

Writing Complicity in Post-Pinochet Chile: The Ideological Adventures of Mariana Callejas

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Civilian complicity remains one of the least studied aspects of the Pinochet dictatorship and, to this point, has not been a matter of public discussion in Chile. Complicity has taken many forms throughout the dictatorship (1973-1990) and transition to democracy (1990-) and demands to be studied in various spheres: among intellectuals, the Church, the political right, the media, and certain “renovated” leftists who have overtly and tacitly upheld Pinochet’s project. This paper, part of a larger project on complicity and its articulations through first-person discourse, will examine the case of Mariana Callejas, a literary writer who married the American-born DINA henchman Michael Townley, infamous for his complicity in the deaths of ex-President Eduardo Frei Montalva, Orlando Letelier, and General Carlos Prats (a general loyal to Allende). After many years living in impunity, Callejas, who continued to write literary fiction up until just a few years ago, is now in prison as an accomplice to the Letelier assassination. In many ways, her case, fictionalized by Roberto Bolaño in his well-known novel *By Night in Chile*, emblemizes the complicities of the Chilean intelligentsia with the dictatorship, while also revealing how common citizens committed themselves ideologically to state sponsored violence. This paper will read Callejas’s present-bound, first person account *Siembra vientos* (1995) against her fiction written in the 1980s during the Pinochet regime. The paper will explore the performativity of Callejas’s narrative “I” in relation to questions of responsibility, ethics, shame, and justice.