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**Being Rotuman In Australia: Cultural
Maintenance In Migration**

**Thesis submitted by
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**For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Arts and Social Sciences
James Cook University**

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The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the *National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research involving Human* (1999), the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practices* (1997), the *James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics, Standard Practices and Guidelines* (2001), and the *James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (2001). The proposed research methodology received clearance from the James Cook University Experimentation Ethics review Committee (Approval number H1413)

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CONTRIBUTION OF OTHERS INCLUDING FINANCIAL AND EDITORIAL HELP

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BEING ROTUMAN IN AUSTRALIA: CULTURAL MAINTENANCE IN MIGRATION

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about migration and culture change examined through the vehicle of collective memory, which engages with the ways Pacific Islanders think about their culture, identity and history. It examines the ways in which Rotuman identity is shaped and maintained in diaspora, what mechanisms are in place that allow them to live and operate in an apparently seamless way within the cultural milieu of an adopted country.

A detailed study of Rotuman migration to Australia has not been previously undertaken and this work is primarily directed at focusing on the total journey, using the metaphor of waypoints and endpoints, in order to make sense of the impetus to migration and the methods used by migrant Rotumans to settle and adjust to life in Australian society and to avoid cultural anomie. It focuses on the ways collective memory has been used by them to fashion their identity in diaspora. The forces for cultural change are enormous in migration but the forces of collective memory are as powerful. The interaction between these two powerful forces has provided and will continue to provide both cultural stability and economic opportunity for Rotumans overseas.

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