

Skeletons Under the Altar: Authoritarian Stereotypes and Voting for Evangelicals in Latin America*

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Abstract

Evangelical Christians are a rapidly growing share of the population in most Latin American countries, yet there is substantial cross-national variation in this religious minority's involvement and success with electoral politics. This paper examines one possible explanation for the electoral success or failure of evangelical politicians—the effect on voting behavior of their ties to former dictators. In the context of online survey experiments conducted prior to general elections in Chile (2013) and Brazil (2014), the treatment primes evangelicals' historical support for military regimes during the 1970s–1980s. I then examine the effect of this association on vote intention for an evangelical candidate for Congress. In Chile, where the democratic-authoritarian cleavage is salient in present-day politics and evangelicals' authoritarian ties were fairly prominent, the treatment increases vote intention among non-evangelical, right-wing respondents. I find null effects in Brazil, where the democratic-authoritarian cleavage is largely irrelevant to present-day politics and where evangelicals' historical support for the military regime was less visible. The paper concludes with a discussion of plans to conduct a similar survey experiment during upcoming general elections in Peru, a case that presents strong expectations of effects on voting behavior.

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1 Introduction

Evangelical Christians are a rapidly growing religious minority in most Latin American countries, accounting for about a fifth of the region's total population. In some places, these numbers have translated into substantial descriptive representation. Brazil's evangelical caucus, for example, currently makes up 13% of Congress, and evangelicals have made steady electoral gains since the transition to democracy in 1985. In other countries, evangelical politicians have been much less successful. In Chile, which has South America's second-largest evangelical population in percentage terms (17%), there are only two Protestants in the 158-seat legislature—Senator Ena von Baer, a Lutheran of German ancestry, and Senator Iván Moreira, who went public with his evangelicalism only after the 2013 election. Chile is an extreme case of weak evangelical electoral presence, but there are others, such as Peru, where recent efforts have fallen short of earlier successes. Evangelicals gained 11% of seats in Peru's 1990 congressional election but averaged only 4% of seats over the next 6 elections, through 2011.¹

This paper examines one potential explanation for the success or failure of evangelical politicians in Latin America—their historical ties to former dictators. As right-wing military regimes took over much of Latin America in the 1960s to 1980s—or Fujimori's electoral authoritarianism took hold of Peru during the 1990s—the local Catholic Church often emerged as a critic and a defender of human rights. Souring relations between the state and its traditional religious ally created an opening for evangelicals, and while some stood with the Catholic Church in opposition to authoritarianism, others offered an uncritical embrace. Ties between evangelicals and authoritarian rulers were often well publicized at the time, and, in some cases, have continued to make headlines as former dictators like Fujimori are tried for human rights abuses.

Given this common history, the stereotype that “evangelical politicians are authoritarian” could plausibly be influencing voting behavior in countries around the region. While evangelical vot-

¹In Latin America, the Spanish and Portuguese term *evangélico* is generally used as a synonym for Protestant, including mainline/historical denominations, whereas the English term “evangelical” refers to a subset of Protestants who believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible and the importance of being born again. In this paper, I use the English term in the same general manner as its Latin American equivalent, except when referring to individuals (such as von Baer) who eschew the “evangélico” label in favor of “protestante” or a specific denominational identifier.

ers are likely to support coreligionists regardless of their political stripes (Boas, 2014; Boas and Smith, 2015), those of other faiths might well factor historical associations into their decisions. However, the magnitude of effects is likely to depend on the degree to which memories of evangelicals' authoritarian ties are still present in voters' minds and on the relevance of the democratic-authoritarian cleavage for present-day electoral politics. In cases where this divide still influences voting behavior, the direction of effects should vary according to voters' ideology, with those on the right tending to respond positively while those on the center and left are repelled.

This paper, part of a larger book project on evangelicals and electoral politics in Latin America, examines the cases of Chile and Brazil, where a significant portion of the evangelical community expressed strong support for military regimes during their decades in power. Despite this common history, evangelicals' authoritarian ties are more likely to influence voting behavior in Chile, given the prominence of these ties—both historically and during recent elections—as well as the salience of the authoritarian-democratic cleavage. For the Chilean case, therefore, I hypothesize that authoritarian stereotypes will affect non-evangelicals' intention to vote for an evangelical candidate—positively, for voters on the right, and negatively, for those on the center-left. I expect smaller or null results for Brazil, given the lower salience of the authoritarian-democratic cleavage and the less prominent nature of evangelicals' support for the military regime.

To test these hypotheses, I use online survey experiments, conducted just prior to recent legislative elections in each country, that prime evangelicals' historical support for military rule. I then examine the effect of this association on vote intention for an evangelical candidate for Congress. In Brazil, priming evangelicals' authoritarian ties has no effect on the vote intention of any subgroup. In Chile, among right-wing, non-evangelical respondents, the Pinochet prime increases intention to vote for an evangelical candidate. However, it has no significant effect for non-evangelicals on the center and left. In both countries, evangelicals engage in identity voting—they are more likely to support a fellow believer—but they are unaffected by the authoritarian cue.

While mostly consistent with my theoretical expectations, the results of this analysis underscore that the weight of the past cannot explain the difference between Brazilian evangelicals' electoral

success and Chilean evangelicals' electoral failures. Evangelicals' authoritarian ties potentially matter more for voting behavior in Chile, but these experiments suggest that, if anything, they should serve as a net benefit for evangelicals' electoral prospects.

In the conclusion to the paper, I discuss plans for a similar survey experiment to be conducted prior to the April 2016 elections in Peru. This country differs from Chile and Brazil in that evangelicals' ties to a former dictator are more recent and are also relevant to current events, with a number of prominent pastors supporting a presidential pardon for the imprisoned Fujimori. Hence, I expect larger effects in this case.

2 Stereotypes, Authoritarianism, and Voting Behavior in Chile and Brazil

It is well established that stereotypes based on a candidate's group membership can affect voting behavior, especially when choosing among relatively unfamiliar options (Berinsky and Mendelberg, 2005; Boas, 2014; Campbell, Green and Layman, 2011; Golebiowska, 2001; McDermott, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2009; Sigelman et al., 1995). Stereotyping allows voters to take assumptions about particular types of candidates—e.g., women are more liberal, doctors are more intelligent, incumbents are better qualified for office—and substitute them for knowledge of the candidate's actual ideological tendencies, issue positions, experience, or personal traits. In this way, stereotypes serve as heuristics, or decision-making shortcuts, that help voters choose candidates. Of course, different voters may react differently to the same stereotype—some may vote against a female candidate because she is considered more liberal, while others would favor her for the same reason.

In Chile, the label *pinochetista*—a supporter of or apologist for the military regime of Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990)—is a stereotype that is likely to affect voting behavior. Public assessments of the military regime remained profoundly divided through the 2000s, and these opinions correlate quite strongly with vote intention for the center-left and right-wing coalitions in legislative elec-

tions (Huneus, 2003; Huneus and Maldonado, 2003). Preferences toward democracy versus authoritarianism also strongly predict party and coalition preference, vote choice, and vote intention, as does the attitude of one's family toward the Pinochet regime (Alvarez and Katz, 2009; López and Morales, 2005; Ortega Frei, 2003; Tironi, Agüero and Valenzuela, 2001; Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003). Based on these and other results, many scholars argue that the divide between supporters and opponents of the Pinochet regime constitutes the major cleavage in present-day Chilean politics (Alvarez and Katz, 2009; Bonilla et al., 2011; Ortega Frei, 2003; Tironi and Agüero, 1999; Tironi, Agüero and Valenzuela, 2001; Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003). This cleavage is reflected not only in public opinion, but also in the party system. The center-left coalition that has governed Chile for most of the years since democratization was originally founded to oppose Pinochet in a 1988 plebiscite on his continued rule, and the right-wing coalition was formed by parties that supported him in that election.

If *pinochetista* sentiment at the individual level affects how Chileans vote, perceptions of a candidate as *pinochetista* are likely to do so as well. Prior research has not tested the effect of a candidate's perceived *pinochetismo* on individual voting behavior, but scholarly and journalistic analysis of Chilean elections often claim that such stereotypes matter for politicians' electoral prospects. For example, the fact that Sebastián Piñera, unlike most prominent right-wing politicians, voted "No" in the 1988 plebiscite on Pinochet's continued rule is often cited as a factor in his 2009 presidential victory. Likewise, Evelyn Matthei, the right-wing coalition's presidential candidate in 2013, is often thought to have been hurt by her "Yes" vote in the plebiscite and the fact that her father was a member of the military junta (Mander, 2013; Navia, 2013; Romero and Bonnefoy, 2013; Toro and Luna, 2011).

In contrast to the situation in Chile, support for or opposition to Brazil's military regime is much less relevant to present-day politics. Both political parties that have held the presidency since 1994, the center-left Workers' Party (PT) and center-right Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), emerged out of opposition to the military dictatorship. The largest party in Congress, the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), did so as well. Even the Democrats/Liberal

Front Party (DEM/PFL), the major right-wing party throughout the 1990s and 2000s, split with the military regime during the transition to democracy and sided with the opposition in the 1985 presidential election. Present-day politicians who had close ties to the military regime—such as Paulo Maluf, a longtime federal deputy and the pro-government candidate in the 1985 presidential election—are much more likely to be known for corruption and clientelistic politics than for their onetime support for authoritarian rule.

Given the lack of a significant democratic-authoritarian cleavage in Brazil's party system, individual attitudes toward Brazil's military regime are unlikely to be a major determinant in public opinion and voting behavior. In contrast to Chile, little research in Brazil has analyzed this question, but that which has been done underscores the limited relevance of support for or opposition to the dictatorship. Belief that the country would function better with the military back in power had a relatively strong correlation with left-right self-placement in 1989, but the correlation had weakened by 1990 and was statistically insignificant by 1998 (Carreirão, 2002, 105, 106, 165). Principal components analysis of survey data from 2006 finds that positive attitudes toward the military regime do not correlate strongly with evaluations of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a left-wing politician much loathed by the Right (Meneguello, 2007; Moisés, 2010).

A telling indicator of the difference in politicization of authoritarian stereotypes between Chile and Brazil is the extent to which terms for supporters of military rule are used in the media. In Brazil, the closest equivalent to *pinochetista* is *arenista*, denoting a former member or supporter of the official party of the military regime, the Aliança Renovadora Nacional, or ARENA. In Chile's leading newspaper, *El Mercurio*, a search on "pinochetista" in the full text of articles from April 2005 to April 2015 returned 137 hits. The equivalent search on "arenista" in Brazil's leading newspaper, *Folha de São Paulo*, returned only 6 hits.

3 Evangelicals' Ties to Military Regimes in Chile and Brazil

Chile and Brazil differ not only with respect to the politicization of authoritarian stereotypes, but also with respect to the prominence of evangelicals' ties to former authoritarian regimes. Given the prominent embrace of the Pinochet regime by a group of evangelical pastors, it is plausible that Chilean public opinion continues to associate evangelicals with *pinochetismo*. As human rights abuses mounted in the aftermath of Pinochet's 1973 coup, the Catholic Church, a traditional ally of the government, began to express solidarity with the victims of repression and distance themselves from the regime (Fleet and Smith, 1997, 59–63). Many Pentecostal clergy, naturally anticommunist in their ideology and always jealous of the Catholic Church's privileged position in society, sought to take advantage of this opportunity to gain favor with the new government (Lagos Schuffeneger, 1988, 112–114).

Evangelical supporters of Pinochet organized themselves into an inter-denominational association, the Council of Pastors, that sought explicitly to defend the military regime. The Council grew out of a December 1974 event in which 32 evangelical clergy gathered with Pinochet at the government headquarters and delivered a declaration of support, characterizing the coup as “God's response to the prayers of all believers who saw Marxism as the maximum expression of the satanic force of darkness” (Puentes Oliva, 1975, 30). Beginning in 1975, the Council of Pastors organized an annual inter-denominational service, the Evangelical Te Deum—officially an act of thanksgiving for the Chilean nation, but often presented as an act of thanksgiving for the military regime itself. Government officials, including Pinochet himself, regularly attended the Evangelical Te Deum, and Chile's overwhelmingly pro-regime news media provided regular coverage (Lagos Schuffeneger, 1988).

The Council of Pastors brought together only a handful of Chile's evangelical churches, but it sought a hegemonic position, and state authorities routinely portrayed it as the official voice of the evangelical community. For example, a government press release on the 1976 Evangelical Te Deum said that “all the evangelical churches of Chile, gathered together in the Council of Pastors, received the President of the Republic” (Lagos Schuffeneger, 1988, 209). State support

for the Council's hegemony was more than just symbolic. In 1976, when free medical care was offered to evangelical pastors and their families, authorities put the Council of Pastors in charge of distributing government-issued identification cards that were necessary to qualify for benefits (Lagos Schuffeneger, 1988, 207–208).

Because of the Council of Pastors' hegemonic ambitions and promotion in pro-regime media, it is likely that, during the Pinochet years, Chileans stereotyped evangelicals as *pinochetista*. A 1986 magazine article supports this claim. Noting the heavy media exposure of Pinochet's visits to the Evangelical Te Deum, it concluded that "public opinion maintains the idea that evangelicals are—in general—addicted to the regime" (Maldonado, 2012, 65).

A stereotype that predominated in the 1980s would not necessarily persist in the electorate three decades later. Yet Chile's 2013 election provided an unusually propitious time for memories of the Pinochet regime, and evangelicals' support for it, to influence voting behavior. During the campaign season, Chile observed both the 40th anniversary of the coup in which Pinochet came to power and the 25th anniversary of the plebiscite in which he was defeated. At the Evangelical Te Deum two months before the election, Bishop Eduardo Durán Castro, president of the National Council of Evangelical Churches of Chile, publicly begged forgiveness on behalf of all evangelicals "for not doing enough when our brothers were deprived of their rights or harassed for thinking differently" (La Nación, 2013). The attendance of Chile's president and most presidential candidates at this event, combined with the general spirit of reflection on the 40th anniversary of the coup, ensured that Durán Castro's statement got a fair amount of attention in the news cycle.

In Brazil, evangelical churches reacted to the 1964 coup and new military regime in a similar fashion as their Chilean counterparts. The Catholic Church initially supported the coup, but relations became strained by 1968 as the regime sought to crack down on leftist priests and Catholic organizations. Many evangelical churches, already anti-communist in their political orientation, sought to take advantage of this development, declaring their support for the government in hopes of gaining tangible benefits. Friendly pastors were invited to take courses at the Superior War College, and authorities offered appointments, jobs, and partnerships for church leaders (Araújo,

1982; Cavalcanti, 1988; Chesnut, 1997; Dantas, 1982).

On the other hand, ties between the state and evangelical churches were much more informal and ad hoc in Brazil than in Chile, meaning that they would be less likely to generate lasting stereotypes about evangelicals as a whole. There was no interdenominational association like Chile's Council of Pastors that mediated relations between supportive pastors and the government. Rather, authorities and individual pastors made deals with one another whenever it was politically expedient to do so. In 1982, for instance, the government offered a television broadcasting license to Rio de Janeiro Baptist Pastor Nilson Fanini in exchange for his support for the pro-regime party in that year's legislative elections (Gaskill, 2002, 222–223). There was also no annual celebration, such as Chile's Evangelical Te Deum, that was attended by authorities and heavily covered by the media. The first time a military president appeared at an evangelical public event was in 1982, eighteen years after the regime's inauguration (Dantas, 1982).

Evangelicals' ties to former dictators were also much less visible during Brazil's most recent election campaign. As in Chile, this election marked an important anniversary—50 years after the 1964 coup—but media attention was focused on evangelicals' contemporary rather than historical political activity. Marina Silva, an environmental leader and Assemblies of God member who became a presidential candidate after her running mate died in a plane crash, led the polls during much of the race, prompting substantial coverage of the potential evangelical vote in her favor. Pastors and church leaders focused their public comments on moral issues, such as opposition to same-sex marriage and the criminalization of anti-gay hate speech, and these issues occupied most of the headlines related to evangelicals during the campaign. In contrast to Chile, Brazilian evangelicals who supported the dictatorship have never felt compelled to offer a public “*mea culpa*.” Moreover, the limited press coverage of evangelicals and the military regime in recent years has focused as much if not more on those that opposed it and were tortured or abducted by authorities (e.g., Cardoso, 2011).

Differences between Chile and Brazil in the politicization of the democratic-authoritarian cleavage and the prominence of evangelicals' ties to former dictators lead to different expectations of

the effect of authoritarian stereotypes on voting behavior. In Chile, where this cleavage has continued relevance and where evangelicals' support for Pinochet received attention during the recent campaign, whether an evangelical candidate is perceived as *pinochetista* should influence voting decisions. For non-evangelical voters, the effect of this stereotype should vary based on ideological tendency. *Pinochetista* attitudes in the electorate correlate strongly with support for the right-wing versus center-left electoral coalitions. Hence, I hypothesize that priming evangelicals' historical ties to Pinochet will make right-wing, non-evangelical voters more likely to support an evangelical candidate and will make center-left, non-evangelical voters less likely to do so.

Expectations are different in the Brazilian case, where the democratic-authoritarian cleavage is much less salient in present-day politics and an "evangelicals are authoritarian" stereotype is less likely to exist. Priming evangelicals' historical support for the dictatorship should have smaller or even null effects if it does not tap into an existing latent belief about this group's political sympathies or if decades-old loyalties are seen as irrelevant to voting decisions in 2014. Hence, I hypothesize that priming evangelicals' historical support the military regime will have smaller effects on non-evangelicals in Brazil than in Chile.

Finally, in both countries, I have different expectations with respect to the voting behavior of evangelicals. In Brazil, and in Latin America more generally, evangelicals tend to vote for fellow believers regardless of a candidate's ideological orientation (Boas, 2014; Boas and Smith, 2015). Many of the key policy issues of interest to this religious minority, such as rights and benefits on par with those granted to the Catholic Church, are likely to be pursued by evangelical politicians of all stripes. Thus, I hypothesize that evangelical voters in Chile and Brazil will be more likely to vote for a candidate who is identified as evangelical, but their support for evangelical candidates will be unaffected by cuing the authoritarian connection.

4 Analysis of the Survey Experiments

4.1 Research Design

To test the effect of authoritarian stereotypes on vote intention for evangelical candidates in Chile and Brazil, I conducted online survey experiments prior to each country’s most recent general election (November 17, 2013 in Chile, and October 5, 2014 in Brazil). The Chilean survey ran for two and a half weeks before election day, while the Brazilian survey ran for four weeks. To recruit respondents, I used advertisements on Facebook, following an approach that I and others have used previously in Brazil (Boas, 2014; Samuels and Zucco, 2013, 2014). Advertisements targeted all adult Facebook users whose profile listed Chile or Brazil as their place of residence, offering a chance to win a new iPad Air in exchange for participating in a 10-minute university survey. To avoid conditioning effects and encourage the broadest possible opt-in sample, advertisements said nothing about politics, and the online consent forms referred to a research study on “how people think about current events in Chile” or “what Brazilians think about certain everyday issues.” Table 1 contains details on the recruitment process and final sample sizes.

Table 1: Recruitment Process for Online Surveys

	Chile 2013	Brazil 2014
Facebook users reached	3,031,024	8,810,236
Unique ad clicks	29,360	68,884
Consented to participate	1,520	1,881
Eligible to participate	1,264	1,493
Completed survey	1,035	1,190

NOTE: Eligible participants were age 18 or over, registered voters, and living in Chile or Brazil.

Given Facebook’s broad user base, both online samples were highly diverse, and the distribution of numerous variables closely mirrored that of the national census or national probability samples, as shown in the Appendix. Respondents were drawn from all regions of each country, from all racial groups in Brazil, and from different ideological tendencies in roughly the same propor-

tions one would expect from a representative sample.² The distribution of party identification was also similar to that of recent waves of the AmericasBarometer, though with fewer nonpartisans (especially in Brazil) and more that identify with minor parties. Each sample obtained good variation on religion and religiosity, though Catholics were underrepresented in both countries, and the nonreligious or nonpracticing were overrepresented in Chile. As is often the case with Facebook-based recruitment, the samples were substantially better educated than each country's national population, and in Chile, the median age was much lower. Unrepresentativeness on religion and religiosity likely stem from this better educated and younger sample, given sociological trends in each country.

Each survey contained an experiment that sought to investigate the effect of authoritarian stereotypes on vote intention for an evangelical candidate for Congress. The experiments took the form of 2×2 factorial designs in which a first treatment primed evangelicals' historical association with former dictators and a second, orthogonal treatment identified a candidate as evangelical. In the first factor, all respondents read a description of evangelicals' advocacy of religious freedom legislation. This relatively non-controversial policy stance was chosen so that the control condition would not prime strong feelings for or against evangelicals—as it might, for example, when mentioning their positions on abortion or same-sex marriage. The treatment group read an additional statement mentioning evangelicals' historical support for authoritarian rule. Respondents were then asked about their agreement or disagreement with evangelicals' political positions or involvement in national politics—a throwaway question, meant to disguise the purpose of the prompt.

For Chile, the question was worded as follows, with the text in italics included only in the treatment condition:

Evangelicals have adopted a variety of political positions in Chile. For example, in the 1990s, the National Christian Alliance pushed for the Religion Law, which guarantees to all religious groups the same rights as the Catholic Church. *In addition, in the 1970s*

²The Chilean survey did not ask about race; this variable is not included in the national census and is rarely asked in surveys.

and 1980s, the Council of Pastors lent their support to the government of Gen. Augusto Pinochet.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the political positions of evangelicals in Chile?

For Brazil, the first factor involved a similar question:

The involvement of evangelicals in Brazilian politics has taken various forms. For example, in 2003, the Congressional Evangelical Caucus promoted changes to the Civil Code to limit state interference in the affairs of religious organizations. *Also, from the 1960s to the 1980s, many evangelical leaders expressed support for the military regime, and a variety of pastors accepted invitations to take courses in the Superior War College.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the involvement of evangelicals in Brazilian politics?

The outcome of interest was measured via the subsequent question, which also constituted the second factor of the experiment. All respondents were given a description of a hypothetical candidate for Congress, including party affiliation and basic demographic details that are made public by the electoral authority in each country. Those in the treatment condition were also told that the candidate was a member of an evangelical church.

For Chile, this question read:

Suppose that Alejandro Pérez is running for Congress for the [Alliance for Chile/New Majority]. He is 35 years old, a businessman, *and a member of an evangelical church.* How likely are you to vote for a person like this?

For Brazil, the question read:

Suppose that José Carlos da Silva is running for Congress for the PMDB. He is 48 years old, married, has finished high school, *and is a member of an evangelical church.* How likely are you to vote for a person like this?

Vote intention was measured on a one-to-seven scale, with endpoints labeled “not at all” and “very” and intermediate points unlabeled.

Aside from religion, the description of the hypothetical candidate was as generic as possible so as to avoid priming any additional associations. The candidate’s name was chosen from among the most common given names and surnames of real candidates in each election (while verifying that no real candidate had the same full name). The surnames are of Spanish and Portuguese origin, respectively, which avoids triggering any heuristics associated with racial or ethnic minorities. For Chile, the fictional candidate’s electoral coalition was randomized between the major left- and right-wing alliances, both of which sponsor a handful of evangelical candidates. For Brazil, I chose a large centrist party, which should not convey any strong ideological leaning.

Table 2: Experimental Design and Sample Sizes Obtained

	Authoritarian Prime	
	Yes	No
Evangelicalism		
	Group 1	Group 2
Mentioned	Chile: N = 246 Brazil: N = 204	Chile: N = 243 Brazil: N = 230
	Group 3	Group 4
Not Mentioned	Chile: N = 257 Brazil: N = 228	Chile: N = 261 Brazil: N = 213

Table 2 summarizes the experimental design and the number of respondents assigned to each treatment condition. The 2×2 factorial design allows one to separately examine several different conditional effects. Let V_1, \dots, V_4 represent the mean vote intention of respondents assigned to groups 1 through 4. The main question of interest, the effect of priming evangelicals’ authoritarian associations on vote intention for an evangelical candidate (*Authoritarian|Evangelical*), can be tested by comparing V_2 and V_1 . A candidate’s evangelicalism may also have its own effect on vote intention, which can be tested conditional on the authoritarian prime (*Evangelical|Authoritarian*,

comparing V_3 and V_1) or conditional on its absence ($Evangelical|\neg Authoritarian$, comparing V_4 and V_2).

A battery of questions toward the end of each survey measured a second outcome of interest. Respondents were asked which political positions they associated with Catholic, evangelical, and atheist/agnostic politicians. Eight options were provided, including *pinochetista* for Chile and *arenista* for Brazil. Respondents could choose more than one option. These questions serve both a manipulation check and, for those in the control condition, a baseline measure of associations with former dictators. Asking about multiple religious groups and providing a variety of distinct answer choices was meant to disguise the purpose of this battery and avoid priming evangelicals' authoritarian ties via the question itself.

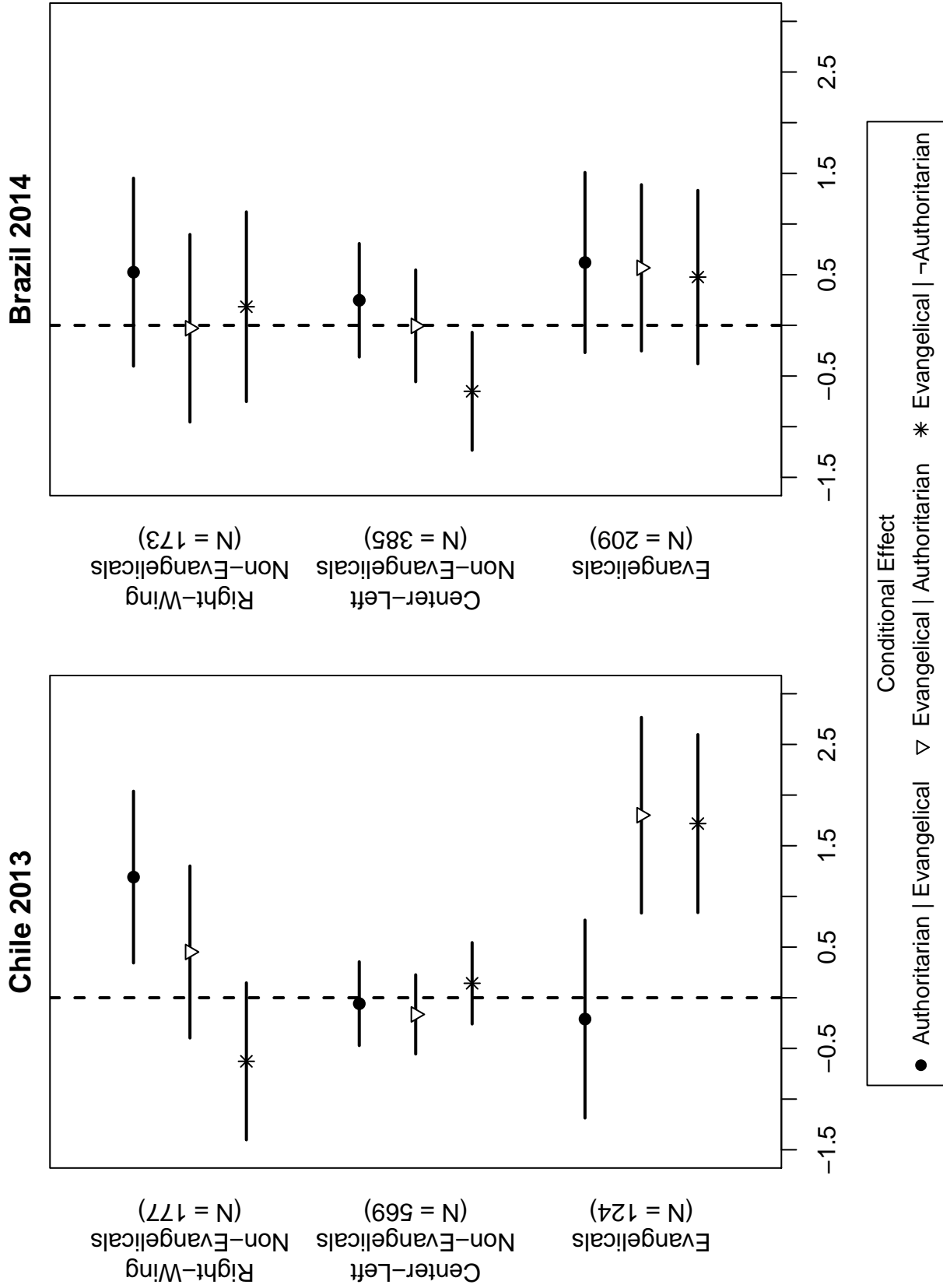
Several features of the surveys are discussed further in the Appendix. Random assignment ensured balance between treatment and control groups with respect to a variety of demographic and political variables. The surveys included several screeners, or attention checks (Berinsky et al., 2014); treatment effects rarely differ significantly based on screener passage. Finally, for Chilean respondents in districts with evangelical candidates for Congress, half were randomly assigned to a “real candidate” version of the vote intention question. Treatment effects do not differ significantly for real versus fictional candidates, but to maintain comparability, I exclude the “real candidate” observations.

4.2 Results

Treatment effects on vote intention provide support for most of the hypotheses advanced above. Results are summarized graphically in Figure 1; tables are in the Appendix.

In Chile, where evangelicals' authoritarian ties were more prominent and the democratic-authoritarian cleavage is more salient in present-day politics, non-evangelical voters on the right (ideological self-identification scores of 7–10) respond positively to the authoritarian prime. Mentioning evangelicals' support for Pinochet boosts vote intention for an evangelical candidate by 1.19 points on

Figure 1: Effect of Authoritarian Stereotypes and Candidate Evangelicalism on Vote Intention



NOTE: Icons give point estimates and lines give 95% confidence intervals. Vote intention is scaled 1–7. The N for each effect estimate is approximately half that of the corresponding group; see the Appendix for details.

the 7-point scale.³ Moreover, right-wing non-evangelicals react to a candidate's evangelicalism in opposite ways depending on whether the Pinochet connection is primed. When Pinochet is not mentioned, describing a candidate as evangelical lowers vote intention by 0.63 points—perhaps because right-wing, non-evangelical voters are primarily Catholic and may see themselves as being in competition with evangelicals.⁴ However, when evangelicals' *pinochetista* ties are mentioned, describing a candidate as evangelical raises vote intention by 0.45 points. Neither effect differs significantly from zero on its own, but they differ from one another at the 0.1 level.

On the other hand, null results are obtained for Chilean non-evangelical respondents on the center-left. Mentioning evangelicals' Pinochet connection has no significant effect on the vote intention of this group.

In Brazil, where evangelicals' authoritarian ties were less visible and the democratic-authoritarian cleavage is largely irrelevant to present-day politics, priming evangelicals' support for authoritarianism has no significant effect on the vote intention of any group. When authoritarian ties are not primed, center-left respondents react negatively to the mention of a candidate's evangelicalism, presumably because they object to evangelicals' positions on other issues such as abortion or same-sex marriage.

Finally, there is evidence of identity voting for evangelical respondents in both countries, though it is somewhat weaker in Brazil. In Chile, mentioning that a candidate belongs to an evangelical church increases vote intention by 1.7–1.8 points on the 7-point scale. This effect holds regardless of whether evangelicals' historical support for Pinochet is also mentioned. In Brazil, these conditional effects are also positive, but smaller in magnitude (0.5–0.6 points) and shy of conventional levels of statistical significance.⁵ These results do not necessarily suggest that evangelical identity voting in Brazil is more limited than in Chile, however. Major Brazilian evangelical denominations

³As shown in the Appendix, interacting the treatment indicator with the 10-point ideology scale yields similar results. At scores of 6 and higher, conditional effects are positive and significant at the 0.05 level; elsewhere they are insignificant.

⁴In the online sample, this group is 60% Catholic and 35% non-religious. By contrast, non-evangelicals on the center-left are 44% Catholic and 49% non-religious.

⁵When not conditioning on treatment status in the first factor, the effect of candidate evangelicalism for evangelical voters is positive and significant at the $p < 0.1$ level.

routinely sponsor their own candidates, who may compete against those from other churches, so simply conveying that a candidate is evangelical may be too weak and ambiguous a signal to win much support from evangelical voters in Brazil.

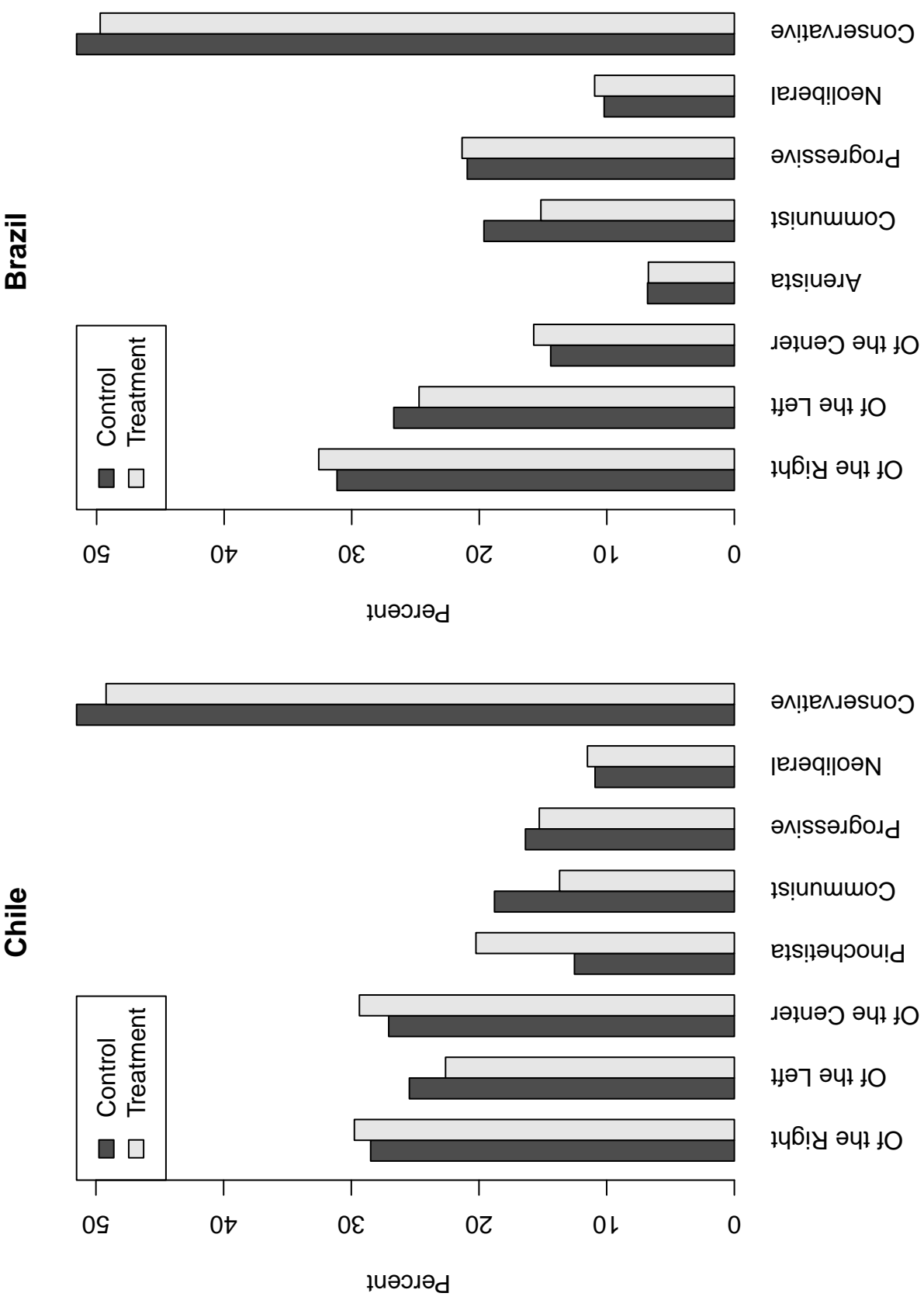
Priming the Pinochet connection can change the intended vote of non-evangelicals on the right, but do Chileans associate evangelical politicians with Pinochet in the absence of explicit prompting? Figure 2 compares the distribution of positions associated with evangelical politicians in each country by respondents in the control group versus those in the treatment group. In Chile, there is clear evidence that the treatment effectively manipulated the degree to which voters stereotype evangelical politicians as *pinochetista*. However, the figure also underscores that voters—prompted or not—are much more likely to attribute other tendencies, such as conservatism, to evangelical politicians. This particular association likely reflects the prominence with which evangelical pastors speak out about moral issues, such as same-sex marriage and abortion, that are relevant to present-day political battles in Chile.

For the Brazilian case, figure 2 underscores that evangelicals' authoritarian ties are even less well known. In the control condition, the percentage who identify evangelical politicians as *arenista* is less than half of the corresponding figure in Chile. Moreover, the treatment has no significant effect on any of the stereotypes, including *arenista*. Given the limited resonance of this term in present-day Brazilian politics, it might be difficult to manipulate the degree to which *any* group of politicians is viewed as *arenista*. The figure also underscores that, as in Chile, evangelical politicians are primarily viewed as conservative, an association that is unaffected by priming their historical ties to the military regime.

5 Conclusion and Planned Comparisons

Chile and Brazil, the two Latin American countries with the largest evangelical populations in percentage terms, differ dramatically with respect to evangelicals' involvement and success in electoral politics. In Brazil, evangelicals have maintained a significant presence in Congress

Figure 2: Ideological Tendencies Associated with Evangelical Politicians



NOTE: Respondents could select multiple ideological tendencies. For Chile, treatment effects are statistically significant for Pinochetista ($p < 0.001$) and Communist ($p < 0.05$). None are statistically significant for Brazil.

since the 1980s, won the governorship of major states such as Rio de Janeiro, and been serious contenders in three presidential elections. In Chile, only a handful of evangelicals has ever been elected to Congress, and only one ever tried, unsuccessfully, to register as a presidential candidate.

A potential explanation for the difference in evangelicals' electoral success in Chile and Brazil concerns the historical baggage of evangelicals' support for former dictators in each country. In both countries, factions of the evangelical community sought to take advantage of a growing rift between the Catholic Church and repressive military regimes, declaring their unconditional support for these right-wing authoritarian rulers. Yet the prominence of these ties to former dictators and the present-day salience of the democratic-authoritarian cleavage differ between the two countries. In Chile, Pinochet's legacy remains a major societal divide that is institutionalized in the party system and correlates strongly with voting behavior. Evangelicals' support for Pinochet was mediated by an organization that sought a hegemonic position and gained prominence in the media, and the 2013 electoral campaign revisited this history on the 40th anniversary of Pinochet's coup. Meanwhile, in Brazil, the authoritarian-democratic cleavage is largely absent from the party system and is not strongly related to political attitudes. Moreover, evangelicals' support for the military regime was more informal and ad hoc, and the issue has not arisen in the same fashion in recent years.

Based on these differences between countries, it is reasonable to expect that an "evangelicals are authoritarian" stereotype has a larger effect on voting behavior in Chile than in Brazil. Based on survey experiments administered during each country's most recent general election campaign, I show that priming evangelicals' historical support for authoritarian rule does matter more for vote intention in Chile than in Brazil. However, the direction of these effects suggest that the weight of the past cannot account for the differences in evangelicals' electoral success between the two countries. In Brazil, null effects of the authoritarian stereotype suggest that evangelical candidates can compete for votes unencumbered by historical associations. Yet in Chile, these associations seem to help more than they hurt. Priming evangelicals' historical support for Pinochet increases the intention of right-wing non-evangelicals to vote for an evangelical candidate. However, this

cue has no significant effect among non-evangelicals on the center and left. Centrist and left-wing voters might well have dismissed these decades-old loyalties as being largely irrelevant to contemporary politics, whereas the same information may have led right-wing voters to conclude that evangelicals were “one of them.”

Moreover, even in Chile, evangelicals’ prior support for authoritarian rule seems unlikely to matter much for real-world voting behavior. Baseline associations of evangelical politicians with *pinochetismo* are low; most voters think of this religious minority as conservative but not authoritarian. Interviews with evangelical candidates for Congress in 2013 and observation of their campaigns underscore that the question of *pinochetista* sympathies rarely, if ever, arises. Baseline associations of Brazilian evangelicals with the former military regime are even lower, likely reflecting the limited resonance of *arenismo* in present-day Brazilian politics.

The lack of a negative average treatment effect of the authoritarian prime in Chile raises the question of how voters would respond to similar stereotypes in Peru, where evangelicals’ ties to authoritarian rule are more recent and more directly relevant to present-day politics. Evangelicals formed a key component of the grassroots base for Alberto Fujimori’s presidential campaign in 1990 and were given nearly a third of the positions on his congressional list; many gained office on his coattails. After the president’s shut-down of Congress in 1992, a number of evangelical legislators broke ranks, but a prominent core remained steadfast Fujimori supporters throughout the 1990s (Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2000; Julcarima Álvarez, 2008; López Rodríguez, 2004, 2008).

Following Fujimori’s ouster in 2000, evangelicals’ support for the former authoritarian leader has continued to make headlines. After Fujimori was convicted and sentenced to prison for human rights violations, embezzlement, and bribery in 2009, a group of evangelical pastors, including former *fujimorista* congressman Pedro Vílchez, sent an open letter to the Peruvian president calling for Fujimori to be pardoned (RPP Noticias, 2013). Evangelical leaders have also been important supporters of Fujimori’s daughter, Keiko Fujimori, who narrowly lost the presidential election in 2011 and is a frontrunner for 2016 (Rivera Barrera and Pérez, 2013). If she remains a major contender, the democratic-authoritarian divide—or at least its manifestation in a new generation of

politicians—will be the defining cleavage of that election. Moreover, evangelicals’ defense of her father’s legacy will be an issue of contemporary relevance.

Using a research design similar to that for Chile and Brazil, I plan to test the effect of authoritarian stereotypes on vote intention for an evangelical candidate in Peru’s 2016 election. The treatment will be administered via the following question:

Evangelicals have adopted a variety of political positions in Peru. For example, the evangelical representatives to the 1979 Constituent Assembly spoke in favor of religious freedom and the separation of Church and State. *In addition, various evangelical congressman lent their support to the government of Alberto Fujimori, and in 2013, a group of pastors came out in favor of a humanitarian pardon for the ex-president.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the political positions of evangelicals in Peru?

As in Chile and Brazil, respondents in the control condition will read only the first sentence of this prompt, while those in the “authoritarian” treatment condition will also read the italicized sentence. The outcome of interest will be measured via the subsequent question, asking about vote intention for a hypothetical candidate for Congress, who will be identified as “a member of an evangelical church” for a randomly chosen half of respondents.

When complete, the studies of Chile, Brazil, and Peru will allow for cross-national comparisons of treatment effects from similar experimental studies, something that has rarely been done in political science. These comparisons should shed light on a potentially important factor for explaining evangelicals politicians’ greater electoral success in some countries than in others.

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