

ABORIGINAL CREATION

From the Arandan of northern Australia

All was darkness in the time before time.

The dark land was called Il-ba-lint-ja, and it possessed nothing save an endlessly tall pole coming out of the ground. It stretched from the barren land to the top of the heavens above.

At the base of the pole, Ka-ro-ra lay in the thick night asleep.

While all around him was deep blackness, his dreams were as bright and colorful as the world we know today.

He was dreaming of Bandicoots; and that the creatures were coming out of his navel, his armpits, his nose and mouth.

Suddenly dawn arose and Il-ba-lint-ja was flooded with light for the first time.

Ka-ro-ra rose from where he had been sleeping. He had been sleeping for a long, long time and he was tired and hungry.

He grabbed two Bandicoots and cooked them in the hot sun. After he had eaten, he realized that he was lonely.

The sun covered itself with necklaces and sunk below the horizon. Ka-ro-ra went back to sleep. This time he dreamed of a Bull-Roarer, which appeared from his armpit. This turned into a young boy, whom he sang to life.

By day father and son hunted for Bandicoots.

By night as they slept, the father dreamed of more and more sons. Each morning he woke up to find twice as many as the night before.

By day Ka-ro-ra and all of his sons ate Bandicoots and cooked them in the sun.

It wasn't long before the land had run out of Bandicoots.

Ka-ro-ra sent his sons further and further out to hunt, but they only returned hungry in the evenings. The Bandicoots were gone.

One morning they heard a strange noise, and saw a dark animal in the misty light. Thinking it might be a Bandicoot, the sons attacked it.

"I'm no Bandicoot! I am T-jen-ter-ama, a man, just like yourselves. Now you have made me lame!"

T-jen-ter-ama was the first of the kangaroos.

That evening, all of Ka-ro-ra's sons gathered around him.

From the hole in the ground where Ka-ro-ra slept, there came a flood of honey, which engulfed the entire land of Il-ba-lint-ja.

All at once, Ka-ro-ra's sons were swept away, along with T-jen-ter-ama the kangaroo. They were all washed underground, and out of sight.

Ka-ro-ra was left standing by the great pole. Ka-ro-ra went back to sleep to dream again.