

The Dreamtime

An Australian Aboriginal creation myth

In the beginning the earth was a bare plain. All was dark. There was no life, no death. The sun, moon and the stars slept beneath the earth. All the eternal ancestors slept there too.

But at last the eternal ancestors woke themselves out of their own eternity and broke through to the surface of the earth. This was the **Dreamtime**.

Now the ancestors arose and they wandered the earth. Some were in animal form, as kangaroos, emus or lizards. Some were in human shape. And some were part animal, part human, part plant.



Two of the ancestors were the Ungambikula. As they wandered across the world, they found half-made human beings. These beings were made of animals and plants, but they were shapeless, bundled up, vague and unfinished.

With their great stone knives, the Ungambikula carved heads, bodies, legs and arms out of the bundles. They made faces, hands and feet. At last the human beings were finished.



So every person was created from nature, and owes allegiance to the animal or plant that made the bundle from which they were created...the plum tree, the grass seed, the lizard, the parakeet, or the rat.

When this work was done the ancestors went back to sleep. Some returned underground, while others became rocks or trees. The trails they walked in Dreamtime are holy trails. Everywhere they went they left sacred traces of their presence – a rock, a waterhole or a tree.

And so the Dreamtime does not just lie in the distant past, the Dreamtime is the eternal Now. Between heartbeat and heartbeat the Dreamtime can come again.