

ABORIGINAL PANTHEON

There are many creation stories from the Aboriginals in Australia mainly because Australia is so large. The creation myth represented here is from the Bandicoot Aboriginal clan, in which Ka-Ro-Ra is the creator god. Aboriginals throughout Australia believe in Dreamtime (Alchera). This is the period long ago when the ancestral spirits of aboriginal tribes walked the earth and living creatures came into being. These ancestors are believed to have returned to their homes underground. Dreamtime is the source of all life. Below are some of the major gods found among the Aboriginals from different parts of Australia.

ALINGA was the sun goddess.

BUNJIL was a sky god (often painted as a great Eagle hawk). He was the creator god in the West of South Australia. He made the world and all things on it. He taught humans to sing and dance, and under his guidance humans gradually became wise in all things. In some stories it is said that he made men out of clay while his brother, Bat, made women out of water.

DJANGGAO (sometimes spelled Junkgowa) and her sister Djungkao were fertility goddesses. They created the ocean and all the fish found there. In Arnhemland (in Australia) the fertility goddesses are known as Wawalag.

GIDJA was the god of the moon. He was in love with Yalma, the Evening Star. Yalma gave birth to the morning star, Lilga. When she died in an accident it was the first time anybody had died. People blamed Gidja for this and tried to kill him. They failed and Gidja cursed the people and told them that when they died they would stay dead. In this way he brought death to humans. In other stories he created women. As punishment he was sent out to sea, and ended up in the sky, where he became the moon. He is also the god of dreams in some stories.

GNOWEE was the sun goddess of the aboriginal people in southeastern Australia. Gnowee once lived on the earth at a time when the sky was always dark. People walked around and needed torches to see anything. One day while Gnowee was out gathering yams her baby son wandered off. She set out to search for him, carrying a huge torch, but never found him. Until today she still climbs the sky every day, carrying her torch, trying to find her son.

KA-RO-RA was creator god according to the Bandicoot clan of the Arandan aboriginals of Australia.

KARRARU is the sun goddess in southwestern Australia.

KUNAPIPI was the mother goddess of the aboriginal tribes in northern Australia. She traveled across the world with heroes and heroines.

MAMARAGAN rode on a thundercloud and threw bolts of lightning. As he beat great stones together rain fell to the dry earth, giving life and food to mankind and all other creatures. Thunder was his voice. In good weather he lived in a puddle.

NABUDI were the goddesses of illness.

PALPINKALARE was the goddess of justice.

PUCKOWE was the grandmother spirit. She lived in the sky and was the special protector of the medicine men.

WATI KUTJARRA were the two male ancestors of humans who taught people to remember their dreams and keep the notion of Dreamtime alive.

WONDJINA were the first beings during the great Dreamtime. They created the world in some stories. They are shown in rock paintings with halos and no mouths; in these paintings their eyes and noses are joined. The Wondjina give both rain and children.

YHI was the goddess of light and creator goddess of the Karraur, an Australian aboriginal group. She gave birth to the moon to replace the sun at night so that people would not be afraid. After creating the first man she created the first woman from a flower stalk so that he would not be lonely.