

Factionalism and partisan politics, and the resulting stop-go cycles, have long been known to have overshadowed economic policy-making in Argentina since the late 1940s. Yet Veigel maintains without substantial supporting evidence that it was since the 1970s that these strains have undercut the search for a broad consensus to build up a new economic order and meet changing international challenges (pp. 203, 205).

This book will call the attention of those interested in the study of Argentina's troubles in recent decades and comparing them with Chile's and Brazil's outlook at the dawning of the new century. At the same time, the substantial macro-economic knowledge accumulated on Argentina suggests that the time has come to address in greater detail, and drawing upon novel sources such as those mentioned above, its more recent internal mechanics of power and policies.

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Steve Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989–2006* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. xxxiv + 548, £73.00, £17.99 pb.

This book forms the final volume of a trilogy whose first works were published in 2006 under the generic title *The Memory Box of Pinochet's Chile*. Readers' reactions to this concluding volume will likely mirror their views of its predecessors, since although the time period covered shifts closer to the present day, the style and framework is shared with books 1 and 2 (respectively, *Battling Hearts and Minds* and *Remembering Pinochet's Chile*). *Reckoning with Pinochet* accordingly offers many of the same virtues and occasional vices, likely to produce a definite love or hate response in many readers.

The whole project is undoubtedly both a labour of love and a reflection of its author's deep and intensely personal engagement with Chile. The unusual luxury of three volumes – and, in the case of books 1 and 2, hefty volumes at that – offers almost unprecedented leeway for Stern to both develop an argument and lay out all the thick description and meticulous source work that academics are generally forced to compress to the point of near-invisibility. Under the circumstances, a lesser author might have succumbed to the kitchen-sink approach. Although Stern does not fall into this trap, the trilogy is certainly wide-ranging and occasionally freeform in ways that may defeat the general reader or comparativist looking for a central seam to mine. Instead, books 2 and 3 in particular offer a wealth of closely observed narration and analysis that will allow Chile specialists of all stripes the twin satisfactions of access to new data and ample opportunity to dispute emphases, nuances and interpretations.

In terms of disciplinary, the book reaches beyond Stern's own background as a historian, in a valuable and largely successful effort to break new ground in offering a social history of memory. Political scientists, cultural and memory studies specialists and ethnographers will each find echoes of their own preoccupations here, although few will find it easy to lay claim to Stern's distinctive 'memory box/memory knots' approach to his subject matter. Having reviewed book 2 and commented at the launch of the Spanish translation of book 1, I should perhaps confess at the outset that I fall into the camp of those who find the author's particular organising principle somewhat distracting. Since each volume reprints the series introduction and invaluable essay on sources, as well as revisiting Stern's initial setting out of his memory stall, the search for a core with which to engage according to the reader's particular interests and expertise

becomes ever more challenging by this final volume, in which these reprises, plus chapter notes between, them constitute fully a quarter of the text.

That said, particularly rewarding sections of this book include the volume (as distinct from the series) introduction as well as the final two substantive chapters and conclusion. These deal, respectively, with developments between 2002 and 2006, closing with a compressed but revealing reflection on the peculiar political theatre that surrounded Pinochet's 2006 funeral and a return to the questions of why Chile's memory trajectory unfolded the way it did and what, if anything, its meaning(s) and implication(s) might be on a broader stage.

Particularly helpful insights along the way include a correct insistence that Chile's memory struggles have had a persistently dual nature. They have been both elite and activist-driven, containing antithetical, matter/antimatter narratives that experience the military regime variously as redemption or as apocalypse. A prevailing sensation of impasse has coexisted with an almost imperceptible but constant redrawing of the boundaries of what is, and what is held to be, possible, conceivable or memorable.

Stern's main conclusions or observations about the 1989–2006 period trace this redrawing, describing the creation of a 'structure of impasse' at the elite level, which crucially was not allowed to produce a complete official amnesia. The memory camp's symbolic and moral soft power was sufficient to force the occasional concession despite repeated setbacks. Occasional high watermarks produced important advances such as the 2003–4 Valech Commission, a second official truth commission focused on torture and political imprisonment. Stern provides one of the first serious accounts of the commission in English, and rightly observes that it marks the emergence of a new key actor, the potentially large and previously hardly visible universe of survivors of past repressive crimes. 'Convergence' effects produced by a strong history of human rights organisation and some synergies with international developments in normative frameworks and possibilities for activism contributed to a more permissive climate for justice change from the mid-2000s, although Stern is at pains to point out that change was never linear or predictable in either origin or direction. Nor does he allow a certain sameness in discourse, demands and even aesthetic and cultural habits to persuade him that the memory camp of today is essentially the direct inheritor of the human-rights-based opposition of yesteryear: rather, he detects discontinuities including an 'enduring sensitisation to human rights' in public culture. This latter claim ought perhaps to be qualified. It is certainly true that changing attitudes on the right and the within the military have been among the most notable features of Chile's post-Pinochet landscape, but it is more difficult to detect any lasting enthusiasm for pro-rights discourse and practice in public life, within and particularly beyond the narrow confines of the issue of past atrocity.

Other interesting sections of the book include a discussion of the vexed question of numbers – this is timely, as Chile is currently in the process of reviewing its official victim registers. The question of underreporting, whether rooted in fear or in cultural differences, as with Chile's southern indigenous communities, may be much more evident in settings such as Peru or Central America, but Stern shows how it has also operated even in the relatively comprehensively documented Chilean repressive past.

The book's main analysis stops at 2006, the year of the inauguration of Chile's first woman president, Michelle Bachelet, but Stern adds sufficient observations about her recently concluded presidential term to support his contention that although Bachelet is generally supposed particularly sensitive to the human rights issue, it was under

previous president Ricardo Lagos that the groundwork was laid for major change. It was Lagos rather than former defence minister Bachelet who faced down the military, forcing them to recognise that genuine subordination to executive authority was no longer a matter of preference. Human rights matters were not the only or even the main subject at issue in this battle of wills, but one outcome was the reluctant acceptance of the perennial nature of the human rights legacy and the need to concede quite different responses to it on each of its periodic appearances centre stage.

Stern's occasional forays into musings about the place of Chilean human rights organising in the international history of such experiences, or the relative contributions of outside and inside actors to recent change, seem in a sense unnecessary as this is a work whose claim to relevance is fully secured by its thorough treatment of one complex national setting. Stern ranges widely and confidently through high politics, grassroots organising, cultural history, legal change and even popular song and theatre to make his point about the need for a comprehensive history of memory to be truly social. It is not necessary to agree with all aspects of his interpretive framework to be duly impressed with the scope of the achievement.

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Sonia Cardenas, *Human Rights in Latin America: A Politics of Terror and Hope* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. xi + 248, \$59.95, £39.00, hb.

The emergence of human rights as an element in national politics and international relations was one of the surprises of the last decades of the twentieth century. It began even before the end of the long Cold War, and with the dismantling of that massive ideological edifice it gathered momentum into our new millennium. It has been a global story, but one in which, as history would have it, Latin America played a leading role. Even within this one world region it is a complex story, involving unprecedented movements in civil society, major social institutions, broad regional democratisation, new intra-governmental bodies and transnational non-governmental networks.

Sonia Cardenas synthesises the story of human rights in Latin America in this very good short book, which admirably fulfils her goal of 'a concise and comprehensive introduction' to the subject 'for students of human rights and Latin America' (p. 12). Its structure is well defined, and her clear, direct prose takes little background for granted. The book conveys an impressive amount of basic information throughout, aptly employing summary charts and tables as well as five appendices. Its description of human rights history over the last four decades is sound, and Cardenas illustrates common and diverging patterns across the region through more in-depth treatment of some dozen countries. Under three broad headings – 'Violating Rights', 'Promoting Reform' and 'Securing Justice' – the book manages to encompass in compact form a great deal of the complex range of phenomena that we associate with human rights in contemporary Latin America.

Cardenas' chapter on 'Explaining Violations' justifiably emphasises the rights of physical integrity that have largely defined the focus of human rights advocacy, but she also recognises the relevance of social, economic and cultural rights (such as those relating to discrimination against women or indigenous groups) here and in later chapters. Her treatment of 'Global Governance' usefully describes the United Nations