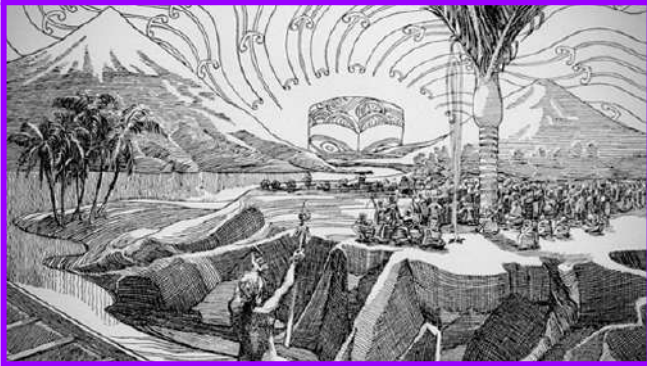


Is Hawaiki a myth? Is Hawaiki more of an idea rather than a physical place? Hawaiki is a place of great importance in Māori tradition, being the place where their ancestors came from. It is seen as a place of birth, death and life. Māori souls are still thought to travel from the tip of the North Island into the Pacific to rest in Hawaiki. If Hawaiki can be attributed to one place, and many Māori tribes feel it can, then Hawaiki is most likely to be on the islands of French Polynesia and in particular Tahiti.



When New Zealand became the last major landmass to be settled by humans in the 1200's, Māori travelled from Polynesia. The oral histories of some Māori tribes note large waka sailing the four thousand kilometres from the Cook Islands and Tahiti to Aotearoa. The skilled navigators and sailors were used to sailing long distances around the Pacific. Historians know this because kumara is an important food for Maori, and that comes from South America.



The Māori language has strong similarities with many languages of the islands of polynesia but in particular Tahiti. Another clue are place names that are shared by both Maori tribes and Tahiti. A further clue to where Hawaiki is, can be found on a small island called Ra'ia'tea. On the shore of the island, an ancient sailing school built by early polynesian explorers still stands. It is believed by many that it was at this school where the first Māori set out on their perilous journey.

Questions (look in the text for highlight clues!)

- 1) How do historians know that Māori were skilled navigators?
 - a) Their boats had been to South America.
 - b) They used the stars to navigate.
 - c) They used large double hulled waka.
- 2) What are three (3) reasons why Hawaiki is a place of great importance for Māori?
- 3) What are three (3) reasons that many believe that Hawaiki is on the islands of Tahiti?
- 4) Where did Māori travel from in the 1200's?
 - a) South America
 - b) Polynesia
 - c) Tahiti
- 5) Where does kumara originally come from?
- 6) How long was the journey from Hawaiki to Aotearoa New Zealand?
- 7) What do you feel is the most convincing reason that Hawaiki is most likely to be Tahiti?

Word Salad

Find the meaning of these words and put each of these words into a sentence.

- 1) attributed
- 2) perilous
- 3) waka

Naming Words (Nouns)

For each sentence find the word that names something.

- 1) He searched the stars for help.
- 2) The waves crashed over him.
- 3) Sailing on the ocean was very lonely.



Māori origins, voyaging and adaptation
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