

טאווירימאטאה

(Tāwhirimātea) טאווירימאטאה

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Tāwhirimātea



The clouds are children of Tāwhirimātea.

In Māori mythology, **Tāwhirimātea** (or **Tāwhiri**) is the god of weather, including thunder and lightning, wind, clouds and storms. He is a son of Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father). In his anger at his brothers for separating their parents, Tāwhirimātea destroyed the forests of Tāne (god of forests), drove Tangaroa (god of the sea) and his progeny into the sea, pursued Rongo and Haumia-tiketike till they had to take refuge in the bosom of their mother Papa, and only found in Tūmatauenga a worthy opponent and eternal enemy (Tregear 1891:499). To fight his brothers, Tāwhirimātea gathered an army of his children, winds and clouds of different kinds - including Apū-hau (“fierce squall”), Apū-matangi, Ao-nui, Ao-roa, Ao-pōuri, Apōtango, Ao-whētuma, Ao-whekere, Ao-kāhiwahiwa, Ao-kānapanapa, Ao-pākinakina, Ao-pakarea, and Aotākawe (Grey 1971). Grey translates these as ‘fierce squalls, whirlwinds, dense clouds, massy clouds, dark clouds, gloomy thick clouds, fiery clouds, clouds which preceded hurricanes, clouds of fiery black, clouds reflecting glowing red light, clouds wildly drifting from all quarters and wildly bursting, clouds of thunder storms, and clouds hurriedly flying on’ (Grey 1956:5).

Other children of Tāwhirimātea are the various kinds of rain, mists and fog. Tāwhirimātea’s attacks on his brothers led to the flooding of large areas of the land. The names of the beings involved in this flooding include Ua-nui (terrible rain), Ua-roa (long-continued rain), Ua-whatu (fierce hailstorms), and Ua-nganga (sleet); after these, their children in turn took up the fight: Hau-maringi (mist), Hau-marotoroto (heavy dew), and Tō-mairangi (light mist) (Grey 1956:10-11, Grey 1971:5). Tregear mentions Hau-maringiringi as a personification of mists (Tregear 1891:54).

Tāwhirimātea live on the sky with his father Rangi and

brother, star Rehua.

1 References

- G. Grey, *Polynesian Mythology*, Illustrated edition, reprinted 1976. (Whitcombe and Tombs: Christchurch), 1956.
- G. Grey, *Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna*, fourth edition. First published 1854. (Reed: Wellington), 1971.
- E.R. Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (Lyon and Blair: Lambton Quay), 1891.

2 External links

- *Tāwhirimātea – the weather* in Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand

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