

# THE LEGACIES OF MILITARY RULE IN CHILE

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*LA HISTORIA OCULTA DEL REGIMEN MILITAR.* By Ascanio Cavallo Castro, Manuel Salazar Salvo, and Oscar Sepúlveda Pacheco. (Santiago: An-tártica, 1989. Pp. 608.)

*FEAR IN CHILE: LIVES UNDER PINOCHET.* By Patricia Politzer. Translated by Diane Wachtell. (New York: Pantheon, 1989. Pp. 245. \$19.45.)

*CHILE: DEATH IN THE SOUTH.* By Jacobo Timerman. Translated by Robert Cox. (New York: Knopf, 1987. Pp. 134. \$15.95.)

*INFORME DE LA COMISION NACIONAL DE VERDAD Y RECONCILIACION.* By Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación. 3 vols. (Santiago: Secretaría de Comunicación y Cultura, Ministerio Secretaría General de Gobierno, 1991. Pp. 1,350.)

*EPOCA DE DESCUBRIMIENTOS.* By Juan Rivano. (Lund, Sweden: Alham-bra de Lund, 1991. Pp. 459.)

*A NATION OF ENEMIES: CHILE UNDER PINOCHET.* By Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela. (New York and London: Norton, 1991. Pp. 367. \$24.95.)

The inauguration of President Patricio Aylwin on 11 March 1990 marked the triumphant return of democracy to Chile after sixteen and a half years of military rule. Although the jubilation of that moment was tempered by the magnitude of the tasks ahead, the country seemed confident that no obstacle on the road to redemocratization was large enough to obstruct the coalition of democratic parties after the momentous electoral victories in the plebiscite of 1988 and the presidential and congressional elections of 1989. Once Chileans became convinced that there was a viable alternative to military rule, they chose democracy. They were also reassured by the knowledge that their choice was part of a legally established mechanism contemplated in the Constitution of 1980. Chile's democratic transition was thus a product not of regime breakdown or revolutionary takeover but rather of the regime's own legality. Chileans felt confident that they could resume their democratic traditions, and they set out to do so with determination. But the country was also aware that the

past could not be erased and that troubling questions remained about the legacies of military rule.<sup>1</sup>

The Chilean transition to democracy has been a peculiar one in that assessment of the impact of military rule began well before the regime's demise. Chilean and foreign observers started evaluating the military regime while it was still in place, in some cases consciously preparing for the electoral contests mentioned in the transitional articles of the 1980 Constitution. Unlike other Latin Americans, Chileans knew in advance that they could influence the course of the transition via analyses and interviews. Many of the most secretive and repressive operations of the regime were brought to light and were in fact widely publicized while the regime was still in power. In casting their votes in the two major contests of 1988 and 1989, Chileans had access to a wide spectrum of information about the regime under which they were living. Thus whether they were for or against the regime's continuation, Chileans already had an unusual amount of perspective on its record.

The volumes under review here exemplify the kinds of writing that appeared shortly before and after the demise of military rule. They thus convey the issues surrounding the transition. All of them seek to evaluate the impact of Pinochet's regime on Chilean society, especially on its victims. These volumes also address some of the most agonizing questions about the transition, especially when viewed in comparative perspective. Will the abuses of the military regime become a major political issue under the new democratic regime? Will civil-military relations be marked by a constant tension between democratic aspirations for justice and the desire for stability and democratic consolidation? Will the memories of repres-

1. A large body of literature on the politics of the Chilean transition continues to grow. Examples include Manuel Antonio Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*, translated by Sharon Kellum (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Garretón, "The Political Evolution of the Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy," in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 95–122; *From Dictatorship to Democracy: Rebuilding Political Consensus in Chile*, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin and Antonio Varas (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Alan Angell and Benny Pollack, "The Chilean Elections of 1989 and the Politics of the Transition to Democracy," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 9, no. 1 (1990):1–23; Brian E. Loveman, "¿Misión cumplida? Civil-Military Relations and the Chilean Political Transition," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 33, no. 3 (Fall 1991):35–74; Loveman, "Democracy on a Tether," *Hemisphere* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1990):24–28; Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, "Chile's Return to Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 65, no. 5 (Winter 1989–90):169–86; Paul W. Drake and Arturo Valenzuela, "The Chilean Plebiscite: A First Step toward Redemocratization," *LASA Forum* 19, no. 4 (Winter 1989):18–36; and *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982–1990*, edited by Paul W. Drake and Iván Jaksic (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991). See also Eduardo Silva, "Chile Past, Present, and Future: The Long Road to National Reconciliation," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 33, no. 4 (Winter 1991):133–46; and Timothy R. Scully, *Rethinking the Center: Party Politics in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chile* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1992), esp. 186–202.

sion, the realities of loss for numerous families, and the ongoing predicament of exile find redress? What lessons, if any, will be learned from this extended period of military rule?

*La historia oculta del régimen militar* by journalists Ascanio Cavallo, Manuel Salazar, and Oscar Sepúlveda provides a detailed description of the evolution and eventual defeat of the military regime in the plebiscite of 5 October 1988. Published shortly after this contest, the account attempts to compile a comprehensive view of the most significant events of the period of military rule between 1973 and 1988. Written in a fast-paced, journalistic style, *La historia oculta* highlights much of the drama of these years and provides important information about major landmarks in the evolution of the military regime. The composition and significance of the various cabinets, the meaning and importance of changes at the higher echelons of the military apparatus, and the relentless ascent to power by General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte are all described in vivid detail. The authors persuasively argue Pinochet's centrality in orchestrating events, large and small, during much of the period. Only near the time of the plebiscite campaign did the general appear to have lost a sense of the national sentiment, and he surrounded himself with sycophants who would cater to his large ambitions for power.

A significant part of the regime's history (and of this account as well) was the creation and development of a large and repressive security apparatus. *La historia oculta* documents how the Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (DINA) under the leadership of Colonel Manuel Contreras amassed a repressive power that reached beyond the far corners of Chile to major capitals of the world, including Buenos Aires, Washington, and Rome. Implicit in this account is the assumption that the rise of the Chilean military regime cannot be separated from the activities of the secret police. Cavallo, Salazar, and Sepúlveda also make it clear that DINA excesses provoked the first schisms within the regime and certainly its international isolation. The assassination of former ambassador Orlando Letelier, for example, brought the regime to the brink of a major crisis and led to DINA's demise in August 1977 as well as to the gilded retirement of Manuel Contreras. More important, the furor led to the forced resignation in July 1978 of Air Force General Gustavo Leigh, who had been challenging Pinochet's increasingly personalistic rule for some time.

But the repression that sustained the regime was not stopped by terminating DINA. *La historia oculta* provides abundant information on the dismal human rights record compiled in Chile since 1978. The grim tally includes the discovery of fifteen bodies in Lonquén in November 1978; the assassination of Communist militants and those belonging to the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria) in 1981; the murder of labor leader Tucapel Jiménez in February 1982; the death by torture of Christian Democratic leader Manuel Fernández in 1984; the brutal assassi-

nation of three Communists in March 1985 in the case known as *los degollados*; the burning of two youths in June 1986; the hunting down of those presumed responsible for the attempt on Pinochet's life in September 1986; the massacre of militants belonging to the FPMR (Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez) in the raid known as Operación Albania in June 1987; and numerous ongoing abuses like detention without charges or protection under habeas corpus, torture and rape of opponents, and arbitrary detention and exile inside and outside the country.

The authors also point out that the assassination of military officers and some former DINA agents was also part of the deadly dynamics of repression and revenge that characterizes the period. But the abductions, brutal torture, and executions under the cover of darkness and the watchful eyes of the security apparatus paint a chilling picture of the dangers of opposition activities under the Pinochet regime. The authors also underscore the courageous role of church leaders, diplomats, and determined family members in defending and sometimes preventing the disappearance of hundreds of Chileans.

The purpose of *La historia oculta* is not to highlight the human rights record of the dictatorship, however, but to emphasize the role that repression played in the larger context of military rule. Thus the analysis focuses more on the cabals of power, the options and decisions involved in major social, political, and economic events, and the awakening of a social movement that led to the resurrection of political parties and their ultimate success in providing a viable alternative to military rule. Inevitably, however, presentation of the major events are all punctuated by the horrors of persecution and death. The authors are to be credited for making certain that the record of military rule will not be perceived in isolation from the sinister aspects of the repression that sustained it.

The impact of repression on people's lives is also the main focus of Patricia Politzer's *Fear in Chile: Lives under Pinochet*. First published in Spanish in 1987, this work consists of fourteen extended interviews with Chileans about the years of dictatorship, commencing with their memories of the coup, their impressions of the country a decade later, and their personal histories as they evolved in the larger context of changes resulting from military rule. This study seeks to address the issue of fear, as promoted by dictatorship and as internalized by different segments of the population. In Politzer's view, "Fear affects not only those who suffer cruelty or censorship directly but also those who are indifferent to dictatorship, and even those who support and justify it" (p. xiii). Those interviewed range from regime supporters to opponents, although the emphasis is clearly on the latter. Certain interviews reflect the ambivalence of Chileans who recognized some of the virtues of military rule but were unhappy with specific policies.

Most of the interviews were conducted in 1983–84, when Chile was

suffering the full impact of the 1981 world recession. During this period, even the most recalcitrant supporters of the regime paused to consider whether it had become too inflexible in applying economic policies and handling political dissent. It was also the time when popular protests erupted and a growing consensus emerged on the need for more dialogue between government and opposition to reduce social tensions and define the country's future.

The image of Chile that emerges from *Fear in Chile* is a country riven by deep divisions—hatred in some instances—over the injustices of the regime. This Chile seemed to have lost the trust, friendliness, and innocence of years past and become dominated by hunger, repression, and irreconcilable political differences. The Chile that Politzer portrays had nothing to offer its youth beyond the extremes of uncritical consumerism and life-threatening political involvement, a country profoundly scarred by the years of military rule.

Readers will sympathize with those who tell their gripping and painful life stories of destitution and repression, but one wonders whether the four interviewees who supported the regime (a fourth of those interviewed) provide a representative sample of the political spectrum in Chile, even at that time of widespread unhappiness about the national situation. After the most acute phase of the crisis, Chile went on to recover economically and witnessed substantial support for Pinochet and his exclusionary regime in the plebiscite in 1988 (43 percent). However inexcusable the regime's crimes might be, a significant portion of the population felt otherwise about the military government, and they are not adequately represented in the sample presented by Politzer.

*Fear in Chile* succeeds in conveying its message, but the translation does not do it justice. The beating of one student protester is described as "a terrific thrashing" (p. 58); a man who has been brutally tortured in the presence of his wife is described as being "in a bad way, but alive" (p. 83); and in reference to the 1973 coup, the mother of a *desaparecido* states that "this coup business was incredible!" Although Chilean speech has a component of dry humor and understatement, such translations fail at key moments to convey the horror of loss, abuse, and violence.

Perhaps the major virtue of *Fear in Chile* is the unobtrusiveness of the interviewer, who allowed the interviewees to develop their story in full, without editorial comments or questions that would have steered their responses in a certain direction. Perhaps the best example is the interview with Manuel Bustos, a labor leader who was imprisoned at the notorious Estadio Nacional, exiled repeatedly, and harassed continuously by military authorities and civilian officials. Yet despite such persecution, this man patiently built labor networks at local and national levels, insisting on the necessity of peaceful opposition to the regime while recognizing some virtues in the neoliberal economic model, and he never lost faith

in the democratic values and fairness of the Chilean people. The single interview with Bustos makes a stronger case for the resilience and courage of the Chilean people than the most strident denunciations of the dictatorship. One possibly unintended strength of this volume is that the interviews allow readers to make up their own minds about which events and testimonies are most significant in evaluating the legacy of the Pinochet regime.

Jacobo Timerman's *Chile: Death in the South* also focuses on the impact of military rule on people's lives, but his treatment attempts a broader assessment of the meaning of dictatorship. He analyzes the Chilean situation under military rule (especially during the 1980s) through the lens of his own experience as a prisoner of the Argentine military in the 1970s and his connections with Chile during the presidency of Salvador Allende, drawing repeated analogies between the behavior of the Chilean military and the German Nazis. The result is a highly personal, unstructured, and distorted account of the Chilean situation on the eve of the 1988 plebiscite.

Some of the ground covered in Timerman's book is fairly familiar, and some of his points are valid enough. For instance, he explains the fury (which he calls "genocidal") of the military on the basis of the perceived revolutionary threat that the extreme left itself was eager to reinforce. Timerman draws useful parallels between Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay in this respect. He also refers to the lack of political unity among the groups opposing military rule, which was painfully apparent at the time of writing (early 1987). Citing the Spanish transition to democracy in the 1970s, Timerman urged the government and opposition to be "realistic" and meet each other halfway. He also makes perceptive points about the silence of some intellectuals, the difficulties encountered by exiles on their return, and the generally poisonous atmosphere generated by poverty and repression.

Yet what Timerman manages to accomplish ends up being largely negated by his effort to push the reader into denouncing the regime. He labels the military as "stupid," "bloodthirsty," and "ferocious." To illustrate regime censorship, he inaccurately states that the film *Cabaret* was purged of scenes showing the Nazis in an unfavorable light. At one point, he suggests that Pinochet resembles, and perhaps even outdoes, Hitler because he built a bigger presidential residence than the Führer's (p. 80). Timerman also concludes that because the military identifies poverty with Marxism, "everyone who is poor is also illegal" (p. 68). Yet at no time does Timerman directly quote military officers or regime supporters, nor does he refer to any of the authoritative studies on Chilean politics and human rights that were available when he was writing his book.

Perhaps more troubling is Timerman's use of testimonies by victims of repression. They appear in captions at the end of many of the



twelve (untitled) chapters, telling the story of brutal repression in the rawest physical aspects. Surely, such descriptions accomplish their goal: they shock, they horrify, and they generate a combination of indignation and pity. But in being presented outside a larger political context and a framework of analysis, they become morbid descriptions that trivialize the suffering of the victims.

Timerman's *Chile: Death in the South* is not destined to become a notable addition to the literature on Chile under military rule. It adds no new information or insights into either the regime or the people whom it victimized; neither does the book predict what was to happen barely a year after it was written. Rather, Timerman's account demonstrates how passionate denunciation can distort rather than contribute to the understanding of dictatorship. Because Timerman was himself a victim of repression, one is inclined to listen. But one ends up listening without validating either the approach or the sources of his well-intentioned but hasty and idiosyncratic account.

In contrast, the *Informe de la Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación* provides both a larger framework for understanding the human rights record in Chile during the years of dictatorship and a detailed account of the 2,279 documented dead.<sup>2</sup> Created by President Aylwin on 25 April 1990, the commission was charged with determining the extent of human rights violations during the military regime. A group of distinguished jurists and human rights observers were asked to focus specifically on human rights violations resulting in death between 11 September 1973 and 11 March 1990. Their charge was primarily to determine the truth about these cases rather than to initiate prosecution, which was left to the courts.

The commission set out to examine some thirty-four hundred cases by interviewing relatives and friends, screening documents, and requesting information from the armed forces. Although the national police and the air force proved to be fairly cooperative, the army generally responded by denying any involvement in such cases. The army also cited destruction of the institution's archives on 14 November 1989 after a "terrorist" attack. Because the commission had no power to subpoena, most of the 160 officers asked to testify declined. A few responded in writing. Nevertheless, the commission was able to elaborate a thoroughly documented report that neutralized a number of regime justifications for loss of life during the period. For instance, the commission stated that most fighting had ceased within forty-eight hours of the coup. No situation of "internal war" existed that could justify the killings, most of which occurred months and years after the coup. The commission also stated flatly that *los desaparecidos* were, for all intents and purposes, dead. It determined that most

2. This figure includes 132 members of the military and police who died in armed confrontations (6 percent of the total).

of the disappeared had been seen last in the hands of members of the security forces and concluded that the armed forces therefore bear moral responsibility for “the practices that they commanded, condoned, or failed to either stop or prevent from recurring.”

The report’s most damning conclusions may be those on the responsibility of the judicial branch, especially the Supreme Court, in allowing and perhaps even facilitating violations of human rights. Most justices refused to acknowledge the existence of such violations, and the courts simply failed to investigate cases despite mounting evidence and requests for habeas corpus. In those cases where the courts inquired about specific violations, they generally accepted the explanations of the Interior Ministry or other official entities at face value. The commission’s report criticizes the judicial branch for its “exaggerated formalism in interpreting the law; its acceptance as proof of confessions obtained under torture”; and its harassment of judges who did investigate human rights violations.

The lengthy introduction presents the commission’s conclusions and discusses its methodology as well as constraints. This section is followed by a detailed account of the events leading to the death or disappearance of each of more than two thousand individuals. This is devastating reading. Although brief, the descriptions provide the basic information about how repression was carried out from the means of abduction to the manner of death. The report also breaks down the location of victims by region, thus demonstrating the scope of repression beyond Santiago.<sup>3</sup>

Although the *Informe* is the most authoritative source for what it covers, one must bear in mind that it did not cover other forms or results of repression. For example, because the report was restricted to human rights violations resulting in death, exile is not a part of the record. Yet exile affected hundreds of thousands of Chileans. The exile experience is poignantly described in Juan Rivano’s *Epoca de descubrimientos*. This novel is not only a piece of testimonial literature but also a philosopher’s view of the cultural implications of exile and an exploration of the consequences of dictatorship for a generation of Chileans. After the 1973 military coup, Rivano was abducted by the secret police and spent a year in several of the most notorious prison camps set up by the military regime. Following his release, he was granted asylum in Sweden, where he currently resides. His fictionalized account concentrates on the issue of exile in this Scandinavian country but also covers the terror and persecution of the early years of the Chilean dictatorship.

3. After receiving copies of the *Informe*, the Aylwin administration set up the Corporación Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación on 9 Feb. 1992 to determine levels of compensation for relatives of victims. Some seven thousand relatives became eligible for health and education benefits and a monetary compensation of approximately four hundred dollars.



*Epoca de descubrimientos* revolves around a former leftist who seeks to avenge the brutal death of his fiancée and unborn child. He himself has suffered torture in Chile, persecution in Argentina, and constant surveillance in Sweden. He searches Europe for his tormentor but encounters complications as the DINA becomes involved in the search. The plot highlights the centrality of the DINA chief in orchestrating a complex web of international espionage and murder. When a former ambassador is assassinated in Washington, D.C., reverberations are felt immediately in Santiago, Sweden, and various major European capitals. The protagonist thus serves as the link who reveals the extent of the security apparatus's reach. Through him one also learns about the personal and collective experience of exile and especially the dynamics of cultural clash, an overlooked aspect of exile.

Sweden, especially the medieval southern city of Lund, serves as the backdrop for a story that unfolds in the tumultuous 1970s. During these years, refugees from all over the world arrived in Sweden by the thousands—an estimated thirty thousand refugees from Chile alone—to begin settling in a land that, while generous, was totally alien to their own cultures and political concerns. Although many exiles viewed their situation as only temporary, others began to realize the permanence of their situations as their children grew up speaking a different language and as they themselves began to accommodate and look at their native culture from an increasingly critical perspective. Many exiles maintained ties to their political parties and in a sense brought their old struggles and divisions to the new environment. Parties became reconstituted, although in isolation from Chile, and their analyses were increasingly at odds with the news emerging from Chile.

The events of the novel take place between 1978 and 1981. During this period, some Chileans question the prevailing view of exiled political leaders who believe in the short-term imminent collapse of the regime and their own relevance in the process. These Chileans, some of whom were committed leftist militants, engage in a series of “discoveries” about themselves, their country, and exile. Most important, they discover that they are not alone in exile and that the Chilean tragedy pales in comparison with events in countries like Iran, Cambodia, and Uganda. These exiles also encounter the dynamics of cultural conflict as many Chileans attempt to perpetuate their lifestyles and their political rhetoric in a country that fairly but sternly reminds them that their status as refugees entitles them to no privileges. This is a country where rules are respected and where abuses of the system are understood but treated firmly. Men watch helplessly as their wives and daughters blossom in a more egalitarian environment and challenge traditional patriarchal authority. Families discover with surprise and chagrin that they cannot set the standards for the treatment of their children, their elders, or even their pets. They resent Swed-

ish society but are challenged by its practices. As a result, they slowly develop attitudes and behavior that enrich them but also alienate them from their own backgrounds.

Families dissolve, new unions are forged, nationals of one country befriend and understand nationals from countries with traditional enmities. Their worlds are turned upside down as the poor suddenly find access to homes, cars, international travel, and other amenities provided by a European standard of living. University education becomes available for refugees in the venerable academies of Sweden. Inevitably, they question their ideological convictions and become increasingly skeptical about the wisdom of returning to Chile. They indulge in extended nostalgia sessions only to realize that little remains to go back to. Yet they suffer the lack of contact with the sounds, smells, and traditional certainties of home. Exile becomes something other than the proclamations of political parties. It becomes the very specific experience of living in a place that is not one's own and longing for a country where one no longer belongs.

*Epoca de descubrimientos* is written in a thoughtful yet often humorous style that is also informative. One learns about Sweden, its legendary social services, harsh climate, and people, and one also anticipates the troubles resulting from the country's international involvement. The number and variety of refugees implied that various political groups would continue their struggles on Swedish soil and often use the country as the base for contacts and political action throughout the world. While the book does not cover the assassination of Prime Minister Olaf Palme or the current backlash in Sweden against immigration, it provides essential background for understanding the massive changes brought about by Swedish foreign and immigration policy in the 1970s and 1980s.

As exiles leave the ideologically charged culture of Chile in the early 1970s and begin to visit the best museums of Europe and read the latest bibliography on innumerable subjects, the reader also learns about the transformation in the outlook of Chileans. Nonpartisan analytical literature destroys old ideological assumptions. The ability to visit the sites of historical events in Europe brings perspective and reality to their own past. Access to multimedia information from around the world makes exiles more sensitive to events beyond their country. Their experience, especially in light of the transformations of Chilean politics in recent years, reflects the profound changes undergone by a single generation of citizens.

Finally, *Epoca de descubrimientos* brings to the fore many of Chile's unresolved problems. Major players in the atrocities of the period are still relevant political actors in Chile. The Orlando Letelier assassination case continues to shed unfavorable light on the judicial system and mars relations between Chile and the United States. Redress for the abuses and dispossession of thousands of Chileans remains an issue. As for the exiles, whether they live comfortably in Swedish exile, are torn between the de-

sire to return and the thought of leaving their children behind, are forever crippled by the experience of repression, or live as strangers in their own land, this book provides the first uncompromising view of Chilean exile.

The final volume to be reviewed, Pamela Constable's and Arturo Valenzuela's *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet*, brings together various aspects discussed in the other books and adds an important interpretive framework for understanding Chile's sixteen and a half years of military rule. This rich and detailed study discusses the emergence of the personalist rule of General Pinochet, the effects of dictatorship on a cross section of society, and the reasons for the eventual demise of the military regime. The authors show how the strong democratic traditions of Chile ultimately prevailed over the regime's draconian attempts to transform the nation's polity, economy, and society.

According to Constable and Valenzuela, the traumatic experience of dictatorship strengthened deeply held democratic values and traditions. Despite the repression of these years, the majority of Chileans did not seek the violent overthrow of the government. Rather, they supported a broad coalition of political parties once these organizations hammered out a viable agreement for a democratic transition. Political parties captured the mood of the nation and shunned the political polarization of previous years in order to present a coherent plan of peaceful opposition to military rule. They did so by utilizing the regime's own legality, as the parties agreed to abide by the transition agenda established in the 1980 Constitution. Constable and Valenzuela also point out that the military government understood that its legitimacy could derive only from a constitutional regime. By enacting a new charter and preserving the presidentialist tradition of the country, the regime also opened the door for its own departure. The genius of the opposition was to take advantage of the military's self-imposed constraints and essentially beat the regime at its own game.

Certainly, Pinochet and his closest supporters did not expect things to turn out this way. They were fully confident that given the legal constraints on the activities of political parties and public confidence in the government's economic achievements, they could win any referendum calling for perpetuation of the regime. But they underestimated Chileans' desire for change and failed to awaken fears for the return to democratic life. The result was a decisive defeat first in the plebiscite of October 1988 and then in the presidential and congressional elections of December 1989.

Constable and Valenzuela explain how this remarkable achievement took place. Unlike other sources, *A Nation of Enemies* combines sophisticated social science research with hundreds of interviews with Chileans from all walks of life—from regime officials to ambivalent middle-class bureaucrats to victims of repression. What emerges are the voices of Chileans articulating their own views on how the process unfolded and af-

fected them personally. Many candidly admit that they remained silent during the worst years of repression because they feared for their jobs and their own security. Regime supporters were also given an opportunity to express their views as to why they backed the regime. The picture that emerges is complex. Some were so driven by hatred of the previous Unidad Popular government of socialist President Salvador Allende that they uncritically supported the new government. Others honestly believed that the important economic transformations taking place justified, if not required, regrettable social costs. Still others completely disassociated themselves from the grimmer aspects of the dictatorship and enthusiastically contributed to what they believed to be the country's revolutionary transformation. All tell their story in a way that makes credible the substantial support for Pinochet and his regime, and even the most extreme representatives are treated fairly.

Even so, Constable and Valenzuela's sympathies clearly lie with the many who overcame humiliation, persecution, and fear to contribute in myriad ways to restoring democracy. Some helped impoverished neighbors, relatives, and victims of repression while others volunteered to register and train voters across the nation. Still others shed their sectarianism to build an agenda of consensus with former political enemies. They gathered in mass movements to protest against regime policies or patiently built mechanisms of political participation in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. By the end of military rule, Chile was confidently poised to move from dictatorship to democracy. The majority expressed its will without hatred and moved on to confront the challenges of civic participation in a changed polity.

The six titles considered here capture, to various degrees of accuracy and depth, the mood of a nation that suffered the full impact of repression during sixteen and a half years of military rule and must still come to grips with many of the dictatorship's legacies. Whether for or against the regime, Chileans understand that the period of military rule was no ordinary chapter in their national history. As these sources make evident, even analysts holding diverse views have had to confront difficult questions in reflecting on the legacies of the period. Chileans who took the country's democratic tradition for granted prior to 1973 now have real experiences to call on in evaluating concepts like justice, citizenship, and human rights. Whether new generations of Chileans will witness a stronger and more judicious democracy emerging after the period of military rule remains a question. Whatever happens, the volumes under review will serve as reminders of the deeply personal side to the Chilean experience of dictatorship.



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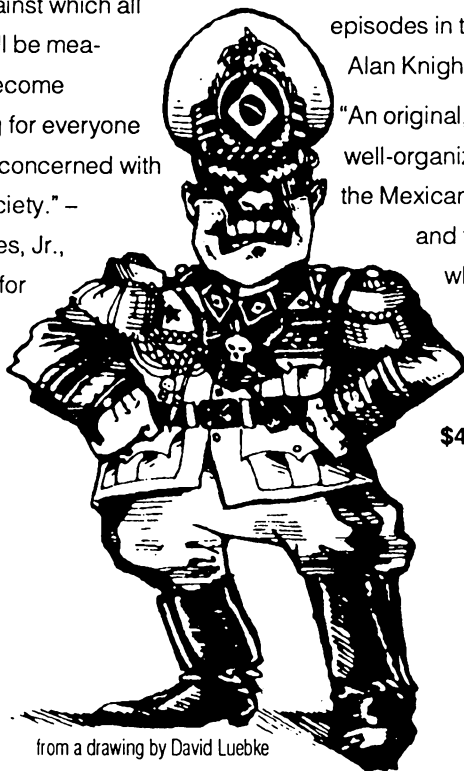
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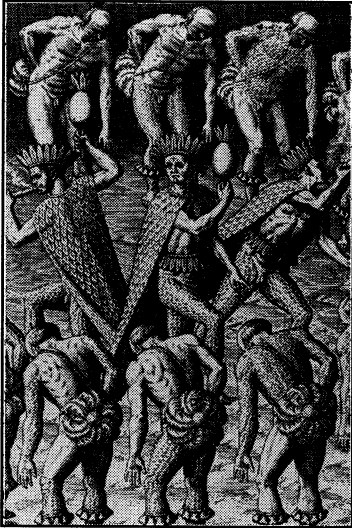
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