



**Remembering enforced disappearances  
and killings committed during Peru's  
armed conflict**

**The "El Ojo que Llora" memorial**

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# Introduction

**F**ollowing the end of armed conflict or a repressive regime, an essential part of the transitional justice process is knowing and remembering the truth about the human rights violations committed. All victims and survivors are entitled to the truth, and to recognition and memory of the abuses carried out against them.

The human right to the truth takes on a particular salience when we consider that authoritarian regimes and post-conflict actors often refuse to accept accountability for abuses committed and attempt to rewrite history in a light favorable to them. In transitional societies, there is often a tension or political struggle between those actors who promote truth, memory, and memorialization initiatives and those who would prefer for the past to be left in the past. For this reason, memory initiatives such as memorials and commemorative practices become even more important, helping to create a historical record as well as a public recognition of what happened to the victims. At the same time, these kinds of practices and events, which are so crucial for fulfilling victims' rights and promoting healing, become spaces of contention and even generate violent responses against them. This has been the case with the *Eye that Cries* (El Ojo que Lloro) in Lima, Peru, a memorial to the victims of Peru's twenty-year internal armed conflict (1980-2000).

This document, authored by Eduardo González, a Peruvian transitional justice expert and DPLF consultant, to whom we are exceptionally grateful, analyzes the relevance of the *Eye that Cries* memorial today, at a moment of prolonged political crisis and extreme uncertainty in Peru.<sup>1</sup> In December 2022, then-President Pedro Castillo was impeached and arrested (and subsequently imprisoned) for trying to dismantle Peru's Congress; he was quickly replaced by then-vice President Dina Boluarte, causing a series of nationwide protests as citizens demanded new general elections. Police and military forces responded to the protests with brutality, leaving over 65 protesters dead. The violent repression of the protests by State forces at the end of 2022 and beginning of this year, not only reflects the gravity of the current situation, but also a long-term undermining of democracy and rule of law in Peru.

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<sup>1</sup> See Will Freeman, "How Peru's Crisis Could Send Shockwaves Through the Region," Council on Foreign Relations, last updated March 22, 2023. Available at <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/how-perus-crisis-could-send-shockwaves-through-region>.

Months after the crisis began instability and citizen discontent continue, and are generating far-reaching economic and social consequences.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the current crisis occurs in a climate of hostility towards initiatives focused on truth and reconciliation for Peru's recent past. On March 28, 2023, the municipality of Miraflores in Lima temporarily closed the Lugar de la Memoria, la Tolerancia y la Inclusión Social (LUM) (The Place of Memory, Tolerance and Social Inclusion), a museum and memory space opened seven years earlier and dedicated to remembering the period of political violence that took place in Peru from 1980 and 2000 and the human rights violations committed.<sup>3</sup> LUM's symbolic significance for victims and families of Peru's conflict cannot be overstated, and its sudden closure, which occurred just hours before an international human rights event was to take place in the space, was an apparent attack on memory and the right to the truth.

This examination of the *Eye that Cries* memorial is an extended version of a study published by the Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation (GIJTR), a transitional justice consortium to which DPLF belongs, as part of a **project mapping commemorative cultures** in different contexts around the globe. It seeks to demonstrate the significance of memory spaces as a link between the past and the present: The *Eye that Cries* memorial is a contested, living space where opposing narratives about the past play out and even cycles of past violence are repeated and echoed—for example, through acts of vandalism against the memorial, discussed further below—but above all it is a sacred space of memory for the very much present, ongoing pain and mourning of families of victims of the conflict.

The present study also considers the competing, contentious narratives about Peru's conflict—the dominant narrative on the one hand, which justifies the Peruvian State in its actions during the conflict, is hostile to the victims and their families, and positions anyone opposed to the government as a “terrorist;” and a victim-centered narrative, promoted by human rights organizations and laid out in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that honors victims and demands accountability for the State for its role in the human rights violations committed during the conflict, on the other.

The current moment in Peru's history not only has echoes of the past—including authoritarian tendencies, State-led and State-justified violence, and human rights abuses being committed with an ever-present threat that they will remain unpunished—but also implores us to consider the unfinished work and failure to fulfill the pillars of transitional justice following the end of Peru's internal conflict.

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2 See Nicolas Larsen, “Ongoing political crisis weighs heavily on Peru's economy,” *International Banker*, July 3, 2023 Available at <https://internationalbanker.com/finance/ongoing-political-crisis-weighs-heavily-on-perus-economy/>.

3 See Hernán Medrano Marin, “LUM: las razones de su clausura y la polémica decisión de la Municipalidad de Miraflores,” *El Comercio*, March 29, 2023. Available at <https://elcomercio.pe/lima/sucesos/lum-las-razones-de-la-clausura-y-lo-que-se-sabe-de-la-polemica-decision-de-la-municipalidad-de-miraflores-carlos-canales-ammnistia-internacional-rafael-lopez-aliaga-certificado-de-inspeccion-tecnica-de-seguridad-en-edificacion-noticia/>.



In a country where even memory and the right to mourn are not adequately protected, how can there be any guarantees of protection for those who oppose the policies of the current State?

As this document demonstrates, memory is not a passive figure; the study makes reference to the “cultural explosiveness of memory,” using several examples to demonstrate how engaging in memory and memorialization can actually be a radical political act. Like the Eye that Cries memorial itself, the present case study challenges us to engage with the past, and confront the reality that the past is never truly the past for victims, families, and survivors of atrocities and human rights violations, however long ago they might have occurred. Engaging with the past is also an essential, and courageous, way to situate ourselves where we are currently, and to attempt to trace how we got here, to address root causes, and hopefully, to right course and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

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# I. The Peruvian armed conflict



**T**he internal armed conflict in Peru began in 1980 when the Communist Party of Peru - Shining Path (PCP-SL), a Maoist organization, initiated military actions in rural areas of the Andean department of Ayacucho. The armed struggle began just as Peru was transitioning to a new democratic order after a military dictatorship that had lasted from 1968. The next twelve years saw a cycle of increasingly violent actions and reactions between the tactics of the PCP-SL and those of the government forces. In 1983, the government decided to replace the police in the counter-subversive struggle, handing over political-military control of the conflict zones to the Armed Forces. This led to massacres in peasant communities and disappearances of people arrested by the Armed Forces, with military bases in some cities of Ayacucho, such as “Los Cabitos” barracks in Huamanga and the municipal stadium in Huanta, becoming centers of torture, arbitrary executions, and enforced disappearance. The year 1983 saw the highest number of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions during the entire 1980-2000 period studied by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The State’s massive human rights violations during its counter-subversive action initially shocked the regions where the PCP-SL started its campaign, but did not result in the defeat of the Maoists. The subversives moved beyond their initial area of operation and expanded into other departments with a strong rural presence. Subversive violence spread and found sustainable mechanisms different from those in their initial region, such as in regions with a drug trafficking presence and in some urban centers.

The capture of people suspected of belonging to the PCP-SL resulted in a heavy concentration of them in prisons, allowing the subversive organization to begin exercising control over the majority of prisoners. Riots by Shining Path prisoners occurred in 1985, 1986, and 1992, resulting in violent reprisals and killings of inmates. The 1986 massacre in three Lima prisons was particularly symbolic, as it generalized horror and impunity: authorities accepted that extrajudicial executions had been committed but never effectively prosecuted those responsible.

The actions of the Shining Path opened the door to armed confrontation as a form of political power struggle for other Marxist-Leninist organizations, such as the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement



in 1984 and other smaller groups. However, subversive violence also provided the government with the opportunity to create paramilitary groups that gained prominence in later years.

It wasn't until 1992 that most subversive armed actions were extinguished due to police actions that resulted in the capture of the most important leaders of the PCP-SL and MRTA. Aside from some violent military operations against remnants of these two forces in the coca-growing areas, the pace and intensity of the conflict decreased.

The losses from the conflict were the greatest in Peru's history. According to the TRC, the most probable number of fatalities was 69,280 people. In its final report the Commission identified almost 4,000 burial sites where human remains of disappeared persons might have been found. In the years following the TRC's work, different institutions were created to search for the disappeared, and a National Registry was established to identify more than 13,000 people whose fate or final whereabouts are unknown.



# **II. Enforced disappearances during the Peruvian armed conflict**

**E**nforced disappearance played a significant role in the Peruvian armed conflict, with the government using it as a means to obtain information through torture, guarantee impunity by obstructing investigations, and quickly produce “results” by eliminating suspects without the need for a complex and lengthy judicial process. This strategy created a climate of terror that dissuaded society from any form of resistance or collaboration with subversive groups, particularly among marginalized sectors of the population, such as peasants and rural students.

When families of the disappeared requested information and justice, these demands were systematically ignored by the State. Throughout the conflict, successive government representatives either denied or downplayed the seriousness of enforced disappearance. In the early 1980s, political leaders argued that allegations of enforced disappearance were false because the alleged victims were not registered in electoral records.<sup>4</sup> In the 1990s, members of Congress from the ruling party claimed that the enforced disappearance of nine students and a professor at the University of La Cantuta was probably voluntary,<sup>5</sup> i.e., they abandoned their usual place of residence to engage in subversive activities.

Enforced disappearance has caused deep trauma to families and communities. The inability to provide appropriate rituals to the human remains of their loved ones constitutes a source of anguish. Just under 600 individual cases of enforced disappearance have been resolved. The absolute majority of cases remain unresolved, leading to thousands of cases of continuous mourning, which has intergenerational consequences for the mental health of affected families and their stigmatization.


Enforced disappearance persisted throughout the Peruvian armed conflict and is inherently linked to a contested social memory space due to the obstruction of mourning, the generation of stigmatization, and the presence of an official negationist discourse.

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4 Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación. Sesiones Institucionales. Partido Acción Popular. Testimonio del Sr. Luis Pércovich. Available at <https://cverdad.org.pe/apublicas/sesiones/sesion11a.php>

5 Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación. Informe Final. Vol VII. Cap 61. Las ejecuciones extrajudiciales de universitarios de La Cantuta.





III. Commemorating  
enforced  
disappearances  
committed during  
Peru's internal  
conflict

**In Peru, the families of the thousands of victims of enforced disappearance do not have a formalized space for mourning.** They lack a burial place where they can perform traditional cultural and religious rituals, which makes it impossible to properly process their grief and say goodbye to their loved ones. Instead, the search for the disappeared replaces the commemoration of their absence, leaving families in a state of permanent suffering. Moreover, enforced disappearance does not find formalized spaces of memory, and the places where disappearances occurred or bodies were disposed of are often stigmatized as sites of fear and danger.

The disappeared, when considered by State authorities as members of subversive organizations, are difficult to regard as innocent victims deserving of solidarity from society. Instead, their memory and the presence of their relatives in the public space are often stigmatized as remnants of the violent period that seek to undermine the state and the legitimacy of the law enforcement agencies.

**The Eye that Cries is a monument to the victims of Peru's armed conflict**, located in one of Lima's most emblematic parks, the Campo de Marte, in the central district of Jesús María. It is a large amphitheater-shaped space consisting of a concentric labyrinth made of blackish pebbles and thousands of gray boulders. The individual names of fatal victims of the internal armed conflict, following the list of victims identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in its 2003 report, have been inscribed on the boulders. At the center of the labyrinth, a black pyramidal monolith has an embedded stone from which water constantly flows, giving the monument its name.





The Eye that Cries Memorial in the Jesus María neighborhood of Lima, Peru. (Photo credit: CIPDH-UNESCO)



Detail of the main stone and the weeping eye at the Eye that Cries memorial. In this image the damage to the main stone from one of the attacks on the Memorial in 2006, as well as the orange paint that was thrown, are visible. (Photo credit: Percy Rojas Quispe)



The monument's aesthetic proposal, created by the Dutch sculptor Lika Mutal, based in Peru, is the beginning of many paradoxes surrounding the Eye that Cries. The monument is both a complex abstraction and a simple transparency. It brings to Peru the Chartres Labyrinth, an object of religious use from medieval Europe designed to create a space for mystical wandering and prayer, but it reassigns meaning to it by turning it into a path literally surrounded by names that lead to a central space that represents, both physically and in its name, the act of weeping. The word "eye" refers to both the organ of vision and a source of water, symbolically journeying through the names of the absent, which are traversed until reaching the center of the pilgrimage, where they are seen and wept for, the two relevant functions of the human eye for this space.

The aesthetic proposal behind the Eye that Cries has successfully established a clear relationship between the signifier and its meaning. Through its highly abstract design and use of a non-native cultural form, the physical object itself represents an eye of water, which in turn symbolizes the human eye in the act of mourning the thousands of names inscribed on the monument.



The Chartres Labyrinth, a work whose influence can be seen in design of the Eye that Cries memorial. (Photo credit: Andy Nicotera)

However, as mentioned earlier, the signifier—meaning relationship is ultimately arbitrary and contingent and is subject to change based on the cultural and political context of a society. The Eye that Cries underwent a transformation from its original purpose as a memorial space for all the victims identified in the TRC report, to one that represented more specifically victims of State action in the armed conflict, thanks to the support of a specific community of memory and human rights NGOs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Rosario Narváez, August 2, 2022.

Despite its initial success, controversies surrounding the monument led to a crisis of confidence for the author regarding the list of names, and a transformation of the identity of the events and victims represented. The monument shifted from representing only “innocent”<sup>7</sup> victims of State action to an encompassing vision of all victims, including those who participated in actions of subversive groups and were extrajudicially executed.

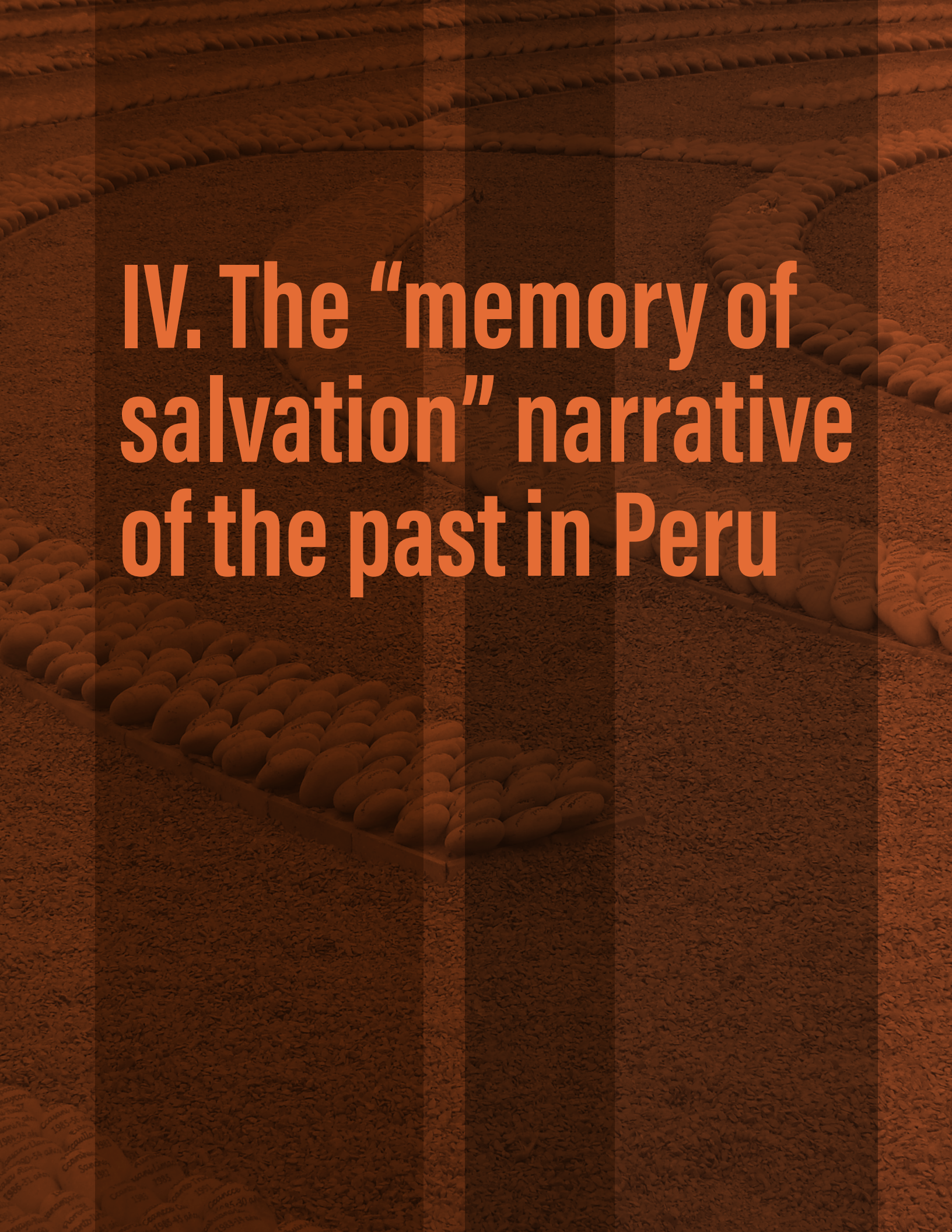
This transformation occurred not just in the use of the monument, but in the very existence of the monument itself, as it sparked opposition from a coalition of followers of former dictator Alberto Fujimori, ultraconservative groups, relatives of military and police personnel killed in the conflict, and others. The function of the monument has thus shifted from being a commemorative space for one community of memory to a site of conflict between opposing communities of memory.

The relationship between the monument, the event it commemorates, and community of memory is similar to that of language: it is contingent and evolutionary, and its continuity is never guaranteed. The Eye that Cries has faced repeated physical attacks by its opposing community of memory, but it has been restored by its community of use. The opponents, who promote a denialist discourse regarding human rights violations and the nature of the armed conflict, have expressed their desire to destroy the monument. Their animosity has resulted in the marginalization of the monument, if not in its destruction. For example, a proposed “Alameda de la memoria,” which would have included the Eye, was never built, and the section of the Campo de Marte where the monument stands is fenced off and permanently closed, with access limited to ceremonies organized by the civil association “Caminos de la memoria.” This organization is composed of individuals who are either members of human rights organizations, civic institutions, or groups of victims’ relatives, and will be further discussed below.

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7 Salgado, Rafael. “De silencios y otros ruidos. Memorias de un hijo de la guerra.” Punto Cardinal Editores, Lima, 2022.





# IV. The “memory of salvation” narrative of the past in Peru



**In the post-conflict period, some narratives have emerged that prioritize the extreme violence of subversive organizations to justify the State.** These narratives use the term “terrorism” to define not only the methods but also the ideology and personal essence of the subversive groups. They present the “terrorist” (member of a subversive group) as an irrational and intrinsically evil actor who rejoices in causing fear and suffering and whose goal is to establish an equally horrendous order. This definition of an absolute enemy leaves no room for ambiguities or subtleties: it does not distinguish between the PCP-SL and the MRTA, nor between them and the leftist organizations that participated in democratic political life. Over time, “terrorism” has become an umbrella concept that increasingly includes moderate sectors, people associated with the rule of law, progressive movements, and others.

In this constellation of discourses, known as the “memory of salvation,” any action against the absolute evil of terrorism is considered legitimate, even if it involves illegal violence on the part of the State. Any attempt to confront terrorism with the weapons of the law is dismissed as naive, weak, or complicit. According to this narrative, only the political and military leadership that decided to strike at terrorism without legalistic scruples, namely the regime headed by Alberto Fujimori and his alliance with the military institutions, could have defeated the enemy and saved the country. However, remnants of the enemy are said to be crouched in the institutions of the rule of law and human rights organizations, continuing the military action of the terrorists through judicial action. The search for the truth and the judicial processes against state perpetrators are seen as a rancorous persecution against those who achieved victory.

This “memory of salvation” is not just about the past; it also implies an attitude of constant alert before a hidden danger. It views the relatives of the disappeared and executed, their legal actions to obtain justice, and their exercises of memory with suspicion and hostility, as new incarnations of the terrorist challenge.

In the two decades since the TRC’s Final Report, skirmishes have taken place around the memory of the armed conflict and its victims, in which the “memory of salvation” has also been a memory of fear. Various moments and events are surrounded by a narrative of scandal and trepidation. The media criticizes the appearance of potential presences of terrorism in culture from time to time. Passages of schoolbooks dedicated to recent history have been denounced for not being sufficiently condemnatory

of terrorism,<sup>8</sup> works of art (performance, visual and literary) have been harassed<sup>9</sup> as supposed apologists for subversive organizations, and memory initiatives that emerge have been stigmatized.

The dispute around the disappeared has a special place in this narrative because prosecuting disappearances is seen as a legal maneuver to persecute the forces of law and order and glorify subversives. The dispute, then, shifts to political interventions on the right to mourn. In recent years, at least three moments have demonstrated the cultural explosiveness of mourning:

In 1996, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) found the Peruvian state guilty<sup>10</sup> of violating the rights of members of the PCP-SL who were arbitrarily executed during the retaking of the Miguel Castro Castro Prison after a riot. The IACtHR ordered the Peruvian state to include the names of the victims in the monument “The Eye that Cries.” However, when the names were added, some media outlets and the “salvation” discourse labeled the monument as a tribute to terrorists, causing a social panic.

In 2018, the municipality of the Comas district destroyed a mausoleum built by relatives of Shining Path prisoners who died in the 1986 prison massacre. An IACtHR ruling ordered the Peruvian State to identify and hand over the remains of prisoners killed during the riot, who had been buried without identification. The relatives built a space of memory around the niches of the victims with Shining Path paraphernalia and symbolism,<sup>11</sup> which caused a panic as it was seen as a possible resurgence of terrorism.<sup>12</sup>

In 2021, after the death of Abimael Guzmán, leader of the PCP-SL, a debate arose about what to do with his remains.<sup>13</sup> The government decided not to deliver the remains to his relatives due to the risk of the burial site becoming a shrine. The remains were cremated, and the ashes were secretly dispersed.

The “salvation” memory is prevalent in Peruvian society, but there are no statistical studies to quantify its hegemony. Its presence in the media, social networks, and everyday language is overwhelming, and it has become a political factor used in conservative positions or to stigmatize groups ranging from the center to the left of the political spectrum during electoral processes.

8 Congreso del Perú. Textos escolares tienen información sesgada respecto al terrorismo. Noviembre 2017.

9 Radio Programas del Perú. PNP investiga obra “La cautiva” por presunta apología al terrorismo. Enero 2015.

10 Inter-American Court of Human Rights: Case of *Miguel Castro Castro Prison vs. Peru*, Judgment of November 25, 2006 (Merits, Reparations and Costs).

11 Andina: “Demolition of the Shining Path mausoleum begins” (2018). Available at: <https://andina.pe/agencia/video-comienzo-demolicion-mausoleo-sendero-luminoso-comas-46713.aspx>

12 Azevedo, Valerie Robin. “Antígona en Comas: administrar difuntos incómodos o las paradojas de las reparaciones posconflicto.” In Bedoya et al. (coordinators), *La violencia que no cesa. Huellas y persistencias del conflicto armado en el Perú contemporáneo*. Punto Cardinal, 2021.

13 El país: “Qué hacer con el cadáver de un monstruo,” 2021. Available at: <https://elpais.com/internacional/2021-09-13/que-hacer-con-el-cadaver-de-un-monstruo-llamado-abimael-guzman.html>





# V. Other non-hegemonic narratives about the past in Peru



**O**ther non-hegemonic narratives in Peru exist, besides the dominant narrative of salvation memory. One such narrative is constructed by human rights organizations and articulated in the TRC's Final Report, which identifies the State's responsibility for human rights violations without justifying the actions of subversive organizations. This ethical and legal memory recognizes the profound historical fault of Peruvian society as a whole for the social fractures that made the armed conflict so violent.

While organizations like the PCP-SL and the MRTA hold undeniable political responsibility for choosing to engage in armed struggle, worsening the living conditions of the population at a time when Peru was recovering the possibility of democracy, the State also bears responsibility. Despite having the authority and legitimacy to confront the subversive challenge, the State ignored its obligations to respect human rights and committed similar atrocities that crossed the threshold of crimes against humanity.

The defeat of subversive organizations resulted in the application of justice against their members. However, from a human rights perspective and narrative, impunity was maintained because of victor's justice—the application of an enemy's criminal law against members of subversive groups and amnesty for State agents. In this scenario, the post-conflict period was marked by the drama of thousands of innocent people unjustly accused or tried without the guarantees of due process, called “presos inocentes.” This narrative holds all the governments of the 1980-2000 period accountable for their serious political responsibilities, and their members may also have criminal responsibilities, for the conduct of the anti-subversive struggle that violated human rights.

This narrative presents a moral discourse that criticizes society for its inaction, which enabled the human rights violations of marginalized groups affected by the conflict, such as peasants, indigenous peoples, women, and children. Victims are portrayed as defenseless, caught in the crossfire and unable to escape the violence of both subversives and law enforcement. The legal actions of human rights organizations during the conflict, and the evolution of the legal framework applicable to terrorism after the conflict, resulted in the creation of the figure of “the innocent victim.”

The defense of human rights, centered on the innocent, was based on the fact that members of the Shining Path used their own legal defense organizations. After the conflict, this distinction was cemented in law, as the reparations mechanism, created after the TRC, excluded members of subversive organizations from reparations,<sup>14</sup> further depoliticizing the memory of victims under the image of “innocence.” In the report of the TRC itself, there are very few instances where the victims are recognized as members of subversive groups, indicating that even those guilty have rights.<sup>15</sup>

In the “human rights” memory narrative, the internal armed conflict period presented a significant challenge. The State’s response was brutal, resulting in greater suffering for the civilian population and exacerbating the social divisions in the country. Consequently, the victims and their families, who were innocent of any crimes, deserve solidarity from society, as well as the restoration of their rights.

The concept of innocent victims is contested by other narratives. The children of subversive group members, particularly those of MRTA members, have undertaken several initiatives, such as testimony and ritual performances, to reclaim their identity and protest the impunity of cases affecting their families. The relatives of victims clearly identified as members of the PCP-SL also have their own claims<sup>16</sup> and a narrative that portrays their loved ones as heroes of a confrontation with a criminal State. Nevertheless, these narratives are subject to continuous criminalization. The Peruvian State has strengthened a law that criminalizes “apology for terrorism,”<sup>17</sup> which is applied with little social oversight and has resulted in procedural rights violations.

Additionally, there are community narratives that circulate in local and regional spaces and contest the official versions. For instance, some peasant communities in areas that were at the center of the armed conflict present the period of violence as a victorious combat where there was no “external savior,” but rather their own efforts to defeat subversion.<sup>18</sup> The internal and inter-community confrontations represent disruptive elements of these memories, as they illuminate the changing community loyalties and positions during the conflict, as well as their consequences in communal violence.<sup>19</sup>

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14 Ley que crea el Plan Integral de Reparaciones. Ley 28592 de julio de 2005. Art. 4

15 Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación. Vol VII. Cap. 33 Las ejecuciones extrajudiciales de Abel Malpartida y Luis Alvarez.

16 Guiné, Anouk. *Género y Conflicto Armado en el Perú*. 2nd ed. Lima: La Plaza Editores.


17 Congreso de la República. Ley que modifica el artículo 316 e incorpora el artículo 316-a al código penal, tipificando el delito de apología al terrorismo. Ley 30610.

18 Caro Cardenas, Ricardo. *Demonios Encarnados- Izquierda, campesinado y lucha armada en Huancavelica*. Lima: La Siniestra Editores, 2021.

19 Theidon, Kimberly. “Entre prójimos. El conflicto armado interno y la política de la reconciliación en el Perú.” *Estudios la Sociedad Rural*, no. 24. Lima: IEP, 2004.



# VI. The role of the State and communities of memory in Peru

The background image shows a large, circular, tiered structure, likely an amphitheater or a large-scale art installation, with many people gathered around it. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The text is centered over the image.

**T**he Peruvian case presents some divergences with a model where a dominant “official” narrative suppresses a subordinate narrative from the victims. In fact, the paradox is that the memory articulated from a human rights perspective has been produced by State institutions, such as a truth commission and yet, the denialist memory is the one which is dominant.

## A. The “human rights” memory in the practices of the Peruvian State

In reality, the dominant narrative presents certain difficulties in the Peruvian case. The “salvation” memory is dominant among the media and political elites and is extremely powerful in the mainstream. However, it does not match the legal reality: after the TRC Final Report, which has official and binding character for the Peruvian State, a series of judicial processes have resulted in the conviction of human rights violators among State actors, the most notable case being the 25-year prison sentence against Alberto Fujimori, former head of State, for his responsibility in the operations of a death squad regarding forced disappearances, arbitrary executions, and torture.

Likewise, Peru has complied with rulings by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), including the annulment of the 1995 amnesty law, the opening or reopening of various criminal proceedings, and reparations to victims. Other transitional justice measures have included the creation of an administrative reparations program and a single registry of victims in which, as of 2018, more than 226,000 individuals, including survivors and relatives of deceased or disappeared persons, and 5,700 communities and population centers were recognized as collective victims.<sup>20</sup> Regarding the search for missing persons, Peru has established forensic capacities and a search law that includes instruments such as a national registry of missing persons and burial sites. At times, moreover, the State has, through its representatives, acknowledged its responsibility and apologized to the victims. Particularly important for the case at hand is the repeated presence of State representatives at commemorations at the “Eye that Cries” to express solidarity with the relatives.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Guillerot, Julie. *Repairs in Peru. 15 years of repair*. 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Toledo, Alejandro. Request for presidential pardon. 2003. Available at <https://lum.cultura.pe/cdi/video/mensaje-la-nacion-del-presidente-alejandro-toledo-sobre-el-informe-final-de-la-comision-de-la>. Pérez Tello, Marisol. Ministerial expression of solidarity. 2016. Available at <https://canaln.pe/actualidad/ministra-justicia-participo-13-aniversario-informe-cvr-n244527>.



The “human rights” narrative in Peru is rooted in the instruments of transitional justice, which have been officially recognized by the State. However, the transition from measures of truth, reparation, and justice to those of memory has not been as straightforward. While some guidelines for a national memory policy have been proposed, none have been officially adopted.

The creation of the Lugar de Memoria (Place of Memory),<sup>22</sup> a museum in Lima under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, was surrounded by social debates. The designers of its museal script<sup>23</sup> opted for a narrative different from that of the TRC, with the aim of creating a space open to different interpretations, including the official narrative of the Armed Forces, who published their own official report on the conflict.<sup>24</sup> Further compounding the ambiguity about this memorial space, even though it exists as a dependency of the Ministry of Culture and part of the national network of museums, a local municipality exercises power over its facilities and, as mentioned in the introduction, in March 2023 proceeded to close it temporarily.<sup>25</sup>

The model of the “dominant narrative in favor of impunity vs. victims’ narrative” is complicated by the absence of a victims’ narrative. As previously stated, the “human rights” memory is constructed upon the idea of an innocent and somewhat depoliticized victim, resulting in many exposed vulnerabilities. This narrative disregards cases where victims were members of subversive organizations, whether their relatives claim their loved ones’ militancy, or it is tactfully ignored. Additionally, this national narrative excludes regional and community perspectives that blur the victim and perpetrator identities. During the conflict, individual combatants shifted sides and roles,<sup>26</sup> and so did communities.<sup>27</sup>

This narrative is supported by a “human rights” memory community made up of civil society organizations that defend human rights, associations of victims and family members, and a broad spectrum of professionals with liberal or progressive views. Local authorities may also be included in this community to the extent that justice and reparation mechanisms align with local community development interests and recognition of their victimization.

This community of memory has not been able to establish a dominant historical narrative and is likely opposed to such a notion, in favor of a democratic perspective that values diversity.<sup>28</sup>

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22 Feldman, Joseph. “When the state elaborates the past. Postwar Peru and the place of memory.” Lima, Peru, 2022. *La Sinistra* essays.

23 Del Pino, Ponciano and Agüero, Jose Carlos. *Cada uno, un lugar de memoria*. LUM, 2014.

24 Zapata, Antonio. “EN HONOR A LA VERDAD”. In *Revista Argumentos*, Issue No. 2, May 2012. Available at <https://argumentos-historico.iep.org.pe/articulos/en-honor-a-la-verdad/>

25 El Comercio. Clausuran Lugar de la Memoria y Reconciliación el día que Amnistía Internacional presenta su Informe anual. 28 de marzo de 2023

26 Gavilan, Lurgio. “Memoirs of an unknown soldier”. 2nd Edition. IEP. Lima, 2021

27 Caro, Ricardo, 2021. Theidon, Kimberly, 2004.

28 Del Pino, Ponciano and Agüero, Jose Carlos. *Cada uno, un lugar de memoria. Conceptual foundations of the Place of Memory, Tolerance and Social Inclusion*, 2014.

Nonetheless, this community possesses the symbolic and social capital<sup>29</sup> required to effectively shape policy-making processes, even though transforming common meanings is a challenging task. Thus, it would be incorrect to assert that the Peruvian State embodies the dominant “salvation” narrative, since official positions reflect the legal successes of the victims and transitional justice mechanisms. However, political leaders in charge of the State seldom challenge the mainstream view that supports the “memory of salvation.”

## B. The “salvation” memory in the practices of the Peruvian State

In contrast to the “human rights” memory, the “savior” memory also exerts pressure and influence on the State, partially succeeding due to the extraordinary combativeness of some of its members who have reached prominent political scenarios and the near-absolute dominance of the press. Since the second government of Alan García (2006-2011) and, even more so, since the 2011 general elections that saw the electoral resurgence of Fujimorism, the “savior” memory has become part of the repertoire of conservative political leaders, with several former members of the armed forces and police holding frontline public roles as vice presidents, members of congress or ministers. Furthermore, the election of Ollanta Humala (2011-2016), a former military officer involved in the counter-subversive struggle accused of human rights violations, as president marked the first time such an individual held such a position. The paradox lies in the coexistence of a dominant “salvation memory” that does not generate policies except in specific cases and a “human rights” memory supported by small but influential communities of memory capable of effectively influencing the State. The political leadership in charge of the State oscillates between supporting the “salvation” discourse that is considered politically necessary and leaving untouched the normative framework achieved through transitional justice.

Denialism has scored important victories in public policy, such as the defense of the Peruvian State against judgments of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), particularly in cases involving victims who were members of subversive groups, the various attempts to pardon former head of State Alberto Fujimori, and the modification of the penal code to criminalize apology for terrorism.<sup>30</sup>

Conservative political leaders have led the protest against what they considered to be dangerous advances of terrorism, forcing moderate politicians to try to find intermediate positions and appeasing speeches. For example, in the case before the IACtHR<sup>31</sup> concerning the extrajudicial executions

29 Bourdieu, Pierre. *Sociology and culture* (Trans. M. Pou). Mexico: Grijalbo (original work published in 1988).

30 Law 30610: Law amending Article 316 and incorporating Article 316-A to the Penal Code, criminalizing the crime of Apology for Terrorism (2017)

31 Inter-American Court of Human Rights Case *Cruz Sanchez et al. v. Peru* Judgment of April 17, 2015. Available at [https://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec\\_292\\_esp.pdf](https://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_292_esp.pdf)



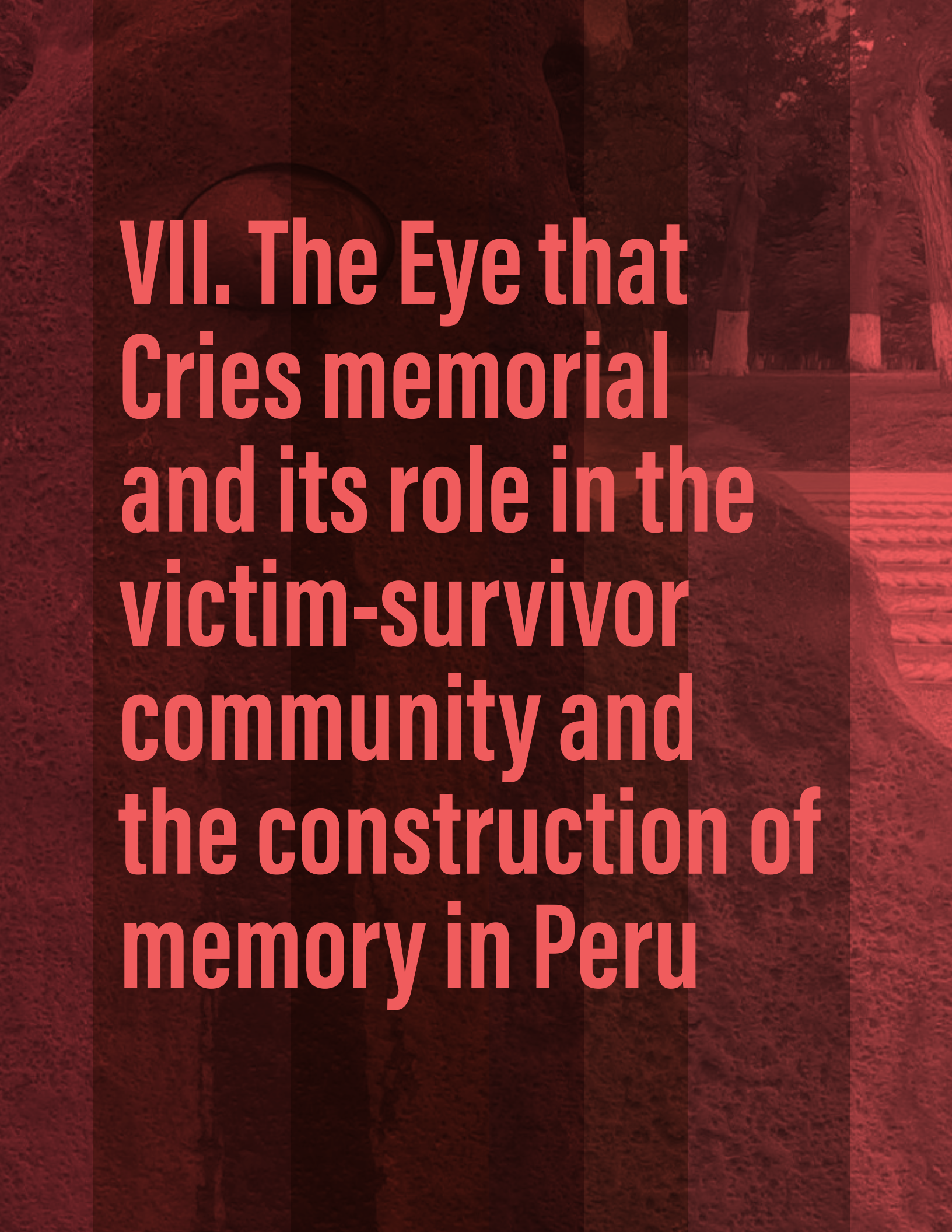
of MRTA members who took hostages at the residence of the Japanese ambassador in 1996, the government of Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006) spoke out on numerous occasions in defense of the Army, whose commandos carried out the operation to retake the residence. The Peruvian State's official version was that any human rights violations would have been the responsibility of "vultures,"<sup>32</sup> an annihilation group under Fujimori's orders, and that the army members were not responsible or had their honor affected by their actions. Despite a judgment against the State, the governments have remained consistent in commemorating the military operation as a happy event, including different distinctions to the veterans of the action and the consecration of a space as a museum of the event.

The Peruvian State, then, is a field of tensions between diverse narratives, particularly the "memory of salvation" and that of "human rights." The memories of former subversive militants or their relatives have no presence in the political space, although they have been gaining some visibility in the literary field.<sup>33</sup>

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32 Michelena, Liliana. "Los gallinazos del rescate en la embajada de Japón" *La Mula*, Dec. 29, 2011. Available at <https://redaccion.lamula.pe/2011/12/29/los-gallinazos-del-rescate-en-la-embajada-de-japon/lilianamichelena/>

33 Gálvez Olaechea, Santiago. *Con la palabra desarmada. Essays on the (post)conflict*, 2015. Agüero, José Carlos. *Los rendidos: sobre el don de perdonar*, 2015. Gavilan, Lurgio. *Memorias de un soldado desconocido. Autobiography and anthropology of violence*, 2021, Salgado, Rafael, 2022.



**VII. The Eye that  
Cries memorial  
and its role in the  
victim-survivor  
community and  
the construction of  
memory in Peru**



**T**he Eye that Cries, known in Spanish as *El Ojo que Lloró*, has been at the center of a long-standing hegemonic battle. Its emergence took place during the first post-Fujimori democratic transition government led by Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006).<sup>34</sup> The initiative to create the monument came from private actors linked to the human rights movement and the artistic and intellectual community in Peru.

The monument represents a dialogue between two visions: that of Dutch-Peruvian artist Lika Mutal,<sup>35</sup> who designed the space as a tribute to the victims named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, and that of human rights defender Francisco Soberón, who supported the project and envisioned it as part of a broader "avenue of memory" located in Campo de Marte, a centrally located park in Lima with high symbolic value due to the presence of important monuments there, including one to the victors of the conflict with Ecuador in 1941 and one to the precursor of Peruvian aviation, Jorge Chavez.

With Soberón's support, Lika Mutal mobilized a broad coalition of allies, including politicians, intellectuals, academics, religious figures, and human rights defenders. This was not a victims' movement, but an initiative in favor of victims and their recognition. While the artist's original vision was not subjected to a process of social consultation beyond the space of personalities that supported her initiative, the monument is an intensely personal work, faithful to the vision of the individual artist, who offered her vision as the basis for what she hoped would be the social practice of memory.

The collaboration of the authorities of the district of Jesús María, the small municipality in which Campo de Marte is located, was crucial in making the monument a reality. Despite its national symbolic importance, Campo de Marte is not under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima nor under that of any ministry, but under that of the district in which it is located. The collaboration of the municipality ensured the selection of the space in the park, and the collaboration of private companies allowed for the erection of the monument and the hiring of labor.

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with Rosario Narváez. August 2, 2022.

<sup>35</sup> Best Urday, Kristel, 2022.

The construction of the Eye that Cries took place during a narrow window of opportunity: the first post-democratic transition government of Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006). During this period, the Peruvian State accepted the contentious jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, after Fujimori's attempt to evade its obligations. The 1995 amnesty law was annulled, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established, functioning, and issuing its Final Report (2001-2003). Additionally, the Human Rights Center of the Ombudsman's Office was created to house the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's archive. The Reparations Law was approved in 2004, and the "Yuyanapaq" photographic exhibit produced by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was exhibited on an itinerant basis before being housed in the National Museum.

In the aftermath of the TRC and the IACHR *Barrios Altos v. Peru* ruling, several virtuous sequences unfolded. The TRC generated artifacts necessary for reparation and memory while the Inter-American Court's jurisprudence allowed for the reopening of judicial proceedings. Reparations, in turn, strengthened local memories and victims' organizations, channeling social demands and fostering development. Although the Ojo que Lloro in Lima was not a product of a victims' movement, it served as a catalyst for numerous memory initiatives throughout the country, including an "Ojito" in the province of Toraya, Abancay<sup>36</sup> similar to the one in Lima.

However, the Eye that Cries became a target for negationists and followers of former President Alberto Fujimori. In 2007, the monument was subjected to the first physical attack by Fujimori's supporters, who labeled it a "terrorist monument" and identified public spaces of memory as places of confrontation. Since then, the Eye that Cries has been subject to a dozen physical attacks, including attempts to destroy or remove the boulders, attacks with distinctive orange paint associated with Fujimorism, and interruption of ceremonies, among others.

As a result of these attacks, the area of the park where the monument is located has remained closed or under surveillance by municipal guards. Despite this, the Eye that Cries and other memory initiatives continue to stand as a powerful reminder of the country's history and the importance of memory and reparation in its healing.

In response to the attacks on the monument, the civil association ***Caminos de la memoria*** ("Paths of Memory") was created in 2008, by workers from human rights organizations who volunteered to care for and clean the monument. They also organized commemorative activities, which generated trust between the activists and the artist, and led to the formalization of the space as "Paths of Memory." The association now manages the monument, facing discouragement, withdrawal, and eventual hostility from the municipal authorities of Jesús María.

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36 Radio Titanka. "The Crying Eye and the 9th anniversary of Ilinque." Available at <http://radiotitanka.pe/noticias/513/el-ojo-que-llora-y-9-aniversario-de-llinque>

***Caminos de la memoria*** has successfully lobbied the municipality to allow them to manage the entrance to the amphitheater and the relationship with the guards in charge of security. Moreover, they have developed political advocacy that resulted in the monument being inscribed in the register of monumental heritage of the state in 2013 and recognized as a “point of culture” by the Ministry of Culture. In 2022, the Ministry of Culture recognized the Eye that Cries as a cultural heritage of the nation under the direction of Gisela Ortiz, herself a family member of a missing person.

The association has also formed alliances with the Ombudsman’s Office and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights at the State level. Internationally, they are part of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience,<sup>37</sup> the largest global alliance of museums and monuments dedicated to victims of human rights violations. “Paths of Memory” has been advocating for several years for the recognition of the Eye that Cries at UNESCO and has obtained pronouncements from the United Nations Special Procedures in favor of the monument.<sup>38</sup>

Over the years, under pressure from negationist attacks, the association’s understanding of the memorial has changed. Initially, human rights activists saw the Eye that Cries as primarily a space for the relatives of the disappeared, who had no other place to mourn. Consequently, the monument was used as a space for victims caused by the State. However, due to constant attacks from negationist sectors, the discourse of protection of the monument turned towards the affirmation that it is, according to the initial vision of its author, a tribute to all victims of violence, including those caused by subversive groups.

The use and physical appearance of the monument, the Eye that Cries, have evolved over time. Commemorative activities now more explicitly include the memory of victims of armed groups, with names and photographs of members of the armed forces and police killed in attacks by subversive groups included in public activities. The physical configuration of the monument has also changed, with new names inscribed and larger stones replacing the original boulders to accommodate the names of “collective cases.” Family members of victims gather at the memorial for significant dates and engage in activities such as placing flowers and photographs on the stones.

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37 Asociación Caminos de la Memoria. “El Ojo que Lloro – Perú.” Sites of Conscience. Available at <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/en/membership/asociacion-caminos-de-la-memoria-el-ojo-que-llora-peru/>

38 UN Human Rights. “Peru: UN experts applaud ‘El Ojo que Lloro’ memorial, warn against denialism.” 9 Feb. 2022. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/es/press-releases/2022/02/peru-un-experts-applaud-el-ojo-que-llora-memorial-warn-against-denialist>





A flower is laid on stones inscribed with the names of victims of Peru's internal conflict and the dates that they were disappeared or killed. Some of the stones include the victims' age at the time of their death or disappearance. (Photo credit: Hannah Ahern)



A guided visit of the Eye that Cries for students of the Carmelitas Private School. (Photo credit: Percy Rojas Quispe).





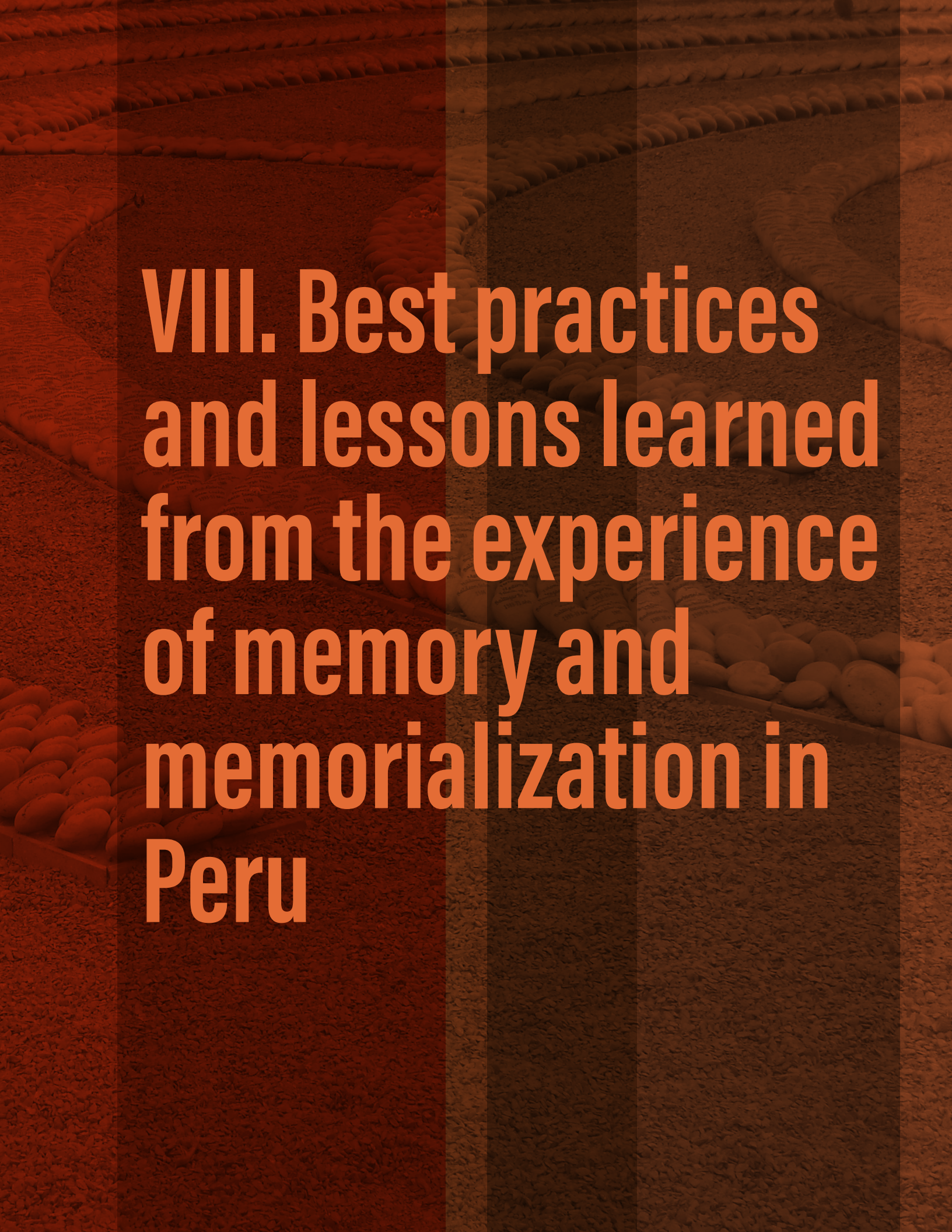
A ceremony at the Eye that Cries memorial to commemorate the anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR)'s final report publication. (Photo credit: Percy Rojas Quispe).

While these interventions alter the creator's original vision, they demonstrate that the Eye that Cries is a space with practical value, realized in each ritual act and in relation to specific communities of victims. The evolution of the monument's use and discourse around it has led to the formalization of a methodology for its use, the development of training modules for guides, and the use of a museal script.<sup>39</sup> However, these acts of commemoration stand in stark contrast to the destructive actions of negationist groups, such as throwing paint over the stones.

Despite the fact that the Eye that Cries was not built after a consultation process that would provide it with a social infrastructure of protection and legitimacy, it has established a network of alliances through "Caminos de la Memoria" that allows it to continue its activities despite the persistent opposition of denialism. The State formally recognizes its explicit function of commemoration, and the commemorative space has been appropriated by victims' organizations.

<sup>39</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. "Memory Roads: Building a Dialogue that Brings Memory into the Present." 2020. Available at <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Caminos-de-la-Memoria-Toolkit-Toolkit-Final.pdf>



The background of the slide features a photograph of a stone path, likely made of river stones, receding into the distance. The path is overlaid with a semi-transparent grid pattern. The overall color palette is a range of brown and orange tones, creating a warm and textured appearance.

# VIII. Best practices and lessons learned from the experience of memory and memorialization in Peru



**T**he Peruvian case is complex and challenges orthodoxies regarding historical memory. There is no complete ideological hegemony over memory, and the State does not directly represent a dominant memory as the official version. Transitional justice and memory mechanisms were not the result of long social consultation processes, but rather rapid actions taken during brief democratic windows. Physical construction preceded social construction,<sup>40</sup> but the lessons learned may not be applicable to future memory inter

However, it is possible to identify elements that reflect internationally recognized principles, as well as those specific to the Peruvian experience.

## → Social consultation and sustainability

The design, realization, and use of monumental spaces require social construction before physical construction. Consultation<sup>42</sup> is necessary to ascertain the will to commemorate, determine forms and functions of commemorative practices, and build alliances that enhance the value of the space.

Consultation should prioritize victims' collectives and be time-efficient, to avoid squandering transitional political opportunities. It can also build trust and alliances between victims' movements, civil society institutions, and political actors. In the Peruvian case, alliances evolved after the creation of the Ojo que Llorra from relatives of State victims to broader collectives. A pre-creation phase that prioritizes consultation and builds resilience in the memorial space is necessary.

40 Bello, Martha Nubia. "Museum of Historical Memory." YouTube video, 2:41, posted by Universidad del Rosario, May 9, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXT11LGOvNc>

41 "Espacios de Memoria." Available at <http://espaciosdememoria.pe/>

42 Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition. "Memorialization Processes in the Context of Gross Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law: The Fifth Pillar of Transitional Justice." July 2020.

## → **Artistic dimension**

Monumental commemoration has an artistic dimension that should interact with users and their decoding of aesthetic language. Although artistic vision cannot be reduced to consultation criteria, proposals can dialogue with common uses intended for commemorative spaces.

El Ojo que Lloro, produced from elite artistic spaces and using symbolic resources external to local tradition, establishes symbolic connections with its communities of memory through transparent and direct metaphors: the weeping eye as a physical image of mourning, the labyrinth of names, and the use of river stones. The metaphors refer to the familiar rite of funeral mourning, and the aesthetic quality of the space allows it to function in two necessary registers: commemorative use and cultural prestige.

## → **The duty of memory and combating denialism**

States are responsible for valuing the material bases of truth and commemoration, protecting them from denialism, which denies the human dignity of victims. While denialism can rely on memory practices, it differs from victim memory as it denies the suffering of others.

In Peru, individuals who have suffered at the hands of subversive organizations support denialism, and although they are entitled to recognition as victims,<sup>43</sup> the rejection of the Eye that Cries tends to come from radical militants of Fujimorism, who seek political gain. This rejection is a violent and evocative memory of the perpetrator, which implies the vindication of human rights violations during the conflict.

It is a mistake for the State to consider denialism a legitimate memory and give it a voice in the spaces of memory. Denialism is not interested in dialogue, narrative consensus, or new historical syntheses. Its goal is to suppress the other and justify the crime. However, the normative framework of transitional justice focuses more on affirmative memory activity and less on guiding principles and practices that should help the State combat denialism. Therefore, there is a need to address this pending task.

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43 UN. Documents on Victims of Terrorism. See <https://www.un.org/victimsofterrorism/es/documents>

## → **Interaction of transitional justice measures**

Transitional justice measures work best when they are considered as an interrelated whole rather than as separate measures. While these measures do not need to occur in parallel, they should be designed to build on the advances of other measures already in place, and with the intention of strengthening those advances.

In Peru, most of the measures considered part of transitional justice have been carried out over a twenty-year period following the fall of the Fujimori regime and the end of the armed conflict. The measures have occurred in sequence, with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the annulment of the amnesty law as initial measures that fed subsequent processes of reparations and criminal justice that continue to this day. Memory initiatives have taken place subsequent to the TRC but without the benefit of a comprehensive and coherent policy. However, initiatives such as El Ojo que Lloró and other commemorative experiences show the catalytic potential of the truth commission and the interrelationship with the reparations process and the search for the disappeared.

Commemoration should build on truth-seeking and refer to non-judicial and judicial truth, as well as serve as an enabling space for reparations. However, commemorative spaces require freedom of expression to function, and the field of a constructive exercise of memory extends from the extremes of censorship on the one hand, to violence on the other. While mechanisms to suppress public debate should be avoided, violence should not be tolerated.

## → **Avoid mechanisms to suppress public debate but do not tolerate violence**

Commemorative spaces require freedom of expression in order to function. Both commemoration and a certain level of civic and peaceful dissent are valid exercises of freedom of expression. The field of a constructive exercise of memory extends from the extremes of censorship, on the one hand, and violence, on the other.

In the Peruvian case, these extremes are very close and restrict the exercise of memory to a narrow field. The State, instead of allowing memory and punishing denialism, expels from the public debate the perspective of the defeated by enacting laws of apology and exclusions of members of subversive groups in the law of reparations. As a result, it limits what can be commemorated. This approach not only excludes those who persist in vindicating violent ideologies, but also those who changed their conceptions, those who accepted what happened, those who surrendered.



On the other hand, the State allows the violent actions of groups that harass human rights organizations and exercise denialist discourse along with violent actions. The Peruvian government has carried out three police operations in recent years against members of radical organizations whose political discourse is inspired by the defeated armed organizations, all of which have been of disputed legality and have resulted in possible violations of due process. Meanwhile, there has been no police intervention against violent denialist groups, even when they have acted in flagrante delicto.

The public exercise of memory is, by its nature and the facts it evokes, controversial and triggers deep traumas. However, it is a necessary exercise that must be protected and requires the legitimacy of the State. The comparison of different versions of the past is valid in society, assuming that they share certain minimum common values in the recognition of human rights.

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This text provides an overview of the “El Ojo que Llora” memorial, a space dedicated to the memory of those who disappeared during the Peruvian armed conflict between 1980-2000. The monument has been the subject of extensive discussion within the literature on the politics of memory in Peru, with particular attention paid to its role as a memory knot where conflicting narratives about the past intersect, at times violently. However, this text aims to highlight the importance of the community of memory formed by the victims’ relatives and a formal association of people and institutions that manage and safeguard the monument.

Against the backdrop of the contentious political context surrounding memory in Peru, the meaning of the monument has evolved from a primarily artistic intervention to a site where diverse, conflicting public narratives about the violent past are articulated and contested. This text identifies some of the lessons learned from the transformation of the “El Ojo que Llora,” from its origins to its current explicit function as a commemorative space, as well as its implicit function as a site of dispute.

## THE DUE PROCESS OF LAW FOUNDATION (DPLF)

DPLF is a nonprofit organization dedicated to human rights and the rule of law in Latin America. DPLF is headquartered in Washington, DC, with an office in El Salvador and a multinational team of professionals based throughout the region. Working with civil society organizations throughout Latin America, DPLF provides technical legal assistance, promotes dialogue with government representatives, and creates opportunities for the exchange of information and experience. DPLF also conducts research and produces publications that analyze and discuss the main human rights challenges in the region, in light of international law and comparative perspectives.

Founded in 1996 by Professor Thomas Buergenthal and his colleagues at the United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador, DPLF has worked on transitional justice issues since its inception, promoting compliance with international standards and the use of inter-American and international law to improve legislation, policy, and practice through comparative research and the exchange of lessons learned in the Americas and other regions of the world.

DPLF’s Impunity and Grave Human Rights Violations Program, which was responsible for the production of this publication, works to strengthen the institutions in charge of criminal prosecution, those with the mandate to grant reparations, and those that search for disappeared persons, establish processes to learn the truth and preserve memory. Our initiatives include research, advocacy and the exchange of experiences and knowledge between countries and partner organizations throughout Latin America.