

# AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CULTURE



AN EXHIBITION ARRANGED BY THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR UNESCO



To Constantine Fedin

With my respects and good wishes  
Louise Morrison  
18/10/61

**T**HIS exhibition provides the most comprehensive display of Australian aboriginal culture that has ever been assembled. It had its origin in a Unesco General Conference Resolution which, in order to advance the mutual understanding of peoples, instructed the Director-General of that organisation "to stimulate and to develop a plan for exchanges of exhibitions accompanied by appropriate catalogues, such exhibitions to be prepared, if possible, by Member States".

In accordance with this Resolution the Australian Unesco Committee for Museums prepared this first really comprehensive presentation of the way of life of Australian aborigines, in the form of a travelling exhibition which can be seen by people in many other parts of the world.

The approval of the Prime Minister of Australia was obtained, and funds to cover the necessary expenditure were allocated by the Commonwealth Government through the Commonwealth Office of Education, which provides the Secretariat for the Australian National Committee for Unesco and its associated Committees. The Committee for Museums then established a Working Party to plan the display and assemble exhibits. Over a period of some three years these exhibits were gathered from museums and other sources throughout Australia. As many of them are quite irreplaceable, they now form a collection which is both unique and priceless.

This display does not, of course, represent the culture of the great majority of the Australian people. Australia's total population is at present ten millions, of which 80,000 only are aborigines. In presenting this exhibition, however, the Australian National Committee for Unesco wishes to pay tribute to the ancient culture of this minority group, to express the hope that it will receive the recognition it deserves, and to emphasise the importance of preserving a permanent record of a culture which is inevitably being modified through contact with Western civilisation.

The aborigines are an Australoid people of medium height, with slender limbs, wavy hair, heavy eyebrows, deep-set brown eyes, wide nostrils, thick lips and a long head. The face protrudes markedly.

Wide variation exists in all their physical characteristics. Opinion is divided as to whether one physical type occupies the continent, or whether three sub-types exist, comprising a frizzly-haired Negrito stock which was replaced by two Australoid strains—a stout southern hairy-bodied group, and a dark northern sparsely-haired variety.

The Tasmanians were a Negrito people of medium stature, with broad nose, thick lips, prominent eyebrows, medium facial protrusion and a rounded head. They reddened their frizzly black hair with ochre.

НАУЧНАЯ  
БИБЛИОТЕКА  
САРАТОВСКОГО  
УНИВЕРСИТЕТА

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1. *Australian aboriginal man.*
2. *Australian aboriginal woman.*
3. *Tasmanian man.*
4. *A central Australian man.*
5. *A Northern Territory woman.*