

TE WAI TAPU

Maori Genealogy of Water

PHOTO: YURI NEMKIN



Te Wai Tapu

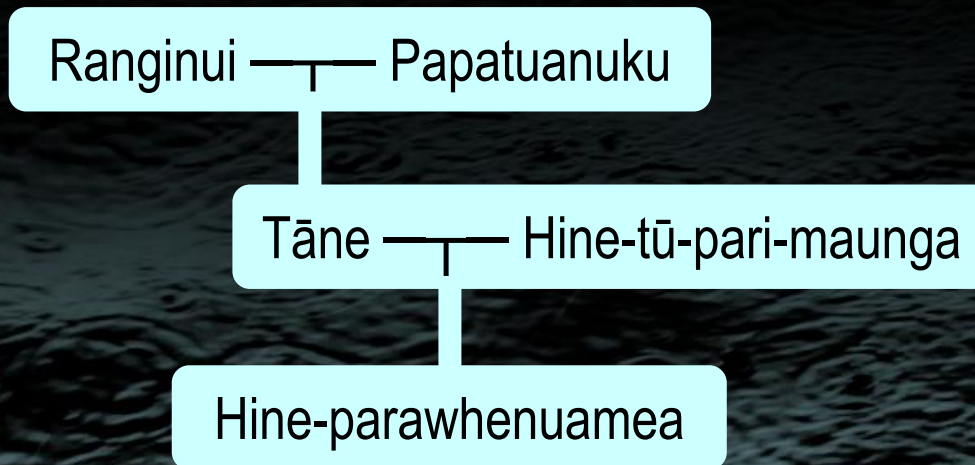


Maori Genealogy of Water

‘The Sacred Cloak of Papatuanuku’

‘Ranginui’s Tears of Love’

- Parawhenuamea is the guardian of freshwater. As can be seen by the genealogy, Hine-tū pari-maunga and Tane are the parents of Hine-parawhenuamea.



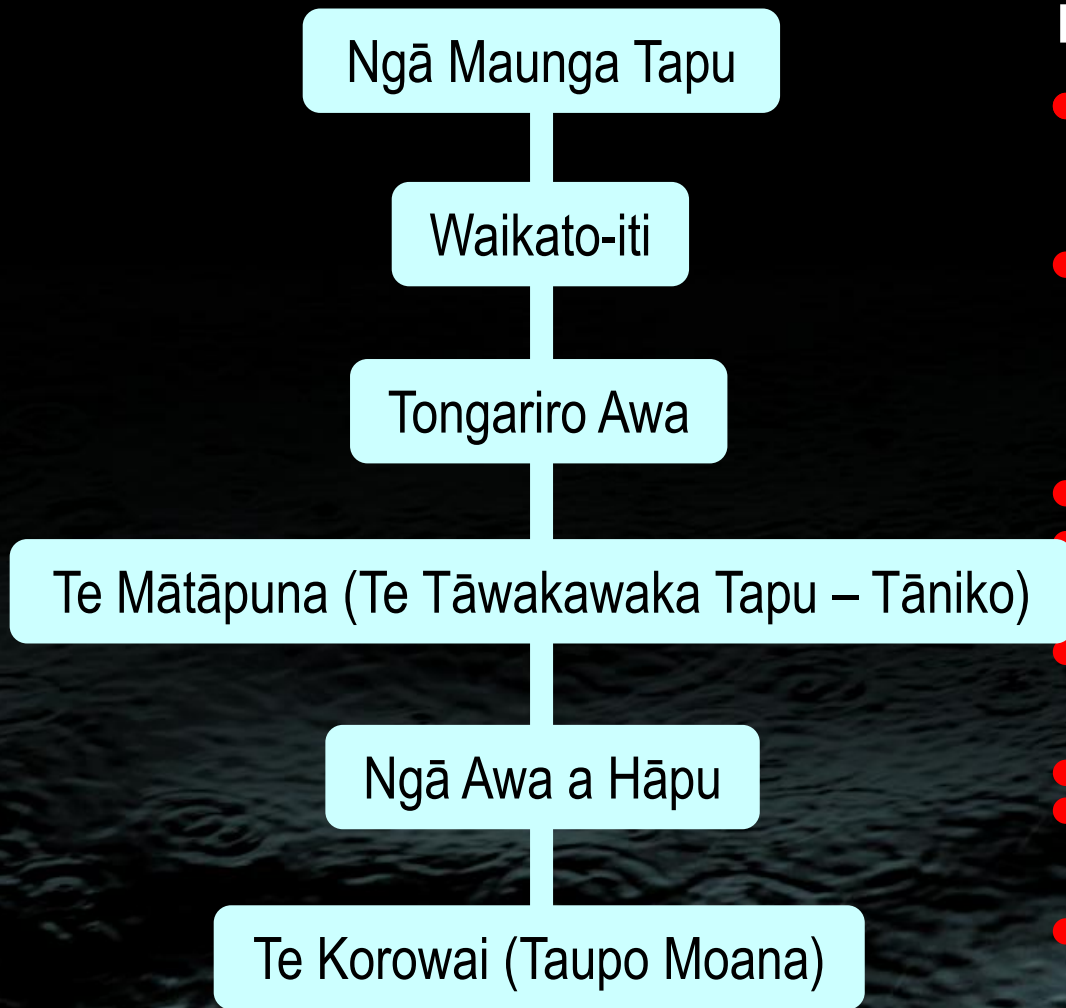
Maori Genealogy of Water

- Papatuauku releases evaporation that eventually reaches the house of Tū-kapua, guardian of clouds. The clouds are a sacred gift from Papatuanuku, the Earth Mother, to her husband Ranginui, the Sky Father. It is the duty of Tū-kapua and Tawhirimātea, the guardian of winds, to arrange that sacred cloak upon Ranginui. Each time man looks skyward, the cloak takes on a different form and colour.
- Tū-kapua, the guardian of rain, is a mischief maker that forever seeks an opportunity to pull the plug on Tū-kapua in order to release rain. Whenever he succeeds the water returns in the form of tears which contains the love of Ranginui for Papatuanuku and also returns to the guardianship of Hine-parawhenuamea.

Maori Genealogy of Water

- Taupo Moana is the sacred cloak of Ngāti Tūwharetoa. It is weaved from the many rivers that flow into it. At the Southern end, which is Te Mātāpuna or upper end of the cloak, is the sacred pattern that sits closest to Te Heuheu and Tongariro Mountain.

Te Korowai Tapu O Tuwharetoa



EXPLANATION

- The gods that Te Heuheua and the Heuheua are the Tongahiro reside on the Eastern and Western shores assist in the weaving of the sacred cloak. From the mountains trickle forth Waikato-iti carrying its sacred waters. They also indicate support for the Paramount Chief Te Heuheua.
- Waikato-iti then flows into Tongariro River.
- If the waters are clean, then the wellbeing of the lake and Tongariro River flows into Tuwharetoa is protected. Taupo Moana.
- If one river is contaminated, the weave develops a fault.
- There it weaves the uppermost and most sacred band of the cloak.
- Eventually the waters are released into the Waikato River.

Te Korowai Tapu O Tuwharetoa

Ko Tongariro Te Maunga Tapu



Ka turuturu ōna
wai tapu ki roto
i a Waikato-iti

Kia rere ki roto
i a Tongariro Awa

Ka rere ki roto i te moana o Taupo me te whatu
te taniko tapu o te korowai o Ngāti Tūwharetoa



Putā noa kia rere ki roto i a Waikato awa

Notes

- Maori personified everything within his environment. When this is understood, and comparisons are made between a Pakeha's explanation of the environment and that of Maori, one soon realises that in most cases, it is only the application of the word or name that differs. The end result is the same

e.g.

MAORI	PAKEHA
Parawhenuamea = Guardian of fresh water	H ₂ O or water
Tū-kapua = Guardian of clouds	Clouds
Parawhenuamea = Guardian of rain	Rain
Parawhenuamea = Guardian of rock	Rock

- I have found that students respond better to learning when humanized names are applied rather than an explanatory word. Because of this, they retain the information more easily. There are always stories behind the names which students tend to remember rather than remembering a scientific explanation.