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The Gods and Goddesses

The ancient Hawaiians had a polytheistic religion. Over the years, they d
of gods and goddesses of various rank and form. This system of gods and
the Hawaiian class system. The Hawaiians had main gods, local gods, de
types of gods.

The Hawaiians had six male gods and two female gods. Included in the si
god, Keawe. Keawe is believed to be the original spirit present at the be
is ancestor of all of the gods. KÃ¢ne is his son, who is a conduit for his
and Lord of the West. NÃ¢wÃ¢hine, daughter of Keawe in female form, is
and the Holy Mother of Heaven or the Moon Goddess. KÃ¢ne and NÃ¢wÃ¢
three sons: Lono, Kanaloa, and KÃ». Lono was the god of the East and fe
god of the South Pacific Ocean. KÃ» was the god of the North and War. T
god WÃ¢kea were the rulers of nature. Keawe, KÃ¢ne, Na'Vahine, Lono, H
Papa, and WÃ¢kea composed the sacred eight.

Through devotion to the eight, a person could gain entrance to the gates
actions on Earth were reported to the court of Heaven, which rules on en
eight gates. Angels, nÃ¢ awaikÃ», observed human actions and presented
the court for judgment.

Each Hawaiian region had individual gods or goddesses. For example, Li
HaleakalÃ¢, and Poli`ahu, goddess of Mauna Kea were worshipped by the
region. These local gods often received offerings at sacred stones or sac

Each Hawaiian profession had its own gods. For example, hula dancers w
poisoners worshipped KalaipÃ¢hoa. Often, the priests of the particular g
profession would set elaborate kapu. A fisherman would have to follow el
during, and after in order to ensure the capture of his fish and to preven
his catch.

The Hawaiians also had volcano gods or goddesses. The personification
explanation of their actions. When one of the volcano gods or goddesses
erupt, offerings were thrown into their lava streams in order to appease

Each Hawaiian family had their own `aumÃ¢kua, family god. This family g
ancestor. It was believed that sickness or bad luck is caused by displeas

There were a group of humans who were considered demigods. These hum

magic that had some effect on the gods, such as Maui. Maui was believed islands, captured the sun, and brought fire to mankind.

The Kahuna

The rank of kahuna was the second highest rank in Hawaiian society, whi based on connection to the divine. Within the rank of kahuna, there were priests, kahuna lapa`au, necromancers, sorcerers, and diviners.

The priests lived within the heiau, temples made of lava rock. Priests of were the only ones allowed in to the kapu or inner court. A Hawaiian prie declaring kapu, forbidden acts or land. Hawaiian priests also had the pow human sacrifices. The priests of the gods and goddesses passed down pr an oral tradition. Often each priest was responsible for flawlessly recitin ceremony. On very important occasions, the head chief would present a h pronounce the conclusion.

Chiefs offered human sacrifices in the cases of grave illnesses, for the b success in war, and to prevent natural disasters. Their religious rituals w of the stars, moon, and sun in the sky. For example, the rise of the cons Pleiades, at sunset signaled the return of the sun's warmth. At this time god of fertility, was held.

The kahuna lapa`au, medicine men, were called to treat illnesses. The m and search for omens. He would use that information to find a way to ple god.

Necromancers came in several different varieties, but they operated on t Necromancers employed spirits often called `unihipili. The ways in which determined the type of necromancer. For example, a kahuna ho`ounÃ¢unÃ find the cause of an illness and exact revenge.

Sorcerers, like necromancers, also had various divisions according to th `anÃ¢`anÃ¢ performed their rituals at night in secret. The kuni performed during the day. Both the `anÃ¢`anÃ¢ and kuni used a part of their subjec piece of hair for example. They would bury the part of the victim. An `an the death of his subject. A kuni`s subject was already dead. The kuni de and then killed the murderer. The ho`opi`opi`o and pÃ¢h`iuhi`u , classes the same manner. They would mark a spot in the road with a death spell, victim would pass.

Another class of sorcerer practiced `apo leo . These sorcerers would stri their victim and steal his voice.

The diviners, kilo kilo, came in several different varieties: kilo `uhane, p The kilo` uhane and po'i`uhane worked using the same basic principle. T believed that the human had two souls. One soul resided in the body. Th roam about and return to it again. The kilo `uhane could see the free sou potential client that his free spirit was troubled. An elaborate set of ritu

prescribed. The po'i`uhane could capture the free spirit within a calabas

Astrologers studied the heavens to predict the fortunes of various chiefs

Summary

The ancient Hawaiian religion is structured similarly to their society. An
of power a god or goddess wields. Keawe is at the top of the hierarchy. I
from which all of the other gods and goddesses descended. The structure
priesthood also reflected this trend. Within the kahuna, there were differ
further divided by jobs.

Source: Emily Morishima
arcturus.pomona.edu/islands/hawaii3.html