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MĀORI ORGANISATION AND CONTEMPORARY MĀORI DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening the Conceptual Plait

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Abstract

This thesis is primarily a study of organisational approaches used by Māori to achieve their development goals and aspirations. One focus is the impact of development ideas and practices, largely driven by international and national influence, upon Māori. Another focus is the role of the state in the direction and implementation of Māori development with particular emphasis on the impact of the structural adjustment programme. As a consequence, the relationships between Māori and the state, Māori and Māori, and Māori with others are critically examined.

The thesis canvasses a number of disciplines including Māori history, ecology, sociology, anthropology, environmental studies, management, and development studies. Engaging with this broad spectrum of ideas and actions and using literature based, empirical and participatory research tools, three themes are explored. They are:

(i) The theme of 'development' which examines international and national perspectives of development in order to identify the merits of shifting the praxis of Māori development;

(ii) The theme of 'organisation' which explores local and wider perspectives of organisational theory and practice in order to identify the implications for Māori organisations;

(iii) The theme of 'relationship' which investigates a wide range of perspectives about the dynamic relationships between Māori themselves and with others, and the opportunities to reaffirm and build new relationships.

The thesis concludes with an analysis of current thought and action before presenting five major conclusions. In essence and simply stated, if Māori self-determination is the destination then the journey is best guided by a Māori centred approach to development and organisational arrangements that are cognisant of the contemporary circumstances, in particular the relationship dynamics, that challenge Māori and the life choices they make.

Acknowledgements

After studying part time for five years, I can only conclude that those around me must have scratched their heads at my often distant and deep thoughts (not always transparent) that have distracted my attention from other things, like mowing the lawns. But as always when all best plans are laid down you can count on a higher order to intervene. In this case, the arrival of a baby daughter, Atarea Nisga'a Hine-Porutu, who decided that the male element in the household should be reminded about the wonders of life and the gifts it brings without concern for doctoral studies or such like. To my new director of life studies, her mother and sister, two brothers, her sister-in-law and two nephews, thank you.

There are many people whom I wish to acknowledge however, the mention of names raises the possibility for personalisation and distraction from the purpose of the thesis. More important, many participants contributed with the understanding that no references would be made to them directly. While I cannot mention them all, I can sincerely thank them for their candid and often provocative views. Without the fullness of their perspectives the analysis would have been less robust and rounded.

There are those that say little but are happy to be there when needed. Although what they do is perceived by them as insignificant, the reality is far more telling. To all the relations, friends and family, your collective support was invaluable. Likewise, to Professor Whatarangi Winiata, Professor John Overton, Professor Wayne Edwards, Dr. James Ritchie, Dr. Godfrey Pohatu, Esther Tinirau, Charlotte Sunde and many others, the sharing of ideas and literature has contributed immensely.

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Since 1982, I have been involved with tribal development. With guidance from various quarters, my immediate future was somewhat designed though not without some rough patches. Indeed, bearing witness to the shifts in tribal attitudes and behaviours has sharpened my intuition and skills. Along the way, education, employment and training, social services, youth support, land claims and marae development were key areas of interest.

In 1992, I became directly involved with Maori development as a public servant whilst still participating with a number of tribal and non-tribal groups and activities. My interests extended to tribal strategy and management, Maori land and economic development, and hapu capacity building. To the people who have contributed positively to my personal development - thank you. Moreover, the completion of this thesis is about fulfilling an obligation to a number of tribal elders and mentors, many of whom have passed on while the wisdom that comes with age descends on others. For reasons that only they will understand I thank them all for their patience and persistence, and look forward to supporting future endeavours.

He kaupapa kotahi he ara whakamua

A shared vision is a pathway forward

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