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Raymond, C. D. (2020). Dealigned or Still Salient? Religious-Secular Divisions in Chilean Presidential Elections. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1111/blar.13111>, <https://doi.org/10.1111/blar.13111>

Published in:
Bulletin of Latin American Research

Document Version:
Peer reviewed version

Queen's University Belfast - Research Portal:
[Link to publication record in Queen's University Belfast Research Portal](#)

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Dealigned or Still Salient? Religious-Secular Divisions in Chilean Presidential Elections

Recent studies have raised questions regarding the salience of religion in Chilean elections. In addition to secularisation reducing the number of adherents and the rise of issues competing with the religious-secular cleavage, recent evidence shows that the impact of religion on voters' ideological orientations has weakened. Contrary to arguments suggesting the religious-secular cleavage has experienced dealignment, analysis of voting behaviour in recent presidential elections shows that significant religious-secular divisions persist: in three of the four most recent elections, religious voters have sided with the main candidate of the right significantly more than have secular voters.

Key Words

Elections; voting behaviour; religion; social cleavages; religious-secular cleavage; Chile

Note:

This is the pre-print version of the manuscript; a revised version accepted at *Bulletin of Latin American Research*.

Religion was central to the formation of the Chilean party system, and structured voting behaviour to a considerable extent for decades (Scully, 1992; Scully, 1995). However, recent developments have created doubt as to whether this remains the case. For one, there have been changes in the issues represented by the parties, such as the appearance of a divide between democracy's steadfast supporters and those with a favourable view of Chile's authoritarian past (Tironi and Agüero, 1999; Tironi, Agüero, and Valenzuela, 2001). Additionally, there have been changes in the religious market (namely, secularisation and the growth of Protestant churches) that may have weakened the social bases that once supported the religious-secular cleavage. As a result of these changes, some have argued that Chile's cleavage between religious and secular has experienced electoral dealignment (see Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003; Bargsted and Somma, 2016; Bargsted and De la Cerda, 2019) akin to what has unfolded in many European democracies (Best, 2011; Goldberg, 2019).

But has religion really ceased to structure Chile's party system, or does religion remain an important factor that continues to influence how voters view politics and, thus, how they vote? Some research suggests that, despite secularisation, religion retains considerable influence on those who remain attached to religion (Valenzuela, Scully, and Somma, 2007; Scully, 2017; Herrera, Morales, and Rayo, 2019). If the effects of religion have changed, it is only because the religious cleavage has undergone realignment, with the balance of religious voters' support shifting from the political centre to (increasingly) socially conservative parties of the right, and non-religious voters shifting to the (increasingly) secular parties of the left (Raymond and Felch, 2014; Valenzuela, Somma, and Scully, 2018).

Because this debate has implications for our understanding of religious cleavages in other Latin American democracies, this paper seeks to determine which of these perspectives on the state of the religious-secular cleavage is most supported by recent evidence. To adjudicate between these competing arguments, this paper examines the impact of religion on

voting behaviour in the four most recent presidential elections. Using surveys measuring voters' behaviour in these elections, the results show that religious-secular divisions have persisted, even if the magnitude of these divisions has fluctuated during these elections. Rather than experiencing dealignment, the continued salience of religion in Chilean society and elections suggests that religious-secular divisions will persist in future elections. Because the social forces undergirding the religious-secular cleavage in Chile are present and may become (even) more important in other Latin American countries than they already are, the results suggest that more attention to religious-secular cleavages may be required to understand party politics and elections across Latin America in the immediate future.

Previous Research

Religion has long been a central feature of Chilean party politics. Going back to the nineteenth century, tensions between religious and secular forces in society were reflected in the political parties. Secular interests seeking to disentangle the relationship between the state and the Church were identified with the radicals, while those looking to protect the interests of the Church supported the conservatives. As the electoral appeal of socialists and communists began to rise in the twentieth century, the Catholic Church threw its support behind the Christian Democratic Party (*Partido Demócrata Cristiano*, or PDC), using the party as a popular vehicle to mobilise religious voters in both urban centres and among peasants in the countryside to oppose Marxism (Scully, 1992). Immediately following the restoration of democracy, it seemed that voting behaviour would continue to be structured along similar religious-secular lines (Scully, 1995), as the PDC continued to attract the support of Catholic voters (Herrera, Morales, and Rayo, 2019).

Since those first elections following democratisation, several changes in Chilean society and the party system have occurred which have, according to some, produced changes

in the strength and/or significance of the religious-secular cleavage. One is that political parties began to divide along lines between those parties channelling voter frustrations with democracy into support (however soft or firm) for authoritarianism and those preferring democracy (Tironi and Agüero, 1999; Tironi, Agüero, and Valenzuela, 2001). As a result of the emphasis on this issue divide, previous literature argues that religion ceased to have significant effects of voting behaviour (Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003).

Another change in Chilean society occurred in the religious market. Whereas Chile was once overwhelmingly Catholic, Evangelical Protestants have made inroads, with increasing numbers of converts: constituting less than two per cent of the population in the 1930 census, Protestants comprised more than 15 per cent of the population by the 2002 census. Because the PDC was formed to mobilise Catholic voters, potentially leaving Protestant voters open to be mobilised by other parties,¹ the growth in the share of Protestants may have reduced the cohesion of the religious vote—and thus the appearance of a religious-secular divide.

Two other related trends are argued to have reduced the appearance of religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour further: secularisation and dealignment. In recent years, more and more Chileans have ceased to identify with religion, with some estimates putting the number of Chileans identifying as non-religious (including those identifying as atheist or agnostic) around 25 per cent of the population (Somma, Bargsted, and Valenzuela, 2017; González, 2018). As an additional sign of secularisation, those continuing to identify as religious attend church less frequently (Luna, Monestier, and Rosenblatt, 2013; Bargsted and De la Cerda, 2019). With people less engaged with their faith, and with religion becoming less important in the average voter's daily life, Chileans are less likely to identify with the

¹ As evidence of the different prospects for mobilising Protestant voters, previous research (Boas, 2016) shows that Protestants may be mobilised the presence of Protestant candidates while non-Protestants are not.

major political ideologies (Bargsted and Somma, 2016; Bargsted and De la Cerda, 2019). Similar to the social dealignment observed in other countries (Best, 2011; Goldberg, 2019), this argument holds that the divisions between religious and secular voters have weakened over time.

Not all signs, however, suggest that the religious-secular cleavage is undergoing dealignment. At a theoretical level, we might expect to observe that a significant religious-secular divide persists based on the literature regarding the transformation of values that occurs in response to socioeconomic development. As economies and societies develop and material needs are met, leaving people are more secure to wrestle with quality-of-life issues, people begin to adopt more individualised, post-material value systems favouring personal freedoms and expression (Inglehart, 1977; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005). As more people come to adopt post-material value systems, issues of personal choice and morality such as abortion, extending marriage rights to same-sex couples, and gender expression enter the issue agenda; because religious groups holding more traditional values systems tend to oppose policy liberalisation on these issues, divisions between religious and secular may persist or even intensify.

Empirically, there is also the fact that despite considerable secularisation, religion remains relevant in the lives of many Chileans (both Catholic and Protestant). This implies that religion will continue to provide values and guide the voting behaviour of a significant share of the electorate in future elections. In keeping with this expectation, religious-secular divisions continue to be found in public opinion, particularly on issues of moral traditionalism, and these issues continue to influence voters' political orientations and voting behaviour (Valenzuela, Scully, and Somma, 2007; Palermo, Infante Erazo, and Hurtado Pinochet, 2015). Additionally, the major parties continue to be divided along religious-secular lines (Altman et al., 2009; Poblete, 2011; Luna, Monestier, and Rosenblatt, 2013

Scully, 2017)—including among legislators themselves in terms of their own religious practices (Valenzuela, Somma, and Scully, 2018). This suggests that parties recognise that religious-secular divisions in the electorate persist and find them sufficiently divisive and stable around which to devise successful electoral strategies.

What, arguably, has changed since democratisation are the parties attracting religious voters' support. Whereas religious voters sided with the PDC and its coalition partners in the broader *Concertación*—chief among them the *Partido Socialista* (Socialist Party) and *Partido por la Democracia* (Party for Democracy)—in the immediate aftermath following the restoration of democracy, the impact of the religious-secular divide reversed by the mid-2000s, benefiting the parties of the right (Raymond and Felch, 2014; Valenzuela, Somma, and Scully, 2018). This is because the PDC's coalition partners increasingly came to represent secular-friendly, socially progressive positions on issues like divorce, abortion, and same-sex marriage while the two major parties of the right—National Renewal (*Renovación Nacional*, or RN) and Independent Democratic Union (*Unión Demócrata Independiente*, or UDI)—staked out more conservative positions on these issues. As a result, voters have realigned their support, siding increasingly with the parties of the right over the PDC and the parties of the left. What remains to be seen is whether the trends toward realignment seen in earlier research have continued in recent elections, or whether the trends towards dealignment have rendered religious-secular divisions inconsequential in recent Chilean elections.

Evidence of Religious-Secular Divisions in Recent Years

We might expect to observe that divisions between religious and secular—with religious voters supporting the right and non-religious voters supporting the left—have persisted in recent elections due to the fact that issues of morality have remained important topics of debate and legislation. The last several elections have featured the topic of legal

recognition of same-sex relationships, either as civil unions or as marriages. Such recognition has been supported by candidates of the left, such as Michelle Bachelet and Tomás Hirsch; while some figures on the right like Sebastián Piñera supported recognition of same-sex civil unions, many have opposed extending *marriage* rights to same-sex couples (CLAM, 2005). The topic of abortion has also featured in recent election campaigns, again dividing parties along religious-secular lines, with candidates on the left favouring abortion legalisation and parties of the right standing opposed (Angell and Reig, 2006; Bodzin, 2013; Allsup, 2017).

Divisions between religious and secular have appeared even more clearly along religious-secular lines when these topics have been debated and voted on in the National Congress. Nearly every member of UDI and RN voted to oppose decriminalisation of abortion and legalisation of civil unions/same-sex marriage, while members of the parties of the left voted overwhelmingly in favour. The fact most members of the PDC voted in favour of same-sex civil unions/marriage and abortion suggests that the realignment of religious voters away from the PDC and towards the parties of the right may have continued in recent elections, further strengthening the ties between religious voters and parties of the right.

Working against the appearance of religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour, however, are some of the actions and personal views of the major candidates. While RN and UDI have been staunch opponents of legislation to liberalise the country's laws regarding abortion and same-sex relationships, religious voters may have questioned the credentials of the right's main presidential candidates, which in turn may have deflated their support among religious voters and inhibited the appearance of religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour. On the issue of legal recognition of same-sex couples, Sebastián Piñera stated during his campaign for president in the election of 2009/10 that he supported legal recognition of same-sex (as well as opposite-sex) cohabitation (CLAM, 2005). While he has

stated his personal opposition to same-sex *marriage* (BBC, 2011), Piñera's somewhat liberal stances on the issue of same-sex civil unions, as well as the so-called morning-after pill (Toro and Luna, 2011), may have undercut his potential support from religious voters, which may have undermined religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour. Additionally, the main conservative candidate in the election of 2013, Evelyn Matthei (then a member of UDI), was a proponent of abortion liberalisation, having sponsored a bill to decriminalise therapeutic (though not elective) abortions (La Tercera, 2010). Because such a stand put Matthei at odds with the opinion of many religious Chileans (not to mention her own party), religious voters may not have been willing to support her candidacy, despite her pledge during the campaign to oppose abortion legalisation (Bodzin, 2013). Lacking the support of religious voters for her past stand on abortion may have reduced any religious-secular division in voting behaviour that might otherwise have appeared with a more traditional conservative candidate.

Thus, it appears that the question about whether voting behaviour continues to be structured by religious-secular divisions remains an open one. While the continued divisions between the parties of the right and left along religious-secular lines suggests that these divisions may be reflected in voting behaviour, the background of the right's most recent candidates may have diminished their support among religious voters. If voters' religious commitments continue to lead them to support parties of the right over the PDC and the parties of the left, then the realignment argument would be supported; if not, then we would have evidence suggesting that the religious-secular cleavage has undergone dealignment.

Data

To determine the extent to which religious divisions in voting behaviour persist, I examine self-reported voting behaviour in the four most recent elections: 2005-6, 2009-10,

2013, and 2017. For the 2005/2006, 2009/2010, and 2013 elections, I examine surveys collected by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (2019; herein LAPOP). For the 2017 election, I examine the post-election survey collected as part of the fifth wave of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2019; herein CSES).

I examine two measures of voting behaviour. First, I examine respondents' self-reported voting behaviour in the second round of each presidential election. The second round of presidential elections is the most important for us to study, not only because it is the decisive election determining the president, but also because it represents the state of the balance between the left and right: because parties of the left and right line up behind one of the top two candidates in the second round, observing that religious/secular voters tend to support one side or the other would provide considerable evidence that religious-secular divisions continue to structure the broader party system. To determine whether religious-secular divisions appear among parties within each of the two major coalitions that have supported presidential candidates in the second round of presidential elections, I supplement these analyses by examining voters' behaviour in the first round of each election.

To measure religious-secular divisions, I include a series of variables measuring respondents' frequency of attendance at religious services. Leaving those who never attend religious services as the baseline, I include dichotomous variables for those attending yearly, monthly, and weekly (or more). Although frequency of attendance only measures one aspect of respondents' behaviour and does not take into account other aspects of religiosity, it nonetheless remains the best proxy differentiating religious from secular respondents used by most previous studies. To ensure that any effect of attendance on voting behaviour is not merely reflective of differences between Catholics and Protestants, I also include a dummy variable for Catholic respondents.

I include several additional control variables to reduce the possibility that the effects

of attendance are spurious. To account for the impact of respondents' ideological orientations on their voting behaviour, I create two dichotomous variables, one for respondents on the ideological left and another for those on the right. Both left and right are defined as those placing themselves on the three left- and right-most positions on the left-right scale,² leaving moderates and those not willing/able to identify themselves on the left-right scale as the baseline.³

To account for the impact of the democracy-authoritarian issue, I include a variable measuring whether respondents were dissatisfied with democracy (coded one for respondents who were fairly/very dissatisfied, and zero otherwise).⁴ While voters' (dis)satisfaction with democracy is admittedly a rough proxy, it nonetheless remains a valid measure: voters satisfied with democracy will be more likely to side with the pro-democratic parties of the left, while those dissatisfied with democracy—and thus at least more open to the return of authoritarian practices—will be more likely to side with the parties of the right. I include several additional controls to account for the possible effects of other social cleavages on voting behaviour. Namely, I include variables measuring respondents' household incomes,⁵ whether the respondent had completed a university education,⁶ whether the respondent

² In the LAPOP data, the left-right scale ranges from 1 (left) to 10 (right), while the XX data uses an eleven-point 0-10 scale.

³ Measuring ideology in this way is necessary given that Chilean voters are increasingly unwilling to locate themselves on the left-right spectrum (Navia and Osorio, 2015; Bargsted and Somma, 2016; Bargsted and De la Cerda, 2019), meaning that to use the original left-right scale would omit an increasing number of respondents (who may or may not be missing at random).

⁴ The question wording for this variable in the LAPOP surveys was as follows: 'In general, would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the way in which democracy functions in Chile?'. The question in the CSES data was worded as follows: 'On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Chile?'.⁵

⁵ The number of levels to the income scales differed from survey to survey. To standardize measurement of income differences across each survey, each is recoded to range from 0 to 1.

⁶ In the 2005/6 data, only respondents' number of years of schooling is measured. To approximate the university-education measure used in other years, I code all respondents having completed 15 years or more of education (comprising 15 percent of the sample) as

resided in a rural area,⁷ and respondents' genders and ages.⁸

Second-Round Voting Behaviour

Table 1 presents the results of logistic regression models predicting support for the conservative candidate in the second round of each presidential election. That is, in 2006, 2010, and 2017, these models predict voting for Sebastián Piñera; in 2013, the conservative candidate is Evelyn Matthei. Positive coefficients imply that the listed variable increases the probability of voting for the conservative candidate, while negative coefficients imply that the variable reduces the probability of voting for the conservative candidate.

Table 1 about here

The results provide some evidence of divisions in voting behaviour between religious and secular in 2006 and 2010: monthly attenders are more likely to vote for Piñera in 2006 (significant at the 10 per cent level), while weekly attenders are significantly more likely to vote for Piñera in 2010. Though frequency of attendance has no apparent effect on voting for Matthei in 2013 (perhaps a reflection of religious voters' frustration with her efforts to legalise abortion), both monthly and weekly attenders are significantly more likely to vote for Piñera than non-attenders in 2017.

The fact several coefficients for the variables measuring respondents' frequency of church attendance reach statistical significance is evidence of robust associations with voting behaviour given that these relationships emerge despite the fact several other variables also emerge as significant predictors. Respondents on the ideological right are significantly more likely to for the conservative candidate, while respondents placing themselves on the ideological left are significantly less likely. Additionally, we see that these results emerge

having completed a high level of education in the 2005/6 data.

⁷ In the LAPOP data, respondents are coded one if they reside in a rural area; the CSES data, respondents residing in a 'rural area or village' are coded as rural.

⁸ Ages are divided by 100 to facilitate interpretation of the coefficients in Table 1.

despite having controlled for the democracy/authoritarianism issue cleavage argued to have displaced the religious-secular cleavage: while those unsatisfied with democracy are significantly more likely to have voted for Piñera in 2006 and Matthei in 2013, dissatisfaction with democracy does not significantly influence voters' behaviour in 2010 or 2017.⁹

The substantive impact of respondents' frequency of attendance on their voting behaviour can be seen in Table 2, which presents the predicted probabilities of voting for the conservative candidate at each level of attendance. To show that differences in voting behaviour between Catholic and Protestant voters was negligible, I present predicted probabilities separately for both groups. These probabilities are calculated by holding income and age to their median values, and all other controls to zero, which allows us to see the independent impact of frequency of attendance on voting behaviour.

Table 2 about here

Table 2 shows that the impact of respondents' frequency of attendance on their voting behaviour is negligible in 2013. In 2006, monthly attendance results in a nine percentage-point increase in the probability that Catholics voted for Piñera relative to those never attending religious services (seven percentage points among Protestants). In 2010, there is a ten percentage-point difference between Protestants attending church weekly and those never

⁹ The lack of a significant, positive effect of attendance on support for Matthei in 2013 is at odds with the findings seen in Valenzuela, Somma, and Scully (2018), who find that their religiosity scale is associated with significantly higher probability of voting for Matthei. While it is possible that this discrepancy arises from the fact that their model does not control for the impact of respondents' political ideology, omitting the ideology variables from the model of voting behaviour in 2013 does not result in a statistically significant effect of monthly or weekly attendance on support for Matthei (though yearly attendance does become significant). This suggests that the difference between the results seen here and those seen in Valenzuela, Somma, and Scully (2018) reflects differences in the measurement of religiosity (theirs being more detailed) to at least some degree. This means that using frequency of attendance leads to more cautious interpretations regarding the continued salience of the religious-secular cleavage, which implies that finding evidence of significant religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour in other elections using this more cautious approach provides even more compelling evidence that such divisions remain important to understanding voting behaviour.

attending—and an eleven-point difference among Catholics. The differences are more substantial still in 2017, with both Catholic and Protestants attending church monthly 23 percentage points more likely to vote for Piñera than those never attending, and weekly attenders 24 percentage points more likely.

So as not to overstate the effect of church attendance, Table 2 also presents the predicted probabilities of voting for the conservative candidate at different levels of satisfaction with democracy and ideology. Regarding the impact of ideology, we see that while few voters on the ideological left vote for the conservative candidate, the overwhelming majority of voters on the right do, with predicted probabilities of 0.89, 0.73, 0.97 in 2010, 2013, 2017, respectively. In the two elections in which dissatisfaction with democracy has a significant effect on voting behaviour (2006 and 2013), we see that the effect of dissatisfaction is stronger than the effect of attendance in 2006, with dissatisfaction leading to a 31 percentage-point increase in the predicted probability of voting for Piñera. In 2010, the effect of dissatisfaction is much weaker, with dissatisfaction leading to a fifteen percentage-point increase in the probability of voting for Matthei. While the effects of ideology and dissatisfaction with democracy on the predicted probability of voting for the conservative candidate are greater than the effects of church attendance, the fact remains that church attendance remains statistically significant even after accounting for these variables. Most theories of voting behaviour locate variables like ideology and satisfaction with democracy as being more proximate to the final voting decision than voters' social identities, and that the effects of social identities on voting behaviour are also mediated by variables like ideology (Dalton, 2006: 178; Lewis-Beck et al., 2008: 23). Because the implication of these theories is that the effects of social identities on voting behaviour are likely to be considerably weaker than attitudinal variables (if they remain significant at all after controlling for attitudinal variables), the fact that attendance continues to have any effect

on voting behaviour is impressive, demonstrating that religion has important effects on voting behaviour.

Taken together, the results in Tables 1 and 2 provide evidence that religion continues to influence voting behaviour in Chilean presidential elections. Though the effects of church attendance in 2006 and 2010 are not as strong as the effects seen in 2017, the fact remains that church attendance continues to influence voting behaviour. The effect of church attendance on voting behaviour in 2010 is all the more impressive considering that the left's candidate in 2009-10 (Eduardo Frei) was from the PDC, which should have worked against the right's ability to attract religious voters' support.

First-Round Voting Behaviour

Table 3 presents the predicted probabilities of voting for each major presidential candidate in the first round of each presidential election. These predicted probabilities are produced using the results of multinomial logistic regressions for each election.¹⁰ As above, predicted probabilities are generated holding income and age at their median values and all other variables to zero to isolate the impact of frequency of attendance on voting behaviour as much as possible.

Table 3 about here

Frequency of attendance has little effect on voting behaviour in the first round of the presidential election in 2005: the predicted probabilities of voting for each candidate change little across the range of respondents' frequency of attendance. We see similarly weak effects of attendance on support for the right in 2013, with a small (though statistically significant) decline in the predicted probabilities voting for Matthei when moving across the range of the frequency-of-attendance variable. The negative relationship between frequency of attendance

¹⁰ I omit the results of these regressions in the interest of space, though these can be obtained from the author upon request.

and support for Matthei provides further evidence suggesting that religious voters did not support her campaign in protest of her support for legalising abortion. If any candidate's vote share is affected, it is Bachelet's, where the predicted probability among those respondents attending church weekly is twelve percentage points greater than among those never attending church.¹¹ Though attendance increases support for Bachelet in the first round, the findings in Tables 1 and 2 above suggest that this effect did not persist in the second round of the election.

In the elections of 2009 and 2017, however, we see evidence that religion leads voters to support candidates on the right. In these elections, it is Piñera who attracts a significantly more religious base of support than the main candidates of the centre-left: those attending weekly are twelve percentage points more likely to vote for Piñera than those attending less frequently. This effect is particularly impressive in 2009, where the PDC's Eduardo Frei was Piñera's primary competitor: despite Frei's ties to the PDC, his vote share is *not* greater among more frequently attending respondents than among less frequently attending respondents. In keeping with earlier research (Raymond and Felch, 2014), this suggests that religious voters preferred Piñera, the RN's candidate, over Frei because the PDC is no longer perceived as the party of religious voters.

The degree to which Piñera's support is rooted among the most frequently attending respondents is even greater in 2017. In this election, not only are respondents attending church weekly twelve percentage points more likely to vote for Piñera than those never attending church and those attending only once per year, but monthly attenders are five percentage points even more likely to vote for Piñera. The non-monotonic effect of attendance on Piñera's vote share may be due in part to the presence of independent José

¹¹ The predicted probability of voting for independent Franco Parisi is also significantly lower among those attending weekly than is the case among respondents attending less frequently.

Antonio Kast (himself a conservative religious Catholic), who drew significantly more (though still weak) support among frequently attending respondents than he did among less-frequently attending respondents.

These findings suggest that the effects of church attendance on support for Piñera seen above were genuinely robust and not merely confined to the second round of voting. In both 2009/10 and 2017, frequently-attending voters tended to line up behind Piñera more so than secular voters never attending church services, and that this was not just the case in the second round (when reluctant supporters were faced with a choice of supporting the lesser of two evils), but rather reflected consistent support for Piñera across both first and second rounds. While the tendency for religious voters to support the parties of the right is interrupted by the fact that Bachelet's 2013 base of support was (even) more firmly rooted among religious than secular voters, this fact still demonstrates that religious-secular divisions have been in evidence in the most recent elections—in contrast to the expectations that the salience of religion for voting behaviour had receded.

Discussion and Conclusion

Recent debates have questioned whether the religious-secular cleavage remains an important determinant of voting behaviour, or whether changes in society and politics mean that the Chilean party system is on course to experience the sort of dealignment witnessed in Western Europe. To determine whether dealignment of the religious-secular cleavage has occurred in Chile, this paper has examined the extent of religious-secular divisions on presidential voting behaviour in the four most recent elections. Despite some evidence that the impact of the religious-secular cleavage has waned—as seen, in particular, by the weakening association between religion and voters' ideological self-placements (Bargsted and Somma, 2016; Bargsted and De la Cerda, 2019)—the fact religion has structured voting

behaviour over the last several elections demonstrates that the Chilean party system has not experienced the sort of religious dealignment seen in other countries (Best, 2011; Goldberg, 2019). Political parties and candidates continue to divide along religious-secular lines on the major questions of morality, creating relatively clear alternatives along religious-secular lines (that are only partly distorted by the candidates' past actions and positions) for voters to choose from: the major parties of the right continue to support the traditional stances on questions of morality, while the parties of the left continue to voice the secular positions on these moral issues. In response to these divisions among elites, voting behaviour continues to divide along religious-secular lines: religious voters continue to support the candidates associated with the parties of the right (with the exception of the election of 2005/6), and less-religious voters supporting the candidates of the left.

While we observe that religion has structured voting behaviour in recent elections, what reason do we have to believe that religious-secular divisions in voting behaviour will persist in future elections? To be sure, the relative weakness of the effects of church attendance on voting behaviour in 2013 suggests that religious-secular divisions in future elections are not given, especially if the candidate-specific properties of this election were responsible for the absence of significant religious-secular divisions. That said, the fact issues of morality like abortion and same-sex marriage remain salient in political discourse—and are poised to remain so for the foreseeable future—suggests that, so long as parties continue to divide along these lines, religion will continue to influence voting behaviour in future elections.

The conclusions to be drawn from the Chilean case have important consequences for our understanding of religious-secular cleavages elsewhere in Latin America. Rather than a future of religious dealignment, the evidence from Chile suggests that with continued socioeconomic development, religious-secular cleavages will emerge in other Latin American

democracies (if they have not emerged already). As seen in some other Latin American countries, opinion on issues like abortion (Rossi and Triunfo, 2012; Palermo, Infante Erazo, and Hurtado Pinochet, 2015; Küng et al., 2018) and same-sex marriage (Dion and Díez, 2017; Navarro et al., 2019) divides along religious-secular lines, even if not to the same extent—or with the same effect on voting behaviour—as seen in Chile. If religious-secular differences are heightened both by the growth in the number of people holding post-material values (Inglehart, 1977; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005) and the resulting polarisation of values between religious and secular (Navarro et al., 2019; Hildebrandt and Jäckle, 2019), then the findings suggest that continued socioeconomic development in other Latin American countries will produce religious-secular divisions of similar intensity to those seen in Chile. If correct, then similar developments to those seen recently in Brazil (Lehmann, 2018) and Costa Rica (Villarreal Fernández and Wilson, 2018) will be felt in other Latin American countries for years to come.

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Table 1: Logistic Regression Estimates of Voting for the Conservative Candidate in the Second Round of Presidential Elections, 2006-2017

Predictors	Year			
	2006	2010	2013	2017
Never Attend				
Yearly Attendance	-0.13	0.11	0.38	0.05
Monthly Attendance	0.46+	-0.02	-0.60	0.95**
Weekly Attendance	-0.02	0.45*	-0.53	1.03**
Catholic	0.18	-0.21	0.00	0.14
Ideological Left	-2.22**	-1.64**	-1.91**	-3.92**
Ideological Right	1.80**	2.09**	3.14**	3.75**
Dissatisfied with Democracy	1.43**	-0.27	1.10**	-0.13
Income Scale	1.18*	0.20	0.74	0.39
Higher Education	0.26	0.35	0.74+	-0.04
Women	-0.35+	0.06	-0.01	0.00
Age	0.21	0.84	0.55	-0.92+
Rural Resident	0.67**	0.05	0.28	0.03
Constant	-2.24**	-0.30	-2.84**	-0.06
Predicted Vote for:	Piñera	Piñera	Matthei	Piñera
Baseline Candidate:	Bachelet	Frei	Bachelet	Guillier
McFadden's R ²	0.25	0.16	0.34	0.32
% Correctly Predicted	79%	67%	88%	73%
n	835	789	576	891

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01. Entries are binary logistic regression coefficients.

Table 2: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for the Conservative Candidate in the Second Round of Presidential Elections, 2006-2017

Catholics	Frequency of Attendance			
	Never	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
2006	0.20	0.18	0.29	0.20
2010	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.61
2013	0.11	0.15	0.06	0.07
2017	0.46	0.47	0.69	0.70

Protestants	Frequency of Attendance			
	Never	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
2006	0.18	0.16	0.25	0.17
2010	0.56	0.58	0.55	0.66
2013	0.11	0.15	0.06	0.06
2017	0.43	0.44	0.66	0.67

	Ideology			Democracy	
	Left	Centre	Right	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
2006	0.03	0.20	0.60	0.20	0.51
2010	0.16	0.50	0.89	0.50	0.44
2013	0.02	0.11	0.73	0.11	0.26
2017	0.02	0.46	0.97	0.46	0.43

Entries are the predicted probabilities of voting for the conservative candidate in each election.

Table 3: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for Each Candidate in the First Round of Presidential Elections, 2005-2017

		Frequency of Attendance		
	Never	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
<u>2005</u>				
Sebastián Piñera	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.18
Michelle Bachelet	0.73	0.76	0.67	0.71
Joaquín Lavín	0.09	0.10	0.15	0.11
Tomás Hirsch	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
<u>2009</u>				
Sebastián Piñera	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.53
Eduardo Frei	0.41	0.40	0.42	0.38
Marco Enríquez-Ominami	0.16	0.16	0.14	0.09
Jorge Arrate	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.00
<u>2013</u>				
Evelyn Matthei	0.06	0.09	0.05	0.05
Michelle Bachelet	0.80	0.78	0.84	0.92
Marco Enríquez-Ominami	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.01
Franco Parisi	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.02
<u>2017</u>				
Sebastián Piñera	0.41	0.39	0.58	0.53
Carolina Goic	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.04
Alejandro Guillier	0.28	0.31	0.26	0.17
Beatriz Sánchez	0.21	0.20	0.08	0.08
Marco Enríquez-Ominami	0.06	0.04	0.00	0.08
José Antonio Kast	0.01	0.02	0.06	0.09

Entries are the predicted probabilities of voting for the candidate listed in each row in the respective election.