

**The politics of «moral sin»:
A study of abortion and divorce
in Catholic Chile since 1990**

Merike Helena Blofield

**The politics of "moral sin": A study of abortion and
divorce in Catholic Chile since 1990**

301
B621p

Las opiniones que se presentan en este trabajo, así como los análisis e interpretaciones que en ellos se contienen, son de responsabilidad exclusiva de su autor y no reflejan necesariamente los puntos de vista de FLACSO.

Esta publicación es uno de los resultados de las actividades desarrolladas, en el ámbito de la investigación y la difusión, por el Area de Relaciones Internacionales y Estudios Estratégicos de FLACSO-Chile. Estas actividades se realizan con el apoyo de diversas fundaciones, organismos internacionales, agencias de cooperación y gobiernos de la región y fuera de ella. Especial mención debemos hacer del apoyo de las fundaciones John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation y Fundación Ford.

Ninguna parte de este libro/documento, incluido el diseño de portada, puede ser reproducida, transmitida o almacenada de manera alguna ni por algún medio, ya sea electrónico, mecánico, químico, óptico, de grabación o de fotocopia, sin autorización de FLACSO.

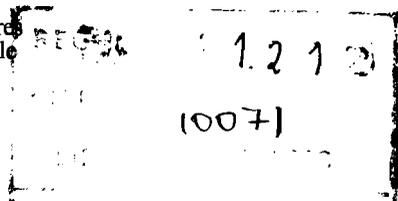
301.42 Blofield, Merike Helena
B652 The politics of "moral sin": a study of abortion
and divorce in Catholic Chile since 1990.
Santiago, Chile: FLACSO-Chile, 2001
63p. Nueva Serie FLACSO
ISBN: 956-205-160-9

FAMILIA / DIVORCIO / ABORTO / IGLESIA
CATOLICA / OPINION PUBLICA / PARTIDOS
POLITICOS / CHILE /

Inscripción N° 120.851. Prohibida su reproducción.

© 2001, FLACSO-Chile.
Leopoldo Urrutia 1950, Ñuñoa.
Teléfonos: (562) 225 7357 - 225 9938 - 225 6955 Fax: (562) 225 4687
Casilla electrónica: flacso@flacso.cl
FLACSO-Chile en el Internet: <http://www.flacso.cl>

Diseño de portada Nueva Serie Flacso: A.Dos Diseñadores
Diagramación interior: Claudia Gutiérrez, FLACSO-Chile
Producción: Marcela Zamorano, FLACSO-Chile
Impresión: LOM



INDEX

The politics of «moral sin»: A study of abortion and divorce in Catholic Chile since 1990	7
Context	9
The religious cleavage	11
The Chilean context	13
Political institutions and parties	13
The social dimensions of divorce and abortion	14
<i>Marital separations</i>	14
<i>Abortion rates and hospitalizations</i>	15
<i>Public opinion on divorce and abortion in the democratic era</i>	17
<i>Public opinion on abortion in 1990</i>	18
<i>Public opinion on abortion in 1996 and 2000</i>	18
Legislative initiatives	19
The religious cleavage in Chilean politics	23
Vatican agenda	23
The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Chile	25
Interest groups	27
Organization and financial resources	31
Intellectual production and resources	32
Networks	33
<i>Access to politicians</i>	33
<i>Organized religion</i>	35
<i>Business and the media</i>	35
<i>International links</i>	37
Consolidation of political party lines on abortion and divorce through the 1990's	39
Worldviews on abortion and divorce	39
The worldviews in the context of Chilean politics	40

<i>Integralist Catholic worldview</i>	40
<i>Liberal Catholic worldview</i>	43
<i>Secular worldview</i>	44
Consolidation of party lines on moral issues	45
Political strategies in the 1990's	46
<i>Consolidation of party lines on divorce</i>	47
<i>Consolidation of party lines on abortion</i>	51
Conclusion and implications for the future	57
Bibliography	61

Summary

Chile is the only country in the world where divorce remains illegal, and one of a handful of countries that prohibits abortion even to save the life of the woman. Moreover, Chile has not followed the trend toward liberalization of divorce and abortion with the re-establishment of democracy, as most Western democracies have. The paper examines this exceptional outcome by outlining the gap between the social dimensions of abortion and divorce –that is, actual behavior of Chileans and its consequences- and public opinion on the one hand, and political dynamics on the other hand.

The paper argues that political discourse has become dominated by a combination of integralist and liberal Catholic discourse, while secular discourse has become non-existent. It shows the differential strategies the political right, center and left have assumed on moral issues. Unlike other countries, the political right in Chile is highly proactive on both divorce and abortion, while the left is passive and reactive on abortion, and confused on divorce. The paper argues that this is influenced by three factors: the influence of the Catholic Church in Chilean politics, the differential access to resources between reformist and conservative networks in civil society, and the strategies they have assumed to promote their views.

Resumen

Chile es el único país en el mundo en el que el divorcio es ilegal y uno de los pocos en que se prohíbe el aborto incluso cuando peligra la vida de la mujer. Chile tampoco ha seguido la tendencia hacia la liberalización del divorcio y aborto una vez restablecida la democracia, como sí sucedió en la mayoría de los países de occidente. El trabajo examina esta excepcionalidad estudiando el importante gap que existe entre las dinámicas políticas y las dimensiones sociales del aborto y el divorcio -esto es, cómo los chilenos se plantean y se comportan en la práctica frente a estos temas.

El trabajo describe cómo la agenda política ha estado dominada por la combinación de un discurso integralista y católico liberal, relegando al discurso secular a una posición marginal. Contrariamente a otros países, la derecha chilena ha tenido una actitud proactiva en ambos temas, mientras la izquierda ha sido pasiva y reactiva en torno al aborto, y confusa al abordar el tema del divorcio. Tres factores explican aquellos comportamientos: la influencia de la Iglesia Católica en la política chilena, la diferencia en el acceso a recursos por parte de los sectores reformistas y conservadores, y las estrategias que han asumido esos sectores para promover sus propios puntos de vista.

The politics of “moral sin”: A study of abortion and divorce in Catholic Chile since 1990

Merike Helena Blofield¹

Why has Chile, unlike any other country in the occident, managed to resist the global postwar trends to liberalize and secularize society? This paper examines the politics of abortion and divorce in the post-Pinochet years to analyze the nature and efficacy of conservative resistance to secularizing reforms. In most countries, transition to democracy has meant a trend toward liberalization –or secularization- of laws on issues such as abortion and divorce, and a more open and democratic public debate on these issues. Contrary to this trend, eleven years of democratic government in Chile has not brought about a secularization of these laws; in fact, the political dynamics around these issues have become more conservative as rightwing resistance has been consolidated. Chile remains the only country in the occidental world (aside from Malta) where divorce is illegal, despite overwhelming public opinion in favor and numerous legislative initiatives to legalize it. Moreover, abortion to save the life of the woman was prohibited in 1989 by the outgoing military regime, and since then numerous legislative initiatives have sought to define abortion as homicide and to increase the jail terms of women and accomplices charged with abortions. The right controls the agenda on abortion, and actively –more successfully than in any other Western country- contests the agenda on divorce.

Several social explanations could be posited to understand Chile’s exceptional stand on moral issues: Chileans are a conservative people due to geographical isolation, lack of immigration, a historically strong upper class with close ties to a strong Catholic Church, and, on a political level, the experience of 17 years of dictatorship during a crucial period of time in world history with regard to women’s rights. All these factors are probably partly true; yet when compared with other countries, an analysis of Chilean society and politics reveals a more

1. Candidata a doctora en Ciencias Políticas de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte (Chapel Hill) y magister en Ciencias Políticas de la Universidad de York (Canadá).

complex political reality. Sociological data reveals that the behavior of Chileans is not conservative in the least: abortion rates in Chile are the highest in the Americas with the exception of Cuba, and 56 percent of children were born out of wedlock in 1999, beating even the haven of social liberalism, Sweden, at 50 percent. Moreover, public opinion supports re-legalization of therapeutic abortion, and an overwhelming majority favors legalized divorce. Yet eleven years of democracy has not brought about a manifested pluralism of worldviews and a political liberalization of laws on abortion and divorce. This working paper attempts to analyze the dynamics that have not allowed for the liberalization of these laws.

Context

Catholic countries have for centuries outlawed what they consider moral sins. Such laws came under increased political debate in the postwar years in the West and, in the case of formerly dictatorial countries, as democratic political contexts allowed for the public manifestation of diverse ethical worldviews. Hence, in every Latin American country except Chile divorce has been legalized, and only El Salvador, Colombia and Chile have -recently- prohibited therapeutic abortion to save the life of the woman. Others have varying indications for legal abortion, although only Cuba, Belize and Guyana maintain abortion on demand.

When Chile is compared with Argentina and Spain (with which a range of characteristics is shared, such as a common history of pro-natalist dictatorships, educated and largely urbanized populaces, and a historically hegemonic Catholic Church) the political differences are illuminated. In all three countries conservative military regimes maintained Catholic laws on abortion and divorce. At the time of democratization in these countries, high rates of illegal clandestine abortions and their health consequences, as well as unregulated, de facto marital separations were glaring social problems. Moreover, public opinion favored legalization of divorce as well as liberalization of current abortion laws in all three countries. Yet, the outcomes differ. In Spain, after the transition to democracy from 1975 on, politicians responded to liberalized public opinion on divorce and abortion, and reformed extant laws². Divorce was legalized in 1981 and abortion legislation was liberalized in 1985. In Argentina, the democratic government assumed power in December 1983, and divorce was legalized in 1987. While abortion remains illegal except to save the life of the woman, public debate on the issue has diversified. In both countries, to varying extent, democratic transitions brought about a more plural debate and liberalization of laws.

2. Liberalization commonly implies reforming laws to allow women legal abortions in specific cases, yet not decriminalizing abortion altogether. Legalization implies complete freedom of choice.

In contrast, Chile maintains prohibitive laws on both. In fact, eleven years of democratic politics have, paradoxically, witnessed a *reinforcement of moral fundamentalism*. Hence, the conservative opposition has succeeded in pushing the issue of liberalizing abortion laws totally off the political agenda, while it has been able to postpone divorce legislation with an impressive countercampaign for over ten years. The consolidation of a conservative moral agenda on the political right has effectively prevented the legal regulation of social changes that have impacted Chile at similar and often higher levels than other Western countries. Both clandestine abortion and de facto separations, as will be seen, amount to dramatic social problems in Chile. Supportive public opinion and ten years of continuous center-left governance -although with a Christian Democratic center party- provide an amenable political context to at least moderate liberalization³. Yet the government has been inactive on these issues, despite studies that continuously demonstrate the efficacy of more assertive family planning programs⁴.

How to explain this seemingly undemocratic -and counterintuitive- outcome in Chile? The puzzle here is how and why this moral agenda has attained such policy priority among the political right in Chile and with such success, and how latent opposition on the left has not translated into an equally active political agenda. The primary factor that distinguishes Chile and requires analysis, I argue, is how the religious cleavage is politically manifested. In the following, I outline what I mean by the religious cleavage. Then, I outline the Chilean political context, including the social dimensions of abortion and marital separations in Chile, public opinion on abortion and divorce, and legislative initiatives related to both during the last ten years. In the following section, I argue that three factors related to the religious cleavage explain the nature of abortion and divorce politics in the country: the changing Vatican agenda, the relationship of the Catholic Church to political parties, and the emergence and effectiveness of new interest groups. Finally, I show how parties have consolidated active and passive positions on abortion and divorce through the 1990's, given the influence of these factors.

3. Moreover, from the point of view of the political right, legal regulation of these social problems would not increase redistributive outlays, and in the case of abortion would in fact contribute to a drastic cut in public health expenditures through a reduction in the hospitalizations of abortion complications.

4. Most recently, a study found that adequate post-abortion treatment -including access to contraceptives- for women who arrive in hospitals for abortion complications reduced the abortion rate among the group by 82 percent, compared to a control group that did not receive such treatment (*La Tercera*, "Plan piloto reduce abortos en 82%", January 20, 2001). Yet such findings seem to fall on deaf ears.

The religious cleavage

Many social theorists predicted the eventual decline of the religious cleavage in the democratic, secularizing western polities. However, the political salience of moral and religious issues has, in many countries, *increased* during the last two decades. This increase has -particularly from a comparative perspective⁵- remained under-analyzed among political scientists.

Two moral issues that have most clearly ignited and divided religious and secular passions –particularly but not only in Catholic countries- are abortion and divorce. These are two topics on which virtually all people have deeply held convictions on, and hence political contestation of these issues tends to be highly visible. In theory, then, we should expect to see democratic politics at its purest when it comes to the resolution of moral issues such as these, and for outcomes to reflect public opinion (Barreiro 1998). This is enforced by the fact that political resolutions on moral issues such as abortion and divorce do not, in theory, involve external conjunctures, such as conflict over redistributive outlays (e.g. increasing taxes to pay for social programs) or “functionally” responding to external pressures (e.g. a government having to accept conditional loans from the International Monetary Fund).

The political manifestation of the religious cleavage is central to understanding outcomes on abortion and divorce and, more broadly, moral conservatism on a political level. Extant analysis of the religious cleavage in politics has mainly centered on Western (and more recently Central) Europe, North America, and select other countries⁶. Scholars in this field lament the lack of serious attention that the cleavage itself as well as analysis of it has received. Castles, a West Europeanist, calls religion an “unfashionable variable” for political scientists (Castles 1994:26). Even more striking, however, is that analysis of the religious cleavage is almost non-existent for Latin America, despite the powerful position of the Catholic Church in most Latin American countries, and the theoretical recognition (from Lipset and Rokkan 1967 on) that the religious cleavage in Catholic countries is of fundamental importance in defining political party systems and in influencing political outcomes. A relatively small but crucial

5. I refer to comparative study here as systematic analysis of social or political phenomena between two or more countries.

6. Most notably Israel, Turkey, Japan, and India.

body of literature on the religious cleavage in democratic countries (Castles 1994; Layman 1999; Scully 1992; Berger 1985; Dogan 1994; van Kersbergen 1995; Lijphart 1982), on church-state relations in Latin America (Gill 1998; Levine 1990; Vallier 1970; Meecham 1966), and a solid literature on political parties (e.g. Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Dix 1989; Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Kitschelt 1994), have contributed to the development of my framework.

The political manifestation of the religious cleavage embodies three dimensions. First, it involves an analysis of the increased Vatican emphasis on family morality since the assumption of John Paul II to the papacy in 1979, and the consequent shift in Church priorities on a national level. This has increased the breach between lay Catholics and the hierarchy. Second, it involves an examination of the nature of political parties and their relationship to the Catholic Church. The third dimension involves the emergence of new interest groups involved in abortion and divorce politics, and their ties to parties and politicians.

Few political scientists have systematically analyzed the role of religion in democratic politics in South America, particularly in relation to moral issues such as abortion and divorce. However, the increasing relevance of religion and ethical values in politics around the world necessitates such analysis. My study of Chile, drawing on interviews, newspaper articles, legislative bills and debates, Church documents, public opinion and aggregate data, and secondary sources, contributes to an understanding of these political dynamics.

The Chilean context

Political institutions and parties

Chile's current presidential system was created by the 1980 Pinochet-designed constitution and is, in essence, a status-quo oriented political system, designed to give one minority -the political right- veto power over legislative changes⁷.

The Chilean Congress includes five major political parties. The governing *Concertación* coalition is formed by the centrist Christian Democrats (PDC) and the left parties, the Party for Democracy (PPD), the Socialist Party (PS), as well as the minor Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSD). The opposition "Alianza por Chile" is formed by the Independent Democratic Union (UDI), which is the party most closely identified with the previous authoritarian regime, and National Renovation (RN), which is right-wing but less identified with Pinochet. The Christian Democrats –with roughly one-third of the popular vote- are the largest party in Chile. Their economic centrism is combined with conservative moral values, given historical ties to and continuing influence of the Catholic Church. The three post-Pinochet presidents (1990–2006) have come from the *Concertación* –the first two from the PDC, and current President Lagos from the left. In Chile's bicameral congress, the *Concertación* has maintained a majority in the Chamber between 1990 and 2000, while designated senators –with nine seats- have tipped the balance of power in the Senate in favor of the Right⁸.

What distinguishes the Chilean party system is, first, the extent to which it is institutionalized (compared to the rest of Latin America), second, the continuing strength (since its inception in 1957) of the Christian Democratic party, and third, the organizational and ideological strength of the political right.

7. Due to space constraints I do not discuss the constitution, electoral system, the bi-cameral chamber and executive-legislative relations here. Suffice it to say that the Senate has nine appointed (unelected) senators, which is designed to tip the balance of power in favor of the right and, like other Latin American regimes, the president has extensive prerogative powers. While the right wing does receive an institutional boost given the constitutional system, it cannot explain why the right has dominated politics on moral issues. The dominance of the right goes far beyond the institutional advantages it has; moreover, such advantages could have, in another political context, produced a passive approach.

8. This may be slowly changing, given that former PDC President Frei (1994–2000) was able to appoint three senators. As the ideological coloring of the senatorial appointments becomes more reflective of congressional balance of power more broadly, right wing opposition to the long-time *Concertación* demand to end with the undemocratic appointments has wavered. The Lagos presidency may see a constitutional reform on the issue.

The social dimensions of divorce and abortion

Marital separations

As stated earlier, Chile is exceptional in its continued prohibition of legal divorce. There are three ways that couples can separate in Chile. First, thousands of fraudulent annulments are performed in Chile each year, in which the couple lies about the “incompetence” of the civil registrar at the time marriage is contracted, hence nulling the union⁹. This option is available and accessible to the middle and upper classes on the basis of mutual consent, and given the hiring costs of lawyers. Second, people separate *de facto* without being able to legally regulate their situations. Hence, many people remain legally married to former partners even when they have formed new families. Third, people simply do not get married, given the legal difficulties involved with eventual separations. This is most common among the lower classes, and is legally most problematic in cases of abandoned partners (women) with children.

It could be argued that the “escape valve” of fraudulent annulments among the middle classes has allowed for the regulation of the problem without legalization of divorce. However, this escape valve may explain lack of willingness to actively *support* the legalization of divorce among some sectors close to the Church, but it does not explain the vehemence with which conservative sectors have organized their *opposition* to divorce.

Numbers on “legitimacy” –that is, births within wedlock- provide another indication of the extent to which family relationships are managed in modern Chile. As tables 1 and 2 indicate, the percentage of children born outside of wedlock has dramatically increased in Chile and is higher than in any other country in Western Europe and North America.

Table 1
Children born out of wedlock in Chile

year	percent out of wedlock
1983	31%
1989	34%
2000	56%*

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas. Anuarios de Demografía. From Gacitúa 1992. The statistics are rounded to the closest percentage point.

*Servicio de Registro Civil e Identificación. *La Tercera*, October 2, 2000.

9. In 1988, legal annulments numbered just under 10 000, and have increased since. (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas. Anuario de Justicia. 1988. Reproduced from Andrés Gacitúa, “Algunos aspectos de la realidad en las estadísticas demográficas y judiciales”, 1992: 32.)

During the democratic years we see a dramatic increase in the number of out-of-wedlock children.

The increased numbers of out-of-wedlock children are partly due, first, to the fact that more people, particularly from the lower classes, no longer choose to marry; second, to the inability to legally regulate new unions formed by people legally married to former partners, and the children born within these unions; and third, to the increased rates of teenage pregnancies in which sole responsibility for offspring tends to fall on the mother.

Table 2

Children born out of wedlock in select West European countries, 1994

country	percent out of wedlock
Italy	7%
United Kingdom	32%
France	35%
Denmark	47%
Sweden	50%

Source: Anthony Giddens, *La Tercera Vía*. Buenos Aires: Taurus. 2000. (Translation from the original title *The Third Way*. 1998.) p.107.

The comparison of Chile with West European countries is useful. All the countries shown in table 2 have legal divorce, and the percentages of out-of-wedlock children vary greatly. This table lends doubt to the argument made by the Chilean right that legalizing divorce destabilizes the traditional family structure. It is clear that legalizing divorce does not raise the percentage of out-of-wedlock children; in fact, many observers point out that it is the *inability* to divorce and remarry that increases these numbers. Chile's statistics corroborate the latter argument.

Abortion rates and hospitalizations

Chile also constitutes an exception given its absolute prohibition on abortion. Yet the gap between laws and behavior is vast. Abortion rates are very high; it is estimated that around 120 000- 175 000 abortions are performed each year

(see Requena 1990: 23-25; Arteaga 1990: 16; Lizarraga and McCnachie 1994: 11; Ferrando et. al. 1994). This translates to roughly one abortion for every three live births¹⁰, the highest abortion rate in South America (Guttmacher 1994).

Hospitalization rates of women with complications from abortions are high. The official rate has fluctuated at above 30 000 cases of induced abortions between 1960 and 1988¹¹. In 1991, the National Institute of Statistics reported 43.000 hospital admissions for abortions and miscarriages¹².

An estimated one-third of maternal mortality in Chile is caused by complications from illegal abortions, at about 1000 times the rate at which women die from legal abortions in developed countries¹³. Moreover, it was estimated in 1996 that the costs of abortion complications for the public health system are 15 million dollars a year (Casas et.al. 1998: 12). Finally, a study completed in 1995 found hundreds of women prosecuted for abortion during the first half of the 1990's, virtually all of whom come from the lower classes (Casas 1996).

Aside from its theoretical significance, three factors define abortion as a practical policy problem: the monumental gap between laws and behaviour, the acute public health consequences of abortion, both human and financial, and the class and gender nature of the problem. Middle- and upper class women have access to the 'escape valve' of safe but expensive private illegal abortions, while health and legal risks from complications are virtually exclusively a problem of working class and poor women¹⁴. Moreover, men rarely participate in the process, and the physical and emotional costs are carried by women alone.

The unequal burden borne by the rich and the poor –and by men and women– could explain the lack of legal change. Yet these factors were also present in (Spain, Argentina, and) many other countries where legal change has taken place. It is the way the problem is –or is not– translated onto the political level that is crucial.

10. Estimates of clandestine activities may not, of course, be wholly accurate. However, a reasonable and quite conservative estimate is that for every hospitalized abortion, there are around five abortions in society that go "unobserved". Moreover, the broad accuracy of the estimates themselves do not tend to be a subject of political controversy; neither experts nor politicians –right or left– question the high level of abortions in the country.

11. Ministry of Health. Chile, 1988. It should be stressed that official statistics report approximately 10 000 less hospitalized abortions annually than the unofficial statistics (Requena 1990:26). There are a number of reasons to place more confidence in unofficial statistics—mainly that the unofficial statistics are adjusted through expert estimates for systematic undercounts and misreportings, e.g. women are unlikely to voluntarily admit in public hospitals that they have induced an abortion.

12. The latter account for approximately 25 percent of the cases. Since 1992, the INS does not report this data.

13. See Gayan Barba 1990; 49; Silva Dreyer 1990: 12; Valdez & Faundez 1997: 62; Ministerio de Salud 1997: 18.

14. One of the most lucrative ways to earn money as a doctor in Chile is to perform abortions, the prices of which are several times the prices of abortions in the United States. The poor resort to backstreet practitioners, who tend to have little or no qualifications.

Public opinion on divorce and abortion in the democratic era

Restrictive rules on abortion and divorce do not reflect public opinion on these issues. On divorce, virtually all surveys since the late 1980's find significant majority support in Chile, indicating that only a minority adhere to a total prohibition.

Table 3
Select survey data on divorce

Table with 4 columns: Year, Percentage in favor, Number of cases, Agency. Rows include 1987 (66.7%, ? cases, Gallup), 1989 (77.0%, 100 cases, Masterclub), and 1996 (79.8%, 1980 cases, Desuc-copesa).

The table reveals, despite some methodological problems regarding the number of cases (lack of information on Gallup and the low number of the Masterclub survey) significant majority support for divorce. These findings are corroborated by a scholar who already in 1992 found a two-to-one relationship between those who are in favor and those who are against divorce (approx. 67% in favor) across all surveys until 1992 (Gacitúa 1992:58). Moreover, in the surveys in which religion was included, those who identified themselves as Catholics (around 75%) tended to be somewhat more liberal than the population over-all (ibid). It is clear that the opinions of liberal Catholics have consistently and strongly contradicted those of the hierarchy and integralist Catholics.

Table 4
Party members' positions on divorce in 1990

Table with 4 columns: Party, % in favor, % against, % indifferent. Rows include UDI (50.0, 50.0, 0.0), RN (44.9, 55.1, 0.0), PDC (59.8, 39.1, 1.1), PPD (70.5, 28.2, 1.3), and PS (77.5, 22.5, 0.0).

Source: Qué Pasa, July 1990, no.1012. Qué Pasa is a weekly national news magazine. The survey was conducted by Gemines¹⁵.

15. Unfortunately, the number of cases is unspecified, and the information is unavailable. However, interviews corroborate these findings in broad form. For example, one UDI legislator (who had supported divorce in the early 1990's and has since changed his position publicly) told me of a vote the party held in 1988 among the party core and those against legalization outnumbered those in favor by only one vote.

Party members' positions on divorce (table 4) are closely in line with public opinion on the issue. Party members on the left mirror public opinion most closely with strong majority support; however, those on the right are divided over the issue and only RN has a narrow majority opinion against divorce. Yet through the 1990's, the left becomes more supportive of divorce as the right consolidates itself against divorce. By the 1997 Chamber vote on divorce, the left votes unanimously –with one abstention- in favor of divorce, while the right votes –with four exceptions- against divorce, and the PDC is deeply split.

Public opinion on abortion in 1990

Despite the fact that rightwing and several PDC politicians claim that a strong social consensus on abortion in favor of the status quo exists¹⁶, public opinion surveys tell another story. Already in 1990, opinions were very divided, as shown in table 5.

Table 5

Question: Under which conditions would you approve of abortion?

Question	% approve
When the mother's health is at risk	75.3%
When the fetus is handicapped	40.8%
When the mother is unmarried	6.5%
When couple does not want a child	13.9%

Source: World Values Survey, 1990. 1500 cases¹⁷.

It is clear that overwhelming majority support among the population for the re-legalization of therapeutic abortion existed right after its prohibition in 1989¹⁸.

Public opinion on abortion in 1996 and 2000

The conservative outcomes on abortion politics may be explained by a conservatization of Chilean society through the 1990's. However, surveys indicate that this is not the case.

16. In interviews, several politicians told me that Chile is a “pro-life society”, and that any attempts to legalize even therapeutic abortion have met, and will continue to meet, with deep societal rejection.

17. The World Values Survey was conducted world-wide in the early 1990's and published in 1994. The data set includes 375 questions, including attitudes toward work, the meaning and purpose of life, family life, and contemporary social issues. The number of cases is 1500 for Chile, and the method was random sampling, although for Chile only the central region was included, which covers 63 percent of the population and where the income level is 40 percent above the national average. (World Values Codebook 1994).

18. Other surveys corroborate these findings. For example, a 1989 CERC survey found that 75.8% of respondents “believe that the interruption of a pregnancy should be legally permitted when the mother's life is at risk or the child would be born deformed.” Similar survey results were found by APROFA-CERC (1989, 1990), DIAGNOS (1984), and FLACSO (1988).

Table 6
Question: In which cases should abortion be permitted?

When...	Percent agree in 1996*	Percent agree in 2000**
The mother's life is in danger	58.7%	77.9%***
The pregnancy is the result of rape	47.7%	55.1%
Fetus is deformed	32.6%	54.4%
The family cannot afford the child	8.4%	—
The woman does not want more children	10.7%	—

* Desuc-Copesa survey, November 1996. 1980 cases.

**The newspaper *Las Ultimas Noticias*. 1014 cases in the Metropolitan region¹⁹.

*** The question was whether legislating therapeutic abortion "should be considered an issue of political priority", lending the 78 percent support added political importance.

It is important to stress that with an issue such as abortion, wording of the question is crucial and can have significant effects on how respondents answer. However, it is clear that substantial majority support for therapeutic abortion- 59% and 78% in 1996 and 2000 respectively- is solid, while around half of those surveyed support legal abortion in the case of rape (48% in 1996, 55% in 2000). Given considerable disagreement on indications such as rape and fetal deformity, these cannot be considered clear-cut issues among the population. The status quo –absolute prohibition of abortion- does not, in any case, have popular approval.

Legislative initiatives

Given the social dimensions of abortion and divorce as well as public opinion approval, we should expect a rush of legislative initiatives to legalize divorce and liberalize abortion, encouraged by eleven years of continuous center-left governance in the 1990's. Given Chile's presidential system, the executive has ample opportunity to define the political agenda, even if the right has substantial influence on whether that agenda is actually passed.

19. *La Tercera*, "La mayoría de los chilenos estaría a favor del aborto terapéutico", August 7, 2000.

In the case of abortion, no legislative rush from the center-left has taken place, in fact, quite the opposite has occurred. Five bills on abortion have been presented in either the Chamber or the Senate since 1990. The first was an initiative to re-legalize therapeutic abortion in 1991 but, after virulent opposition on the right, the governing *Concertación* never even passed it on to a commission. The other four (1994 [3], 2001), initiated by the right, have all proposed to increase penalties for women who commit abortions and their accomplices to equal penalties for homicide; to introduce the concept of *arrepentimiento eficaz* in which women who supply the police with the names of abortion providers or accomplices receive reduced (or in the last bill, nulled) sentences; as well as to change the definition of abortion in the penal code from a “crime against public morality” to “homicide”. The two that were introduced in the Chamber were sent to the family committee, which never discussed the bills. The identical bill introduced in the Senate was approved by the Justice Committee and lost on the Senate floor, in 1998, by only two votes. A minimally reformed version is due to be introduced in the Senate in the near future.

On divorce, the political panorama is more varied as both left and right have initiated their own projects to regulate marital separations. Since 1990, there have been three reformist and four conservative initiatives on divorce, all except one presented in the Chamber. One was a conservative bill and sought to eliminate the ease with which Catholic annulments could be obtained (in 1991) and was never discussed. The next three all sought to legalize divorce. The first two –introduced in 1991 and 1993- were not discussed, but the third, more conservative bill presented in 1995, built on the previous bills, passed the commissions, and was voted on and approved along party lines in the Chamber in 1997. During commission and plenary debates on the issue, two conservative initiatives were presented, sponsored by right wing deputies and one Christian Democrat, first with the general vote, and a modified version with the particular vote. These would have, in effect, restricted the scope of the bill dramatically, either by avoiding the actual “dissolution of the marital bond”(that is, divorce) or by making the bill retroactively inapplicable to already married couples, as well as giving couples at the moment of contracting marriage the choice to maintain the marriage “indissoluble”, and hence renounce a possible future recourse to divorce. Both initiatives were voted down in plenary sessions along party lines. The divorce bill was sent to the Justice Commission in the Senate in 1997, and has not, to date, been presented for discussion by the right wing

commission presidents. Given the visibility of the issue in the media, and overwhelming public opinion in favor of legislation, the impasse led the left-wing Presidential candidate Ricardo Lagos (current President) to include it in his electoral program during the 1999 campaigns, and promise to include it within executive prerogative if necessary²⁰. However, taking advantage of the protracted wait he has been responsible for in the Senate, President of the Justice Commission RN Senator Sergio Diez, a vehement opponent of legalized divorce, has developed his own counter-project with the active participation and support of right-wing legislators, intellectuals, and clergy. The basic idea of the project is to avoid divorce by modernizing (but not fundamentally changing) annulment legislation, and giving the Catholic Church as well as select other religions the authority to approve or deny applications for annulment²¹. Debate on divorce has been postponed by the president several times, and at the time of submission of this paper (April 2001) it is unclear when the issue will finally be introduced in the Senate.

20. Executive prerogative in Chile's presidential system allows the President to surpass congressional reticence and force commissions and the plenary to discuss issues of executive choice during half of the congressional year. The executive has announced plans to introduce it in March 2001.

21. Interview with RN Senator Sergio Diez, November 29, 2000, Valparaíso.

The religious cleavage in Chilean politics

The social dimensions of abortion and divorce as well as favorable public opinion have not brought about a liberalization of abortion and divorce laws and, in the case of abortion, have not even resulted in legislative initiatives. Why has the left been so timid, and why has the right been so active?

Solid explanations for leftwing timidity have been posited (Haas 1999; Blofield and Haas 2000; Htun 2000), which focus most importantly on the legacy of Catholic Church opposition to the dictatorship and its consequent influence over its former allies, as well as the dynamics of coalition politics between a more openly secular left and a Christian Democratic center party (for a detailed analysis, see Blofield and Haas 2000). These explain an important part of leftwing hesitance on abortion and divorce but leave the active opposition of the political right unexplained. My explanation highlights three crucial factors related to the religious cleavage in explaining the conservative outcomes –both left timidity as well as right opposition- on the politics of abortion and divorce in Chile. First, the changing Vatican agenda since the assumption of the Papacy by John Paul II in 1979, and its impact on the Chilean Church. Second, the relationship of the Chilean Church to political parties since the transition (which includes previous explanations). Third, the relative access to resources and effectiveness of conservative and reformist interest groups in the 1990's. The political right has been strongly influenced by the growth of a network of social organizations, elite educational institutes, and think-tanks, fostered by the consolidation in Chile of the integralist Catholic groups Opus Dei and the Legionaries of Christ among the highly cohesive Chilean upper classes.

Vatican agenda

While Catholic teaching on abortion and divorce has remained a constant during the 20th century, there has been a shift in emphasis as well as strategies on the issues. John Paul II has, since his ascension to the papacy in 1978, made family morality, with a particular emphasis on abortion and divorce, top priorities of the

hierarchy. Since then, a doctrinal shift, organizational changes, and changes in personnel have unified the Church position and concretized the Papal message²².

First, the Chilean Church itself has, in response to both the Papal agenda as well as to their perception of moral degradation in Chilean society at the onset of democratic politics and possible liberalization of legislation on divorce and abortion, launched various family units and organizations within the Church. In the mid-1990's the Chilean Church created the Pastoral Institute of the Family to promote a nation-wide family-oriented campaign. In 1997, the Santiago archdiocese formed the "Vicariate of the Family" to emphasize Church doctrine on the family, most prominently on issues such as divorce, sexual education, and abortion. These were both attempts to counter liberal discourse in more active and constructive ways by influencing problem definition and agenda-setting, and not merely trying to influence final votes in Congress²³.

Second, while moral opposition to divorce has been a constant in Church teaching throughout the century, the extent to which it is appropriate for bishops to lobby in the legislative realm, and apply outright pressure, has shifted. The Vatican II message on the autonomy of the moral and legislative realm has been modified during the reign of John Paul II in a more integralist direction, and this has become clear in Church involvement in politics in Chile. On the one hand, the position of the Chilean Church is that Catholic doctrine on divorce should extend to the legislative realm. This is most simply encapsulated in Cardinal Oviedo's statement in 1997 during the divorce debates in the Chamber: "A Catholic cannot vote for divorce".

On the other hand, the nature of the Catholic Church as an institution has allowed it to forcefully foster unity in the clerical ranks and hence a united public front on divorce despite the existence of internal discord. Several PDC deputies have had priests privately express their support for legislative autonomy on the issue of divorce, while acknowledging they cannot publicly do so²⁴. The Church has

22. Daudelin and Hewitt (in 1995) find that since the ascension of John Paul II to the Papacy in 1978, over 50 percent of Latin American bishops have been replaced, nearly all of the new bishops being more conservative than their predecessors (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995). My own research on personnel changes in the 1980's and 1990's within the Chilean Church strongly confirms the conservatization of the clergy in Chile.

23. This had been the case in Argentina, where even officials in the Episcopate admit that the Church campaign in opposition to divorce was wholly reactive and negative.

24. Interviews with two PDC deputies, both of whom sponsored the divorce bill currently pending debate in the Senate. September and October 2000, Santiago and Valparaíso.

expressly prohibited priests from publicly manifesting divergent views on the issue²⁵, and severely chastised the few who have done so²⁶. This strategy has allowed the Church, in the short term, to present a united and formidable opposition to the legalization of divorce²⁷. This has enabled the conservative voice to appear very coherent and unified, in distinction with reformist voices, which are more participatory, democratic and fragmented, and maintain discrepancies not only over strategies but over goals as well.

This is grounded in the generally high social position the Catholic Church in Chile has so far enjoyed. Yet the social position of the Church in the medium and long term is not clear. The effects of completely silencing discord in the ranks instead of allowing for a debate on an issue that is such an acute social problem may have a demoralizing effect within the Church, as well as distance the Church itself from the population in general, only a small minority of whom continue to agree with its position²⁸. That is, even many within the Church believe that the hierarchy runs the risk of appearing fundamentalist and distant from social reality, and of becoming a “private club for the faithful”²⁹. This perception has resonated politically in other Catholic countries, and what distinguishes the continuing power of the Church and the political manifestation of its doctrine in Chile is the political allies it has found.

The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Chile³⁰

Changes in the Vatican alone cannot explain the influence of Catholic doctrine in politics. We need to observe how the doctrine is translated into actual politics. Since the transition to democracy, the Church has actively sought allies across the political spectrum -with the right, the PDC and the left -to promote its vision

25. *La Tercera*, interview with priest Ramon Cifuentes. 1997. date?

26. Bishop of Punta Arenas Tomás González, while he does not disagree with Church doctrine on divorce per se- has publicly maintained the position that “the Church should promote, not impose, its doctrine” (*El Mercurio*, “Iglesia debe proponer y no imponer su doctrina, dijo Obispo T.González”, July 7, 1994). The position has elicited severe condemnation by the hierarchy.

27. There was vehement clerical opposition to equalizing the legal rights of legitimate, illegitimate and natural children, as well as to the prohibition of expelling pregnant girls from high school. However, clerical opposition was not official and united, and both bills have recently become law.

28. Which has been the history of secularization in the West.

29. Interview with an official in the department of public relations of the Chilean Episcopate, October 2000, Santiago.

30. On a broader level, patterns of party formation in Catholic countries tend to differ from those in Protestant countries, given the nature of the Catholic Church as an organization and its insertion into politics and society. There is, over-all, a strong identification of right-wing/conservative parties with the Church, and leftwing/reformist parties with secular support bases. This has given the conservative parties the historical advantage of a wealthy, organized and centralized interest group as a natural support base. This clear “dichotomy” is complicated when a Christian Democratic center party is formed. Such parties tend to be more centrist on economic issues but –as a point of departure- have sided with Church teaching on moral and social issues.

and interests on a political level. In the case of the PDC, legislative reform on contentious issues such as abortion and divorce is politically complicated and divisive for the party. As a point of departure, it is clear that the Chilean DC party in the 1990's is morally and socially more conservative than its European counterparts were in the 1970's and 1980's, when significant sectors of Christian Democrats actively supported the legalization of divorce and the liberalization of abortion laws. The impact of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990), which froze reform on women's rights, among other things, during the decades when the most fundamental changes were taking place in the democratic world³¹, certainly influenced the evolution of party positions on moral issues. When the DC party re-emerged during democratization in the 1980's, the more conservative reign of Pope John Paul II had had time to exert a decisive influence on current ideology of the Chilean Church, and the oppositional role the Church had played during the military regime allowed it to demand a privileged political role and to reassert its influence in politics.

This heritage gives the Church great leverage over party and legislator commitments, even when individual disagreement exists. The reaffirmation of orthodoxy in the Church hierarchy and its influence on the party has aggravated divisions within the party. Basically, the more conservative leadership prefer to retain unquestioning adherence to Church doctrine on moral issues, while reformists maintain a more autonomous and pluralist approach to interpretations of Catholic doctrine. Divorce has polarized the party with reformists actively aligning with the left, and the conservative leadership preferring to avoid the issue but when forced to broach it, aligning with the right (Blofield and Haas 2000). The political costs involving abortion have, however, allowed it to remain a taboo issue within the party, distinguishing the Chilean PDC from its West European counterparts.

These internal divisions are only aggravated by the governing coalition the PDC maintains with the more openly secular left. Due to the legacy of the dictatorship, an alliance of the PDC with the right has been out of the question *as of yet*, even though the conservative sector identifies more closely with the right than the left on moral issues (Blofield and Haas 2000).

31. Interestingly, Smith, in the early 1970's, points to the declining influence of the Catholic Church in Chilean politics, including within the DC party: "the party's "Catholic ideological distinctives have been so diluted by pragmatic politics and an emerging humanist consensus that we may well speak of the secularization of Christian Democracy"(Smith 1974: 126). This was, of course, within the context of Vatican II. Smith may very well have been accurate for the time in which he was writing, before the military coup (1973-1990) and the Vatican reassertion of moral orthodoxy (1978-).

Church reassertion of influence has not been limited to the Christian Democrats; rather, it has extended both to the right and to the left. On the left, the Church has openly used its human rights legacy to pressure the left into following Catholic doctrine on family-related issues. Its calls on the left to pay its political debt are often explicit, and many left politicians are affected, or choose to be affected, by them. What is interesting is that the majority of the bishops that continue to “collect the debt”³² ten years into democracy are not the great human rights protectors of the 1970’s and 1980’s. Yet the left is hesitant to openly confront the Church, which is linked to the coalition the left maintains with the PDC, to the alliance between the Church and the political right, and to the relative weakness of reformist interest groups.

On the political right in Chile, morally liberal free-marketeers are virtually non-existent. Both the Church and the political right have strongly coincident public positions on issues of family morality, and have fostered close relations to promote political outcomes in accordance with them. From a very conflictual relationship during the military regime, when a significant number of right wing politicians were acquiescent of human rights violations and supported regime continuance, the two actors have managed to foster close relations and find common interests during the democratic years³³. From delegitimizing, often personally offensive remarks about bishops in the 1980’s, right politicians have come to manifest a remarkable respect for clergy in the 1990’s. The position of the right on abortion and divorce has helped bridge relations after the conflict of the 1980’s, and has given the right increased moral legitimacy during the democratic years.

Interest groups

Church influence in politics alone cannot explain the outcome. Politicians could treat the Church as just another interest group –as they have come to do in other countries- and, in fact, politicians in Chile have strong incentives to change legislation given the support of the population for such reforms, and the social problems caused by the lack of them. Moreover, the Church strategy has been most effective in burying and postponing issues that would otherwise be debated;

32. A term used by several left politicians I interviewed to describe their relationship with the Church.

33. See Haas (1999) for an overview of Church influence on sex education and divorce in the 1990’s.

however, the right has been willing to go further to actively promote its own agenda, and propose its own legislative initiatives. The more active strategy of the right wing has been fuelled by the proliferation of integralist Catholic organizations in Chilean society. They have fostered efficient interest groups and conservative networks with access to resources on the right, while less efficient interest groups on the left have few resources. This has allowed the right to dominate the framing of moral issues.

The interest groups involved in moral issues can be grouped into two sectors: reformist –leftwing- and conservative –right wing. The reformist sector is mostly composed of explicit feminist groups, but also includes some lawyers' networks. The Church is the most important institution forming the conservative sector, but it is not the only one. The conservatization of Chilean politics has been strongly supported by the growth of integralist Catholic organizations (that broadly belong to the Church itself) in Chilean society, most markedly Opus Dei (Latin for "Work of God") and the Legionarios de Cristo (Legionaries of Christ), and social organizations formed by their members. Opus Dei (the majority of whom are lay Catholics) and the Legionaries are dedicated to promoting adherence to Catholic morality on the family on an individual, social and political level³⁴. The reading of Catholic doctrine is selective to the extent that social morality –for instance, Vatican critiques of neo-liberalism- are not part of their agenda. This has led to strong critiques from other sectors of the Catholic Church³⁵. The Legionaries are more organized, and their explicit mission is, according to Legionaire priest O'Reilly, to influence the most powerful sectors of society; that is, current and future leaders in the political, economic and social realm. They have fostered conservative interest groups that have assumed an active role in trying to change the status quo on abortion and divorce through social mobilization and political lobbying³⁶. These groups have managed to make abortion and divorce issues of political priority for the right wing, and the right –except for a few exceptions- has publicly unified over these issues.

34. Virtually all of Opus Dei members are lay people. The Legionaries, on the other hand, are formed by Catholic priests and, technically, lay people are supporters, not members.

35. An official in the department of religion at the Vicariate for Education called these groups "ultra-rightists".

36. One of the most important organizations is ChileUnido, formed in 1998 by a group of conservative Legionarie supporters with the explicit goal of retaining and promoting Chile's traditional family structure in national laws. One of the areas in which ChileUnido has been most active is in its anti-abortion campaigns. ISFEM branched out from Chileunido and serves more specifically as a lobby group for the same goals. Fundación Maria Ayuda, Hacer Familia, and Porvenir de Chile are some of the other social organizations dedicated to the same goals. These organizations maintain good access to politicians on the right, particularly UDI.

The proliferation of these civil society organizations has been very beneficial for the political reaffirmation of Church doctrine. First, it has enabled the Church not to appear isolated. On the one hand, these organizations have been able to universalize Church ideology by disavowing explicitly Catholic roots, and by – at least theoretically- welcoming like-minded people from all religious faiths. Several people I interviewed claimed to me that the similarity of their ideology and goals with the Catholic Church was coincidental. On the other hand, the ability of these organizations to distance themselves from the Catholic Church per se has allowed them more creativity in discourse. Their disavowal of formal links to the Church and strict Catholic roots in their ideology has enabled them, in essence, to use the discourse of the left to their own advantage by calling for pluralism and tolerance toward their message as representatives of a democratic civil society. This has hit hard for left groups, for whom calls for pluralism –in opposition to the imposition of Catholic morality- have been one of the cornerstones of their calls for the political liberalization of moral laws. The people I interviewed kept reinforcing their independence from a) each other, b) the Legionaries and Opus Dei, and c) politicians. This image is not, however, wholly grounded in reality, and the personal and ideological links between the social organizations, integral Catholic groups, think-tanks, and political parties are strong³⁷.

As table seven lays out, interest groups with a conservative agenda are more organized, have more resources and tighter networks, and maintain better access to political parties than organizations with a reformist agenda. This has resulted in the political right actively assuming an integralist political agenda on moral issues, while the center-left has remained passive on abortion, and divided on divorce.

37. Considerable overlap and moving among personnel in the organizations, think-tanks, and the political arena exists. Personal contacts and relationships are tight as well.

Table 7
Comparison of conservative and reformist interest groups

	Catholic Church	Conservative groups (incl. Opus Dei and Legionaries)	Reformist groups
Finances	High	High, internal & external	Low, external
Organization	Centralized, hierarchical	Tight links, democratic	Decentralized & democratic
Intellectual Networks	Priority	Priority	Non-priority
Religious org's	—	Catholic Church	No
Political links	Center-right-left	Right, some center	Left-center
Business/media	Sympathetic	Sympathetic	Un-sympathetic
International links	Vatican	Growing	Declining

In Table 7, I separate the Catholic Church into one category, and place conservative groups –including Opus Dei and the Legionaries- in another category. In reality, of course, these two categories are over-lapping, as Opus Dei and the Legionaries form specific sectors of the Church, even if they do not form part of the hierarchy (i.e. the Bishopry and the Episcopal Conference). As I discuss below, many of the social organizations have been formed by these sectors and, over-all, the ideology of both the Church and the social organizations on family morality is the same. Moreover, we could visualize Opus Dei and the Legionaries as a bridge between the Church and the conservative groups. I conceptualize them separately in the table, given the organizational and financial differences between the more formalized Catholic Church and the newer interest groups.

In the following section, I explain the differences between the conservative and reformist groups in the area of organization and financial resources, intellectual production and resources, and networks. The last aspect includes access to politicians, business and the media, religion, and international links.

Organization and financial resources

The Catholic Church in Chile, as in Latin America in general, has a history of vast land ownership and wealth. More recently, during the last eleven years of democratic politics the Chilean government has transferred legal ownership of properties to the Catholic Church. Neo-liberal changes in educational policy have also increased Church income through student fees. In essence, the Catholic Church has massive resources at its disposal, both financial and organizational. Church statements can be instantly and widely disseminated through clergy, Catholic associations and the media. Organizational networks can, on the other hand, mobilize people.

Both Opus Dei and the Legionaries have experienced a phenomenal growth in their financial capacities in the last decade. While Opus Dei officially arrived in Chile in the early 1950's, its institutional presence received a boost with the formation of private schools and a university in the last decade. The university of Los Andes has expanded from a tiny building in downtown Santiago in 1990 to an institution with several thousand students and a beautiful campus in the most exclusive district in the city. This expansion was achieved primarily through business donations³⁸.

The Legionaries came to Chile in the early 1980's, but their organizational efforts took off with the arrival of Irish priest John O'Reilly in 1986. A charismatic person, O'Reilly focused on proselytizing among the upper classes, particularly the business elite, and successfully created a network of donors for Legionaries' religious and social causes. Such a network is fundamental, because the explicit mission of the organization is to influence the elites, who in turn influence the social and political climate of a country. Hence, educational institutes and social organizations are crucial for value diffusion, and elite donations, in turn, are crucial for their maintenance. The Legionaries have several private elite schools in Santiago, and recently bought a university. A significant sector of the upper classes go to the private schools of Opus Dei and the Legionaries, which they consider to be among the best schools in Santiago. Moreover, the Legionaries and their supporters have founded numerous social organizations dedicated to the promotion of Catholic family values during the

38. Interview with the director of the Law School of the University of Los Andes, January 19, 2001, Santiago.

last decade³⁹. These organizations have become the backbone of the social and political opposition to divorce and therapeutic abortion, as well as other issues related to sexual and family morality.

In contrast, the financial resources of feminist organizations have plummeted in the last ten years. They are virtually wholly dependent on international private or public funding agencies, and irregular government contracts for particular projects. This imbalance in resources between social organizations on the right and the left was somewhat “artificially” equalized during the 1980’s struggles for democracy, as foreign money -mostly European- flooded in to support anti-Pinochet and pro-transition organization. Many women’s groups were funded in this way and, since the return to democracy, most of the sources dried up as groups were expected to adjust to a democratic setting and to find domestic sources of funding. Women’s groups have had a hard time making the transition, and extant organizations remain dependent on international funding agencies for support.

Intellectual production and resources

One of the most important long-term sources for a successful ideological project is the production of a coherent theoretical and normative discourse based in empirical analysis. This necessitates training and funding intellectual production, through schools, universities and, most specifically, think-tanks. The right wing has, in the last ten years, fostered several think-tanks, the most important of which is, on moral issues, Instituto Libertad y Desarrollo (Freedom and Development Institute), which maintains a close relationship with the American think-tank The Heritage Foundation. Well-funded by the domestic business community, Libertad y Desarrollo is most closely aligned with UDI, but retains tight links to politicians in the RN as well. Most importantly, policy analysts have produced a formidable amount of analysis on both abortion and divorce, from an integralist Catholic stance, and with explicit policy recommendations. They have been able to shift the justifications for integralist policies away from appeals based solely on Catholic doctrine to arguments based on empirical data and democratic theory. These documents are the direct ideological and political base for both right-wing legislative initiatives on abortion and divorce, as well

39. Interview with Legionaire supporter and UDI vice-president, January 16, 2001, Santiago. According to the respondent, the Legionaries founded “thousands of social organizations” in the 1990’s.

as their opposition to left-wing legislative initiatives. The ability of the right to dominate discourse has enabled the social scientific weakness of many of these works go by unquestioned.

Left-wing think-tanks with links to *Concertación* leadership exist. However, a prominent socialist deputy argues that the biggest mistake the *Concertación* made during its ten years as government in Chile has been “not to make universities function like universities, to have critical thinking, capacity to analyze, alternative proposals”. Hence, he argues, “the political parties are acting not only with little institutional weight, and weakened, but also with little cultural and intellectual backing”⁴⁰. The policy institutes specifically are not as strong -financially or organizationally- as those of the right, and their policy priorities have not involved abortion and divorce. Feminist lobby groups have produced documents with policy recommendations on divorce in particular, but their production, dissemination among politicians and, most importantly, policy presence is not as sustained as is the influence of their counterparts on the right. Hence, the right wing has been able to dominate problem definition on abortion, and counter problem definition on divorce.

Networks

Access to politicians

Both conservative and feminist organizations retain networks among each other, given their common goals. The effectiveness and success of organizational efforts, however, vary. Groups on the right are very active. They inform legislators on their intellectual materials and activities regularly⁴¹, and have access to UDI and RN politicians, as well as the more conservative sectors of the Christian Democrats. Many of the rightwing political elites belong to Opus Dei or support the Legionaries, or maintain close ties to them. The influence of Legionaries is most strongly consolidated in UDI, where most of the leadership are supporters. The near-victorious 1999 UDI presidential candidate Joaquín Lavín belongs to Opus Dei, and has made it clear that as President, he would veto divorce legislation even if it passed the Chamber and Senate⁴². The influence

40. Interview with PS deputy Carlos Montes, September 20, 2000, Santiago.

41. The director of ISFEM told me they sent their informational policy packages to all legislators, both left and right, except for one deputy who had expressly asked them not to. Interview with Ismini Anastasiou, November 2000, Santiago.

42. Interview with a pro-divorce RN deputy, November 30, 2000, Valparaíso.

of Opus Dei and the Legionaries is consolidated in UDI, and encompasses significant sectors of RN as well⁴³. Direct influence is pretty much restricted to the political right, and Christian Democrats tend to have ties to more mainstream or leftist sectors of the Church⁴⁴.

Feminist organizations have fostered few active allies on the left on the issue of abortion. The *Foro Abierto de Salud y Derechos Reproductivos* (Open Forum on Health and Reproductive Rights), an umbrella organization of feminist groups working on reproductive rights, has focused on initiatives on a social level and with more limited reach. Political contacts and public relations campaigns are less notable. On divorce, feminists have been able to foster networks with reformist politicians and lawyers, who may not identify themselves as feminist but who share the view that marriage legislation must be modernized and divorce legalized. The lobby group *Grupo Iniciativa* –an umbrella group of feminist organizations- engages in public debate and social campaigns, and promotes specific policy initiatives on women’s rights. *Grupo Iniciativa* has been effective in creating links with feminist politicians and, to a limited extent, with Sernam⁴⁵. This has enabled feminists to have a voice, if not influence, on the policy-making process on the divorce bill.

Yet feminist access to politicians in general has largely been restricted to the few explicitly feminist deputies in Congress, who themselves have limited influence in the *Concertación*. After all, the relatively conservative divorce bill pending Senate debate has not taken into account feminist analyses. Several left politicians I interviewed dismissed the importance of feminists in Chilean society. A quote by a socialist senator encapsulates the problem of both perceptions and reality: “look out the window, I don’t see any feminist movement here, anything like compared to what I saw in Italy in the 1970’s”⁴⁶. Feminist groups are seen as weak and hence inconsequential in terms of policy preferences, and have been unable to determine the policy priorities for the left the way the conservative coalition has done on the right.

43. UDI presidential candidate Lavín’s 1999 campaign at US \$60 million was an all-time high for Chile, outspending Lagos on a ratio of ten to one. In Chile there are no campaign finance laws, and hence information is not public and accessible, but several observers believe that substantial financial support from abroad had been received through Legionaire and Opus Dei networks.

44. The ‘old guard’ of the Christian Democrats are, however, sympathetic to integral Catholicism and, aware of this, some of the social organizations are beginning to build relationships with PDC legislators. A badly needed generational change in the PDC may impede the further development of these links.

45. Sernam -Servicio Nacional de la Mujer- is the National Ministry for Women. It was created by the executive in 1991 to promote women’s rights, and has played an active role in less controversial initiatives on women’s rights, such as enabling working mothers to better fulfill their dual roles, ending discrimination between ‘legitimate’ and ‘illegitimate’ children, prohibiting the expulsion of pregnant girls from school, and enhancing the labor conditions of domestic workers. See Haas 2000 for a comprehensive analysis of Sernam’s role in women’s rights legislation in the 1990’s.

46. Interview with PS Senator José Antonio Viera-Gallo, November 2000, Santiago.

Organized religion

The links between right-wing organizations and the Catholic Church are clear. The left has a few links to progressive evangelical and Catholic priests, but these are vastly outweighed by the costs of having a unified and active Church hierarchy against the feminists on issues of family morality. The impact of strong Church opposition is deepened by the inability of the left to generate and, importantly, to disseminate its own, coherent counterdiscourse to Catholic morality.

Business and the media

Two factors are important here: the extent to which Chile's business class identifies with moral conservatism, and media ownership. First, the links between the business class and moral conservatives (although largely uninvestigated and perhaps uninvestigable) are extensive and tight. While the Chilean owning class have historically been staunch moral conservatives, space for dissension, particularly in the postwar era, has existed. In the 1990's, elite discourse has, if anything, become more orthodox. The most important avenues for the promotion of moral conservatism have become the Legionaries and Opus Dei, whose schools and universities have gained the reputation of being the institutes for elite formation. Hence, according to several observers, institutes linked to these two organizations (as well as Catholic schools more broadly) are seen as avenues of social ascendance. The influence this perception, as well as its reality, has had on elite discourse on moral issues has been fundamental.

Second, ownership of the media is highly concentrated. All of Chile's major national newspapers are owned by two conglomerates, the owners of which are solidly right-wing and morally conservative. The lack of a left-wing alternative newspaper, and the consequent ability of the right wing to ideologically dominate, has shaped moral politics at least as much as it has shaped economic politics in this country. All leaders of conservative organizations concurred, in interviews, that the domestic business community has generally been willing to financially sponsor and symbolically support the social and lobby campaigns of these organizations. The most prominent example is the anti-abortion initiative of *Chileunido* (an ongoing campaign since 1998) in which all TV channels agreed

to view their ads free of cost, in effect donating the organization millions of dollars, and other companies gave them direct donations⁴⁷.

Discourse analysis reveals a much more sympathetic response to right wing initiatives and public declarations than to those on the left. For instance, with the introduction of the therapeutic abortion bill in 1991, most newspapers focused on right wing reactions to it, rather than left explanations of it. However, with the three rightwing initiatives to increase abortion penalties in 1994, most newspapers focused on right wing explanations of it, and almost completely omitted left critiques of it.

This ideological slant is corroborated by my interviews, in which conservative respondents unanimously had a positive view of the role of the media in Chile, while reformist respondents were universally negative. While conservative organizations successfully engage in frequent and active letter-writing campaigns and have succeeded in fostering close relations with the media in general, the opinions of feminist organizations are much less prominent in the press. This is due both to a bias in publishing⁴⁸, as well as fewer letters sent by feminists. Several feminist leaders I interviewed admitted to not sending letters to editors, and to declining interviews with the press, given bad previous experiences and general lack of morale. This understandable reaction has had significant negative consequences in terms of making the presence of feminist networks known.

On any given issue that touches on the family, the Church has privileged representation, followed by the rightwing opposition and, lastly, the centerleft government. Feminist analyses are virtually non-existent. Basically, the media in Chile diffuses the ideology and policy preferences of the conservative interest groups.

47. Interview with the editorial director of a national afternoon newspaper and one of the founding members of Chileunido, January 11, 2001, Santiago.

48. My search through letters to the editor on abortion in *La Tercera* (the mainstream newspaper) between 1997 and August 2000, found the following groups represented: Comisión de la Familia (Family Commission), Campaña del Día del Niño por Nacer (The Child-to-be-born Day Campaign), Abogados Contra el Aborto (Lawyers Against Abortion), Asociación Latinoamericana para la Familia (Latin American Association for the Family), Psiquiatras Contra el Aborto (Psychiatrists Against Abortion), and Juventud UDI (UDI Youth). All the organizations represented are against legalizing abortion under any circumstances. Individuals without an organizational affiliation are omitted here.

International links

The right has fostered international links with success. Opus Dei and the Legionaries are international organizations and, although the extent of financial flows is not public information, several observers noted that some of the financing for US \$60 million presidential campaign of UDI candidate Lavín in 1999 came from these organizations abroad. Chile is, by foreign and Chilean pro-life activists alike, considered an exemplar for the rest of the occidental world. It is seen as the “last bastion” of political adherence to Church family doctrine and, as such, carries a great deal of symbolic weight in the Vatican and among conservative networks. At the same time, Chile can be seen as a strategically important country in Latin America for religious conservatives seeking to expand their influence, given its economic success and the growing middle class⁴⁹. Fertile ground to influence future conservatism on the continent exists.

For feminist groups, links to foreign agencies are crucial. First, they provide funding that has not been available domestically. Second, they provide an intellectual base and strategic advice, basically because in almost all West European and North American countries the political changes feminists seek in Chile have already been achieved. However, lack of time and resources has made it more difficult for feminists to allocate more time to the search for and maintenance of these links.

In terms of organization and financial resources, as well as access to politicians and business, the conservative groups maintain a much better stand than do their counterparts on the left. This has been aided, if not made possible altogether, through access to the networks that organizations such as Opus Dei and the Legionaries have developed. Feminist organizations have, on the other hand, experienced a reduction in access to financial resources (international funding has decreased while domestic funding remains non-existent) and very limited access to politicians. Moreover, the right has been very effective in intellectual production and problem definition in the national media. The left, on the other hand, has not prioritized intellectual production on issues related to Catholic morality, and has not conducted effective campaigns on problem definition in the media.

49. Interview with Legionaire priest John O'Reilly, October 17, 2000, Santiago.

Paradoxically, then, despite the passive support in public opinion among the population, feminists have had little political influence on abortion and divorce, while conservative organizations, despite the lack of support in numbers, have high political influence. In essence, while most of society has increasingly liberal values and behavior, integralism within the right wing is consolidated.

Consolidation of political party lines on abortion and divorce through the 1990's

The Church and interest groups on the right have effectively influenced politicians by making them avoid challenges to the status quo or by inducing them to change the status quo in a more conservative direction. They have framed the debate in such a way that those who seek to question the current prohibition on abortion are considered baby-killers, and those who question the prohibition on divorce seek to destroy the family. Effective lobbying has induced politicians on the right to actively maintain conservative positions and on the left to refrain from assuming liberal positions.

In the following, I outline three worldviews on morality in general and abortion and divorce in particular: integralist Catholic, liberal Catholic, and a secular worldview. I use the term worldviews because the issues analyzed here –abortion and divorce- touch on very deeply held values of individuals, and different positions on these issues more broadly reflect different worldviews on the nature and ends of family, society and politics. These three worldviews are represented in the Chilean party system. However, the factors I have outlined in the previous section have impacted the public manifestation of these worldviews, giving the integralist Catholic worldview political dominance on abortion, while both the integralist and liberal Catholic worldviews contest the issue of divorce and, finally, the secular worldview has been marginalized into political insignificance.

Worldviews on abortion and divorce

Two issues delineate the boundaries of these worldviews: first, where moral authority is vested; and second, how to deal with moral transgressors. All three 'ideal types' of worldviews encompass distinct views of the family, of society, of women's roles in both, and how these roles are to be politically regulated. While both the liberal and integralist Catholic worldviews maintain relatively static roles for women and men, derived from God and interpreted through the Church hierarchy, differences exist on how moral authority should be man-

aged, and how to deal with transgressors. Berger outlines the difference between integral and liberal Catholicism. Liberal Catholics believe that faith should be a matter of private affairs, and something that unites people in a general sense, while integral Catholics believe that faith should be the “judge of all”, and “reject[] the notion that spheres of life (lie) beyond the reach of religious regulation” (Berger 1985: 32). Hence, liberals agree that, while Catholic doctrine provides inspiration and insight, social reality and individual conscience should play a role in the political regulation of morality.

Finally, the secular worldview vests the moral authority to make the decision to divorce or to have an abortion in the individual, and transgression is not an issue. Abortion and divorce are considered “social problems”, and the conceptualization of these issues as “moral” is an imposition of one worldview on others. Moreover, this worldview rejects the idea that religious doctrine should have any influence in the political regulation of social life. Gender roles are considered social constructs for the purposes of political regulation. This implies that they are and should be mutable⁵⁰.

The worldviews in the context of Chilean politics

*Integralist Catholic worldview*⁵¹

Moral guidance, according to integralists, must only be based on and drawn from a literal interpretation of Catholic doctrine. Moreover, Catholic moral values do not belong only to the Church or to Catholics, according to Legionaire priest John O’Reilly, but are universal and reflect human nature, given their base in natural law. Hence the reach of Catholic doctrine is universal and non-negotiable. These values, according to O’Reilly, “are superior and anterior to man and... must be respected”. The conception of human nature and appropriate moral behavior is narrow and essentialist, and sanctions should be applied to those who transgress the boundaries.

50. A comprehensive analysis of the three worldviews I posit is beyond the scope of this paper, aside from laying out the very basic differences in relation to abortion and divorce between the worldviews. It forms part of my dissertation research and will be addressed in the thesis.

51. Here I draw on two central proponents of the integralist worldview in Chile, the leading Legionary in Chile, Priest John O’Reilly, and Jorge Reyes, political advisor to UDI senators and the author of numerous political initiatives related to abortion and the family. References to them are based on an interview with Priest O’Reilly on October 17, 2000, Santiago, and on an interview with Jorge Reyes, November 10, 2000, Santiago.

Divorce, in Chilean Cardinal Jorge Medina's words, "goes against God's plan for human beings" (Medina 1991). Women have clearly defined roles which are threatened and destroyed if divorce or abortion is allowed. According to O'Reilly, "a woman's essence, and cradle, is the family, she needs this environment to grow". For a highly influential UDI political advisor, "the woman will socially always dedicate herself to her home because she will always do it, because that is how it is". Hence, aside from going against natural law, divorce hurts women because it threatens the context in which their nature is best fulfilled. Moreover, legalizing divorce is seen as a threat to individual liberty. Divorce, according to Reyes, "negates man's liberty, I believe that I have only one important capacity in life as a man and that is my liberty and to me no one can say that when I chose my wife -I did it for eternity- no one can say to me tomorrow that you did not do it for eternity"⁵². Finally, on a practical level the legalization of divorce in fact encourages people to separate, and statistics of marital separations from countries where divorce is legal are used by integralists to show how legalization would destroy the traditional family structure. Social problems such as poverty, teenage delinquency, alcoholism and drug addiction, unstable family relations, paternal abandonment, and "moral and social breakdown" in Western countries are attributed to the fact that divorce is legal⁵³.

With regard to abortion, a society must be founded on the principle of right to life under all circumstances. Abortion is an intentional act of murder against a human being and therefore criminal under all circumstances, even when the life of the mother is in danger. Moreover, abortion only becomes an issue when women do not engage in a "correct sexuality" and, if they commit abortion, they go against their nature and confront terrible consequences for doing so. Reyes argues that «if you give a woman the opportunity between having or not having an abortion, she will always seek to keep the child, that is always...a woman arrives at the decision of abortion only because of the lack of opportunity and for having closed herself within a dark road that takes her into a decision of death, which marks her for the rest of her life...»

52. This argument –that legalizing divorce is a threat to individual liberties and a pluralist society- is a principle that is widely argued on the political right, and around which legislative proposals have been made (e.g. to allow for the couple to renounce their right to divorce, or to prohibit divorce among those who profess to be Catholics, etc.).

53. Public policy studies done by analysts at the Liberty and Development Institute and Chileunido cite all these factors as effects of legalized divorce.

As for social reality, O'Reilly argues that “[i]f we had accepted Church doctrine on premarital relations... we would not have the problems we have today”. Sex should only form part of a marital relationship, and should always be open to the possibility of procreation. Sex education and access to contraception is not only unnecessary, but morally and socially degrading and harmful. Social problems such as growing AIDS rates, teenage pregnancies, and clandestine abortions exist because of lax social sanctions against transgressors, not because of Church doctrine itself.

The response to transgressors is punitive. Moral transgressors must be appropriately punished, and hence all four legislative initiatives the right has proposed with regard to abortion during the 1990's have sought to increase penalties for those involved in abortions⁵⁴. One of the defenses for the abortion bill in the 1998 Senate plenary debate was that “human beings need to be punished for certain behaviors”⁵⁵. On the other hand, women who die in the process of carrying their children to term (even if the child dies), or carry the babies of their rapists, are hailed as martyrs and examples for others to follow (Guzmán 1974, Reyes interview). On divorce, the issue at stake is not the ability of people to separate, but rather their ability to re-marry. Those who have failed once should not be legally given another chance to re-make their lives. Similarly, the Catholic Church does not allow separated people who have formed new unions to participate in communion.

54. As noted earlier, clauses exist for women who denounce to the police the names of the practitioners and others who helped them to have their sentences reduced (1994 initiatives) or altogether eliminated (2001 initiative). This is called “arrepentimiento eficaz” (effective repentance) and is commonly applied to cases involving drug dealers or terrorism. One initiative in 1994 also sought to give police more powers to denounce and raid clandestine clinics.

55. Jorge Martínez Busch. Appointed Senator. Speech during Legislature 338^a, Ordinary Session 14^a, July 15, 1998.

Liberal Catholic worldview

Liberal Catholics, while they agree with the general message and divine inspiration of Catholic doctrine, disagree with its reach, as well as how it should be implemented. Most importantly, liberals believe that the political realm should, in principle, be autonomous and that legislators—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—should have the right to exercise individual conscience when they so choose. Hence, one of the Christian Democratic sponsors of the divorce bill, deputy Ignacio Walker, reiterated the principle of legislative autonomy and individual conscience when defending his seemingly contradictory posture as a practicing Catholic who approves divorce⁵⁶. Another PDC deputy and sponsor emphasized that social reality should be factored into public policy from the basis of a pluralist, democratic society⁵⁷.

On divorce, liberal Catholics agree with Catholic doctrine that a traditional and legally permanent family is a social good. However, in cases of irremediable marital breakdowns, divorce is considered a lesser evil and hence can be justified within a Catholic worldview. Therefore, divorce should be available but difficult to obtain, encouraging people to remain married and not change partners. The current divorce bill pending Senate debate is an explicit example of liberal Catholicism, two of the main authors of which are PDC deputies Ignacio Walker and Mariana Aylwin. The bill is conservative by standards of comparative law, and does not allow for divorce based on mutual consent alone (Aylwin and Walker 1995)⁵⁸. If extenuating circumstances do not exist (e.g. homosexuality, physical violence etc.) the couple must remain separated for five years in theory and seven years in practice (given the court system) before the marriage is formally dissolved.

While Catholicism defines abortion as a sin, the liberal Catholic view is to “hate the sin, forgive the sinner”. Thus liberal Catholics tend to vest symbolic importance to retaining abortion illegal, while extending forgiveness and understanding to women who have aborted by not prosecuting them. Moreover,

56. Interview with PDC deputy Ignacio Walker, September 11, 2000, Santiago.

57. Interview with PDC deputy Sergio Elgueta, October 3, 2000, Valparaíso.

58. Along with several leftwing deputies and one RN deputy, three Christian Democrats—Aylwin, Walker and Elgueta—sponsored the bill.

and importantly, some liberal Catholics may concede that there are conditions under which abortion may be allowed, as in the case of threat to the life of the woman and in the case of rape⁵⁹.

The 1991 bill to re-legalize therapeutic abortion is based on a liberal Catholic worldview: the wording of the bill does not question the premise that abortion is an attempt against human life. Rather, it focuses on the negative consequences on the family in cases where mothers die from pregnancies due to the unavailability of abortion, and leave husbands and children without care (Boletín no 499-07). Finally, many liberal Catholics support preventive sexual education campaigns to confront the abortion rate and its consequences, despite Church condemnation of any fertility regulation it considers “artificial”⁶⁰.

Secular worldview

People who adhere to a secular worldview maintain that the moral authority and choice on issues such as abortion and divorce should reside in the individual. Moreover, they tend to respond to social reality with pragmatic policy postures: given the high abortion rate and its consequences, the state should, they argue, concern itself with its effects, particularly on poor women. Hence abortion should be regulated, and people should be given access to information and services that allow them to make their own decisions about their reproductive potential. This involves comprehensive sexual education and access to contraception. Divorce should be legalized given individual liberty to choose who to share one’s life with, and in order to respond to the social reality of marital separations. The focus of divorce legislation should be on regulating its effects and protecting those who tend to suffer most (i.e. women and children) by enforcing child support.

If only ideological and not strategic concerns reigned, the majority of the left would lean toward a secular worldview, which is implicit in the private postures of most leftist politicians. Many of them -as well as some on the center and one

59. Several Catholic deputies indicated to me in private that they considered rape and threat to life as acceptable conditions for legal abortion. This makes them liberal instead of integralist Catholics.

60. The only acceptable regulation of fertility is abstinence and the ‘rhythm method’, which involves restricting sexual intercourse to what are referred to as ‘safe days’ during a woman’s menstrual cycle.

on the right- told me that personally they support the liberalization of abortion laws. However, even the feminist deputies affirm that liberalization is not a political priority –or even an issue- in their party, given the political dynamics around the issue⁶¹. This is reflected in the lack of legal initiatives since the first two reformist divorce bills (1991, 1993) that sought to regulate marital breakups on a pragmatic basis. Since then, no one has actively promoted legal initiatives that depart from a non-religious basis.

Feminist organizations involved in abortion and divorce consider that political regulation of these problems should depart from their effects on the most vulnerable members of society, which are women in general and poor women in particular. Policy proposals made by *Grupo Iniciativa* on divorce call for the right of couples to decide if and when they want to separate, and demand equitable regulation of the effects of divorce on the poorer and more vulnerable members of a family (Grupo Iniciativa 2000). The *Foro Abierto de Salud y Derechos Reproductivos* views abortion first and foremost through its health consequences on women (Blofield 1998).

Consolidation of party lines on moral issues

Tables 8a and b illustrate the public adherence of right, center and left parties to the worldviews in 1990 and 2000.

Table 8a
Adherence of right, center and left political parties in
Chile to the worldviews in 1990.

	right	center	left
Integralist Catholic	x	x	
Liberal Catholic	x	x	x
Secular			x

61. Interviews with PPD deputy Maria Antonieta Saa, September 27, 2000, Santiago; PPD deputy Adriana Muñoz , October 3, 2000, Valparaíso; PS deputy Carlos Montes, September 20, 2000, Santiago; and PS senator José Antonio Viera-Gallo, November 13, 2000, Santiago.

Table 8b
Adherence of right, center and left political parties in Chile to the worldviews in 2000.

	right	center	left
Integralist Catholic	x	x	
Liberal Catholic		x	x
Secular			

right = UDI, RN center = PDC left = PPD, PS

Through the 1990's, we see the definition of party positions on abortion and divorce along religious lines⁶². Over the last ten years, due to the combined influence of the Vatican agenda, the influence of the Church on political parties, and the political influence of conservative and reformist interest groups and networks respectively, the range of options on the political right has been reduced to integral Catholicism, and the range of options on the political left has been reduced to liberal Catholicism. While the political center is divided between liberal and integralist Catholicism, the majority has –given the influence of the Catholic Church but not the conservative interest groups, combined with the pressure of being in a coalition with the left – consolidated its positions along the liberal Catholic worldview. The secular worldview has been reduced into political insignificance.

Political strategies in the 1990's

This 'range of options' has translated into the following political strategies on the right, center and left.

	<i>right</i>	<i>center</i>	<i>left</i>
<i>abortion</i>	active	passive	passive
<i>divorce</i>	active	divided	active

The influence of the Vatican agenda, the Church- political party nexus, and the insertion of conservative and reformist networks on the right and the left,

62. Somewhat akin to the process of religious polarization between Republicans and Democrats in the last two decades in the United States (Layman 1999), although the political dimensions and debate are substantially more conservative and less reflective of popular sentiment in the case of Chile. Layman uses the terms 'nominal' or 'mainstream' and 'fundamentalist' Christians (both Catholic and Protestant) to distinguish the difference. I prefer the term integralist in the case of mainly Catholic Chile. The underlying distinction is the same.

explains the active and passive stances of the political parties on abortion and divorce. The Catholic Church has actively pressured for these issues not to be politically raised at all, and the left has assumed elements of Church strategy through the 1990's. The weakness of feminist organizations and active Church-right opposition has pushed abortion completely off the political agenda of the left, while on divorce a broader reformist coalition, given active Church-right opposition, has yet to pass legislation. The right, on the other hand, given the active support of integralist groups and the Catholic Church, maintains opposition to abortion and divorce high on the political agenda.

Consolidation of party lines on divorce

On divorce, both the left and the right have assumed active strategies -for and against- while the PDC leadership, despite internal disagreement, has tried to avoid the issue. These strategies have been assumed through the consolidation of party positions on the issue.

Right after the transition, significant divisions within UDI and RN existed on divorce, as indicated in the survey, with both parties evenly split over the issue. Julio Dittborn, the President of UDI at the time and annulled himself, declared his support for the legalization of divorce in 1991. However, after party pressure, he “softened” his position, and reiterated that his party was against divorce⁶³.

Similarly, Hernán Buchi, the failed UDI presidential candidate in 1989, and separated himself, declared by June, 1991 that “when you advance in divorce legislation, what happens is that people take marriage more lightly”⁶⁴. At this time, UDI officially declared its opposition to any initiative to legalize divorce despite the contradictions in the leadership and the fact that half of party members supported legalization (Moreno del Pablo 1992: 64).

The RN also maintained internal divisions over the issue, given that a significant minority of the party were free masonists, while most of the members were traditional Catholics. One RN senator developed his own legislative project to legalize divorce in 1991, and publicized it extensively⁶⁵. The project was never

63. Interview with UDI deputy Julio Dittborn, January 10, 2001, Valparaíso.

64. *La Epoca*, June 14, 1991.

65. Senator Hugo Ortíz developed his own divorce project (*El Mercurio*, June 20, 1991).

presented, however, and the party leadership assumed a strongly pro-Catholic discourse. Now, prominent leaders maintain that divorce is not and has not been a conflictual issue⁶⁶. It is probable that the RN directive –conservative Catholics– clamped down on the liberal sectors within the party.

By the 1997 vote on divorce, legislators on the left and the right voted along party lines, although technically all were free to vote in conscience. On the left, all except one voted in favor of divorce⁶⁷. In the PDC, two-thirds of the deputies voted in favor of divorce in a deeply divisive vote for the party. On the right, all except four deputies (3 RN, one UDI) voted against divorce.

The right has, since its defeat, consolidated a strategy to *actively* keep divorce off the political agenda, and to present well-developed counterproposals at times when it does reach the agenda. Hence, both the UDI and RN presidents of the Senate Commission of Justice have, for three and a half years (1997-2001) since the Chamber bill on divorce was sent to the commission, refused to have it discussed⁶⁸. This has allowed the right time to organize a more sophisticated counter to the legislation than they did in the Chamber, with the active participation of politicians, intellectuals, and clergy. Diez, who is the current President of the Justice Commission, will introduce the counterproposal with the original bill if and when executive prerogative forces the commission to address the divorce bill⁶⁹.

Meanwhile, the discursive approach of the right has been to insist that the population does not need or want a divorce law. This has been the open stance of UDI presidential candidate Lavín. UDI advisor Reyes argues that “the public agenda today is not in these issues”.

Virtually all surveys tell another story, however, and the interesting issue is that UDI and RN have chosen to go against public opinion through the 1990’s on divorce, even though these issues do not threaten their economic interests through redistributive outlays or by fundamentally changing the class structure, nor is it related to defense of the legacy of the military regime, the two issues which have

66. Interview with a leading RN political advisor, January 4, 2001, Santiago; interview with RN senator and president of justice commission Sergio Diez, November 29, 2000. However, a RN sponsor of the divorce bill does consider the issue a source of intra-party divisions, even if it is not a primary cause of tension in the party.

67. PS deputy Jaime Naranjo, a devout Catholic and opposed to legal divorce, abstained from the vote along with a pro-divorce left deputy, hence allowing his stance to have an impact without voting against the party. Curiously, Naranjo has had his own marriage annulled.

68. The UDI Senator told me that the right wing has done everything they can to postpone the debate on divorce, and meanwhile develop their own counterproposal to the Chamber bill (interview January 14, 2001, Santiago).

69. Interview with Senator Sergio Diez, November 29, 2000, Valparaíso.

elicited formidable and united right opposition in the past⁷⁰. The explanation lies in the consolidation of Catholic integralism in the social bases of the Chilean right.

In 1990, initial willingness to legislate on divorce existed within the governing coalition. Following the transition, there was a general and widespread recognition of the problems lack of legal divorce had created, and a general willingness to place it on the political agenda. On the left, both PS and PPD –as indicated by the survey- were strongly in favor of legalization in the early 1990's. Even a majority of Christian Democrats supported divorce, and the leadership was willing to discuss the issue, despite heated internal divisions. The electoral program of the *Concertación* itself stated –somewhat ambiguously to be sure- in 1989: “resolving the hypocrisy of marital annulments through legislative initiative is within the proposals of the democratic government” (*Concertación* 1989).

Moreover, after the *Concertación* assumed power in 1990, judicial, public and ministerial organs of the state urged the government to act. The Director of the Civil Registry in 1991 urged the century-old legislation on civil marriage to be renovated in order to establish regulations around de facto separations, a large and growing problem in Chilean society⁷¹. Similarly, several Supreme Court judges called on the government to address and legislate divorce, given the regulatory and legal problems and frauds that were currently taking place within the system (Moreno del Pablo 1992). The first minister of Sernam -Soledad Alvear- indicated in October 1990 that it was necessary to socially and politically address the issue of divorce, and that a participative and extensive debate in Congress on the matter was desirable⁷².

Yet by June, 1991, right after the first divorce bill had been presented by leftwing legislators in the Chamber, Alvear emphasized that Sernam in its capacity as government ministry would not stimulate the debate on divorce⁷³. By July, both the presidents of the Chamber and Senate received an official document from the Catholic Church reiterating Church opposition to divorce legislation⁷⁴. The executive responded to concerted pressure by the Church and made it clear that it did not plan to initiate or to support a divorce bill so soon after the transition.

70. The issue of defending the legacy of the military regime has produced divisions between UDI and RN, as well as within UDI itself, given the prosecution of Augusto Pinochet in Chile. The extent to which Pinochet should be defended against the courts of justice has elicited severe disagreements which UDI has been unable to hide from public view.

71. *El Mercurio*, September 28, 1990. Obtained from Moreno del Pablo (1992).

72. *La Nación*, October 18, 1990. Obtained from Moreno del Pablo.

73. *El Sur de Concepción*, June 2, 1991. Obtained from Moreno del Pablo.

74. *La Epoca*, July 23, 1991. Obtained from Moreno del Pablo.

Executive hesitance did not, however, hinder legislators from the governing parties from introducing their own bills. The main impetus has come from the left, although several Christian Democratic deputies, as discussed, lent their active and crucial support to the efforts. Since the early 1990's, PS and PPD legislators have come to unanimously support divorce legislation, and the issue has reached political agenda priority among significant groups of legislators since the 1995 legislative initiative gained ground. However, left support has consolidated, after the earlier more radical initiatives, behind the liberal Catholic bill on divorce. Finally, Lagos' inclusion of divorce in his 1999 presidential campaign indicates that, despite the conservative nature of the bill, the left assumed an active stance on divorce. Yet several presidential postponements of the debate since Lagos took office in March 2000 reveal that reformist networks are not influential even with a leftist president, while the Church retains privileged access to the new government.

The issue for the PDC has been more complicated. Divorce remains an extremely divisive issue, given the foundational principles of the party (in 1957 it was explicitly anti-divorce) and the strong adherence sectors of the leadership want to maintain to the principles enacted almost half a century ago⁷⁵. The party leadership has preferred to keep the issue of divorce off the political agenda while several deputies –most notably Mariana Aylwin and Ignacio Walker- sponsored the bill that was voted on in 1997⁷⁶. Hence, the executive governments, of PDC President Aylwin (1990-1994) and PDC President Eduardo Frei (1994-2000) did not initiate or actively support any legislative initiatives, despite tacit approval by the two former presidents that legislation was needed.

Executive desire (from 1990-2001) to postpone conflict along the religious dimension has allowed the right to consolidate a powerful oppositional block – with the Church- and to increase the political costs associated with promoting divorce legislation. The fact that divorce is still illegal can be considered a political victory for the right.

75. Interview with Enrique Krauss, ex-president of the PDC (1997-1999) and current PDC deputy in Congress.

76. This tension is encapsulated in an angry declaration by Krauss when he assumed the PDC presidency in 1997 (while members of his own party were actively supporting the divorce bill in the Chamber) that the population had no need for or interest in legislating divorce.

Consolidation of party lines on abortion

In the early 1990's, there was an initial openness on the left to re-instate therapeutic abortion –repealed in 1989 by the military- on the political agenda. However, once Adriana Muñoz- author of the therapeutic abortion bill of 1991- was vilified by the right and the press as a baby-killer⁷⁷, the political costs of broaching the issue became apparent. Isolated leftwing initiatives in 1993 and 1994 to reinstate the Muñoz bill on the political agenda received more of the same from the right, and a reticent –although not rejecting- response from left leaders. Christian Democrats remained silent. This reticence and silence was publicly interpreted by the right as a sign of moral relativism on the left, and leaders called on the governing coalition to assume an actively pro-life stance or be exposed as pro-abortionists⁷⁸. While this strategy did not receive much resonance among the cen

77. The press focused on the reactions of the right to the project, rather than those of the left or the initiator of the project itself. Here is an overview of right wing reactions in the press to the legislative initiative to re-legalize therapeutic abortion –to save the life of the woman-in 1991:

Juan Antonio Coloma, the UDI Secretary-General, sends out a “warning to public opinion on the gravest reaches that the project to establish therapeutic abortion in Chile has”, and argues that “[t]oday the medical need to permit therapeutic abortion to save the physical or psychological integrity of the mother does not exist... illnesses incompatible with pregnancy, in terms of justifying an abortion, no longer exist”. Therapeutic abortion “is a pretext... Behind the formation [of the project] is not the issue of how to understand the problems of life, rather, it is to implant in Chile a dangerous and for the national community absolutely unnecessary system of abortion”. (*La Epoca*, “La UDI rechaza proyecto de ley sobre aborto terapéutico presentado por PS.” October 7, 1991, page 9.) He argues that the project is nothing more than “another debilitating element for the social and moral order”, and is “linked to other initiatives launched by other leftwing leaders in the last months”, including providing condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS and the proposal to legalize divorce, which constitute “in themselves and taken together elements that debilitate a proper social order of the moral”. (*La Epoca*, “UDI advierte quiebre moral en el aborto terapéutico”. October 10, 1991, page 13.)

Dario Paya, President of UDI Youth and later deputy (and sponsor of one of the 1994 bills to increase abortion penalties) argues that “the proposal lacks merit and does not have ethical, legal or scientific foundations”. (*La Epoca*, “Grupo sale al paso a proyecto pro aborto de Adriana Muñoz.” June 30, 1991, page 9.)

He warns of the “gestation” of “a hidden movement whose most profound intention is to legalize abortion in Chile”. (*La Nación*, “Pidieron a diputada Muñoz que retire proyecto sobre aborto.” June 30, 1991, page 4.)

The RN is equally categorical in its rejection. RN leader Alberto Espina rejects the project to re-legalize therapeutic abortion, calling it “one of the most cruel forms of assassination”. (*La Nación*, “RN y UDI se pronuncian: derecha rechaza proyecto de aborto.” June 28, 1991, page 13.) Moreover, other prominent RN leaders (María Angélica Cristi, Andrés Allamand, María Pía Guzmán) together declared that the project is actually “a subterfuge to legalize abortion because in current medicine the choice between the life of the mother and the child no longer exists”. Legalizing therapeutic abortion “would signify simplifying the death of the defenseless and the innocent”. They call on other “pro-life parties” to reject the Muñoz project. (*El Mercurio*, “RN rechaza proyecto de aborto terapéutico.” October 5, 1991, page 5.)

The UDI-linked Liberty and Development Institute calls the project unconstitutional, given that the constitution “guarantees all persons the right to life and physical and psychological integrity”. Fetuses are unquestionably considered persons, and the issue is not discussed. (*El Mercurio*, “Proyecto sobre aborto es inconstitucional.” November 1, 1991, page 4.)

Leftwing declarations are scantily reported in the media, and most left politicians, given the reaction of the right, choose to remain quiet. Muñoz defends her bill by arguing that, among other factors, all civilized countries allow therapeutic abortion, and that cases of threat to mother's life do exist and doctors must have the legal ability to save the woman's life (*La Epoca*, “Diputada socialista Adriana Muñoz propicia restituir aborto terapéutico”. June 27, 1991, 6).

It is worth noting that, at this time, a more sympathetic informative article on the social dimensions of abortion appears in the weekly news magazine *Revista Análisis* (July 29, 1991, 6-7). This newsmagazine has since been discontinued. Similarly, *La Epoca*, which has provided somewhat more balanced reporting on these issues, went bankrupt in 1998. The consolidation of rightwing ownership in the media through the 1990's has left its mark on the public debate on moral issues.

78. *El Mercurio*, “Instan a Frei a definir postura sobre el aborto”. July 19, 1993, 4c.

ter or the left at the time, the three abortion bills the right initiated in 1994 made it clear to the left that they did not intend to let reformists dominate abortion politics, as had been the case in Western Europe and North America. UDI called, without success, for the right proposals to be included within executive prerogative. Simultaneously, the party launched a massive public relations campaign on the issue, including signature-gathering events, which received a great deal of publicity in the national press⁷⁹. This allowed the right to dominate problem definition as well as agenda-setting, even though executive power in the hands of the center-left coalition and its veto over urgency status for the abortion bills forced the right to use the ordinary legislative channels.

Meanwhile, the vast majority on the political left assumed a passive approach to the issue. Some feminists unsuccessfully tried to reinstate therapeutic abortion on the agenda of sympathetic legislators. However, its potential to visibly divide the governing coalition and to elicit rightwing media campaigns was enough to make the left parties collectively as well as all legislators individually to back off, and strategies to approach the issue of abortion have been reduced to passive, defensive attempts to retain the status quo and to make limited inroads on the side of prevention.

The journey of the rightwing Senate bill on abortion reflects the lack of priority the left relegates to the issue. When the Senate abortion bill –having been approved for debate by the Justice Commission in 1996- was scheduled for plenary debate in 1998, UDI sponsor Larraín argues that he had the needed Christian Democratic votes to approve it. The left was unprepared for the debate, and lawyer and abortion expert Lidia Casas was called by a leftwing senator four days before the date of the debate to provide an analysis of the bill and its effects⁸⁰. She assembled a team that worked day and night for three days straight, and her analysis is the direct base of the opposing senators' arguments. The ultimate rejection of the bill by two votes was a surprise to its sponsor, and while it can be read as a short-term success for the left –a couple of Christian Democrats had changed their minds- the fact that the narrow victory was reliant on the work of one person –notified a few days in advance- indicates that the left is not organized around the issue, and has not attached much priority to it.

79. *Las Últimas Noticias*, "Urgencia a proyectos contra el aborto". July 31, 1994, 7; *El Mercurio*, "Piden urgencia para ley contra aborto". July 31, 1994, 3c; *La Nación*, "Médicos y la UDI se pronuncian sobre el aborto". July 31, 1994, 10.

80. Interview with Lidia Casas, November 21, 2000, Santiago.

Moreover, Larraín himself considers the process a political victory because even though his bill narrowly lost, it has managed to divert the moral discourse away from whether or not to liberalize abortion laws as is the case in other countries, to whether punitive strategies are the most appropriate way to attack the problem of abortion, and whether the crime should equal homicide in its nature and punishment⁸¹. He –along with a group of other UDI senators- is introducing a minimally reformed version in 2001.

Currently, left deputies prefer to retain their support for limited liberalization of abortion laws private, and do not to assume public stands on the issue. Despite the social parameters of the abortion problem, the left has not mounted an active opposition to right discourse, and abortion is not currently, as mentioned, considered a political priority within either party.

In the year 2000, the right has not relaxed its stance on abortion. UDI analyst Reyes argues that the issue of abortion is «the most profound, ethical theme that confronts us as a society». His party has an obligation to be «effective in the pro-life struggle» and spread the message that «we are all called on to be pro-life, it is not the territory of one party, sector or ideology, this is anthropology». Given this, the issue is non-negotiable, and Reyes believes that «here the issue is not to cede on anything...it is a politics of convincing rather than consensus». There is room for proselytizing, not dialogue.

This active political opposition is translated into multiple strategies. First, every opening to influence the political level is embraced. When the new PPD minister of Sernam, Adriana Delpiano, represented Chile at the Beijing +5 Conference⁸² in New York in June 2000, both feminists and conservatives had lobbied hard for a stance consequent with their ideological points of view. Delpiano had promised feminists she would maintain the position Chile had taken at the United Nations Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing (against abortion but supportive of “reproductive rights”). However, at the last minute she gave into intense pressure from UDI and officially declared Chile to be “pro-life”, rudely disappointing the feminists⁸³. Moreover, UDI sponsored a pro-Vatican

81. Interview with UDI senator Hernán Larraín, January 15, 2001, Santiago.

82. United Nations Conference on Women.

83. Feminists told me that Delpiano apologized afterwards, arguing that a translational mistake had made her unaware of what she was saying. Reyes, on the other hand, told me that Delpiano approached him and said: “you win”, and included their stance in the speech.

declaration -written by Reyes- reaffirming its status as a permanent observer at the United Nations. The declaration was unanimously supported in Congress, where no one dared to bring up the issue of church-state separation.

Second, active media campaigns against individuals who publicly assume liberal Catholic or secular stances on issues that can be related to abortion or divorce are launched. The media is more favorable to the right to begin with, and right politicians attract a great deal of attention to themselves and their opponents by making strident declarations to the press. A telling example is UDI Senator Carlos Bombal's characterization, in February 2001, of the health minister's initiative to allow voluntary sterilization in public hospitals as "a Nazi practice"⁸⁴. Bombal received substantial media coverage on television and in the printed news.

Third, conservative interest groups have increasingly resorted to court challenges to bar reforms in cases they have not been able to politically halt, such as ministry decrees. Hence, the health ministry's intention and then decision to allow for the commercialization -under prescription for cases of rape and contraceptive failure- of the morning-after pill in Chile in March 2001 sent off a political storm. The opposition of the political right and the Catholic Church is centered on the contention that the pill causes an abortion, and has occupied newspaper headlines and been the topic of numerous TV talkshows in Chile since early March. A network of pro-life organizations successfully achieved a court injunction that repealed the government decision until a court decision is made. If the Appeals Court rejects their claim, the groups are prepared to appeal to the more conservative Supreme Court. These actions serve as an effective warning as to the kind of organized opposition any politician who might advocate the decriminalization of even therapeutic abortion will encounter.

In the case of divorce, the political right has so far been able to bar changes, not by voting them down but by actively affecting problem definition, agenda-setting, and the legislative process itself. In the case of abortion, the left was, so far, able to vote down the proposal to increase abortion penalties, while it has had little control over problem definition and agenda setting.

84. Currently, only men are allowed to voluntarily sterilize themselves –an almost non-existent practice in Chile as well as in Latin America in general- while women need to prove they have three or more children, a health need for the procedure, as well as their husband's or partner's authorization.

Most importantly, right strategies have successfully managed to send the message of opposition at all costs to left politicians, and to change their cost-benefit analyses on divorce as well as initiatives that can be broadly linked to the abortion issue. The amount of time and effort politicians must spend to persevere in efforts to liberalize laws on moral issues is enough to dissuade anyone who does not hold a strong social base of support.

Conclusion and implications for the future

Paradoxically, despite the passive support in numbers, feminists have had little political influence on abortion and divorce, while conservative organizations, despite the lack of support in numbers, have high political influence. In essence, while most of society has increasingly liberal values and behavior, integralism within the right wing is consolidated. However, it is not enough to explain the success of the right in dominating the political landscape. It is also important to understand the motivation that brings the political right to assume such conservative moral positions, ones that are often more conservative than what many of them believe or live themselves. In the current context of Chilean politics, the right stands to gain from maintaining an actively integralist stance on these issues.

First, the right gains political benefits. These are issues that divide the *Concertación*, both within the PDC and between the PDC and the left. The Christian Democrats are particularly vulnerable to accusations of being anti-family, and are aware of the political costs involved⁸⁵. Fomenting these divisions by questioning the moral bases of the left and center serves the right politically, because it forces the parties within the *Concertación* to publicly disagree on these issues and, more importantly, to do it in the context of right wing framing of the debate. The *Concertación* is unable to engage in the debate on their terms, as anyone who is pro-divorce becomes an enemy of a stable family, and anyone who seeks to open the debate on abortion is called a baby-killer. Moreover, it creates tensions between the Church and the governing coalition, as right politicians point to what they argue is an inconsistency on the center-left in having received the support of the Church hierarchy on issues of human rights violations during the dictatorship, yet daring to go against Church doctrine on issues related to family morality during the democratic years.

85. Interviews with a prominent PDC deputy, September 2000, Santiago; and with PPD deputy Adriana Muñoz, October 3, 2000, Valparaíso.

Second, and related, these activist policy positions enable the right, on the other hand, to present itself as the defender of family morality in the media and on a political level. The success of the right has been to change a politically conflictual relation with the Church in the 1980's to a relationship of mutual support and, hence, to appear morally legitimate and even superior, despite its recent history of complicity with human rights violations and its regressive position on social and labor rights. This Church-aligned position has not involved many political or economic sacrifices.

Rather, and third, it has brought economic benefits. In general, right wing politicians receive the support of economic and, increasingly, religious groups, which condition -although it is difficult to prove- the supply of resources to the maintenance of conservative moral positions. The incentives to promote integralism are high, while the incentives to diverge from these policy positions are low. Hence, even liberal politicians on the right have come to support integralist positions.

Finally, it is unclear whether there are direct electoral gains to be made on moral issues in either direction. However, poor sectors are more conservative in public opinion than the Chilean average on moral issues, and calls on the right have been made to base a conservative social movement in the poor urban sectors of Santiago (Lehmann 1996). In any case, it is highly unlikely that the urban poor would vote against a populist candidate on the basis of their position on divorce, if other promises such as employment and reduction in poverty were successfully made. This electoral strategy may satisfy the urban poor (at least in the short term) and the Chilean upper classes, where integralism is consolidated. Moreover, the more liberal sectors of the business classes are unlikely to prefer a leftist candidate on the basis of moral issues alone. On the left, it is unclear that left candidates would *lose* any votes by going against the Catholic Church on these issues. After all, public opinion *is* in their favor and so far the concerted media campaigns of the right and Church declarations seem to have had no effect in swaying the mass public on these issues.

What is interesting about the Chilean case is that we see an emergent fundamentalist social movement with its intellectual, organizational and financial base in the highly centralized Chilean upper class. We could predict an expansion toward the lower classes in urban Santiago in order to obtain a popular social

base for the movement. The ultimate municipal elections in October 2000, in which UDI mayors won key municipal posts across Santiago, could help achieve this.

While center-left control of the executive and majority in the Chamber has prevented the right agenda from being politically implemented so far, a rightwing presidency under Lavín is a distinct possibility for 2006, around which the political right has already begun to organize.

The ultimate legislative success of the right strategy depends on capturing the crucial median legislator. This depends, first, on the ability of the political right to increase its political representation to capture more legislative seats, around which the right has actively organized for the Congressional elections of 2001. This has involved bringing forth new, young, and female faces to capture traditional *Concertación* districts. These deputy nominees are integralist, and very well-trained with unified party support, and their discourse centers on the reduction of poverty and unemployment. While moral issues are central to the party agenda, divorce in particular is not part of the electoral campaign per se, given public opinion. Second, success depends on the relationship of the political right to the cadre of integralist Christian Democrats. Two factors are important here: first, whether the political right can make significant inroads among Christian Democrats, an option that interest groups and politicians have recently begun to organize around. While during the first half of the 1990's cooperation between the *Concertación* and the right wing was out of the question –particularly for the center-left- given the Pinochet legacy, time has allowed these distinctions to fade away. The ideological glue that has held the *Concertación* together is its legacy of opposition to the Pinochet regime and economic reformism; the first is fading away, and integralist Christian Democrats may find less personal and political barriers than before to associating with the former enemy. Interest groups have begun to forge access to and lobby the more conservative Christian Democratic politicians, and rightwing politicians –as well as Christian Democrats themselves- have become more amenable to cross-coalition lobbying on moral issues⁸⁶.

86. Interview with PDC deputy Zarco Luksic, November 29, 2000, Valparaíso.

The second factor is the state of internal politics in the Christian Democratic Party, as well as its potential impact on electoral votes. The integralist PDC politicians largely form –as noted earlier- the ‘old guard’ of the party. The PDC is badly in need of a generational reform without which it may lose a great deal of voter appeal, not only because of the electorate’s desire to see younger faces, but because many of the older faces have become associated with clientelism and even corruption. This generational change could produce a liberalization of party politics on moral issues, which might hinder right access to this group of key swing legislators.

As for the political left, feminist hopes of a new chance at agenda-setting on abortion during the Lagos presidency were dashed away with his reaffirmation of an explicitly anti-abortion stance in September 2000. Unless feminists are able to publicize the extent of public opinion support for a limited liberalization of abortion laws, to politicize the public health consequences of clandestine abortions, and through these actions to improve their ability to influence the political agenda and change politicians’ perceptions of the political balance of power on abortion, no change is to be expected in the near future.

Divorce, however, is on the political agenda and the political alignments in the Senate will determine the ultimate outcome of the legislative bill. Given rightwing counterproposals as well as the ability of the Senate to add indications to the current bill, a modified version is most likely going to be bounced back to the Chamber. Given potential rightwing inroads among Christian Democrats, the 2001 legislative elections, and the possibility of a Lavín presidency –in which case he would veto any divorce bill- the left is working under a tight schedule.

Bibliography (not all of these works are directly cited in the working paper.)

- Arteaga, Ana Maria. "Mujer y salud reproductiva: elementos básicos para un perfil de la situación en Chile", Santiago: Area Mujer. 1990.
- Aylwin, Mariana and Ignacio Walker. *Divorcio: Argumentos de una Posición*. Santiago, Chile. 1995.
- Baurreiro Pérez-Pardo, Belén. *Democracia y Conflicto Moral: La Política del Aborto en Italia y España*. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales. 1998. (Ph.D.dissertation.)
- Baumgartner, Frank R., and Beth L. Leech. *Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1998.
- Berger, Suzanne. "Religious transformation and the future of politics" in *European Sociological Review*, vol. 1:1, May 1985.
- Blofield, Merike. "Abortion politics in Chile and Argentina: public opinion, social organization and political agendas". Paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association, Chicago, September 24, 1998.
- Blofield, Merike, and Liesl Haas. "Legislative Dynamics in Chile: Exploring Left Influence on Policy, 1990-1998", paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association, Miami, March 16-18, 2000.
- Boletín No 499-07. Moción de Cámara de Diputados de Chile, "Modifica el artículo 119 del Código Sanitario en lo relativo al aborto terapéutico".
- Casas Becerra, Lidia. *Mujeres Procesadas por Aborto*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones. 1996.
- Casas, Lidia; Nunez, Nuria; Zavala, Ximena. 1998. *Aborto: Elementos para una Discusión Necesaria*. Santiago: Instituto de la Mujer.
- Castles, Francis G. "On religion and public policy: does Catholicism make a difference?" in *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 25. 1994.
- Daudelin, Jean, and W.E. Hewitt. "Churches and Politics in Latin America: Catholicism at the Crossroads" in *Third World Quarterly*, 16:2. 1995.
- Dix, Robert, "Cleavage Structures and Party Systems in Latin America", in *Comparative Politics*. October 1989.
- Dogan, Mattei. "Erosion of class voting and of the religious vote in Western Europe" in *International Social Science Journal*, vol.146, December 1995.
- Fleet, Michael, and Brian H. Smith. *The Catholic Church and Democracy in Chile and Peru*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 1997.
- Fleet, Michael. *The Rise and Fall of Chilean Christian Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Gacitúa, Andres, articulo en *Nos Habíamos Amado Tanto: Un Aporte al Debate Sobre el Divorcio en Chile*. Santiago: Corsaps. 1992.

- Gayán Barba, Patricio. "Consecuencias Médicas del Aborto Inducido en Chile" in Mariano Requena (editor) *Aborto Inducido en Chile*. Edición Sociedad Chilena de Salud Pública. 1990.
- Gill, Anthony. *Rendering Unto Caesar: The Catholic Church and the State in Latin America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1998.
- Grau, Olga, Eugenia Brito and Riet Delsing. *Discurso, Género y Poder. Discursos Públicos: Chile 1978-1993*. Santiago: Lom Ediciones. 1997.
- Grupo Iniciativa Mujeres. "El divorcio que viene: observaciones a la Ley de Divorcio en Chile". Santiago, 2000.
- Haas, Liesl. "The Catholic Church in Chile: New Political Alliances." Christian Smith and Joshua Prokopy. *Latin American Religion in Motion*. New York: Routledge. 1999.
- _____. *Legislating Equality: Institutional Politics and the Expansion of Women's Rights in Chile*. PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 2000.
- Htun, Mala N. "Ruling the Family: Church, State and Divorce", paper presented at the 2000 meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 31-September 3, 2000. Washington, DC.
- Huber, Evelyne, Charles Ragin, and John D. Stephens. "Social Democracy, Christian Democracy, Constitutional Structure and the Welfare State", *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 3, 1999.
- Kingdon, John W. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers. 1995.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1994.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, Peter Lange, Gary Marks, and John D. Stephens (editors), *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Layman, Geoffrey C. "'Culture Wars' in the American party system: religious and cultural change among partisan activists since 1972", in *American Politics Quarterly*, vol.27:1. January 1999.
- Lehmann, Carla. [name of article?] in *Estudios Públicos*. 1996.
- Levine, Daniel H. "From church and state to religion and politics and back again", *Social Compass*, vol. 37:3. 1990.
- Lijphart, Arend. "The relative salience of the socio-economic and religious issue dimensions: coalition formations in ten Western democracies, 1919-1979", in *European Journal of Political Research*, vol.10. 1982.
- Linz, Juan J. "Church and State in Spain from the Civil War to the return of democracy", in *Daedalus*, vol.120:3. 1991.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Stein Rokkan (editors). *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*.

- Free Press. 1967.
- Mainwaring, Scott, and Timothy R. Scully. *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. Sranford: Stanford University Press. 1995.
- Meecham, Lloyd J. *Church and State in Latin America: A History of Politico-Ecclesiastical Relations*. Chapel Hill; UNC Press. 1966.
- Ministerio de Salud. *Tarjeta de Presentación: Situación de la Salud en Chile 1997*. Santiago: Publicación Oficial del Ministerio de Salud. 1997.
- Moreno del Pablo, Pilar. artículo en *Nos Habíamos Amado Tanto: Un Aporte al Debate Sobre el Divorcio en Chile*. Santiago: Corsaps. 1992.
- Morgenstern, Scott. 1999. "U.S. Models and Latin American Legislatures." *Legislative Politics in Latin America*. Scott Morgenstern and Benito Nacif, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Paxman, John M., Alberto Rizo, Laura Brown, and Janie Benson, "The clandestine epidemic: the practice of unsafe abortion in Latin America", *Studies in Family Planning*, 24:4, July/August 1993.
- Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1992.
- Requena, Mariano. *El Aborto Inducido en Chile*. Santiago: Edición Sociedad Chilena de Salud Pública. 1990.
- Scully, Timothy. *Rethinking the Center: Party Politics in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Chile*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1992.
- Silva Dreyer, Ana María. "Estadísticas sobre planificación familiar y aborto en Chile". *Informativo N° 4*, Santiago: Instituto de la Mujer. 1990.
- Stetson, Dorothy McBride, and Amy Mazur (editors). *Comparative State Feminism*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications. 1995.
- Thelen, Kathleen, Sven Steinmo, and Frank Longstreth. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1992.
- Vallier, Ivan. *Catholicism, Social Control, and Modernization in Latin America*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1970.
- Van Kersbergen, Kees. *Social Capitalism: A Study of Christian Democracy and the Welfare State*. London and New York: Routledge. 1995.
- Valdés E., Teresa, and Alejandra Faúndez M. *Diagnóstico de Salud Reproductiva en Chile*. Santiago: El Foro Abierto de Salud y Derechos Reproductivos. 1997.

Newspapers consulted:

El Mercurio
La Segunda
La Tercera
La Epoca
La Nación
Revista Análisis