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### ABSTRACT

#### Chilean TRC: Truth-Telling and Gaining Democracy

*Ala'a Ahmad Mohammad Abhari, Zlata Bozac.*

*Palestine, Al-Quds Bard, Al-Quds Bard College, Human Rights and International Law.*

**Background:** In 1990 a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC) was established after the military dictatorship under Augusto Pinochet's regime between the period (1973-1990), where human rights were violated, and many victims struggled during the regime. After that dictatorial regime ended, there was democratic elections which made the new president at that time: Patricio Aylwin establish the TRC, and it was named the Rettig after its chairman; just six weeks after his inauguration as the new Chilean president, who made it clear that his prominent goal is to investigate human rights violations during the past through this TRC. As reported by Brahm, the Rettig had many aims, and the most crucial were: investigating gross human rights violations that occurred during the 17-years-long dictatorship, exploring the cases in which the victims were killed or disappeared, prosecute the perpetrators, and prevent the repetition of human rights abuses, and recommend reparations. This paper will explore the methods in which the Rettig investigated the cases during the military dictatorship, and will investigate some important concepts that challenged the TRC's job or were interconnected with, and the outcomes and reparations of the TRC, which will help us in understanding the dramatic transition into democracy after the dictatorship in 1990. Therefore, the research question that will be examined in this research is: what were the utilized methods of investigation by the Chilean TRC and were they effective?

**Objectives:** In this study I wanted to understand some paramount terms in transitional justice such as naming names, and legal bodies Vs. TRC's, and examine how their

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to the mentioned authors at the mentioned institutes.

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E-mail: [research@admin.alquds.edu](mailto:research@admin.alquds.edu)

Palestine, Abu Dis, Al-Quds University



influence was huge despite not having a power of subpoena. Through the car of the Rettig as a TRC, I wanted to investigate their methods of investigation and the gaps that they left during their working time.

**Methods:** I utilized Primary and secondary sources in this study.

**Results:** I was able to thoroughly answer my research question, through analyzing the Rettig's functions and methods of investigation; I was also able to make a comparison between legal bodies and the TRC. Moreover, I examined the amnesty law 1978 and how it got reinterpreted after the democratization of the system. Further, I came up with the outcomes and reparations of the TRC, and its weaknesses.

**Conclusions:** The commission's work was crucial to achieve transitional justice after a 17-year period of military dictatorship, and gaining democracy in Chile. The commission was directly challenged by the limitations of the legal and political bodies, which restricted their functions in naming names, and investigating many cases of death, torture and forced disappearances due to the Amnesty law 1978 that was then reinterpreted. However, their work was supported by the public who wanted to know what happened for the victims. The recommendations and reparations were very helpful for the judicial body, and helped in gaining justice as much as possible for the victims at that time. Ultimately, the Rettig's weaknesses were then reinterpreted, investigated and developed upon further; leaving many opinions and doubts on the commission's findings, however, many scholars consider it as very successful.

**Keywords:** transitional justice, truth and reconciliation commission, perpetrator, naming names, power of subpoena.