areas in response to the agrarian reform.



Chile National Stadium, used as a detention and torture center between September 11 and November 7, 1973

Methods of torture vary according to the places and times of captivity, but the common thread in all torture mechanisms was the intention to break the will of detainees, extract information about activities, places and people against the dictatorship. One of the most common methods of torture was the "grill" in which detainees were subjected to awful treatment through electric shock. Detainees were stripped of their clothing, handcuffed, immobilized. They would be blindfolded or hooded to evoke the feeling of helplessness. On several occasions, military or police threw water on the detainee to ensure the electric shock was felt throughout the body.

Other common methods of torture include repeated beatings, deliberate bodily injuries, hanging, forced uncomfortable positions, deprivation or interruption of sleep, asphyxiation and exposure to extreme temperatures, threats, mock shooting, forced witnessing of torture of peers, Russian roulette and confinement. Women were frequently subject to humiliation, stripping, rape and sexual assaults. Of these, 229 prisoners were pregnant, some of them gave birth in prison, some were forced to abort, others had miscarriages due to the beatings. Ten of them who were detained while pregnant disappeared, and their whereabouts as well as their children are still unknown.

Two cases at this moment were very notorious. First, between September 30 and October 22, 1973, General Arellano with a delegation of officers runs from the southern to the northern detention centers to kill adherents to the Popular Unity and intensify torture and execution procedures. They passed through the cities of Cauquenes, La Serena, Copiapo, Antofagasta and Calama, in other words, a big part of the northern region of the country, leaving 75 dead. This case is known as 'The caravan of death'.

Second, from the very first day, the Army set up the clandestine prison camp 'Tejas Verdes' in the coastal city of San Antonio. These facilities were used to experiment and test the

torture methods, and to train the military in these practices, being the seeds of what would be the National Intelligence Direction, DINA. Prisoners were transported in refrigerated trucks provided by the fishing companies.

The rapid deployment of the military in these three months and its links with the business world show the previous preparation and what was coming. The effective control and annihilation of the opponents demystifies the magnitude of the alleged armed resistance.

From January 1974 to August 1977 the persecution was aimed at annihilating the central cells of opposition parties and movements, ergo, the violence was selective to trace and track people from socialist and communist parties or militants of the MIR.

As previously mentioned, DINA was created. The secret service had resources of operations, even companies generated resources to give it solvency. It cooperated with police forces and all the branches of the Army. In this way, a 'community of intelligence' was created. Thus, forced disappearance was a recurrent method applied to infringe terror in the population. Also, detention of suspects in regular prisons and police stations was the norm. Prison camps existed until 1976, in parallel, clandestine detention and torture centers proliferated with enhanced interrogation techniques.

In this period, the secret service, with the aid of Condor members, organized a series of operations beyond the borders targeting exiled Chileans

- On September 30th, 1974, in Buenos Aires, former commander-in-chief Carlos Prats and his wife Sofía Cuthbert were bombed. Both lost their lives. Working for the DINA, the U.S.-born assassin Michael Townley was hired to detonate the explosive.
- On October 6th, 1975, in Rome, the former Christian Democrat Interior Minister Bernardo Leighton and his wife, Ana Fresno, were shot and seriously wounded, but survived. The neo-fascist group responsible for the attack had been contacted by Michael Townley.
- On September 21st, 1976, in Washington D.C., another bomb exploded in the car of the former chancellor Orlando Letelier, killing both him and his North American colleague Ronni Moffit. It was later discovered that the assassination was executed by the DINA with the help of anti-Castro Cubans. Michael Townley admitted that he was involved in this crime as well.

The Southern Cone collaboration between the intelligence agencies also completed Operation Colombo, which was a media montage designed to discredit the allegations of forced disappearances of 119 detainees in 1975. The magazines, which were created only for the occasion (Lea, in Argentina; Novo O´Dia in Brazil), spread false news that these people had died due to internal confrontations. Chilean media, such as El Mercurio, La Segunda and La Tercera, reproduced the news. Various human rights organizations, human rights lawyers, along with families of victims denounce the falsity of the fake news: they were forcibly disappeared while they were imprisoned.

The bombing in Washington caused a big fuss in the American press. The possibilities that joint operations between Condor members and the CIA would be revealed prompted the United States to pressure the Junta to convict those involved in the murder. This

influenced the decision to dissolve the DINA to be replaced by the National Center of Information, CNI, in 1977.

All these events attracted the attention of the international community. Solidarity arose in different countries and was expressed through condemning human rights violations, granting asylum, and delivering resources to support victims and those collaborating with them. People from all over the world participate in various public actions to show support for Chile. International organizations as UN, Amnesty International, and The Russel Tribunal joined in repudiation. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS sent its first mission to Chile in July 1974. The International Red Cross showed its presence in Chile, visiting detention centers and prison camps, bringing humanitarian aid to prisoners and also to their relatives outside.

Faced with this situation, the dictatorship reacted in three visible ways. By Decree Law of 1974, the Junta establishes that any person, foreign or Chilean, who from abroad dishonors, defames, or disparages the country, its government, and its people, is attacking the essential interests of the State. Thousands of people are prohibited from entering Chile. In 1975, a list was distributed to ministries, border posts and diplomatic missions. Chilean consulates mark their passports with an "L," signifying limited circulation.

Second, Pinochet called a National Consultation in January of 1978, to confirm the support for his policies. Even though electoral registries have been outlawed, the population is called to vote YES or NO. According to the official reports, 75% of voters were supporters of Pinochet.

Finally, an Amnesty Law was enacted, granting amnesty to all persons involved in criminal acts as executors or accomplices, committed between 1973 to 1978, without making a distinction between common crimes and those committed with political motivation; except for those involved in the Washington bombing. Until the second half of the 90s, the Amnesty Law was one of the main obstacles before the investigation of the illicit acts committed during the period.

This third part of the period is characterized by the increasing international pressure, which provided support to the different human rights organizations, thus having more notoriety in public opinion. Relatives of the victims shift from confusion and helplessness to the organization of solidarity actions and denunciations. The demand for justice takes form in habeas corpus. The official silence and indifference created a space for peaceful acts of protest; people chained themselves to emblematic buildings and staged long fast in response. The solidarity becomes more organized, and groups of relatives do not give up. The Chilean churches come to their defense with two major institutions: first in 1973, Committee of Cooperation for Peace in Chile, and second in 1976, the Vicariate of Solidarity. These opened the doors to provide legal and social assistance to victims and their families

In 1974, the Association of Families of Detained-Disappeared was created. For years, its members make daily pilgrimages to morgues, police stations, detention centers and hospitals. Shortly after the Association of Families of Political Prisoners was added, organized around the different detention centers, along with the Association of Families of Political Executed in 1978. Organizations of relatives of the victims of repression appear in the country and in exile, forming an ethical reference for the demands of truth and justice.

Women organized to reveal the abuses of the regime. Numerous feminist organization and movements emerged to protest repression and the vision of womanhood that the Junta tried to impose on society, and support victim's relatives.

Besides, Chileans were not only fed up with the repression of the Military regime, but also the economic state of the nation. Chile, being overly dependent on the external market, was strongly affected by the world recession of 1980. Unemployment reached nearly 25%. Several companies collapsed in debt. Government intervened in more than five banks and put state-owned companies out to tender.

The complex economic scenario led to the unrest of workers, students and opponents into organizing national protests during the 80s, leading to violent massive repression, typically ending in massive roundups, hundreds of prisoners and deaths.

Also, during this period, bodies were found in different regions of the country, shocking the society. In December of 1978, in furnaces from the limestone mine in Lonquén, the remains of 15 rural farmers were found, who had been detained in 1973 by the local police. In March of 1980, the furnaces were dynamited to hide the evidence.

The half-naked body of Marta Ugarte, who was arrested August 9, 1976, and suffered brutal tortures in Villa Grimaldi, Santiago, was found washed up to the beach of La Ballena in Los Molles the same year in September. It was discovered that she was transferred in a helicopter, along with the other victims, and thrown into the sea. Disinformation agencies tried to cover her death as a crime of passion. Torture intensified and was publicly shown to society to instill fear, indicating deaths and discovery of bodies as false confrontations of opponents. For example, in March of 1985, during a state of siege, publicist Santiago Nattino was arrested. The following day, armed men kidnapped José Manuel Parada, an official of the Vicariate of Solidarity, and Manuel Guerrero of 36 years, leader of the Teachers Association of Chile. Witnesses point out a hovering helicopter and traffic deviations in that sector. Days after, the decapitated bodies were found along the route that goes to the international airport. Admiral José Toribio Merino spoke of a crime "of the Communist Party", while General César Mendoza said that it was "a settling of scores".

In this climate of profound insecurity, discontent and social effervescence, groups were organized or formed, and through armed action they began to act out. These groups performed various attacks debilitating electrical towers and targeting uniformed agents of the State. In September of 1986, an attack was orchestrated against Pinochet, who was traveling from Cajón del Maipo towards Santiago with his grandson and escorts. Militants of the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) ambushed his caravan and in the process five of his guards died, but Pinochet and his grandson remained without injuries. In retaliation for the attack, that same night, four militants of the MIR and the Communist Party were kidnapped and shot on public roads of Santiago.

6. Chile's Neoliberal Experiment

Just short of two weeks following the military coup, on September 24th, 1973, a commission was assembled to prepare a blueprint to replace the Political Constitution of 1925. Seven years later in July of 1980, the task was completed.

The main objective of the new Constitution was to protect the regime from any group or ideology that wanted to threaten the State and the nation. To this end, it declared any act or organization unconstitutional that advocated a concept contrary to the family or based on class struggle. It also established a strongly presidential model; a National Security Council, whose members were mostly military; a Constitutional Court with the power to resolve the legitimacy of the acts of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial power;
Armed Forces constituted as guarantors of institutionality, with commanders-in-chief who could not be removed; a binomial electoral system, favoring the existence of only two major political conglomerates; a Senate composed in part of appointed senators; local governments presided over by appointed mayors and severe restrictions on the possibility of reforming the Constitution, thus, reforming the model.

The draft was heavily influenced by the Chicago Boys, Chilean students of economics that traveled to the US to study at Chicago University, under Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger who stressed free market policies, without government intervention. These economists were advisors of the Junta during the dictatorship, drawing the path to implement total free market policy in a framework of extreme inequality (along with the economic agents involved) that perpetuated the already existing inequality in Chile.[10]

With the purpose of ratifying the Constitution, the government called a plebiscite to take place on September 11th, 1980. Without electoral registries, as it happened with the National Consultation earlier, Chileans were called to vote "YES", to accept the new text and allow Pinochet to stay in power for 8 years more, or vote "NO". To encourage the YES vote, the military Junta ran a campaign promising economic recovery and calling on the importance of nationalism. The "YES" won with 65% of votes.

Even though it has been significantly modified, the 1980 Constitution is still in place today, and is the one that will be changed. After the demonstrations during October and November of 2019, party leaders agreed on a 'Peace pact' to start a process for a New Constitution awaiting citizens' approval. This process began in October in 2020, in a consultation in which 78% of the voters approved a new redaction through the constitutional convention system.

7. Transition to Democracy

During the 80s, the social movements, families of victims and human rights organizations gained strength. International pressure died down due to the Cold War coming to an end and Latin American dictatorships either fell or were weakened. Broad sector of Chilean society started to claim the plebiscite of 1988, as was established in the referendum of 1980.

The citizen protests opened the door to important achievements such as the end of the State of Siege and the lifting of the restriction to manifest. From August 20, 1983, lists of exiles who are authorized to return are published up until September 1st, 1988 when the last list is published.

Listed in the 1980 Constitution, a plebiscite was to be held in 1988 for Chileans to vote YES to continue under the military regime for eight more years or to vote NO. The first

10 Rumié Rojo, S. A. (2019). Chicago Boys en Chile: neoliberalismo, saber experto y el auge de una nueva tecnocracia. Revista mexicana de ciencias políticas y sociales, 64(235), 139-164.

steps were to overcome fear, and to get the Junta to ratify a series of laws to regulate the process, unlike the one held in 1980.

As the plebiscite approached, opposition groups with members of banned political parties, organizations of relatives and human rights organización, and large social movements united around the NO. They formed a pact known as 'Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia' Coalition of Parties for Democracy. Their objectives were:

- Massive enrollment in electoral registries
- Legalization of political parties
- Train representatives to prevent electoral fraud
- Organize a parallel counting system
- Carry out an educational and communicative campaign in favor of the NO

In October of 1986, the Electoral Registration System was made public. In February and March of 1987, the voting registries were reopened, and political parties were legalized. In May of 1988, the Constitutional Organic Law on Popular Votes and Scrutinies was published. The Junta proposed the candidate that Chileans should either reject or approve for eight years more: Augusto Pinochet himself.

The NO campaign used the slogan "The Happiness is Coming," and supporters went "door to door" to propagate. The slogan in support of the YES campaign was "Chile, winner country". The Electoral Tribunal ordered that the YES and the NO campaigns were offered free access to 15 minutes of propaganda each day on national television the month prior to the plebiscite. It achieved a historic number of viewers.

On October 5th, 1988, the plebiscite was held. A lot of uncertainty and fear circulated the atmosphere.

Starting in the early evening, more than 60,000 citizens participated in the parallel recount of votes for the opposition. At 11 PM, the early results indicated that NO option would win. In the days prior to the plebiscite, the CIA received detailed information regarding Pinochet's plans to remain in office despite the results. However, Pinochet failed to take one variable into account: Chilean High Command Officials that are opposed to the idea of refusing the results of the plebiscite. The next day, the Chief of the Air Force Fernando Matthei, recognized that NO option won, so the Junta had no other option than to follow suit.

In the evening of October 6th, on the Nation Television Channel, Pinochet recognized the results and warned that the process allocated under the Constitution of 1980 would continue. Presidential and parliamentary elections were allowed to take place the following year.

Unfortunately, the defeat of the dictatorship in the plebiscite does not translate into the cessation of repression. Various media outlets and journalists continued to face struggles in carrying out their work. Members of leftwing groups were killed in the middle of the street by CNI agents. And the repression against the trade union movement continued to worsen.

In the last months of the military dictatorship, various decrees were passed, reinforcing

its valid institutionality through "laws of mooring" thus ensuring the legacy of the Junta and its collaborators in legal terms. Patricio Aylwin, a Christian Democrat, became the first democratically elected president with 51.6% of the vote, ending a 17-year dictatorship.

In March 1990, Aylwin assumed command of the nation. A citizen act was held at the Estadio Nacional in which he made a fervent call for reconciliation and established a commitment to the uncovering of the truth and establishment of justice. This event took place in the same location in which hundreds of people were detained, subjected to torture, disappeared, and sometimes killed. The event was marked by the slogan 'Nunca Más', Never Again, phrase associated with the Holocaust and other genocides, especially in Latin America, to mark the promise to end human rights violations and for non-repetition.

8. Memory, Truth, Justice, Transitional Justice – Current State of Democracy

One of the first tasks of Alywin was to address the human rights abuses that occurred. For the National Reconciliation to be possible, the names, circumstances and whereabouts of the detained, disappeared or executed victims of the state or political violence needed to be identified.

In April of 1990, the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation was created, known as the Rettig Commission. Its goal was to investigate accusations regarding victims who disappeared or were killed by state agents and political violence.

General Pinochet had personally taken care of shielding the Supreme Court for his benefit, and to keep the amnesty law in full force, which prevented any investigation into the crimes committed between 1973 and 1978, the period when the notorious human rights violations occurred. Not only that, but he also retained his position as commander-in-chief of the Army thanks to the 'laws of mooring'. The Commission was empowered to carry out all the procedures and inquiries it deemed necessary, including requesting information from the authorities and services of the State. In this context, the Armed Forces and the Carabineros were requested to send information for which they reacted as being less willing to hand it over to the Commission, revealing an attitude that would permanently strain civil-military relations in the 90s.

After almost a year of reviewing State documentation, reports of various national human rights organizations and interviewing relatives of victims, in February of 1991 the report established the existence of 2,298 victims.

The Rettig Report begins by explaining the need for its work, its scope and coverage. It defines the norms of international and national law by which the victims are considered subjects of human rights violations or political violence. Then, it describes the historical framework surrounding the coup and the first months of the military regime.

The latter was highly criticized by relatives' organizations at the time, even to this day, setting a biased democratic memory narrative that finally became the official one. Incomplete truth was not synonymous with justice for them. Also, the Report attributed responsibilities to the specific perpetrators and not to the institutions, so that the armed forces did not feel accountable. Despite this, right-wing sectors indicated that the report was superficial, distorted and would not help national reconciliation.

Even though the Report was published, and of public access, neither the government nor the media made big efforts to circulate it. So, for the mainstream and public opinion, this information remained unknown in the first years of the return of democracy.

In April of 1991, President Aylwin sent to the Parliament a project to create the National Truth and Reparation Corporation, an organism that would be in charge to implement the recommendations of the Report regarding redress. It started its work in 1992, but its first job was a continuation of the Report due to the appearance of new evidence and testimonies. In 1994 the Corporation increased the number to 3,185 victims.

As another Truth Commission process in the world during the 90s, the Chilean one is non-binding regarding justice. It is descriptive of the facts, not explanatory or interpretive of what happened. For the Rettig Report, there is confidentiality of the information, and only the courts of justice can access it, something that must be managed by the relatives in a scenario where the amnesty law was still in force. So, in practice, the right to justice did not exist.[11]

In terms of reparation, the newly formed Commission began to implement the Report's recommendations related to direct reparation to victims in 1997, such as monetary pension and state benefits, in the form of free health care or university scholarships for the relatives. Later, the program was renamed as Human Rights Program and was relocated into the Ministry of Justice, expanding its functions given the events that occurred during the early 2000s.

Evidently, the 90s were a tense decade for the country. Also, a series of lawsuits were also initiated on other state issues, such as the financial state of the republic. Scandals broke out about embezzlements. Transitional justice was not re-foundational here: legal, economic and constitutional regime in Chile preserves several measures taken during the dictatorial period to date. So Aylwin, to avoid tensions with the army, had to turn a blind eye to these situations.

Politics was conducted by consensus, and justice, as Aylwin himself said, was taken 'as far as possible'. There were no transversal social movements due to the trauma in this kind of 'supervised' democracy by the militaries. The State apparatus accommodated all structural reforms that the 1980 Constitution established, processes in which, in a country with high rates of poverty, the neoliberal model is installed.

The congress had deputies and senators who openly supported the regime and were in favor of letting Pinochet take the position as appointed senator, following the mandate of the 1980 Constitution. In 1998 he took office, and some of his bills were related to the dictatorship: he tried to declare September 11 as the Day of National Unity, to promote reconciliation, with the aim of leaving the past behind. Right-wing senators approved it, arguing that it was necessary to forget the past and focus on the current problems of the nation, thus fixing a historical denialism.

11 Mathias, A., Páez, D., Espinosa, A., Sandoval, S., Alzugaray, C., Arnoso, M., Cárdenas, M., da Costa, S., Reyes, C., Rimé, B, & Zubieta, E. (2020). The association between Truth Commissions evaluation, emotional climate and institutional trust: comparison and meta-analysis of surveys in six South American countries (La relación entre la evaluación de las Comisiones de la verdad, el clima emocional y la confianza institucional: comparación y metanálisis en seis países de Sudamérica). International Journal of Social Psychology, 35(2), 203-245.

The same year, The Supreme Court of Justice decided that amnesty law was no longer applicable in human rights violations investigation. The first judicial cases started 10 years after the plebiscite that ended the period, with many former military personnel dead, living abroad or out of service.

In October of 1998, while traveling in London, Pinochet was arrested by virtue of an arrest warrant issued by the Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón, who sought to put him on trial for the murders of Spanish citizens. He was detained until the British Home Secretary decided to release him for humanitarian reasons, due to his alleged health in 2002. Back in Chile, he was impeached for the 'The caravan of death' case, but he was dismissed for senile dementia. This was celebrated by Pinochet supporters but it was very painful for victims' relatives.

But relatives' organizations and victims pressed anyway. In 2003, under the government of Ricardo Lagos, the third democratically elected president after the dictatorship, and a member of the Coalition of Parties for Democracy, the victims of political prison had a success, extending the search for the truth, the ones that were alive, survivors of the terror. Lagos mandated the function of the National Commission on Political Prison and Torture, known as the Valech Commission. A year later, the commission confirmed the existence of 27,255 victims. As was the case with the recommendation of Rettig Inform, the reparation measures of the Valech Report that were implemented in that moment were direct compensation to victims.

What caused the most commotion about the Valech Report and the associated reparation law was the 50-year state of secrecy that the documents, testimonies and antecedents provided would have, with the supposed purpose of safeguarding the privacy of those involved, making the execution of judicial proceedings impossible. This was another low blow for human rights defenders and memory advocates. The United Nations Committee against Torture has been concerned about impunity for torture crimes and has urged the State to abolish secrecy.

Meanwhile, in the early 2000s, several neighborhood and grassroots organization, with victims and relatives, and memory advocates were working around former torture centers, fighting to have them to be declared as historical monuments. But no active support of the state was shown. Sites of memory –and broader societal and symbolic redress– began to emerge from the self-managed work of these collectives, academic studies and artists and writers.

In 2005, Pinochet was prosecuted again, this time for the 'Operation Colombo' case. He was being processed in another corruption investigation too. But, again, he was dismissed in December 2006, and died of a heart attack, in freedom. Pinochet's supporters and the Army honored him with a big funeral with thousands of people around Military School. At that time, President Michele Bachelet did not respond to the request of the Military regarding national mourning.

Country was divided, but not only for this. A series of student-led protests regarding the seconday education and higher education were the protagonists of the political conversation. These were the largest mass protests since the 1980s. The student's movement in 2006

aimed at reformulating the quality of education and the role of the State as an agent in this process. This set sight on the Constitution. If Pinochet was able to refund the whole political system, why have democratic governments after 16 years not been able to do the same? The students pointed to the legacies of the dictatorship, the mooring laws, declaring the initiatives during the 90s as a sort of 'failed transitional process'.

It is difficult to say whether there was a direct influence, but after the secondary student's movement, a series of strong social movements in the search to guarantee human rights and the welfare state began to take part in the country.[12] Also, in 2011 university student's protests began, now seeking to enhance higher education and get universal free education. During the decade of 2010 various movements and civil organizations formed demanding environmental, justice, energy efficiency and access to water; new retirement pension system, assure access to health care, etc. In other words, movements developed around access to economic, social, cultural and environmental rights and demands about a standard of living.

Also, LGBTQIA+ movements started to gain force. Strikes and demonstrations to defend and support indigenous causes too. Additionally, at the end of the decade, initiatives supporting immigrants increased. The sense of the otherness emerged, apart from the Chilean identity and supposed 'good values' that the dictatorship model tried to impose on citizens. Social discomfort for corruption of the State, politicians, military, and police forces; and collusion by the private sector made possible by the laws and Constitution, small penalties for those who were involved caused great outrage.

A campaign led by various political, social and cultural personalities was launched in 2013, calling for a change to the 1980 Constitution. During the second Bachelet administration, a series of participatory initiatives were carried out to raise the process. At the end of her mandate, a draft was sent to Congress, but the recently assumed second government of Sebastián Piñera refused to continue with it.

In the first half of the decade of 2010s, the symbolic redress measures extended to society with the objective to guarantee a non-repetition setting, established in both Truth Commissions, started to be implemented profusely. First, a state fund is designated to give to fund some of the memory sites after years of self-management. However, to date there is still no clear funding or management policy for these spaces.

In 2010, by Bachelet's mandate the national Museum of Memory and Human Rights was opened, a space for those families that does not have a physical space of remembrance for their beloved ones, and acquaint the facts of what happened, through education. For the commemoration of the 40 years of the coup, in 2013 the literary and audiovisual production in the country proliferated. Television series on national channels, films, fiction books and biographies, concerts and public events gave space to talk about the period in an intergenerational way. Diverse narratives came to the surface, different from the democratic memory established in the Commissions. Academic debates around the dictatorship increased and diversified as well, and the context that the dictatorship occured and its effects to this day were some topics that (finally) were addressed.

12 Sotomayor, F. I. (2019). Malestar, acción colectiva y movimientos sociales en chile:(2001–2017). Revista Ciência & Saberes-UniFacema, 4(2), 1137-1151
13 Barrios, L. A. (2015). Televisión y memoria: a 40 años del golpe de estado en Chile. Revista Comhumanitas, 6(1), 189-204.

However, all of this had to coexist with denialist speeches. In contrast to other countries that had gone into transitional justice processes, in Chile, there are no legal limitations about speeches that can be considered hate. The official factual history of the State (in the Commissions, this democratic memory) with plural and extended narratives (by memory sites, victims and relatives, and academia), and also denialism cohabit almost like equals in the public sphere.

Long protests, called the Feminist May, led mainly by female university students against gender-based violence and inequality between men and women occurred in 2018. Their demands echoed in other spaces of society.

That same year, several environmental activists died in suspicious conditions, and the repression the southern part of the country, considered Mapuche territory, was under heavy police repression. Citizens strongly reproached the government and showed their support for the causes. Despite everything aforementioned, formal participation in an organization or political parties, and the exercise of voting remained low.

9. 2019 Protest, The So-Called 'Revuelta Social'

The protests that began in October 2019 initially started due to the increase in the public transportation fare. However, the massive street demonstrations soon exposed the high cost of living, low pensions, lack of access to health treatments, and a generalized rejection of the political class and the institutional discredit accumulated during the last few years, including the country's own Constitution as the motive of the mobilizations. These were the same demands for which large social movements developed during the 2010s. People started to demand 'Happiness' promised during the NO campaign. Some slogans during the Revuelta Social were 'it was not 30 pesos; it was 30 years' pointing to the 30 years of the return of democracy.

President Sebastián Piñera decreed a state of emergency and a curfew as of Saturday night, October 19. The mobilization expanded to other regions of the country a few hours later. Tanks and military presence in the streets were the usual, bringing back memories and fear in those who lived during the 70s and 80s.

People reacted to police repression, and the protests got bigger. The National Institute of Human Rights identified more than 3,400 civilians that were hospitalized as a result of the protests, while almost 8,000 were arrested in odd situations. In addition, they denounced cases of torture and other abuses by the Armed Forces and Carabineros. Investigations carried out by organizations such as Amnesty International, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Human Rights Watch and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights determined the occurrence of serious human rights violations committed by State agents. The government acknowledged the existence of some specific cases of police brutality, but ruled out the systematic occurrence of these violations.

People were on the streets demanding one thing: to live and be treated in dignity. In response to the demonstrations, the government announced a series of measures, which included reforms to pensions, health, salaries and public administration. Similarly, security measures on anti-vandalism, anti-terrorism and reconstruction of public space were

to be introduced, in a way discriminating against the social movement.

There were no measures for state agents who attacked, generating a stronger feel of impunity. The ongoing situation adds a layer to the necessity to speak about what happened (during the dictatorship and now). This has shown us that the non-repetition promise was not really ensured.

In November 2020, most of the political parties signed an agreement to draft a new political constitution.

On October 25, 2020, a national plebiscite was held by which the citizens were to pronounce themselves in favor or against initiating the process, and the mechanism by which it would be drafted. The citizens decided by a large majority (78 %) to draft a new Constitution. The drafting body (79 %) was a Constitutional Convention, the first with gender parity in the world, with seats reserved for indigenous peoples and whose members were elected exclusively for this purpose in May 2021.

The Constitutional Convention began its sessions on July 4, 2021. We expect it to be based on the respect of human rights, along with a new process of justice for the fallen and injured ones, in order to deepen and enhance democracy.

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PART 2: ARGENTINA, 1976



1. Pre-Coup and Coup History

If we think of the seventies in Argentina, we must remember the Cold War, the repercussions of the Cuban Revolution throughout Latin America and the impact of almost 20 years of proscription of the majority party: the Peronist party. In our country, as in the rest of the world, the mobilization experiences of the 1960s were led by a novel social actor: the youth. The post-war economic boom had created the conditions for the young people to turn to political mobilization, evading the material urges and family mandates of previous generations.

In Argentina, this panorama was combined with particular political, economic, and social processes. First, since the 1950s, the productive profile and development strategies had been redefined with a strong presence of transnational capital. Second, we have a particular element of tension between workers and ruling classes resulting from the closure of the Peronist experience and its consequences in terms of union and political mobilization during the 1960s. In a context of institutional instability, the military power that was, reinforced that was stubborn in the tutelage of political power and suspicious of any form of mobilization that went beyond the western way of life. These sectors sought to retain State power by redefining the concept of “national security”. Reducing all forms of dissidence to the idea of “subversion”, the National Security Doctrine encouraged the persecution of those who were identified as an “internal enemy”.

Although the exercise of violence by the Argentine government towards its own civil society had existed for at least the previous hundred years, a particularly intense range of legal and illegal forms of repression to political, trade union and cultural activity was deployed from the mid-1970s. Taken as a whole, these practices have been called State terrorism. This expression implies the illegitimate use of the State’s resources for the exercise of force. It also implies a massive and systematic use of this violence, which collectively harms the citizen’s rights and guarantees with which the laws protect them. In this way, there is a generalized feeling of fear and paralysis in the face of state power.

Since the end of 1974, people linked to left-wing political parties, armed organizations and various kinds of unions as well as intellectual, artistic or religious advocacy have been assassinated, attacked or forced to leave the country. These actions were attributed to an armed group so-called Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (known as Triple A), an extreme right-wing group linked to the conservative sectors of the Peronist party and to the armed forces, with the evident connivance of local, provincial, and national authorities.

“To annihilate the actions of subversive groups” was the objective used by the constitutional government to deploy the armed forces in different parts of the territory since mid 1975. In this way, it was defined which individuals and groups would be considered as an

"internal enemy". This denomination included left-wing armed organizations as well as different critical and dissident individuals in the political, working, student, religious, and cultural spheres.

After the military coup of March 24, 1976, repression took a quantitative and qualitative leap. The disappearance of people became commonplace, turning into the distinctive characteristic of this dictatorship. For this purpose, numerous police and military facilities, and even private properties, were used to house and torture detainees, most of whom were later murdered and disappeared.

The terror created by the State led to a weakening of the social fabric that could have provided support or containment to the victims and those directly affected. This guaranteed, for a time, impunity for the perpetrators. However, the massiveness of the repression, its public display in densely populated urban areas, the reports of thousands of political prisoners, survivors and relatives of victims, built a resistance movement that grew in the last years of the dictatorship.

2. Specific Type of Repression

To understand the particular nature of the repression and political violence in Argentina in the seventies, we have to start by considering that between 1930 and 1976 there were six coups d'état in the country, all of them led by some military sector and supported by different economic or political groups. Therefore, the news on the radio in the early morning of March 24th, was not such for the Argentine society. Many people took it as part of a certain routine that our political system had acquired 46 years ago. However, as time went by, people became aware that they were facing something new, something different.

What was distinctive about the repression of the last Argentine dictatorship? What makes it stand out from the rest? The first answer that comes to mind is, logically, the State terrorism. All dictatorships in Argentina in the 20th century used illegal detentions and political persecution to discipline society. In every case, political activity was forbidden, and intellectuals, scientists, artists and politicians were forced into exile. But, in this last one, all these practices acquired a systematicity and a scale never seen before. Plus, enforced disappearance became the main repressive method. The term "disappeared" would assume new meanings and embody new fears for Argentine society since then.

Although it is the most popular hypothesis, so to speak, to see the singularity of the last civil-military dictatorship in the repressive method it used limits the capacity of understanding since it makes it seem that kidnapping, torture and disappearance were an end in themselves. It empties the analysis of politics and leaves it lodged in the absolute planes of morality and the mental health of the perpetrators; in this way, once the genocidaires are imprisoned, the dangers of repetition would be solved. Here we will briefly propose another model to understand why the 1976-1983 period was exceptional. The central hypothesis is that not only the repressive method but also the objectives pursued were exceptional.

Juan Villarreal[1], from whom we will take this idea of looking at the 1976-1983 period from another perspective, states that the last dictatorship was characterized by an unusual

1 Villarreal, Juan. "Los hilos sociales del poder" in Jozami, Eduardo et. al. Crisis de la dictadura argentina. Política económica y cambio social. Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 1985.

concentration of power not in the military corporation but at the top of the social structure, and this was achieved within the framework of a regressive social process. A vast process of social restructuring took place, tending to strengthen the bases of domination and to fragment the subaltern classes. The author says that the cycle of alternation between weak democratic governments and military coups of the period opened in 1930 is due to a crisis of hegemony both at the general level of Argentine society and within the ruling classes. He sums it up with the idea that there was a "heterogeneous social structure above and homogeneous below", which in the framework of a capitalist economy made the political and economic process lean towards instability. The fractions of the ruling class fought among themselves over the model of development and accumulation and the dominated classes enjoyed, through the political-party identity acquired in 1945 and the industrialization process of the last 50 years, a homogeneity that gave them the capacity to question the patterns of production and accumulation. This means that there were irreconcilable conflicts between fractions of the propertied classes, ideological fractures that were expressed in terms of nationalism versus liberalism, political contradictions that spoke of a fragmentation from above that could not be resolved in hegemony. An example of this is the confrontations between medium-sized landowners oriented to the domestic market and large producers linked to exports, or industrialists against agricultural entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the alliance represented by Peronism between the industrial and popular sectors was a destabilizing industrial-worker axis.

Faced with this situation, the military corporation appeared as the actor that settled the conflict without much success. The 1976 dictatorship aimed to put an end to this situation by reversing the social situation: homogeneity in the social leadership with a clearly winning and hegemonic fraction of capital (financial and agricultural capital) and heterogeneity in the dominated classes through a strategy of "scorched earth" which not only included state terror but also deindustrialization which reduced the weight of industrial workers, union closure that blocked forms of corporate expression and the growth of non-wage labor that strengthened the social figure of self-employed workers, all means to break organic and individual solidarities and change the cultural, political and economic structure of the country.

After March 24, 1976, the number of detentions that were not formally recognized by any authority multiplied rapidly. According to countless testimonies, the people arrested were subjected to different forms of systematic torture and housed in clandestine detention centers. The torments were aimed at emotionally breaking the detainees in order to obtain information about their activities and militant networks. The continuity of the systematic torture sought to produce a dehumanizing effect, breaking all meaningful ties with the outside world.

Torture included different forms of physical aggression, from beatings to the use of the electric shocks, psychological torments such as having to witness the torture of others (including family members, partners and friends) or being subjected to mock executions. The repression also included different forms of sexual violence against men and women, and particularly cruel treatment of pregnant women and women in labor, among other forms in which violence revealed a gender-differentiated character. The clandestine nature of the repressive actions allowed a margin of discretion for those responsible. This protected and promoted actions based on personal motivations - enmity, political disagreement,



First military junta:
Jorge Rafael Videla, Emilio Eduardo Massera, Orlando Ramón Agosti - Oath, 1976

material ambitions, revenge, sexual desires - becoming, paradoxically, a systematic feature that reinforced the defenselessness of the victims. Arbitrariness also gave rise to theft and looting of the homes of the detainees. Some other people were released as arbitrarily as they had been detained, both from the clandestine centers and from the prisons.

But most of the victims of the repression were last seen at the time of their abduction or in the centers. Today we know that many of those who disappeared during state terrorism were killed inside or outside their places of detention. Some died during torture sessions or were shot and buried as NN* in cemeteries. Others were drugged and thrown into the river or the sea, as revealed by the bodies that appeared from time to time on the riverbanks and in the testimonies of some of those involved in the so-called “death flights”.

3. Systematic Child Abduction and Identity Theft Scheme

The repression included the children, who were victims of a different kind and especially a cruel crime: appropriation. As we said, the majority of the victims were young people, between 18 and 35 years. Many of them had children, or were women expecting their babies. Children were, in many cases, kidnapped along with their parents and taken to the clandestine detention centers with them. When not, they were abandoned in the houses,

on the streets or given to the neighbors. Pregnant women, on the other hand, were part of the clandestine detention center population, and were forced to have their babies in captivity. What happened later with these children? They were appropriated. In this process there were two ways: in one way, they were directly given into the care of a family (normally related to the military) who registered the child as if they were their own. These families could be civil families, military families, or even the captors themselves. We discovered that these children were sometimes promised way before they were born. The other way was putting the children to adoption by illegal means.

The dictatorship deprived these children, today adults, of their identity. Around 500 children were kidnapped during these years. In the search for these children, Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo was born in 1977. To date, the organization was able to solve 130 cases, however, over 350 are still with a question mark, some of whom we are unaware if they were born. Many others are adults today around 40 years old who don’t know the truth about their biological parents and families.

This crime was perpetrated in numerous clandestine detention centers located in different parts of the country, in charge of military and security forces. It involved the Army, the Navy, Air Force, the Police, and other national and provincial security forces.

Round of the Madres and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, 1981, Archivo General de la Nación, República Argentina



Also, civilians participated: doctors, midwives, judges, and minority institutions were a key part in this crime, that was committing them systematically.

The search and the claim for these children began early on. From the first years of the dictatorship, their relatives began to announce their disappearance on a national and international scale. Gradually, a group of women, many of whom were already part of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, began to collectively organize this struggle. In this way, the original group that would form Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo) emerged, an organization that, over the years, consolidated itself as the main body dealing with the specific problem of the "disappeared children", as the appropriated children were called in those years.

4. Transition to Democracy

The initial strength and support of the military regime started to fade as we reached the last years of the decade. As we said, the victims of the repression were primarily social and political activists, workers, students and their unions and organizations. Any kind of activity or manifestation of these groups was certainly blocked since 1976, and fear had a paralyzing effect in society in general. However, by 1979, slowly some voices started to rise.

One of those voices were from the victims' relatives, who started to organize from the beginnings of the dictatorship claiming to know about their sons and daughters, taken by the military forces, and denouncing the state terror. The first group was "Relatives of Detained and Disappeared People for Political Reasons", formed in 1975, then Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in 1976, and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo in 1977.

During the first years these groups were very small in terms of active members, but as time passed and the number of victims grew, they also did considerably. The Mothers and Grandmothers introduced a new form of demonstration with the rallies at Plaza de Mayo that summoned more and more people each Thursday under the demand of "return of the victims alive". At the same time, Argentinians living in exile started to organize. These groups were the first to organize and systematize testimonies and information about each case, and with this material, travel around the world to present Argentina's case of human rights violations to the international organizations. This way, they established powerful relationships that allowed their claim to be heard in different countries. The exiles worked to announce internationally that human rights were being violated in our country.

This international pressure led to the visit of the Interamerican Human Rights Commission to the country in 1979. This event had an enormous repercussion nationally and internationally. The commissioners took thousands of testimonies and visited places recognized as illegal detention camps by the survivors. This material was extremely important for the subsequent investigation about the crimes committed.

At the same time, a serious economic crisis was taking place in the country. The neoliberal policies from the regime were in crisis. Discontent among people with the government grew and unions started very slowly to protest again in the middle of an extreme repression. Businessmen from the industry sector also started to show their differences with the government as the crisis escalated. The student movement also has an awakening,

and political parties start to press for a transition to democracy through an alliance of different political parties that tried to negotiate with the military.

In this scenario of political weakness and economic crisis, we arrive at the Malvinas War in 1982. The decision of initiating this war was based on the need to legitimize the military government. By using a historic national cause such as the Malvinas Islands, the military sought to win the people's support. This actually happened and for two months society was in a state of patriotic euphoria. Even opponents to the dictatorship supported the war. The media, under the control of the government, published fake news about the war, saying that Argentina was winning, and we would take control of the islands again. The truth was that the soldiers, young untrained men, more teenagers than men, were suffering cold and hunger in a very hostile territory abandoned by their own military chiefs, and were being defeated by one of the most powerful navy forces in the world. After a predictable, terrible, and sad performance of the Argentine troops in the islands, the war came to an end by mid-June. This defeat meant the end of the dictatorship.



Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, demonstration in 1987

The Argentine people were devastated. Already in shock by a strong economic crisis and suffocated by a repressive military government, discontent increased and a transition to democracy was inevitable for the military. Different protests started to take place, and although the government replied with repression, by 1983 the transition was underway. It was a transition by collapse, no negotiations were possible.

On December 10th, 1983, Raúl Alfonsín took over the government after making a powerful campaign during which he promised to hold those responsible for the crimes committed during the dictatorship accountable. The prosecution policy of President Alfonsín aimed to carry out short and limited trials. This was based on the idea that the leaders of the military forces as well as the leaders of the revolutionary organizations were responsible for initiating a violent confrontation in the early seventies. The difference was that, once this confrontation started, the military took over the State and, from that position, implemented a much powerful violence that harmed the entire society, including people that were not part of the conflict. This interpretation, known in Argentina as "the theory of the two demons", has many problems and has been criticized by researchers and activists, but it was the interpretation that structured at that time the prosecution policy and was clearly expressed in the National Commission on Disappeared People's report. This report, in a resumed version, was published in 1984 under the name "Nunca Más" (Never again) and became a bestseller in the country. This report, as result of the commission's work, is considered a milestone in the struggle for memory, truth and justice. A second milestone was the trial of the Military Juntas, where the military chiefs who confirmed the four boards that governed the country between 1976 and 1982 were prosecuted for the crimes committed against the people.

Alfonsín's success with this policy was limited by the own verdict of the trial, where judges sentenced and that all members of the security or military forces who were involved in these crimes must be prosecuted. This led to an enormous number of lawsuits in the courts against a large number of military and police officers who were still on active duty. These groups began to pressure the government to prevent their persecution, putting the whole democratic system in danger. As the political situation became more and more tense, Alfonsín decided to enact two laws: in December 1986, the "Punto final" law established a deadline for the filing of new indictments and for their prosecution, and in June 1987 the National Congress passed into law the bill sent by the National Government known as "Due Obedience", which freed all middle and lower members of the security and military forces of guilt and charges. Throughout this process, the human rights movement was a protagonist, activating initiatives to search for mass graves, participating in judicial processes, protesting in the streets at every setback or promoting petitions against government actions in 1986 and 1987.

The gigantic economic crisis of 1989, which included hyperinflation, a state of siege, looting and an early presidential election led Argentina to have a new president: in May 1989 Carlos Menem took office with promises of returning to the mid-century welfare state. It soon became clear that he would not deliver. His neoliberal approach in the economic field was combined with a policy regarding human rights violations in the past consisted on pardoning all those judicially involved in the political violence of the 70s, without distinguishing between members of the State and those civilians who were part of the armed organizations, and creating a dominant discourse based on the idea that the best thing for the country was reconciliation between the parties, forgetting the trauma and moving forward without looking back. Memory was, in his perspective, an obstacle to the country's development. Before the first month of Government, it was announced that the idea of sanctioning a pardon or amnesty for the military and guerrillas was on the agenda (Acuña and Smulovitz: 2007, 72). What remained to be defined, and this was what generated the greatest controversy within the government, was the formality of the decision, scope and moment to implement it. The government's position generated rejection, which was expressed in opinion polls that showed up to 68% opposition. The most active opposition came from the human rights movement which, however, generated few equivalent effects in other sectors of society due to the impact of the political and economic crisis with which the Alfonsín government ended (cessation of payment of the foreign debt, hyperinflation, state of siege, early handover of presidential power, etc.). When the decision was formalized, there were protests and street rallies, but their scope and impact were so low that the government continued with its position as if nothing had happened. The decision to pardon was announced in July 1989 and by the time it was implemented in October of that year there was little room for resistance or for resignation[2]. The closure of the issue was proposed by the government based on the idea that the country needed to be pacified. This so-called peace was the Trojan Horse. Thus, once the 1989 electoral dispute was over, the President went so far as to state: "my idea tends fundamentally to bring peace within the Argentine community, because we need to close wounds and definitively heal a past that does not do the country any good". With a communication style that mixed humor with cynicism, and which characterized his entire presidency, Menem announced his position on the issue of the prosecution of crimes against humanity committed during the last military dictatorship.

5. Memory, Truth, Justice, Transitional Justice & Current State of Democracy

The amnesties given by Menem's Government in 1989 and 1990 were a clear setback for the organizations of the victims of the dictatorship and their families -also, a brake for the trial policy that had been a unique and exemplary case in the region. Even so, in the 1990s, these organizations continued with their denunciation activities and demanded the reopening of the trials that had been closed by the laws of Full Stop and Due Obedience. Although in the first half of the decade this activity was developed in an adverse context, where oblivion had been socially installed, from 1995 onwards this changed, and society experienced an awakening of memory. A key factor in this process was the emergence of the HIJOS (Hijas por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio), the organization of the sons and daughters of the disappeared, who joined the demands of the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo for justice. This new generation developed a novel form of protest: the "escrache", or "exposure" protest. "If there is no justice, there is escrache" was their motto, so they began to point out the former perpetrators, unpunished, outside their houses, alarming the neighbors, the neighborhood, the whole society. Seeking a social condemnation and raising awareness that people who had violated human rights, who had tortured and murdered were circulating in freedom among us.

At the same time, tributes and remembrances to the victims of State terrorism began to grow, as well as the marking of the sites where clandestine detention centers had operated.

2 Carlos H. Acuña y Catalina Smulovitz. "Militares en la transición argentina: del gobierno a la subordinación constitucional", en Anne Pérotin-Dumon (dir.). Historizar el pasado vivo en América Latina. Copyright ©2007 Anne Pérotin-Dumon http://etica.uahurtado.cl/historizarelpasadovivo/es_contenido.php

The first case of a site marked and around which the neighbors themselves began to organize was the so-called “Athletic Club”, in 1996. In that same year, the march for the 20th anniversary of the coup was massive, as it had not been for many years. Society showed renewed support.

Up to this point, the State had remained aloof in these memorialization efforts, but from the end of the decade, it began to assume an increasingly active role. This was reflected, for example, in the municipal ordinance in 1997 that ordered the creation of the Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism, located today in the Memory Park in the city of Buenos Aires, and the creation of the Museum of Memory in Rosario in 1998. The late 1990s were recognized by many scholars of the period as the “memory boom”.

The economic, social and political crisis that erupted in December 2001 constituted a new turning point for the Argentine human rights movement and its demands. The 2001 crisis was read as the crisis of the neoliberal economic and social model that the dictatorship had managed to impose through state terrorism. To this extent, the dictatorship and the impunity of the crimes committed in those years returned to a main place in the public agenda.

When Néstor Kirchner took office in May 2003, he stated in his inauguration speech that he belonged to the generation decimated by the dictatorship. Before the United Nations General Assembly in September of that year, he said: “The defense of human rights occupies a central place in the new agenda of the Argentine Republic. We are children of the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo”.



ESMA, Memory Site, 2021

March 24, 2019. Demonstration for the 43rd anniversary of the Coup d’Etat. People carrying the flag with the faces of the dissapeared.



This new national policy in the field of Human Rights had many milestones that are worth highlighting in order to understand the current scenario. On the anniversary of the Coup d’État in 2004, President Kirchner held a ceremony in an emblematic place: the Mechanics School of the Navy, where one of the largest clandestine detention centers in the country operated. In that act, the President, in addition to apologizing to the Argentine society on behalf of the State for the years of silence in the face of the atrocities committed by the dictatorship, announced that that site would no longer belong to the Navy and would become a space for remembrance. That same day, in a high-impact act of symbolic reparation, he ordered the removal of the pictures of the dictators from the Courtyard of Honor of the National Military College. The following year, in 2005, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation declared unconstitutional the laws of Full Stop and Due Obedience, allowing the reopening of the trials for the crimes of the dictatorship. This reopening was possible because of a transcendental shift in the legal consideration of these crimes. Unlike the trials that had been carried out in the 1980s, which considered the crimes committed by the dictatorship as ordinary criminal offens, they would now be judged as crimes against humanity.

In these years, several measures were implemented in the cultural and educational field. As of 2006, March 24 was instituted as the National Day of Memory for Truth and Justice,

thus becoming mandatory content in the curricula of all educational levels in all provinces of the country. At the same time, the Federal Network of Sites of Memory was created, with the aim of supporting the process of marking, taking possession, and building spaces for memory in the emblematic sites that functioned as clandestine detention centers during the dictatorship. Related to the latter, an intense work was carried out to find and systematize archives related to the repression and the denunciation activity of the families' organizations, which had its maximum expression in the creation of the National Archive of Memory in 2006, and a whole network of provincial archives that concentrated the documentation of their respective localities. These actions, among others, had human rights organizations as consultants and protagonists and were based on the premise of differentiating themselves from the policies deployed by the previous governments of the democratic period.

The struggle of the human rights movement for memory, truth and justice throughout democracy, even in the most adverse context, built the foundations for the process initiated in 2003, whose greatest contribution is to have transformed those demands into State policies (CELS, 2016: 3). The simultaneous commitment of the three branches of power and the Attorney General's Office since then allowed for very significant progress in the prosecution of crimes against humanity and the development of a set of public policies. As for the trials, since the reopening of the cases as of September 2021, a total of 264 sentences have been handed down in trials for crimes against humanity and the total number of convicted persons amounts to 1,044.

Victims' reparation policies were expanded, including economic, social, judicial, and symbolic reparations. The possibility of testifying in court, being heard, having psychological support and being able to see their kidnappers convicted meant for many of them the fulfillment of a long-standing demand.

Finally, the amplification of actions supported by the State in pursuit of the reunion of children kidnapped during the years of State terrorism allowed the restitution of many granddaughters and grandsons appropriated and their reunion with their families.

Overall, it is a process that was consolidated to reach very broad levels of social agreement, an institutional dynamic that is difficult to reverse and constitutes an emblematic reference for the region and the world.

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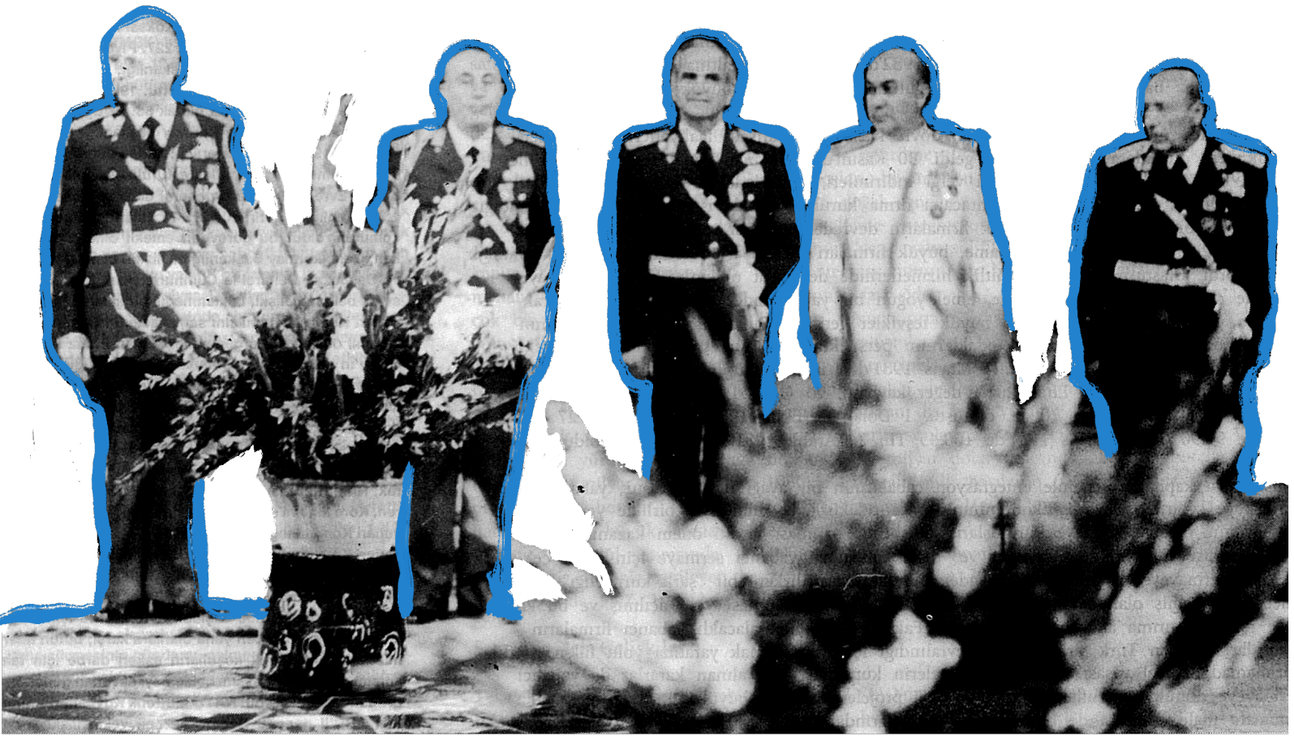
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PART 3: TURKEY, 1980



1. Pre-Coup and Coup History

As a global phenomenon, the Spring 1968 uprising inspired different forms of resistance in various countries around the world. In Turkey, its effects on the socialist student movement as well as the mobilization of labor organizations, unions and peasants can be analyzed together with the regional and Cold War politics of that time as well as the domestic socio-political developments. Universities and student associations became hubs for those who were mobilizing around demands for a democratic and autonomous university, social inequalities and revolutionary ideas. Campuses also allowed a space for socialist ideas to spread to those who came from different parts of the country. During this time, we can pin down three international waves that influenced and captured the imagination of the socialist movement in Turkey: first and foremost the European Student Movement, national independence movements and anti-imperialist wars in Asia, Latin America and Africa and Chinese Cultural Revolution.[1] In addition to these movements, the communism of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics took its place as the 4th wave that ideologically shaped a number of socialist fractions. These movements influenced several socialist / leftist groups in Turkey throughout the 70's and triggered a significant break with the past.

In 1965, Turkish Worker Party (TIP) was the first socialist party to win 15 seats in the Parliament and initially got the support of various progressive forces in the society including students. As the idea of socialism and therefore the student movement grew stronger, the ties between TİP and the socialist students broke as the latter drifted away from parliamentarism towards revolutionary mobilizing. Different socialist student groups emerged based on their perception and ideas about anti-imperialism, socialism and Marxism and these eventually turned into massive socialist movements each led by iconic student leaders in their early 20s such as Deniz Gezmiş (THKO), Mahir Çayan (THKP-C) and İbrahim Kaypakkaya (TİKKO) to name a few. The spirit of 1968 motivated the autonomous student movement, which then paved the way to recognize the power of mobilization and radicalism by breaking from theoretical discussions of Marxism and focusing on the actual demands of the progressives, students, workers or peasants. Anti-Americanism and anti-imperialism were two widely supported ideals within different sectors of the society during the 70s. Boycotts and occupations, especially at major universities, were frequent actions that the students utilized to declare their academic and social demands. New ideas of solidarity solidified in the forums where students exercised democratic practices and built the resistance bottom up. It was truly a period of empowerment

1 Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, İletişim Yayınları, kitap 7, sayfa 2094



for the youth who was questioning not only the establishment in order to change it but also the previous generation and their understanding of socialism and activism. Kurdish students found a space to become active subjects of the resistance especially at the events such as the 'East Evening' targeted by the fascists. Especially after the Military Memorandum of 1971, the student movement became the dynamo of the socialist movement to target and influence the larger segments of the society.

As the student movement grew stronger and the boycotts and occupations intensified, the responses became more violent and armed. The movement eventually merged within the larger segments of the society sparking a struggle not for the continuation of the State but for a new social order within which they anchored their dreams for a future vision. Revolutionary movements stemmed from these revolutionary ideas of the 1968 and shaped several socialist factions and movements that sprung from them in the following decades.

Between 1967 and 1969, Turkish Worker Party organized "East Rallies" that focused on the social and political inequalities that Kurds were subject to. First rally was organized on September 16, 1967 in Diyarbakır and a large number of participants joined TİP in raising the demands for equal citizenship and identity rights. Following this period, Kurdish mobilization continued to accelerate as the Kurdish revolutionaries drifted away from the larger socialist movements to form their own political groups mostly around their own socialist Kurdish publications.

Mass demonstrations reached its peak moment with the June 15 and 16 demonstrations of the workers. On February 13, 1967, Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK) was established and quickly became an alternative for the workers against Türk-İş that was carrying out very amicable negotiations with the government and the bourgeoisie. Adalet Partisi (Justice Party) Government drafted an unconstitutional law that threatened the existence of the Confederation. This move triggered one of the largest marches organized by the workers, both from DİSK and Türk-İş, who left their factories and headed towards the center of Istanbul on June 15 and 16. Many workers and union officers were arrested and Marshall law was declared. On August 22, 1970 the bill was signed into law by President Cevdet Sunay but later revoked by the Constitutional Supreme Court. Workers resistance of June 15 an 16 created a momentum that helped the workers recognize their power and legitimize them as a strong ally leading the struggle for a political change in the society. DİSK organized more workers over the next decade strengthening the labor unions in the political arena that were fighting for collective bargaining and strikes. The resistance also mobilized the youth which eventually branched out to several groups.

In more definitive terms, the 1968 among the youth in Turkey could perhaps be defined with spontaneity, creativity and massiveness, which gave confidence and self-recognition to both the students and the workers of the era. Independent theater groups (Theater for the Revolution, street theaters and workers' theaters), SinemaTek and publications of the Marxist classics all contributed to an exuberant and productive cultural life in the country.

Although limited in its geographical scope and participation, peasants' struggle grew significantly between 1967 and 1971 in parallel to these developments. Two main groups among peasants were those who did not own the land and those who were small producers.

They targeted their demands to the landlords and the state for land reforms that included fair distribution of lands. We see that as the struggle grew stronger, an element of anti-imperialism also defined the characteristics of the struggle. Peasants frequently appeared in the newspapers for their land occupations in Odabaşı, Gölpınar, Beyceli and in several other towns followed by mass demonstrations. Peasants received the support of student movement en masse during this time.[2]

On the other hand, the first mass mobilization of women on the left were Revolutionary Women's Associations, Ankara Women's Association (which later formed the Federation of Revolutionary Women's Association) and Association of Progressive Women established in 1975. Following these associations, Democratic Women's Union, the predecessor of Federation of the Democratic Women's Union was established. Between 1975 and 1980, thousands of women mobilized in these associations taking active role in the anti-fascist resistance and building struggles around the issues of abortion, gender inequalities and unemployment. The goal of these associations differed based on the political groups they organized in; therefore, initial objectives were to politicize women for them to engage in the anti-fascist resistance. During this time, women's struggle manifested itself as the extension of the socialist struggle and the idea that emancipation of the women were to be realized with the establishment of the socialist rule at an unknown future.

This momentum of resistance, struggles and revolutionary mobilizing was to be interrupted by the 1971 Military Memorandum where thousands, some of which were urban guerrillas, were rounded up and their leaders were either murdered, executed or sentenced to death penalty. During this time, we see a solidarity between these different factions against the military to save their friends from prison and execution and on the other hand we also witness a very harsh and brutal attack of the military against its young and educated population.



**Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Struggles,
İletişim Publishing, 1988**

2 ibid. p. 2136

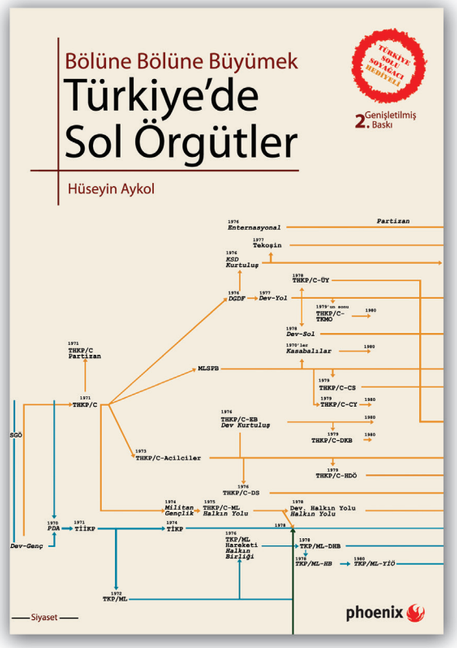
An immediate arrest of student leaders pretty much cut off the mobility of these leftist groups and the leaders were tortured or executed in prisons. Kurdish groups were equally targeted after the 1971 Military Memorandum, however, Kurdish political groups continued to gain strength in the 80s as well.

The legacy of these socialist movements and their leaders continued well after the coup. Several new formations sprung and rapidly gained support in a society that was crippling with socio-economic problems. Several of these political prisoners were released after the 1974 Amnesty of the CHP - MSP Coalition Government and those who were free further branched out from the core socialist movements of the pre-1971 era and formed even more revolutionary groups.

As Diyarbakir prison became the center for perpetrators to apply various forms of tortures, the vast majority of the political prisoners were Kurds. The conditions were so horrific and the techniques were so unbearable that four activists, Ferhat Kurtay, Eşref Anyık, Mahmut Zengin and Necmi Öner burned themselves to death to stop the inhumane treatments and raise awareness to what was taking place in Diyarbakır Military Prison. Kurds' mobilization before the 1980 Coup manifested itself as a continuous struggle against the Junta in the prisons and helped the Kurdish freedom movement to consolidate its base and gain more support throughout the years.

Overall, Turkey, in the late 1970's, is a country where peasants, workers and students mobilized in large numbers. Socialist groups and movements ideologically differed from each other where some of them branched out to armed struggles as they concluded this to be their route to revolution. Naturally, the rise of revolutionary ideas and socialism created its enemies who were heavily supported by the State in terms of military education and supplies. Ultra-Nationalists and counter-guerrilla, Nationalist Movement Party and Gray Wolves (Ülkücüler) worked hand in hand to violently combat the socialist groups. Not only the revolutionary groups but also occupational associations and unions were organizing in large numbers throughout the country. Some of these included DİSK (Revolutionary Workers Union Confederation), TÖB-DER (Turkey's largest teacher assocatıon) and TÜM-DER (Public servants' association), etc. Several members and leaders of these unions and associations were targeted by the members of the Gray Wolves, counter-guerilla, or ultra-nationalist groups. Towards the end of 70s, socialists were powerfully controlling the workspaces and defending neighborhoods against the fascist attacks. Evidently, an anti-fascist resistance defines the days going into 1980. Fascist attacks, assassinations of the academics, journalists, students and several leftist leaders as well as mass violence taking place in the country during May 1st, Şavşat Massacre and and massacres targeting Alevi citizens such as Sivas, Çorum and Maraş Massacres intensified in the second half of the 70s crystalizing the question of civil war.

On a global scale, several developments affected the domestic politics in Turkey as well as its international relations in the 70s. As an international crisis, the Cyprus Operation by the Turkish Military Forces on July 20, 1974 and the American embargo following the operation forced the country into political isolation as well as economic hardship. During this period, the Ecevit government stated that their intention was to stay in NATO and CENTO, however, pursued new relationships with the Soviets and the neighboring socialist countries.



"Bölüne bölüne büyümek" hiç de akıl kârı olmasa gerek. Bununla birlikte, ülkemizin son 100 yılında, bu topraklarda 200'ü aşkın sol örgüt kurulup faaliyet gösterdiyse, bu çeşitlilik biraz da kültürler mozaiğimizden kaynaklanıyor olmalı. Verimliliğiyle ünlü Anadolu toprağı, galiba bu konuda da çok zengin.

Osmanlı'dan günümüze kadar kurulan ve şu ya da bu uzunlukta bir dönem faaliyet gösteren sol örgütleri kitabımıza alırken, onların legal partiler ya da illegal örgütler oluşuna bakmadık. Bu araştırmamızın amacı, sayısı kesinlikle belirlenemeyecek kadar çok olan ülkemizdeki sol örgütleri olumlu ya da olumsuz yönleriyle değerlendirmek olmayıp, onları bir katalog, bir almanak halinde sizlerin dikkatine sunmaktır.

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On February 11, 1979, the United Stated lost an important ally in the Gulf region when Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was toppled by the Islamic leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in the Iranian Revolution. On December 24, 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan installing Babrak Kamal (Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) as Afghanistan's new head of government. Through Carter Doctrine, the US financed and supported the Mujahideen in Afghanistan in an effort to block the communist advances in the region.

The 70s also defines the structural crisis of capitalism which can be elaborated as the crisis of the over-accumulation of capital. This necessitated not only the economic restructuring but also the restructuring and reorganization of the political power[3]. By the end of the 70s Turkey was in turmoil with unsolved economic and social problems facing strikes and partial paralysis of politics. The Turkish economy, with its import-based and domestic market-oriented model, was in crisis.

Externally supported minority AP Government (Adalet Partisi - Justice Party) issued the so-called 'January 24 Measures' in an effort to end the economic instability and radically transform the domestic market-oriented model to an economic policy toward export-oriented industrialization in line with the global neoliberal order. This package was prepared by Turgut Özal who had been appointed as the secretary of treasury by the Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel. This new model, proposed by Özal, required restructuring of capital in the country and includ-ed harsh measures concerning the devaluation, reduction of the share of the state in the economy, and limitations for support for the purchases of agricultural products. Moreover, subsidies have been abolished, except for fertilizers, energy and transport. Foreign trade was liberalized, foreign capital investments were encouraged, profit transfers were facili-tated and foreign contracting services were supported. Imports were gradually liberalized. Exports, tax refunds, low-interest loans, customs exemptions on imported materials for manufacturers and exporters, as well as incentive systems differentiated according to sec-tors. The key was to establish a structure suitable for the production process and to bring the capital-labor conflict to a new structure that would not be an obstacle in its implemen-tation and eventually to integrate domestic capital with international capital. Overall, these changes required legal changes and the National Assembly was slow in the transformation. The January 24 Measures were seen as an assault by the labor organizations which limited the capability of the Parliament to accept and pass such economic measures. These decisions, however, would be quickly adapted by the Junta and applied right after the Coup in 1980. Even on the day of the Coup, IMF and World Bank Turkey desk chiefs as well as ambassa-dors reached out to bureaucrats and staff to understand whether there was a change in the program. The relief came in a press conference on September 16, 1980 when General Kenan Evren declared that the program would be implemented as it is and to show the dedication of the military regime to the economic program, Turgut Özal was offered a senior position in the first days of the Coup[4].

Meanwhile, The Grand National Assembly of Turkey was unable to elect a President during the six months preceding the Coup. Industrial bourgeoisie faced great challenges from largely organized political groups, associations, and unions. Along with the economic crisis, hegemonic crisis also defined the late 70s.[5] As a minor detail, one should also mention that in 1978, the term for the Chief of the General Staff was running out. It was expected

3 Ebru Ozan Deniz, Gülme Sırası Bizde, Metis Yayınları, 2012, İstanbul, sayfa 48
4 Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi, ibid. s. 2389
5 Ebru Ozan Deniz, ibid. p. 22

of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit to extend the time for the existing Chief of Staff. However, Ecevit, instead chose Kenan Evren who was getting ready for his retirement from the Ground Forces to become the Chief of General Staff. In Mehmet Ali Birand's documentary, Ecevit explains his choice of General Kenan Evren as follows:

> 'I had the impression that he was a general who was not interested in politics. He even had such a soft style that I was worried whether he would be able to establish his authority in the Armed Forces, in the General Staff.'[6]

2. September 12, 1980

On September 12, 1980, a defining moment in our history, the National Security Council, consisting of the Chairman of the National Security Council and Chief of the General Staff Kenan Evren, the members of the Naval Forces Commander of the Naval Forces Full Admiral Nejat Tümer, Commander of the Ground Forces Full General Nurettin Ersin, Commander of the Air Forces Full General Tahsin Şahinkaya, and Commander of the Gendarmerei Sedat Celasun declared a coup d'état, extended martial law throughout the country and abolished the Parliament and the Government. As declared in the Proclamation No 4 of the NSC, Full General Haydar Saltık became the Secretary General of the National Security Concil. In subsequent declarations of National Security Council decrees, the basis of the military dictatorship was quickly established.



Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Struggles, İletişim Publishing, 1988

6 Mehmet Ali Birand, 32. Gün Arşivi, 12 Eylül Belgeseli

In contrast to Pinochet's Coup and the direct involvement of the CIA, American intervention is yet to be proved with official documents and uncovered in the case of the 1980 Coup. Widely known and circulated piece of information belongs to Paul Henze, former CIA and National Security specialist and head of CIA's Ankara Office about his remarks to President Jimmy Carter, 'Our boys did it'. In an interview for 32. Gün 12 Eylül Belgeseli (32. Gün September 12 Documentary) he states the following regarding the moment when President Jimmy Carter heard about the Coup while watching the Fiddler on The Roof:
'He didn't leave, there was no reason to leave. That was basically a positive development. The next day the feeling in Washington was a sense of relief.'[7]

Not only did the Coup seem to end the aforementioned hegemonic crisis but also used brutal force and oppression to pave the way to drastically rebuild and restructure the society in order to facilitate the economic and social integration to the neoliberal order. Turkey was clearly in a crisis on the verge of a civil war, which was partially staged by the Turkish military to justify an intervention. Immediately after the coup, several unions and associations were banned and closed, which outlawed most of the organizers and members within these organizations. Thousands of revolutionists were taken into custody and tortured in big stadiums, teachers' hostels and even in several state buildings. Prisons were filled with many political figures as well as ordinary citizens. Torture became an systematic act of imprisonment. Many prisons were famous for their notorious torture techniques perpetrated by soldiers of various ranks and counter guerilla members. Besides the military, officers of the Intelligence Service, doctors and even judges were joining the torture sessions around the country.[8]

In a relatively short period of time, Jmilitary regime was successful in smashing the socialist left by detaining, executing or forcing them to flee the country. Although we uniformly talk about the left or the socialist left, it involved several revolutionaries from different ethnic and religious backgrounds including Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Arap Orthodox, Syriacs, Georgians, Laz and Kurds alike. Some of the political prisoners were subject to extra torture measures because of their ethnic and religious backgrounds. Detailed research is necessary to pan out the experiences of each group to understand the true nature of oppression targeting them.

General Kenan Evren appointed Admiral Bülend Ulusu as prime minister on September 20, 1980. The Bülend Ulusu Government received a vote of confidence from the NSC on September 30, 1980. The National Security Council and the Bülend Ulusu Government de facto ruled the country until the 1983 elections. They laid the foundation of the Constitution and the anti-democratic practices after the Coup. The Coup Constitution drafted and voted in 1982 still serves as the country's constitution. Although it has been changed and revised many times over the years, it still determines the existing justice, higher education and electoral systems of the country.

7 Mehmet Ali Birand, 32. Gün Arşivi, 12 Eylül Belgeseli
8 Şerafettin Kaya, Diyarbakır'da İşkence, Yazılama Yayınları, Mayıs 2016, page

3. Accountability:

Accountability of the Military:

The first thing that comes to mind under this title is the military that planned, organized and implemented the Coup. National Security Council Chairman and Chief of Staff Kenan Evren, members Naval Forces Commander Full Admiral Nejat Tümer, Ground Forces Commander Full General Nurettin Ersin, Air Force Commander Full General Tahsin Şahinkaya, Gendarmerie Commander Full General Sedat Celasun, NSC Secretary General Haydar Saltık, as well as martial law commanders of 13 regions fall into this category.[9]
Accountability of the Security and MIT (National Intelligence Organization) Officers

In addition to the military, police officers and MİT members, who were the perpetrators of the crimes against humanity committed during the coup period, are among those responsible for the coup.

Accountability of the Political Actors

The Government of Bülent Ulusu, the members of the Cabinet, the Governors of the State of Emergency and the members of the Advisory Council are considered to be the political culprits of the coup, as they implemented the decisions made by the coup plotters and did not intervene to prevent crimes against humanity.[10]

Civil Accomplices

As a group that is generally ignored during and after the coup d'etat of 12 September 1980, civil accomplices were not actually directly involved in crimes against humanity, but held responsible for contributing to the obscuration, oblivion of these crimes or aiding the establishment of the military regime ideology, thus ensuring the continuation of the period and the crimes.

9 https://en.bellekmuzesi.org/museum/military-police-and-national-intelligence-officials-responsible-of-the-crimes-committed-during-and-after-the-military-coup-of-september-12-1980/
10 (https://en.bellekmuzesi.org/museum/political-actors-of-the-military-coup/)

4. Outcome of the Coup was Devastating[11]

1. 650 thousand people were detained and severely tortured during detention periods of up to 90 days,
2. 1 million 683 thousand people were labeled as communist, Alawite, Kurdish, religious, or sharia.
3. 230 thousand people were tried in Martial Law Courts out of 210 thousand lawsuits opened,
4. The death penalty was demanded for 7 thousand people, 517 people were given the death penalty,
5. The death sentence of 124 people was upheld by the Military Supreme Court,
6. 50 of those sentenced to death were hanged (18 left-wing, 8 right-wing, 23 criminal criminals, 1 ASALA militant),
7. The files of 259 people whose executions were requested were sent to the Parliament,
8. 388 thousand people were not given passports,
9. 30 thousand people were fired because they were “inconvenient”,
10. 14 thousand people were stripped of their citizenship,
11. 30 thousand people went abroad as “refugees”, 366 people died “with suspicion”,
12. In prison a total of 299 people died,
13. It was documented that 171 people “died from torture”,
14. 14 people died on hunger strike,
15. 16 people were shot while “running away”,
16. 95 people died in “conflict”,
17. 73 people were given a “natural death report”,
18. 43 people were reported to have “committed suicide”,
19. 937 movies were banned because they were deemed “objectionable”,
20. The activities of 23 thousand 677 associations were stopped,
21. Political parties and trade unions were closed down, many politicians were detained and arrested without justification.
22. 3 thousand 854 teachers, 120 faculty members at the university and 47 judges were dismissed,
23. A total of 4,000 years in prison were demanded for 400 journalists,
24. Journalists were sentenced to 3 thousand 315 years and 6 months in prison,
25. 31 journalists were imprisoned,
26. 300 journalists were attacked,
27. 3 journalists were killed with guns,
28. The newspapers stopped publishing for 300 days,
29. 303 lawsuits were filed for 13 major newspapers,
30. 39 tons of newspapers and magazines were destroyed,
31. Hundreds of thousands of publications were confiscated and destroyed.
32. 113,607 books belonging to Science and Socialism publications were burned. Publishing house owners were detained, arrested, tortured. İlhan Erdost was tortured and killed.

11 Report shared with the public by Nevzat Helvacı on September 21, 1993 https://www.ihd.org.tr/12-eylul-1980-askeri-darbe-davasi-suruyor-2/ Some data in this report have not been used in the light of new data.

5. Specific Types of Repression:

Political activities were drastically curtailed. The activities of political parties were prohibited, parties were dissolved and the leaders of these parties were placed under army protection and they were forbidden by law to make political statements. Several unions, trade organizations and associations were either closed down or their activities were suspended and their assets were confiscated. Trade union confederations DİSK and MİSK, teachers’ association TÖB-DER are among those to name a few. Normal trade union activities were not to be performed in the country. The Martial Law commanders not only had the power to prohibit strikes but also the publications. During the coup, several publications were shot down and their editors, writers and publishers were arrested on charges of crimes of opinion (Articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code). The Martial Law Courts extensively utilized the use of Articles 140, 141, 142 (crimes of opinion and Article 146 (high treason) against thousands of citizens. The National Security Council through its military courts and Martial Law Courts appointed judges and members to these courts where citizens were tried without being informed what the actual charges were. The rights of defense of those who were accused were eliminated. We have testimonies of the witnesses that elaborate that it was almost impossible for them to see or even talk to their attorneys.[12] Several of them testified that they had no access to the complete case files for an extended amount of time.[13] Courts were utilized to further torture the prisoners on the way to the courts and back. In some cases, even the defense lawyers were detained on duty. Most of these testimonies were also collected by international human rights organizations especially during the mid 80’s when the prisoners started protesting the inhumane conditions and tortures they had to endure in the majority of the prisons in Turkey. Diyarbakir, Mamak, Metris and Erzurum were some of the many prisons known for their notorious and inhumane treatments of the prisoners. Especially in Diyarbakır where Kurds were subject to unimaginable tortures in Ward Number 5, Captain Esat Oktay Yıldıran exercised his power to systematically torture the prisoners. In Mamak prisoners where subject to the tortures of Colonel Raci Tetik who was running the prison almost like a camp. Ferit Ildırar and Ahmet Selek were two of the soldiers who were brought to court for death due to torture in Artvin. Several international organizations such as Amnesty International made visits to prisons and published the first detailed reports about torture.[14] These organizations also collected witness testimonies of the political refugees especially in the mid 80’s when they arrived in Europe. With these documents, refugees tried to raise awareness about the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Junta and the following governments with a hope that international pressure could slow down the tortures and oppression in prisons.

Military regime extended the detention period from 15 days to 30 days and then to 90 days right at the beginning of the Coup. Based on our research, witness testimonies and resources, we can attest that every person who was detained by the military and security forces during the Coup were tortured in one form or the other.[15] Torture centers were not only police stations, prisons and military barracks but also other state institutions such as schools, dormitories, sports centers, state owned meat processing centers as well as private properties.

12 Delikanlı Eylem, Delikanlı Özlem, Geride Kalanlar Projesi – 1980 Darbesi Sözlü Tarih Araştırması, RIT Kolektif Hafıza Çalışma Grubu, 2012 – 2019 Delikanli Eylem, 1980 Darbesi Sözlü Tarih Araştırması, RIT Kolektif Hafıza Çalışma Grubu, 2020-2022
13 Memory Museum for Historical Justice Oral History Collection https://en.bellekmuzesi.org/oralhistory
14 Memory Museum for Historical Justice Resources https://en.bellekmuzesi.org/reports/
15 Memory Museum for Historircal Justice Mapping Torture https://en.bellekmuzesi.org/mapping-torture/



Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Struggles, İletişim Publishing, 1988

Evidence shows that officers committed crimes that are classified under crimes against humanity. Some of these include:

- Torture
- Executions
- Enforced disappearances

Torture began immediately at the detention centers regardless of where the detainee was brought. In several cases families of the detainees were unaware of the whereabouts. Some died during these torture sessions, others were severely injured with long lasting effects. Types of tortures included beatings, use of electric shocks, sexual violence against men and women, depriving prisoners from food and water, forcing them to solitary confinement staying in cells in horrendous conditions, depriving them from the use of bathroom and hygiene practices as well as psychological torture. These were among the 45 types of torture identified by the Memory Museum for Historical Justice. After the release, the methods of repression were applied in the form of compulsory military service, disqualification from the profession and obligatory administrative follow-up in another city.

6. From the Military Regime to the Authoritarian State

The Advisory Council with its 160 members, worked on a new constitution and presented it to the nation on July 17, 1982. General Kenan Evren himself organized rallies around the country to talk about the new constitution which would eventually provide him a strong presidency and curtailed and eliminated most of the rights and freedoms that the 1961 Constitution provided.[16] The referendum was held on November 7, 1982 and received approval from 91.4 percent of the voters. Cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Diyarbakır and also other cities with Kurdish majority registered significant “no” votes in this referendum. By the acceptance of the Constitution, Evren was also elected as president for a seven-year term. He took office on November 9, 1982. New constitution included the special clause Article 15 that gave lifelong immunity to Coup leaders.

General elections were held on November 6, 1983 and this was the first election since 1977 which technically marks the end of the military regime. Following the new constitution, a new law on political parties was issued in March 1983. This law banned the political parties that were established before the Coup for the following 10 years. New parties could be formed but they required military rulers’ approval. Political parties that were not banned by the National Security Council could participate in the election which included Turgut Özal’s Motherland Party (ANAP), People’s Party (HP) that was the continuation of the CHP and the Nationalist Democracy Party that was founded by the junta and headed by former general Turgut Sunalp. Voter turnout was 76.6% and Özal’s ANAP won 45.14% of the votes which was a significant victory in the elections. Özal had served in the military government from 1980 to 1982 as deputy prime minister for economic affairs and his new government took office in December 1983. Considering the fact that politicians and political parties were banned from the process, we cannot accept this as a free democratic election. Many of the former deputies and senators were banned until 1986, some 200 were not allowed to be in politics until 1991.[17]

In 1984, local elections were held and some of the political figures who were banned previously by the military regime started to show up in rallies. Süleyman Demirel and Bülent Ecevit were two of these names. Martial law was lifted in most of Turkey’s provinces by the end of 1987, but the number of civilians being tried in military courts had actually increased. During this time, we also see international organizations’ reports on the systematic torture in the prisons as well as the curtailing of freedoms and civil rights, especially for the Kurds. The Özal government over the years preferred to dismiss these reports.[18]

In 1987, the second general election since the Coup was held and unlike the one in 1983, this election allowed many politicians and political parties to enter the race. However, the election threshold of 10% then became another obstacle to qualify for assembly seats.

16 Memory Museum for Historical Justice Statements of Kenan Evren: https://bellekmuzesi.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/evrenlercomp.pdf
17 http://countrystudies.us/turkey/78.htm
18 Memory Museum for Historical Justice Resources: https://bellekmuzesi.org/ raporlar/

7. Silence and Absence of Reconciliation

One of the characteristics of the 1980 Coup is that both during the military regime period and also after the 'return to democracy', those who were responsible for severe human rights violations, especially torture, ill-treatment, extrajudicial executions and political murders, which can be defined as "Crimes Against Humanity", were never held responsible for their criminal acts.

We detailed that the acts of crimes against humanity were committed in Turkey in a widespread and systematic manner.[19] Impunity has a defining role in this equation and following the Coup it has been transformed into an immanent state reflex and culture that extends and/or gradually changes its form since 1980. As we have seen in the Argentinian and Chilean examples, impunity is not unique to Turkey either but there is a clear distinction between these countries in terms of their experiences in post-coup periods and how each deals with its violent past. In the case of Turkey, until the political prisoners were released from mid 80's to early 90's, the Turkish State and the Governments never met with a serious confrontation about this past.

According to the official records, it was accepted that 171 people died as a result of torture, but in these files either the perpetrators were not punished due to "no connection could be established with the act" or "prolonged/extended proceedings due to procedural reasons", or the perpetrators were not sentenced to appropriate punishments proportional to the crime. Even if they were not sentenced to an appropriate punishment, the punishments given were not applied because the perpetrators, all of whom were state officials, could not be caught. Several perpetrators continued their life by being promoted to higher ranks in the upcoming governments or within their bureaucratic circles.

In the previous episodes, Lucas Massuco, Milena Duran and Beatriz Águila Mussa shared the transitional justice practices and reconciliation periods in Argentina and Chile. Unlike these two countries, Turkey's past regarding the 1980 Coup can be defined with the term 'silence'. This applies both to the efforts of the State to proscribe, censor and silence any effort that would illuminate the period but also the silence of the society in general and to some extent even the silence of those who were targeted by the military regime.[20] Resistance against the crimes were built by those who were targeted by the military regime:

1. Political prisoners around the country
2. Their families that organized to support their children/spouses in prison
3. Political initiatives / organizations
4. Civil society organizations

The families that organized in front of the prisons during the 80's eventually paved the way to the Human Rights Association of Turkey and several other organizations and initiatives in the country. Families amplified the voice of their children or spouses who started and organized the resistance against torture and against the military imposition that forced uniform dress code in prisons. Diyarbakır, the most notorious for torture and inhumane treatment of the inmates, went down in history for the hunger strikes and death fasts of

19 Memory Museum for Historical Justice Mapping Torture: https://bellekmuzesi.org/iskence-haritasi/)
20 Ertuğrul Mavioğlu, Aılmayıp Beslenenler, İthaki Yayınları, 5. Baskı, page 25

the prisoners and their active resistance. On January 2nd, 1981, majority of the prisoners started the hunger strike protesting torture, which eventually turned into a continuous struggle in the prison followed by death fasts. This form of resistance immediately spread in other prisons around the country initiating a period of awareness about the acts of the military in prisons. Second wave of strikes continued in 1984 in Metris, Sağmalcılar, Mamak, Erzurum prisons and several more around the country. 14 people died during the hunger strikes. Women's struggle in several prisons around the country including Metris, Mamak and Diyarbakır deserves a special mention as they were also subject to gender based torture and their resistance showed an unbreakable will against the military regime. The solidarity and the struggle of the families grew stronger among men and women who politicized while trying to locate their children in prisons and raise their voices to ensure their well-being in the hands of the torturers.

When the prisoners were released in the late 80's and early 90, most of them started their lives from scratch. We can base this information on the witness testimonies. Most of them were in their early 20's when they were imprisoned and until that point they only knew how to struggle against fascism. Some of them returned to their schools, did their military service or started new jobs that they were not meant to be conducting. In this new phase of struggle, neither the efforts to bring those who were responsible for crimes against humanity was a priority nor the judicial system was actually punishing even those few who were being held responsible for those crimes.

In this period, we can see drastic social, political and economic changes in society as well. Although the Junta was furnishing itself with the images of Ataturk and utilizing Kemalism when necessary, it helped the religious groups to flourish in an effort to combat 'communism'. Coup leader Kenan Evren cited verses from the Quran frequently during his rallies and promoted religion education in schools.

> 'If the child really learns the religion lesson in schools from enlightened teachers, that child can deal with people who give him wrong information in this way and say (No, he is not like that, we read this, this is how it is). If the child does not learn, if the child does not see anything from his family, where will the child get his religious education? Religious knowledge taught in schools is not contrary to secularism. Our understanding of secularism is the separation of religious affairs from state affairs, and the non-interference of clergy in state affairs.'[21]

The Coup Constitution allowed Sunni religion classes to be mandatory and a total of 56 new religious schools opened around the country. Ironically, once seen as a threat to democracy by the soldiers, Islamic groups found an environment where they could flourish after the Coup. This support went along with the 'Green Wave project' of the US that supported the Islamic groups against communism in the region. One of the Islamic movements that benefited from this environment was the Gülen Movement (Cemaat)[22] that was behind yet another coup attempt in 2016. The Cemaat grew stronger in the 80's and reached its climax during the AKP Government that has been ruling the country since 2002.

21 Tarihsel Adalet için Bellek Müzesi, Kenan Evren'in Konuşmaları, 12 Eylül 1982 - 9 Kasım 1983 / Burdur Konuşması 1 Ekim, 1982, sayfa 31
22 Ahmet Şık, 000Kitap 'Dokunan Yanar', Postacı Yayınevi, 2012, İstanbul, sayfa 14

One of the crucial turning points of the AKP Rule was the 2010 Referendum that paved the way for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to consolidate power and transform the Parliamentary System into a 'one of a kind' presidential system. Amidst this discussion was the special clause called Article 15 which provided protection to coup leaders and, if changed, would allow the courts to accept indictments against those responsible for the 1980 Coup d'État. Proposed constitutional amendments can be structured in 4 categories: Coup leaders and military personnel, economic and social rights, individual freedoms and judicial reforms.

Left was divided between those who supported the 'yes' vote claiming that the 1982 Constitution should be changed to bring more freedoms and democracy (this group is called 'not enough but yes' group since then) and those who supported the 'no' vote claiming that reforms proposed in the Constitution would help Erdoğan consolidate power and gain control of the judiciary. In between these two camps, a third route was the 'boycott' camp – mostly supported by the Kurds who would neither give a 'yes' vote to Erdoğan or a 'no' vote to maintain a repressive constitution. To this date, these camps continue their discussions about who was historically proved to be right. Referendum was held on September 12, 2010 and the Government got 58% of the 'yes' votes. Supreme Election Board's decision No. 851 on the endorsement of the referendum was published in the Resmi Gazete (Official Gazette) dated 24 September 2010.

Following the Referandum, and the heated debates evolving around the Article 15 and the 1980 Coup, September 12 process began. Timeline of the September 12 Trials analyzed and prepared by Attorney Emel Atatürk illuminates how impunity unfolds time and time again:[23]

• After the 2010 referendum, on 13 September 2010, many individuals as well as human rights organizations (Human Rights Association, Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People) went to Ankara CourtHouse to file a criminal complaint about those involved in the coup and other officials who helped them. Criminal petitions were about staging a military coup and crimes against humanity committed during the relevant period. In January 2012, a Turkish court in Ankara accepted the indictments against General Kenan Evren and General Tahsin Şahinkaya, the only surviving coup leaders, for their role in the coup. With the Decision of Ankara Deputy Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, non-jurisdiction was awarded for the said petitions, upon which the file was decided to be sent to the Public Prosecutor's Office. A case was opened under the Article 146/1 of the Turkish Criminal Code for aggravated life imprisonment only for the living members of the National Security Council, Kenan Evren and Tahsin Şahinkaya, not for all members who were held accountable for the coup and only for their crimes committed on 02.01.1980 and between 12.09.1980 and 06.12.1983 with the charges of "attempting by use of force to change or remove all or part of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey and to abolish or prevent the functioning of the Turkish Grand National Assembly" established in line with the Constitution.

• The indictment included descriptions of important events before the Coup such as May 1, 1977 Celebrations, March 16 Massacre, Sivas, Maraş and Çorum Massacres as well as several murders of the academics and journalists. However the lawsuit was filed only for the crime of attempting by force to remove the Turkish Grand Assembly and failed to include any charges for crimes against humanity. Witness testimonies included detailed description of systematic and widespread torture including electrocution, sexual harassment and rape, Palestinian sling, beating with a sandbag, dogs bites, as well as psychological torture and the prisons and detention centers that these took place. These and several other human rights violations were not subject to punishment. Also requests for intervention of several political parties, human rights organizations and witnesses were denied. The Coup leaders Kenan Evren and Tahsin Şahinkaya defended themselves that they are not guilty of any crimes but were acting in line with the Domestic Service Law 35 of the Turkish Military Force. Şahinkaya also claimed that September 12th is a historical event and such events could only be judged by history and not by courts.

• The trial which was limited to only two defendants and where even the most basic evidence of the coup could not be brought from relevant state institutions such as the National Security Council and National Intelligence Service, the first court decision came about two years later Ankara 10. ACM 2014/137 E. 2014/81 K. K Date 18.06. 2014 decided to punish the defendants. The decision was appealed by the defendants. For a year, no communiqué was prepared.

• On September 9, 2015, the Office of the Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme Court stated that the case should be dropped due to death. Supreme Court (16. CD. With its decision numbered (2015/5859 E.-2016/4175 K) on June 21, 2016, it decided that the case was subject to Statute of Limitation but there was no room for a decision due to the death of the defendants and decided to dismiss it due to death.

• Ankara 10th High Criminal Court (2016/330 E-2017/127 K) that re-examined the reversal, complied with the reversal in the hearing dated 4 May 2017 and ruled that the case was subject to statute of limitation in line with the decision of the Court of Cassation, but there was no room for a decision due to the death of the defendants, TCK 64/1 and CMK 223/ and dropped the case due to death as required by 8.

• The decision was appealed again, this time by the complainants. In other words, the local court's decision to dismiss the case due to death in accordance with the new Turkish Penal Code was deemed a ground for annulment, and it was decided that the case should be dismissed due to the death of the defendants according to the old Turkish Penal Code.

• Upon dismissal, the file was returned to the 10th High Criminal Court for the third time. Ankara 10th High Criminal Court again complied with the reversal decision of the 16th Penal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeals in the decision hearing of the case, which lasted six years, on April 12, 2019. The court board decided that the public case brought against Kenan Evren and Tahsin Şahinkaya, the deceased defendants of the September 12 trial, be eliminated due to death. The court also ruled that there is no room for reinstating the military ranks of the defendants by confiscating their assets and removing them from the Turkish Armed Forces. Following the decision of the local court, the case again came to the 16th Penal Chamber of the Supreme Court.

• In the final notification, prepared by the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, the court's decision to dismiss the case was requested. The decision regarding the seizure of the defendants' assets, their removal from their military ranks and their

23 Avukat Emel Ataktürk, 12 Eylül - Yayımlanmamış ön makale, İstanbul

dismissal from the Turkish Armed Forces was demanded to be reversed. In the notification, it was reminded that in the first decision of the local court, it was decided to apply Articles 30 and 31 of the Military Penal Code, which regulates the decommissioning of the defendants. On April 21, 2022, the Supreme Court approved to dismiss the case due to the death of the generals.

Before the process concluded, Kenan Evren died on May 9, 2015, and Tahsin Şahinkaya died on June 9, 2015. Thinly attended official funerals were held for the coup generals. By looking at the entire development and how the end of the process did not yield to anything concrete, these results prevent us from saying that justice was served.

8. Struggle for Memory, Truth and Justice in Turkey Today

On February 24, 2021, a presidential decision was announced in the Resmi Gazete (Official Gazette) with the number 31405. The decision included the establishment of the commission and its working procedures and principles as set forth with the law numbered 2020/39 and dated October 13, 2020. As a rare example, this announcement was made for the victims who incurred losses by the Military Coup of May 27, 1961 and the call was for the compensation of those losses. Deadline for the applications were three months after the announcement of the law in the Resmi Gazete, which was May 24, 2021. The commission has a website that details the law and the application process.[24] A quiet undertaking, we are eager to see how this rare example of reparations will unfold and whether the outcome will be shared publicly. It is not surprising to see that the AKP Government and the President pursued a rather unconventional route to compensate the victims for their material and moral losses regarding a political group that he aligns himself with, but this sets a precedent as a rare example for reparations in Turkey.

Reconciliation and transitional justice practices regarding the 1980 Coup are mostly avoided and dismissed by the Turkish State or several governments no matter which political party is ruling the country. We should also mention that Turkey has been ruled by the right or center parties of the political spectrum since the 1980 Coup. Therefore, in the absence of an official policy to address these crimes, other forms of resistance take place. When we evaluate the last 42 years in terms of seeking historical justice about the 1980 Coup, we can see a clear path of struggle of the witnesses, families, human rights organizations and civil initiatives. In other words, we see an effort of the civil society to document and share the crimes of the military regime through publications, memoires, oral history research, documentaries, and creation of the platforms to build mechanisms of seeking justice. In the last 10 years, there is a clear proliferation of oral history work that allows us to see the Coup with a wider and deeper perspective not only documenting the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Junta but also detailing the anti-fascist resistance and the struggle of the revolutionary left in the 70's. This form of memory activism is an effective effort to bridge the gap between the 70's and our recent history that was mainly disrupted, distorted and reconstructed by the military regime. Compared to Argentina and Chile, judicial remedies seem to be postponed to an unknown future in the case of Turkey and our only way of demanding justice and recording and documenting perpetrators is through historical justice and specifically through memory activism built bottom up by those who were targeted by the military regime.

24 https://1960tazminatkomisyonu.adalet.gov.tr/

We must mention the following organizations and associations whose active work focuses on the human rights violations and crimes of the 1980 Coup and its military dictatorship.

Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği "İHD") was founded, on 17 July 1986, by 98 human rights defenders. The association was initiated by the families of the political prisoners in the years that the oppression of military rule continued in the prisons. Families were raising their voice against torture and executions, following the cases of their children in courts, and also organizing rallies and meetings with officials to prevent human rights abuses. After about one year, 98 people including intellectuals, writers, journalists, doctors, lawyers, architects, and engineers signed the foundation petition of Human Rights Association or IHD.

With its 29 branches, 3 representative offices and over 10.000 members and activists, IHD focuses mainly on campaigns for freedom of expression, finding forcibly disappeared, peace, amnesty that aims for social peace. Human Rights Association struggles for protecting life right, abolishing Death Penalty, finding disappeared person, prevention of execution.

IHD carries out an effective struggle against torture and within the frameworks of its activities it has founded HRFT (Turkish Human Rights Foundation) for treatment and rehabilitation of torture victims in 1990. HRFT published very crucial reports about the systematic use of torture in the 80s.[25]



Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in support of the Saturday Mothers/People in Galatasaray Galatasaray Square, 1995
Source: Ali Öz Archive

25 https://ihd.org.tr/en/history-of-human-rights-associaton-ihd/

Human Rights Foundation of Turkey is a human rights organization established in 1990, 10 years after the military coup in 1980. They list their mandate as following:

'HRFT focuses on treatment, rehabilitation, documentation and eradication of torture and other ill-treatment. Since its establishment, HRFT provided treatment and rehabilitation services to more than 18.000 torture survivors and their relatives in Turkey. HRFT adopts a holistic treatment approach and abides by the "well-being" definition of the World Health Organization, which includes the physical, psychological, and social well-being of an individual. The Foundation has four treatment centers in Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara and Diyarbakir, and two reference centers in Cizre and Van.

In addition to its treatment and rehabilitation efforts, HRFT also operates effective documentation, investigation, and prevention of torture. HRFT played a pioneering role in the preparation of the "UN Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment", commonly known as "the Istanbul Protocol". HRFT regularly organizes the Istanbul Protocol training for health and medical professionals within Turkey and abroad. In 2000, HRFT published the "Torture Atlas", along with the Association of Forensic Medicine Specialists and Turkish Medical Association. The Torture Atlas is the only document of its kind focusing on the medical documentation of torture.'[26]

Cumartesi Anneleri / İnsanları (Saturday Mothers / People) is an important civil initiative that started silent sit-in communal vigil gatherings in Istanbul on May 27, 1995 consisting of families of the forcibly disappeared. The group gathered on Saturdays in Galatasaray Square on one of the busiest streets in İstanbul, İstiklal Caddesi. This civil disobedience and peaceful gatherings made the enforced disappearances visible to a wider public in the 90s. Although the majority of the protestors were families of those who were forcibly disappeared in the 90s, families whose loved ones were forcibly disappeared in the 80s also joined the group.

The group was reportedly influenced by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, members of whom later came to Turkey to support Saturday Mothers /People. Initiated by 30 people, the group grew a larger base of supporters over the years and continue to be active raising awareness about the enforced disappearances.

In 2011, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan invited members of the Saturday Mothers promising that he will do everything he can to alleviate the suffering of the family members, however, this promise was never followed through. Before their 700th saturday vigil, the government banned Saturday Mothers to gather in Galatasaray as part of their ongoing crackdown on civil society. The group gathered nevertheless and was arrested the same day. The trial continues in İstanbul under the observance and monitoring of several human rights organizations including the Solidarity Network of Human Rights Defenders. Their social media account can be followed for updated information.[27]

26 https://en.tihv.org.tr/about-hrft/
27 https://www.facebook.com/ICumartesiAnneleriI/
https://twitter.com/cmrtesianneleri

Truth, Justice and Memory Center (Hakikat, Adalet ve Hafıza Merkezi) in İstanbul is an association mainly focusing on documenting the crimes against humanity and gross human rights violations perpetrated in Turkey. It defines its aim as to establish the grounds and processes for transitional justice and thereby contribute to the democratization of Turkey and the establishment of social peace. The Association also documented crimes perpetrated during the 1980 Coup.[28]

Through its Collective Memory Working Group and Aesthetic and Politics Working Group, **Research Institute on Turkey** extensively works on oral history, arts and historical justice projects that focus on the 1980 Coup D'Etat. RIT places a special emphasis on commonizing practices of knowledge for a collective learning and collective creating processes. In order to address the gross human rights violations, RIT creates novel tools aiming to reach out to an audience that has no memory of the Coup. Towards this goal, RIT established Turkey's first digital museum and human rights archive about the 1980 Coup d'État. **Memory Museum for Historical Justice** displays and elaborates the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Junta by technologically linking oral history interviews, memory objects and court files within its permanent collections. RIT hopes that Memory Museum will reach the wider audience to mobilize around memory activism and collectively build a democratic platform to remember and resist undemocratic practices and rules.[29]

TAYAD and **YAKAY-DER**[30] are two other organizations that focus on enforced disappearances concerning the Coup.The number of organizations, associations or political party members that made an effort to document, disseminate and address the crimes of the Junta is beyond the scope of this pre-report. However, we can clearly state that without the efforts of the civil society, crimes of the Junta could not be uncovered as much as it is today.

28 https://hakikatadalethafiza.org/en/why-hafiza-merkezi/
29 www.riturkey.org
30 https://yakayder.com/tr/sayfa/english-francais/2

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