

DREAMTIME

Aboriginal people believed that long ago, before time itself, their ancestors, coming from the sky, travelled across the land of Australia from East to West. Wherever they stopped the landscape changed: a rock, grew, a water hole appeared or a sandy beach rose from the sea and each became a sacred site.

In these places too, the different Aboriginal lands were born, each with its own language and owning a part of the stories of creation.

Without written text the aborigines pass on their legends through songs, dances and paintings. The aborigines called the period of creation dreamtime.

Still today aborigines have totems which are animals they consider to be their dreamtime ancestors.

In Australia's Kakadu National park there are 5000 rock art sites. Only a few years ago an aboriginal people, the Gugudju, came back to live there. On the floors of the caverns we can see the bones of ancient hunted animals. On the walls there are beautiful paintings. Archeologists think that some of the paintings are at least 20.000 years old. This art tradition continues but today the aborigines paint mainly on tree bark.