POLITICS, SOCIOECONOMC STATUS, AND INDIGENOUS

IDENTITY IN LATIN AMERICA: THE BOLIVIAN CASE

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Abstract: This paper uses survey data to explore why some speakers of indigenous languages (or people of indigenous ancestry) in Bolivia identify as indigenous, while others do not. It examines three main theoretical approaches to understanding ethnic identification: the assimilation/enclosure model, which would expect that indigenous identification would be inversely related to socio-economic status and residential and linguistic integration; the ethnic competition model, which would make the opposite predictions; and a more explicitly political approach, which would link indigenous identification to the political socialization of individuals. The study finds some support for the assimilation/enclosure model and the politicization hypothesis, but it finds no support for the ethnic competition approach to understanding ethnic identification.

Scholars traditionally treated ethnicity as singular, deeply-rooted, and fixed (Geertz 1973; Horowitz 1985; Van Evera 2001). That is, they assumed, implicitly or explicitly, that individuals have only one ethnic identity and that this identity does not change over time. In recent decades, however, this approach to understanding ethnicity, known as primordialism, has been largely supplanted by a different approach, which argues that ethnic or racial identity is socially constructed. Constructivists maintain that individuals have multiple ethnic identities and that these identities often change over time (Chandra 2001; de la Cadena 2000; Nobles 2000; Portes 1984). Individuals will, for example, assume different identities in different social, political, or economic contexts.

The fluid nature of racial and ethnic identity in Latin America clearly provides support for the constructivist model. Numerous studies have documented how conceptions of race and identity have shifted over time in the region (Nobles 2000; Telles 2004; Degregori et al 1998; Yashar 2005). Since the colonial era, for example, Latin American countries have suppressed and devalued indigenous cultures and peoples.[1] During the mid-20th century, many Latin American governments sought to reshape their indigenous populations around their class identities, organizing indigenous people into peasant associations that were closely linked to the state (Yashar 2005; Degregori et al 1998). The last few decades, however, have witnessed the reemergence of indigenous identities (Albó 1991; Van Cott 2004; Yashar 2005). Powerful indigenous movements have emerged that have sought to restore indigenous traditions and identities. These

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[1] The term *mestizo* typically refers to people of mixed European and indigenous descent, but at times it includes people who have other racial or ethnic mixtures as well.

movements have put pressure on Latin American governments to recognize indigenous traditions, grant autonomy to indigenous areas, and create state institutions and programs to cater to the needs of the indigenous population.

Although various studies have shown us how conceptions of race and ethnicity in Latin America have changed over time, they have not typically explored the determinants of ethnic identity at the individual level. We still know relatively little about why some people identify as indigenous, while others with relatively similar ascriptive characteristics do not. These questions are important not only because they will help us understand how ethnicity and race is constructed in the region, but also because they will contribute to broader theories of the determinants of race and ethnicity. Latin America has long been viewed as an outlier because of the relatively low political salience of race and ethnicity in the region. Deepening our understanding of the determinants of ethnic identification in the region will help us build better theories about when and why race or ethnicity matters.

This paper focuses on the construction of indigenous identities in Bolivia. Bolivia represents an interesting case because the number of people who self-identify as indigenous in the country is considerably below what one would predict. There are a number of reasons to expect that a large percentage of the Bolivian population would self-identify as indigenous. First, a large percentage of the Bolivian population has indigenous phenotypes. Indeed, outside estimates have suggested that 60 to 80 percent of the population is indigenous, although these sources typically do not reveal how

indigenous status is measured or spell out the methodology used to come up with such estimates (Deruyttere 1999; Hopenhayn and Bello 2001; Yashar 2005). Second, a large proportion of the Bolivian population speaks indigenous languages. According to the 2001 census, 49.5 percent of the Bolivian population above 5 years of age reported that they were raised in a home where an indigenous language was spoken, often in addition to Spanish (INE 2003: 142). This represents a decline from 55.6 percent of the population in 1992 and 65.6 percent in 1976, but still constitutes a larger proportion of the population than in any other Latin American country. Third and finally, Bolivia has an increasingly powerful indigenous movement, which has sought to promote indigenous identities. Bolivia's indigenous movement has succeeded in forcing the resignation of two presidents in the last few years and it also recently helped elect an indigenous person, Evo Morales, as president for the first time.

Although the prevalence of indigenous languages and phenotypes as well as the strength of the indigenous movement in Bolivia would suggest that the country has a large indigenous presence, recent surveys have found that only a small percentage of the population self-identifies as indigenous. Indeed, surveys by the Ministry of Human Development (Rojas Ortuste and Verdesoto Custode 1997), the United Nations Development Program (PNUD 2004), and the Latin American Public Opinion Project (Seligson 1998, 2000 and 2002) found that less than 16 percent of the population self-identifies as indigenous. These surveys all found that approximately 60 percent of the Bolivian population self-identifies as *mestizo* and between 20 and 25 percent of the population self-identifies as white. Moreover, even among the population that speaks

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indigenous languages, a relatively small percentage self-identifies as indigenous. According to the 2002 LAPOP survey, for example, only 20 percent of the population that speaks indigenous languages self-identifies as indigenous.

The 2001 census did report that a much larger percentage of the population self-identifies as indigenous--62 percent of the population above 15 years of age--but the question used by the Bolivian census to ascertain indigenous self-identification has been widely criticized on several grounds. First, the question did not specifically ask if people self-identify as indigenous, but rather if they identified as Quechua, Aymara, Guaraní, Chiquitano, Mojeño, another native group, or none of these groups. It may be that people are more willing to identify themselves as belonging to certain indigenous linguistic communities, such as Quechua or Aymara, than as indigenous per se. Second, the question did not provide the option of identifying as *mestizo*, or mixed, and numerous surveys have shown that the majority of Bolivians will identify as *mestizo* if given this option. Third, the nature of the census question, which obliged people who did not identify with one of the indigenous categories listed to choose the option "none," may also have encouraged people to choose one of the indigenous categories.

The large difference between the number of people willing to self-identify as indigenous in various surveys and outside estimates of the size of the indigenous population suggests that many people who are perceived as indigenous may not self-identify as indigenous or at least may not do so consistently.[2] Many of the people who

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[2] Studies of race in Brazil have also noted significant differences in racial self-perception and the way in which interviewers classify people by race (Telles 2002).

self-identify as *mestizo*, for example, have indigenous phenotypes and may be mostly of indigenous ancestry, which leads them to be perceived as indigenous.[3] Some of the people who self-identify as *mestizo* also speak indigenous languages or wear indigenous dress, which may also lead them to be identified by others as indigenous. In the 2002 LAPOP survey, for example, 37 percent of the population that self-identified as *mestizo* was raised in a home where an indigenous language was spoken and seven percent of the population that identified as *mestizo* used indigenous dress.[4] Recent anthropological studies have proposed a new ethnic category of indigenous *mestizos*, because, they argue, that many people identify as both *mestizo* and indigenous (de la Cadena 2000; UNDP 2004).

What leads people to choose one identity over another? Who is likely to identify with a subordinate ethnic or racial category, and why might they do so? More specifically, what factors have led some people of indigenous descent in Bolivia to identify as indigenous, while other people have not?

This paper uses survey data to explore why some people in Bolivia identify as indigenous, while others do not. It examines three main theoretical approaches to understanding ethnic identification: the assimilation/enclosure model; the ethnic competition model; and a more explicitly political approach. As we shall see, the study finds some support for the assimilation/enclosure model and the politicization hypothesis,

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[3] Some studies have shown that *mestizos* in Bolivia have substantial genetic similarities (HLA alleles) to isolated Amerindian tribes, moreso, in fact than the Peruvian *mestizos* that were examined (Cervantes 2003; de Pablo et al 2000).

[4] By contrast, 69 percent of the respondents who self-identified as indigenous in this survey spoke indigenous languages and 23 percent of them wore indigenous dress.

but it finds no support for the ethnic competition approach to understanding ethnic identification. The paper is organized as follows. The first section of this paper explores some existing theories of ethnic identification and generates some hypotheses from them. The second section lays out the methodology used to explore these hypotheses. The third section presents the findings of the paper, and the conclusion discusses some of the larger implications of these findings.

The Assimilation/Enclosure Model

Existing theories of race and ethnicity offer a number of potential explanations for ethnic identification. Various studies of ethnicity in the United States, for example, have linked ethnic identification to socioeconomic status and integration. The assimilation model, which was developed by Robert Park (1950) and other members of the Chicago School, argued that ethnic identification gradually waned among members of immigrant groups as they climbed the socio-economic ladder. According to this approach, rising levels of income and education would facilitate assimilation, and thus weaken ethnic identification. Assimilation theorists and other scholars have argued that mastery of the English language and residential integration also speeds up the assimilation process, thereby weakening ethnic ties. Another approach known as the enclosure model emphasized many of the same variables as the assimilation model, but did not view assimilation (and loss of ethnic identity) among immigrant groups as inevitable (Massey and Denton 1992; Eschbach and Gómez 1998). Rather, they argued that segregation,

isolation, and lack of socio-economic mobility might lead members of immigrant groups maintain their identities indefinitely as they failed to assimilate to the mainstream.

Indigenous people in Latin America do not represent an immigrant group; nevertheless they face considerable pressures to assimilate or to adopt a non-indigenous identity, given the social, economic, and political dominance enjoyed by the non-indigenous population in Latin America and the high levels of discrimination against indigenous people. Following the assimilation/enclosure model, we might expect people of indigenous descent who are wealthier and more educated to be less likely to identify as indigenous. Indeed, the possibility of assimilation is much greater for wealthier and more educated people. Wealthier and better-educated people of indigenous descent have a greater chance than do poorer, less-educated people of being accepted as non-indigenous and they may find it easier to adopt non-indigenous customs and lifestyles. Wealthier and better-educated people may also face greater incentives to shed their indigenous identities, given that they are likely to have more contact with non-indigenous people. Professional and residential advancement, for example, may depend on adopting a non-indigenous identity.

Following the assimilation and enclosure models, we might also expect people of indigenous descent who speak Spanish and who live in mixed or non-indigenous areas to be less likely to identify as indigenous. People who speak Spanish and live in non-indigenous areas are more likely to be accepted as non-indigenous, which makes the adoption of a non-indigenous identity more feasible. Spanish-speakers and people who

live in mixed or non-indigenous neighborhoods may also have greater incentives to adopt non-indigenous identities since they typically have more contact with non-indigenous people. They, too, may adopt non-indigenous identities in order to avoid discrimination or to advance their careers, education or residential situation. People of indigenous descent who speak Spanish and live in mixed or non-indigenous areas may also feel less tied to their indigenous identities. By contrast, people who do not speak Spanish and live in predominantly indigenous areas may feel that they have little possibility or interest in identifying as non-indigenous or in being identified as such.

The Ethnic Competition Model

Another prominent approach in the race and ethnicity literature in the United States, the ethnic competition model, would have very different expectations. The ethnic competition approach has argued that socio-economic progress and contact with other ethnic groups strengthens ethnic identities rather than weakening them (Portes 1984). According to this model, as people rise up the socio-economic ladder, master the English language or move into integrated neighborhoods, they increasingly compete for jobs and other resources with members of ethnic groups, and they also become increasingly aware of discrimination. Competition with members of other ethnic groups and greater awareness of discrimination against his or her own ethnic group, in turn, tend to strengthen an individual's ethnic identification.

An explanation of the determinants of indigenous identity derived from the ethnic competition approach would focus on many of the same variables as the assimilation model but would predict the opposite effects. It would expect, for example, that wealthier and more educated people of indigenous ancestry, especially those people who speak Spanish and live in integrated areas, would be more inclined to identify as indigenous because they would be more likely to have competed with members of other ethnic groups for resources, such as housing, jobs, and school grades and admissions. According to the ethnic competition model, wealthier and more educated people, as well as people who speak Spanish and live integrated areas, will also be more likely to be aware of discrimination against indigenous people, which would make them even more likely to identify as indigenous.

A political model of indigenous identity

The two dominant approaches in the literature on ethnic identity—the assimilation/enclosure model and the ethnic competition model—thus focus on economic and social factors, largely ignoring any potential political determinants of ethnic identification. A very different approach, however, would suggest that identification with a particular race or ethnicity is a political act in addition to being a social or economic one. Race and ethnicity tends to become more politicized in some contexts and periods than others, and some ideologies may seek to promote racial or ethnic consciousness, while others may try to suppress it. Political organizations often play an important role in the politicization of race and ethnicity as well by drawing attention to racial or ethnic

discrimination and inequalities. Participation in these organizations can thus lead individuals to become more aware of this discrimination and inequalities and heighten an individual's identification with a subordinate ethnic or racial group. Participation in certain political organizations may also foster a sense of racial or ethnic solidarity, particularly if those organizations are dominated by members of that group. Thus, individuals who have grown up in a certain political context, who have participated in certain organizations, and who have adopted or been exposed to certain ideologies may be more likely to identify with a particular ethnic or racial group.

The existing literature on Bolivia would suggest that political movements have played an important role in shaping ethnic identification in the country. The salience of indigenous identity in Bolivia has varied considerably over time depending in part upon state policies (Ticona, Rojas and Albó 1995; Patzi Paco 1998; Yashar 2005). In the wake of the 1952 Bolivian revolution, for example, the Bolivian government sought to suppress ethnic identification, organizing indigenous people around their class, rather than their ethnic, identities. During the 1970s, however, an independent indigenous movement emerged among the Aymara-speaking communities in the highlands of Bolivia and gradually took control of the peasant unions in the area. This movement, which became known as the Katarista movement, sought to increase ethnic consciousness, restore indigenous traditions, and eliminate economic and social discrimination against the indigenous population. The Katarista movement never gained many adherents outside of Aymara-speaking areas of the Bolivian highlands, but it did manage to gain control of the peasant unions in these areas and it raised awareness of indigenous issues nationwide

(Hurtado 1986; Rivera Cusicanqui 1986). Moreover, in the early 1990s, a prominent Katarista leader, Victor Hugo Cárdenas, was elected Vice President, and, under his leadership, some of the traditional demands of the indigenous movement, such as bilingual education and greater local autonomy, were adopted, although these reforms failed to satisfy many indigenous leaders.

In the 1990s, an important new indigenous-based movement led by Evo Morales emerged from the unions of Quechua-speaking coca growers in the Chapare region, and gradually gained control of the Bolivian peasant union confederation, the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB). Morales' movement, like the Kataristas, subsequently formed a political party and entered the electoral arena, where it achieved considerably greater political success than had the Kataristas. Morales and his party, the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), finished second in the 2002 general elections, and in 2005 Morales was elected president with a stunning 53 percent of the vote. Unlike the Katarista parties, Morales and the MAS have drawn support from both the Aymara and the Quechua populations, as well as from the smaller lowlands Indian communities. Other important indigenous movements and organizations have also emerged in recent years. The Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti, a radical indigenous party led by the Aymara leader Felipe Quispe, emerged to compete in the 2002 presidential elections. It earned a respectable 6 percent of the national vote in these elections, although its support was largely confined to Aymara-speaking communities of La Paz. An indigenous organization designed to represent the lowland Indians, the Confederación de Indígenas del Oriente y Amázonia de Bolivia (CIDOB), has also expanded its

influence in the last decade, although it has not competed in elections under its own banner. The various indigenous organizations have carried out repeated marches and demonstrations to make their political demands known. Indeed, protests led by some of these indigenous organizations led to the resignation of presidents Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in 2003 and Carlos Mesa in 2005.

Given the relatively recent emergence of powerful indigenous movements in Bolivia and the rising political salience of ethnicity in the country, we might expect relatively young individuals to be more likely to self-identify as indigenous. Younger people will have come of age at a time of increased indigenous mobilization and ethnic pride. They therefore might be more likely to adopt an indigenous identity as a political statement than older people who tended to be politicized around class for much of their lives. Given the rising political salience of ethnicity, we would also expect the percentage of people who self-identify as indigenous to be greater in recent surveys than in older ones.

Owing to the long tradition of indigenous organizing in Aymara areas of Bolivia, we might also expect people of Aymara heritage to be more likely to identify as indigenous than people from other backgrounds. Indigenous organizations and parties have traditionally been much stronger in Aymara-speaking areas than elsewhere in Bolivia. As a result, we would expect the Aymara population to be more politicized than other indigenous groups and Aymara individuals to have greater ethnic pride and consciousness. It is unclear whether there would be differences in the level of ethnic self-

identification among other indigenous communities, however. Given the emergence of a strong lowlands indigenous organization, it is possible that members of lowlands indigenous communities might have higher rates of politicization and ethnic consciousness, however.

Much indigenous organizing has focused around the peasant unions or associations that were created after the Bolivian revolution. These peasant organizations have played a central role in formulating and presenting the demands of indigenous communities and in promoting ethnic consciousness. People who participate in peasant unions or associations should therefore be more likely to identify as indigenous as well. We might also expect people who participate in other types of unions, such as the miners' and teachers' unions, to have greater ethnic consciousness as well. Many of these unions have a tradition of radicalism and intense political activity, which may promote ethnic as well as class consciousness. In Bolivia, men have traditionally participated in these types of political organizations much more frequently than women, so we might also expect men to be more ethnically politicized and more likely to self-identify as indigenous than women.[5]

Finally, we might expect people who espouse left-wing views to be more likely to identify as indigenous than people on the center or right ideologically. Left-wing leaders and parties have done much to promote indigenous demands in Bolivia and to raise ethnic consciousness. The traditional left-wing parties carried out a great deal of organizing in indigenous areas in Bolivia in the 1970s and 1980s, which helped politicize some sectors

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[5] By contrast, a more culturally-driven theory of indigenous identity might expect women to be more likely to self-identify as indigenous than men, given that indigenous women often maintain certain cultural traditions, such as traditional dress, more widely than do men.

of the indigenous population and may have indirectly promoted ethnic consciousness (Ticona, Rojas and Albó 1995; Van Cott 2005). Left-wing parties have also gone further than other parties in embracing traditional indigenous demands and recruiting indigenous candidates. Indigenous parties, meanwhile, have adopted traditional left-wing positions as well as indigenous demands. The MAS, for example, has vigorously opposed neoliberal reforms and U.S. intervention in Bolivia at the same time that it has pushed for greater autonomy and land rights for indigenous peoples and trumpeted the achievements of indigenous civilizations. The Katarista parties and, especially the MAS and the MIP, have also drawn heavily on the human and material resources of the Bolivian left (Zegada Claure 2002; Romero Ballivián 2002; Van Cott 2005). As a result, indigenous language speakers who hold left wing views should tend to have greater sense of ethnic consciousness and pride and be more likely to self-identify as indigenous.

Measurement

To explore these hypotheses, I use data from three surveys carried out in Bolivia in 1998, 2000, and 2002 under the direction of Mitchell Seligson as part of the Latin American Public Opinion Project.[6] The surveys, which were financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, have several advantages over most Latin American surveys for the purposes of this study. First, they used national samples, rather than strictly urban samples, which is particularly important in studying indigenous people who are disproportionately located in rural areas. Second, unlike most Latin American polls, these surveys included a question about ethnic identity. Third, the surveys were

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[6] For more details on the surveys, see Seligson 1999, 2001, and 2003.

conducted in Quechua and Aymara as well as in Spanish, which meant that they did not exclude those indigenous people who do not speak Spanish.[7]

The survey question about ethnic identity was phrased as follows: "Do you consider yourself a person of the white race, *mestizo*, indigenous or black?"[8] The interviewers also accepted two other categories: "*cholo*," which is a term commonly used to describe a person of indigenous or mixed descent who lives in urban areas; and "other." People who responded that they were *originario*, or original people, were included in the indigenous category. Approximately 62.8 percent of the surveys' respondents self-identified as *mestizo*, including many people who reported that they had spoken an indigenous language at home in their childhood. The second most common response was white, which accounted for 23.9 percent of the surveys' respondents including some people who reported that they had spoken an indigenous language at home in their childhood. Only 10.0 percent of the surveys' respondents self-identified as indigenous. The least common responses were *cholo* and black, which accounted for 2.3 percent and 1.0 percent of the sample respectively.

The surveys also asked interviewees: "What language have you spoken at home since you were little?" Five alternatives were provided--Spanish, Quechua, Aymara, other native, or other foreign language—but more than one alternative was accepted. In the full sample, 59.2 percent of the respondents reported that they only spoke Spanish in the home when they were little, 34.8 percent reported that they spoke an indigenous

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[7] The number of interviews conducted in the indigenous languages was quite small, however, in large part because the vast majority of Bolivians who speak indigenous languages also speak Spanish.
[8] In Spanish, the question was: "Usted se considera una persona de raza blanca, mestiza, indígena o negra?"

language and Spanish, and 6.0 percent reported that they only spoke an indigenous language. Of the respondents that spoke an indigenous language, 63.8 percent spoke Quechua and 37.7 percent spoke Aymara, and only 3.4 percent spoke some other indigenous language.[9]

The total sample size of the (national) surveys was 9,000 (approximately 3,000 for each survey), but I restricted the sample to those people who might have a cultural reason to identify as indigenous, namely those people who had spoken an indigenous language at home in their childhood. I subsequently carried out analyses on a somewhat larger sample of people who acknowledge having indigenous ancestry since these people too might have some reason to identify as indigenous. The latter category included people who self-identify as *mestizo*, *cholo,* or indigenous. Only 75 percent of the national samples acknowledge having some indigenous ancestry and 41 percent of the national samples reported speaking an indigenous language. Restricting the sample to these categories of people, of course, means that the samples are not nationally representative.

To carry out the analyses, I created a dummy variable which is scored as 1 if the respondent identifies as indigenous and 0 if he or she identifies with some other ethnic category. To test the assimilation and ethnic competition hypotheses, I included variables measuring the socio-economic status of the respondents in the analyses, specifically their monthly household income (in income ranges) and their level of education (last year of study completed). To measure linguistic assimilation, I included a dichotomous variable measuring whether the respondents only spoke an indigenous language at home when

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[9] These figures do not sum to 100 percent because some people spoke more than one indigenous language.

they were little. Unfortunately, the survey did not include a question about the degree of residential integration, but it did include a question about the level of urbanization. In Bolivia, cities tend to be more ethnically mixed than rural areas, so I used the urbanization rate as a rough proxy for the degree of residential integration. To test the politicization hypotheses, I included variables measuring whether they participated often, occasionally, almost never, or never in labor unions and in trade associations--the latter category specifically included peasant organizations as well as associations of professionals, merchants, and producers. I also included an ordinal variable measuring the respondents' ideology (on a ten point scale from left to right), as well as variables measuring the age and gender of the respondents. Finally, I included dummy variables for people who spoke Aymara at home when they were little as well as for people who spoke "other native" languages—that is, lowlands indigenous languages. Quechua speakers were thus the base category. **Table 1** lists the variables included in the analysis and their predicted effects according to the different theoretical models examined

Data analyses

Table 2 presents summary data on the percent of the respondents with different demographic, socio-economic, and political characteristics that self-identified as indigenous in the 2002 survey. The first column presents data for those people who reported speaking indigenous languages at home since they were little, whereas the second column presents data for those people who report having some indigenous ancestry (self-identified *mestizos*, *cholos*, and indigenous people). The table shows that,

as assimilation theory would predict, people of lower socio-economic status tend to self-identify as indigenous more frequently than do people of higher socio-economic status. This is true for indigenous languages speakers as well as for people who report having some indigenous ancestry. For example, 25.4 percent of indigenous language speakers who have completed less than 6 years of school self-identified as indigenous in the survey, as opposed to only 9.3 percent of people who had completed 13 or more years of school. Similarly, 27.6 percent of indigenous language speakers who earned less than 250 Bolivianos per month self-identified as indigenous, compared with only 9.0 percent of the respondents who earned more than 1,000 Bolivianos monthly. Speakers of indigenous languages (or people with indigenous ancestry) who live in very rural areas or who are monolingual also tend to self-identify as indigenous more frequently than do indigenous language speakers (or people with indigenous ancestry) who live in cities or who are multilingual. Whereas these findings provide preliminary support for assimilation/enclosure theory, they contradict the expectations of ethnic competition theory.

Table 2 also provides some preliminary support for a theory of indigenous identification focusing on political factors. As the table shows, speakers of indigenous languages (or people with indigenous ancestry) who participate in trade associations, including peasant organizations, frequently, or even occasionally, tend to self-identify as indigenous at much greater rates than do indigenous language speakers (or people with indigenous ancestry) who never or almost never attend such meetings. The frequency of participation in union meetings, however, does not have a linear relationship with

indigenous self-identification for indigenous language speakers, although it does for

people with some indigenous ancestry. Speakers of indigenous language (or people with

indigenous ancestry) who are male and who have left-wing views also self-identify as

indigenous more frequently than do indigenous language speakers (or people with

indigenous ancestry) who are female or who have centrist or right wing views. Contrary

to the expectations of the politicization model, however, speakers of indigenous language

who are relatively young (under 40) are not more likely to self-identify as indigenous.[10]

Finally, speakers of Aymara also tend to self-identify as indigenous much more

frequently than do Quechua speakers (or the monolingual Spanish-speaking population),

which may be a result of the long tradition of indigenous activism in Aymara

communities. Surprisingly, however, speakers of lowlands indigenous languages tend to

identify as indigenous much more frequently than either the Quechua or Aymara

population. This may be partly a result of the growing levels of political organizing and

mobilization among the indigenous population in the Amazon. However, it is also

possible that a high percentage of speakers of lowlands indigenous languages identify as

indigenous in large part because these communities have traditionally been relatively

isolated and only weakly assimilated into the rest of the Bolivian population. As a result,

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[10] Nevertheless, the LAPOP surveys do indicate that the proportion of people who self-identify as indigenous in Bolivia is increasing. A nationally representative survey carried out by LAPOP in 2004 found that 16 percent of the population self-identified as indigenous, as opposed to only 11 percent in 2002, 9 percent in 2000 and 10 percent in 1998 (Seligson, Morales and Blum 2004: 39). The difference between the percentage of people who self-identified as indigenous in 2004 and the percentage of people who self-identified as indigenous in earlier surveys was statistically significant. These data refer to the number of people who answered indigenous or native when they were asked whether they identified with the white, *mestizo*, indigenous or black race, but other questions yield similar results. The 2004 LAPOP survey, for example, also asked a question about ethnic self-identification that was identical to that which appeared on the 2001 census. It found that the percentage of people who identified as belonging to some indigenous group (i.e., Quechua, Aymara, Guarani, etc.) represented 74 percent of the population in 2004, as opposed to only 62 percent in the 2001 census.

this finding may support an assimilation/enclosure model of indigenous identity, rather than a politicization approach.

To test the hypotheses more rigorously and examine the independent effects of each variable, I carried out logistic regression analyses on both the sample of indigenous language speakers (model 1) and the sample of people with at least some indigenous ancestry (model 2). The results, which are presented in **Table 3**, provide further support for an assimiliation/enclosure model of indigenous self-identification, but not for an ethnic competition model. The coefficients of income, education and the level of urbanization are negative in both models, indicating that wealthier, better educated, urban-dwelling indigenous languages speakers (or people with indigenous ancestry) are less likely to identify as indigenous than are poorer, less-educated and rural dwelling indigenous language speakers (or people with indigenous ancestry). All three coefficients are highly statistically significant in the sample that includes all people who report having some indigenous ancestry, but the income variable falls below conventional levels of statistical significance in the model that is restricted to speakers of indigenous languages. The substantive effects of education are particularly strong. A simulation based on Model 1 suggests that there is a 23 percent probability that a speaker of indigenous languages in Bolivia will identify as indigenous if he or she has no education, as compared to only a 7 percent probability if he or she has a university education, holding all other variables at their means.

Both models also suggest that linguistic isolation makes self-identification as indigenous more likely, as assimilation/enclosure theory (but not the ethnic competition theory) would expect. Indeed, the dummy variable for monolingual indigenous language speakers has a positive sign and is highly statistically significant in both models, indicating that people who speak only indigenous languages are more likely to identify as indigenous than people who also speak Spanish or who only speak Spanish. The substantive effect of this variable on indigenous self-identification is also quite large. A simulation based on Model 1 suggests there is a 24 percent probability that someone who only speaks an indigenous language will self-identify as indigenous, whereas there is only a 13 percent chance that someone who speaks Spanish in addition to an indigenous language will do so.

The logistic regression results also provide some support for a politicization model of indigenous identification. As the results show, participation in meetings of trade associations, including peasant organizations, has a positive and statistically significant effect on indigenous identification in both models. Ideology, meanwhile, has a negative and statistically significant coefficient in both models, indicating that indigenous language speakers (or people with indigenous ancestry) with left wing views are more likely to self-identify as indigenous than are indigenous language speakers (or people of indigenous ancestry) with centrist or right wing views. Participation in labor unions does not have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of self-identifying as indigenous in either model, however. Moreover, ohe substantive effect of participation in trade associations or holding left wing views on the likelihood of self-identifying as

indigenous is somewhat weaker than the effect of education or linguistic isolation. For example, indigenous language speakers who participate frequently in meetings of trade associations have a 17 percent probability of self-identifying as indigenous, as opposed to less than 12 percent for those indigenous language speakers who never participate in these meetings, holding all other variables at their means.

Several other variables that may be related to politicization levels--age, gender, and linguistic group--also proved to have a significant effect on the likelihood of self-identifying as indigenous. The positive sign for the male variable indicates that men are more likely to self-identify as indigenous than are women, and the negative sign on the coefficient of the age variable suggests that the young are more likely to self-identify as indigenous than are older people. As discussed earlier, men may be more likely to self-identify as indigenous because in Bolivia they typically participate at higher levels in political parties, peasant associations, and other political organizations that have raised ethnic consciousness. Young people, meanwhile, may be more likely to self-identify as indigenous because they have come of age during a period of increased ethnic consciousness and politicization.[11] The substantive effects of these variables are not particularly strong. According to a simulation based on Model 1, male indigenous language speakers have a 15 percent probability of self-identifying as indigenous, whereas female indigenous language speakers have a 10 percent probability of doing so, when all other variables are held at their means.

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[11] The coefficient of the variable measuring year that the survey was taken is also positive, indicating that more people self-identified as indigenous in recent surveys. However, it is only statistically significant in the sample that includes all people who acknowledge having some indigenous ancestry.

The most powerful effects are generated by the dummy variables for linguistic group, both of which are highly statistically significant and in the expected direction in both samples. A simulation based on model 1 shows there is a 24 percent probability that a speaker of Aymara will self-identify as indigenous, as opposed to only a 9 percent probability for speakers of other indigenous languages when all other variables are held at their means. As noted above, this may be in part a reflection of the traditionally higher levels of indigenous organizing among Aymara communities than among the Quechua-speaking population. The substantive effect of speaking a lowlands indigenous language is even greater. According to Model 1, speakers of lowlands indigenous languages have a 51 percent probability of self-identifying as indigenous, whereas speakers of other indigenous languages have a 12 percent probability on average. As noted previously, however, it is not clear whether speakers of lowlands indigenous languages are more likely to self-identify as indigenous because they are more politicized or because they are less assimilated.

With many of these findings, it is difficult to be certain if there is a causal relationship between these variables and, if so, in what direction the causality runs. We cannot be sure, for example, whether participating in trade associations or holding leftist views leads people to self-identify as indigenous or whether self-identifying as indigenous causes people to participate in trade associations and hold leftist views. Similarly, it is not clear whether having little education and living in a rural area makes some one more likely to self-identify as indigenous or if those people who self-identify as indigenous are less likely to gain an advanced education or move to urban areas. It is also

quite possible that other variables, such as skin color or experiences with discrimination, may shape indigenous identification and socio-economic status or the degree of politicization. The ideal way to examine these thorny issues of causality would be to track the same people over time to examine how changes in their socio-economic status, political views or participation affected their ethnic identities. Unfortunately, there are no panel data available that examines ethnic identification among the citizens of these countries over a long period of time, so the issue of causality must therefore remain unresolved. Nevertheless, the present study at least sheds light on the correlates, if not the determinants, of indigenous identification.

Conclusion:

This study has found support for both the assimilation model as well as a more political approach to understanding indigenous identity in Bolivia, but not for the ethnic competition model. As the assimilation model would predict, socio-economic advancement and linguistic integration reduce the likelihood that indigenous language speakers (and people of indigenous ancestry) will self-identify as indigenous. However, the probability that an indigenous language speaker will self-identify as indigenous also increases with participation in meetings of trade associations, such as peasant organizations, as a politicization model would expect. Indigenous self-identification is also higher among Aymara speakers, who have a long tradition of indigenous organizing and politicization, as well as among speakers of lowlands indigenous languages.

These findings have both practical and theoretical implications. On a practical level, they suggest that indigenous identities in the region will be subject to two countervailing trends in the future. On the one hand, the rapid decline in the number of monolingual indigenous speakers, increased urbanization, and progress in the socio-economic standing of most people of indigenous ancestry in Latin America may gradually reduce the proportion of people who self-identify as indigenous. On the other hand, the rising power of indigenous movements and the growing politicization of ethnic identity may increase the number of people who self-identify as indigenous. Which trend proves to be more powerful may determine the future of indigenous identities in the region.

On a theoretical level, the findings of this study suggest that existing theories of ethnic identity need to take politics more seriously. This study found that indigenous identification in Bolivia is shaped not only by socio-economic or demographic factors, but also by politics. Political experiences may shape ethnic identities by heightening people's awareness of discrimination, instilling a greater sense of ethnic solidarity, and exposing people to new ideologies of race and ethnicity. As these findings make clear, ethnic self-identification may be a social or economic act, but it is also profoundly a political one.

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TABLE 1
PREDICTED EFFECTS ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF SELF-IDENTIFYING AS INDIGENOUS

Variable	Prediction of Assimilation Model	Prediction of Ethnic Competition Model	Prediction of Politicization Model
Socioeconomic Variables			
Income	Negative	Positive	
Education	Negative	Positive	
Residential/linguistic integration variables			
Urbanization rate	Negative	Positive	
Speaks only indigenous languages	Positive	Negative	
Political Variables			
Participation in trade association meetings			Positive
Participation in union meetings			Positive
Leftist ideology			Positive
Demographic variables			
Aymara speakers			Positive
Age			Negative
Male			Positive

TABLE 2
Characteristics of self-identified indigenous respondents in Bolivian surveys
(% of people with each characteristic that self-identify as indigenous)

	Indigenous language speakers	Respondents with some indigenous ancestry
Monthly income		
0-250 Bolivianos	27.6%	25.2%
250-500 Bs	17.1	13.7
500-1,000 Bs	14.1	9.5
Over 1,000 Bs	9.0	5.0
Education		
0-5 years of school	25.4%	21.7%
6-8 years	19.2	15.2
9-12 years	13.8	9.7
13 or more years	9.3	5.6
Residence		
Urban>20,000	11.2%	7.1%
Urban/Rural 500-20,000	20.8	13.8
Dispersed rural	22.6	19.2
Linguistic isolation		
Spoke indigenous language only	31.5%	35.2
Spoke Spanish	15.6	10.7
Participation in trade groups		
Almost never or never	16.9%	11.3%
Occasionally	18.4	13.8
Frequently	22.5	16.6
Participation in union meetings		
Almost never or never	17.4%	11.6%
Occasionally	19.4	15.0
Frequently	17.7	16.6
Ideology		
Left	19.9	14.0
Center	14.6	10.1
Right	14.7	9.9
Linguistic group		
Quechua speakers	12.8%	14.8
Aymara speakers	24.6	26.9
Other native languages	52.8	62.7
Age		
Less than 40	17.8%	11.5%
40 and over	17.8	13.4
Gender		
Male	19.3%	13.1
Female	16.0	11.2

Table 3
Correlates of Indigenous Self-Identification
(Logistic Regression Analyses)

	Model 1 Indigenous Language Speakers	Model 2 All people who report indigenous ancestry
Constant	-117.838 (69.924)	-191.803** (56.911)
Income level	-.099 (.060)	-.182*** (.048)
Years of education	-.078*** (.015)	-.084*** (.013)
Urbanization level	-.185*** (.0478)	-.185*** (.038)
Only spoke an indigenous language	.888*** (.152)	.986*** .151)
Participation in union meetings	.019 (.066)	.041 (.056)
Participation in trade association meetings	.143* (.057)	.141** (.048)
Ideology (10 point left-right scale)	-.067** (.026)	-.051* (.021)
Spoke Aymara	1.055*** (.129)	1.153*** (.114)
Spoke a lowlands indigenous language	2.059*** (.225)	2.469*** (.240)
Male	.419** (.126)	.317** (.100)
Age	-.011* (.004)	-.014*** (.004)
Year of survey	.059 (.035)	.096** (.028)
Pseudo R^2	.1218	.1436
N	2,428	5,147

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$ (two-tailed tests)
(Standard errors in parentheses)