

INCA PANTHEON

The Inca worshipped many gods and goddesses. Most of them represented the elements and natural phenomena such as rain, thunder, earth and sea. The main god and ruler was Inti, the sun god. The Incas considered themselves Inti's chosen 'children of the sun.' Many temples were erected in honor of Inti and Pachacamac, the creator god. Inca rulers were thought to be direct descendants from these deities, giving them god-like powers over the empire.

APU ILLAPU was the rain god, an agricultural deity whom people would pray to when they needed rain. The Inca believed his shadow was in the Milky Way, where he drew the water that he poured down to earth as rain.

AYAR CACHI was a god with a very hot temper. He was so difficult that his brother Manco Capac and sister Mama Occlo locked him up in a cave. He still sits in that cave about 30 kilometres from Cuzco (a city in Peru) and tries to get out every now and then. Local people believe this causes earthquakes in the area.

ILLAPA was the goddess of thunder and lightning. When she came to earth she became Yakumama, the goddess of water and rivers.

INTI was the sun god and the patron deity of the holy city of Cuzco, home of the sun. He was the patron god of the Incas and especially worshipped by farmers who needed his warmth and light to grow crops. Inti was represented with a human face in a great disk and is found on many temples.

K'UYCHI was the rainbow god. This deity was connected with fertility. He was the heavenly form of the goddess Sach'mama, the Mother Tree.

MAMA KILYA was the wife of the sun god Inti. She was the Moon Mother who regulated women's menstrual cycles.

MAMA OCCLO was the sister of Manco Capac chosen by Pachacamac for her wisdom to civilize the people. She taught the women how to weave cloth and build houses.

MANCO CAPAC was Pachacamac's son, celebrated for his courage. He was sent to earth to become the first king of the Incas. He taught his people how to grow plants, make weapons, work together, share resources and worship the gods.

PACHACAMAC was the creator god of the Inca, also known as Viracocha. He was the sky god who created the sun, the moon and the people. He brought Manco Capac and Mama Occlo to the world to civilize people and teach them skills such as farming and crafts.

PACHAMAMA was the goddess of the earth or earth mother and wife of Pachacamac. She is still the object of a cult all over the Andean mountains where people make her offerings of coca leaf and 'chicha' beer and pray to her on all major agricultural occasions.

QOCHAMAMA was the goddess of the sea or Sea Mother, especially worshipped in the coastal regions.

SACH'AMAMA means Mother Tree. She was a goddess in the shape of a snake with two heads. When she passed on to the heavenly world she transformed into K'uychi.

YAKUMAMA means Mother Water. This water goddess was portrayed as a snake. When she came to the earth's surface, she transformed into a great river. She could also pass to the upper world. In that shape she was called Illapa meaning thunder and lightning.

