Expliquant l'idée de Dieu chez ce peuple, le Dr. Schärer donne dans des chapitres denses, les noms et les séjours des dieux, la nature et les manifestations de ces êtres divins, l'acte de création et l'organisation primordiale de l'univers, le peuple, la terre, la maison, la vie et le temps sacrés; l'ordre divin, ses perturbations et comment le restaurer, enfin ce qui constitue l'essence de la religion de Ngaju. Comment le mythe de la création ordonne les faits de la nature et de quelle façon le monde de l'au-delà est la réplique de ce monde-ci.

Tout cet exposé n'est en rien gratuit car il s'appuie sur des mythes et des dessins fournis par les Ngajus eux-mêmes et certains de ces textes, selon les meilleures traditions, sont donnés *in-extenso* en traduction juxtalinéaire.

Cet ouvrage remarquable, écrit à l'origine en allemand, méritait une plus large diffusion. Pour la traduction en anglais, l'Institut Royal néerlandais pour la langue, la géographie et l'ethnologie, a fait appel à un spécialiste de cette région du monde, le professeur Rodney Needham, qui joint à sa connaissance des langues européennes celle des langues indonésiennes, ce qui était indispensable pour mener à bien une telle œuvre où les citations et les mots en dayak abondent.

Et si les spécialistes de l'Asie du Sud-Est ou ceux des anciens substrats de la péninsule indienne et de l'Indonésie doivent connaître cet ouvrage, nous le recommandons également à ceux qui s'intéressent à Madagascar car bien des traits de culture ou de langue ont des résonnances familières pour ceux qui étudient l'île rouge où s'est développé loin à l'Ouest un rameau séparé de cette même très ancienne civilisation.

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Religion in South Asia. Edited by Edward B. HARPER. Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1964. 199 pp. Price, $6.50.

This book is a solid and rather remarkable contribution to our understanding of the religious systems of rural India and Ceylon. The essays are an outgrowth of the Conference on Religion in South Asia, held at the University of California in 1961. After the conference the papers were revised and edited, and were subsequently published in a special issue of the Journal of Asian Studies, prior to their appearance in book form.

In addition to the preface, written by Edward B. Harper, the volume includes nine selections by leading authorities on the area: Harper, David G. Mandelbaum, Michael M. Ames, Gerald D. Berreman, Pauline Mahar Kolenda, Morris E. Opler, John J. Gumperz, Alan R. Beals, and Nur Yalman. Each paper is a substantial contribution, and the book has a degree of unity which is so conspicuously lacking in many other collections of essays. Particularly

helpful in stressing the salient themes of the religions of the area, and in drawing the threads of the various papers together, is the article by David G. Mandelbaum, entitled "Introduction: Process and Structure in South Asian Religion", in which he comments on the essays of the other contributors. As Mandelbaum notes, three of the papers, those by Opler, Beals, and Gumperz, focus their attention upon process in religion. The other five papers are more concerned with structure than with process, although in the analyses of structure, process is clarified as well.

The title of the book, "Religion in South Asia", might seem at first rather misleading, since the papers are primarily concerned with religion in rural India and in Ceylon, rather than covering a broader area in southern Asia. The reason for the title, however, is satisfactorily explained by Harper in the preface, where he relates how and why other possible names for the conference were considered and rejected. The title "Conference on Hinduism" had the disadvantage of suggesting an almost exclusive focus upon the more sophisticated theological and philosophical aspects of a religious system, whereas in fact most of the participants in the conference had done fieldwork in rural areas of South Asia, and had devoted at least part of their attention to the study of the non-philosophic traditions such as shamanism, "mother-goddess" complexes, and animal sacrifice to local deities. The term "Popular Hinduism" was also unacceptable, since it implied that the Sanskritic and philosophical traditions were "unpopular". Harper writes that, "In short, using either 'Hinduism' or 'Popular Hinduism' alone tends to create a false dichotomy" (p. 3). Furthermore, these terms also tended to obscure resemblances between Hinduism and other religious systems in South Asia, since the religions of many tribalists show numerous similarities to Hindu beliefs and practices, and "... in many local regions of South Asia there appear to be levels of a religious system common not only to Hindus of differing sects and castes, but also to non-Hindus such as Muslims, Jains, Buddhists, and Christians, not to mention 'semi-Hindus' such as Sikhs and Lingayats..." (p. 4)

In the papers the emphasis is upon structure and process rather than upon content and description. Each author analyzes a certain part of the religion as it is practiced, rather than attempting to give a systematic coverage of Hinduism in India and Buddhism in Ceylon. In general, attempts are made to answer the broad question of what meaning the deities and rituals have in the lives of the common people in South Asia. In Mandelbaum's words, the focus in these studies is on "the reality and totality of religious activity" (p. 6), rather than upon the scriptural texts alone. A distinction is made between the "transcendental complex" and the "pragmatic complex" in the religions of South Asia, the two being complementary to each other, with each serving different religious purposes. The "transcendental complex" is concerned with the universal deities, and is elucidated in the Sanskrit texts. It is in the keeping of priests belonging to the highest castes. The "pragmatic complex" includes the worship of local deities, who are often malevolent, and who may cause illness and accidents. The religious practitioners of the "pragmatic complex" are usually drawn from the lower castes, and their role is an achieved rather than

an ascribed one. Among these functionaries are caretaker-ritualists and shamans, who are concerned with the individual welfare of the people, and who deal with personal and local exigencies.

The paper by Michael Ames presents a structural analysis of the total religious system of Ceylon, which includes both Theravada Buddhism and "magical-animism". Since Buddhism is an outgrowth of early Indian religion, it is in certain fundamental respects analogous to Hinduism. Theravada Buddhism dominates the Sinhalese religious system, but it combines with a rich variety of "non-Buddhist" magical-animistic beliefs and practices to form an integrated system. The central idea in Sinhalese religion is other-wordly salvation *(nirvānaya)*, which is practically unattainable, but is nevertheless the focus or "goal orientation" of the Sinhalese religious system. To attain salvation and avoid suffering the individual must eradicate his own mental defilements, to escape the constant round of birth and rebirth, by systematic meditation and absolute renunciation of the world. The goal is an extremely remote one, however, since its attainment requires thousands and thousands of rebirths. Nevertheless, other-worldly salvation remains the dominant ideal of all Sinhalese Buddhists, who meanwhile find in the spirit cults of magical-animism temporary ways of combatting suffering and averting misfortune. Nur Yalman's essay, "The Structure of Sinhalese Healing Rituals", looks for underlying motifs in the healing rituals of the pragmatic side of Sinhalese religion, and describes the way in which several types of "worldly" supernaturals are ranked in a hierarchy of worth.

Gerald D. Berreman finds that priests and shamans exemplify two main divisions in the religion of the Pahari of the lower Himalayas of north India and Nepal. As elsewhere in India, the Brahmin priests are religious "technicians", learned practitioners of the Sanskritic traditions, who exert a conservative influence upon the populace. In contrast the shamans, drawn mainly from the lower castes, are often religious innovators. "They determine which supernatural being is to be worshipped, placated, or exorcised, which ceremony will be performed, which sacrifice will be offered, which pilgrimage undertaken, which new supernatural will be worshipped, and which old one will fall by the wayside" (p. 66). Certain Pahari Brahmins, too, influenced by the Sanskritic Brahminism of the plains to the south, called "atraditional priests" by Berreman, have become innovators and advocates of religious change.

Morris E. Opler examines the complementary processes of particularization and generalization in religious practices, which link culture to individuals and individuals to culture. He illustrates the process of particularization with a description of a Shiah Muslim ceremony which he observed at a village in north India.

Pauline Mahar Kolenda finds a discrepancy between the Hindu scriptural concept of *Karma* (predestination) and the actual practices of the Sweepers (Untouchables) of a village in western Uttar Pradesh. The Sweepers explain their lowly status as a consequence of unfortunate accidents of group history rather than in terms of individual misconduct in previous existences, and

accordingly attempt to improve their physical health and social status in this life by resorting to the pragmatic, local deities.

John J. Gumperz examines religious drama in north India as a means of communication which cuts across caste lines and other political and social barriers in a diverse population. Despite the great local cultural diversity in India, "in the study of religion the subcontinent may be viewed as a single large field of social action" (p. 89). Gumperz sees religion as a metalanguage, and postulates that there is a code of religious symbols which is understood across the bounds of caste, region, and denomination.

Alan R. Beals analyzes the interlocal festivals *(jātra)* held by village communities in South India, in which the people of one village act in concert to honor local deities and to entertain visitors from other villages. Community solidarity is bolstered by the participation of all castes and sects in the village. Despite the benefits and favorable reputation which the village is supposed to derive from giving an interlocal festival, adverse results are seen in the bloody conflicts which frequently break out on such occasions.

One of the most important papers in the book is the concluding selection, by Edward B. Harper, "Ritual Pollution as an Integrator of Caste and Religion". Harper discusses two of the most all-pervasive themes in Hindu culture, the concepts of purity and pollution, and examines their relation to the social structure. Although Harper's data are mainly from the Havik Brahmins of northwestern Mysore, his analysis helps to advance our understanding of the extreme concern with ritual purity and pollution which permeates all Indian culture.

Each selection in the book is the outcome of significant and competently executed research. The book is one which no student of South Asian cultures can afford to ignore, and it will also be of value to those scholars interested in comparative religion in general.

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The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan. Ivan MORRIS. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1964. 336 pp. $5.95.

The Tale of Genji, the world's oldest novel, has been used by some anthropologists for its ethnological information. If the atmosphere of the original novel is lost in this form of presentation, the information which could be extracted from the novel is assembled under various topics with supplementary documentation of economic and political situations of the period, which places the rather one-sided account of life described in the novel in the proper perspective. The larger part of the novel was written most probably between 1002 and 1020, and the author, Murasaki Shikibu, was born in the 70's of the