

RUAUMOKO
(The Unborn Child, the Guardian of Volcanoes and Earthquakes)

Rangi-nui (Skyfather) and Papa-tu-a-nuku (Earth Mother) laid in deep darkness closely intertwined with their children between them. The children of Heaven and Earth felt trapped in the darkness, unsatisfied with their existence. They longed for the light they sensed outside the confines created by their parents. They tried to separate them but to no avail. Then Tane-Mahuta (later, the God of the Forest) made his attempt. With his head and shoulders he pressed against his mother, the Earth, and with his legs and feet against his father, and little by little he was able to push his father upwards. The connecting veins of Papa-tu-a-nuku and Rangi-nui were suddenly torn apart and as their blood poured out they cried out in pain. Tane-Mahuta didn't give up until Heaven was far above and Earth far below. Te Ao Marama (the World of Light) was given in this manner to all the creatures. The third stage of life began and the children became the protectors and keepers of Nature.

The youngest son, RUAUMOKO, was not yet born at the time of the separation. He remained with Papa-tu-a-nuku to comfort her in her sorrow, and was thus forever unborn in the womb of the EARTH. And although he lived in these narrow confines or, according to some, at Papa-tu-a-nuku's breast, he is an unruly and difficult atua, who incorporates volcanic fire and all kinds of subterranean activity. With his youthful power he causes earthquakes, but also divides the warmth of summer from the cold of winter. He pulls all the strings that hold the solid ground. He calls forth thunder, like a haka performed in the hot air of summer.

The soil for this part of the Aotearoa project comes both from Mt. Tarawera, a volcano which erupted in 1886 with terrible consequences and destroyed the world famous Pink and White Terraces, as well as from the thermal area of Whakarewarewa where geysers throw up water and steam to a height of 30 m, where hot mud bubbles in holes and the Maori cook their meals in boiling hot pools. Both places are located on the tribal land of the Te Arawa near Rotorua on the north island of Aotearoa.