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“Justice, Memory and Transnational Networks. European and South American Entanglements”*

RALUCA GROSESCU, SOPHIE BABY and LAURE NEUMAYER

More than twenty years after Augusto Pinochet’s arrest in London, this special issue examines the globalization of post-dictatorial and post-conflict justice and memory processes through the lens of interconnections and mutual influences between Europe and South America. The collection challenges the currently dominant literature on reckoning with violent pasts. It does so by moving beyond both analyses confined within specific national borders and diffusionist accounts of so-called “universalised” justice and mnemonic paradigms purportedly embraced worldwide. The Trans-Atlantic perspective provides scholars with an ideal opportunity to analyse empirically the nexus between global and local scales of action, and to highlight agency in transnational mnemopolitics. Through case studies of trans-regional entanglements, we contend that the globalization of memory and justice paradigms goes hand in hand with a fragmentation of, and on occasion competition between different narratives concerning dictatorial pasts, between international, regional and local understandings of “best practices” of dealing with political violence, and between various professional groups engaged in accountability and remembrance processes. The collection shows the multi-faceted nature of transnational transfers and collaborations, some of which reflect concepts that have become significant in the international arena, while others mirror ideas and practices with limited global impact that circulate only between “semi-peripheries” or between less influential networks of activists.

Since the 1990s, accelerated globalization and increasing world connectivity have led to the circulation of justice and mnemonic models across the globe and to the emergence of a multitude of transnational spaces of activism concerned with anti-impunity and memorialization processes. Yet, the scarcity of empirically informed research examining concrete transfers and exchanges across world regions remains striking. We by and large still lack any thorough investigation of these linkages, comprising cross-border relations between non-state actors.

Against this background, the collection focuses on concrete forms of trans-regional mobilization and circulation of ideas between two continents—Europe and Latin America—that have been at the forefront of the global processes of

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judicialization of the past. At different conjunctures since 1945, these regions have produced ground-breaking justice and memory paradigms (e.g. international tribunals, truth commissions, forensic archaeology, global imagery relating to the Holocaust and the transnational icon of the “disappeared”) that have circulated between the two continents, mutually influenced each other, and were later re-appropriated worldwide. Trans-Atlantic interactions lie at the heart of the global history of reckoning with violent pasts. Their analysis sheds light on globalization processes beyond the two regions by revealing how transnational narratives on political violence are constructed, shared, or contested through various channels and networks, and how cross-border activism reinforces (or downplays) specific models of dealing with the past at national, regional and international levels. This helps us understand why certain justice and memory claims become dominant in certain situations and even acquire global momentum, while others remain peripheral even though they may circulate between particular socio-political spaces.

Two approaches have so far dominated the scholarship on post-dictatorial and post-conflict justice and memory. The prevailing one has provided analyses of national case studies or comparative accounts of countries viewed as discrete units, thereby neglecting entanglements across national borders and world regions. It has thus overlooked the impact of globalization on specific national settings and has sought to explain memorialization dynamics by reference to domestic variables alone. This line of inquiry was inaugurated at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s by the first comparative studies on the “third wave of democratization”,¹ and was succeeded by a burgeoning literature on transitional justice (TJ) in Southern Europe, Latin America and Eastern Europe.² This scholarship sought to establish causal relationships between the implementation of various justice mechanisms and the prospects for democratization, identified factors that influence the processes of reckoning with past violence, and often drew prescriptive conclusions about whether and when to punish crimes committed under dictatorial rule. The focus was on the internal variables that frame transitional justice (e.g. the nature of the former regime, the modalities of exit from dictatorship, or the post-dictatorial struggles for political power), whereas external determinants such as the degree of regional integration, the role of transnational cooperations and the international shifts in memory and justice regimes, were overlooked.³ This literature paid scant attention to the manner in which interactions and movements of

1. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

2. For comparative accounts on TJ in “third wave” democracies see Neil J. Kritz (ed.), *Transitional Justice. How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995); James McAdams (ed.), *Transitional Justice and the Rule of Law in New Democracies* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997); Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Carmen Gonzalez-Enriques, and Paloma Aguilar (eds.), *The Politics of Memory. Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Vesselin Popovski and Monica Serrano (eds.), *After Oppression. Transitional Justice in Latin America and Eastern Europe* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2012).

3. For critiques of transitological approaches to democratisation and TJ see Michel Dobry, “Les voies incertaines de la transitologie. Choix stratégiques, séquences historiques, bifurcations et processus de Path Dependence”, *Revue Française de Science Politique*, Vol. 50, No. 4–5 (2000), pp. 585–614; Raluca Grosescu “The Use of Transitology in the Field of Transitional Justice: A Critique of the Literature on the ‘Third Wave’ of Democratisation”, *Historein*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2015), pp.102–116.