



The Law of Primitive Man: A Study in Comparative Legal Dynamics

E. Adamson Hoebel

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A classic work in the anthropology of law, this book offered one of the first ambitiously conceived analyses of the fundamental rights and duties that are treated as law among nonliterate peoples (labeled "primitive" at the time of the original publication). The heart of the book is a description and analysis of the law of five societies: the Eskimo; the Ifugao of northern Luzon in the Philippines; the Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne tribes of the western plains of the United States; the Trobriand Islanders of the southwest Pacific; and the Ashanti of western Africa. Hoebel's lucid analysis reveals the variety and complexity of these societies' political and legal institutions. It emphasizes their use of due process in adjudication and enforcement and highlights the importance of general explicit standards of conduct in these societies. In offering these detailed case studies of societies studied by other anthropologists, and in outlining an influential approach to the subject, it remains an illuminating book for both scholars and students.

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