Te Peeke o Aotearoa: colonial and decolonial finance in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1860s–1890s

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The familiar narrative of the British colonization of Aotearoa New Zealand is one of military violence and legal coercion that stripped Māori of their communally held lands and left them impoverished, ravaged by disease and, by the end of the nineteenth century, apparently destined for oblivion (Te Rangi Hiroa 1924). A banknote issued by the Kīngitanga, the Māori King movement, in the 1880s, however, hints at a less linear, more complicated regime of financial colonization waged by the British in Aotearoa New Zealand. The kotahi pāuna (one pound) note is one of few existing examples of currency issued by Te Peeke o Aotearoa, The Bank of Aotearoa, and is, indeed, one of few testimonies to the bank’s existence. Very little is known about the bank, save that it operated as an exclusively Māori alternative to prevailing colonial financial institutions for approximately twenty years (1885–1905). In this chapter, I take the banknote as an artefact that reveals historical and material entanglements of finance and colonization and that, moreover, points towards political potentialities of finance for decolonial struggle.

Reportage on Te Peeke o Aotearoa is scarce and, of the few news articles that give mention to it in the 1880s and 1890s, much is inflected with the racialized, often patronizing tone of the Pākehā (New Zealand European) journalists who penned it. Details of the bank’s establishment and dissolution are particularly unclear, and where certain claims are posited as fact in one article, in others they are called into question. Yet, with such accounts constituting some of the most substantial sources on the bank, they cannot be discounted. As Andrew Clifford notes in one of the only recent studies of the bank, ‘Ko Te Peeke o Aotearoa (Bank of Aotearoa) is cloaked
in the mists of time’ (Clifford 2017: 290). The contribution in this chapter is, on one level, a patching together of a lost history in an attempt to recover Te Peeke o Aotearoa from those mists. In this endeavour, colonial news sources provide necessary but problematic pieces of the puzzle, and are best consulted with a degree of caution.

An exact date for the founding of Te Peeke o Aotearoa is unknown, but an article in the *Waikato Times*, dated 12 December 1885, suggests that ‘a Maori bank at Maungatautari’ was operating ‘in full swing’ at that time. The bank at Maungatautari and Te Peeke o Aotearoa are believed to be either the same institution or branches of the same institution, with cheques issued under each name that appear identical in style and printing (Park 1992: 164). Te Peeke o Aotearoa was established by King Tāwhiao, leader of the Kīngitanga from 1860 to 1894. Kīngitanga secretary, T. T. Rāwhiti of Ngāti Hauā, played a major role in the bank and ‘was probably its organiser and manager’ (Park 1996: 97). The bank provided retail functions including deposits, chequing, note issue and lending, offering loans at an interest rate of a penny a day per pound sterling. It is likely that Te Peeke suffered a major fire in 1886; however, dated cheques suggest that the bank survived the fire and was functioning in 1894 and even as late as 1905 (Clifford 2017).

Figure 4.1 Kotahi pāuna (one pound) note issued by the Kīngitanga bank, Te Peeke o Aotearoa.
Although little can be discerned about the bank’s daily operations, Te Peeke left material traces of its existence in the form of cheques and notes. I take these traces as a prompt to further understand the political and economic conditions of the bank’s emergence. The kotahi pāuna note pictured in Figure 4.1 is a historical artefact that both was embedded within and reveals much about a broader regime of financial colonization enacted by the British in Aotearoa New Zealand (Comyn 2022). This was a regime within which financial institutions, instruments and practices were not incidental to the materialization of the colonial project but centrally enabled and even impelled it, from the first waves of settler emigration in the 1840s to the formation of the colonial state and beyond. Indeed, the effort to settler-colonize Aotearoa New Zealand was not, at least initially, a national undertaking but a joint stock speculation pursued in direct defiance of the British government (Cumming 2019). This was part of a broader push towards colonialism from the early nineteenth century that was motivated by a particular strain of political economy that viewed colonialism as a solution to Britain’s economic troubles – in particular, the coincidence of the increasing poverty of the masses with the increasing concentration of wealth in a few hands.

The circulation of currency plays a significant role in the establishment of, and resistance to, settler colonialism as we also see in the chapter by Cordes (Chapter 5). The banknote issued by Te Peeke o Aotearoa provides an entry point from which to explore both the workings of the financial–colonial regime in Aotearoa New Zealand and the forms of Māori political organization that developed in response to it, powerfully subverting its mechanics to challenge the logic of division explicit in the colonial project.

Colonial finance: debt as a means of expropriation

The political potency of Te Peeke o Aotearoa can be appreciated only when measured against the sustained centrality of finance, and particularly credit, to the colonial regime as a means of securing Māori land, resources and political and economic subordination in the decades immediately preceding the bank’s establishment. Situated within these conditions, the advent of the bank may be grasped as
a powerful subversion of reigning financial–colonialist logics towards new, decolonial ends.

Pākehā credit networks and the debt relations they fostered in Māori communities were immensely damaging in their effects on whānau, hapū and iwi1 from the 1860s through to the 1900s. These relations fuelled a self-perpetuating system of colonization by binding Māori into networks of dependency on the colonizer that could be dissolved only through the alienation of land. Taken together, the Native Lands Acts of 1862 and 1865 were a key driver of this system of financial colonization. The Acts, whose effect upon Māori land tenure is often understood as one of ‘individualization’, must also be grasped as means of enacting a profound financialization of Māori land, realized fundamentally through the transformation of land into a security against debts. For, what the land Acts implemented first and foremost – inseparable from and prefiguring the individualization of Māori land tenure – were particular debt relations. It was these relations, rather than the legislation directly, that crippled Māori economically, wresting the base from them piece by piece, repayment by repayment. (The role that securitization of land and housing plays in contemporary settler colonialism is also a central focus of Nir (Chapter 16).

According to customary tenure, Māori land claims (or take) were held communally by hapū and iwi, and could derive from a range of factors including discovery, ancestry, conquest and gift. This made them unrecognizable in terms of English property relations, which are founded upon exclusive ownership rights vested in individuals. Hence, in order to expedite land sales and the progress of colonization, the New Zealand government implemented the Native Lands Acts, which enabled for Māori land rights to be ‘ascertained, defined and declared’ and provided for the establishment of a Native Land Court, presided over by Europeans, for this purpose. Māori were required to apply to the Court, which opened in 1865, in order to have their interests recognized and certified, a process that rendered them ‘claimants’ with respect to their own lands. Any individual could notify the Court of their interest in a particular piece of land, and no more than ten individuals could be named on a certificate of ownership.

The Native Lands Acts were expressly intended to assimilate Māori customary title into English property law, in doing so fracturing
the economic and political bases of Māori social relations. As minister of justice Henry Sewell stated in 1870,

The object of the Native Lands Act was two-fold: to bring the great bulk of the lands of the Northern Island which belonged to the Natives, and which, before the passing of that Act, were *extra commercium* [...] within the reach of colonization. The other great object was, the detribalization of the Natives, – to destroy, if it were possible, the principle of communism which ran through the whole of their institutions, upon which their social system was based, and which stood as a barrier in the way of all attempts to amalgamate the Native race into our own social and political system.²

The political motives of the legislation were clearly articulated by F. D. Fenton, key architect of the Native Lands Acts and chief judge of the Native Land Court from 1865 to 1882, who wrote in 1871: ‘in the destruction of the communal system of holding land is involved the downfall of communal principles of the tribe, and the power of combination for objects of war or depredation’.³

The Acts’ effect was to individualize land title formerly vested in the collective mana of the iwi or hapū. Instead of land being managed by a community, each ‘owner’ was granted a particular share of land that they could individually decide to hold, lease or alienate to government agents or directly to settlers. The scale of this operation is seen in the example of Hawke’s Bay, where ownership title was granted to 558 individuals for 569,220 acres of land that properly belonged to 3,773 people (Ballara 1982). Every one of those individuals was empowered without restriction to alienate land that properly belonged to the iwi or hapū. This system prefigured the alienation of four million hectares of Māori land within the first thirty years of the Court’s operation (Walker 1990). By the end of the century, only 15% (or seven million acres) remained of the more than sixty-six million acres in Māori ownership in 1840 (Sorrenson 1976). As Judith Binney (1990: 143) and other important historians see it, the Native Lands Acts were ‘an act of war’ that aimed to complete what the colonial administration set out to achieve with its invasion of the Waikato in 1863–64: large-scale land acquisition and the concomitant fracturing of the communal economic base of Māori society.

The Native Lands Acts’ dramatic effectiveness as a means of expropriation cannot wholly be attributed to the legislation itself,
nor even to the colonial legal system at large. A major factor in this effectiveness was the concurrent fostering of debt relations between Māori ‘landowners’ and Pākehā storekeepers. The creation of debt relations is not only a structuring feature of settler colonialism, but becomes entangled with attempts to create a hostile environment for racialized subjects of former colonies in contemporary Britain, as the chapters by Medien (Chapter 7) and Dickson et al. (Chapter 8) reveal. Legislation, and in particular the Native Lands Acts, was a powerful instrument of colonization in Aotearoa New Zealand, but its fulcrum was finance.

For the majority of Māori claimants, indebtedness was a precondition for simply commencing the process of obtaining land title. In order to be heard before the Native Land Court, the 1865 Act obliged claimants to meet the costs of employing a government-appointed surveyor. Māori, however, being overwhelmingly based in rural areas away from commercial centres, lacked access to cash. They had to pay for survey costs on credit, with the land functioning as security, and because of this ‘often pa[id] double what it cost a European’ (Heale 1867). The Waitangi Tribunal notes that, ‘From the outset there was a legislative expectation that survey costs would be paid in land.’ In order to extinguish the debts owing to surveyors – which under further Land Acts in the 1880s and 1890s became subject to a 5% interest rate – claimants were forced to sell off portions of land once title was eventually ascertained. To take Ngāti Whakaue as an example, Kathryn Rose notes that for three of the iwi’s blocks in the Rotorua district, ‘the compounding interest and administration fees increased the total debt […] by 30 per cent in the five years from 1893 to 1898’ (Rose 2004: 271). Indeed, the Native Lands Act 1865 provided for the direct transfer of title to surveyors whose services were conducted on credit, who would ‘have a lien thereon’ until the charges were paid. As Angela Ballara (1982: 532) summarizes, ‘Land rather than money became the Maori means of exchange.’

The expense of surveys could consume large portions of the proceeds accruing to Māori from land sales. According to one report, in the central North Island the average proportion of sales revenue taken up by survey costs was 21% (Macky 2004: 64). In some cases, survey costs consumed almost the entire sale value of the block. Often, the payment was made in land. In the case of
the Tahorakuri block, for instance, 36,362 acres out of 50,000 (73%) were surrendered to ‘defray survey costs’ (Stirling 2004). Ngāti Tūwharetoa, a central North Island iwi, sold an estimated 300,000 acres of land to the government in order to cover court costs and survey costs incurred in securing its title. Under the Native Lands Acts, immense amounts of land passed out of Māori hands in lieu of surveying fees – that is, in merely servicing debt. Debt relations embroiled iwi and hapū in a paradoxical cycle of alienation wherein, ultimately, ‘the Māori people paid in land for the privilege of selling land’ (Ballara 1982: 534).

Debt relations were, then, in place at the very outset of the legal process for ‘ascertaining’ Māori land title. A creditor–debtor relation that mapped onto, qualified and entrenched the relation of colonizer and colonized was, in fact, foundational to the legislation used by the Crown to progressively deplete Māori of their material wealth. Many claimants entered the courts in a position of indebtedness that predetermined their outcomes and foreclosed possibilities for the future.

Moreover, the Native Land Court hearings themselves were designed in such a way as to entrench claimants into cycles of debt. Any member of an iwi could apply for investigation of title, and anyone with interests in the land in question had to attend court if they wanted these recognized. Evidence towards a claim could be presented only at the appointed hearing, notice of which was posted in the national newspaper. This meant that entire communities had to attend court hearings, often in Pākehā towns located at great distances from their lands. In 1883, for instance, Taupo claimants protested against travelling 100 miles to Cambridge for the hearing on the Tatua block. With some hearings lasting several months, large expenses were incurred on accommodation, transport and rations, not to mention the cost of the longer-term food shortages arising from the neglect of cultivations in claimants’ absence: ‘Rations (food) for 200 people for six weeks cost about £300, the equivalent of five years’ wages for a single agricultural worker’ (Waitangi Tribunal 2008: 516). In addition to survey costs, fees paid to lawyers and interpreters were incumbent upon the claimants. These additional costs meant that, upon receipt of title, grantees often sold off portions of land to discharge debts owed to a network of creditors comprising lawyers, interpreters, surveyors, hoteliers and publicans.
The transformation of the land into security for debts, a pivotal moment in the financialization of Māori land tenure, is highlighted by M. P. K. Sorrenson (1956: 186) as ‘a fundamental factor’ that sooner or later coerced even strong opponents of sale into disposing of land. Once the land was registered in the names of ten or fewer individuals, it was easy for government land agents to pick off the often indebted grantees and coerce them into selling their shares. They did so, Sorrenson explains, by engaging ‘the assistance of the local storekeeper or publican, who often acted as “Native land agents” and who offered the Maoris liberal supplies of goods and liquor on credit’ (Sorrenson 1956: 186). According to Ballara, individual grantees were offered unlimited credit by Pākehā storekeepers. This would continue ‘until their debts had mounted to such proportions that they could only be settled by mortgaging or selling the land that was theirs, at least on paper’ (Ballara 1982: 536). An 1872 government land commission found that storekeepers engaged in many duplicitous practices, including withholding from Māori customers the true extent of their indebtedness and falsifying accounts (Richmond 1873: 2).

The commission, which looked into 301 disputes from Māori landowners concerning purchases in the Hawke’s Bay area, found that ‘Nearly all the sales which we investigated were made to dealers. The land was in fact taken in discharge of a previous debit balance.’ The debts accrued by Māori vendors were so significant that, upon selling the land, the balance owed to them often came to nothing. In the few cases where a credit did favour the vendor, purchasers (chief among them government agents) consistently refused to pay in cash and insisted Māori take the payment in goods, chiefly alcohol. Putting such outcomes down to the ‘careless and extravagant expenditure’ of the ‘natives’, the commission did not recommend a return of land to the claimants (Richmond 1873: 2–3).

Credit was, therefore, a crucial facilitator of the colonial legislative project to expropriate Māori land and destroy the communal relations identified as foundational to Māori society. This was a regime of financial exploitation that was premised upon and systematically reinforced the lack of access Māori had to cash. In Ballara’s (1982: 527) terms, it ‘inveigled them into an inflationary spiral of trading, debt-incurrence, land-alienation, further purchasing, further debts and further land sales or leases’. This cycle of debt, mediated by
purchase agents, storekeepers, publicans and the courts, could be settled only with the alienation of the only asset Māori had: the whenua (land). Under the Native Lands Acts, thousands of acres of Māori land were alienated to the colonial regime via transactions that were not simply enabled by credit networks but were, in turn, necessitated by them, as Māori became entrapped in relations of debt dependency upon the colonizer.

Viewed in the context of this financial-colonial regime waged against Māori in the 1860s and 1870s – decades in which the latter experienced a ruthless depletion of communal lands mediated by cycles of debt – it is easy to understand why, by the mid-1880s, some wanted to develop their own financial institutions.

**Decolonial finance: the Kīngitanga and Te Peeke o Aotearoa**

Certain Māori in the central North Island refused to engage with the Native Land Court from 1867, when its first hearings were held in the district, through the 1870s and beyond. Chief among those who remained steadfast in their opposition to the Court was Tāwhiao, Waikato rangatira and leader of the Kīngitanga, a pan-tribal Māori movement aimed at protecting the land and recovering economic and political autonomy, or mana motuhake. Tāwhiao maintained his refusal to engage with the Court even as five iwi applied in 1886 for the investigation of title to Te Rohe Pōtæ, an area comprising an estimated 3.5 million acres in the central North Island and which included Kāwhia, ‘a bastion of Kingitanga strength and refuge to many of the King’s Waikato supporters’ (Husbands and Mitchell 2011: 101–121).

These iwi had resisted the Native Land Court for twenty years because of their alignment to the Kīngitanga and the fear that engagement with the Court would result in land loss. At a major Kīngitanga hui at Te Poutu in 1885, which was attended by more than 1,000, resolutions reportedly included the withdrawal of iwi lands from the Native Land Court and the refusal of land surveys, leases and sales (Marr 2011). However, in 1886, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Whanganui and Ngāti Hikairo made a tactical decision to apply to the Court in order to have the boundaries of Te Rohe Pōtæ recognized and protected (Marr 1996).
Despite the intentions of the iwi not to alienate, simply engaging with the Court resulted in 91,000 acres of land being transferred to the Crown in lieu of survey fees and other court-related costs (Husbands and Mitchell 2011). The subsequent subdivision of the land, once the boundaries were ascertained, paved the way for individuals to be picked off by land agents and, by 1910, more than half of Te Rohe Pōtae had passed out of iwi hands.

Credit was integral to the ‘opening’ (Adams, Te Uira and Parsonson 1997) of the King country in the late nineteenth century, functioning as a key driver in the transfer of immense amounts of Māori land into Pākehā hands. But, just as finance was employed by the colonizer as an instrument for partitioning and assimilating Māori social relations, so too was it identified and mobilized by some Māori as a potential means of securing autonomy within a decolonial framework. In 1885, Tāwhiao and the Kīngitanga established Te Peeke o Aotearoa – the first and only bank built by Māori for Māori. For the Kīngitanga to develop its own banking facilities at this particular historical moment was to lay the foundations for a financial network that was disengaged from, and could exist outside of, the creditor–debtor relation that drove the seizure of land. The Kīngitanga’s actions may be viewed as a refusal of the terms of credit proffered by the colonizer, a refusal to partake in a relation of dependency, which not only asserted the economic autonomy of iwi aligned with the Kīngitanga but, given the centrality of credit to the colonial project, threatened to weaken its very fabric.

The bank’s emergence was shaped by and must be understood in relation to the development of the Kīngitanga. Founded in 1858 in the central North Island, the Kīngitanga sought to unify iwi in the creation of a polity that represented and embodied Māori sovereignty. It intended to govern in parallel with the British Crown, which, for its part, would preside over the Pākehā population. The colonial government, however, refused to recognize any entity other than the Crown as sovereign in the country and, in the 1860s, did its utmost to quash the Kīngitanga in the Waikato Wars. In 1863, Tāwhiao and his followers were declared rebels under the New Zealand Settlements Act and the Crown proceeded to confiscate 1.2 million acres of their fertile lands. Even this, according to Matthew Wynyard (2019: 4) ‘paled in comparison’ to the amount of land lost through the Native Land Court.
After the raupatu (confiscations) of the 1860s, Tāwhiao and his people retreated into Ngāti Maniapoto lands and he remained itinerant for the next twenty years. In 1884, he travelled to London, where he failed to gain an audience with Queen Victoria, before resolving ‘to look for Maori solutions to Maori problems through Maori institutions, and to attempt to do so on a national basis’ (King 1977: 29–30). His vision, according to R. T. Mahuta (1996: 60), was ‘the rebirth of a self-sufficient base, supported by the strength and stability of the people’. Te Peeke o Aotearoa would provide support for a range of social institutions intended to promote mana motuhake (autonomy) and kotahitanga (unity). In the 1880s and 1890s, Stuart Park (1996: 179) writes, Tāwhiao’s ‘drive for Maori autonomy led him to establish a separate government, with parliament, treasury, licences, courts, justices and constables, with power to levy fines for the treasury, and a bank to house the treasury’.

As storehouse for the Kīngitanga treasury, Te Peeke o Aotearoa was inseparable from the development of Te Kauhanganui, the Kīngitanga parliament that opened in May 1891 and raised revenue by collecting taxes. Financial autonomy was essential to a project aiming to restore the self-determination of Māori in all aspects of social and political life. In practical terms, as Clifford (2017: 290) writes of Te Peeke o Aotearoa, ‘A functional state within a state would require this type of institution.’ The harakeke (flax bush) pictured on the lower left of the banknote is particularly apposite here. Harakeke is a symbol not only of whānau but also of industry and exchange. The motif also has associations with self-sufficiency and sustainability, with Māori tikanga (practice) being to harvest only the outer (tupuna or ‘grandparent’) leaves of the bush and allow the inner, younger shoots to develop.

As noted earlier, many Māori vendors were not paid cash in exchange for lands ‘sold’ as a result of engaging with the Native Land Court but, rather, in credit. However, by the late nineteenth century, those who did receive cash needed a secure location for it. To some extent, then, the establishment of Te Peeke o Aotearoa may be understood as a practical response to an inflow of cash into previously cashless communities. As well as wanting to consolidate and protect the sums acquired through land sales, Kīngitanga leaders likely saw opportunities in providing deposit and lending services for communities in the central North Island, services which would
otherwise be provided by the Pākehā banks. Notwithstanding the patronizing tone of his *Hawke's Bay Herald* article, J. F. Edgar (1891) spoke a certain amount of truth when he wrote that the bank’s founders reasoned that, ‘as the Europeans were making a profit by keeping the Maoris money, there was no reason why the Maoris should not be their own bankers, and enjoy the profit themselves’. Indeed, the potential threat posed by Te Peeke for the colonial economy is evident in Edgar’s claim that news of its opening precipitated ‘an immediate run on the European banks’, which, had it become general, would have caused widespread closures.

Beyond the immediate and practical motives for its establishment, Te Peeke o Aotearoa also signified broader possibilities for Māori in terms of the decolonial futures whose imaginings it was entwined with, and for which it could provide economic support. This claim is fair in light of the bank’s conditions of emergence; namely, that it was conceived within a transformative political movement engaged in a broad (re)imaging of the future that cut across Māori social, political and economic organization – a reimagining necessitated by the colonial project, which was, by this time, entrenched. A bank is not merely a storehouse for money but a means of consolidating, redistributing (via credit) and augmenting it (via interest). The productive power of money centralized in a bank is more than the sum of its parts; transformed into interest-bearing (loanable) capital it can support capitalist enterprise on a scale unachievable when resources are scattered across a disparate population.

Te Peeke o Aotearoa was a way of centralizing iwi wealth and rendering it available for (re)distribution. In the context of a brutal undermining of the Māori economic base, this was in effect a pooling of resources. In this way, Te Peeke should not be seen as a capitulation to but, rather, a subversion and repudiation of the financial-colonial regime. The colonial administration employed credit as an instrument of division specifically intended to fracture and disperse the communal economic base of Māori society. It was a key weapon mobilized as part of a strategy of ‘divide and conquer’. Yet, whereas in the hands of the colonizer credit signified and enacted a logic of division, the Kīngitanga sought to mobilize it as an instrument of integration and consolidation within a broader political project founded on a logic of pan-iwi solidarity. For the Kīngitanga, banking represented a means of reorganizing the existing material resources of iwi that
was concomitant with, and facilitated, a broad restructuring of Māori social relations to build a united front against colonization.

It is not known what, if any, grand ventures were pursued or envisaged by Tāwhiao and the directors of Te Peeke o Aotearoa. But what is clear is that for the Kīngitanga to establish its own, exclusively Māori banking institution at this moment in history was not simply a practical response to newly obtained cash reserves. The formation of Te Peeke o Aotearoa was a political decision that aimed to regain financial independence for Māori by establishing credit systems – the means to consolidate and (re)distribute community assets – outside the financial-legal infrastructure of the colonizer. It was, moreover, a powerful symbolic assertion of rangatiratanga (sovereignty) that reminded Pākehā of the right of Māori as tangata whenua to self-determination. For Māori to conduct their financial transactions with Te Peeke, to make deposits and draw loans in a network that excluded predatory Pākehā lenders, was a subtle way of claiming and demonstrating fidelity to an authority outside of colonial rule.

(Re)reading colonial histories in terms of finance

Undertaking to critically reread colonial histories so as to render the pivotal role of financial institutions, instruments and practices explicit has important implications for knowledge. One of these is that it provokes a reconsideration of the centrality typically accorded to government entities and influential individuals as the agents of history. In orthodox narratives of the colonization of Aotearoa New Zealand, finance tends to name a passive technical apparatus operating in the background, the utility of which is largely assumed. To instead document the material ways in which finance has effected colonization – and not incidentally to its otherwise purely technical activities, but through the realization of a logic of division and reproduction that is immanent in it and is mobilized for particular ends – reveals it as an agentive and highly political entity that can, moreover, be contested.

(Re)reading colonial histories in terms of finance has implications not only for knowledge but for contemporary politics. It brings new emphases and complexities to debates in the settler-colonial context
regarding, for instance, where responsibility lies for the (ongoing) social, cultural and economic destruction wrought by colonization, or by what means the reparations owed to indigenous peoples should be paid. And looking to a specific example of decolonial finance like Te Peeke o Aotearoa not just in terms of what it achieved, but in terms of the broader possibilities it represented within a movement of building indigenous political autonomy, contains further insight for contemporary decolonial movements in its suggestion of the potential utility of finance as a means of moving beyond the restrictions of the colonial-capitalist present.

Further resources


Works cited


Binney, J. (1990) ‘The Native Land Court and the Maori Communities’. In J. Binney, J. Basset and E. Olssen (eds), The People and the Land:


**Notes**

1 Whānau refers to an extended family group. Hapū refers to a larger kinship group consisting of a number of whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor. It was the primary political unit in traditional Māori society. Iwi refers to an extended kinship group, tribe, nation or people – often descending from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.


4 The concept of owning whenua (land) did not exist in tikanga Māori.