



# THE RAPI NUI CREATION STORY

## MAKE, MAKE THE WORLD




Make Make was alone; this was not good. He took a gourd filled with water and looked inside. Make Make's shadow entered the water. Make Make saw how the shadow of his face had entered the water. Make Make spoke and greeted his own shadow: "Hail young man! how beautiful you are, similar to me". Then a bird landed suddenly on Make Make's right shoulder. This one got scared, seeing a being with a beak, wings and feathers. Make Make took both of them, the shadow and the bird, and left them together.

## ON A SIDE NOTE




Some scholars see in this union the birth of Make Make's first-born son, who could be the Tangata Manu or bird man who was worshiped in Orongo and who was considered the incarnation of the god.

## MAKE, MAKE FISH AND MAN




After a while, Make Make thought of creating the man, who would be just like him, who would have a voice and speak like him. Make Make fertilized some stones but there was no result because the reflux waters ran over the extension of unproductive and bad land. He fertilized the water and from the scattered fertilizer only many small paroko fishes came out. Finally, Make Make fertilized the clay soil. Man was born from it. Make Make saw that this turned out well.

## ONE IS THE LONELIEST NUMBER



Then Make Make saw that he was still not well because the man was still alone. He made him sleep in the house. When he was asleep, Make Make fertilized his ribs on the left side. Hence the woman was born.

## ON A(NOTHER) SIDE NOTE



In this legend the references to Genesis are more than evident. Here the influence of Catholic missionaries on the early oral tradition is clearly seen. The adoption of Christian ideas and their fusion with ancient beliefs gave rise to a **religious syncretism** that is still present in many aspects of Rapa Nui today.