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Morris Morley and Chris McGillion, *Reagan and Pinochet: The Struggle over US Policy toward Chile* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 2015, \$34.99). Pp. 354. ISBN 978 1 1074 5809 3.

United States policy towards Augusto Pinochet's dictatorial regime (1973–90) underwent two major shifts during Ronald Reagan's presidency, from a "close embrace" early on, to active support for democracy after 1985. Morris Morley and Chris McGillion have written a well-researched and comprehensive account of US–Chile relations for the period, drawing on an array of archival sources as well as interviews conducted with officials in both the Reagan and Pinochet administrations. The most striking finding from their prodigious research is just how little influence Washington actually had in the five years leading up to Pinochet's electoral defeat in 1988 and subsequent transfer of power to civilian leaders.

One of the book's merits is the superb job it does setting up the ideas, antecedents, and personalities which anchored Reagan's foreign-policy approach at the start of the 1980s, as well as the challenges and contradictions to US policy arising from changing domestic and international contexts. Beginning in 1983, anti-regime protests and political violence in Chile prompted Reagan officials to reassess their approach. They began urging Pinochet to negotiate a democratic transition with moderate opponents before the tense situation escalated any further. Increasingly, Pinochet appeared less like a reliable US ally and more like an embarrassing anachronism. Furthermore, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina had all returned to civilian rule by 1985, making Chile the hemispheric "odd man out."

Initially, Reagan officials thought they could change Pinochet's mind with lectures and petitions, even as he refused to concede on just about every issue. As time went on, US policymakers discovered the depth of the dictator's intransigence and that he wanted to remain in power well past 1989. This fact alarmed Washington as well as a significant part of the Chilean military. Members of the junta feared that Pinochet's continued presence at La Moneda would have negative consequences for their institutions and possibly destabilize the country.

The text shows, as well as any other I have read, the bifurcated nature of Washington policymaking, in which interagency disagreements and separate actions by the Pentagon, the State Department, and Congress hampered policy coherence. *Reagan and Pinochet* takes the reader deep into the heart of the Washington bureaucracy. The book also demonstrates sound knowledge of Chile's political actors and the constitutional qualities of the dictatorship. That is, Chile's increasingly independent courts and autonomous junta members demanded Pinochet's respect for the integrity of the 1988 plebiscite, scheduled to determine whether or not he would receive another eight-year term of office in accord with the 1980 Constitution.

Despite the military's concerns about Pinochet's perpetuation in power, junta members José Toribio Merino (navy), Fernando Matthei (air force), and Roldofo Stange (police) were united on key aspects of any transition: no prosecution of officers, no major changes to the 1980 Constitution, and no major changes to Chile's macroeconomic structure. Reagan officials eventually understood these dynamics, but they also clung to an unrealistic notion that they could get the army to abandon Pinochet. Meanwhile, Washington refused to apply its considerable financial leverage for fear of destabilizing the country to the benefit of the radical left. This was Pinochet's trump card with the Americans. He knew they wanted to

keep the Chilean Communist Party on the fringes of the political system and that Washington was not likely to undermine his free-market economy, touted as a model for Latin America.

In the end, US pressure was not a game-changer. Morley and McGillion reach the well-supported conclusion that “the restoration of democracy was more a function of decisions and timetables determined by Chile’s internal dynamics than a response to imperial state pressures.” However, they also conclude that steady US pressure on Pinochet had real significance, helping to “decompress a volatile situation in Chile” and “coaxing and encouraging adherence to the 1980 Constitution among those junta members most eager to bring Pinochet’s personalist rule to an end” (322).

The book speaks to questions about US influence in the Third World, especially the promotion of democracy during the final phase of the Cold War, and fits into a historiographical trend. Recent books by Tanya Harmer and Kristian Gustafson similarly demonstrate that the United States enjoyed less influence in Chile than had previously been thought. A sophisticated piece of scholarship, *Reagan and Pinochet* is a must-read for students of the Cold War, US diplomacy, and Chilean history.

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Steven Bender, *Mea Culpa: Lessons on Law and Regret from US History* (London: New York University Press, 2015, \$35.00). Pp. 239. ISBN 978 1 4798 9962 3.

Steven Bender would like the United States to be better. “In this book,” he opens, “I identify and apply a moral compass, steeped in history, that can guide decision makers and all of us on our journey toward an advanced humanity and one that avoids moral blind spots” (6). This is, then, a work of advocacy, a critique of many recent and current US laws, policies, and programmes, and suggestions for ways in which change might occur. *Mea Culpa* is very much in keeping with Bender’s earlier work, referenced frequently here, in which he has advocated forcefully for the rights of immigrants to the United States, particularly those from a Latino/a background. Here, though, Bender expands his scope to consider other groups in the United States who, he believes, have been “dehumanized” by official or unofficial actions: farm workers, the poor, homosexuals, death row inmates, Muslims, African Americans, and women.

Bender takes his framework from instances of official regret, policies and actions for which governments federal and state have, in the past, apologized: slavery, Jim Crow, lynching, the treatment of Native Americans, Japanese internment during World War II, the exclusion of Chinese immigrants, the Tuskegee syphilis experiments, and forced sterilizations. Examining these historical events for “common clues that should have been evident contemporaneously to policymakers and other participants” (16), he concludes that the common theme is “the perceived lesser humanity of the targets and victims” (23). Armed with this knowledge, policymakers and the public can “foresee the potential for societal regret and ... thus alter the course of history during the current generation” (25). Rather than having to wait decades for official recognition of the harm done to individuals and groups by official policy, the book argues, damaging policies and laws can be identified and changed today, thus avoiding the need for official regret and preventing enormous harm being inflicted.