

Songlines (Picador Books)

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The songlines are the invisible pathways that criss-cross Australia, ancient tracks connecting communities and following ancient boundaries. Along these lines Aboriginals passed the songs which revealed the creation of the land and the secrets of its past. In this magical account, Chatwin recalls his travels across the length and breadth of Australia seeking to find the truth about the songs and unravel the mysteries of their stories.

The late Bruce Chatwin carved out a literary career as unique as any writer's in this century: his books included *In Patagonia*, a fabulist travel narrative, *The Viceroy of Ouidah*, a mock-historical tale of a Brazilian slave-trader in 19th century Africa, and *The Songlines*, his beautiful, elegiac, comic account of following the invisible pathways traced by the Australian aborigines. Chatwin was nothing if not erudite, and the vast, eclectic body of literature that underlies this tale of trekking across the outback gives it a resonance found in few other recent travel books. A poignancy, as well, since Chatwin's untimely death made *The Songlines* one of his last books.

Bruce Chatwin (1940-1989) was the author of *In Patagonia*, *The Viceroy of Ouidah*, *On the Black Hill*, *The Songlines*, and *Utz*. His other books are *What Am I Doing Here* and *Anatomy of Restlessness*, posthumous anthologies of shorter works, and *Far Journeys*, a collection of his photographs that also includes selections from his travel notebooks.

Other Books

Telling Tennant's Story, Tennant Creek and Australia's Unresolved Past Winner of the 2022 Australian Political Book of the Year Award 'A drily elegant, bracing work from a pained and open heart' –Helen Garner 'Refreshing and original. A unique window on Australia's past and its barbed resonance today ... Essential reading for anyone interested in the challenge of truth-telling.' –Mark McKenna 'A graceful, unostentatiously scholarly, wise (and highly readable) book on a subject of overwhelming and enduring significance for all Australians.' –Robert Manne The tale of a town, and a nation Returning after fifty years to the frontier town where he lived as a boy, Dean Ashenden finds Tennant Creek transformed, but its silence about the past still mostly intact. Provoked by a half-hidden account, Ashenden sets out to understand how the story of 'relations between two racial groups within a single field of life' has been told and not told, in this town and across the nation. In a riveting combination of memoir, reportage and political and intellectual history, Ashenden traces the strange career of the great Australian silence - from its beginnings in the first encounters of black and white, through the work of the early anthropologists, the historians and the courts in landmark cases about land rights and the Stolen Generations, to still-continuing controversy. In a moving finale, Ashenden goes back to Tennant Creek once more to meet for the first time some of his Aboriginal contemporaries, and to ask how the truths of Australia's story can best be told.

... Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne. Carment, David and Helen J. Wilson (eds) (1996) *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography: Vol. 3*, Northern Territory University Press, Darwin. Chatwin, Bruce (1987) *The Songlines*, Picador, London."