



Review of the book “Why do not the ‘70 go by?” By Claudia Hilb (Siglo Veintiuno Editors)



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Mini Review

“Why do not the 70s pass?” By Claudia Hilb, it was published in 2018 by Siglo Veintiuno. This is a 176-page book that was compiled from different essays that the researcher published between 2013 and 2017, based on interventions or conferences held both in the academic field and in journalistic media. Hilb presents a series of controversial writings about how to think about the recent past in Argentina, more precisely, about how we link as a society with the open characteristic of our recent history. Given the continued presence of the debate about what happened during the last military dictatorship (1976-1983), the author wonders about the reasons and implications of the permanent latency of the traumatic past in Argentine political and social life.

In Argentina, academic research on the recent past has focused mainly on the processes of political radicalization in the late 1960s and on the application of State Terrorism and the systematic plan for the disappearance of people by the last dictatorship. Military. Around the links between recent history and memory, there are also investigations that address the ways of remembering these processes, giving an account of the presence of struggles for the senses of that past. In this way, political discourses, the mass media and social daily life can be analyzed as a field of disputes over the meanings of what happened in our recent history, but fundamentally, about its implications, links and meanings in the I presented. In this way, although the anchoring to stop socially against State Terrorism has been, since the return to democracy, the “Never Again” and the Trial to the Military Boards of 1985, different ways of linking to the traumatic past persist.

Since 2003, and for more than 10 years, the policies of memory, truth and justice transcended the front of denunciation and resistance of human rights organizations and the demands of certain political sectors, to become a State policy. This

allowed for the investigation and prosecution of crimes against humanity that continued to go unpunished and the development of different public policies that interpreted military actions, in alliance with the large economic groups and with members of the political and judicial wing. In this way, an interpretation of the past was promoted that sought the trial and punishment of the guilty and the heroization of those who fought against that system.

This memory of the recent past has high levels of social consensus, but it coexists with different interpretations about how to think about the responsibilities of what happened in the 1970s; that is to say with memories that demand justice for the victims of the guerrillas and the pardon of the military that acted under the fulfillment of orders or that justify the actions of the Armed Forces during the Dictatorship, in terms of a war against the subversion. This not only depicts a way of interpreting the past, but also has a real impact on the legal environment and ways of thinking about social mobilizations and the actions of the security forces in our country. And while it is true that this opposition of voices exists since the return of democracy, it is clear that before they remained more hidden [1].

This mode of operation of Argentine politics and society has become even more visible after the assumption of the government of Cambiemos, the alliance that brought President Mauricio Macri to power in 2015. This is linked to a certain tendency to modify the policies on human rights representative of the efforts of Néstor and Cristina Kirchner (2003-2015). Since the assumption of Cambiemos, the human rights policy has been relativized by the national government creating a halo of distrust that links it to acts of corruption of previous management. Various government officials, including the President himself, have publicly questioned the number of missing persons and the role of human rights organizations, as well as downplaying the

commemorative dates [2]. Some turning points of these conflicts occurred in 2017: the benefit of the 2 x 1 with which the Supreme Court of Justice authorized the release of the genocide Luis Muiña and the disappearance and death of Santiago Maldonado during the repression of the National Gendarmerie to the claims of the Mapuche community in the Argentine Patagonia. This context functioned as a breeding ground to highlight the disputes that exist on how to interpret what happened during the last dictatorship and reflected how recent Argentine history continues to be open, the presence of the past in the present and the social and political disputes that became evident. It comes off. More precisely, the conflicting memories were exposed around what happened during the last military Dictatorship in Argentina and the violation of human rights through forced disappearance and State Terrorism.

Returning to Hilb's book, I argue that it is a controversial operation as it breaks with the uncritical look on the human rights policy present during the Kirchnerist governments. Although, when thinking about impunity or the prosecution of crimes committed during the dictatorship, the author is clearly positioned in the realization of justice, generates questions to reflect on the gray areas surrounding the memories of "Judgment and Punishment." The author problematizes about the conflict in our country about the ways of remembering and acting on the traumatic past, demonstrating the problems that revolve around it.

It can be said that the theoretical basis that guides the reflection of the author focuses on the work of the philosopher Hanna Arendt about how to think about evil, its prosecution and its eventual forgiveness. In this way, Hilb questions that the idea held by Arendt about the existence of "crimes that cannot be punished or forgive" has been used as a slogan empty of content to sustain the human rights policy. In this way, there is an impoverishment of the debate about the recent past because public interventions are judged in the dichotomy between "comrades" or "deniers". Claudia Hilb does not believe in the theory of the two demons or exonerate the Armed Forces from their criminal responsibility, but observes the difficulty of constructing a common scene of public interest as it is very complex to discuss that traumatic stage with honesty and without opportunism; that is to say that the '70 do not finish passing through their political use in the current conflicts.

In relation to this, another central point of the book refers to the author's reflections on the Milani case and the application of the 2 x 1 [3] for the genocidal Muiña. In both cases, it observes the application of a double political, legal and social stance regarding the perpetrators of crimes against humanity. As for César Milani, who, while having causes for his participation in the dictatorial repression, was promoted to head of the Armed Forces during the presidency of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, Hilb observes the support to the decision of the government on the part of ample sectors, including certain pillars of the

defense of human rights as it was a decision that started from a government committed to these policies. In this way, it analyzes the presence of dissonant voices regarding the prosecution of crimes against humanity, within the monolithic discourse of human rights.

Regarding the Muiña case, the author analyzes how the Supreme Court of Justice, had to back down on the decision taken due to the strong repercussion that the case had; that is, against the rejection of broad political, legal and communication sectors, but mainly because of the massive social mobilization that repudiated the application of the law. Hilb observes how in the debates it did not matter if the decision adhered to the law or not, but rather that they relied on the fight against human rights policies. In this way, the researcher asks what it is that determines that we exonerate a soldier socially and. With everything mentioned above, it manifests the dilemma and the difficulties posed by political, legal and ethical judgments about human rights policies.

In his reflections, Hilb focuses on the analysis of human rights policies, promoted by the State but with a strong social anchorage. Practically does not refer to the memories that defend military action because it understands that, although unfair and illegal, those views do not generate internal debates. On the other hand, the majority position held in the "Never Again" agreement is the one that generates the greatest contradictions and disputes. It is there where he observes a greater radicalization of positions since the assumption of the government of Mauricio Macri given that, faced with the relativization of these policies by the government, the opposing positions have intensified (around them, Hilb also analyzes the discourse of the human rights organizations of March 24, 2017 and the law of the figure "30 thousand" to refer to the disappeared in the official documents issued by the province of Buenos Aires).

"Why do not the '70s go by?" He does not intend to give an answer, but to question from different angles why those years do not stop happening; as well as inviting us to reflect on the social taboo that exists in our country around reconciliation and repentance. Far removed from the policies of forgetfulness and forgiveness that would leave unpunished crimes committed by the dictatorial state, she does understand that it may be possible to talk about reconciliation "among those who are no longer the ones we were (...) on the assumption of that radical break with the past, to be able to erect a common scene of Nevermore" (2018: 144). The former official of Cambiemos in the City of Buenos Aires, Darío Lopérfido argued in a public lecture that "In Argentina there were not 30,000 disappeared". President Macri in an interview with BuzzFeed, maintained his position on the disappeared by arguing "It's a debate I'm not going in. I have no idea if it was 9 or 30 thousand (...) It's a discussion that does not make sense".

During President Macri's administration, no official events were held for the commemoration of March 24 and, in

December 2016, there was an attempt to remove the character of irremovability to the holiday. The 2x1 Law (1994-2001) indicated that after two years of preventive detention without a sentence, the days of detention should be doubled. Although the law was repealed, in the Muiña case the Supreme Court opted for the application of the most benign law principle.

References

1. El ex funcionario de Cambiemos en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Darío Lopérfido argumentó en una conferencia pública que “En Argentina no hubo 30 mil desaparecidos”. El Presidente Macri en una entrevista con

Buzz Feed, sostuvo su posición sobre los desaparecidos al argumentar “Es un debate en el que no voy a entrar. No tengo idea si fueron 9 o 30 mil (...) Es una discusión que no tiene sentido”

2. Durante la gestión del Presidente Macri no se realizaron actos oficiales para la conmemoración del 24 de marzo y, en diciembre de 2016, hubo un intento por quitarle el carácter de inamovilidad al feriado.
3. La Ley de 2x1 (1994-2001) indicaba que luego de dos años de prisión preventiva sin condena, se debían computar dobles los días de detención. Aunque la ley fue derogada, en el caso Muiña la Corte Suprema optó por la aplicación del principio de la ley más benigna.



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