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Rūnanga: Manuka Kawe Ake Facilitating Māori Aspirations

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**HE TOHU AROHA
DEDICATION**

Ki a koutou ngā ahi kā o te ukaipo, o Moawhango, o Te Riu o Puanga
He mihi tēnei ki a koutou ka whakapau kaha
For those who have maintained and those who are yet to maintain the iwi
marae as the bastions of our identity

**Kaupeka ki runga
Kaupeka ki raro
Kui, kui, whiti ora e!**

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the location and role of the rūnanga institution. As a prominent contemporary organization for Māori development, relevant theory locates rūnanga with regard to a broader developmental framework and their potential to function within it. The position of rūnanga, as a facilitator of Māori development, is assessed with reference to Dependency theory, World Systems theory and Modes of Production. These theories highlight the systematic historic dis-empowerment of Māori through the processes of colonisation with particular regard to rūnanga. The thesis also considers the evolution of the rūnanga since its migration from Hawaiki, its utilisation as a forum of colonial resistance, its co-option into the governmental system and its contemporary resurgence. This provides a historical overview of the rūnanga as an institution. In addition, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whitikaupeka has been used as the case study which considers the issues of becoming a rūnanga and includes what the structure of the rūnanga might look like for Ngāti Whitikaupeka as an iwi.

The theories of Community Development and Empowerment are offered as means to counter the further dis-empowerment of Māori, where institutions such as rūnanga can utilise these notions to facilitate positive outcomes for iwi and Māori development. Field research contained in this thesis identifies some of the specific concerns and aspirations of Ngāti Whitikaupeka iwi members. In utilising the notions of empowerment and community development the field research provides an explicit statement of iwi aspirations to maintain the connection between Ngāti Whitikaupeka iwi members at the flax-roots and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whitikaupeka as a representative body that can facilitate those aspirations. Supplementary to this the iwi aspirations that have been identified in this study are intended to provide some direction for the rūnanga as the representative decision-making body moving into the future.

MIHI

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