

**Roberto Bolaño (1953-2003) & Chronology of Chilean Coup (1973) and Aftermath**

1953 - B. born in Santiago de Chile, the son of a truck driver (who was also a boxer) and a teacher

1958-68 - B. w/ his family live in different cities in Chile: Quilpué, Cauquenes, Viña del Mar and Los Angeles

1968 - B. moves w/ his family to Mexico City at the age of 15. He enrolls in High School for 2 years and then quits his formal education altogether.

1968 - The Massacre of Tlatelolco in Mexico City

Sept. 4, 1970 - Socialist leader Salvador Allende wins presidential election in Chile (36% of vote)

November 2, 1970 - Allende takes office in Chile.

Sept. 11, 1973 - Coup d'etat overthrows Allende in Chile; 3,000-10,000 deaths during the coup alone

1973 - B. decides he wants to return to Chile to support the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende. He embarks on a long trip from Mexico to Chile by land and by sea. When he finally arrives in Chile, the coup is about to take place or already has taken place. Once it takes place, he is arrested as "a Mexican spy" and is jailed for 8 days. The only reason he gets out of jail is because once there, he is recognized by two police men who had gone to school with him in Chile when he was 15 years old. One of them approaches him, and asks, "Don't you remember me? I'm your classmate." These two police men got him released from jail.

1973-1977 - General Augusto Pinochet emerges as leader of military government in Chile

January, 1974 - B. returns to Mexico City, and remains there until 1977

1975 - B. publishes his first book of poems

1975 - The Spanish dictator General Francisco Franco dies

1977 - B. leaves Mexico, and travels in Africa, France, and Spain. He decides to stay in Spain, in Barcelona, where his mother has lived for 2 years. In Spain he supports himself with a variety of odd jobs.

1978 - Pinochet orchestrates plebiscite in Chile to test to confirm his authority - 75% vote in favor of Pinochet govt.

1980 - After 3 years in Barcelona, B. moves to the medieval city Gerona, in Cataluña.

August 10, 1980 - New Constitution promulgated in Chile; calls for plebiscite on return to civilian rule in 1988.

1983-88 - Unsuccessful protests in Chile in favor of a return to democracy

1984 - B. writes his first novel.

1987 - Registration begins for referendum; opposition in Chile forms broad front

October 5, 1988 - Pinochet loses plebiscite (55%-43%), forcing presidential elections in Chile.

December 15, 1989 - Opposition alliance under Patricio Alwyn wins presidential elections with 55%; Pinochet remains Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces

March 11, 1990 - Pinochet's last day in office.

1993 - B. publishes a novel of his for the first time, *La pista de hielo*

December, 1994 - Eduardo Frei (representing Center-Left coalition) elected President of Chile

1996 - B. publishes 2 books, *La literatura nazi en América Latina*, and his novel *Estrella distante* (Distant Star)

- Patricio Guzmán's documentary "Chile: Obstinate Memory" filmed in Santiago de Chile; released in 1997

1997 - B. publishes the short-story collection *Llamadas telefónicas*.

1998 - B. publishes the novel *Los detectives salvajes*. He travels to Chile for the first time in 25 years. This will also be his only return trip to Chile before his death in 2003.

March 10 - Pinochet retires as Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces; takes post as Senator-for-life

October 16 - Pinochet arrested in Great Britain on orders of Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón

1999 - B. receives the prestigious Premio Rómulo Gallegos for *Los detectives salvajes*, recognized as the best novel published in Spanish the previous year

2000 - B. publishes the novel *Nocturno de Chile*

January 17 - Socialist Ricardo Lagos (representing Center-Left coalition) elected President of Chile in run-off against conservative Joaquín Lavín (51% to 48%)

March 2 - Pinochet released on health grounds; returns to Chile

October - Patricio Guzmán's "Chile, Obstinate Memory" shown for first time in commercial theatres in Santiago de Chile

2001 - B. publishes the short-story collection *Putas asesinas*

2002 - B. publishes the novel *Amberes*, written years earlier

July 15, 2003 - Bolaño dies from liver failure

September - B's short-story collection *El gaucho insufrible* published posthumously

2004 - A collection of B's articles and essays published posthumously under the title of *Entre paréntesis*.

His monumental novel *2666*, which remained unfinished at his death, is published posthumously.

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