

Lazos de Sangre: Untangling impunity and femicide in Chile and Argentina

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Femicide, first publicly defined by activist Diana Russell as “the killing of women ‘committed on the basis of gender discrimination,’”¹ has brought Latin America’s feminist discourse into sharp definition. Perhaps most visibly, in June 2015, grassroots feminist movement #NiUnaMenos rallied over 25,000 demonstrators to Santiago and Buenos Aires around the demand not “one woman less” be lost to gender violence.² Chile—through student activists such as Emilia Schneider³ and mass memorial events such as victims’ vigils⁴—and Argentina—as the birthplace of #NiUnaMenos—have emerged as regional forerunners in sheer scale of femicide protest and virtual activism.

And yet, the modern scope and historical mechanisms of femicide remain indefinite. State reluctance to establish reporting bodies⁵ has murkyed both femicide statistics prior to 2007 in the region and the very definition of femicide. If the state fails to provide adequate data or reporting bodies, should femicide be better understood as “feminicide”, a “systematic” preferential killing of women in which the state is directly or indirectly implicated?⁶ To answer

¹ Russell, Diana. "Diana Russell." *Defining Femicide*. October 2014. Accessed June 19, 2019. <https://www.dianarussell.com/defining-femicide-.html>.

² "Ximena Espeche, Gender and Protest in Argentina." Interview by author. June 25, 2019.

³ "Chilean Feminists Take over 14 University Campuses in Response to Accusations of Sexual Assault." 48 Hills. May 21, 2018. Accessed July 11, 2019. <https://48hills.org/2018/05/chilean-feminists-take-over/>.

⁴ "'Five in 36 Hours': Chilean Women's Rights Activists Hold Vigil to Protest Spate of Femicides." News | TeleSUR English. June 15, 2018. Accessed June 11, 2019. <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Five-in-36-Hours-Chilean-Womens-Rights-Activists-Hold-Vigil-to-Protest-Spate-of-Femicides-20180615-0002.html>.

⁵ Mujica, Diego Tuesta Y Jaris. "Problemas En La Investigación Procesal-penal Del Femicidio En El Perú." *URVIO - Revista Latinoamericana De Estudios De Seguridad*, no. 17 (2015). Accessed June 11, 2019. doi:10.17141/urvio.17.2015.2015.

⁶ Fregoso, Rosa Linda., and Cynthia L. Bejarano. *Terrorizing Women: Feminicide in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

incorrectly has meant barring from conferences for some social scientists, and stark differences in cross-country gender-based violence rates.⁷

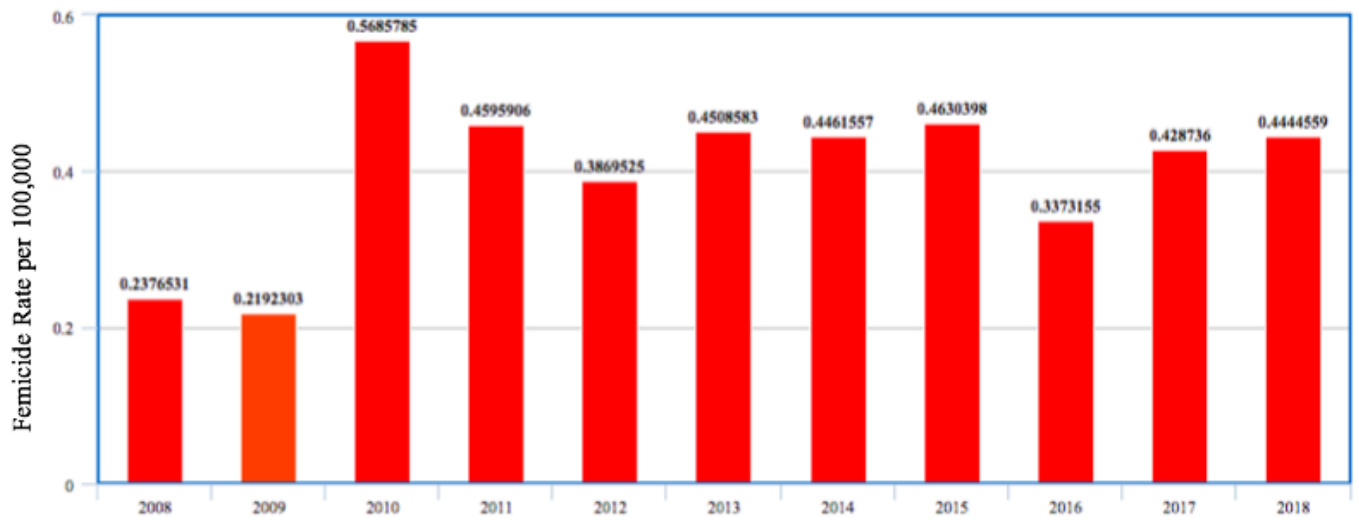
Impunity is widely considered a critical factor in prevalence of gender-based violence.⁸ Recent research further suggests level of impunity, in terms of strength of rule of law and corruption control, could be the most reliable predictor of femicide incidence rate.⁹ To begin answering lack of consensus regarding the state's role in femicide, this report isolates the element of impunity, questioning: by what mechanisms might differing Chilean and Argentine experiences of impunity influence the countries' diverging femicide rates?

Comparison of Argentina and Chile is timely not only given their capitals' centrality in current gender violence protest, but also in light of a puzzling divergence of Argentine and Chilean femicide rates. Even with correction for differing standards of legally reportable femicide, over the past decade the Chilean femicide rate has remained a full 0.4 per 100,000 lower on average than those of its eastern neighbor—counter to the countries' shared experience of highly visible guerilla and post-dictatorship impunity.

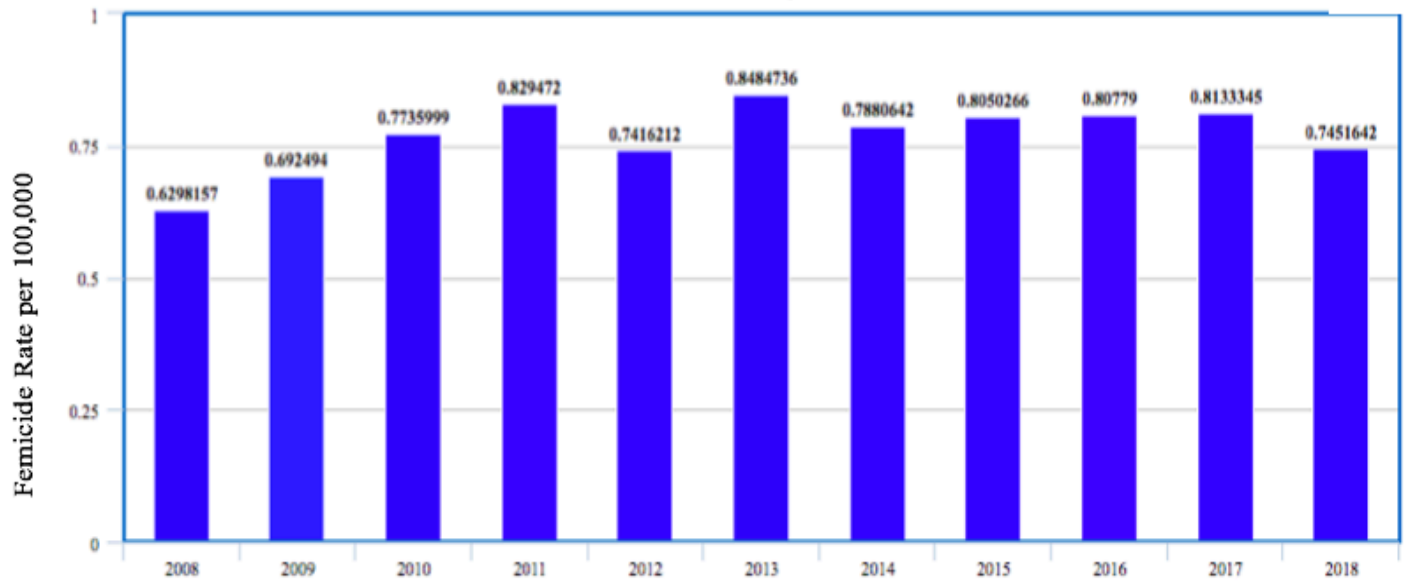
⁷ Mujica, Diego Tuesta Y Jaris. "Problemas En La Investigación Procesal-penal Del Femicidio En El Perú." URVIO - Revista Latinoamericana De Estudios De Seguridad, no. 17 (2015). Accessed June 11, 2019. doi:10.17141/urvio.17.2015.2015.

⁸ Geetha, V. "On Impunity." *Economic and Political Weekly* 48 (2013): 15-17. January 2013. Accessed June 26, 2019. https://www-jstor-org.prx.library.gatech.edu/stable/23391174?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=impunity&searchUri=/action/doBasicSearch?Query=impunity&filter=&ab_segments=0/default-2/control&refreqid=search:b02a5308fcf53a2e4780fb6c5db90b6d&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents. ; Lagarde, Marcela. *Los Cautiverios De Las Mujeres: Madresposas, Monjas, Putas, Presas Y Locas*. México: Siglo Veintiuno, 2015. ; Carcedo, A. (2000). *No olvidamos ni aceptamos: Femicidio en Centroamérica, 2000-2006* (Rep.). Retrieved June 26, 2019, from Asociación Centro Feminista de Información y Acción website: [http://www.ufrgs.br/rotascriticas/textos/no-olvidamos-ni-aceptamos-femicidio-en-centroamerica\[1\].pdf](http://www.ufrgs.br/rotascriticas/textos/no-olvidamos-ni-aceptamos-femicidio-en-centroamerica[1].pdf)

⁹ Saccomano, Celeste. "The Causes of Femicide in Latin America." *Barcelona International Studies Institute Student Series* 24 (2015). 2015. https://www.ibe.org/ibe_studentpaper24_71980.pdf.

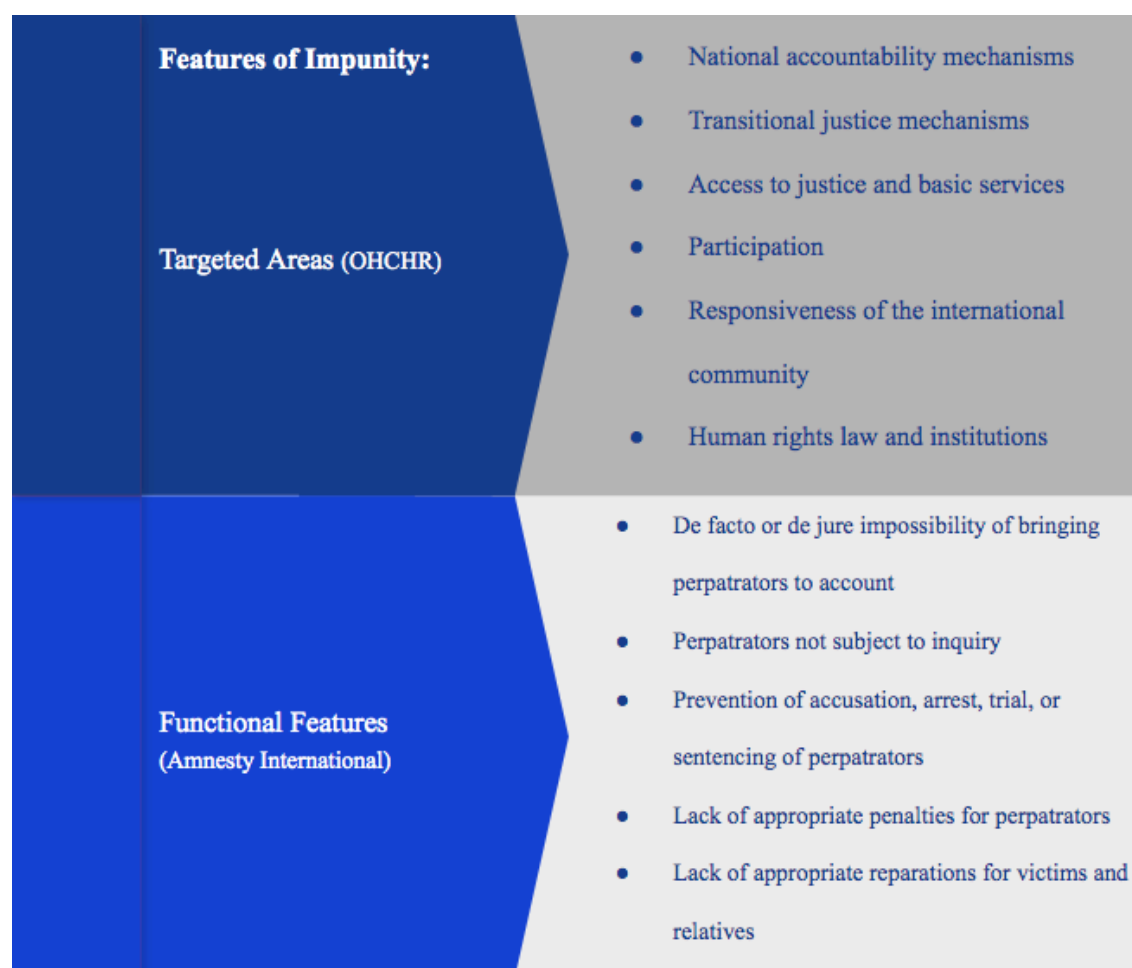
Intimate Femicide Rate¹ for Chile, 2008-2018

¹Total reported femicides exclude non-intimate femicides

Intimate Femicide Rate² for Argentina, 2008-2018

²Estimates generated from intimate out of total reported rate

This analysis focuses largely on the most visible Chilean and Argentine periods of impunity, 1973-2005 and 1976-2005, respectively,¹⁰ with additional reference to pre- and post-authoritarian periods which set direct precedents for standards of violence and justice for women. Causal relation between impunity and femicide has been established by prior study. This analysis seeks instead to clarify a range of possible mechanisms, with reference to areas frequently affected by impunity and factors in femicide at five levels, that underlie the impunity-femicide relationship.



¹⁰ Wright, Thomas C. *Impunity, Human Rights, and Democracy: Chile and Argentina, 1990-2005*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014. 2014. Accessed June 27, 2019. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gatech/reader.action?docID=3571804>.

Risk Factors in Femicide at Five Levels		
	Individual (perpetrator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witnessing marital violence as a child • Experiencing child abuse • Absent father in childhood • Alcohol abuse • Personality disorder • Low academic achievement • Low income • History of family violence
	Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male dominance in the family • Male control of family wealth • Frequent marital verbal conflicts • Economic stress
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Low socioeconomic status • Isolation of woman and family from community • Delinquent peer association patterns • Low social capital
	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norms of male ownership of women • Rigid gender roles • Traditions of male dominance • Weak community sanctions against domestic violence • Acceptance of physical chastisement and interpersonal violence as a means of conflict resolution
	Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of women in elected government • Reductions in government social spending • Prior intimate partner violence (IPV) • No mandated arrest for violation of IPV-related restraining orders • No legislation restricting access to firearms for IPV offenders • Gun ownership • Prior verbal threats to kill with a weapon (by offender) • Prior forced intercourse with a partner (offender and victim) • Alcohol and drug abuse • Mental illness • Male-female disparity in education and employment • Lack of safe spaces for women • Low level of femicide awareness amongst health and justice service workers • Low participation of women in political and familial decision making

Within the scope of authoritarian impunity, it seems probable that the gendered killing of Argentine women is uniquely intensified by perception of institutions, rate and focus of legal reform, and functional aspects of violence against women during impune periods. Beyond the dictatorship period, differing cultures of corruption, popular female figures, and physical and legal frontiers in human rights likely contribute to these nations' diverging femicide frequencies.

Pre-Authoritarian Features of Impunity and Femicide

Between the 16th-mid and 19th centuries, Argentina and Chile both developed an impune legal posture of acceptance without compliance—"se acata pero no se cumple"—to Spanish colonial dictates.¹¹ Yet, political cultures of impunity quickly diverged in the countries: historians Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman note the persistance of a more diffuse, nepotism-based style of Chilean corruption that contrasts sharply with the predominance of explicit bribery in Argentina.¹² Though its relationship to gendered killing is not immediately evident, explicit bribery appears capable of disempowering female participation and femicide reporting in ways implicit corruption is not. Because female politicians are more likely to disapprove of explicit bribe-taking¹³, they are more likely to be excluded from informal dealings that make the passage of women's interest legislation, such as anti-femicide measures, possible. Political scientists such as Barney Warf additionally posit the explicit impunity of Argentine corruption has generated a

¹¹ Lira, Elizabeth, and Brian Loveman. "Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and Impunity as Historical Themes: Chile, 1814-2006." *Radical History Review*, December 2007. Accessed June 27, 2019. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elizabeth_Lira3/publication/240740575_Truth_Justice_Reconciliation_and_Impunity_as_Historical_Themes_Chile_1814-2006/links/566cab3e08ae1a797e3da40d.pdf.

¹² Lira and Loveman, "Historical Themes", 5-7; Warf, Barney, and Sheridan Stewart. "Latin American Corruption in Geographic Perspective." *Journal of Latin American Geography* 15, no. 1 (2016): 133-55. Accessed June 27, 2019. doi:10.1353/lag.2016.0006.

¹³ Swamy, Anand V., Young Lee, Omar Azfar, and Stephen Knack. "Gender and Corruption." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, no. 232 (February 15, 2001). Accessed June 27, 2019. doi:10.2139/ssrn.260062.

unique degree of “scandal fatigue”,¹⁴ precipitating an overall decline of investigative reporting—suggesting impunity poses a greater challenge to Argentine femicide watchdog journalists seeking to maintain readership and VAW awareness than to their Chilean counterparts.

Alongside a diffuse style of impune corruption, Chilean political culture has historically provisioned women distinct roles and safe spaces in transitional justice largely absent from the Argentine past. In the unique process of “constitutional accusation”, the routine public questioning of incumbents and ex-politicians, wives of accused cabinet members fleeing punishment are granted the power to appear as their absent spouses’ defense, for example.¹⁵ Here 19th century Chilean women are provided a degree of control over the course of impunity uncommon in the region, a degree of control over what version of the “truth is known and remembered” that makes willful forgetting of violence against women all the more difficult.¹⁶

In later decades, Chilean socialism designated safe spaces for women—a key counter to femicide risk—as a means to combat perceived capitalist impunity. From the 1930s onward, local party leaders generated broad middle-class support for ideals of “sexual respect for women” and “non-eroticized relations” (made reality through socialist womens’ sports clubs and strict rules of conduct at socialist dances, for example) as a means to distinguish socialist Chileans from a capitalist “other” whose excesses culminate in unpunished violence against women.¹⁷ Similarly,

¹⁴ Warf, Barney, and Sheridan Stewart. "Latin American Corruption in Geographic Perspective." *Journal of Latin American Geography* 15, no. 1 (2016): 133-55. Accessed June 27, 2019. doi:10.1353/lag.2016.0006.

¹⁵ Lira, Elizabeth, and Brian Loveman. "Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and Impunity as Historical Themes: Chile, 1814-2006." *Radical History Review*, December 2007. Accessed June 27, 2019. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elizabeth_Lira3/publication/240740575_Truth_Justice_Reconciliation_and_Impunity_as_Historical_Themes_Chile_1814-2006/links/566cab3e08ae1a797e3da40d.pdf.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Rosemblatt, Karin Alejandra. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures & the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. United States: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

the decoupling of female political activity and sexual vulnerability in Chilean socialist rhetoric freed women to unify early in a strong lobby first organized around moral issues of impunity, such as the failure of the state to punish alcohol producers for fraud.¹⁸ As such, in Chile, socialist female political participation can be understood not only as a general femicide-reducing factor, but further a source of opposition towards impune sources of ecological femicide risk.

By contrast, Argentina spurned socialism for Peronism in this period.¹⁹ In fact, though the Peronist effort for women's rights has its roots in socialist militant groups, socialist women's groups actively opposed the Peronist suffrage platform, viewing the program as a bid to enhance the political power of a First Lady already granted an intolerable degree of "immunity".²⁰ First Lady Eva Peron's perceived impunity became central to a fracturing of female political participation from the 1940s-1950s, contributing to an apparent shift from unified feminist groups as evasive combatants of authoritarian paternalism in the 1930s²¹ to a vertical organization of feminism which would "ironically pave the way to a more paternalistic state".²² Beyond these surface tensions' capacity to compromise women's political participation as a femicide-reducing factor, paternalism has been viewed as an inherently gender-biased system of

¹⁸ Rosemblatt, "Gendered Compromises", 189.

¹⁹ Adelman, Jeremy. "Socialism and Democracy in Argentina in the Age of the Second International." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 72, no. 2 (May 1992). Accessed June 28, 2019. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2515555?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

²⁰ Corrarello, Ana Maria, and Ana Laura Maizels. "A Long History of Struggles, Setbacks, and Hopes: Argentina." *African Yearbook of Rhetoric* 6, no. 2 (January 2015). Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://journals.co.za/content/ayor/6/2/EJC180563>.

²¹ Masiello, Francine Rose. *Between Civilization and Barbarism Women, Nation and Literary Culture in Modern Argentina*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Pr., 1992. 2010. Accessed June 28, 2019.

²² Hammond, Gregory. *The Women's Suffrage Movement and Feminism in Argentina from Rosa to Perón*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2011. 2012. Accessed June 28, 2019.

inequality in the feminist literature of other nations, and may have similarly reinforced male dominance as a social femicide risk factor in 20th-century Argentina.²³

Furthermore, Argentine and Chilean experiences of VAW have diverged in degree of femicide discourse's absorption into broader discussions of historical human rights abuse. In the period 1860-1880, the two states undertook parallel military incursions in Mapuche territory with the intent of claiming the lands for colonization. Acts of unpunished violence against indigenous women were not uncommon in either campaign.²⁴ The countries' related geographies of VAW, however, result in diverging impunity-femicide dynamics: for example, the most common means for Mapuche cattle raiders in Argentina to escape capture was border crossing to Chile.²⁵ In the accounts of Argentine settlers, a distinct narrative justifying retributive killings and kidnappings of indigenous women as a means of forcing Mapuche accountability for property loss then follows. In this sense, post-colonial Argentine femicides can be conceptualized as both instances of, and vigilante reprisals, against impunity. At the level of social femicide risk factors, this equation of women to physical property reinforces norms of male ownership of women, and enhances perception of physical VAW as an acceptable means of political conflict resolution. Because Mapuche conquest cemented the political careers of Argentine nation builders like

²³ Stensgard, Alicia. "Power Asymmetry, Paternalistic, and Situational Factors Resulting in Violence Against Women in Canada." *Muses from the North* 3 (May 2019). May 2019. Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://www.ucn.ca/sites/mftn/spring2019/Pages/Article-3.aspx>.

²⁴ Taylor, Lucy. "Colonial Encounters at the Margins: The Welsh/Tehuelche in Patagonia." *Conceptualising IR from the Margins: Historically, Geographically and Beyond*, July 23, 2014. Accessed June 28, 2019. <http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/FLACSO-ISA-BuenosAires-2014/Archive/a95de33f-06fa-4de1-89c0-bdd6328e3bfc.pdf>. ; Guevara, Tomás, and Jauna Malen. *The Last Araucanian Customs and Families*. Vol. 7. Mapuches: Social Life and Customs. Santiago, 1913. Accessed June 28, 2019. <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-121420.html>.

²⁵ Perry, Richard O. "Warfare on the Pampas in the 1870s." *Military Affairs*, 52nd ser., 36, no. 2 (April 1, 1972). Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/1bde89d79f17c1c16430fe783abbf33e/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1819215>.

President Julio Roca—unlike the relative political anonymity of Chilean architects of the Araucanía Occupation, such as Colonel Cornelio Saavedra Rodríguez—lack of reparations for past femicides seem concealed within a larger narrative of genocide as a historical necessity of nationbuilding posited by revisionist Argentine historians.²⁶

Communications theorist Karina Bidaseca argues discussion of this historical relationship between women, impunity, and violence has only recently entered Argentine literature²⁷ and has focused almost exclusively on the experience of past women “invisibilized” and “inaudible” victims of “gender colonization”.²⁸ Popular post-colonial Chilean literature, however, affords women an ironically empowered role in the national narrative of impunity and gendered killing. Exaggerated figures such as “La Quintrala”²⁹, legendary landowner and alleged murderer of several hundred slaves who evaded punishment by leveraging political relatives, cast women as equal recipients of both lethal benefits and harms of impunity. These narratives are particularly

²⁶ Delrio, Walter, Diana Lenton, Marcelo Musante, Mariano Nagy, Alexis Papazian, and Pilar Pérez. "Discussing Indigenous Genocide in Argentina: Past, Present, and Consequences of Argentinean State Policies toward Native Peoples." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 5, no. 2 (2010): 138-59. Accessed June 28, 2019. doi:10.3138/gsp.5.2.138.

²⁷ Bidaseca, Karina. "Written in Racialized Bodies. Language, Memory and (Post)colonial Genealogies of Femicide in Latin America." *Journal of Latin American Communication Research* 3 (November 6, 2013). Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://www.alaic.org/journal/index.php/jlacr/article/view/84/59>.

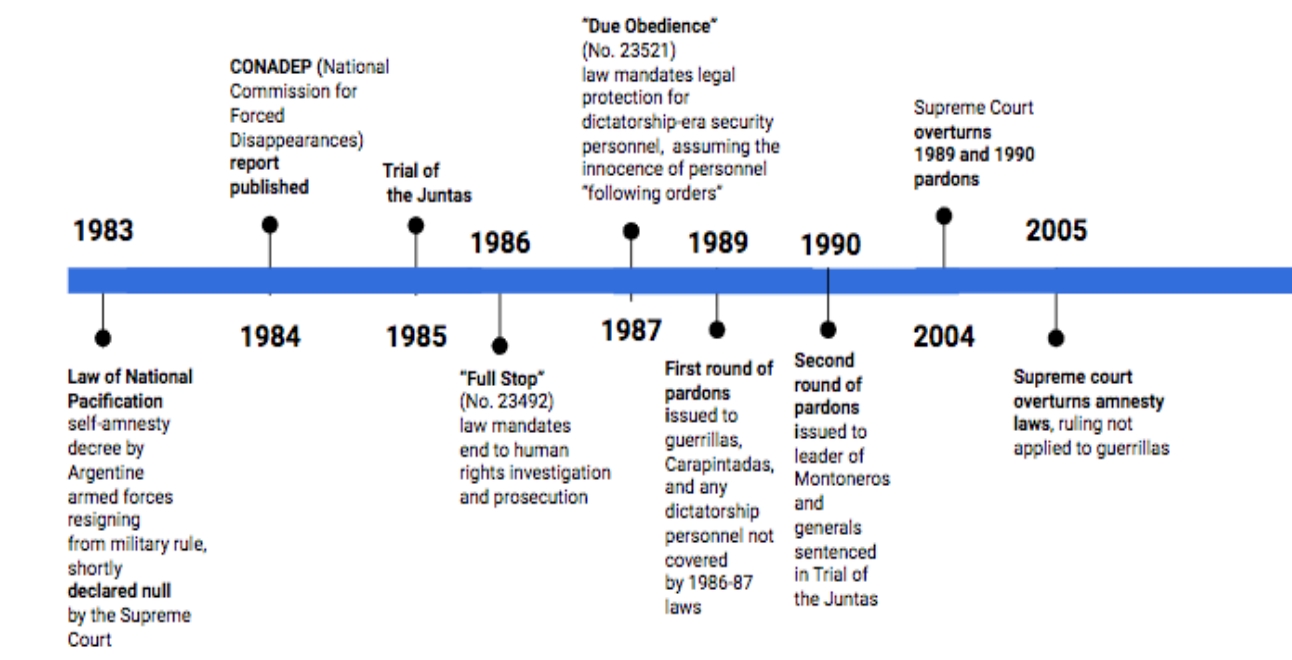
²⁸ Ancalao, Liliana. "Liliana Ancalao, Translated by Seth Michelson - Poetry." *ConnotationPress.com*. January 2018. Accessed July 28, 2019. <https://www.connotationpress.com/hoppenthaler-s-congeries/january-2018/3156-liliana-ancalao-translated-by-seth-michelson-poetry>.

²⁹ "Testamento De Catalina De Los Ríos, La Quintrala." *Archivo Nacional*. Accessed June 28, 2019. https://www.archivonacional.gob.cl/616/w3-article-8122.html?_noredirect=1.

worthy of note where they become frames for femicide reporting³⁰, where portrayal of gendered killing victims impacts degree of femicide awareness at the ecological level of risk.

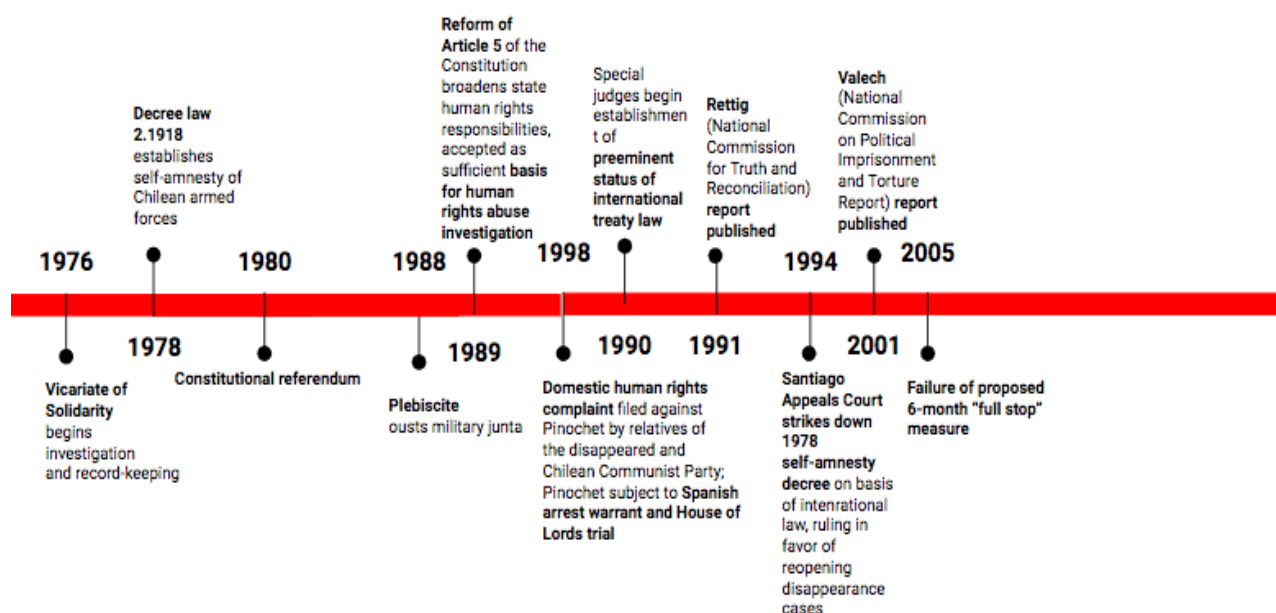
Authoritarian Features of Impunity and Femicide, 1970s-2005

Impunity and Democratic Transition in Argentina, Overview



³⁰ Lira, Claudia, and Patsili Toledo. "The Media and Gender-Based Murders of Women: Notes on the Cases in Europe and Latin America." Heinrich Böll Stiftung European Union. July 24, 2014. Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://eu.boell.org/en/2014/07/24/media-and-gender-based-murders-women-notes-cases-europe-and-latin-america>. ; Mellado, Carola. "Online Newspaper Coverage of Femicide in Chile and the US." University of Kansas Communication Studies, May 31, 2013. Accessed June 28, 2019. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/f616/da5e70d9c8bfcbb0234534d654002e134d75.pdf>.

Impunity and Democratic Transition in Chile, Overview



Rate and Focus of Legal Response to Impunity

Though Chile and Argentina experienced similar episodes of authoritarian rule and subsequent impunity in the mid-1970s-2005 period—counting an estimated 40,000³¹ and 30,000³² disappeared, respectively—the countries have exhibited differing trajectories of transitional justice in intentionality of transition, continuity of reform, theory of justice, and stability of reparations intimately related to femicide risk factors. Whereas Chile underwent “transition by

³¹ Valech Aludante, Sergio. Comisión Nacional Sobre Prisión Política Y Tortura. Report. 2001. Accessed June 29, 2019. <http://www.derechoshumanos.net/paises/America/derechos-humanos-Chile/informes-comisiones/Informe-Comision-Valech.pdf>.

³² Rojas, Guillermo. "30,000 Missing: Reality, Myth and Dogma: True History and Ideological Manipulation." Editorial Santiago Apostle, 2003. Accessed June 29, 2019. <http://catalogue.sciencespo.fr/ark:/46513/sc0000610417>.

design”³³, following the dictates of the Pinochet regime’s 1980 constitution, to a protected democracy in which the former dictator retained protected legal status as Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Army, Argentine transition occurred “without a blueprint”³⁴ following the disgraced, post-Malvinas exit of military leadership from government. Though survival of the Pinochet regime’s political framework would seem to encourage continuing impune VAW, this institutional continuity also ensured the maintenance of clear political pressure points³⁵, particularly lobby-susceptible planning ministries, providing female victims’ rights groups stable leverage to pass gender quotas³⁶ and rights laws³⁷ once democracy was re-established. Application of gender quotas to internal party offices, by contrast, has failed to materialize in post-dictatorship Argentina.³⁸ Similarly, the Chilean regime’s desire to protect nepotistic influence during democratic transition inadvertantly protected female leadership in women’s services organizations. Pinochet’s 1980 constitution, for example, ensured the survival of the Chilean Mothers’ Center (CEMA) by decreeing the general’s wife would maintain her position as services director, while state women’s foundations in Argentina faced a process of re-foundation after dictated dissolution³⁹ and replacement of their detained female leaders.⁴⁰ As

³³ Wright, Thomas C. *Impunity, Human Rights, and Democracy: Chile and Argentina, 1990-2005*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014. 2014. Accessed June 27, 2019.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gatech/reader.action?docID=3571804>.

³⁴ Wright, Thomas C. "Impunity, Human Rights & Democracy: Chile & Argentina 1990-2005." *Impunity and Human Rights in Latin America Webcast Series*, May 26, 2019. May 15, 2015. Accessed May 26, 2019.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-6790>.

³⁵ Waylen, Georgina. "Gender and Democratic Politics: A Comparative Analysis of Consolidation in Argentina and Chile." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32, no. 3 (October 2000): 765-93. Accessed June 29, 2019.

doi:10.1017/s0022216x00005939.

³⁶ <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/oje-doc1-paridad.pdf>.

³⁷ Ley N° 19.741 Modifica la Ley N° 14.908, Sobre Abandono de Familia y Pago De Pensiones Alimenticias (2001).

³⁸ Cogliano, Natalia, and Danilo Deguissti. *Documento De Trabajo N° 1 La Nueva Ley De Paridad De Género En Argentina: Antecedentes Y Desafíos*. Report. Accessed May 19, 2019.

³⁹ Gelb, Joyce, and Marian Lief Palley. *Women and Politics around the World. a Comparative History and Survey: Issues*. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009. 2009. Accessed May 27, 2019.

⁴⁰ Craske, Nikki. *Women and Politics in Latin America*. 1st ed. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

such, planned transition in Chile protected footholds for women's participation in elected government as a femicide reducing factor at the ecological level, and their subsequent ability to introduce legislation⁴¹ targeting risk factors such as male control of wealth at the relationship level.

Argentina, by contrast, transitioned to democracy “by collapse”⁴²—falling into legal vacillation between accountability and amnesties that would endure until the Kirchner administration. At a theoretical level, this inconsistent approach to impunity can be viewed as a source of “durable disorder”—a political state in which individuals doubt the monopoly of the state on justice and use of violence as punishment, and are more likely to seek personal gains by defecting “from below” through acts such as homicide and exploitation of disadvantaged groups.

⁴³ Though Chile has experienced historical reversals of justice, an ordered disorder instead emerged from its periodic cycle of “olvido” and “amnistía” over the period 1829-1932: amnestied politicians, such as senators Manuel Matta and Benjamin Mackenna, were reliably reabsorbed into political life under opposition parties after each of five civil wars with little legal redefinition of pardonable crimes.⁴⁴ Qualitative data appears to bear out the application of this theoretical lens to femicide as defection: in a series of recent interviews regarding abusive ex-partners, for example, Buenos Aires women frequently described violence against them in

⁴¹ Ley N° 19.741 Modifica la Ley N° 14.908, Sobre Abandono de Familia y Pago De Pensiones Alimenticias (2001).

⁴² Wright, Thomas C. "Impunity, Human Rights & Democracy: Chile & Argentina 1990-2005." Impunity and Human Rights in Latin America Webcast Series, May 26, 2019. May 15, 2015. Accessed May 26, 2019. <https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-6790>.

⁴³ Cerny, Philip G. "The New Security Dilemma." *Rethinking World Politics*, 2010, 217-44. Accessed June 14, 2019. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199733699.003.0011.

⁴⁴ Lira, Elizabeth, and Brian Loveman. "Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and Impunity as Historical Themes: Chile, 1814-2006." *Radical History Review*, December 2007. Accessed June 27, 2019.

terms of dictatorship-era torture and post-dictatorship uncertainty without prompting.⁴⁵ Such accounts suggest a link in discourse between family violence and broader vacillating state accountability for violence, risking greater normalization of femicide at the individual level.

As a functional measure of impunity, stability of reparations is component in perceived stability of transitional justice. While Argentine reparations to widows and families of the disappeared have largely taken the form of government issued bonds with rapidly depreciating value⁴⁶, Chile has relied on a program of cash transfers.⁴⁷ In doing so, the state seems to provide a deterrent to economic stress and empowers widows' stable control of household wealth at the relationship level of femicide risk.

Following a historical precedent of the "verdadera verdad" as a separate pursuit from legal justice⁴⁸, Chile's Aylwin administration entered office with a mandate to seek "truth" and "justice to the extent possible"⁴⁹ for those victimized by the Pinochet regime. Far from Argentine President Raul Alfonsín's approach to establishing combined truth and justice through

⁴⁵ Sutton, Barbara. *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Womens Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010. 2010. Accessed June 23, 2019. https://books.google.com/books?id=gSVBaaJ9PEoC&pg=PA141&lpg=PA141&dq=interview+tigre+argentina+boyfriend&source=bl&ots=hAai63xws5&sig=ACfU3U3rzigHeLQNWt6Fi_QqUhuUU35eMg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjYIMW--drjAhUMVK0KHTS8A7IQ6AEwF3oECAwQAQ#v=onepage&q=interview+tigre+argentina+boyfriend&f=false.

⁴⁶ Wilson, Christina M. "Argentina's Reparations Bonds: An Analysis of Continuing Reparations." *Fordham International Law Journal* 28, no. 3 (2004). Accessed June 24, 2019. <https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1971&context=ilj>.

⁴⁷ Fletcher, Laurel E. "Comparative Country Studies Regarding Truth, Justice, and Reparations for Gross Human Rights Violations: Brazil, Chile, and Guatemala." *SSRN Electronic Journal* 2 (April 2014). Accessed June 30, 2019. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2758973.

⁴⁸ Lira, Elizabeth, and Brian Loveman. "Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and Impunity as Historical Themes: Chile, 1814-2006." *Radical History Review*, December 2007. Accessed June 27, 2019.

⁴⁹ Borzutzky, Silvia. *Human Rights Policies in Chile*. Studies of the Americas. Palgrave, 2017.

“exemplary trials”⁵⁰, rhetorical separation of truth from justice in post-dictatorship Chile has provided an unexpected shield from state persecution to archives of dictatorship-era femicide and women investigating impune femicides. Because their efforts are perceived to have little bearing on the fate of former regime members, Chilean mothers who uncover the remains of disappeared women in the Atacama,⁵¹ for example, are not targeted with the intensity the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo⁵² face. This grassroots freedom of VAW investigation and documentation provides greater support for femicide awareness amongst justice services workers at the ecological level of risk through stable contact with evidence of gendered killings.

Functional Aspects of Impune Violence Against Women (VAW)

Though exact counts of the authoritarian-era detained are elusive in both Chile and Argentina, 360 women⁵³ have been named as prisoners at the Argentine Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA), which served as a detention center 1976-1983, and 126 female prisoners⁵⁴, most held in estate detention center “La Discotheque” 1973-1975, have been named as victims of human rights violations under Pinochet. Past study of femicide dynamics in the region⁵⁵ suggests the functional features of VAW during authoritarian periods deeply affects the

⁵⁰ Wright, Thomas C. *Impunity, Human Rights, and Democracy: Chile and Argentina, 1990-2005*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014. 2014. Accessed June 27, 2019.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gatech/reader.action?docID=3571804>.

⁵¹ *Nostalgia for the Light*. Directed by Patricio Guzmán. United Kingdom: New Wave Films UK, 2010. 2011. Accessed June 19, 2019. <http://www.pbs.org/pov/nostalgiafortheight/>.

⁵² Femenia, Nora Amalia, and Carlos Ariel Gil. "Argentinas Mothers of Plaza De Mayo: The Mourning Process from Junta to Democracy." *Feminist Studies* 13, no. 1 (1987): 9. Accessed June 30, 2019. doi:10.2307/3177832.

⁵³ Sabato, Ernesto. *Nunca Más*. Report. September 20, 1984. Accessed June 30, 2019.

⁵⁴ Valech Aludante, Sergio. *Comisión Nacional Sobre Prisión Política y Tortura*. Report. 2001. Accessed June 29, 2019. <http://www.derechoshumanos.net/paises/America/derechos-humanos-Chile/informes-comisiones/Informe-Comision-Valech.pdf>.

⁵⁵ Carey, David, and M. Gabriela Torres. "Precursors to Femicide: Guatemalan Women in a Vortex of Violence." *Latin American Research Review*, January 2010. Accessed June 30, 2019. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49712296_Precursors_to_Femicide_Guatemalan_Women_in_a_Vortex_of_Violence.

degree to which femicide is normalized in post-dictatorship state policy. As such, differing levels of covertness, state views of subversion, and roles of female collaborators in impune VAW pose possible factors in differing Chilean and Argentine experiences of femicide risk.

Perhaps the most stark difference in practice of VAW between these countries is the extent of infant theft. Whereas only one case of politically-motivated newborn kidnapping has been confirmed by the Chilean government⁵⁶, Argentine authorities estimate 500 infants⁵⁷ were stolen from imprisoned women as a means of repression. Officer training during Argentine military rule stressed the survival of a detained mother, and her bond with her child, represented the beginning of a lineage of subversives⁵⁸. By contrast, policy briefings from the Pinochet period repeatedly decry a shrinking population the greatest “enemy within” and established low birth rate as a national security concern. Where Argentine women were subject to femicide as component in a policy of eliminating political opponents, Chilean women became “slaves to life”⁵⁹—DINA operatives were tasked with capturing left-wing women seeking abortions for detainment in state maternity wards, for example, but lethal orders were relatively rare.⁶⁰ Within the framework of naturalization of femicide through policy, physical violence as a means of

⁵⁶ Jarroud, Marianela. "Children Stolen by Chilean Dictatorship Finally Come to Light." *Children Stolen by Chilean Dictatorship Finally Come to Light* | Inter Press Service. January 14, 2014. Accessed June 30, 2019. <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/12/children-stolen-by-chilean-dictatorship-finally-come-to-light/>.

⁵⁷ Sabato, Ernesto. *Nunca Más*. Report. September 20, 1984. Accessed June 30, 2019.

⁵⁸ Sutton, Barbara. *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Womens Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010. 2010. Accessed June 23, 2019. https://books.google.com/books?id=gSVBaaJ9PEoC&pg=PA141&lpg=PA141&dq=interview+tigre+argentina+boyfriend&source=bl&ots=hAai63xws5&sig=ACfU3U3rzigHeLQNWt6Fi_QqUhuUU35eMg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjYIMW--drjAhUMVK0KHTS8A7IQ6AEwF3oECAwQAQ#v=onepage&q=interview+tigre+argentina+boyfriend&f=false.

⁵⁹ Moenne, María Elena Acuña. "Embodying Memory: Women and the Legacy of the Military Government in Chile." *Feminist Review* 79, no. 1 (2005): 150-61. Accessed June 30, 2019. doi:10.1057/palgrave.fr.9400203.

⁶⁰ Valech Aludante, Sergio. *Comisión Nacional Sobre Prisión Política y Tortura*. Report. 2001. Accessed June 29, 2019. <http://www.derechoshumanos.net/paises/America/derechos-humanos-Chile/informes-comisiones/Informe-Comision-Valech.pdf>.

conflict resolution at the social level of femicide risk seems inherent in the Argentine state's reliance on femicide as a means of subversion control.

International response to Chilean state human rights abuses in the period 1973-1990 shaped functional features of Argentine human rights abuses 1976-1983. Open, impune violence against civilians, particularly executions carried out by the Chilean Army's "Caravan of Death", awoke a dormant international system⁶¹ of human rights protest that drove Argentine authorities to rely on more covert forms of VAW, such as the disappearance of women by night⁶², to maintain plausible deniability.⁶³ Because greater efforts were made to keep repressive VAW from public view, this tendency of Argentine security forces to operate sub rosa would appear to lessen awareness of femicides as a risk factor at the ecological level.

Given the states' contrasting views of, and secrecy in, use of lethal force against women, the role of women in impune VAW necessarily differed between Argentina and Chile. While Chilean female collaborators with the Pinochet regime largely held roles in intelligence and administration⁶⁴, in Argentina, women played a substantial role as doctors and midwives to detained women—frequently determining whether torture of female detainees continued and assisting with delivery of infants bound for forced adoptions.⁶⁵ Inherent in this collaboration were practices that contributed to a lack of femicide amongst justice and health services workers

⁶¹ Ensaiaco, Mark. *Chile Bajo Pinochet: La Recuperación De La Verdad*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2002.

⁶² Sabato, Ernesto. *Nunca Más*. Report. September 20, 1984. Accessed June 30, 2019.

⁶³ Wright, Thomas C. *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006.

⁶⁴ Traverso, Antonio. "La Flaca Alejandra: Post-Dictatorship Documentary and (No) Reconciliation in Chile." *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*, October 1, 2017. Accessed May 19, 2019. <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=dbb753e6-cd38-4dfb-bf3b-16e14fce6396@sdv-sessmgr03>.

⁶⁵ D'Antonio, Debora C. "Controversial Images of Women During the Last Argentine Military Dictatorship (1976-83)." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 12, no. 3 (2004). Accessed July 4, 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1356932042000287080?needAccess=true>.

continuing into the post-dictatorship period. In particular, “no-naming”⁶⁶, or the failure to record the names of detained mothers executed after giving birth, has made identifying those eligible for reparations that might reduce economic risk at the relationship level arduous.⁶⁷ Procedures specific to women seem to have made their impune and secretive killing all the easier—as one midwife to the detained recalls, the nature of mothers’ imprisonment was unclear to medical staff because “you don’t talk in the delivery room”.⁶⁸

Role of Institutions in Impunity and Response

Political scientists Mala Htun and Georgina Waylen argue that the organization of institutions, particularly in terms of incentives and deterrents perceived by civilians, during transition deeply affects post-dictatorship gender policy outcomes.⁶⁹ Within this framework, the Chilean and Argentine military’s differing roles in impune VAW pose possible ongoing influence on perception and prevention of femicide risk.

“I often feel,” one Argentine judge involved in transitional proceedings confessed “we have treated the military as scapegoats...we have done nothing about the civilians who marched with the military.”⁷⁰ This perception of “asesinos” as a culpable party clearly separated from civil society, social scientist Roht-Arriaza argues, has encouraged a practice of public blaming⁷¹ in which perceived responsibility for VAW periodically shifts between female victims and the

⁶⁶ D'Antonio, Debora C. "Controversial Images of Women During the Last Argentine Military Dictatorship (1976-83)." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 12, no. 3 (2004). Accessed July 4, 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1356932042000287080?needAccess=true>.

⁶⁷ Arditti, Rita. *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza De Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina*. Toronto: CNIB, 2006.

⁶⁸ D'Antonio, Debora C. "Controversial Images".

⁶⁹ Waylen, Georgina, Karen Celis, Johanna Kantola, and S. Laurel Weldon. *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

⁷⁰ Roht-Arriaza, Naomi. *Impunity and Human Rights in International Law and Practice*. Enskede: TPB, 2000.

⁷¹ Roht-Arriaza, Naomi. "Impunity and Human Rights".

military establishment. Furthermore, this monolithic shifting of blame permits denial of some intimate partners' roles in dictatorship-era VAW. Description of tortures Lieutenant Jorge Rádice, for example, carried out on the woman who would become his wife were struck from court records for reasons of marital "privacy".⁷² The decree establishing the Chilean Rettig Commission⁷³, by contrast, makes clear that private citizens and civilians will be held responsible for crimes committed against women during the dictatorship period—providing deeper recognition of individual partners' and family members' role in VAW at the social level of risk.

Conclusion

In the pre-dictatorship period, it is probable that stronger linkage of femicide impunity to nation building narratives, weaker traditions of female involvement in transitional justice, lesser sense of truth-justice separation, and lower tolerance for political return of the amnestied supported the normalization and intensification of femicidal violence in Argentina to a greater degree than in Chile. Additionally, greater acceptance of women as wielders of impune violence in popular imagination, socialist safe spaces as united counterweights to perceived capitalist impunity, and less explicit styles of corruption pose impunity-related deterrants to femicide in Chile.

During the highly visible mid-1970s-2005 period of impunity, designed transition, fewer reversals of justice, greater stability of financial reparations, and pursuit of truth as a separate entity from justice likely predisposed Chile towards a femicide-reducing sense of female

⁷² Roht-Arriaza, Naomi. *Impunity and Human Rights in International Law and Practice*. Enskede: TPB, 2000.

⁷³ D'Antonio, Debora C. "Controversial Images of Women During the Last Argentine Military Dictatorship (1976-83)." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 12, no. 3 (2004). Accessed July 4, 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1356932042000287080?needAccess=true>.

economic and political security, order, and femicide awareness. With regard to functional aspects of repressive violence against women, acceptance of lethal attempts to control subversion and less overt modes of VAW appear to contribute to femicide-elevating risks to awareness amongst service providers and acceptance of violence as a means of conflict resolution.

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