

Moai. Easter Island. Before 1770s

Moai are statues that have been carved of compressed volcanic ashes in Easter Island. The statues are monolithic meaning carved in one piece. They are one piece figures with heads and condensed torsos.

The Moai statues were believed to be carved by the Polynesian colonizers of the Easter Island. In addition, signify deceased ancestors; the Moai, was once at ceremonial sites and was considered as the embodiment of powerful living chiefs. They were also significant ancestry statues symbols.

The islanders were thought to believe that their statues would capture the chief's powers. They believed that by focusing on the powers on the island, good things would happen such as rain would fall and crops would grow.

As in the case of many religious structures on Easter Island, it has been positioned with astronomical accuracy; the seven statues of Moai look in the direction of where the sun sets during equinox. It also aligned with the moon.



The biggest Moai statue ever completed and put into place measures practically near 33 feet tall. An even larger statue still in the excavation would have stood nearly 70 feet tall. It is about 4 to 5 tons in weight. On some the Moai's faces were decorated with coral eyes.

