



The Self-Made Anthropologist: A life of A. P. Elkin

By Tigger Wise

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This is an account of the remarkable life of Australia's first professor of anthropology, the author of the immensely influential *The Australian Aborigines*, whose national and international reputation as a champion of the Aboriginal people, built over 50 years, is now the subject of considerable controversy.

Drawn from unpublished letters, diaries and documents, interviews with friends and foes, and many other sources, this fast-moving biography presents a compelling portrait of the real Elkin - a complex, angry, persistent, authoritarian figure, a man fiercely convinced that it was his duty to shape the lives and thoughts of his fellow Australians. This is a life played out against a background of the state and national politics of the Aboriginal issue, fierce academic rivalries, and the rise of a new profession.

The Self-Made Anthropologist frees Elkin from the myths, contradictions and intense privacy that veiled his 88 years; he stands now before us for judgement.

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