Ethnic Cleavages and Electoral Volatility in Latin America

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Latin America has been plagued by electoral volatility in the last few decades. A recent study found that "more than two-thirds of the Latin American countries experienced more electoral volatility than the most volatile European democracy."[1] Electoral volatility, which is measured as the net shift in votes (or seats) between parties from one election to another, may undermine democratic governance and economic growth by creating political and economic uncertainty.[2] Thus, it causes considerable concern to both democratic theorists and economic planners.[3]

What is the source of electoral volatility within Latin America? What contribution, if any, do ethnic voting patterns in the region make to this volatility? A variety of studies on electoral volatility in other regions have argued that ethnic diversity tends to reduce electoral volatility because in ethnically diverse polities voters will consistently vote for the party that represents their ethnic group. Bartolini and Mair, for example, find that ethnolinguistic diversity has reduced electoral volatility in western Europe, and Birnir shows that ethnic diversity has similarly stabilized electoral preferences in new democracies around the world.[4] Surprisingly, however, studies of electoral volatility in Latin America have not examined the impact of ethnic diversity on electoral volatility but have focused instead on economic and institutional causes.[5]

The ethnic composition of societies in Latin America has significantly influenced electoral volatility, but not in the way that Bartolini and Mair and other studies of electoral volatility would predict. Electoral volatility has tended to be higher in areas with proportionally large indigenous populations, largely because the major parties in these countries have failed to address the needs and demands of the indigenous. Indigenous voters have consequently shifted their votes away from these parties and toward unstable new parties.

Studies of indigenous political participation in Latin America have paid relatively little attention to the electoral behavior of the indigenous and its impact on party systems. Most have focused instead on the emergence of indigenous social movements.[6] One important exception is a study by Van Cott, which found an inverse bivariate correlation between the proportion of the population that is indigenous and the degree of party system institutionalization in the region.[7] She argues that this corre-

lation exists because "the ability of elites to restrict the size of the political class in societies with large ethnically distinct populations provided social conditions and political incentives conducive to the development of features—such as clientelism and personalism—that tend to impede the institutionalization of party systems."[8]

This analysis differs from Van Cott's in several important ways. First, this article focuses on electoral volatility, a more easily defined and measured concept than party system institutionalization and one that can be measured on the subnational level. A low level of electoral volatility is often used as one indicator of an institutionalized party system, but it is not typically the only criterion.[9] Second, this article examines a larger number of cases and controls for other potential influences, such as institutional and economic factors. Most important, this article provides a very different explanation than Van Cott for the high levels of electoral volatility (and hence low levels of party system institutionalization) found in countries with proportionally large indigenous populations. It attributes the high levels of electoral volatility to the voting behavior of the indigenous population, and it can therefore account for the higher levels of electoral volatility found in predominantly indigenous areas within Bolivia and other Latin American countries. Van Cott, by contrast, focuses on how the existence of a large indigenous population has shaped elite behavior and politics at the national level.

Theories of Electoral Volatility

Studies of electoral volatility have identified three main groups of causal variables: economic changes, political institutions, and social cleavages.[10] Economic changes are hypothesized to lead to electoral volatility largely because some citizens will respond to upswings or downswings in the economy by shifting their votes toward or away from the president's party, which is typically held responsible for the national economy.[11] Such shifts, where they take place on a large scale and are not offset by countervailing trends, may result in increases in electoral volatility.

Political institutions may also affect electoral volatility. Numerous studies have shown that party system fragmentation tends to be correlated with electoral volatility, presumably because, where there are more parties, the policy distance between each party is smaller, which facilitates the transfer of votes from one party to another.[12] The degree of polarization of the party system, in contrast, may reduce electoral volatility by increasing the policy distance between different parties.[13] Roberts and Wibbels found that the age of the main parties also affects the degree of electoral volatility since older parties are likely to have deeper, more stable roots in society than younger ones. Finally, significant changes in electoral rules or irregular changes in executive authority may also lead to electoral volatility by increasing turnout or by favoring certain parties over others.[14]

Social cleavages have also long been thought to shape the degree of electoral volatility. Some studies, like Roberts and Wibbels', have focused on class cleavages, which they suggest have tied voters to particular parties that represent the interests of their social class. Other analyses, however, have explored the role played by a range of social cleavages. In their classic study, Lipset and Rokkan suggested that party systems in western Europe have been stable because they have been grounded in ethnolinguistic, religious, and territorial cleavages as well as class cleavages.[15] Bartolini and Mair provide quantitative evidence to support Lipset and Rokkan's arguments, finding that high levels of working class organization and ethnic and religious diversity tended to dampen electoral volatility in Europe between 1885 and 1985. They argue that, "the stronger and more pervasive is the strength of the cleavage system of a given country or period, the lower will be the elasticity of the vote and, therefore, the lower will be the level of electoral instability."[16] Birnir, meanwhile, suggests that ethnic diversity is particularly conducive to electoral stability in new democracies.[17] She argues that ethnicity is a salient cue, which voters with unformed party allegiances will use to make electoral choices. Because ethnic identities tend to be relatively stable over time, ethnicity can play a key role in stabilizing electoral preferences. Indeed, her quantitative analysis of elections in more than sixty countries around the world found that ethnic fractionalization had a statistically significant positive relationship with vote stability over time.[18]

The expectation that ethnic cleavages, like other forms of social cleavages, will reduce electoral volatility is predicated on the assumption that different parties will represent distinct ethnic groups and establish enduring ties to them. Where party systems do not divide along ethnic lines and individual parties do not seek to represent particular ethnic groups, one would not necessarily expect ethnic cleavages to lead to electoral stability. On the contrary, ethnic groups that do not feel well-represented by the existing party system might reasonably be expected to exhibit high levels of electoral volatility since they would be unlikely to form strong attachments to political parties under these circumstances. Members of unrepresented ethnic groups that suffer from significant socioeconomic disadvantages might switch their votes particularly frequently since they have little reason to establish enduring ties to political parties that fail to cater to their needs.

In Latin America party systems have not divided along ethnic lines, and disadvantaged ethnic groups have not been well-represented by the major parties. Indeed, Latin American party systems have not typically reflected the many significant social cleavages that exist in the region since the party systems have been composed principally of catch-all parties, which have drawn support from a variety of social classes and ethnic groups.[19] Until quite recently, ethnic parties were virtually unknown in Latin America—the first significant ethnic party in the region did not emerge until 1996. (I define a significant party as one that receives at least 5 percent of the vote in national elections.) Ethnic parties have been scarce in Latin America for a variety of reasons, including the

fluidity of ethnic identities in the region, state efforts to coopt and assimilate members of disadvantaged ethnic groups, the paucity of resources for party building among disadvantaged ethnic groups such as the indigenous population, and electoral laws that have made it more difficult for geographically concentrated ethnic groups, such as the indigenous, to form parties.[20] Because Latin American party systems have not broken down along ethnic lines, there is little reason to expect that ethnic diversity per se would have an effect on electoral volatility.

This conclusion does not mean that ethnic cleavages have had no effect on electoral volatility in the region, however. On the contrary, areas with large indigenous populations have tended to have higher levels of electoral volatility than areas with small indigenous populations, because the major parties in Latin America have made only meager efforts to address the needs and demands of the indigenous population in recent decades. (I define a major party as one that receives at least 20 percent of the vote in national elections.) The major parties have recruited relatively few members of the indigenous population as candidates for important elected offices and for leadership positions within the parties. They have not typically embraced the demands of the principal indigenous organizations for sweeping agrarian reforms, regional autonomy, and various other programs designed to reduce the economic and political marginalization of the indigenous. Finally, and perhaps most important, the parties that have governed Latin America in the last couple of decades have not made significant progress in improving the socioeconomic position of the indigenous. The indigenous population has long lagged behind the nonindigenous population in most indicators of socioeconomic status, such as income, education, and life expectancy, and little, if any, progress has been made in closing that gap in recent decades.[21] According to a study by Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, in the 1990s 79 percent of the indigenous population in Peru, 81 percent of the indigenous population in Mexico, and 87 percent of the indigenous population in Guatemala fell below the poverty line.[22] By contrast, less than half of the nonindigenous population fell below the poverty line in these countries.

The failure of the major parties to address the needs and demands of the indigenous population has weakened the ties between these parties and indigenous voters, which has led to high levels of electoral volatility in indigenous areas. Indigenous people have become increasingly frustrated with the major parties, particularly the governing parties, leading the level of support that these parties receive in indigenous communities to deteriorate. Many indigenous voters have migrated towards minor leftist and populist parties, some of which have made special efforts to appeal to indigenous people. This migration too, however, has led to electoral volatility because these parties have often been weakly institutionalized and highly personalistic, which has made them fragile in the face of internal schisms and the death or defection of key leaders. The emergence of significant indigenous parties has also contributed to electoral volatility, since it has led large numbers of indigenous voters

to shift their votes toward the indigenous parties, although in the long run these new indigenous parties might actually reduce electoral volatility in indigenous areas by engendering stronger party loyalties among indigenous voters.

Electoral Volatility in Latin America

Four Latin American countries—Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru—have proportionally very large indigenous populations. Estimates of the proportion of the population that is indigenous in these countries vary somewhat, but they typically range from 60 to 80 percent of the total population in Bolivia, from 40 to 60 percent in Guatemala, from 20 to 40 percent in Peru, and from 15 to 35 percent in Ecuador.[23] No other Latin American country, by contrast, has an indigenous population that represents more than 15 percent of the total population.

The four Latin American countries with proportionally large indigenous populations have had extremely high levels of electoral volatility in recent decades. Indeed, as Table 1 indicates, Guatemala and Peru have experienced more electoral volatility than any other Latin American country in the last couple of decades, and Bolivia and Ecuador also rank among the six Latin American countries with the highest mean levels of electoral volatility during this period. Together these four countries had an average level of electoral volatility of 37.8 percent, according to the Pedersen index.[24] By contrast, the fourteen Latin American countries with proportionally small indigenous populations had average levels of electoral volatility of only 16.9 percent.

A variety of factors, however, may account for the high levels of electoral volatility in the countries with proportionally large indigenous populations. Indeed, it is unlikely that the voting patterns of the indigenous population alone could account for all of this volatility. To examine what role, if any, the size of the indigenous population, as opposed to other factors, has played in shaping electoral volatility in Latin America, I first carried out multivariate regression analyses of the determinants of national-level electoral volatility in eighteen Latin American countries. The initial test was modeled on the study by Roberts and Wibbels, but it extended their analysis in three principal ways. First and most important, the analysis included variables designed to explore the impact of ethnic cleavages on electoral volatility.[25] Second, the data set included El Salvador and Guatemala, which Roberts and Wibbels had excluded.[26] Third, the analysis covered a slightly longer time period: 1980–2000, as opposed to 1980–1997.

I included two measures of ethnic cleavages in the analysis: the percentage of the total population that is indigenous and the effective number of ethnic groups, which is a commonly used measure of ethnic diversity.[27] I also included a variable measuring the level of class cleavages, the unionization rate.[28] To control for the impact of

Table 1 Electoral Volatility in Latin America (Seats in Lower Chamber of the Legislature)

Country	Period	Average volatility (Pedersen Index)
Chile	1989-1997	1.67
Honduras	1981-1997	7.67
Uruguay	1984-1999	11.78
Costa Rica	1978-1998	13.68
Argentina	1983-1999	13.71
Colombia	1978-1998	14.56
Mexico	1979-2000	14.93
Nicaragua	1990-1996	15.59
Paraguay	1989-1998	16.04
Dominican Republic	1978-1998	20.38
El Salvador	1985-2000	20.76
Panama	1994-1999	24.92
Bolivia	1980-1997	28.65
Venezuela	1978-2000	28.98
Ecuador	1979-1998	29.55
Brazil	1982-1998	31.94
Guatemala	1985-1999	43.56
Peru	1980-2000	49.58
Latin America	**1978-2000**	**22.06**
Europe	**1885-1985**	**8.6**
United States	**1948-96**	**4.5**

Source: Payne et al. 2002; Roberts and Wibbels 1999.

economic performance on electoral volatility, I included variables measuring the rate of change in GDP and the logged rate of inflation, both of which were lagged by one year.[29] In order to control for the effect of different political institutions, I included variables measuring the level of party system fragmentation, party system polarization, party system age, and the degree of institutional discontinuity.[30] I also sought to control for similar, but unrelated, trends in the value of the dependent variable and one or more independent variables by including a trend variable that measured the number of years elapsed since 1980.

I estimated the pooled cross-sectional times-series model using the Generalized Estimation Equation.[31] It was not appropriate to use the standard approach to analyzing panel data—panel corrected standard errors—in this case because the cross-sectional units (countries) significantly outnumber the time points. Leverage plots detected three outliers—the 1996 Nicaraguan elections, the 2000 Peruvian elections, and the 1998 Venezuelan elections. I therefore included dummy variables for each of these observa-

tions. (The omission of these dummy variables weakens the results somewhat, but all of the statistically significant variables remain significant with the exception of the unionization rate.) An analysis of residual plots found no identifiable pattern to the data, which suggests that serial correlation is not a significant problem. Moreover, the assumption of nonserially correlated errors is less problematic in this analysis than in most cross-sectional time series analyses given the relatively short time period involved and the fact that only a small number of observations (elections) took place in the same year.

The results of the analyses, which are displayed in Table 2, largely confirm the findings of Roberts and Wibbels, but they also suggest that ethnic cleavages have played a role in creating electoral volatility in Latin America. As Model 1 of the table indicates, all of the variables that were significant in Roberts and Wibbels' analysis remain statistically significant when the analysis is extended to include additional variables and a greater number of countries and elections. Most of the institutional variables have strong effects on electoral volatility. The age of the party system and its degree of polarization both have a statistically significant negative relationship with the degree of electoral volatility, while the institutional discontinuity index has a highly statistically significant positive relationship with the instability of the vote. Surprisingly, however, party system fragmentation has no significant relationship with electoral volatility. The variables measuring short-term economic changes yield more mixed results. Both the change in GDP and the logged inflation rate have the expected signs, but only the former is statistically significant. Finally, the unionization rate has a statistically significant negative impact on electoral volatility, supporting the conventional wisdom that countries with stronger class cleavages (that is, more unionized workers) tend to have less electoral volatility.

The coefficient of the percentage of the population that is indigenous, meanwhile, is positive and statistically significant, which suggests that ethnic cleavages affect electoral volatility in Latin America. Increasing the percentage of the population that is indigenous by 50 percent yields a 9.3 point increase in the index of electoral volatility. The high correlation in the sample between the size of the indigenous population and the effective number of ethnic groups ($r = .81$) prevents the inclusion of the latter variable in the same model. Nevertheless, as Model 2 of Table 2 shows, if the effective number of ethnic groups is substituted for the size of the indigenous population in the model, the effective number of ethnic groups has a positive (but not statistically significant) impact on electoral volatility.

Electoral Volatility and Ethnic Cleavages in Bolivia

A national-level statistical analysis thus suggests that the ethnic composition of Latin American societies affects their level of electoral volatility, but in a different way than studies of electoral volatility would expect. A national-level analysis of

Table 2 National-Level Determinants of Electoral Volatility in Latin America

	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	38.679***	38.585***
	(5.623)	(6.387)
Change in GDP (lagged one year)	-.678**	-.609**
	(.243)	(.247)
Inflation rate (logged and lagged one year)	.00030	.00051
	(.00091)	(.00094)
Index of institutional discontinuity	14.609***	14.227***
	(1.929)	(1.974)
Age of party system	-.163***	-.190***
	(.0338)	(.035)
Degree of left-right polarization	-.193**	-.217***
	(.059)	(.060)
Effective number of parties	.0067	.036
	(.0738)	(.077)
Unionization rate	-.378**	-.420**
	(.129)	(.135)
Trend variable	.148	.073
	(.221)	(.227)
Indigenous population as a percent of total	.187**	
	(.066)	
Effective number of ethnic groups		2.862
		(1.600)
N	80	80

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p<.001 (two-tailed tests)
(Standard errors in parentheses)

electoral volatility in Latin America is not without problems, however. To begin with, it suffers from degrees of freedom problems because the number of countries in the region is relatively small. Indeed, this sample, which included all the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in the region with the exception of Cuba, comprised only eighteen countries. The solution employed here was to expand the number of observations by looking at various elections in each country. But this solution is problematic because the observations in each country are not independent of each other. Moreover, the main variable of interest—the proportion of the population that is indigenous—does not vary significantly during the narrow time period under examination.

I therefore complemented the national-level analysis with a similar analysis of the determinants of electoral volatility at the subnational level in Bolivia. Although the subnational analysis covers only a single country, it has a number of advantages over the national-level analysis. First, it enables the number of observations under study to expand—the Bolivian sample includes 112 provinces—without treating different

elections as independent observations. Second, it ensures that there is sufficient variation on the main independent variable of interest, the proportion of the population that is indigenous. Third, it controls for unmeasured national-level characteristics that might influence electoral volatility. Fourth, it reduces the likelihood of nonrandom measurement error owing to cross-national differences in the way social cleavages or other variables are measured.[32] This issue is particularly important with regard to this study since different criteria are used to measure indigenous status in different countries. Fifth, the examination of a single case allows the exploration of the causes of electoral volatility in indigenous areas in somewhat more detail.

Bolivia is an interesting case to examine because it is ethnically diverse. Indeed, it has the proportionally largest indigenous population in Latin America. Moreover, Bolivia, unlike most Latin American countries, has relatively comprehensive and accurate census data on ethnicity, which are available at the provincial level. The 2001 Bolivian census asks all individuals above fifteen years of age to identify their ethnic group: Quechua, Aymara, Guaraní, Chiquitano, Mojeño, other native, or none of the above.[33] Approximately 62.0 percent of the census respondents identified as one of the six indigenous categories (mostly Quechua or Aymara), a figure which falls within the range of outside estimates of the proportion of the population that is indigenous in Bolivia. The census data on the percentage of the population that self-identifies as indigenous are also highly correlated (r=.86) across provinces with data on the percentage of people who speak an indigenous language. Thus, there is ample reason to believe that the Bolivian census data on ethnic self-identification are reasonably accurate, although any measurement of the indigenous population in Latin America is bound to be the subject of some controversy.

I first examined the relationship between the proportion of indigenous population and the level of electoral volatility through a comparison of means. I measured electoral volatility in each Bolivian province using the Pederson index—measured in votes rather than seats—for all general elections held between 1985 and 2002.[34] As Table 3 shows, the level of electoral volatility tends to be significantly higher in those provinces where the indigenous represent a large proportion of the population. The difference in levels of electoral volatility between mostly indigenous and mostly nonindigenous provinces is particularly stark in the 1997–2002 elections, but it is quite large in all sets of elections between 1985 and 2002. Over the entire period, electoral volatility averaged 45.0 percent in provinces where the indigenous population represents more than two-thirds of the population, as compared to only 24.4 percent in provinces where the indigenous accounted for less than one-third of the population.

I subsequently estimated multivariate regression models, which are presented in Table 4, in order to control for other variables that might influence the degree of electoral volatility across provinces. I used the mean level of electoral volatility (calculated by vote shares) in each Bolivian province between 1985 and 2002 as the

Table 3 The Indigenous Population and Electoral Volatility in Bolivian Provinces

	Proportion of the Provincial Population that is Indigenous		
Elections	**Less than 33%**	**33% to 67%**	**More than 67%**
1985-89	25.3%	26.3%	44.3%
1989-93	24.7	31.4	46.5
1993-97	22.3	28.5	36.7
1997-2002	25.4	39.3	52.3
Mean of 1985-2002	24.4	31.3	45.0

dependent variable of the multivariate analysis. Model 1 included independent variables measuring the degree of party system fragmentation and polarization as well as the proportion of the population that is indigenous and the effective number of ethnic groups.[35] Model 2 also included variables measuring the degree of urbanization, the literacy rate, and income per capita at the provincial level.[36] The change in GDP, the inflation rate, and the unionization rate could not be included here because data

Table 4 The Determinants of Electoral Volatility at the Provincial Level in Bolivia

	Model 1	**Model 2**
Constant	.082 (.054)	-.138 (.113)
Indigenous population / total population	.211*** (.029)	.229*** (.031)
Effective number of ethnic groups	-.017 (.163)	-.029* (.013)
Effective number of parties	.041** (.013)	.036** (.013)
Degree of left-right polarization	.024 (.115)	.176 (.131)
Percent change in the size of the electorate	.004 (.035)	.027 (.036)
Urbanization rate		.0002 (.035)
Literacy rate		.181 (.102)
Annual per capita income in Bolivianos		.000023 (.000017)
R^2	.661	.688
N	112	112

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)
(Standard errors in parentheses)

on these variables were not available at the provincial level in Bolivia. The variables measuring the age of the party system and the institutional discontinuity index were also omitted because they measure national-level characteristics that do not vary within a country. However, a variable measuring the net change in total votes between elections was included in order to examine how changes in the size of the electorate might affect electoral volatility at the provincial level in Bolivia.[37]

Neither the degree of party system polarization nor changes in the size of the electorate had a significant effect on electoral volatility at the provincial level in Bolivia. Nor did the level of ethnic diversity achieve statistical significance in Model 1, although it did reach a low level of statistical significance when further variables were included in the analysis in Model 2. The coefficient for the effective number of parties, meanwhile, was positive and statistically significant in both models, suggesting that high levels of party system fragmentation have worsened electoral volatility in Bolivia.

The proportion of the population that is indigenous had by far the strongest relationship with electoral volatility in Bolivia. According to Model 1, a one standard deviation (30 percent) increase in the proportion of the population that is indigenous leads to a 6.3 point increase in the Pederson index of electoral volatility. Model 1 would predict that Bolivian provinces that are completely indigenous would have an index of electoral volatility that is 21.1 points higher than provinces that have no indigenous population. To put these numbers in perspective, the expected difference in electoral volatility between completely indigenous and nonindigenous provinces in Bolivia is approximately twice as much as the difference between the European country with the most electoral volatility and the European country with the least electoral volatility for the period 1885–1985.[38]

The relationship between the proportion of the population that is indigenous and the degree of electoral volatility in Bolivia is not simply a product of regional variation in literacy, income, and urbanization. Indeed, as Model 2 of Table 4 illustrates, if the provincial literacy rate, income per capita, and the urbanization rate are included in the model, the proportion of the population that is indigenous continues to have a very strong impact on electoral volatility. Moreover, this relationship remains quite strong even if the models are weighted (using Weighted Least Squares) by the number of valid votes to control for the vast differences in the population size of provinces in Bolivia.

Understanding Electoral Volatility in Bolivia

What accounts for the high levels of electoral volatility in indigenous areas in Bolivia? It stems in large part from the fact that the country's major parties have paid relatively little attention to the needs and demands of the indigenous population. The

failure of the major parties to represent the indigenous population adequately has helped lead to a steady deterioration in support for these parties in indigenous areas and the rise of unstable new parties.

Most of the indigenous population in Bolivia did not gain the right to vote until after the 1952 revolution, when the victorious *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR) eliminated restrictions on the franchise. In the wake of the revolution, the MNR carried out a sweeping land reform program and expanded education and social services in rural areas, all of which benefited the indigenous population. The MNR also incorporated the indigenous population into the state through peasant unions, which it used to coopt the indigenous population and distribute benefits to them. Partly as a result, the indigenous population voted overwhelmingly for the MNR in the decade following the revolution. The ties between the MNR and the indigenous population, however, eroded during the long period of military rule that began in 1964. Since the return to democracy in 1982, a variety of political parties have won the support of sectors of the indigenous population.

Three parties have dominated Bolivian politics since the return to democracy: the MNR, *Acción Democrática Nacionalista* (ADN), and the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR).[39] One of these parties held the presidency continuously between 1985 and 2003, and until the 2002 elections they controlled more than two-thirds of the seats in the legislature. Surprisingly, however, these parties have not recruited many indigenous candidates to run for important political positions or for posts within the party leadership. Moreover, when they have recruited indigenous candidates, the major parties have often placed them low on the ballot, which has reduced the likelihood that they would gain office. In the 1997–2002 congress, for example, only one of these parties' eighty-one deputies in the national legislature was indigenous, and none of their twenty-two senators was indigenous.[40] The major parties have recruited a growing number of indigenous candidates for council member positions in rural municipalities in recent years, but the leaders of these parties and their top candidates for important political positions continue to be overwhelmingly white and *mestizo*.[41]

The major parties and hence the Bolivian government have also rejected many of the demands of the main indigenous organizations. Bolivian indigenous organizations, such as the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTCB) and the *Confederación Indígena del Oriente Boliviano* (CIDOB), have pushed for a wide variety of policy changes, ranging from the granting of broad land, mineral, and water rights to indigenous communities to the elimination of the coca eradication programs and the scaling back of the market-oriented reforms that Bolivia has implemented in the last two decades. To put pressure on the government, the indigenous organizations have at times blocked roads or carried out other types of political protests, which has caused the relationship between the government and

the indigenous organizations to deteriorate. Indeed, clashes between the MNR-led government and indigenous protestors, including the CSUTCB, in the fall of 2003 caused the death of more than fifty people and ultimately forced the resignation of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, just one year into his second term as president.

Nonetheless, the main parties have tried to woo the support of indigenous voters and organizations. The MIR-led government of Jaime Paz Zamora (1989–93), for example, recognized two and a half million hectares of indigenous territories and ratified the ILO Convention 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples. Sánchez de Lozada of the MNR forged an electoral alliance with a small indigenous party, *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupak Katari de Liberación* (MRTKL), during his first successful campaign for the presidency in 1993 and named an Aymara leader, Victor Hugo Cárdenas, as his running mate. Once in office, his administration implemented a number of reforms designed partially to benefit the indigenous population, including an agrarian reform law (*Ley de Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria*), a political decentralization measure (*Ley de Participación Popular*), a multicultural education measure (*Ley de Reforma Educativa*), and a constitutional amendment that recognized Bolivia's multiethnic and pluricultural nature.

However, these measures were typically implemented in a top-down fashion, and they did not go nearly as far as the indigenous organizations and leaders would have liked.[42] Moreover, none of these governments managed to do much to improve the economic situation of the indigenous population. Indeed, rural peasants have been hurt by some of the market-oriented reforms that successive Bolivian governments have implemented since 1985, which have included the elimination of agricultural subsidies, removal of price controls, reduction of barriers to agricultural imports, and cuts in social spending.[43] As a result, the indigenous population continues to lag well behind the nonindigenous population economically. A survey carried out by the Bolivian government in 2000 revealed that more than 60 percent of speakers of indigenous languages lived in conditions of extreme poverty, as opposed to less than 30 percent of the Spanish-speaking population.[44]

The failure of the major parties to establish close ties to indigenous leaders and organizations and to address the needs of the indigenous population has caused the support for these parties in indigenous areas to deteriorate significantly over time. The MNR, for example, won only 19.0 percent of the vote in provinces that were a majority indigenous in 2002, as opposed to 32.6 percent in 1985. The ADN's share of the vote in provinces where the indigenous represent a majority, meanwhile, dropped from 22.7 percent in 1985 to 3.9 per cent in 2002. Support for the MIR rose in the late 1980s in provinces where the indigenous are in the majority, but it has declined steadily since that time, dropping from 24.0 percent in 1989 to 14.0 percent in 2002. Overall, the share of the vote accounted for by the three major parties in indigenous majority provinces declined from 66 percent in 1985 to 37 percent in

2002. By contrast, these parties have not lost nearly as much ground in the provinces where the indigenous are a minority. Indeed, the MNR, ADN, and the MIR still accounted for 73 percent of the vote in nonindigenous provinces in the 2002 elections, down only slightly from 82 percent in 1985.[45]

The growing disaffection with the major parties in indigenous areas partly explains why electoral volatility has been higher in indigenous than in nonindigenous areas in Bolivia. So, too, does indigenous support for unstable populist and leftist parties. Many of the indigenous voters who have deserted the major parties have voted for populist or leftist parties, such as *Conciencia de Patria* (CONDEPA), *Unión Cívica Solidaridad* (UCS), the *Movimiento Bolivia Libre* (MBL), and the *Nueva Fuerza Republicana* (NFR). Indeed, each of these parties has typically fared better in indigenous than in nonindigenous provinces in Bolivia.

These parties have made important inroads in indigenous communities for a number of reasons. First, they have recruited significant numbers of indigenous candidates. CONDEPA, for example, placed an Aymara woman, Remedios Loza, at the top of the list of its candidates for the chamber of deputies in La Paz in 1989, and the party nominated her as its presidential candidate in 1997 after the death of CONDEPA's founder, Carlos Palenque. The NFR, meanwhile, recruited the indigenous leader, Alejo Véliz, to its party, and elected eight indigenous people as deputies to the national legislature in the 2002 elections.[46] Second, the populist and leftist parties have also made symbolic appeals to indigenous voters. CONDEPA, for example, has incorporated the Aymara flag (*wiphala*) and other indigenous symbols into its campaign propaganda, and top candidates from various populist parties have frequently spoken Quechua or Aymara on the campaign trail.[47] Third, these parties have embraced many of the programmatic demands of the indigenous organizations. Some of the populist or leftist parties have called for sweeping agrarian reforms, and all of them have criticized the market-oriented reforms enacted by successive Bolivian governments. Finally, the populist parties, like the major parties, have used clientelist practices to win votes. Max Fernández, the founding leader of the UCS, used his considerable personal wealth to finance campaign spending and public works in communities around the country. The NFR, meanwhile, has reportedly used its control of the mayoralty of Cochabamba and the national office of popular participation to distribute patronage in exchange for votes.[48]

Indigenous support for populist and leftist parties in Bolivia has contributed to electoral volatility in indigenous areas because these parties have tended to be personalistic and weakly institutionalized, which has made them highly unstable.[49] Both CONDEPA and UCS, for example, grew rapidly in the early 1990s thanks in large part to their charismatic founders, but the parties were seriously weakened by the death of these leaders in the mid 1990s. CONDEPA's share of the national vote reached a high of 16 percent in 1997—nearly all of it in heavily indigenous areas in the departments of La Paz and Oruro—but it declined sharply after Palenque died of

a heart attack in 1997. In the 2002 elections CONDEPA won less than 1 percent of the overall vote. The UCS fared somewhat better after the death of Fernández in a plane crash in 1995, but it too has declined in recent years. Its share of the vote fell from a high of 15.1 percent in 1997 to 5.5 percent in 2002. The populist and leftist parties have also been weakened by internal schisms and defections. Remedios Loza, for example, left CONDEPA before the 2002 elections after an unsuccessful battle for control of the party with Carlos Palenque's daughter. Many of the MBL's most prominent members, including Manfred Reyes Villa, the founder of the NFR, similarly abandoned that party in the mid 1990s, weakening it severely. More recently, two important recruits of the NFR, Alejo Véliz, the indigenous leader, and Ivo Kuljis, a Bolivian business leader, have abandoned the party, which bodes poorly for its future.[50] The organizational weakness and leadership instability of these parties have thus contributed to the high levels of electoral volatility in indigenous areas.

The rise of indigenous parties in Bolivia has also contributed to the decline in support for populist and leftist parties in indigenous areas. Indigenous parties have competed in Bolivian elections since the return to democracy, but the first generation of indigenous parties remained politically marginal, never winning more than 3 percent of the national vote. In the mid 1990s, however, a new generation of indigenous parties emerged. The most successful of these parties sprang from the *Asamblea de la Soberanía de los Pueblos* (ASP), a political party founded in 1995 by the coca growers' unions, which had taken over the main Bolivian indigenous association, CSUTCB. ASP split after the 1997 general elections largely because of personal differences between the movement's two preeminent leaders, Evo Morales and Alejo Véliz. Morales' faction took over the party label of a largely defunct left-wing party named *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS). MAS did reasonably well in the 1999 municipal elections, but it achieved its real breakthrough in the 2002 general elections when it won 20.9 percent of the national vote, more than any other party save the MNR. Another indigenous party, *Movimiento Indígena Pachakutik* (MIP), which was founded by the Aymara indigenous leader, Felipe Quispe, in 2000, also rose to prominence in the 2002 elections when it won 6.1 percent of the vote.

The indigenous parties, especially the MAS, have attracted the support of some nonindigenous voters, but they have fared much better in indigenous than in non-indigenous areas. Indeed, MAS won 33 percent of the vote in provinces that were a majority indigenous and only 6 percent in those provinces where the indigenous were a minority of the population. Similarly, MIP won more than eight percent of the vote in majority indigenous provinces but less than one percent in the provinces where the indigenous are in the minority. Whereas support for the MIP was largely concentrated in Aymara-speaking rural areas of the department of La Paz, MAS ran well throughout most of the indigenous highlands, especially in Cochabamba, but also in heavily indigenous provinces in the departments of La Paz, Oruro, and Potosí.

The indigenous parties have won support from numerous indigenous voters in part because they have presented themselves as the legitimate representatives of the indigenous population. Most of the top leaders and candidates of the indigenous parties have been indigenous people, and they have embraced traditional indigenous demands, such as agrarian reform, local autonomy, and coca cultivation. The indigenous parties have also capitalized on growing disaffection with the traditionally dominant parties and their policies, particularly among lower socioeconomic groups. Indeed, a survey conducted shortly after the election revealed that the MAS did particularly well among poorer, less-educated, and politically disaffected voters.[51] MAS and MIP also benefited from the internal divisions and other problems afflicting some of the populist and left-wing parties, such as CONDEPA, UCS, and MBL, which had won the support of these types of voters in previous elections.[52] Finally, Morales and MAS probably benefited from the intervention of the U.S. ambassador, who had warned obliquely that the election of Morales could jeopardize U.S. aid to Bolivia.[53]

To date, the rise of indigenous parties has worsened electoral volatility in indigenous areas in Bolivia because these parties have attracted numerous indigenous voters who formerly supported other parties. Indeed, electoral volatility in indigenous areas reached a peak between the 1997 and 2002 elections in large part because of the massive shift of indigenous voters to MAS and, to a lesser extent, MIP. Nevertheless, in the long run, the emergence of important parties that actively seek to represent the interests of the indigenous population could reduce electoral volatility in indigenous areas. To do so, however, the indigenous parties will need to build strong party organizations and avoid the internal schisms and personalistic leadership that have plagued indigenous political organizations in Bolivia in the past.

Conclusion

The ethnic composition of Latin American countries has influenced electoral volatility in the region, but not in the way that studies of social cleavages would predict. Electoral volatility, in Latin America has been higher where the proportion of the population that is indigenous is greater. The strong relationship between the relative size of the indigenous population and electoral volatility can be attributed largely to the failure of the main parties in Latin America to represent the indigenous population adequately. Many indigenous voters have not developed strong ties to the main parties because these parties have not actively catered to their interests.

The ethnic composition of society may have varying effects on electoral volatility, depending on the degree to which ethnic groups are represented by the party system.

Ethnic diversity might well reduce electoral volatility where important ethnic parties exist or where the existing parties have captured the votes of certain ethnic groups by embracing their demands and recruiting their leaders as candidates. Where the existing political parties do not adequately address the needs and demands of important ethnic groups, however, the relative size of these ethnic groups may be positively correlated with electoral volatility.

The emergence of important indigenous parties in Latin America is therefore likely to have important effects on electoral volatility. In the short term, the rise of these parties may worsen electoral volatility as more and more indigenous voters shift their votes from the existing parties to the new indigenous parties. In the long run, however, the new indigenous parties—or other parties that address the needs of the indigenous population—may be able to reduce the high levels of electoral volatility in countries with large indigenous populations by building stronger, more stable ties to indigenous voters. Whatever other merits they may have, the new indigenous parties thus have the potential to contribute to the institutionalization of party systems in the region.

NOTES

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10. Bartolini and Mair; Remmer; Coppedge; Roberts and Wibbels; Birnir.

11. Remmer; Edward Tufte, *Political Control of the Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Michael S. Lewis-Beck, *Economics and Elections: The Major Western Democracies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988).

12. Bartolini and Mair; Remmer; Roberts and Wibbels; Birnir; Pedersen.

13. Bartolini and Mair; Roberts and Wibbels.

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15. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967).

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17. Birnir.

18. Birnir also notes that, where the party system does not represent key ethnic groups, ethnic diversity is not likely to reduce electoral volatility. See Jóhanna Kristín Birnir, "The Ethnic Effect: The Effect of Ethnic Electoral Behavior on the Political Development of New Democracies" (unpublished book ms., 2004).

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23. Hopenhayn and Bello; Anne Deruyttere, "Nativos en números," *Revista BID América* (September–October 1999), 15; *Europa World Yearbook* (London: Europa Publications, various years); Alexia Peyser and Juan Chackiel, "La identificación de poblaciones indígenas en los censos de América Latina," in *América Latina: Aspectos Conceptuales de los Censos del 2000* (Santiago: CEPAL/CELADE, 1999).

24. To calculate the Pedersen index, the absolute value of the change in each party's share of the total vote (or total seats) between elections is summed, and this figure is divided by two.

25. Roberts and Wibbels.

26. Roberts and Wibbels excluded Guatemala and El Salvador on the grounds that the left had not been permitted to compete for power in these countries. However, center-left parties participated in elec-

tions in Guatemala and El Salvador as early as the 1980s, and by the mid 1990s the far left was also fielding candidates in these countries.

27. Data on the proportion of the population that is indigenous come from Peyser and Chackiel. Data on the effective number of ethnic groups, which is calculated as the inverse of the sum of squares of each ethnic group's share of the total population, come from Gary Cox, *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1997); and the Central Intelligence Agency, *World Factbook* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, various years). Where necessary, I used interpolation to derive estimates for missing years.

28. Data on unionization rates come from the International Labour Organisation (1999); Roberts and Wibbels; and the International Labour Organisation, *World Labour Report 1997–98: Industrial Relations, Democracy and Social Stability* (Geneva: ILO, 1997). I used interpolation to come up with estimates for missing years.

29. Data on these variables come from the World Bank, *World Development Indicators on CD-Rom* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2002); International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook* (Washington, D.C.: IMF, various years); and Roberts and Wibbels.

30. The measurement of these variables follows Roberts and Wibbels. I measured party system fragmentation as the percentage of the vote captured by the largest two parties (subtracted by one hundred) and party system polarization as the dispersion of the vote from the center of the party system, and the age of the party system was measured as the average age of the parties that captured more than 10 percent of the vote in the previous election. I used the index constructed by Roberts and Wibbels, p. 581, to measure the degree of institutional discontinuity. Their index, which ranges from zero to three, assigns one point for each of the following types of discontinuities: the adoption of a new constitution; an irregular change in executive authority; and an increase in voter turnout of more than 25 percent due to the enfranchisement of a large group of new voters. Data on these variables come from *Europa World Yearbook*; Mainwaring and Scully; Roberts and Wibbels; Payne, Zovatto, Flórez, and Zavala; and Michael Coppedge, "A Classification of Latin American Political Parties" (Notre Dame: *Working Paper Series*, Kellogg Institute of International Studies, University of Notre Dame, 1997).

31. See K. Y. Liang and S. L. Zeger, "Longitudinal Data Analysis Using Generalized Linear Models," *Biometrika*, 73 (1986), 13–22; Mark P. Jones, "Electoral Institutions, Social Cleavages, and Candidate Competition in Presidential Elections," *Electoral Studies*, 23 (2004), 73–106; Timothy Power, James Garand, and Caroline Fornos, "Explaining Voter Turnout in Latin America, 1980–2000," *Comparative Political Studies* (October 2004).

32. Mark P. Jones, "Racial Heterogeneity and the Effective Number of Candidates in Majority Runoff Elections: Evidence from Louisiana," *Electoral Studies,* 16 (1997), 349–58.

33. Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Bolivia), *Censo de Población y Vivienda 2001*, http://www.ine.gov.bo.

34. Bolivia uses a single (fused) ballot for both presidential elections and the proportional representation tier of the legislature. The data come from Fundemos, "Datos Estadísticos Elecciones Generales, 1979–1997," *Opiniones y Análisis*, 31 (February 1998); and Corte Nacional Electoral, www.cne.org.bo.

35. I constructed the data on the effective number of ethnic groups by treating each indigenous category as well as the residual category as a distinct ethnic group. The ethnicity data come from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística.

36. The provincial-level data on the literacy and urbanization rate come from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística. The income data come from the Unidad de Análisis Políticas Económicas y Sociales (UDAPSO), *Indices de Desarrollo Humano y Otros Indicadores Sociales en 311 Municipios de Bolivia* (La Paz: UDAPSO, 1997).

37. The electoral data used to construct the variables on party system fragmentation, party system polarization, and the net change in total votes at the provincial level come from Fundemos and the Corte Nacional Electoral and represent mean figures for national elections between 1985 and 2002.

38. Bartolini and Mair, p. 73.
39. Eduardo A. Gamarra and James M. Malloy, "The Patrimonial Dynamics of Party Politics in Bolivia," in Mainwaring and Scully, eds.; René Antonio Mayorga, *Antipolítica y Neopopulismo* (La Paz: Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios, 1995).
40. See Xavier Albó, "Bolivia: From Indian and Campesino Leaders to Councillors and Parliamentary Deputies," in Rachel Seider, ed., *Multiculturalism in Latin America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 95. Eight indigenous deputies from the MIR, but none from the MNR and ADN, were elected for the 2002–2007 legislative session. See Wigberto Rivero Pinto, "Indígenas y Campesinos en las Elecciones: El Poder de la Bolivia Emergente," *Opiniones y Análisis*, 60 (2002), 36.
41. The MNR, for example, elected seventy-one indigenous council members, and the MIR elected thirteen indigenous council members in the 1995 municipal elections. See Albó, p. 84.
42. Donna Lee Van Cott, *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: Democratization and Constitutional Transformation in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000); Yashar.
43. Javier Hurtado Mercado, "Comportamientos Políticos del Campesinado 1978/1995." *Opiniones y Análisis*, 21 (May 1995), 127–54; Yashar.
44. Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Bolivia), *Programa de Mejoramiento de las Encuestas y la Medición de las Condiciones de Vida (MECOVI)*, http://www.ine.gov.bo/mecovi/index.htm.
45. In surveys the indigenous population has expressed lower support for political parties, the legislature, and the political system in general than the nonindigenous population. See Mitchell Seligson, *Auditoría de la Democracia: Bolivia, 2002* (La Paz: USAID, 2002), pp. 154–56; and Gonzalo Rojas Ortuste, "Las Varias Caras de la Representación y la Legitimidad Democrática," in *Democracia y Cultura Política en Bolivia* (La Paz: Corte Nacional Electoral, 2001), p. 167.
46. See Rivera Pinto, p. 36. Populist and leftist parties have also recruited significant numbers of indigenous candidates for municipal elections. In the 1995 municipal elections the *Movimiento Bolivia Libre* elected ninety indigenous municipal council members, more than any other party. See Albó, p. 84. UCS and CONDEPA, meanwhile, elected thirty-four and twenty-four indigenous council members, respectively, in these elections, which placed them in third and fourth place in this category.
47. Stéphanie Alenda Mary, "CONDEPA y UCS, Fin del Populismo?," *Opiniones y Análisis*, 60 (2002); Salvador Romero Ballivián, *Reformas, Conflictos, y Consensos* (La Paz: Fundemos, 1999); Carlos Iván Degregori, "Movimientos étnicos, democracia y nación en Perú y Bolivia," in Claudia Dary, ed., *La Construcción de la Nación y la Representación Ciudadana en México, Guatemala, Perú, Ecuador y Bolivia* (Guatemala: FLACSO 1998), p. 206.
48. See Albó, p. 89.
49. Mayorga; Alenda Mary.
50. Mayorga, "La Metamorfosis del Sistema de Partidos," *Opiniones y Análisis*, 60 (2002), 81.
51. Seligson, pp. 48–61.
52. See Romero Ballivián, "La Eleccion Presidencial 2002: Una Visión de Conjunto," *Opiniones y Análisis*, 57 (2002), 191; Van Cott, "Bolivia's 2002 Elections: From Exclusion to Inclusion," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 35 (November 2003), 751–75.
53. Ibid.