Overview of Oceania by A. P. Elkin

# Oceania by A. P. Elkin

Please note that these aren't my opinions, and just notes from this book. It's pretty hard to find so these notes should be enough. (This version of the book was written in 1969)

* Humans adapt mentally as well as physically
* Humans developed a theory about the world around them since pre-literate times
  + This is religion and philosophy
  + Not always the same

## Philosophy

* Indigenous Australians are pre-literate, their ideas similar to the 'primitive philosophers' of Europe
  + Extremely rudimentary
  + Despite this, they still have intelligence
* Aboriginals have a limited capacity in logic.
  + Arguably not only pre-literate, but also pre-logical.
    - Author disagrees; they have quite logical systems

## Cosmogony

* Recounts how everyone has no comprehension of what came before,
  + This includes Indigenous Australians
  + Shows the Indigenous belief on the creation of the world
  + In this regard, similar to European culture

## Cosmology

* As opposed to cause and effect in European culture, Indigenous Australian's think of the world as a phenomena-based
  + Is this due to the urgency of acquiring food?
  + Not future/forward-thinking, rather thinking of the present more
* Likened to cult in its potency.
* Each part is part/expression of a whole
* Dreaming aren't split into more sub-dreaming
* IA (Indigenous Australian is too long) ≠ Western but getting there
* Over a long period of time, IA have built up a large collection of knowledge

## Epistemology

### Causation:

* Differs to European (but I mean, they were isolated for 80,000 years wdy expect)

### Time:

* In E, time is centered on the individual, and is measured strictly, mathematically.
* In IA, time is not measured this way.
  + Very lax about schedules
  + They will come, eventually
    - Angers anthropologist.
    - But for IA, there is no delay.
  + No account for E time

### Space:

* In E, space is strictly measured in distance
* In IA, who needs distance, if you just know all of it. The entire way.

### Number

* In E, numbers are key
* In IA, not really.
  + As they live in the present, they don't need to keep track of numbers
  + Instead of keeping track, he can describe every single little thing.
    - Not 20 rocks, but 20 different things characterised by... something

### Ownership

* No need for excess
  + Needs are respected, however,