



**The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive:
Systems of Marriage and the Family in the Pre-
Industrial Societies of Eurasia (Studies in Literacy,
the Family, Culture and the State)**

Jack Goody

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Continuing the comparative survey of pre-industrial family formation undertaken in *The Development of Family and Marriage in Europe* (1983), Professor Goody looks in depth at kinship practice in Asia. His findings cause him to question many traditional assumptions about the "primitive" East, and he suggests that, in contrast to pre-colonial Africa, kinship practice in Asia has much in common with that prevailing in parts of pre-industrial Europe. Goody examines the transmission of productive and other property in relation both to the prevailing political economy and to family and ideological structures, and explores the distribution of mechanisms and strategies of management across cultures. The book concludes that notions of western "uniqueness" are often misplaced, and that much previous work on Asian kinship has been unwittingly distorted by the application of concepts and approaches derived from other, inappropriate, social formations.

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