

HEGEMONY, ANTI-HEGEMONY AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY

Control, Resistance and Coups in Fiji

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Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

The thesis argues that the colonial state in Fiji was founded upon ethno-cultural divisions, which continued in the post-colonial period with the establishment of indigenous chiefly political hegemony. By using a neo-Gramscian analytical framework based on the centrality of the role of ethnicity and culture in the study of colonial and post-colonial societies, the thesis develops three inter-related themes for the analysis of Fiji's political history: the role of colonial culture, the importance of ethno-cultural divisions, and the changing role of the military in hegemony, anti-hegemony and counter-hegemony. The thesis proposes a dynamic model of de-colonisation that conceptualises Fiji's post-colonial political history in terms of hegemonic cycles that sees indigenous chiefly hegemony subside into factionalisation of the indigenous polity, inter-ethnic alliances and coercive indigenous assertion. These cycles operate as a product of conflict between hegemonic, anti-hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces. The study finds that the hegemonic cycles were interrupted by a failed indigenous coercive phase in 2000 which led to military counter-hegemony and the ouster of the indigenous political order in 2006. The thesis notes that the re-alignment of indigenous political forces, following the latest military intervention, had the potential to re-instate the hegemonic cycles. The neo-Gramscian model developed in the thesis has a projective element and can be used to analyse the role of ethnicity and culture in colonial and post-colonial hegemonies such as in the South Pacific region.

Fiji Words

Vanua	the interconnected relationship among god, land and the indigenous community in Fiji
Matanitu	Indigenous government
Mataqali	Indigenous Fijian landowning unit
Mata-ni-Vanua	Spokesperson for the indigenous village
Koro	Indigenous Fijian village
Lala	Indigenous Fijian customary practice of giving part of the first produce as tribute to the chief
Turaga-ni-Koro	Indigenous Village administrator
Buli	District Officer
Roko	Provincial Council
Roko Tui	Head of the Provincial Council
Tikina	District
Bulubulu	Traditional Indigenous Fijian way of dispute resolution
Luve-ni-wai	Waterbabies
Tuka	Immortality, associated with a cult movement called Tuka in the late nineteenth century in Fiji
Navosavakadua	A leader who speaks only once: a title conferred to indigenous Magistrates in Colonial Fiji
Veiqali	Principal township
Qali	A province or a town subject to another
Ratu	Title of a male indigenous chief
Tabu	Prohibition
i-taukei	Indigenous Fijians
Bete	Priest
Yavusa	Clan
i-tokatoka	An extended family unit
Tui	A village chief
Bati	A indigenous Fijian warrior
Adi	Title of an indigenous female chief
Girmit	A term used by Indo-Fijians to describe Indians who came to Fiji from India to work as indenture labourers in Fiji from 1879 to 1916
Jihaji	The boat people