

**WHY INDIGENOUS-BASED PARTIES?
NEW PARTY FORMATION AND ELECTORAL SUCCESS
IN LATIN AMERICA¹**

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Indigenous movements are assuming increasing political importance in Latin American democracies. They have organized nation-wide strikes and protests, blocked unpopular economic reforms, toppled corrupt leaders, and in some instances formed their own political parties and captured presidencies. While a number of scholars have sought to explain the recent emergence of indigenous rights movements in Latin America (Albó 2002; Bengoa 2000; Brysk 2000; Grey & Zamosc 2004; Maybury-Lewis 2002; Pallares 2002; Selverston-Scher 2001; Van Cott 2000; Warren & Jackson 2002; Yashar 2005), few have paid explicit attention to their partisan organizing efforts.² Indigenous peoples' parties attempt to link a long-excluded segment of the population to the state. The inclusion of indigenous peoples in the formal political system has improved the quality of political representation and the prospects for democratic consolidation in the region. Thus, the decision by indigenous movements to create their own political parties and contest the electoral arena represents a significant development in Latin America, one that is ripe for investigation.

The study of new party formation is important for uncovering the ways in which social conflict may be addressed by political systems. New parties can serve to replace established parties or force them to incorporate new demands into their political programs (Downs 1957, 128). Perhaps most important to Latin America, new parties can enhance the quality and inclusiveness of political representation by effectively articulating the interests of new social actors in the political arena. However, much of the work on the logic of party formation has been limited to stable democratic systems in advanced industrial societies (Aldrich 1995; Hug 2001; Kitschelt 1989; Schattschneider 1960) and does not travel well across party systems, especially those in new democracies in developing countries. This body of literature is also limited by its tendency to explain party formation on the basis of successful party emergence, as in the case of the Green parties of Western Europe, rather than on cases where the expected parties did not emerge. In contrast, this study examines both the presence and absence of indigenous party formation in Latin America, thereby providing a full range of variation on the dependent variable. This approach sheds considerable new light on the dynamics behind the party formation process.

The paper addresses two central questions. First, why are indigenous-based parties forming in some Latin American countries and not in others? And second, what factors account for the varying degrees of success of these newly formed parties? Using two separate modeling procedures, the study tests several key hypotheses regarding the determinants of new party formation and success. A pooled cross-sectional time-series logistic regression analysis of presidential and legislative elections in 17 Latin American countries (1978-2004) is performed first to test for the conditions that determine the emergence of indigenous-based parties. A tobit regression analysis of the strength of the indigenous party vote in legislative elections across all countries is then performed. Much of the statistical analysis being done on indigenous parties in Latin America is limited to with-in country analyses of election returns (Beck & Mijeski 2001) or to cross-national comparisons based on a handful of cases (Birnie 2000; Madrid 2003; Rice & Van Cott, in press). This study is the first to examine the region in its entirety.

² Notable exceptions include Beck and Mijeski (2001), Collins (2004), Rice and Van Cott (in press), and Van Cott (2005).

The paper contends that indigenous party emergence and electoral performance are conditioned by two basic factors: (1) institutional rules and arrangements; and (2) historic patterns of popular political incorporation. Specifically, I argue that indigenous-based parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries with permissive institutional environments and weak historical traditions of class-based organizing in civil and political society. The study seeks to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to scholarly understanding of the interaction between social cleavages and formal political institutions. The findings of the study suggest the need for a more integrated theory of party formation, one that is sensitive to path dependent development patterns and the social and ideational basis of political representation.

Indigenous Movements and Electoral Politics

Indigenous movements in Latin America have adopted a variety of stances in relation to electoral politics. In some instances, indigenous movements have remained as social movements, emphasizing political autonomy and the ability to mobilize social pressure on the government in power both domestically and by way of international allies. In other instances, indigenous movements have opted to align themselves with political parties in order to take advantage of existing political networks and attempt to broaden them to include indigenous concerns. Lastly, indigenous movements in a handful of cases have opted to create their own political parties as part of a strategy of “autonomy in participation” by combining protest and electoral politics. The strategic decision on the part of indigenous movements to enter into electoral politics reflects the complex interaction between cultural, political institutional, and historical factors.

In Nicaragua, indigenous groups have successfully contested regional elections by way of their own electoral vehicles since 1990. The indigenous-based political organization Yabti Tasba Masraka Nanih Asia Takanka (YATAMA), which translates from the Miskito language as the “Organization of Peoples of Mother Earth,” has enabled Miskito peoples to gain representation within the regional autonomous governments of the Caribbean coast (Brysk 2000, 81). The Atlantic region of Nicaragua was divided into two multi-ethnic autonomous zones in 1987 under the Sandinista government, the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic and the Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic (Dunbar Ortiz 1987). In the 1990s, indigenous representatives from the YATAMA party were widely elected to regional and municipal councils in the Miskito-dominated northern region (Brysk 2000, 116). However, YATAMA does not participate in national-level elections.

In Colombia and Venezuela, several national indigenous-based parties have emerged. The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) and the Indigenous Authorities of Colombia (AICO) first entered into electoral politics in 1990 by way of the National Constituent Assembly, which ultimately secured two reserved seats in the senate for indigenous representatives (Van Cott 2003, 26). In 1991, both organizations successfully competed in congressional elections along with a newly formed indigenous-based party, the Indigenous Social Alliance (ASI). Since the 1990s, indigenous peoples’ parties in Colombia have managed to win a number of seats and posts beyond those constitutionally mandated. Similarly, in Venezuela indigenous groups first participated in national politics by way of the constituent assembly elections of 1999, which resulted in the reservation of three seats in the legislature for indigenous representatives (Van Cott

2005, 209). The indigenous political organizations United Multiethnic People of Amazonas (PUAMA) and National Indian Council of Venezuela (CONIVE) have since expanded their representation beyond that of the established minimum (Van Cott 2003, 15).

Ecuador and Bolivia are home to Latin America's most successful indigenous-based parties to date. In addition to their larger indigenous populations, the success of these countries' indigenous movements is the result of a two-pronged strategy based on opposition in the streets and parliament as well as their capacity to combine competing class- and ethnic-based demands. The indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia stand out for their mobilizational and organizational capacity in uniting diverse sectors of civil society in the struggle against neoliberalism and for launching their own highly successful national political parties. In Ecuador, the Movement for Plurinational Unity Pachakutik-New Country (MUPP-NP) party was a major organizational force behind the winning electoral coalition in the presidential race of 2002 of ex-colonel Lucio Gutiérrez, who had participated alongside the indigenous movement in the massive civic uprising of January 2000 which forced then-president Jamil Mahuad out of office (*El Comercio* 2000; Lucas 2000). However, tensions within the governing coalition over the allocation of key ministerial posts and policy directions resulted in the withdrawal of the Pachakutik party from the government after only 204 days in power (*El Comercio* 2003). In Bolivia, the indigenous-based Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party led by Evo Morales managed to obtain a majority vote in the presidential elections of December 2005, a feat that had not been achieved by any Bolivian party since the transition to democracy in the early 1980s. As a result, Bolivia has become the first country in Latin America to elect an indigenous leader as its president.

Explaining Party Formation: Theories and Hypotheses

The theoretical framework of the paper integrates four important fields of inquiry. The literature on indigenous movements and democratic political representation in Latin America provides a useful framework for understanding why ethnic identities have become politicized in the contemporary period, but it does not address how this new cleavage does, or does not, project into the electoral arena. Instead, the focus of this body of work is on protest politics, to the neglect of institutionalized politics (Brysk 2000; Selverston-Scher 2002; Yashar 2005). The literature on social cleavage theory and new party formation addresses how social cleavages are, or are not, translated into political oppositions, but mainly according to the logics of consolidated party systems in advanced democracies (Bartolini & Mair 1990; Lipset & Rokkan 1967; Sartori 1976). The predominant application of the theory has been in studying preexisting social cleavages in the party systems of Western Europe, rather than the politicization of new cleavages.

The literature on the new institutionalism offers some clues as to how political institutions shape and constrain the articulation of new social cleavages in weakly institutionalized party systems (Jones 1995; Lijphart 1994; Rothstein 1996). Institutions are said to create incentives for social actors to behave in certain ways. The existence of unattached or "mobile" voters available to support a new option as a result of institutional effects can also influence new party formation and success. However, institutions alone do not determine political outcomes. A more complete explanation should also include an analysis of historic patterns of popular political incorporation. The literature on historical

institutionalism and political development provides some answers as to how distinct legacies influence the evolution of national politics (Collier & Collier 1992; Luebbert 1991; Mahoney 2002). The discussion that follows combines key insights from each of these bodies of literature and extends their scope to address a new set of cases and concerns.

Institutional Arrangements and New Party Formation

Political party systems can generate strong incentives against or in favor of the rise of new challengers. Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) famous "freezing" hypothesis suggests that once a party system is established, and universal suffrage is secured, its cleavage structure tends to persist over time. Recent work by Zielinski (2002) demonstrates that the logic of the theory may be extended to the study of new democracies. According to Zielinski (2002), the political dynamics within weakly institutionalized party systems, or those which have not yet "frozen," are critical in determining which (if any) cleavages will be established as permanent axes of electoral competition. Likewise, the literature suggests that once a party system is consolidated and the distribution of voters reaches an equilibrium, the likelihood of new party formation diminishes (Downs 1957; Hug 2001). For a new party to form there must be an available pool of unattached voters. While a party system is still in a state of flux, it may more accurately translate social tensions into political oppositions and provide channels for the participation of new groups in politics, thus leading to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1. Indigenous-based political parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries which have inchoate or weakly institutionalized party systems than in those which have well-institutionalized party systems.

Institutional Rules and Electoral Systems

Institutional rules can create high or low barriers to party entry. Proportional representation is expected to encourage the formation and success of new parties by creating a more proportional vote-to-seat calculation and by providing lower barriers for small parties to gain seats (Lijphart 1986; Sartori 1986). District magnitude, defined as the number of legislative seats to be filled within an electoral district, is also widely regarded as a critical institutional variable in determining the formation and maintenance of parties. According to Taagepera and Shugart (1989, 142), "the decisive question is not whether a particular system is plurality or PR, but what its effective magnitude is." Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994) suggest that political systems are especially sensitive to district magnitude where the number of ethnic groups is large. Political decentralization is also expected to provide incentives for new party formation. Decentralization allows minority groups to elect representatives to local office in regions where they are relatively more concentrated. The devolution of greater resources and governing authority to the local level may enable small opposition parties to use a successful experience in municipal-level government to mount a challenge at higher levels (Brysk 2000; Schonwalder 1998). Lastly, ease of party registration rules, including the number of signatures required to register a party as well as the vote thresholds to gain representation and maintain party status, are also expected to influence new party formation and success (Lijphart 1986; Van Cott 2003). These propositions generate the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 2. *Indigenous-based political parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries where the institutional barriers to entry are low.*

Historical Institutionalism and Political Development

The literature on historical institutionalism posits that critical junctures in a nation's history establish distinct trajectories that shape future political dynamics (Collier & Collier 1991; Luebbert 1991; Rueschemeyer, Stephens & Stephens 1992). According to Collier and Collier (1991), initial patterns of popular incorporation have a fundamental impact on the subsequent evolution of national politics. The authors argue that within the framework of the historic commonality of corporatism in Latin America, cross-national variations in the process of labor incorporation were highly consequential for the types of party systems that developed. Collier and Collier's framework may fruitfully be extended to include an examination of how different patterns of incorporation of the peasantry shaped the prospects for the emergence of indigenous political movements in Latin America. In countries where leftist, class-based organizing predominated, patterns of political mobilization created class identities and collective action repertoires that may impede the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities. Where multi-class, populist patterns of incorporation existed, the identities and organizational forms competing with ethnicity are much weaker and may facilitate the emergence of strong indigenous-based movements. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

HYPOTHESIS 3. *Indigenous-based political parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries with weak traditions of class-based organizing in civil and political society than in those with a historic pattern of leftist or class-based popular incorporation.*

Lastly, in terms of electoral success alone, it is recognized that “[n]o party, new or old, can survive without gaining the support of a sizeable faction of the electorate” (Downs 1957, 128). Since indigenous peoples are in the minority in most Latin American countries, in order to succeed electorally at the national level indigenous-based parties need to appeal to the broader society. Therefore, the success of indigenous-based political parties may require the dilution of ethnic-based demands and the inclusion of popular demands that are not rooted in ethnicity, much like socialist parties in Western Europe had to dilute class identities and become multi-class parties in order to compete electorally (Przeworski 1985). This observation leads to the final hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 4. *Indigenous-based political parties that seek to build horizontal and organizational linkages to other popular sector actors tend to be more successful than those parties based exclusively on indigenous demands.*

Modeling Party Formation and Success

The formation of indigenous-based political parties is a new and somewhat rare phenomenon in Latin America. Between the years of 1978 and 2004, only eighteen national-level indigenous political parties emerged in four countries out of a total of 353 country-year observations included in the data set developed by the author.³ Following

³ The indigenous parties and year of formation included in the data set are as follows: Bolivia, MITKA (1978), MITKA-1 (1980), MRTK (1983), MRTKL (1985), FULKA (1989), Eje Pachakuti (1992), KND

Van Cott (2003, 3) an indigenous party is defined as “an organization authorized to compete in local or national elections; the majority of its leadership and membership identifies themselves as belonging to a nondominant ethnic group, and its electoral platform includes demands and programs of an ethnic or cultural nature.” For the purpose of this study, the dependent variable is based on indigenous peoples’ parties that are active in national-level elections due to the lack of reliable information on indigenous parties active at the regional or local level for all seventeen countries. A political party is considered to be formed when it obtains legal registration and contests an election. Given that parties may form in non-election years, the unit of observation in the data set is the country-year. The countries and years they enter into the data set are as follows: Argentina 1983; Bolivia 1980; Brazil 1985; Chile 1990; Colombia 1978; Costa Rica 1978; Ecuador 1979; El Salvador 1992; Guatemala 1986; Honduras 1982; Mexico 1988; Nicaragua 1990; Panama 1989; Paraguay 1989; Peru 1980; Uruguay 1985; and Venezuela 1978.⁴

Dependent Variables

The study employs two separate models with two different dependent variables: a dichotomous variable measuring the formation and maintenance of indigenous-based parties (*Party Emergence and Existence*) and a continuous variable measuring the combined vote share in legislative elections of indigenous-based parties (*Strength of Vote*). In terms of the party emergence and existence variable, if one or more indigenous parties formed in a country within a given year it was assigned a value of 1, if no indigenous party formed in a given year it was assigned a value of 0 in the data set. However, each indigenous party continued to receive a score of 1 as long as it remained in the data set (N=55, out of total sample size of 353 country-years).⁵ This coding scheme accounts for party maintenance over time, a key component of party consolidation, rather than merely the initial appearance of indigenous-based parties onto the electoral landscape. If an indigenous party ceased to exist it was dropped from the data set. To control for the different number of country cases, the regression was clustered by country groupings. Due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, the pooled sample was analyzed using logistic regression analysis.

Vote strength is defined here as the percentage of the vote in lower-house elections captured by indigenous-based parties.⁶ To test for the conditions that influence the general strength or weakness of indigenous electoral options across all cases, including those where an indigenous party was unable to emerge, a Tobit regression

(1993), ASP (1995), MAS (1999), MIP (2002); Colombia, ONIC (1990), AICO (1990), ASI (1991), MIC (1993); Ecuador, MUPP-NP (1996), MIAJ (2002); Venezuela, PUAMA (1997), CONIVE (1999).

⁴ Each country enters into the data set starting from the year of its transition to democracy. The cases of Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela, which transitioned to democracy in the mid-twentieth century, were entered into the data set beginning in 1978, the beginning of the third wave of democracy. Data on political regime change dates was taken from Wilkie (ed.). *Statistical Abstract of Latin America*, 2002, Vol. 28, Table 1002.

⁵ Rather than party formation per se, this coding of the dependent variable measures the formation and existence (e.g. presence) of indigenous parties.

⁶ Lower-house election data was used to enhance the comparability of results given that not all indigenous parties compete in presidential elections (e.g. Colombia and Venezuela) and not all countries with indigenous parties have an upper house (e.g. Ecuador). Data for this variable was drawn mainly from Payne et al. (2002) with some supplementation from the websites of various national electoral institutes.

analysis on the vote strength variable was performed with the unit of observation being the election-year (N=100). Unlike Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis, a Tobit analysis takes into account the large number of zeros contained within the dependent variable. To test which indigenous-based parties are more successful than others requires that such a party exist and compete in an election. Due to the small number of elections that included indigenous-based parties (N=16), a statistical analysis could not be performed on indigenous party success directly.

Independent Variables

The central independent variables of the study are institutional rules and arrangements and historic patterns of popular political incorporation. In terms of institutional arrangements, the study tests the impact of party system institutionalization (*Party System Institutionalization*) on the emergence and performance of indigenous-based political parties. Based on the work of Mainwaring and Scully (1995), a party system is said to be institutionalized when it meets the following four criteria: stability in the rules of the game; stable party roots in society; legitimacy of parties and of the electoral process; and strong party organizations. Party system institutionalization is operationalized in my study by an index comprised of electoral volatility (net aggregate vote shifts from one election to the next) and party age (the average age of the major parties). Party system fragmentation (the vote share of the top two parties) was also included in the index.⁷ A well-institutionalized party system is characterized here as possessing low levels of electoral volatility, older, more entrenched parties, and fewer effective parties, while an inchoate party system is characterized by the reverse conditions. Well-institutionalized party systems tend to structure political competition and monopolize political loyalties so as to make the rise of new challengers difficult. Inchoate party systems provide greater space for new parties to emerge given that there are more individuals without fixed loyalties available to support a new party. As a result, indigenous-based political parties are more likely to form and be successful under inchoate party systems.

Regarding institutional rules, it is expected that proportional representation, political decentralization, high district magnitude, and the ease of party registration rules will increase the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success. The additional entry points into the political system created by this particular configuration of institutional rules is thought to be advantageous to minority opposition parties (Ordeshook & Shvetsova 1994; Van Cott 2003). With the exceptions of Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Venezuela, which have mixed plurality/proportional representation electoral systems, and Chile which has a unique binomial system, all of the Latin American countries are PR systems. Although the empirical record does not allow for much variation on the electoral system variable, there is considerable variation in terms of the degree of proportionality. This variation is partly captured by district magnitude. A

⁷ All of the party system institutionalization variables were derived from a data set generously shared by Roberts and Wibbels (1999). I extended the data for all countries up to and including the year 2004 using data from Payne et al. (2002) and the on-line election results website, Elections Around the World (<http://www.electionworld.org>). The party system institutionalization variable was calculated on the basis of the three variable means and ranged from a value of 0 to 3, with 0 signifying a weakly institutionalized party system. For details see Appendix A.

district magnitude variable (*District Magnitude*), calculated as the average number of seats per electoral district in the lower house of deputies, was included in the models.⁸ It is expected that higher district magnitudes will be associated with the emergence and enhanced electoral performance of indigenous peoples' parties. It is also expected that a decentralized political system will provide greater incentives for indigenous party formation and success. The degree of political decentralization (*Decentralization*) was measured by the difference between the percentage of governmental revenues collected and controlled by the central government versus that of state, regional, and/or local governments subtracted from 100.⁹ Higher scores are thereby associated with a more decentralized state.

In terms of ease of party registration rules, it is expected that the emergence and performance of indigenous-based parties will be correlated with a minimal number of signatures required for party registration and minimal vote thresholds to gain representation and to maintain party status (Lijphart 1986). An index of party registration rules (*Barriers to Entry*) was calculated based on the variable mean for the percentage of signatures of the electoral registry required to register a political party, the minimum percentage of the vote needed to win a seat, and the percentage of the vote needed to maintain party status.¹⁰ The barriers to entry variable ranged from a value of 0 to 3, with 0 signifying a low barrier to entry. It is hypothesized that indigenous-based political parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries where the institutional barriers to entry are low. It is also expected that the presence of reserved seats for indigenous representatives as well as the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights will increase the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success (Van Cott 2000; 2003). Dummy variables for reserved seats (*Reserved Seats*) and the constitutional codification (*Constitutional Recognition*) of special rights for indigenous peoples were included in the models.¹¹

Given that variations in institutional rules and arrangements may interact with variations in the size and heterogeneity of indigenous groups, variables for indigenous population size and the effective number of ethnic groups were included in the models. Based on the work of Chandra (2004), it is expected that ethnic parties are more likely to succeed when they target votes from their own ethnic category. Therefore, it is hypothesized that indigenous-based parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries with large indigenous populations. An indigenous population size variable (*Indigenous Population*) was calculated on the basis of the percentage of a nation's

⁸ Data for the district magnitude variable was drawn from Payne et al. (2002) as well as from the websites of various national electoral institutes.

⁹ Data for the decentralization variable was drawn from the International Monetary Fund, *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook*, various volumes.

¹⁰ Data for the barriers to entry variable was drawn from the electoral laws and constitutional archives of Georgetown's Political Database of the Americas (<http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba>). For details see Appendix A.

¹¹ Only Colombia and Venezuela have reserved seats in their congresses for indigenous representatives. In Colombia, as of 1991, indigenous peoples are guaranteed two seats in the senate. In Venezuela, as of 1999, indigenous peoples compete for three seats in the national unicameral legislature (Van Cott 2003). The year of the constitutional amendment to include special rights for indigenous peoples was derived from the constitutional archive of Georgetown's Political Database of the Americas.

population that is indigenous.¹² Following the suggestion of Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994), ethnic heterogeneity, or the effective number of indigenous groups in a country, was calculated according to the formula used to measure the effective number of parties in a political system. Rather than using Rae's (1967) fractionalization formula, the study adapts Laakso and Taagepera's (1979) straightforward measure of the effective number of parties in a party system, weighted according to size. In other words, the effective number of indigenous groups (*Indigenous Ethnic Heterogeneity*) was derived by squaring each group's share of the total indigenous population, summing all of the squares and then dividing 1 by this number.¹³ Higher scores are thereby associated with a more heterogeneous or divided indigenous population. It is expected that indigenous-based political parties will experience greater electoral success in countries with a more united or homogeneous indigenous population.

To capture the demonstration effect produced by the prior formation and success of indigenous parties in neighboring countries, a dummy variable (*Regional Diffusion*) was used to test for potential ideological diffusion and political learning across countries. A value of 1 was assigned to countries that neighbor another country in which an indigenous-based party was present, while a value of 0 was assigned to those countries without such a neighbor. It is expected that the formation and success of indigenous parties in one country will be positively associated with the formation and success of indigenous parties in surrounding countries. A dummy variable (*Convention 169*) was also used to test the influence of international factors on the decision by indigenous movements in some Latin American countries to form their own electoral vehicles (Brysk 2000). A value of 1 was assigned to countries that ratified the International Labor Organization's Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, with a value of 0 assigned to those countries that did not ratify the convention.¹⁴ It is expected that the ratification of an international agreement guaranteeing special rights for indigenous peoples will increase the likelihood of indigenous party formation. A variable on the degree of civil liberties (*Freedom House Score*) was also included in the models to test for whether indigenous-based parties are more likely to form under the condition of a strong or weak democracy.¹⁵ Given that indigenous movements in certain national contexts have sought to expand democratic participation and inclusion by forming their

¹² National census data on indigenous population size are not comparable given that they classify indigenous peoples using different indicators and tend to grossly underestimate the number of indigenous peoples. See Lavaud and Lestage (2002) for an interesting discussion on the difficulties of counting indigenous peoples. The data used for the calculation of the indigenous population variable was drawn from alternative estimates provided in Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1994) for the 1970s and 1980s, and from Deruyttere (1997) for the 1990s and 2000s.

¹³ Data for the ethnic heterogeneity variable was drawn from ethno-linguistic country reports available on-line at <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

¹⁴ Data for the Convention 169 variable was drawn from the ILO's website in which the ratifying countries are listed. The website is located at: <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm>. Latin American countries which have yet to sign the accord include Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, and Uruguay. With the exception of Venezuela, subsequent indigenous-based parties formed in all countries with indigenous parties after the signing of the ILO's convention.

¹⁵ Data for this variable was based on Freedom House's country ratings, which score countries along a scale ranging from 1 (highest degree of freedom) to 7 (lowest degree of freedom). Civil liberty is defined by Freedom House as the, "freedom to develop opinions, interests, and personal autonomy without interference from the state." Data available on-line at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/ratings>.

own electoral vehicles, it is expected that indigenous-based parties are more likely to emerge and be successful in countries with fewer civil liberties.

In terms of historic patterns of popular political incorporation, it is hypothesized that a higher average vote share for Marxist political parties, which reflects the salience of class-based ideologies and identities in society, will decrease the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success in a country. Class-based identities may politically overshadow ethnic identification in countries with a historic pattern of popular political incorporation and mobilization by Marxist parties. To account for the historical strength of political parties of the Left, a variable based on the average legislative vote share of Marxist parties in Latin America in the post-Second World War period was calculated by the author and incorporated into the data set at the start of the third wave of democracy. The vote share of Marxist parties in the contemporary period was then averaged with the historical scores to produce a moving average (*Left Share of Vote*).¹⁶ This measure of the historical weight of class-based ideology in the electoral arena tests the notion that a historic pattern of leftist or class-based popular incorporation impedes the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities. It is therefore expected that a lower vote share for political parties of Left will be associated with the greater likelihood of indigenous party formation and electoral success.

To account for the impact of non-electoral movements of the Left on identity formation within civil society, a dummy variable was used to control for the presence of a revolutionary leftist movement within a country (*Revolutionary Left Movement*).¹⁷ It is hypothesized that the existence of a strong revolutionary force whose strategy is to exclude or oppress other social identities and forms of organizing will decrease the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success in a country. Political violence as a result of clashes between such movements and the state have also taken a heavy toll on indigenous populations and made it more difficult for indigenous movements to organize and mobilize in countries such as Peru and Guatemala (Degregori 2003; Yashar 2005). To further test the impact of class-based identities in society on indigenous party formation and success, a variable measuring the level of trade union density was included in the study (*Trade Union Density*).¹⁸ Trade union density, measured as a percentage of the work force, serves as an indicator of a class cleavage in society that may impede the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities (Roberts & Wibbels 1999). It is therefore hypothesized that higher levels of trade union density, indicating the salience of

¹⁶ The Latin American political party classifications developed by Coppedge (1997) were used to identify parties of the Marxist left, with supplementation for those countries not covered in his study from various volumes of the *Europa World Year Book*. Data for the historic calculations was derived from Nohlen (1993), while data for the contemporary calculations was derived from Payne et al. (2002).

¹⁷ To code the revolutionary left variable, data was derived from the International Peace Research Institute's Conflict Data project as described in Gleditsch et al. (2002) and available on-line at: <http://www.prio.no/cwp/armedconflict/>. If a country was coded in the data set as having a high intensity armed conflict involving leftist forces I coded it as a 1 in my data set. To account for the long-term impacts of such movements on civil society, once the death toll reached 1000/year the country continued to receive a score of 1 for the remainder of the data set. The countries coded as having a revolutionary left force are Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Peru.

¹⁸ Data for the trade union density variable was drawn from the data set developed by Roberts and Wibbels (1999). The author calculated the trade union density for El Salvador and Guatemala, the two countries not covered by their study, using the ILO's *World Labour Report, 1997-1998*, available on-line at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/publ/wlr97/annex/tab11.htm>.

class-based identities and organizational forms in society, will decrease the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success.

Lastly, in terms of electoral success, it is hypothesized that indigenous-based parties that run in coalition with non-indigenous parties will receive a higher vote share in legislative elections. A dummy variable was included in the party success model to control for the existence of an indigenous party in an electoral coalition with a non-indigenous party (*Party Coalition*).¹⁹ It is expected that indigenous parties with ties to other popular sector actors will be more successful than parties running exclusively on an indigenist platform.

Results and Data Analysis

The results of the pooled cross-sectional time-series logistic regression analysis on indigenous party emergence and existence in Latin America offers important support for the argument that political institutions in conjunction with historic patterns of popular political incorporation condition the salience of ethnic identities in the region (see Table 1). Model 1 tests the level of party system institutionalization (**H1**), the effect of an index of institutional rules (**H2**), and the impact of leftist or class-based popular political incorporation (**H3**) on the likelihood of indigenous party emergence. With respect to the institutional variables, the level of party system institutionalization, district magnitude, and the degree of decentralization proved to be significant predictors of indigenous party emergence and existence, and in the hypothesized directions. Indigenous-based parties were found to be more likely to exist under the condition of a weakly institutionalized party system. This finding lends support to the notion that well-institutionalized or consolidated party systems generate strong incentives against the rise of new challengers, whereas inchoate party systems provide greater space for the emergence of minority opposition parties (Hug 2001; Zielinski 2002). As expected, higher district magnitudes were found to facilitate indigenous party development by creating a more proportional vote-to-seat ratio. Similarly, greater decentralization was also found to be associated with the emergence of indigenous parties. Decentralized political systems provide more incentives for indigenous-based parties to arise, as they enable indigenous movements to form viable local-level parties in regions where the indigenous population is relatively concentrated before attempting to compete at higher levels (Van Cott 2003). Thus, inchoate party systems, more proportional electoral systems, and decentralized states are found to provide more channels for the participation of new social actors in politics.

*****Insert Table 1 about here*****

Surprisingly, however, ease of party registration rules did not prove to be a significant predictor of the emergence and existence of indigenous-based parties. This finding is especially unexpected, as it challenges much of the conventional wisdom about the decisive role that this factor plays in determining new party formation (Lijphart 1986; Van Cott 2005). In terms of barriers to entry, with the exception of Venezuela, all

¹⁹ The only national-level party coalitions that formed during the time period covered by this study was in Bolivia in 1993 between the MRTKL and the MNR, which resulted in a presidential victory for the coalition, and in Ecuador in 2002 between the MUPP-NP and the PSP, also resulting in a presidential victory for the coalition.

countries with indigenous parties experienced a tightening up of party registration rules following the formation of a significant national-level indigenous party, supposedly in an effort to limit excessive party system fragmentation (Van Cott 2003, 14). Regardless, subsequent indigenous-based parties formed in Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador in spite of the raised barriers to entry. This finding casts considerable doubt on the effectiveness of institutional engineering as a means of influencing political outcomes. It also suggests that the causal arrow may in fact point in the opposite direction, that institutional rules are the outcomes of the choices of social actors rather than the determinants of their behavior.

The constitutional codification of special rights for indigenous peoples was also not found to be a significant predictor of the emergence and existence of indigenous-based parties. An examination of the empirical record reveals that important constitutional reforms took place in all four countries with indigenous-based political parties following the establishment of a viable national-level indigenous party. Consequently, the constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples is more likely the result, rather than the cause, of the emergence of indigenous-based parties. In contrast, the reservation of seats in congress for indigenous representatives was found to facilitate indigenous party development. However, it was not possible to test this argument statistically given the distribution of the data (see Figure 1).²⁰ A simple cross-tabulation of the reserved seats and indigenous party existence variables revealed that while indigenous-based parties emerged in the absence of reserved seats, there are no cases in which special reserved seats did not produce an indigenous-based party. This finding lends strong support to the assertion by Van Cott (2003, 30) that “reserving elected offices for indigenous candidates is enormously effective in stimulating political mobilization among indigenous populations.”

*****Insert Figure 1 about here*****

Regional diffusion was not found to be a significant predictor of indigenous party formation. While there is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that indigenous movements learn from the experiences of their cohorts in neighboring countries, there is no formal consultation mechanism between them for discussing tactics and strategies for mobilizing and organizing.²¹ However, indigenous-based political parties were found to be more likely to form in countries that have ratified international agreements pertaining to indigenous rights. Indigenous movements in Latin America have made extensive use of international allies to access wider audiences and resources (Brysk 2000; Warren & Jackson 2002). International influences are therefore found to have an important impact on the decision of new social actors to form their own parties and enter into electoral politics, an aspect that has largely been ignored by the literature on new party formation. It was also discovered that indigenous-based parties tend to emerge in countries with fewer civil liberties. This finding is theoretically important as it runs counter to much of

²⁰ For statistical analysis to be possible, there must be observations in each of the four data cells.

²¹ For instance, at an indigenous peoples forum in Peru that I attended in October 2003, the participants watched a video tape of the indigenous-led massive civil society uprising in Ecuador in January 2000 which led to the ouster of then-president Jamil Mahuad.

the conventional wisdom in social movement studies which suggests that more rights and liberties would provide greater political opportunities and space for indigenous party development. The findings of my study suggest that indigenous party development may in part be a response to undemocratic practices.

In terms of the demographic variables included in the model, a more ethnically homogenous, and presumably more united, indigenous population was found to be a significant predictor of indigenous party development. At the same time, however, a larger proportional indigenous population was not found to be a significant factor in the emergence of indigenous-based parties. Taken together, the results suggest that in the presence of relatively homogenous indigenous groups and permissive institutional rules and arrangements, indigenous peoples will organize their own partisan expressions even when their population size is too small to be electorally competitive at the national level, such as in Colombia and Venezuela. In other words, small indigenous-based parties may not get many votes, but they can still exist provided that these conditions are in place.

Regarding historic patterns of popular political incorporation, the salience of class-based identities and ideologies in the electoral arena was found to be a significant predictor of indigenous party emergence and existence. A negative association between the historical vote share for political parties of the Marxist left with the emergence of indigenous-based parties in Latin America was discovered. However, neither the absence of a revolutionary left movement nor the level of trade union density were found to be significant predictors of the emergence and existence of indigenous-based parties. Consequently, the results here offer only some support for the notion that in countries where leftist, class-based organizing predominated, the patterns of popular political mobilization created class identities that may impede the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities.

Model 2 tests the impact of institutional rules and arrangements, historic patterns of popular political incorporation, and the effect of electoral coalition formation (**H4**) on the strength of indigenous party vote. The results of the Tobit regression analysis suggest similarities between the conditions that determine party formation and those that determine electoral performance (see Table 2). Support for indigenous-based parties is partly conditioned by institutional rules. In this case, higher district magnitudes and greater decentralization were found to be associated with the enhanced electoral performance of indigenous-based parties. A greater number of seats per electoral district as well as the greater transfer of resources and power to local governments allows minority opposition parties to gain a foothold in the political system and potentially build-up a base of support. Indigenous peoples' parties were also found to fare better where the indigenous population itself is more ethnically homogenous, and therefore less divided by ethnic rivalries.

*****Insert Table 2 about here*****

The reservation of seats for indigenous representatives in congress was found to increase the strength of the indigenous party vote. However, political systems only tend to reserve special seats for minority ethnic groups where their population is small and poses little threat to established parties (Van Cott 2005, 32). Indigenous-based parties were also found to experience greater electoral success when competing in a coalition

with a non-indigenous party. This finding confirms the hypothesis that indigenous-based parties that seek to build horizontal and organizational linkages to other popular sector actors tend to be more successful than those parties based exclusively on indigenous demands.

Finally, distinct legacies of class-based organizing in civil society were found to negatively affect support for indigenous peoples' parties. Higher levels of trade union density, an indication of a class cleavage in society, were found to block support for indigenous electoral options. This finding lends further support to the notion that the predominance of class-based forms of organizing and mobilizing impedes the articulation and mobilization of ethnic identities in a country.

Rethinking Party Formation

The results of the indigenous party emergence and performance models suggest a number of theoretical and methodological observations. To better understand the intersection between social cleavages and formal institutions, a more integrated theory of party formation is needed. Neto and Cox (1997) have proposed that the new institutionalist approach be combined with the sociological tradition in order to better explain the effective number of parties in a given polity. The findings of my study suggest that a more complete account of new party formation should also include an analysis of how historic patterns of popular political incorporation and mobilization shape contemporary political identities. The paper's findings indicate that ethnic-based movements are more likely to be translated into institutionalized forms of political competition in countries with weak traditions of class-based organizing in civil and political society. Consequently, the study advocates a more historic, path-dependent approach to the study of the formation and success of new parties. International factors also appear to play an important role in determining new party formation, a finding that opens up a new avenue for research.

The most important methodological lesson is that the study of party success is far more complex than conventionally assumed. If the emergence of a new party is a rare occurrence, as in the case of indigenous-based parties in Latin America, the limited number of observations on the dependent variable creates problems for statistical analysis. In response to this challenge, I performed a Tobit regression analysis on the strength of vote variable to test for the conditions that influence the aggregate strength or weakness of indigenous electoral options across all cases, both positive and negative. To directly test for the factors that determine the electoral success of indigenous-based parties would entail an alternative methodological approach. Boolean analysis may be an effective method of isolating the conditions expected to produce greater electoral success for indigenous-based parties (Ragin 1987). A sub-national research design would also produce a larger number of cases of indigenous-based party emergence and existence than otherwise would be possible, thereby allowing for the statistical analysis of party success. Future research designs will need to take these methodological considerations into account.

Conclusion

The empirical task of this paper has been to demonstrate the conditions under which the emergence of indigenous-based political parties in Latin American becomes

likely, and the factors that contribute to the initial performance of these newly formed parties. I have argued that indigenous party emergence and electoral performance are conditioned by political institutions and historical patterns of popular political incorporation and mobilization. Weak traditions of class-based organizing in civil and political society in conjunction with permissive institutional rules and arrangements were found to increase the likelihood of indigenous party formation and success in a country. International factors, including the ratification of international conventions, were also found to play an important role in the decision by indigenous movements to form their own political parties and enter into the electoral arena.

The rise and fall of scholarly interest in the study of new party formation has largely been defined by the electoral fate of new cohorts of political parties (Hug 2001, 1). The recent and growing interest in indigenous-based political parties in Latin America is no exception. However, greater theoretical attention is needed on how new social cleavages are, or are not, translated into political oppositions in the unconsolidated party systems of new democracies, as well as on the long-term implications for political representation. Electoral contests in uninstitutionalized party systems are critical in determining which social cleavages will become a permanent axis of political competition. If party systems in Latin America freeze before ethnic-based concerns become entrenched, indigenous demands will continue to be excluded from the political agenda. The emergence of indigenous peoples' political parties onto the electoral landscape marks a key moment in the democratic history of Latin America. The success of these newly emerged parties has the potential to inspire similar political movements across the globe.

Table 1
 Logistic Regression on Indigenous Party Existence by
 Institutional, Structural, and Demographic Variables,
 Clustered by Country

| Variables | Indigenous Party Existence |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Party System Institutionalization | -.692* (.338) |
| Barriers to Entry | -.199 (.244) |
| District Magnitude | .243* (.114) |
| Decentralization | .097*** (.030) |
| Convention 169 | 2.08** (.735) |
| Constitutional Recognition | -.154 (1.07) |
| Regional Diffusion | .640 (.842) |
| Ethnic Heterogeneity | -.240* (.115) |
| Indigenous Population | .023 (.053) |
| Left Share of Vote | -.250** (.086) |
| Revolutionary Left Movement | -2.14 (1.32) |
| Trade Union Density | -.118 (.073) |
| Freedom House Score | 1.73**** (.410) |
| Constant | -8.34 (2.96) |
| Pseudo R ² | .496 |
| N | 353 |

Note: Two-tailed tests. Entries are unstandardized logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors printed below in parentheses.

*p≤.05, **p≤.01, ***p≤.001, ****p≤.000

| | | Indigenous Party Existence | |
|----------------|---|----------------------------|---------------|
| | | 0 | 1 |
| Reserved Seats | 0 | 298 (89.5%) | 35 (10.5%) |
| | 1 | 0 | 20 (100%) |

Figure 1 Cross-tabulation of Reserved Seats by Party Existence

Table 2
Tobit Regression on Strength of Indigenous Party Vote
by Institutional, Structural, and Demographic Variables

| Variables | Indigenous Party Vote |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Party System Institutionalization | -2.89 (2.17) |
| Barriers to Entry | 1.02 (2.10) |
| District Magnitude | 1.92** (.738) |
| Decentralization | .312** (.113) |
| Party Coalition | 15.5** (5.01) |
| Reserved Seats | 17.7** (7.06) |
| Ethnic Heterogeneity | -1.83** (.680) |
| Indigenous Population | .016 (.123) |
| Left Share of Vote | -.489 (.526) |
| Revolutionary Left Movement | -6.33 (6.49) |
| Trade Union Density | -.649* (.320) |
| Freedom House Score | 2.37 (2.98) |
| Constant | -17.5 (12.3) |
| Pseudo R2 | .400 |
| N | 100 |

Note: Two-tailed tests. Entries are unstandardized tobit regression coefficients with standard errors printed below in parentheses.

*p≤.05, **p≤.01

Appendix

Measurement of Variables

Party System Institutionalization

The index of party system institutionalization was constructed based on the sample means of electoral volatility, party age, and fragmentation variables. Well-institutionalized party systems are those that possess levels of electoral volatility below the sample mean, party ages above the mean, and fragmentation levels below the mean. Conversely, weakly institutionalized party systems are those that possess high levels of electoral volatility, younger party ages, and greater levels of fragmentation. The party system institutionalization index ranged from a value of 0 to 3, with 0 signifying a weakly institutionalized party system. The component variables of the index were measured according to the following formulations:

Electoral Volatility

Electoral volatility was calculated according to the Pedersen index (1983). The index provides a measure of the net aggregate vote shifts from one election to the next. It is calculated as the sum of individual party gains and losses divided by two. The index yields a scale from 0 to 100, with 0 signifying the no parties lost or gained vote percentages and a score of 100 meaning that all vote shares went to a new set of parties. For the purpose of this study, the electoral volatility scores of presidential and legislative elections were averaged to produce one general score.

Party Age

The party age variable was calculated as the average age of political parties that received more than ten percent of the vote in the previous election. The party ages used in this study are based on the average of the ages of the parties in presidential and legislative elections.

Fragmentation

Following Roberts and Wibbels (1999), party system fragmentation was calculated by the percentage of the vote obtained by the top two parties in the previous election subtracted from 100. Higher scores are thereby associated with greater fragmentation. The fragmentation scores used in this study are the average of the presidential and legislative election scores.

Barriers to Entry

The electoral barriers to entry index was constructed based on the sample means of party registration signatures, threshold to maintain party status, and district threshold to gain representation variables. Countries with low barriers to entry are characterized as possessing a required number of signatures for party registration below the sample mean, and vote thresholds to maintain party status as well as to gain representation that are below the mean. Countries with high barriers to entry are characterized as requiring a higher number of signatures for party registration, and greater vote thresholds to maintain party status as well as to gain representation. The barriers to entry index ranged from a

value of 0 to 3, with 0 signifying ease of party registration rules. The component variables of the index were calculated according to the following:

Registration Signatures

The registration signatures variable was calculated as the percentage of signatures based on the national electoral registry in each country that is required to register a political party as outlined in the countries' respective electoral laws.

Threshold to Maintain Party Status

The threshold for party maintenance variable was calculated as the percentage of the vote in national-level elections that a party must obtain in order to retain their legal status as a political party and compete in a subsequent election.

District Threshold for Representation

The district threshold to gain representation variable was calculated as the percentage of the vote in a national-level election that a party is required to obtain in order to win one seat.

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