

RE-COLONISATION AND INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE

NEOLIBERALISM IN THE PACIFIC

Ema Maria Bargh

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D e c l a r a t i o n

I hereby certify that this thesis is the result of my own independent research and all sources used have been duly acknowledged.

Signed:

Emma Maria Bargh

Date:

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I argue that neoliberal agendas and policies being embedded in the Pacific, utilising multiple authors, indirect rule, institutionalisation and normalisation, are akin to colonisation and can aptly be described as re-colonisation. Many of these practices are not new: rather they continue long-standing Western practices particularly relating to the perception of non-Western peoples.

I argue further that these neoliberal policies and agendas are inadequate for the Pacific in various ways. They are inadequate because the values and ideals underpinning neoliberalism contribute to narrow perceptions of Indigenous peoples in the Pacific as incapable of properly governing themselves and of Indigenous cultures as obstacles to 'development'. These perceptions often continue to be expressed overtly, but are also newly articulated and govern through Indigenous structures and identities.

I argue that developing a broader understanding of Indigenous resistance assists us to comprehend Indigenous peoples and to see their cultures, not as rigidified structures fixed in time and awaiting foreign governing, but rather as dynamic and living practices. Re-imagining indigeneity and resistance also assists us in moving beyond a simplistic binary of re-colonisation and resistance to more nuanced understandings.

By complicating neoliberal agendas I seek to question how forms of knowledge, which dominate policies for states and academic disciplines that claim to be able to account for the Pacific, such as international relations and international political economy, come to dominate if they are based on and perpetuated utilising such inadequate ideas.

I suggest that if neoliberalism holds such currency in the Pacific and yet is so inadequate, then perhaps there are other forms of knowledge equally dominant, which require reconceptualising. By creating more complex propositions I hope not only to make neoliberal policies and agendas appear untenable, but also the more long-standing Western perceptions of non-Western people, of which neoliberalism is a powerful element.

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