

“From dictatorial systems to consolidated democracies. A comparative study between Argentina and Taiwan. Taiwan a beacon of hope for defenders of democracies”

María Julia Moreyra¹

In memory of my parents, Alicia Paús and Julio César Moreyra, my grandmother María Graciani, and Noel.

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To the victims, survivors, and their families whose rights were violated under authoritarian regimes

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Professor Shiow-duan Hawang

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Members of the Rose Historic Site

Professor Jau- Hwa Chen

¹ MOFA Fellow 2026 from Argentina. She is a Lawyer, Magister in International Relations and Peace Fellow – Rotary International (Chulalongkorn University, Class 20). Currently, she works for the Ministry of Women and Diversity of the Province of Buenos Aires. She is Speaker Chair at the Rotary Club End Human Trafficking, Activator of Positive Peace and Ambassador of the IEP (Institute for Economics and Peace – Australia). María Julia Moreyra received the Rotary Award “Service Above Self” in 2024.

Professor Shian- Chi Shen

Professor Yi- Chien Chen

Mrs. Lilian Liu

Sue Wun

Solid Ruei- Jhe Sie

Rebecca Yu-Yu Liou

Howard Chien

Annie Wu

Mabel Li

Nellie Lin

Kevin Tan

Brady Li

Tomás Norberto Hsu

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Argentina

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Claudia Velis

Clara Luna Gómez Sánchez

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Leonardo Fossati

Ana María García Muñitis

Ludmila González Cerulli

Abstract

This paper examines the respective transitions to democracy experienced by two countries located on different continents, with distinct cultures, but which in the past were ruled by authoritarian regimes that deeply damaged the social fabric.

Upon restoring democracy, both Taiwan and Argentina embraced this form of government, believing it to be the only system in which human rights can be protected and defended. Victims, survivors, and their families have shared their experiences and keep the memory alive so that events such as those experienced by Argentine and Taiwanese societies will never be repeated.

Keywords

Transitional justice – Human Rights- Crimes against humanity- Democracy- Victims – Survivors- Memory- Justice- Truth

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Introduction

This paper focuses on two political processes (Taiwan and Argentina) and how they were related to the transition from dictatorship to democracy in the second half of the 20th century.

The processes of political transition have become subjects of historical study by a Western historiographic community that has seen in the different processes, continuities or cycles, as sociologists and political scientists such as S.P. Huntington and his different “democratic waves” have been defending. The 20th century should be remembered primarily as the century of democracy. When the century began, no country could boast of having a fully democratic system, that is, one in which at least all adult individuals had the right to vote. (García Jurado, 2003, p.8).

Huntington has developed the theme of modern democratic transitions, particularly those recorded in the last quarter of the twentieth century, which he called the “third democratic wave”, a subject to which he dedicated one of his best-known books of the same name. Huntington states that the first of the democratic waves began in 1828 and ended in 1926; the second began in 1943 and ended in 1962, and the third began in 1974 and was still in force in 1990, the year in which his research ended, admitting that he did not have enough evidence to say whether it had already ended or whether there would still be more transitions. (García Jurado, 2003, p. 17).

Therefore, a comparative study should be carried out that analyzes the uniqueness of the specific cases within a comparative framework that respects the differences, but at the same time finds the points of connection. We will use a qualitative method, drawing on key literature on the subject as well as interviews with victims and family members from the dictatorial periods in both countries, and with scholars from Taiwan and Argentina who highlighted the importance of transitional justice.

The transition in Argentina happened prior to that of Taiwan in 1983, after a bloody dictatorship that left thousands of people missing. The Taiwanese transition took place when in 1987 martial law was lifted and Taiwan began a process of democratization, with the abolition of the Temporary Provisions and culminated in the first direct presidential election in 1996.

Given the breadth of the chosen topic, this paper will focus on the key aspects that characterized the transition to democracy in both countries following flagrant human rights violations against their victims; the role played by victims, survivors, and family members in preserving historical memory; and the achievements and remaining challenges faced by Argentina and Taiwan in consolidating democracy. One section is titled “Taiwan, Beacon of Hope”. Despite the difficulties the country has faced in the past—and continues to face today—due to its status in the international community, it stands as a well-established democracy and a defender of human rights.

I. Taiwan and The Rise of Authoritarianism

After the World War II and Japan's surrender in 1945, China through the KMT (Nationalist Kuomintang- Chinese Nationalist Party) resumed governance on Taiwan. For the people of Taiwan, it was a new opportunity to realize their long-cherished ambition to attain equality and autonomy. Everyone looked forward to working with the newly arrived Nationalist Government to build a new Taiwan. However, the Executive Office of Taiwan Province had been in constant conflict with the public since its establishment. (The Taipei 228 Memorial Museum)

The fact that the Taiwanese were treated as if they lacked political talent, combined with economic and social decline, caused the initial enthusiasm to turn into disappointment and anger. Finally, tensions escalated and led to what is historically known as the “228 Incident”. It is important to note that 228 Incident, which occurred on February 28, 1947, was not an isolated event, but rather the catalyst that ushered in the period known as the “White Terror” in Taiwan.

On February 27, 1947, Tobacco Monopoly Bureau agents confiscated Lin Chiang-mai's illegal cigarettes and took her money. While trying to arrest her for selling illegal cigarettes, the agents beat her on the head with a pistol, which prompted the gathering crowd to attack the agents. The agents fled the scene, but killed one person, Chen Wen-hsi, during the confrontation while trying to flee. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 6).

The following day, February 28, thousands protested outside of the Tobacco Bureau demanding that the two agents be executed. Another crowd found, and killed, tobacco agents in a different part of Taipei. But the rioting spread all across Taiwan when another group of protesters were fired upon outside of the Governor General Chen Yi's office. Rioting took place from February 28 to mid- March. The people of Taiwan took control of cities and towns. KMT soldiers indiscriminately killed people in the streets. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 6). This day, as mentioned above, is historically known as the 228 Incident. Although the exact number of fatalities is unknown, it is estimated to be between 18,000 and 28,000 (Roth, 2019, p.54).

Although 228 Incident marked the beginning of authoritarianism and a repressive state, systematic and institutionalized violence started in 1949. The KMT in charge of President Chiang Kai-shek made Taipei its capital. For four decades on Taiwan, the Nationalist government imposed martial law, “freezing” the application of many important rights and freedoms that had been guaranteed in the ROC Constitution of 1947. (Cohen, Alford and Chang- fa Lo, 2019, p. 3).

President Chiang Kai-shek created a party-state which concentrated all state power in himself, without any democratic checks. The President also set up the secret police and controlled the intelligence agency as well as the military. (Huang, 2019, p. 93- 94). The party owned movie companies, youth centers, and an investment firm, and these companies continue(d) to exist as private companies— influenced by decades of association with the KMT—well after Taiwan democratized. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 3 and 4). After his death in 1975, his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, took control of the country.

The period known as the “White Terror” was characterized by human rights violations against those whom the government considered traitors, spies, or participants in communist activities. Civilians were subjected to the jurisdiction of military tribunals, which violated a provision of the Roc Constitution, in which Article 9 provides that “no person shall be subject to trial by a military tribunal, except those in active military service”.



La Paloma, a film that depicts the conditions prevailing in Taiwanese society during the White Terror. Source: María Julia Moreyra

During the White Terror period, the military tribunal had to obey the President's final decision on sentencing. Therefore, the procedures and the judgments of courts-martial were apparently unconstitutional. The illegitimate state used the formal law as a tool to control the people in Taiwan rather than to confine state power as the constitution required. (Huang, 2019, p.94)

Despite the prevailing circumstances, the Taiwanese continued to defend their fundamental rights. On December 10, 1979, International Human Rights Day, a demonstration took place in Kaohsiung that was linked to Formosa Magazine. The demonstration was violently suppressed, and its leaders were subjected to high-profile military trials that resulted in long prison sentences. One of the people arrested for supporting the publication of the aforementioned magazine was Annette Lu Hsiu-lien, who would later become Taiwan's vice president. This event is historically known as the "Kaohsiung Incident".

During this period 140,000 Taiwanese people were arrested, imprisoned, tortured or executed for their real or perceived political beliefs (Chen, 2018: 443). The White Terror involved some 3,000 to 4,000 executions, the most extreme outcomes of the roughly 140,000 political trials conducted by ROC martial-law courts (including some 30,000 retrospectively deemed "improper"). (Roth, 2019, p. 54).

In this context, one event that deserves special mention is the murder of the Chinese-American writer Henry Liu (Liu Yi-liang), whose pen name was Chiang Nan, which took place at his home in San Francisco on October 15, 1984. It was committed by Chen Chi-li, the leader of the Bamboo Union, Taiwan's largest criminal gang and two of his assistants. Some of Liu's articles had offended the KMT, as they focused on aspects of the lives of Chiang Kai-shek and his son, Chiang Ching-kuo. Liu was about to publish a book on the subject in question. He was persuaded by the KMT, but the party's efforts were unsuccessful.

The U.S government knew the identities of the perpetrators of the assassination, who had returned to Taiwan. Although there were no extradition treaties or diplomatic relations between the two countries, and even though the KMT had resisted, the gangster-killers were put on trial in Taiwan criminal court and the military officials who had conspired with them on trial in a court-martial prosecution.

In opinion of Jerome Cohen the Chiang Nan *ming-an*, coming as it did on the eve of Taiwan's political reform era, just before the elimination of martial law, played a helpful role in many aspects of Taiwan's history. It further exposed the lawless violence underlying the KMT dictatorship, demonstrated that restrictions on the media could be defied, promoted respect for human rights, and increased pressures for democratic progress and a genuine rule of law. (Cohen, 2019, p. 28).

II. Return to Democracy

Faced with growing pressure from civil society, in 1987 the government

abrogated martial law and removed the ban on organizing new political parties, finally allowing the people of Taiwan the autonomy needed to develop a democratic society and build a constitutional democracy able to protect their rights and freedoms. (Tien & Cheng, 1997, p. 1).

The first popular presidential election took place in March 1996, where the KMT won the presidential election and maintained a majority in the country's Legislative Yuan. This party remained in power for the next 12 years. It was not until 2016 that the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the legislative and presidential elections, opening a new chapter in the approach to transitional justice.

As regards this important topic, Taiwan is an anomaly among new democratic countries. Political scientist Nai-teh Wu (2005) has shown in full detail how Taiwan's particular historical situation resulted in the phenomenon of "ten thousand victims without a single perpetrator." (Chen, Chun-Hung and Yeh, Hung-Ling, 2019, page 70). The emphasis was put on reparations for victims. There were not any trials or lustration law to identify or name any possible perpetrators. The unnamed perpetrators are individuals who served in the KMT in various capacities, including "the core ruling elite and those personnel, mostly in the military and security forces, who acted on the former's direct and implicit order, but sometimes on their own initiative". (Wu, Nai-teh, 2005).

Victims, survivors, and their families, NGOs, and much of the academic community have been calling for transitional justice in Taiwan. From the interviews conducted with many of these actors, we have been able to conclude that it is essential to address what happened in the past, because the victims must be recognized on a collective level, and this recognition must come from the state itself. Similarly, failing to take into account and acknowledge what happened in the past can lead to history repeating itself.

A significant development that reaffirms the commitment of the Taiwanese academic community to democracy and respect for human rights has been the establishment of the Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University in 2000. The Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University was established by an initiative group of interdisciplinary academics in 2000, realizing that Taiwan's hard-earned democracy must be consolidated by human rights awareness and education. (https://web-en.scu.edu.tw/hrer/web_page/1013)

The Center is very active in organizing conferences, seminars, and exchanges among human rights scholars, legal experts, and activists. It offers an undergraduate program as well as a Master's degree in human rights. Both programs bring together professionals from different disciplines, raising students' awareness of the value of human rights for democracy and the importance of peace at the local, regional, and international levels.

In addition, the Center is one of the founding members of International Human Rights Education (IHRE) Consortium, a group of academics who organized

modules on human rights at their respective universities in Australia, South Africa, Taiwan, the US, Poland and the Netherlands. (<https://ahrcapec.weebly.com/chang.html>)

Professor Jau-hwa Chen, former director of the Center, stated that the Undergraduate Program—which is the only one of its kind in Taiwan and was established in 2004—was created to address the needs of the victims. Victims of the “White Terror” shared their testimonies about the importance of respecting human rights and what they mean to Taiwanese society. The Master's Degree in Human Rights was established in 2008, and transitional justice is one of the topics covered in both this program and the undergraduate program. (Interview conducted at Professor Jau- hwa Chen on June 18, 2026)

III. The road to Transitional Justice

Transitional justice is a democratic conception of justice that examines how societies affected by massive human rights violations caused by civil war, violent conflict, or dictatorial regimes can transition to democratic systems in which lasting peace can be guaranteed. (de Gamboa Tapias, 2006, p. 12). There are three main tasks involved in the pursuit of transitional justice: the first is to deal with the perpetrators, the second is to provide reparations for the victims, and the third is to preserve historical memories. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 414).

Transitional justice in Taiwan has been strongly promoted by presidents from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)—particularly during the terms of Tsai Ing-wen and the current president, Lai Ching-te, who has continued this work—to shed light on the crimes committed during “White Terror” period.”

Prior to the terms of office of Tsai Ing-wen and Lai Ching-te of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the approach to transitional justice in Taiwan went through very uneven phases. It depended on whether the president belonged to the former authoritarian single party (KMT) or to the opposition.

Lee Teng- hui (1988-2000) assumed the presidency of Taiwan following the death of Chiang Ching-kuo (1988). In March 1990 he was formally elected for a full term as the eight- term president.

Upon assuming the presidency, he made the following statement regarding the topic discussed in this article: *“In order to make progress, we should look forward and not look back. If we are all prepared to take this stance, I believe that the development of Taiwan will be much faster”*. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 417). This statement sparked outrage among civil society, and the president changed his stance on the issue.

He was the first head of state to offer an official apology on behalf of the government to the families of the victims of the 228 Incident, and he enacted the first law providing for financial reparations in 1995. However, Human Rights

activists argue that the model was biased, as it prioritized financial compensation over declassifying the archives or prosecuting state perpetrators.

Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008) was the first president not to be a member of the KMT. Prior to his election as president, he had used his executive powers during his four-year term as mayor of Taipei to establish a Memorial Day for the 228 Incident, to rename Taipei New Park as 228 Peace Memorial Park, and to build the Taipei 228 Memorial Museum. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 456).

At one of his official events, he affirmed that, based on the relevant historical materials, Chiang Kai-shek should unquestionably be held accountable for the 228 Incident. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 462). As a consequence, an important number of statues were removed and important public places were renamed. In addition, his government sponsored research on legal responsibility for the persecution of political opponents during the martial era period. Such research included plans to prosecute the perpetrators. (Shaffer, 2014)

Institutional, social, and political obstacles prevented President Chen from making progress on his transitional justice measures. In addition, during his presidency, the KMT held a majority in Parliament, which prevented far-reaching reforms from being implemented.

Ma Ying-jeou (2008 – 2016) As a member of the KMT, his rise to power marked a significant shift from the previous administration's transitional justice policies. Soon after his inauguration, most of the previous government's transitional justice policies were reversed without public consultation. The former dictators' mausoleums were reopened, and the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall was renamed the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial. (Shaffer, 2014)

Although Ma Ying-jeou continued to attend the annual memorial services for the victims of the White Terror to offer institutional apologies and give certificates of honorary rehabilitation, he firmly opposed investigating the assets illegally seized by his party during the dictatorship or declassifying military and intelligence files that would compromise the former regime.

It is important to highlight that on February 28, 2011, the National 228 Memorial Museum formally opened its doors, becoming the first national memorial museum of human rights in Taiwan (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 479), since he had promised it during his election campaign.

IV. Sustained Progress Toward Achieving Transitional Justice

Transitional justice was one of the most significant issues on Tsai Ing-Wen's 2016 presidential campaign platform. Having won the presidential election, an important step during her administration (2016-2024) was to legalize the work of transitional justice on an institutional level. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, pages 485 and 489). It was pivotal for her

administration to deal with state violence and injustice from the era of authoritarianism in Taiwan.

In her inaugural address, President Tsai dedicated an entire section of the speech to the subject, signaling that she would tackle the transitional justice issue. Her words and directives were very clear on the first day:

“For the new democratic system to move forward, we must first find a way to face the past together. I will establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission inside the Presidential Office, to address the historical past in the most sincere and cautious manner. The goal of transitional justice is to pursue true social reconciliation, so that all Taiwanese can take to heart the mistakes of that era.

We will discover the truth, heal wounds, and clarify responsibilities. From here on out, history will no longer divide Taiwan. Instead, it will propel Taiwan forward”. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 10)

Former political prisoners were earnestly looking forward that through Transitional Justice Commission that the truth could be revealed soonest the possible and their rights and fairness could be restored. (Chin, 2023 p. 253)

In December 2017, the Legislative Yuan passed the “Act on Promoting Transitional Justice”, which explicitly aims to achieve 3 of the 5 objectives: “to open up political archives”, “to remove authoritarian symbols and preserve the sites of injustices” and “to remedy miscarriages of justice, clarify the truth, and promote reconciliation”. Moreover, the law established a Transitional Justice Commission (TJC), which was originally only mandated to work for two years before being dissolved. (Yuan, Hsueh Hua, Shen, Chen Yi, and Long, Yang Chen, 2022, page 4)

The Act created a nine-member committee to investigate the facts of the White Terror Era. The Act stated that the commission would also address the ill-gotten political party assets not already covered by the Act Governing the Handling of Ill-gotten Properties by Political Parties and Their Affiliate Organizations. (Jaminson, 2022)

Furthermore, in 2018 and 2019, the TJC exonerated a large number of individuals who had been victims of the “White Terror.” Many of those pardoned had already passed away and were posthumously granted a certificate of “rehabilitation of honor”. Some families received compensation. Almost 6,000 victims of political persecution have had their convictions overturned since the creation of the TJC in 2018. (Jaminson, 2022)

According to the TJC, Chiang Kai-Shek himself participated in more than 4000 political trials during the White Terror period. Political trials and brutal suppression peaked in the 1950s. (Jaminson, 2022).

As Shattuck noted it is of the utmost importance that the archives could be opened. Doing so would provide the greater public – and the rest of the world – a peek into the operations of the authoritarian regime. (Shattuck, 2019, p.25).

In February 2017, Tsai Ing-wen announced that all documents related to the 228 Incident had been declassified (a total of 4,617 documents), were made available to the public. (Hsu, 2017). In July 2019, the Legislative Yuan passed the Political Archives Act in order to declassify government documents concerning matters from August 15, 1945 to November 6, 1992, including documents related to the 228 Incident.

Many of the people we interviewed noted how divided society is regarding Chiang Kai-shek and his son, especially the older generation that still admires them. Professor Shen expressed that this division was very clear in the 1990s, with some people arguing that the government had acted correctly and others maintaining the exact opposite. (Interview conducted at Professor Shiau-chi Shen on July 8, 2026)

Similarly, President Tsai Ing-wen apologized to the indigenous peoples for the suffering they endured during the authoritarian period. She said on August 1, 2016: *"On behalf of the government, I express to you our deepest apology. For the four centuries of pain and mistreatment you have endured, I apologize to you on behalf of the government"*. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 45)

Taiwan's current president, Lai Ching-teh, who took office in 2024, goes on his commitment to historical memory. Archives from Taiwan's authoritarian period continue to be declassified. All of this is being done to ensure democracy in the country.

V. Consequences of the Lack of Justice

Visiting sites of historical memory highlights the state's outstanding obligations to society. We had the opportunity to visit the National Human Rights Museum in Taipei and the Taipei 228 Memorial Museum.

At this last Museum, visitors can read the following text: *"Decades have passed since that chaotic period. Hence, ascertaining the actual number of casualties is like searching for truth in a dense fog – it requires more information and the continued efforts of people from all sectors of society. Deserving of even more attention, though, are those who suffered from state violence without due process and other serious human rights violations that occurred during the 228 Incident. The Incident resulted in the disappearance and silencing of an entire generation of Taiwanese elites. The lucky ones were released from prison or fled overseas; the truly misfortune were those who were secretly or publicly executed or who disappeared and never returned. Countless ordinary people suffered death and injury during the incident as well. Some were wounded or killed by stray bullets or shrapnel from hand grenades; others were robbed or lost property, and still others were executed by military police but their names are unknown."*

For a long time, the experiences of the victims and their families have been long a taboo subject in Taiwanese society. However, the stories and cultural artifacts they left behind have been preserved as reminders of the indelible scars inflicted during the 228 Incident". (Taipei 228 Incident Museum).



228 Peace Memorial Monument (located in 228 Peace Memorial Park). Source: María Julia Moreyra

Fred Him San-Chin, a political prisoner, gave a moving interview for this research work. One of the themes is that it is precisely the lack of justice regarding the KMT's authoritarian period that leads him, even to this day, to wonder why he had to endure so much suffering. He expressed that he can forgive those who hurt him if they tell him the exact circumstances and situations at that time which led them to carry out the orders of their superiors. Unfortunately, to this day, that has not happened. (Interview conducted at the National Human Rights Museum in Taiwan on May 28, 2026). His last wish is to be able to find the truth: "why and how I was suspected and targeted in the very beginning" (Chin, 2023, p. 237)

In an interview conducted on June 18, 2026, with Professor Jau-hwa Chen, former Director of the Human Rights Center at Soochow University, she stated that the lack of justice is closely linked to the actions of the KMT. The party

justified the policies implemented during the long period of martial law. Added to this is the fact that the military lacks training in human rights, which is fundamental to a democratic state.

The aforementioned professor also stated that Taiwan's situation is unique, since it was expelled from the United Nations and it is very difficult to change the prevailing culture. The explanations provided by the KMT regarding what happened were not credible. On the lifting of martial law, the professor mentioned that this occurred in part due to pressure from the United States, but also because The New York Times published the list of prisoners in Taiwan. This put pressure on the party, because if they had not lifted martial law, the consequences for the KMT would have been disastrous. (Interview conducted at Professor Jau- hwa Chen on June 18, 2026).

Finally, Professor Chen emphasized how important it is for the victims to understand why they had to endure so much suffering under Taiwan's authoritarian regime. Their criminal records were expunged, but they were innocent. That is why they are calling for transitional justice to be carried out.

VI. The victims

Yao, Chia-wen and his wife Chou, Ching-yu, and Fred Him-San Chin were interviewed; they shared their experiences as victims under the authoritarian regime imposed by the KMT. They also expressed their hopes and views regarding transitional justice.

We would like to extend our special thanks to the people we interviewed for their warmth and for sharing such difficult moments in their lives. We would also like to thank professor Shiow-duan Hawang from Soochow University, who was a great support throughout this research project.

“I am not a hero, I am a professor and a lawyer”

Yao, Chia-wen



From left to right: Professor Shiow-duan Hawang, María Julia Moreyra, Mr. Yao, Chia-wen and Mrs. Chou, Ching-yu.

1. Yao, Chia-wen

Under stifling control at home and isolated in the international community to Chiang's claim to represent all China, the Taiwanese populace sought to express its many grievances through a number of spontaneous democratic movements that rocked the stability of the Chiang government. The *Formosa Movement* of 1979 was of particular importance in this respect. (Hand in Hand towards Democracy, 2006, p. 13).

In the struggle for democracy in Taiwan, the couple—Yao, Chia -wen and Chou, Ching - yu—stands out for their leadership. Yao, Chien wen is a prominent figure in the promotion of democracy in Taiwan. He was one of the “five core leaders” of the Formosa Incident. His involvement in this Incident led to his arrest, trial by a military court, and sentencing to 12 years in prison for the crime of treason. He was finally released after serving 7 years and 1 month of his sentence.

At the age of 37, Yao began to actively participate in Taiwan's democracy movement. He wrote books and articles promoting the concepts of democracy and political reform. On December 10, 1979, many of the writers for Formosa Magazine marched in Kaohsiung. Yao was one of them.

While in prison, he continued to write in support of democracy in Taiwan, since for him justice and human rights are of the utmost importance. Even in the most difficult times, he always held onto his dream of a peaceful and democratic society.

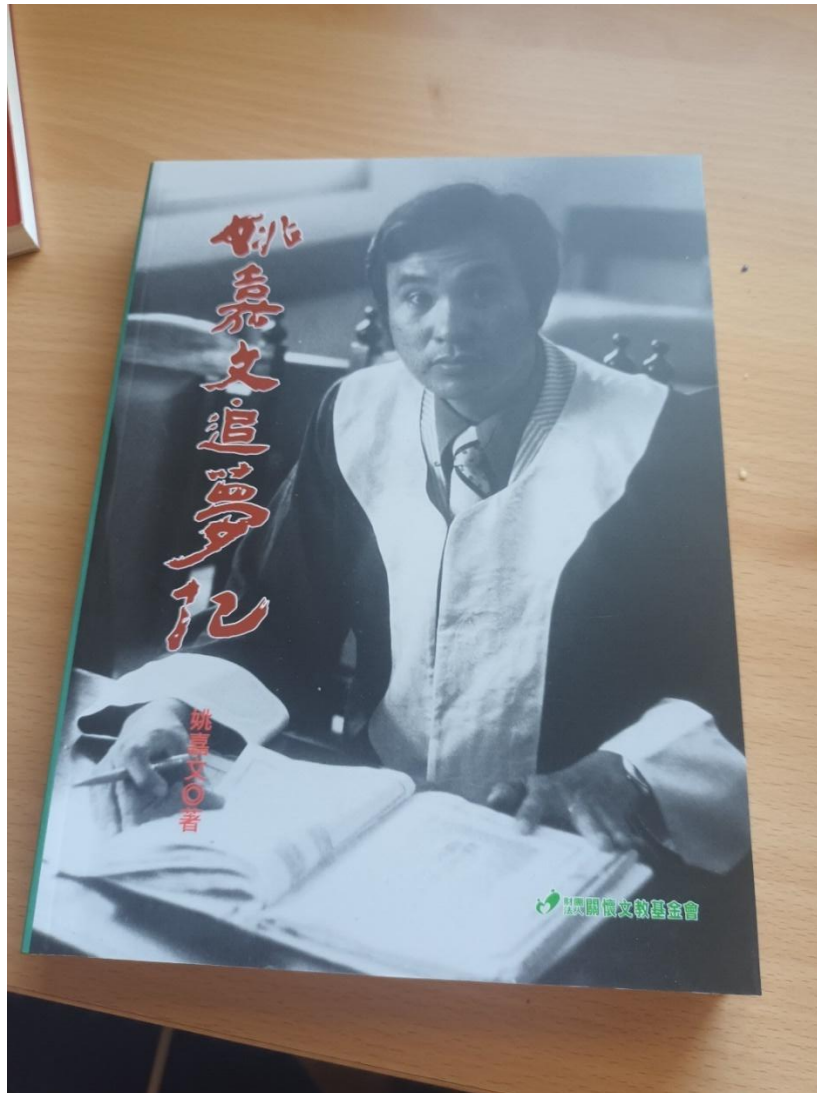
Released in 1987, Yao resumed his involvement in Taiwan's democratic movement and became Chairman of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the nation's major opposition party. He was the first of the Formosa Movement leaders to hold this office, and he used its stature vigorously to promote Taiwan Independence and sovereignty and the overhaul of the National Assembly elections (Hand in Hand towards Democracy, 2006, p. 24).

In 1992, Yao was elected a Member of the Legislative Yuan. He promoted the judicial reform and focused on the situation in the South China Sea and Taiwan Straits. He also had a very prolific teaching career. He mentioned in the interview that Nylon Cheng's wife was his student.

His first words in the interview were that they are people of peace and that they never resorted to violence to defend their rights. His time in prison was hard; he and his family felt fear during martial law, but he never lost his faith that he would be released. (Interview conducted at Yao, Chia -wen's office in Taiwan on May 4, 2026).

His political career was also very extensive. When the DPP became the ruling party in 2000, he served as the party's chief advisor. In 2002, he was nominated by the President of the Republic and confirmed by the Legislative Yuan as President of the Examination Yuan. Under his leadership, programs for the employment, promotion, protection, and training of the nation's civil servants have undergone significant administrative reform (Hand in Hand towards Democracy, 2006, p. 26).

As regards Transitional Justice he expressed: "Efforts to implement transitional justice were insufficient in Taiwan. There were reparations and some improvements, but not as much as what happened in Argentina. The KMT held a great deal of power and controlled the media and education. The future is very important. Although it is difficult to teach (The population was educated under the pillar that Chiang Kai-shek was a hero), society—and students in particular—must learn the true history of what happened in Taiwan." (Interview conducted at Yao, Chia -wen's office in Taiwan on May 4, 2026).



Book written by Yao, Chia-wen

“My goal as a social worker is to help people who are in need”

2. Chou, Ching-yu

The life of Chou, Ching-yu—a social worker and the wife of Yao, Chia-wen—was affected by the events that followed the Formosa Movement and her husband was imprisoned. “At the beginning I cried a lot when my husband was arrested, as he had been accused of treason. It wasn't true. He was innocent. I was interested in the families, particularly children. Their parents were in prison and the situation was very difficult for them. I fought to keep families safe and encouraged people to believe that they weren't alone and that they hadn't done anything wrong”. (Interview conducted at Yao, Chia -wen's office in Taiwan on May 4, 2026).

At the beginning, she didn't want to get involved in politics, but she did so because human rights violations are a truly serious problem. She, along family members of persons detained in the Formosa Incident organized to militate for their release

and to seek support from abroad. She was in charge of being in touch with foreign organizations.

Later, she was urged by Formosa Incident defense lawyers to stand for election to represent the ideals and concepts of the democracy advocates, and at the end of 1980, Chow won election to the National Assembly with more than 150000 votes, the highest single poll in that election. Not only did these votes catapult Chou into the political arena, but they also demonstrated to the ruling party that Yao, Chia – wen was a democratically- supported activist, not a mere rebel. (Hand in Hand towards Democracy, 2006, p. 36).

At the interview she mentioned that she knew perfectly well the conditions in which prisoners lived. She could visit her husband two months after being imprisoned and only for 30 minutes. Then she could see him once a week. She organized the Taiwan Care Center to help families of the persons detained after the Formosa Incident. She also published Care Magazine to promote the concepts of human rights and democracy.

Over the years, more people joined Taiwan's democratic movement. In 1986, Chou and other dissidents began planning the creation of a new party. "The party's first meetings were held at my home while Yao was in prison. This party is the DDP (Founded on September 28, 1986)." (Interview conducted at Yao, Chia -wen's office in Taiwan on May 4, 2026).

In January 1987, Yao, Chia – wen was released from prison and was elected Chariman of the DPP, a position he held for two years. The couple returned to Yao's hometown to continue their democratic activities, and in 1989, Chou was nominated by the DPP to run in the election for Magistrate of Changua Country. (Hand in Hand towards Democracy, 2006, p. 38).

She has held other political positions, but her career has been defined by her advocacy for environmental protection and her social work. In the interview, she stated that being a Christian and a social worker helped her in the work she performed.

Human rights have always played a central role in her life. During our conversation, she explained that in the past she faced many problems that were considered invisible (In many cases, people didn't want to speak out because they believed that learning the truth would lead to even worse consequences), whereas today human rights are given the utmost importance.

3.Fred Him - San Chin

"When there is life, there will be hope, and when there is hope, there is a way"



Fred Him San-Chin at the National Museum of Human Rights. Source: María Julia Moreyra

Before the interview at the National Museum of Human Rights in Taipei, we read Fred Him- San Chin (Mr. Fred)'s memoir, a book that touches the deepest emotions and serves as a true testament to the darkest period Taiwan faced, while also offering a message of hope, especially for future generations.

Mr. Fred was born in Malaysia. He went to study Chemical Engineering as an overseas Chinese Student at National Cheng Kung University in Tainan (Taiwan), declining to go to Liverpool for his higher education. In 1971 he was arrested as suspect responsible for the 1979 USIS Tainan Explosion Case², and sentenced to twelve years of imprisonment under charge of overthrow of the government.

² Since Mr. Fred was studying and reading books in English at the USIS (United States Information Service in Tainan), when an explosion occurred there in 1970, the students were blamed for the incident. That day, Mr. Fred had not been at the USIS, but he was accused of planning and carrying out the explosion because he frequently visited the place.

Since his arrest, he was tortured and he suffered all kind of human rights violations. During his time in prison, he had a very good relationship with the other inmates, who encouraged him not to lose hope that he would be released. He was released from jail in 1983, but he was prohibited to go back to Malaysia. Being without an ID Card and with the stigma of being a political prisoner, he became a homeless for about three years.

“The KMT does not acknowledge the mistakes it made. Its members believe they did the right thing. Without concrete evidence, the party imprisoned or executed people. Through education, the KMT carried out a form of brainwashing on the population. Older generations admire Chiang Kai-shek, without considering that his party caused great harm to Taiwanese society.” (Interview conducted at the National Human Rights Museum in Taiwan on May 28, 2026).

Although Mr. Chin escaped a certain death sentence through the intervention of Amnesty International and got back on his feet through the help of his friends after twelve years of imprisonment, he could not lift the depression weighing down on his mind and heart. (Chin, 2023, p.8) The KMT exercised power arbitrarily and in violation of human rights leaving a lasting mark on Mr. Fred which was very difficult to overcome.

To this day, the question Mr. Fred constantly asks himself is why he was deprived of his liberty and fundamental rights for 12 years. In his memoir, he says: *“I firmly believed speaking out the pains is the best medicine to get along with the unforgettable and tragic experiences we had gone through in the past”*. (Chin, 2023, p. 12)

His life in prison, his love for his mother, and his little dog, “Little Flower”, who kept him company while he was detained on Green Island, are all part of his memories. These and other events show his resilience and his ability to overcome adversity.

With faith and perseverance, he managed to rebuild his life. He got married, has children, and he is hopeful that transitional justice will take place in Taiwan. Since 2009, Mr. Chin has actively participated in human rights- related movements, serving as a volunteer guide at the Jing – Mei White Terror Memorial Park and the Green Island White Terror Memorial Park, where he is affectionately known as “Brother San”. (Chin, 2023, p.7)

In the interview we conducted, Mr. Fred stated: “Human rights issue is always the priority. There was a time when they were violated in Taiwan. That is why the younger generations must be educated about the importance of human rights and learn from the lessons of history, so that history does not repeat itself.”

He continues to fight for truth and justice, especially for his friends who passed away and for the present and future of the country. At the National Museum of Human Rights, Mr. Fred welcomes not only prominent figures in the field of transitional justice, but also researchers, students, and anyone who wishes to learn about what happened during the authoritarian regime imposed by the KMT.

“I’m very optimistic about the younger generations. These days, many young people come to the Museum to learn about what happened in the past. I believe we have a bright future ahead of us in the years to come.” (Interview conducted at the National Human Rights Museum in Taiwan on May 28, 2026).

“I received so much from the people of Taiwan. I suffered and experienced moments of immense happiness on the very same ground. I was homeless, and many people in the same situation as me helped me. That is why, since 2016, I have been organizing a ‘Human Rights Banquet’ that brings together homeless people and senior political prisoners.” (Interview conducted at the National Human Rights Museum in Taiwan on May 28, 2026)³.

VII. Taiwan, beacon of hope

Taiwan embraces democracy after many years of authoritarian rule and flagrant human rights violations. Taiwan also defends the rule of law, social justice and gender equality. The country strives for peace, the well-being of its people, and sustained dialogue with its neighbors.

Although it is a relatively young democracy, Taiwan has developed new sociopolitical legislation, promotes respect for human rights and environmental awareness, and is showing greater inclusivity in social, political, and economic matters. As former President Tsai Ing-wen said: *“The story of Taiwan is one of resilience – of a country upholding democratic, progressive values while facing a constant challenge to its existence. Our success is a testament to what a determined practitioner of democracy, characterized by good governance and transparency, can achieve”*. (Tsai Ing-wen, 2021).

“Over the past few decades, we have overcome adversity and international isolation to achieve one of modern political history’s most successful democratic transitions. The key ingredients of this achievement have been patience, resourcefulness, pragmatism, and a stubborn refusal to give up” (Tsai Ing-wen, 2021)

Taiwan’s human rights performance is, by the most prominent gauges, exemplary, and there is no likelihood of regression to the repressive practices of the past. (Roth, 2019, p. 62). In the 2017 Freedom House index, Taiwan ranks as the second-freest country in Asia (trailing only Japan), and tied for 37th out of 195 nations globally (ahead of the United States). (Roth, 2019, p. 52)

Despite having been excluded from the United Nations and most international organizations, the country—thanks to the efforts and creativity of its people—has developed new channels for engaging with the international community and has become one of the most vibrant democracies in the Indo-Pacific region. Given its

³ Mr. Fred doesn’t know of any other country where an event like this takes place. This project is named “Human Rights Banquet” based on the idea that these two groups of vulnerable people who lived at the bottom level of the society can come together for mutual encouragement.

commitment to democratic values, Taiwan stands as a model and source of inspiration for other countries.

In Taiwan's transformation from authoritarianism to a full democracy, Nylon Cheng played a pivotal role through his defense of freedom of expression. Wu'er Kaixi, a former Tiananmen student leader, said: "*Nylon Cheng's sacrifice was vital to Taiwan's democratic transformation.*" (Horton, 2023)⁴

Deepening democracy reinforces on the global stage an already positive image of Taiwan as a success story, not only in terms of economic growth but also in political development. Taiwan has worked hard to export its image to the rest of the developing world – to Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and even the People's Republic of China. (Wong, 2003, p.235).

In 2003, Taiwan established the first national democracy assistance foundation in Asia, "Taiwan Foundation for Democracy". It is devoted to strengthening democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad. The Foundation's primary concerns are to further consolidate Taiwan's democratic system, to promote democracy in Asia, and to participate actively in the global democratic network. (<https://www.fundsforngos.org/conferences/the-taiwan-foundation-for-democracy/>)

It is essential that tragedies such as those that occurred in the past never happen again and that the Taiwanese people face their present and future with unity, without forgetting what took place during a dark period in their history. Taiwanese society has high hopes for the younger generations, who are imbued with democratic values and are transforming the country into a beacon of hope not only for the region but for the entire international community.

VIII. Argentina: The Last and Bloodiest Dictatorship

Notably, between 1930 and 1983, Argentina experienced six *coups d'état* led by military interventionism (1930, 1943, 1955, 1962, 1966 and 1976-1983) in between short periods of weak democratic rule. Not all the coups used the same degree of violence and not all of them received the same rejection and resistance from political parties and large sectors of the population. In addition, not all of them were supported by catholic fundamentalism against the 'leftist subversion of Western values' in the context of the cold war, as was the case of the last coup. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 90)

The period under the last military dictatorship was marked by flagrant human rights violations perpetrated by the state (*state terrorism*). It included media censorship⁵, illegal detentions, breaking and entering, political imprisonment,

⁴ Further details about what happened to Nylon Cheng in his defense of freedom of speech will be provided in the section titled "Nylon Cheng and 100% Freedom of Speech."

⁵ Creation of blacklists of authors and books—the closure of publishing houses, and book burnings. The military created a climate of fear and terror in intellectual circles that, led to self-censorship (Zeitler, 2009, p. 2 and 3)

military controls in the streets, summary executions disguised as confrontation and torture of the opposition (Bergalli 1984; Calveiro 2006; Feld and Franco 2015; Vezzetti 2002). Many of the political prisoners disappeared after being thrown into the sea while sedated during the infamous “death flights.” Authoritarian and clandestine practices characterized the criminal justice system of that period.

The disappearances demonstrated the development of an obvious determination on the part of the state to exterminate its opponents. They introduced a new characteristic to politically motivated murder – its clandestine practice. These singularities set the case of Argentina apart, even from the rest of the dictatorships that ruled the countries of the region in the 1970s. (Crenzel 2008b: 174-175)

It also led to the appropriation of almost 500 children and babies who disappeared with their parents or were born in detention centres and were given to other families to assume false identities which remain subject to discovery even to the present day. This tragic situation led the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo to search for their grandchildren—and they continue to do so—since it is extremely important that the grandchildren can reclaim their true identities.

Clandestine and systematic practices of state repression through military, police and paramilitary forces were complementary but they sometimes overlapped, which made it easy to sway public opinion into blaming ‘subversive’ groups for homicides, robberies and other ordinary crimes. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, 90). The population was very afraid to report crimes to the police. Added to this were other crimes committed or tolerated by the ruling military regime, such as cases of sexual abuse or extortion of alleged collaborators with the “subversion,” among others.

While supporters of the dictatorship identified the use of force as a “war against subversion”, “communism” or “terrorism, some of its critics considered it a “dirty war” (a very controversial concept even today), with tens of thousands of victims, among which were union leaders, workers, priests, human rights lawyers, scientists, doctors and leaders of political parties, their friends, acquaintances and relatives, and others who were deemed suspicious. Human rights groups claim even to this today, as an emblem or symbol, the number of ‘30,000 disappeared’ by ‘state terror’ in the context of a ‘genocide’ (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 91).

IX. Return to Democracy

The transition from dictatorship to democracy took place in Argentina during the period that Huntington refers to as the “third wave” (1993)⁶. The 1983 presidential elections marked a milestone in the history of 20th-century democracy. Not only did they bring an end to the last military dictatorship, but they also consolidated democracy in the country (which has remained uninterrupted since 1983).

⁶ The topic was addressed at the beginning of this research paper.

After the dictatorship ended, Argentina found itself in a chaotic situation. There was unemployment, poverty, and a crushing foreign debt. Added to this were the defeat in the Falklands War and the consequences of human rights violations.

It was against this backdrop that Radical Party candidate Raúl Alfonsín assumed the presidency. Raúl Alfonsín emerged as the candidate who was committed to safeguarding the formal framework of democratic institutions, sensitive to the concerns of marginalized groups, and had a clear policy regarding the military. (Mercer, 2005, p.15). A cornerstone of his administration was the investigation and prosecution of the crimes of state terrorism committed by the last military dictatorship.

Carlos Nino, a leading figure in transitional justice in Argentina, stated, “Since the dictators had taken over national institutions, the solution lay in reclaiming those institutions and traditions that had been brutally interrupted.” (Mendez Montenegro, 2023, p. 269).

The return of democracy put an end to military and police interventions in universities, private institutions, and the media, as well as to the control exerted over intellectuals and their work. It also allowed for the return of many who had gone into exile to escape the regime. (Zeitler, 2009, p. 4). Likewise, freedom of expression was promoted and it meant an end of the censorship that had characterized the military governments that preceded it.

X. Raúl Alfonsín’s Government, a Pioneer in Transitional Justice

1. The Truth Commission and the “Nunca Más” Report

Just five days after taking office as President of Argentina, Raúl Alfonsín established CONADEP (Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas) National Commission of Disappeared People), the truth commission tasked with investigating the disappearances and serious crimes committed by the last military dictatorship. The Commission was composed of prominent figures from the fields of science, journalism, culture, and religion. Its president was the renowned writer Ernesto Sábato.

For over nine months, commission officials and volunteers travelled the country and created local delegations in the search for *desaparecidos* (people who were disappeared as a result of state actions) and evidence of state crimes and their perpetrators, the destruction of evidence, and the existence of a clandestine systematic network of detention and torture centers. After initial disbelief and fear, the work of these commission officials and volunteers generated thousands of new testimonials from other victims, morgue and hospital professionals, police, the military, community leaders, religious leaders and other leaders with first-hand knowledge and experiences of the clandestine torture and *centros clandestinos de detención* (detention centers) that operated throughout the country under military rule, in Córdoba, Mendoza,

Santa Fe and Buenos Aires. That was the case of the notorious *Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada* (Naval School of Mechanics or ESMA), in a central location in the city of Buenos Aires, where political detainees were tortured and interrogated before being killed. The work of the CONADEP helped prove that these centres had been part of an entire system of state terrorism (Crenzel 2008a: 63, 2008b: 179-181; Carrington 2014: 87-88).

In its report, CONADEP – which compiled 7,380 case files containing complaints from relatives of the *desaparecidos*, testimonies from individuals released from detention centers, and statements from security forces involved in the repressive actions—estimates that 8,960 people remain victims of enforced disappearance. It also highlights a provisional list of 1,300 people who were seen in one of the clandestine detention centers prior to their final disappearance. (CONADEP, 2006, p. 479 and 481).

The report contains testimonies regarding cases of sexual violence. One of the is transcribed below, which demonstrates that these crimes were used as a means of torture: *"Of the testimonies mentioned, that of Mr. CC (whose full personal information is included in the corresponding court filing) provides particularly illuminating details. The witness learned from his fellow soldiers that there was a constant turnover of pregnant women in that ward and that a carpenter sergeant named Falcón had raped one of them; he was sentenced to ten days in jail for this incident but, after serving his sentence, had resumed his duties as usual".* (CONADEP, 2006, p. 312)

In 1984, at a public ceremony, Ernesto Sábató presented President Alfonsín the final report titled "NUNCA MÁS." The report went on to become a best seller. (By 2007 *Nunca Más* had sold more than half a million copies and had been translated into English, Hebrew, Italian, German and Portuguese.) The evidence collected by CONADEP was the prosecution's key resource in the trials that led to the conviction of the military juntas. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 92)⁷

"Nunca Más" remains the main motto of the human rights movement, and the public refers to this slogan whenever an event occurs in the country that undermines democracy. This important Report was also regarded as a valuable resource by other truth commissions in countries that had faced dictatorships.

⁷ The main controversy surrounding the use of the "Nunca Más" Report as evidence was the suppression of the political affiliations of the survivors and witnesses, revealing a clear attempt to steer the testimony toward a single purpose: to refute the "theory of the two demons," which argued that there was a war in which the ends justified the means, that is, the military defended its "dirty war" through a supposed and improbable equivalence of forces with the "enemy." (Rauschenberg, 2013, p. 3)



Presentation of the “Nunca Más” Report. Source: Unión Cívica Radical.

2. The Trials of the Juntas

As a result of CONADEP’s work, in 1985 nine former members of the military juntas were successfully prosecuted in a high federal civil court in Buenos Aires (the trials of the Juntas) and five others (ex-generals Videla, Massera, Agosti, Viola and Lambruschini) were convicted and sentenced according to criminal law (and not the military code) to prison (life imprisonment) for crimes of aggravated murder, kidnapping and multiple cases of torture. This led to investigations of a large number of people in other courts. International complaints were also taken into account.

The trial of the military juntas was the first case in Latin America in which a civilian court tried former military leaders for the atrocities they had committed. The trial took place at a time when civil society was exerting pressure to uncover what had really happened during a dark period in the country’s history, but the military resisted and sought to prevent the search for truth and justice.

This trial marked an initial success: systematic state violence was recognized as a crime rather than as “excesses” of an internal war. (Gaitan Hairabedian, 2025, p. 2). Mónica Pinto, former Dean of the UBA School of Law, stated at the ceremony held at the National Congress to mark the 25th anniversary of the trial of the military juntas: *“The trial of the commanders, the trial of the juntas—as we all know—was in reality a trial of the arrogance of power. It was a trial in which we- Argentine people- were not only able to see how those who violated the law had to be held accountable—since this is the normal functioning of the law, even though this was our first major case—but this trial also made it possible to establish the truth of what had happened.”* (Pinto, 2010, p. 54).

It is very important to recall the names of those who set a precedent in the history of transitional justice. The judges in the historic Trial of the Military Juntas were: León Arslanián, Andrés D'Alessio, Ricardo Gil Lavedra, Guillermo Ledesma, Jorge Torlasco, and Jorge Valerga Aráoz. The Office of the Prosecutor was

headed by Julio Strassera, Chief Prosecutor, and his deputy was Luis Moreno Ocampo.



Argentine cinema depicted the famous Trial of the Juntas in the film “Argentina, 1985”, which was nominated for an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 2023. Source: Revista Noticias- Perfil.

XI. Setbacks in transitional justice

The historic trial of the military juntas and the government's decision to go on with the prosecutions led to *levantamiento carapintada* (military uprisings). This threatened democracy, but the uprising was quelled by President Alfonsín. People took the streets to condemn the coup attempt and defend democracy. To avoid consequences that would endanger the fledgling democracy, Raúl Alfonsín went to Campo de Mayo to negotiate with the rebels. He later uttered the famous phrase: “*The house is in order; there is no bloodshed.*” The trials of the military juntas were temporarily restricted as a result of the above.

In that context, in 1986 and 1987 hierarchical condemnations were prioritized and two laws were passed: one set a deadline in the presentation of new charges (*‘Punto Final’*, Law 23.492); and another limited the legal responsibility of soldiers who acted under superior orders (*‘Obediencia Debida’*, Law 23.521) except in cases of appropriation of minors. This highly controversial decision, which led to the closure of most of these criminal proceedings, was followed by a decision of the next president – from the opposing Peronist party – that seemed to imply the complete end of trials and punishments. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p.94)

In 1990, President Menem (1989 – 1995-1999), citing national reconciliation and in his capacity as head of the executive branch, granted pardons to the military officers convicted in the Trial of the Juntas, as well as to hundreds of

military personnel, public officials, and some high-ranking members of leftist groups who were facing legal proceedings⁸. During the 1990s, there were no criminal prosecutions, but 'Truth trials' were held in some federal courts to gather information about the facts and responsibilities, although there was no prospect of criminal conviction. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 94).

Notwithstanding the above, both the Argentine human rights movement and the survivors and relatives of the victims persisted in their demands, obtaining arrest warrants and extraditions. It is important to highlight the struggle of the Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo), who continued their search for their grandchildren and worked to reopen criminal cases against the perpetrators of heinous crimes, always with the support of human rights organizations. In 2001, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights – whose decisions must be followed by its members – ruled against the impunity of amnesty laws and pardons in crimes 'against humanity' (ruling '*Barrios Altos*').

The bombings in Buenos Aires of the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the Argentine - Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) community center in 1994 – with the alleged complicity of members of state and police forces – resulted in a large number of dead and wounded civilian victims. As a result, new strong demands for mechanisms of accountability and justice against impunity and power crimes were boosted and victim social movements re-emerged together with their demands for truth and justice with regards to the crimes of the dictatorship. 'Insecurity' and crime fears in Argentina became especially widespread after the mid-1990s (Kessler 2009, 2010: 115-138).

The so-called "truth trials" that began in 1997 were the result of the collective efforts of various relatives of politically disappeared persons and human rights organizations that used the justice system to investigate the victims' whereabouts, even though they were unable to bring the perpetrators to trial. (Rauschenberg, 2023, p. 4)

In 1998, a real loophole in the impunity laws was discovered: the abduction of babies born in captivity was not covered by the provisions of the amnesty" (Filippini, 2011, p. 25). This allowed human rights activists to develop new strategies to pursue criminal proceedings, rather than merely seeking the truth.

Currently, 50 years after the last coup d'état, Javier Milei's administration released a video that recounts the historical narrative and questions the policies adopted in this area since 2003. This is creating new divisions on an issue in which Argentina has been a leader.

XII. An End to Criminal Impunity and the Resumption of Large-Scale Trials

⁸ Ciudad Futura believes that it was not fully explained what exactly was supposed to be reconciled and brought to peace. The adoption of this measure is ethically untenable because it relied on keeping the sentencing decision hidden from the public. (Mercer, 2005, p. 32)

During Néstor Kirchner's administration (2003 – 2007), transitional justice was given new momentum as an agenda item. Congress enacted Law 25.779, which declared the invalidity of '*Punto Final*' (Law 23.492) and '*Obediencia Debida*' (Law 23.521). In 2005, the National Supreme Court upheld Law 25.779 ('Simon' ruling) and, in 2007, it declared the pardons in relation to the military unconstitutional ('Riveros' ruling). Thus, state crimes of the past were considered 'crimes against humanity' and laws protecting or limiting the prosecution of military personnel and accomplices were considered unconstitutional. This did not extend to political crimes committed by armed leftist organizations. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p.95)

The reopening of trials was the result of four factors: the persistence of civil society, the renewal of the Supreme Court with prestigious judges, the absence of a similar veto, and international pressure. This demonstrates that Argentina's transitional justice was an ongoing process. (Gaitan Hairabedian, 2025, p. 5)

Néstor Kirchner developed a strong policy of memory, truth, and justice which was implemented regarding the crimes committed by the military during the last dictatorship. It was supported by the Argentine human rights movement and especially by the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo. On March 24, 2004, he removed the picture of Rafael Videla (the first president of dictatorship) from the gallery of the national military college. It was considered an outstanding action in his policy about human rights. After 2006, spurred on by the executive branch, the trials intensified, bringing an increasing number of perpetrators to justice.

One point worth noting is that, with the resumption of the trials, special attention was also given to crimes of sexual violence. Both men and women were victims of these crimes, but many women were treated as sex slaves. These crimes were considered crimes against humanity because they were committed systematically as a means of torture. This made it possible to prosecute and convict the perpetrators of these crimes.

His policy on this issue was carried forward by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2011-2015). Human rights organizations and victims' movements strongly supported these policies, and many of them received symbolic and material recognition from the government (to the point of becoming – very controversially – key players in politics) as never before. (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 95).

In sum, from 2003 to the end of 2015, a total of 2,821 people (military, police and civilians) were indicted in hundreds of federal investigations involving multiple participants, promoted in several courts throughout the country. Many of these had been initially investigated in the 1980s until amnesty laws and pardons took effect. The current trend is to group federal investigations around clandestine detention centres or common plans (like the Naval School of Mechanics or ESMA, '*Automotores Orletti*', '*Vesuvio*' or the jointly developed plan with dictatorships of Chile and Uruguay: '*Plan Condor*', and others). (Zysman Quiroz, 2017, p. 95)

A large number of the accused are still under investigation; some died of natural causes and a few absconded. Strictly speaking, during the years 2006-2015, 662 of those defendants were convicted on trial and 60 were acquitted. Thirty eight per cent were sentenced to life imprisonment (*'prisión'* or *'reclusión'*) with the potential for parole; 31.5 per cent were sentenced to 3-15 years in prison (ordinary prisons for serious crimes, not military prisons); 27 per cent were sentenced to 16-25 years; 3 per cent to no more than three years; and, for the remainder (0.5 per cent), a range of other sentences. Nearly one third of the convictions were for offenses of illegal deprivation of liberty; a slightly smaller proportion for torture or murder; and the remainder for appropriation of children, sexual violence or other crimes (CELS 2015; Ministerio Público Fiscal de la Nación (MPF) 2015).

XIII. Argentina and Its Valuable Contribution to Transitional Justice

Argentina also accounts for more than a third of the trials for human rights abuses in the world and most of the transitional justice domestic trials (Nino 1997; Sikkink 1996, 2011). The trials of the military juntas in Argentina and his reputation in the fight against impunity were the decisive factors in Luis Moreno Ocampo⁹'s unanimous election as the first Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in April 2003.

The legality and legitimacy of the criminal justice system to protect ordinary citizens was established based on the rule of law. A liberal criminal orientation was maintained, in which the human rights of the accused and the convicted were reestablished while torture of imprisoned people was punished severely (Sozzo, 2014, p. 13).

Policies on memory, truth, and justice placed Argentina at the global forefront of transitional justice. That process was extremely successful, serving as the first example of a domestic prosecution of the perpetrators of the worst human rights violations. The activists and intellectuals who participated in that process became leading figures in the field. These were a series of bold actions taken amid total uncertainty about the process's success. (Mendez, 2023, p. 297 and 298).

Luis Moreno Ocampo, speaking at the event mentioned earlier in this paper at the Argentine National Congress to mark the 25th anniversary of the trial of the military juntas, stated: *"I am very proud of what we accomplished as prosecutors in the trial. What I think we need to understand very clearly is that before there was a trial, there was a very powerful social and political movement. In 1983, there was an intense debate in Argentine society about peace versus justice. Society said it wanted peace, but with justice. It was not only during the presidential campaign, but above all with the passage of Law 23049, which repealed the self-amnesty decree issued by the military government. Representatives and senators from all political parties agreed that Argentina needed to investigate what had happened and could not ignore the past"*. (Moreno Ocampo, 2010, p. 16).

⁹ Luis Moreno Ocampo served as an assistant prosecutor in the Trial of the Military Juntas.

Finally, we want to highlight Professor Chen's words. When she visited Argentina some time ago, she had extensive knowledge of transitional justice in the country. In the interview, she stated that President Raúl Alfonsín faced a difficult term in office but achieved significant results in this area. When she and her colleagues read the books by the Argentine author Carlos Nino, they were very excited. They took his words to heart because they were exactly what they needed to know. (Interview conducted at Professor Jau- hwa Chen on June 18, 2026)

XIV. Families of the victims

1. Paula Salas Triana

“The orphans are victims of state terrorism”



Paula Salas Triana. Source: María Julia Moreyra

“They (military) also stole our identity in the realm of health”

Paula is the daughter of Diego and Elisa, two young medical students and activists¹⁰ who were abruptly arrested, held captive, and remain *desaparecidos* to this day. We interviewed Paula at the former Fifth Police Station in La Plata, the place where her parents were last seen alive. When we arrived, Paula welcomed us with a smile that lit up the place, which today, by court order, is a Memorial Site. With great conviction and dedication, and in honor of her parents' memory, she shared her story with us.

When the coup d'état took place in 1976, Elisa was pregnant. Paula was born on September 22, 1976. She had an older brother. In October of that year, a heavily armed gang broke into their home and took her parents away. The children were left in the house, guarded by an armed man. The military alerted a neighbor about the children. They could either be placed in a *casa cuna*¹¹ or stay with that neighbor.

The neighbor, who was a nurse, entered the home, and since Paula's mother had taught her oldest son how to pronounce his name, the neighbor was able to locate his maternal grandfather, Dr. Triana. Subsequently, both children were handed over to their paternal grandparents. The situation was difficult at the Triana family's home. Their grandmother was in the hospital, and their mother—who was an only child—was *desaparecida*.

The children spent their childhood with the Salas family. Paula recalls: *"Those were difficult times. Our maternal and paternal grandparents' homes were under surveillance, and we received threats. We were under court supervision, and a judge made decisions on our behalf. We were part of a family filled with love, but also with a great deal of pain"*. (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026)

When Paula was six years old, she learned the truth about what had happened. To her, her parents were her grandparents. *"There were situations that weren't normal. They didn't tell me anything until I was six, but at the same time, I couldn't say anything either. It wasn't an easy process. Birthdays were celebrated at party venues, not at our house."* (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026)

Elvira, her maternal grandmother, became a Mother of the Plaza de Mayo. Along with Hebe de Bonafini and other Mothers, she took part in the marches around the plaza, demanding information about the whereabouts of her children. *"Hebe de Bonafini represented all the Mothers. At first, they had a hard time expressing themselves. They didn't see themselves as feminists, but in their actions, they were. They knocked on doors and devised their strategies. They were pioneers—women who led the Southern Cone Movement."* (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026).

They saw her grandmother Elvira (her husband had passed away when Paula was 8 years old), but since there wasn't a close relationship between the Triana

¹⁰ They had met at the Nuestra Señora de las Victorias Parish in La Plata, where there were also people who were *desaparecidos*.

¹¹ A Casa Cuna is a historic institution or foundation dedicated to receiving, housing, and caring for young children who are orphans or who have been abandoned or are in vulnerable situations.

and Salas families, they didn't have such a close bond with Elvira during their childhood. In addition, she was constantly threatened, and due to a series of incidents, she was unable to attend important events in her grandchildren's lives, such as her brother's First Communion.

This situation changed in the 1990s, when her brother, then a teenager, filed for emancipation, joined the HIJOS group, and went to live with his grandmother Elvira. Paula said, *"The 1990s were complicated years. The president at the time granted amnesty to those who committed crimes against humanity, in addition to the Full Stop Law (Ley de Punto Final) and the Due Obedience Law (Ley de Obediencia Debida)."*

Paula secretly attended HIJOS meetings. She felt it wasn't the right time for her to join the organization. She went on with her life. She attended university, got married, and had her first daughter. *"Pregnancy brought me closer to my mom and my grandmother Elvira. I had a problem during that time, and my grandmother told me that the same thing had happened to my mother. We started having really lovely conversations and developed new bonds."* (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026).

In 2003, her paternal grandfather passed away. The void left by their grandfather's death led Paula and her brother to piece together their family history as adults. She learned that the last place their parents were seen alive was the former Fifth Police Station in La Plata. Their mother had mastitis (she was breastfeeding Paula at the time of her arrest) and did not receive medical care.

"Rebuilding has been a roadmap throughout our lives." (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026). When her second child was born, her paternal grandmother died. That's when she felt the pain of loss. But she also felt a sense of liberation. She began her activism with HIJOS, on the Human Rights committee.

"Thanks to Néstor Kirchner, the trials have resumed (funds have been allocated to continue them). Certain portraits of military officers were taken down at the ESMA. Néstor offered an apology on behalf of the State. My philosophy of life is to be a Peronist. The trials bring us a sense of relief. Full economic reparations haven't been made. There's no price. The military put a price on our parents' lives." (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026)

Paula decided to raise her children in joy and love. She acknowledged that there are difficult times, but she chooses to get through them by honoring the memory of her parents, who fought for a better world and wanted their children to carry on that legacy. *"Forgetting is a way of making people disappear."* (Interview conducted on August 21, 2026)

Today, she carries on that legacy by working to keep their memory alive at the Undersecretariat for Human Rights of the Province of Buenos Aires. In the very same place where her parents were detained and last seen, she carries out her work to promote human rights with commitment and conviction.

She gave her testimony at the trials that resumed in 2003. When her son heard her testimony, he realized that the place he used to go to when he was little was where his mother worked and where his grandparents had been detained. He saw his mother as a little girl.

The younger generations formed a network called NIETES. They are the children of the children. This is a group of young people who are activists, but whose history differs from that of their parents.

Our last question for Paula was this: What would you say to your parents if they were here? Her answer was incredibly moving: *“I’d ask them if they’re proud of me.”*

2. Ana María García Muñitis

“There will always be someone fighting for human rights”



Ana María García Muñitis at “Rafael Hernández” National High School. Source: María Julia Moreyra

Ana María García Muñitis is the niece of two men *desaparecidos* during the last military dictatorship. She is the principal of the “Rafael Hernández” National High School in La Plata, a high school that is highly regarded nationwide.

A brother and a brother-in-law of Ana María’s mother were kidnapped during the last military dictatorship. This had a profound impact on the family, as her aunt and cousins decided to go into exile, and Ana María’s grandmother became one of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo.

Her grandmother was a housewife with six children and led a frugal life. But when her son and son-in-law were kidnapped, she began fighting to find out their whereabouts. She took part in the first marches of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in San Martín Square in La Plata and also traveled to Buenos Aires to join other Mothers in their struggle. *“The Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo made a difference in the fight for human rights. I never heard a single word of anger or vengeance from them.”* (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026).

From childhood, Ana María experienced the consequences of the dictatorship: repeated moves, involvement in political activism. She was always by her grandmother’s side. Her father was a doctor and assisted with the deliveries of women who were in hiding. He also provided medical care to men who were in this vulnerable situation. For her, these events were routine.

In the interview, Ana María said: *“I remember those difficult times. Many people distanced themselves from my family. I am grateful to those who stood by us. My father always prioritized the state. For him, the state was the guarantor of democracy.”* (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026).

Her childhood and adolescence unfolded as described above. She was always with her family and cherished the memory of her uncles, whom she remembers with admiration for being progressive and for wanting to change not only their country but also the world. She highlighted that it was admirable to see them fight for their ideals.

In the interview, she also stated that while the Mothers were and are the symbol of the struggle, in her case, the role of her maternal grandfather is also significant. He was an activist seeking information on the whereabouts of his son and son-in-law, and he also testified in the truth trials.

“The return to democracy coincided with my entry into college. I went on defending democracy and the public sphere. I belong to the generation of young men who went to fight in the Falklands. I became an activist for human rights, a commitment that continues to this day”. (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026).

Ana María highlights President Raúl Alfonsín—whom she had met before he became president due to his involvement in human rights issues—for his undisputed achievements in the area of transitional justice. CONADEP and the Trial of the Military Juntas allowed the public to learn what had happened in Argentina during a period of great darkness. Subsequently, there were many

tensions, and under President Menem, the country experienced setbacks in this area until 2003.

“During the administrations of Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, trials resumed, the universal issue of human rights was prioritized, and the topic gained traction in society, particularly among young people. Today, the struggle to defend human rights continues. What is happening today is terrible. It pains us that the national government is questioning the struggle of those who seek to learn the whereabouts of their loved ones. Human rights are universal; they are not limited to political activists. There must be continuity on this issue, without any breaks.” (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026).

Thanks to the testimony given during the trials, Ana María's family learned that one of her uncles had been taken to Campo de Mayo, where he was killed. Her other uncle was murdered on one of the “death flights.” His remains were never recovered.

Given her work as Director of the Colegio Nacional, we asked Ana María about the younger generations. She gave us the following response: *“Teenagers want to know what happened in our country. Their parents were born into a democracy. Democracy is not up for debate. There must be no doubt that what happened in the 1970s can never happen again. There are topics that are discussed within families. For example, teenagers are very interested in what happened on the Night of the Pencils.”* (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026).

There are two dates marked on the calendar of the Colegio Nacional and the National University of La Plata: March 24 (National Day of Remembrance for Truth and Justice) and September 16 (High School Students' Rights Day). In La Plata (Argentina), ten young student activists, aged 16 to 18, were demanding the reinstatement of the high school student bus pass, a benefit that had been suspended. Because of their social commitment and political involvement, the dictatorship considered them dangerous. On September 16, 1976, they were taken to clandestine detention centers, where they were tortured. Six of them remain *desaparecidos*. In 2026, special recognition was given to some of the survivors of the Night of the Pencils (50 years after that tragic event).

Ana María emphasizes: *“We must remember and keep the memory alive so that what Argentina experienced under the last dictatorship never happens again. This must be passed down from generation to generation.”* (Interview conducted on August 25, 2026). Being in charge of the Colegio Nacional allows her to continue her activism. The school has spaces dedicated to remembrance. The school's library is named “Madres de Plaza de Mayo.” One of the Mothers, Hebe De Bonafini, donated a tile from Plaza de Mayo, which is now on display at the school. One of the school's students died in the Falklands War, and the school also pays tribute to the Heroes of that conflict.

There is also a mural depicting “The Night of the Pencils,” created by fine arts students, and in the schoolyard there is a structure commemorating this event, made from pieces of school desks and metal. Finally, in the same space stands

a lemon tree dedicated to a granddaughter who is still *desaparecida*. Her grandmother, Chicha Mariani, fought her entire life to find her and died without ever being able to reunite with her.

XV. Comparative analysis

1. Transitional Justice in Argentina and Taiwan

In Argentina, as this paper has shown, transitional justice took place following the last military dictatorship. The prominent Argentine scholar Emilio Crenzel states that Argentina serves as a global model in this area. (Interview conducted on July 27, 2026)

“The country did everything it could in the area of transitional justice. The Truth Commission has served as a model for other commissions around the world. The Trial of the Military Juntas restored the criminal justice system for the prosecution of human rights violations. Victims received both financial and symbolic reparations. Those accused were barred from holding public office. The topic of “Memory, Truth, and Justice” was included in the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools throughout the country (National Education Law 26206), and memorial sites were established”. (Interview conducted on July 27, 2026)

In the arena of transitional justice, there have been significant milestones and setbacks (impunity laws, governments that sought to silence and/or forget); the issue was vigorously revisited in 2003, and today the government has adopted a denialist stance regarding the tragedy that occurred in the country during the last military dictatorship. As Emilio Crenzel has pointed out: *“Thanks to Raúl Alfonsín, the Trial of the Military Juntas took place and CONADEP was established. For their part, Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner played a central role in the resumption of the trials and the establishment of sites of memory. As for the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, their actions were significant because they represented a stand against the dictatorial regime.”* (Interview conducted on July 27, 2026). Another important milestone was the creation of the Genetic Bank during Raúl Alfonsín’s administration, spearheaded by the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, which has enabled many grandchildren to reclaim their identity.

“Today, the national government’s narrative is one of denial. It claims that things did not happen the way they actually did. This instills great fear in the victims, as they worry that something similar could happen again. Traumatic experiences are relived. Something they thought they had overcome is brought back to life”. (Interview with the psychologist Gabriela Ponthot on August 7, 2026).

An important public policy implemented by the province of Buenos Aires regarding this issue is the “Support Team for Victims”. Following Jorge Julio

López¹²'s second disappearance, the Support Team for Victims of State Terrorism "Dr. Silvia Bleichmar" was established in the province of Buenos Aires in 2012 under the Undersecretariat for Human Rights. Previously, this support had been provided by human rights organizations.

The Team supports victims and survivors in the context of the trials—before, during, and after the dictatorship. They do not provide assistance and coordinate their activities with the former Fifth Police Station of La Plata.

"Collective recognition is essential for mental health. When that recognition is lacking, that sense of helplessness carries over into other situations. Symbolic reparation means that the person can find meaning in what happened to them and continue the struggle." (Interview with Gabriela Ponthot on August 7, 2026).

Gabriela Ponthot is a psychologist and a member of this team. In the interview we conducted with her, she stated: *"We consider the specific nature of this type of trauma, which is different from other traumas. Since these are irreparable issues—it's not possible to return to the previous state—we work extensively with the symbolic. Providing support as a government official is not the same as doing so as a professional in my private practice."* (Interview conducted on August 7, 2026).

The following paragraphs are remarks made by psychologist Gabriela Ponthot during an interview conducted on August 7, 2026, at the Undersecretariat for Human Rights of the Province of Buenos Aires.

"State recognition is essential for reparations. There is no other effective way to achieve this except through the State, which is the guarantor. Conditions must be created to restore dignity to the victims".

"The passage of time creates greater distance. This is not the case for the victims, their children, and their grandchildren. It is harder for those who were not victims or their relatives to understand the issue. That is why the Undersecretariat has various programs to raise awareness. I recognize that most students do become aware of the issue. I recalled that in one instance, a student asked, "Is this real? Did this really happen? If there were people who committed these crimes, they must be in jail."

"In the trials currently underway, there have been calls for the children to be recognized as victims. In addition, many of the defendants are passing away. Once they are no longer alive, there will be truth trials. It happened in León Suárez some months ago".

¹² Jorge Julio López was a victim of the last military dictatorship. He survived, and when the trials resumed, he wanted to testify as a witness in the trial for crimes against humanity against police officer Miguel Etchecolatz. After testifying, and one day before a guilty verdict was handed down, on September 18, 2006, he disappeared, and to this day, no one knows what happened to him.



Support Team for Victims of State Terrorism¹³

In the case of Taiwan, the transitional justice process has not yet taken place. As described earlier in this article, it was the administration of President Tsai Ing-wen that took the most action to address this issue. As mentioned Yao, Chia-wen, those efforts were not sufficient to ensure that the victims received the justice they deserve or to fulfill all the requirements necessary for the country to achieve genuine transitional justice.

“When the democratic transition took place, the Constitution was amended, but the structure remained the same. The KMT continues to wield a great deal of power. It exercises tight control over the economy and the media. It holds a majority in the Legislative Yuan and has close ties to China”. (Interview conducted at Professor Jau-hwa Chen on June 18, 2026)

The aforementioned professor also stated that the way of transition plays a vital role but it is very hard for Taiwan. In one of her articles where she refers to The Concluding Report of Taiwan’s Transitional Justice Commission, she mentions: *“Victims want the government to take their claims seriously and alter the entire transitional justice system accordingly. Making an investigation is an intrinsic aspect of transitional justice, together with legal prosecution, truth – telling, compensation, and institutional transformation, would restore victim’s dignity and reduce their sense of injustice and impotence. If the overall goal of transitional justice is to create a just society in the long run, the commission’s activities should*

¹³ Special thanks to the members of this team for the interview and the photo they sent.

be viewed as building bricks of transitional justice. Victims' allegations against offenders are thus critical to the process of truth – telling, investigation, prosecution, restitution, and so on; they also help victims overcome a sense of unfairness. Some allegations may be false or only partially true. To vindicate victims, all allegations should be documented, examined, and compared to other available evidence". (Chen, Jaw- hwa, 2026, p.167).

"Unlike in Argentina, no perpetrators were brought to trial in Taiwan. Many are outside the country; others died". (Interview conducted at Professor Shiau- chi Shen on July 8, 2026). When this happens, a situation of structural impunity arises, leading to profound social, psychological, and legal consequences for the community. Victims and their families are left without legal protection, as the State does not recognize the harm they have suffered, and the unresolved trauma is passed down from generation to generation.

Finally, Professor Shiau- chi Sen in the interviewed mentioned above, stated: *"Taiwan is different from Argentina, because during the years of martial law, the victims were tried by military courts. The judges made the rulings, and the final verdict was handed down by the President of Taiwan. He, who wielded immense power, could agree or disagree. The 228 Incident is more similiar to what happened in Argentina where people did not go to any military trial. An important number of these victims are still desaparecidas. There is no precise data".*

It is very important for the victims, survivors, their families and societies that the government apologize for the crimes committed. These apologies also show that governments are committed to preventing these tragedies from happening again. In Taiwan, President Tsai Ing-wen did so (as it was mentioned earlier in this paper) and in Argentina, President Néstor Kirchner stated in 2004: *"We must call things by their proper names (...) I am here to ask for forgiveness on behalf of the national government for the shame of having remained silent for 20 years of democracy about so many atrocities". (Clarín, 2004).*

2. The victims

In both Taiwan and Argentina, during the authoritarian regimes, victims suffered flagrant violations of their human rights. They were victims of sexual crimes, physically and psychologically tortured, murdered, forcibly disappeared, and deprived of their liberty without cause, among other abuses.

In Taiwan during the White Terror, civilians who were arrested were tried by military tribunals. In Argentina, this did not happen. They were not subjected to any kind of trial. Many were killed outright, while others could survive or are *desaparecidos*.

The last military dictatorship in Argentina committed the crime of child abduction, targeting both children who lived with their parents at the time of their capture and those born in captivity. *"Stripped of their identity and torn from their families, the disappeared children are—and will remain for a long time—a deep, open wound*

in our society. They represent an attack on the defenseless, the vulnerable, and the innocent, and a new form of torment has been created." (CONADEP, 2006, p. 303). (This topic is discussed in detail in the section "Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo").

As for who the victims were in Argentina, *"anything was possible: from people advocating for a social revolution to sensitive teenagers who went to shantytowns to help their residents. Everyone was caught up in the roundup: union leaders fighting for better wages, young people who had been members of a student organization, journalists who were not supporters of the dictatorship, psychologists and sociologists because they belonged to "suspicious" professions, and nuns and priests who had brought the teachings of Christ to the slums. And friends of any of them. Most of them are innocent".* (CONADEP, 2006, p. 13).

The victims of the White Terror in Taiwan (1947–1992) were primarily political dissidents, intellectuals, the social elite, and anyone perceived as a threat to or opponent of the authoritarian, single-party Kuomintang (KMT) regime led by Chiang Kai-shek. There were people who were executed for knowing the wrong person, reading the wrong document, or openly advocating for political change. (Shattuck, 2019, p. 3)

The return to democracy in both countries has allowed victims, survivors, and family members to speak out about what happened, without fear of being persecuted again. Their testimonies are of great importance for keeping the memory alive.

In Argentina, many of them have been able to give testimony in the trials that have taken place in the country. Their testimonies have been crucial in securing the conviction of the perpetrators for crimes against humanity. In Taiwan, no perpetrators of the crimes committed during the White Terror have been brought to trial.

We would like to emphasize that the people we interviewed for this research demonstrated great strength and resilience when speaking about a topic so sensitive to their feelings. In most cases, they faced—and continue to face—adversity with a smile.

In this paper and section, we wish to highlight the figure of Nylon Cheng, who sacrificed the most precious thing he had—his life—in defense of freedom of expression in Taiwan. His legacy is carried on today by his wife, his daughter, the members of the foundation that bears his name, and a segment of society that supports his advocacy for freedom of expression.

In Argentina, we honor the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo for their courage in standing up to the dictators and for searching with all their might for their children and grandchildren, with unwavering perseverance. Most of them passed away, but their legacy lives on through their children and grandchildren and in the majority of society, which has always shown them support.

A. Nylon Cheng and 100 % freedom of speech

"I'd also say thank you, because if not for you, Taiwan wouldn't be this good now,"

Yeh Chu-lan (Nylon's wife)



Picture of Nylon Cheng taken at Nylon Cheng Liberty Foundation and Memorial Museum

In 1984, three years before martial law was lifted in Taiwan, the journalist Nylon Cheng founded the “Tangwai” (outside – the- party) magazine Freedom Era Weekly in order to fight for 100 % Freedom of Speech. Despite suppression from the then-Kuomintang (KMT) government, Freedom Era Weekly served as a vital platform for dissent, persistently advocating for political freedom and free speech, and published a total of 302 issues over five years and eight months. (Focus Taiwan, 2024)

After organizing several political events, Nylon Cheng published on December 10, 1988 a "Draft of the Republic of Taiwan Constitution" written by pro-independence advocate Koh Se-kai, which prompted a reaction from the KMT. The Republic of China (ROC, still Taiwan's official name) may have democratized in the 1990s, but in 1989 it still had strict anti-secession laws, which Nylon Cheng sought to challenge. (Horton, 2023)

The aforementioned publication led to him being notified of an arrest warrant. He barricaded himself in his office, declaring that the KMT would never capture him alive. And so, on April 7, 1989, Nylon set himself on fire using the stored gasoline in his office.

His sacrifice contributed to the successive repeal of laws restricting free speech, and more than thirty years after his passing, Taiwan was ranked 12th among 165 jurisdictions worldwide and first in Asia in the 2023 Human Freedom Index. (Focus Taiwan, 2024).

The former headquarters of the weekly newspaper "Freedom Era Weekly" became the Nylon Cheng Liberty Foundation and Memorial Museum in 1999, and inside, charred remnants of objects from the past are preserved, such as the folding bed on which he slept during the 71 days he spent in voluntary confinement.

Her daughter, Cheng Chu-Mei along with a group of volunteers dedicated to preserving Nylon's legacy, welcomes local and international visitors, reaffirming the importance of freedom of expression and how Nylon's work serves as a pillar of Taiwanese democracy. *"Following Nylon's death, those of us who carry on his legacy aim to bridge the past and the present and to raise awareness of Taiwan's situation not only locally but also globally".* (Interview conducted at the Nylon Cheng Liberty Foundation and Memorial Museum on May 20, 2026)

On December 22, 2016, the Executive Yuan approved the designation of April 7 as Freedom of Speech Day in the Republic of China (Taiwan), coinciding with the anniversary of Nylon Cheng's death. This day is a national holiday in Taiwan since 2017.

"Nylon's legacy knows no borders. Through literature, music, and painting, people express their feelings about Nylon's personal story. The Foundation also welcomes visits from students and their teachers, who have the opportunity to learn about Nylon's struggle and contributions to democracy in Taiwan. (Interview conducted at the Nylon Cheng Liberty Foundation and Memorial Museum on May 20, 2026)

Victims and survivors of the "White Terror," scholars, and human rights advocates have spoken out about Nylon's work and his sacrifice in the pursuit of freedom of expression. Among them, this research paper transcribes the words of Fred Him San-Chin, a victim of Taiwan's authoritarian period and author of "Facing the Calamity": *"As the 100% freedom of speech fighter, Nylon Cheng, who sacrificed his life by burning himself when the police force came for the arrest in 1989, said*

to his follower before he set fire on himself: "I have done my part and the rest is your responsibility". Every time we heard the young generation repeating it, we felt the kind of satisfaction and the worthiness in sacrificing of our time to accompany them and tell them our stories" (Chin, 2023, p. 236).

B. Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo)

"In Argentina, the madwomen of Plaza de Mayo will be an example of mental health because they refused to forget in times of compulsory amnesia".

Eduardo Galeano, Uruguayan writer



Picture of Mothers of Plaza de Mayo – Source: Memoria Abierta Archives

Mothers of Plaza de Mayo was founded in April 1977. After months of fruitless individual efforts to report the disappearances and search for their detained-disappeared sons and daughters, a group of mothers began gathering in Plaza de Mayo and in churches to meet, share information, and devise strategies for collective action and advocacy. Thus, the initial fourteen were joined by an ever-growing number of other women—and men—who felt an urgent need to pool their strength and resources in the search (Website Memoria Abierta)

The campaign for the *desaparecidos* became public and took on a political dimension through the First March of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, held in silence in front of the seat of government in April 1977, and through the first open

letter published in October of that year, in which they demanded to know the truth about the disappeared. (Crenzel, 2008, p. 44)

In the midst of the dictatorship, it was very difficult for the mothers and grandmothers to continue their search, but they never showed any fear. Their children and grandchildren kept them steadfast in their struggle. They were always active in the search for their children and grandchildren, organizing marches, speaking out in Argentina, and giving interviews to international media to raise awareness about what was happening in the country. They also traveled to various European countries and made presentations to the UN and the OAS, always receiving expressions of solidarity.

In December 1977, three Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo were kidnapped and disappeared. Despite the pain this caused, the Mothers continued their struggle, speaking out and demanding justice at the national and international levels, alongside other human rights organizations.

Over the course of 50 years of struggle, drawing on their profound pain as mothers, they established themselves as a major political force in the public sphere—one that is indispensable and deeply necessary for the fight to defend and expand rights. (Website Memoria Abierta). They keep the memory alive so that the horrors of the past are not forgotten and since it is pivotal that history does not repeat itself.

At first, the Mothers and Grandmothers were part of the same organization, but they later split off because the Grandmothers, in addition to demanding justice for their children, were searching for their grandchildren, who had been born while their mothers were in captivity. The search for the babies had to be treated differently from the search for adults *desaparecidos*. Certain specific actions, tasks and dynamics were required. That is how the group of women -Madres who were searching for their grandchildren—began holding their own meetings in cafes or in their homes to develop strategies for reporting the disappearances and searching for their grandchildren, who were believed to have been born in captivity. (Laino Sanchis, 2023, p. 342). At the same time, information was leaking out—often from members of the Catholic Church—admitting that these children were “given away” or “placed” with “good families.” Some rumors even suggested that children were being sold abroad. (Laino Sanchis, 2023, p. 344)¹⁴

The Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo Civil Association is currently one of the most widely recognized Argentine human rights organizations both nationally and internationally. Above all, it is the leading voice in the struggle to reunite families with their loved ones—people who were abducted as children or newborns by the

¹⁴ The crime of child abduction involved military and security forces personnel, as well as numerous civilians and civilian organizations. Doctors, midwives, judges, and minority institutions were involved to varying degrees and played a key role in the commission of the crime. (Laino Sanchis, 2022, p. 189)

armed forces and security forces during the era of state terrorism. (Laino Sanchis, 2023, p. 339).

22 October 1977 is the most widely accepted date for the founding of the Association. (Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, 2007). In 2004, the Argentine National Congress, through Law 26001, “in commemoration of the beginning of the struggle undertaken by the Abuelas of Plaza de Mayo,” designated October 22 as National Day for the Right to Identity.

As the grandmothers searched for their grandchildren, interdisciplinary teams (comprising lawyers, psychologists, geneticists, and doctors) were formed to contribute their knowledge and expertise to the search for and identification of the children *desaparecidos* and their return to their biological families.

Thanks to the struggle of the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, many grandchildren (now adults) were able to reclaim their identity and be reunited with their biological families (As of the date of this paper, 140 people have regained their identity). Likewise, thanks to the efforts of the Grandmothers, various policies were promoted and public agencies were created, such as the National Genetic Data Bank (established in 1987), which is indispensable for identifying, through genetic testing, those presumed to be the children of disappeared persons; the National Commission for the Right to Identity (established in 1992), which conducts investigations to locate individuals who were abducted during the last dictatorship; and the Specialized Unit for Cases of Child Abduction during State Terrorism (UFICANTE, established in 2012), which investigates, monitors, and advises prosecutors’ offices in all cases of abduction as well as in legal proceedings for the restoration of identity. (Laino Sanchis, 2022, p. 200 and 201)

3. Perpetrators of crimes against humanity

The KMT in Taiwan and the military forces of the self-proclaimed National Reorganization Process in Argentina committed flagrant human rights violations, as previously mentioned. The crimes committed by both authoritarian regimes are crimes against humanity. What characterizes these crimes is that they constitute a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population. They shake the very conscience of humanity. (Website Amnistía Internacional).

One of the major achievements in the area of transitional justice in Argentina was the Trial of the Juntas, in which five of the nine members of the juntas were convicted of carrying out a systematic plan of extermination during the civil-military dictatorship beginning on March 24, 1976. (Website Argentina.gob.ar). After a period of setbacks, trials against those who committed crimes against humanity resumed in 2003 and continue to this day.

The members of CONADEP were always motivated in their work by the pursuit of truth and justice. But as noted in the Preface to the “Nunca Más” Report, *“in the course of their investigations they were insulted and threatened by those who committed the crimes—people who, far from repenting, once again invoked the justifications of the “dirty war,” the salvation of the homeland, and its Western and Christian values”*. (CONADEP, 2006, p. 14).

“The perpetrators did not apologize and did not express remorse for what they did. They have never cooperated by explaining what happened to the *desaparecidos*, nor have they provided any clues as to their whereabouts”. (Interview with Emilio Crenzel on July 27, 2026).

As regards Taiwan, the perpetrators' attitude is similar in that they do not acknowledge or apologize for the crimes they have committed. *“Taiwan finds itself in an unusual circumstance since the Kuomintang regime’s henchmen have not been brought to justice and continue to operate with impunity. Offenders feel no regret for the torture and human rights violations they have previously committed against victims”*. (Chen, Jau-hwa, 2026, p. 164 and 166).

Based on interviews conducted in both Taiwan and Argentina, and primarily on the analysis carried out by Gabriela Ponthot, a psychologist, and member of the Support Team for Victims of State Terrorism (Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina), it has been concluded that when perpetrators do not apologize for the harm they caused their victims, the impact is profound and complex. This leads to a sense of helplessness that is passed down from generation to generation.

4. Preservation of unjust sites. Today, sites of historical memory

One issue that Taiwan and Argentina have considered to be of the utmost importance is the preservation of the sites where human rights violations were committed by the authorities of both authoritarian regimes. Today, these are sites of historical memory, where visitors can gain an appreciation for the suffering endured by the victims and reflect on the importance of defending democracy and its values. Events such as those that occurred in Argentina and Taiwan must never happen again. We must learn from the mistakes of the past so that history does not repeat itself.

Although there are several sites dedicated to historical memory in both countries, in this article we focus on the National Human Rights Museum in Taipei (Taiwan) and the former Fifth Police Station in the city of La Plata (Argentina), since interviews with victims, survivors, and some family members of victims were conducted at both locations.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, in December 2017, the Legislative Yuan passed the “Act on Promoting Transitional Justice”, which explicitly aims to achieve 3 of the 5 objectives. One of these objectives is “*to remove authoritarian symbols and preserve the sites of injustices*”.

As in parts of Latin America, the drive to democratisation in Taiwan, active since the late 1980s, sees museums utilized to support tangible changes to the justice system and to support citizens to understand their recent history and why and how Taiwan can move forward in ways that are just and transparent. It feels as though there is an explicit political role for museums in Taiwan in a way that simply doesn't exist in many other parts of the world. (Chin, 2023, p.292)

The National Human Rights Museum in Taipei was home to the Military Justice Academy as well as the National Military Xindian Fuxing Camp (historical injustice

site), where prisoners were detained and tried. *“With human rights as its core value, this Museum has devoted itself to recover and represent the injustice sites since its inception in 2018. These injustice sites have been transformed into spaces that allow for continuous dialogue and reflection. It is an essential mission for the promotion of transitional justice by the National Human Rights Museum”*. (The Historical Scenarios of the White Terror in Taiwan, 2021).

The Historical Scenarios of the White Terror in Taiwan is an exhibition which is arranged in three spaces. Barrack I is an introduction to the authoritarian regime and there is the unit of “oppression and resistance”. Barrack II shows various categories of the injustice sites and all restrictions in their fundamental rights suffered by political prisoners. Finally, Barrack III exhibits the practical works of transitional justice.

At this important museum, where we interviewed Mr. Fred on May 28, 2026, he welcomes all those who wish to learn about a dark period in Taiwan’s history, saying that it is the most important museum in the country related to the negative histories of the past decades. He also expresses his hope that in the very near future transitional justice will be achieved in this country.



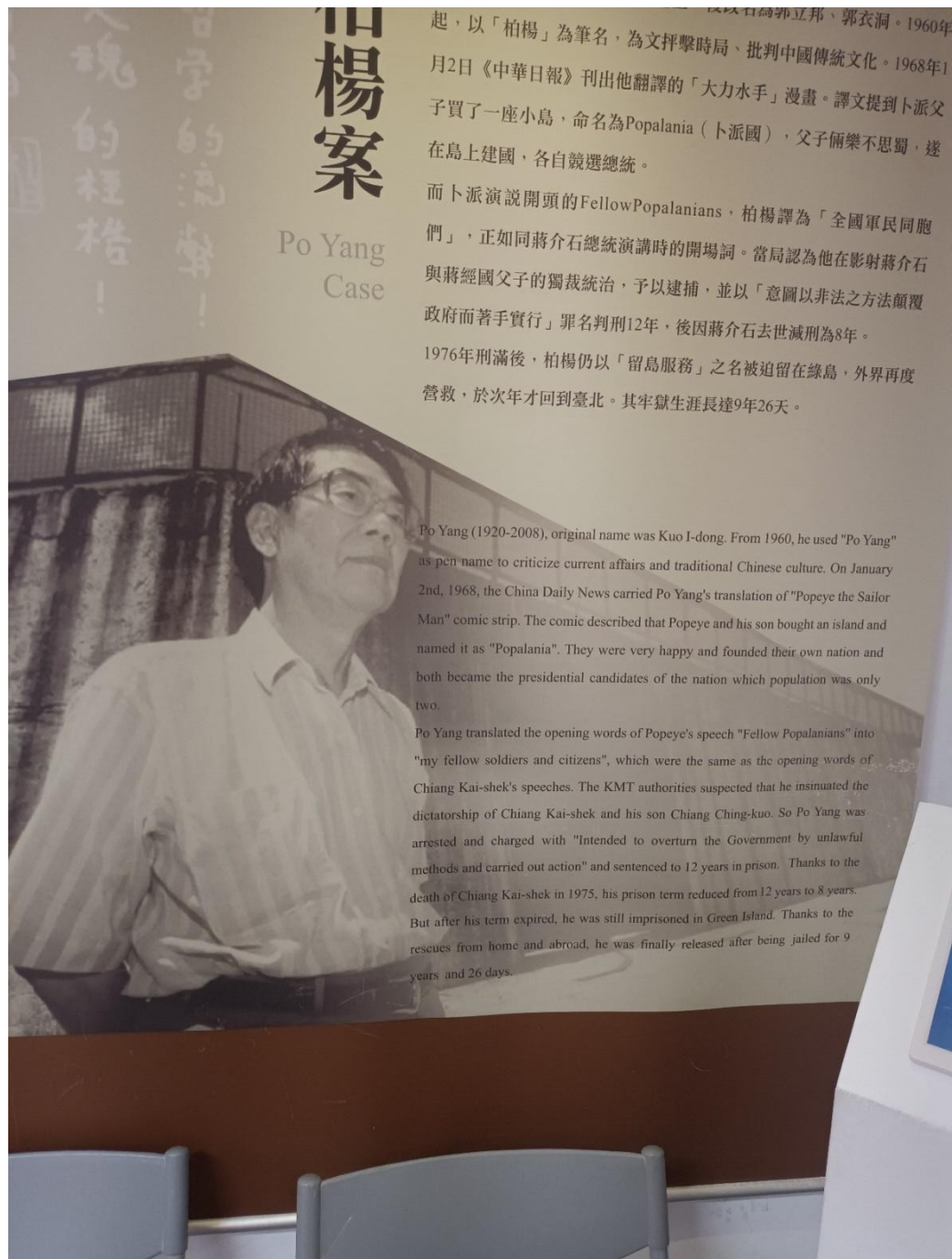
Female Victims. Source: María Julia Moreyra



National Human Rights Museum. Source: María Julia Moreyra



Memorial at National Human Rights Museum. Source: María Julia Moreyra



Po Yang Case. Source: María Julia Moreyra



Military Court. Source: María Julia Moreyra

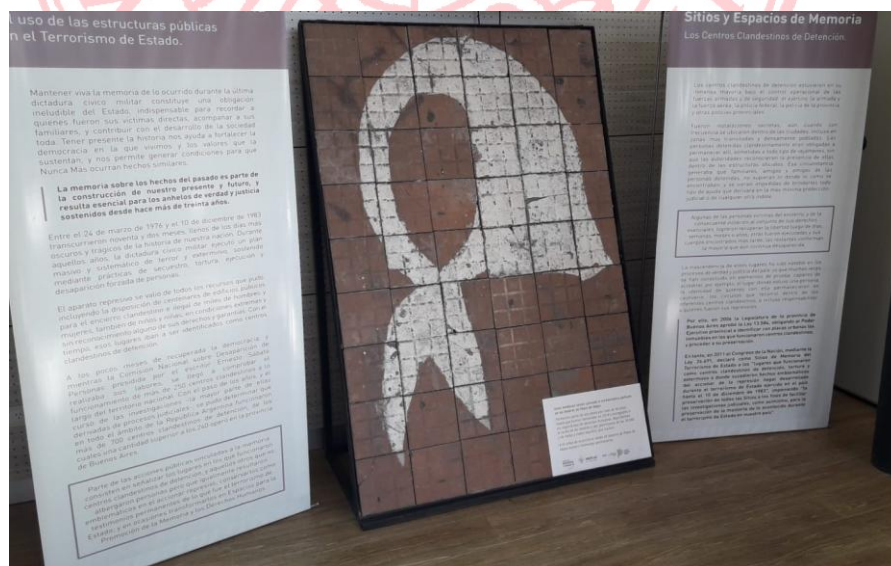
National Law 26,691 in Argentina, enacted in 2011, established that former clandestine detention centers should be converted into sites of memory. These spaces are managed through public policies and the efforts of human rights organizations.

The former 5th Police Station in La Plata now formally serves as a Space for Remembrance and the Promotion of Human Rights, having once been a clandestine detention center during the last civil-military dictatorship. We visited this important site on July 30, 2026, and it was there that we interviewed Paula Salas Triana, who shared a moving account of her life story with us. (See the whole interview at pages 31 to 34)

It served as a clandestine detention center and maternity ward between 1976 and 1978. Today, it is administered by the Undersecretariat for Human Rights of the Province of Buenos Aires, which organizes educational guided tours, museum exhibitions, and cultural and educational activities in collaboration with the La Plata chapter of the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo.



Campaña “Plantar Memoria” (Campaign “Planting Memory”). Source: María Julia Moreyra

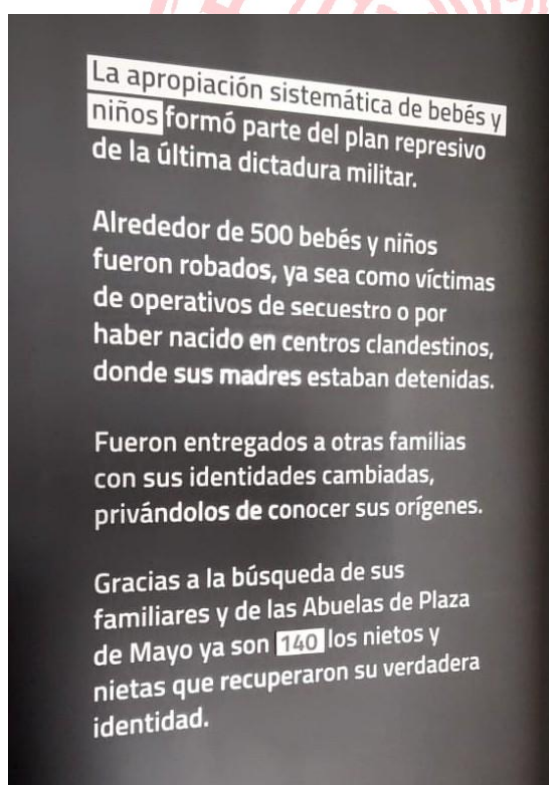


Tile featuring the symbol of the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo.

Source: María Julia Moreyra

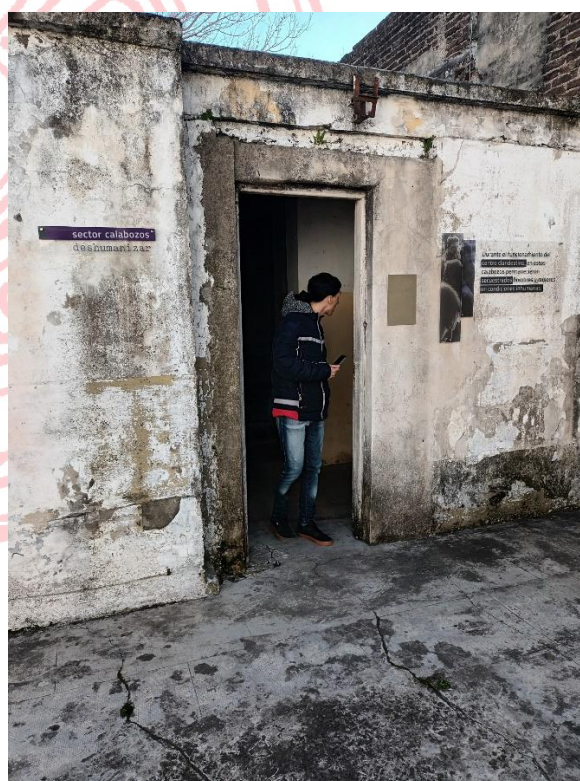


Portrait of One of the Victims of State Terrorism. Source: María Julia Moreyra



Systematic Abduction of Infants and Children.

Source: María Julia Moreyra



Calabozos Sector.

Source: María Julia Moreyra

5.The stance of society and especially of the younger generations

At this point, a comparison should be made between Taiwan and Argentina. As mentioned throughout this paper, Taiwan has not undergone a transitional justice process. Given that the KMT—the party that instituted the White Terror—continues to hold power in Taiwan, opinions are divided on the subject of this research.

“The younger generation wants transitional justice. They don’t know the details, but they’re in agreement. The hope is that the younger generation of the KMT recognizes what was done by the party. But society is divided. With society divided, there is no leader who enjoys majority support. Former President Tsai Ing-wen did research about the past. She did a lot for the victims and their families, but when she wanted to go after the perpetrators, the KMT and part of the society said it was for political reasons”. (Interview conducted at Professor Shiau- chi Shen on July 8, 2026).

Scholars with expertise in human rights in Taiwan have written numerous books and articles highlighting the importance of transitional justice. A clear example is Professor Chen, who, in one of her articles, conducted a comprehensive analysis of the events that took place during the White Terror and the approaches adopted in the country upon the restoration of democracy. Regarding her article, Professor Chen notes: *“It aims to help readers reconsider the future of Taiwan’s transitional justice”.* (Chen, 2026, p. 165)

“Letting the young generation to have the general knowledge of the past, I firmly believed that they could be able to find the right paths or destinies for their future to seek mutual trust in working together with others in conforming to a common interest in the promotion of Human Rights issues and to consolidate a mutual workforce for a peaceful environment to assure a more harmonious and free democracy on the soil they are standing”. (Chin, 2023, p. 235)

In Argentina, as noted earlier, transitional justice began immediately upon the return to democracy. *“Argentine society supports Memory, Truth, and Justice. It is a topic of great interest, especially for younger generations, who visit memorial sites every year. Every March 24 (the day on which Memory is commemorated), there are large demonstrations throughout the country”.* (Interview with Emilio Crenzel on July 27, 2026)

In interviews with Gabriela Ponthot, Paula Salas Triana, and Ana María García Muñitis, all three agree that younger generations are interested in the topic, which is part of the country's history and culture. The topic serves as a rallying point for younger generations because of the importance of protecting and defending human rights.

Conclusion

This study thoroughly examined the transitions to democracy in Taiwan and Argentina following authoritarian periods marked by flagrant human rights violations and, consequently, crimes against humanity. Both regimes seized

control of the state, dominated the media, and persecuted journalists who defended freedom of expression. Nylon Cheng is a clear example in Taiwan of the repression carried out by the KMT. In Argentina, many journalists were persecuted, murdered, or disappeared, and others were forced into exile. Some notable cases of persecuted and *desaparecidos* journalists, including Rodolfo Walsh, Julián Delgado, Luis Guagnini, and Eduardo Ramos.

In both countries, corruption, censorship of free speech, and extreme abuse of power were always present behind the dominant figures. In addition to physical and psychological torture, murders, and disappearances, in Argentina the repressive apparatus took children away from their families. Many of them were newborns and were given to other families. In other cases, the women were pregnant; they gave birth while in captivity, and in most cases, those children were not returned to their biological families but were instead handed over to members of the repressive regime or to people of their choosing.

In dark times such as those experienced in Argentina and Taiwan, figures always emerge who defend fundamental rights and become symbols of the struggle: Nylon Cheng, Yao, Chia - wen and Mr. Fred in Taiwan. In Argentina, the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo defied the military regime, and thanks to their courage, in some cases the fate of their children was revealed, and to date, 140 of the 500 children who were abducted have had their identities restored.

The social fabric of both societies was severely damaged. These are traumatic events that, if not properly addressed, are passed down from generation to generation. That is why transitional justice is extremely important. Many situations are irreparable, as they cannot return to their previous state. But it is essential that the government acknowledge the crimes committed, that the perpetrators be brought to trial, and that a Truth Commission investigate what happened during those dark periods. Only in these situations can the trauma be overcome. As Gabriela Ponthot stated, collective action and state recognition are essential for providing redress to victims who have suffered serious human rights violations.

No one on this earth should have to endure the humiliating situations faced by the victims of the “White Terror” and the “National Reorganization Process”. Human rights must be protected and respected at all times, as they are intrinsically linked to humanity.

Argentina underwent its transitional justice process immediately after the return to democracy. The Argentine model serves as a reference for many countries that have experienced authoritarian periods. Despite the advances and setbacks in this area—and with the current national government denying what happened—the society supports the policies of “Memory, Truth, and Justice.”

Taiwan is a country with a well-established democracy, but one in which transitional justice has not yet been fully implemented. It is a complex case, given that the KMT—which committed abuses during the “White Terror”—still wields significant power in the country, and this has led to a divided society. It is crucial that the younger generations of the KMT acknowledge the abuses committed by

their ancestors and that transitional justice take place. This is for the sake of those who lost their lives, those who survived, and society as a whole, which must always live in the truth.

The permanent exhibition “Flowers of Freedom,” which is opened at the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, is a central tool of transitional justice in Taiwan. It is a space that has transformed the memorial’s original purpose, with an emphasis on democratic education and reconciliation. There, visitors can learn about Taiwan’s democratic milestones, as well as examples from other countries that have undergone transitional justice processes, including Argentina.



Source: María Julia Moreyra

Finally, we hope that NEVER AGAIN will any country be subjected to authoritarian regimes that cause true tragedies such as those mentioned in this committed proposal. We strive for a world whose pillars are truth, memory, justice, and respect for human rights.

Appendix I

Pictures of interviewed academics and NGO representatives



Professor Jau- Hwa Chen.

Source: Jau – Hwa Chen



Professor Shian- Chi Shen.

Source: Shian- Chi Shen



From right to left: Chu- Mei Cheng, María Julia Moreyra and Luna Liu (Nylon Cheng Liberty Foundation and Memorial Museum). Source: María Julia Moreyra



Rose Historic Site. Source: María Julia Moreyra

“Rafael Hernández” National High School of La Plata



Tile featuring the symbol of the Mothers and Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo (donated by Mother Hebe de Bonafini). Source: María Julia Moreyra



A lemon tree in honor of one of the abducted granddaughters (Clara Anahí Mariani), whose search continues to this day. Source: María Julia Moreyra



Library "Mothers of Plaza of Mayo". Source: María Julia Moreyra

Appendix II

Dr. Julio César Strassera – Closing Argument- Trial of the Juntas (American Rhetoric)

"Your Honors, this process has meant, for those of us who have had the painful privilege of knowing it intimately, a sort of descent into dark areas of the human soul, where misery, abjection, and horror register profundities difficult to imagine before and to understand afterwards.

In *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri reserved the seventh circle of hell for the violent: for all those who harm others using force. And within that same enclosure, he submerged in a river of boiling and nauseating blood a certain genre of condemned, thus described by the poet: "These are the tyrants who lived on blood and robbery. Here their merciless faults are mourned."

I do not come now to promote such a tremendous sentence for the defendants, although I cannot rule out that another court, of even higher rank than the present one, will take care of it in due course.

I will limit myself to briefly substantiating the human convenience and necessity of punishment. I follow Oliver Wendell Holmes when he states: "The law threatens certain pains if one does certain things. If one persists in doing them, the law must inflict these pains in order that its threats will continue to be believed."

Punishment, which according to certain interpretations is nothing more than institutionalized revenge, is thus opposed to uncontrolled revenge. If this position means that we will be regarded as stubborn retributionists, we will assume the risk in the certainty that we are not alone in the search for the desired equanimity. Even the jurists who are most skeptical about the justification of punishment, despite relativizing the retributive purpose, end up surrendering to reality.

We can therefore affirm with Günter Stratenwerth, that even if the retributive function of punishment is doubtful, in fact, it is a reality: "The need for retribution, in the case of crimes that move public opinion, cannot simply be eliminated. If these needs are not met, in other words, if the administration of criminal justice fails, even if only supposedly, we will always be faced with the threat of relapsing into the law of one's hand or Lynchian justice."

For all these reasons, Mr. President, this trial, and conviction are important and necessary for the Argentine nation, which has been offended by atrocious crimes. Their own atrocity makes the mere hypothesis of impunity monstrous. Unless the moral conscience of Argentines has descended to tribal levels, no one can admit that kidnapping, torture, or murder constitute "political events" or "contingencies of combat."

Now that the Argentine people have recovered the government and control of their institutions, I assume the responsibility of declaring on their behalf that sadism is neither a political ideology nor a war strategy, but a moral perversion. As a result of this trial and conviction, the Argentine people will recover their self-esteem, their faith in the values on which the Nation was built, and their international image, severely damaged by the crimes of illegal repression.

For all these reasons also, this trial and conviction are important and necessary for the Armed Forces of the Nation. This process has not been held against them but against those responsible for their leadership in the period 1976-1982. It is not the Armed Forces that are in the dock, but specific and determined individuals who are accused of specific and determined crimes. It is not military honor that is at stake here, but precisely the perpetration of acts that are contrary to military honor. And, finally, this conviction will not serve to [defame] the Armed Forces, but to point out and exclude those who infamous them with their misconduct.

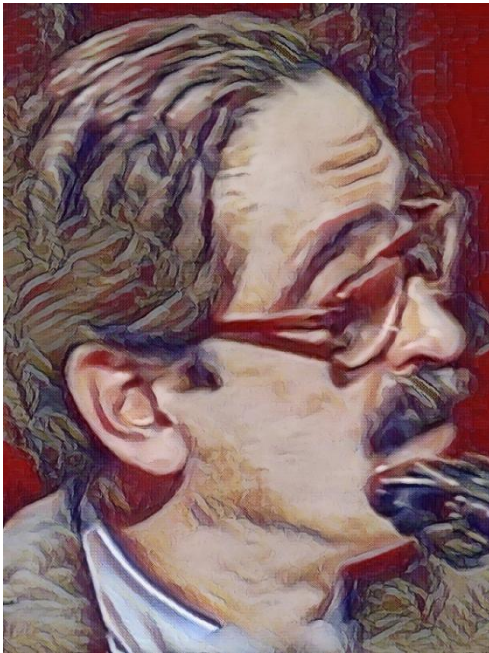
For all these reasons, finally, this trial and conviction are important and necessary for the victims who claim and the survivors who deserve this reparation. It is not, of course, a question of reviving old slogans, such as the one that "spilled blood will not be negotiated," which served to justify so many atrocities. It is not a question now of negotiating anything, because nothing is being negotiated. It is simply that from respect for life and the suffering of any human being, we restore among us the cult of life. We Argentines have tried to obtain peace by founding it in oblivion, and we have failed. We have already talked about past and frustrated amnesties.

We have tried to seek peace through violence and the extermination of the adversary, and we have failed; I refer to the period just described. Based on this trial and the conviction I advocate; we have the responsibility to build a peace based not on forgetfulness but on memory; not on violence but on justice. This is our chance, and it may be our last. For these considerations, I accuse the

defendants herein of the crimes that have been the object of qualification, and I request that, in the final judgment, they be sentenced to the following penalties:

- Jorge Rafael Videla: Life sentence plus the accessory of Article 52 of the Penal Code.
- Emilio Eduardo Massera: Life sentence plus the accessory of Article 52 of the Penal Code.
- Orlando Ramon Agosti: Life sentence plus the accessory of Article 52 of the Penal Code.
- Roberto Eduardo Viola: Life sentence.
- Armando Lambruschini: Life sentence.
- Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri: 15 years imprisonment
- Omar Rubens Graffigna: 15 years imprisonment
- Jorge Isaac Anaya: 12 years imprisonment
- Basilio Lami Dozo: 10 years imprisonment

For all, with legal accessories and costs.



Your Honors, I wish to waive any claim to originality in closing this motion. I wish to use a phrase that is not my own because it already belongs to all the Argentine people.

Your Honors: **"Never again."**

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