

MAORI PANTHEON

Maori religion is complex, with many gods that represent the sea, sky, mountains, war, etc. A very important part of Maori religion is what they call the life force (mauri), spirit (wairua) that can be found in all people and spiritual power or prestige (mana).

HINE was the first mortal woman, created by Tane, god of the forest. She later became Tane's wife, and her children were the first of the Maori peoples.

HINENUITEPO is the goddess of death.

MANAIA is a half-bird, half-human deity. It has a bird's head and a human form.

MARAKIHAU is half-fish and half human with a tube-like tongue.

MATAAHO is the god of the secrets hidden in the earth.

PAPATUANUKU (Papa) was the mother earth goddess in the Maori tradition. Her husband was Rangi, the Sky Father. This couple had many powerful children, including the gods of the sea, forest and winds. Papa's grandchildren were the first of the Maori peoples.

RANGINUI (Rangi) was the Sky Father, and the husband of Papa, the Earth. He was the father to the first gods and grandfather of the Maori race. His love for his wife almost destroyed his children and prevented the creation of the world of the Maoris.

RONA was the mortal daughter of the Sea God Tangaroa. She became the goddess of the tides, controlling the movement of her father's empire. Once, when she was out fetching water in the dark she tripped and fell. She swore at the moon. The moon was so angered by her rudeness that she was kidnapped and taken into the sky. According to the Maori beliefs, there is a woman with her bucket in the moon, still visible today. Since she continued to do her work from the moon, the moon has a great influence on the tides.

RUAMOKO is the son of Rangi and Papa. He was just a baby at the time of their separation. He became the god of earthquakes and volcanoes.

TANE MAHUTA was the god of the forests, a son of Rangi the Sky and Papa the Earth. He was mainly responsible for the creation of the Maori world, separating his parents and allowing light to come to the earth and life to flourish. He set the Sun and Moon in their places in the sky and created the first woman, Hine, whom he married.

TANGAROA was a powerful son of Rangi and Papa, and became god of the sea after his parents' separation.

TAWHIRI MATEA was a younger son of Rangi and Papa, and the god of the winds. He was the only child of the Earth and the Sky who did not want his parents to be separated and often sent fierce hurricanes to punish his brothers. The first reptiles were created due to one of his storms - reptiles were once fish that escaped the waters in terror from one of Tawhiri's storms and became land creatures.

