



Under Heaven's Brow: Pre-Christian Religious Tradition in Chuuk (Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society)

Ward H. Goodenough

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For the people of Chuuk and for students of religion and Micronesian culture, this book pulls together and makes available in English the somewhat scattered published accounts (largely in German), along with Goodenough's own (as yet unpublished) information about religious beliefs and ritual practices in pre-Christian Chuuk. The materials are presented in a way that seeks to document and illustrate a particular approach, a functional one, to understanding the kinds of human concerns that give rise to religious behavior. Simply to describe traditional beliefs and rituals without the relevant social background information leaves the reader without any feeling for what were the emotional concerns, engendered by life in Chuukese society, that ritual practices helped people address. Ward Goodenough offers a theoretical introduction, the necessary background information about Chuuk and the ways in which members of Chuukese society experienced themselves and their fellows, the world view and overall set of beliefs providing the intellectual framework within which ritual practices were formulated and understood, and the various bodies of ritual practices. He concludes the book with a summary that pulls together how the rituals described appear to related to the emotional concerns that growing up and living in Chuuk tended to create.

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