

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Ethnodevelopment within the Bolivian Aymara
A Case Study in Laja

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

in

Development Studies

At Massey University, Palmerston North,
New Zealand

Brent Timothy Rapson

2003

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the great support that I received from my wife, Maggie, in writing this thesis. Without her encouragement and assistance the work would never have been finished. *Gracias!* Thanks also to my two thesis supervisors, Dr. Barbara Nowak and Dr. Susan Maiava, for their constant guidance and for always being there to answer my questions.

To the people of Laja, who allowed me to undertake this research in their community, my sincere hope that one day soon a successful process of ethnodevelopment, will take place there, bringing a brighter future to you all.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to Mum and Dad, with my heartfelt thanks for the years of joy growing up in your care and under your loving direction.

Table of Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	.....	iv
<i>List of Maps</i>	.....	vi
<i>List of Figures</i>	.....	vi
<i>List of Plates</i>	.....	vi
1. Introduction	.....	1
2. Theoretical Framework	.....	4
The initial paradigms	.....	4
New directions in development theory	.....	9
The introduction of ethnodevelopment	.....	12
Ten conditions for ethnodevelopment	.....	17
Next steps for ethnodevelopment	.....	24
3. The Aymaran Context	.....	27
Historical background	.....	27
Demographic background	.....	32
Cultural background	.....	40
The Aymaran cultural identity	.....	41
The importance of the community and of the individual	.....	44
Social organizational structures	.....	45
Laja	.....	47
4. Research Methodologies and Fieldwork	.....	52
Choosing Laja	.....	53
The information requirements	.....	57
The research methodologies	.....	64
The information sources	.....	65
The fieldwork	.....	69
5. Data Analysis and Results	.....	77
The ten conditions for ethnodevelopment	.....	78
Conclusion	.....	112
6. The Implications	.....	114

Measuring ethnodevelopment	114
Ethnodevelopment in Laja	120
The implication for Laja	124
The implication for the theoretical framework	126
7. Conclusion	140
Towards a new classification	140
Final comments	143
References and Bibliography	145
Appendix 1: The Questionnaires	151

List of Tables

Table 1	Aymaran population by country	33
Table 2	Population of indigenous groups in Bolivia	35
Table 3	Indigenous group by department	36
Table 4	Aymaran population by Bolivian department	38
Table 5	Language spoken (mother tongue) by Bolivian department	39
Table 6	Information requirements and sources	58
Table 7	Demographic breakdown of the population of Laja	73
Table 8	Participants in research by age group	73
Table 9	Household survey statistics	75
Table 10	Secondary sources consulted	76
Table 11	Legal title of property held in Laja	78
Table 12	Legal title of property held in Laja (friends)	79
Table 13	Land title confiscated in Laja	79
Table 14	Foods eaten in Laja	81
Table 15	Own food grown in Laja	81
Table 16	Food shortages in Laja	82
Table 17	How many months of shortages	83
Table 18	How shortages are met	83
Table 19	Water sources	84
Table 20	Sufficient water	85
Table 21	Income-producing activities in Laja (my results)	86
Table 22	Income-producing activities in Laja (INE, 2001)	87
Table 23	Income to the Municipal Government of Laja	88
Table 24	Where would you seek medical attention?	90
Table 25	Why was the Laja hospital preferred?	90
Table 26	Why was La Paz preferred?	90
Table 27	Garbage disposal facilities?	91
Table 28	Opinion of sanitary conditions in Laja	91
Table 29	Social organizations in Laja	93
Table 30	Activities of social organizations	93
Table 31	Attitudes towards social organizations	94

Table 32	Aymaran cultural expressions	95
Table 33	Measures to protect cultural identity	96
Table 34	Change in Aymaran cultural identity?	96
Table 35	Examples of cultural change (stronger cultural identity)	97
Table 36	Examples of cultural change (weaker cultural identity)	98
Table 37	Outside organizations respect culture	99
Table 38	Languages taught in schools	100
Table 39	Preferred language in schools	100
Table 40	Aymara in national politics	102
Table 41	Aymara in local government politics	102
Table 42	Representatives from Laja in national politics	102
Table 43	Exercise right to vote	104
Table 44	Would you receive a fair trial?	104
Table 45	Equality before the law	105
Table 46	Discrimination on the basis of race	105
Table 47	Discrimination on the basis of gender	106
Table 48	Discrimination on the basis of religion	107
Table 49	Discrimination on the basis of political opinion	107
Table 50	Involvement in natural resources conservation	111
Table 51	Conclusions	112
Table 52	Change in economic situation	120
Table 53	Change in employment levels	120
Table 54	Change in quality of life	121
Table 55	Control of own development	122

List of Maps

Map 1	South America	.....	34
Map 2	Laja and Lake Titicaca	.....	51
Map 3	Bolivia by department	.....	56

List of Figures

Figure 1	Model for evaluating ethnodevelopment	.....	118
Figure 2	Ethnodevelopment in Laja	.....	124

List of Plates

Plate 1	Bust of Alonso de Mendoza (main square of Laja)	.....	48
Plate 2	Main church of Laja	.....	49
Plate 3	View of Laja from the hill behind the community	.....	49

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Aymaran people have lived on the Andean *altiplano* between the valley where today's city of La Paz sits and Lake Titicaca for over 800 years. During that time they have been conquered by the Inca Kingdom, the Spanish Crown and the *mestizo* governors of the Republic of Bolivia. Despite this history of submission the Aymara have maintained their unique cultural identity strong and pure.

Life on the *altiplano* has always been a challenge and today is no exception. Harsh weather conditions and isolation from mainstream Bolivian society have limited the possibility of economic development for the thousands of Aymaran communities spread across the *altiplano*. One such rural community is Laja, the original location of the city of La Paz, today home to an Aymaran population of 707.

For decades, authors within the discipline of development studies have been seeking sustainable solutions for rural communities like Laja. The introduction of the theories of alternative development in the 1980s helped focus development studies on the issues that would truly impact on world poverty after the weaknesses of mainstream development theories became evident. Arising from the alternative development paradigm came the theory of ethnodevelopment.

Ethnodevelopment seeks to preserve and promote the cultural identity of the indigenous group through processes of sustainable development. In 1996, William Partridge, Jorge Uquillas and Kathryn Johns presented an important paper *Including the Excluded: Ethnodevelopment in Latin America* (Partridge et al. 1996) to the annual World Bank Conference on Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Building on the earlier work of influential papers by Stavenhagen (1986) and Hettne (1993), Partridge et al. adopted a more operational focus, in which they propose ten conditions for successful ethnodevelopment.

The objective of my thesis is to analyse the ten conditions for ethnodevelopment set out by Partridge et al. in *Including the Excluded: Ethnodevelopment in Latin America* and evaluate their relevance in a practical setting.

The Aymaran community of Laja will be adopted as a case study in order to test the ten conditions proposed by Partridge et al. and to obtain feedback from the field that will enable me to undertake a critical analysis of these conditions. A secondary objective will be to use the conditions proposed by Partridge et al. to evaluate the degree of ethnodevelopment currently occurring in Laja.

The principle research methodology that I will use to obtain the feedback required to fulfil these two objectives will be the semi-structured interview of a sample of household representatives from Laja. A number of secondary sources will also be consulted to either support or challenge the findings that my surveys provide.

The results of these surveys and the information from the secondary sources will allow me, firstly to evaluate both the presence of each of the ten conditions for ethnodevelopment in Laja, and also to undertake an evaluation of the presence of ethnodevelopment itself in Laja. Secondly, with the feedback obtained I will undertake an evaluation of the validity of each of the ten conditions proposed by Partridge et al. in the wider framework of strategies for ethnodevelopment and offer some suggestions towards improving them.

Having the opportunity to live among Aymaran people, in both rural and urban settings, for seven years, has given me a strong desire to understand more deeply this complex culture. Also, witnessing first hand the failure of development initiatives within this ethnic group has challenged me to help seek development strategies that are more appropriate to this culture and therefore more able to offer tangible benefits. This, therefore, is the motivation behind this case study, which endeavours to introduce cultural strengths into development through the concept of ethnodevelopment.

My thesis will start, in Chapter 2, with a detailed review of the literature concerned with ethnodevelopment. In Chapter 3 I will explain the historic, demographic and cultural background of the Aymaran people and also describe the Aymaran rural community of

Laja, where my I carried out my research. In Chapter 4, a complete justification of the research methodologies that I implemented will be made, as well as a full description of the fieldwork that I undertook.

In Chapter 5 I will explain and analyse all of the data obtained and in Chapter 6 I will link back the results of the fieldwork in Laja to the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter 2. Finally, I Chapter 7, I will propose some modifications to the conditions for ethnodevelopment established by Partridge et al. and draw some final conclusions.