

PĀ MAI TŌ REO

Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi
INCORPORATED

Travelling into the hinterland of China

Ngahiwi Tomoana

Pā mai tō reo is a one-page chronicle of the journeys of the Waka Takitimu and its origins from Te Moananui a Kiwa and its steady migration over 300 years to its eventual resting place in Te Waipounamu, Aotearoa.

Previous to the Takitimu voyage, however, we can trace our whakapapa through Polynesia into Melanesia through Micronesia into Austronesia from our origins in Asia.

In 2012 I travelled with Tā Pita Sharples into the hinterland of Southern China into the steep mountain villages where people still lived in caves that were fitted with housing platforms but had electricity and cellphones.

It was the first time that the New Zealand Embassy staff had ever visited these secluded places. But the New Zealand Ambassador, Carl Worker, had predicted that Pita would make connection with these people immediately, as it was said that this was the area where Māori first



An elderly Chinese woman in Southern China. Photo / Supplied

left China for Taiwan.

We had seen some of their pictures of adzes and 'hei tiki' that were similar to our own. As we climbed up the mountainous passes to the village we heard the reedy wailing of the women folk as they called out to us.

One of our party from Tuwharetoa had just buried her mum before this trip, and she burst into tears when she saw her 'mum' amongst the host women.

When she was able to speak

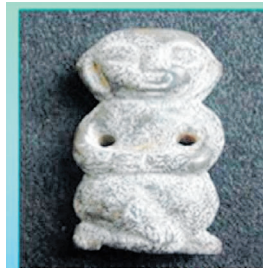
again she said the old kuia was a perfect image of her mum. Furthermore, when they were introduced together, she burst into tears again, as the kuia rubbed her arm just like her mother would.

I know this sounds so coincidental but it was too close to ignore. Needless to say, our ope was a huge hit with the villagers and with the mayors and with the regional heads which gained support in Beijing Government headquarters.

The SEAC – the Chinese equivalent of TPK – then got involved and asked us if we would connect with all the ethnic Chinese tribes of which there are about 20, numbering 200 million people.

They wanted us to work with them to retain their language and culture as they moved from subsistence level farming to more corporate and collective farming and furthermore into the industrialised and technical industries that were moving into the regions.

The Chinese Government acknowledged that Māori could assist in the retention of



Chinese carving



Top left is a Chinese carving which is similar to the Māori 'hei tiki' on the right. The bottom left picture is a Chinese tiki, compared to the Māori traditional 'tiki' on the right.



Chinese tiki



culture and traditions as these ethnic communities moved forward into the industrialised world which China was fast

becoming a global leader.

The regional government even offered our group a huge tract of land – 10 square miles

to demonstrate and support how Māori are leaders in economic growth, but that's another story ...

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Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi
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OUR OBJECTIVES

Ngāti Kahungunu - Culturally Strong
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Healthy and Vibrant Whānau
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Economically Strong
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Informed and Participating Citizens in the World
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Independent and Self Determined
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Healthy, Thriving and Sustainable Environment
 Ngāti Kahungunu - Making our Mark

OUR VISION

“Kahungunu - ki te whaiao, ki te ao mārama”
 Achieving excellence in all areas of our lives

OUR MISSION

Kia maumahara ki te mana āhua ake o Ngāti Kahungunu
 Uphold the absolute uniqueness of the living breath of Kahungunu
 “To enhance the mana and well-being of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi”