

RITUAL AND DEFERENCE*Maurice Bloch*

Anthropologists have been concerned with the puzzle caused by the observation that, while it is clear that rituals seem to be, in part at least, communicative acts – in that some kind of non-trivial information is conveyed and is involved for both participants and observers alike – it seems very difficult to be satisfactorily precise about what this content might be. It has even been suggested by many, including myself, that a precise decoding of the message of rituals is necessarily misleading (Bloch 1974; Sperber 1974; Lewis 1980; Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994). Some have gone so far as to argue that rituals are simply meaningless (Staal 1979), though exactly what such a claim would amount to is very unclear. However, one reason for arguing in this way is simply that, in the field, we are frustratingly and continually faced with informants who say that they don't know what rituals mean or why they are done in this or that way. Nonetheless, what stops anthropologists adhering easily to the thesis that rituals are meaningless is that these very same informants who a minute before admitted they did not know what elements of the ritual were about, add, at the same time, puzzlingly and portentously, that these elements mean something very deep and they insist that it is very important to perform them in precisely the right way.

In fact, anthropological discussions often suffer from the fact that they conflate the problem of writing the ethnography of ritual (symbolic analysis) and the problem of understanding the meaning of what is going on for the participants. But leaving this point aside, anthropologists nevertheless often leave us with the rather lame point that rituals convey

something or other that is vague but somehow powerful. Here I want to follow a tradition in ritual analysis that, instead of being embarrassed about vagueness, makes it its central concern. This is what I want to be precise about. Furthermore, I want to go much beyond my predecessors, myself included, in arguing that the vagueness of ritual offers us a clue to the nature of much human social knowledge and of many learning processes.

REPETITION

One feature which has often been noted in discussions concerning ritual is the presence of repetition (Leach 1966; Bloch 1974; Rappaport 1975; Lewis 1980). In fact, the term 'repetition' in these discussions is used to refer to quite a variety of phenomena, all of which are commonly present in rituals.

First of all, the same elements or phrases are often repeated in the same performance, sometimes to a bewildering extent. For example, in a type of Malagasy circumcision ritual the same phrase can recur several hundred times, perhaps even more; similarly, in Christian rituals the word 'Amen' is also said many times. Secondly, there is the fact that whole rituals are often repetitions one of another. One weekly Mass is in many parts much the same as that of the week before. Finally, actors in rituals guide much of their behaviour in terms of what they believe others, or themselves, to have done or said on previous occasions. In this sense they are repeating either themselves or others. Indeed, any act, whether a speech act or otherwise, that appears to originate fully with the actor cannot properly be called a ritual in English.

It is repetition of this latter type that I want to concentrate on. At least some, if not most, of the actions involved in some kinds of phenomena are understood, by actors and observers alike, as repetitions; that is, they are acts, whether speech acts or acts of another kind, that do not completely originate in the intentionality of the producer at the time of his or her performance. This point is most important and, with the notable exceptions of Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994) and Keane (1997), whose arguments are somewhat similar to mine, has not been stressed enough in the literature. It means that what is involved in ritual is conscious 'repetition', either of oneself or, much more often and much more importantly, of others whom one has seen or heard perform the

ritual before. All rituals thus involve what can be called 'quotation', if we use the term to refer not just to language, but to all repetitions of originators. These originators must have some sort of authority, and this authority justifies quoting them, as in the Lord's Prayer or the Christian communion service.

Familiar statements given to anthropologists by participants in rituals, such as 'We do this because it is the custom of the ancestors', 'We do this because it is what one does at these events', or 'We do this because we have been ordered to act in this way', imply conscious quotation.

Therefore, the inevitable implication of such statements is that, for both participants and onlookers, it is not just the specific present context of time and place that frames the intentionality of the acts of the ritual actor and that is relevant to fully understanding them, but also the past time and space context of specified, or unspecified, previous occurrences of the repeated/quoted acts. As Humphrey and Laidlaw put it, in a way that echoes a point I made in an earlier article (Bloch 1974), 'ritualization transforms the relation between intention and the meaning of action' (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994: 90).

When a Malagasy, during a circumcision ceremony, sprays water by way of blessing on those present, everyone knows that he or she is doing this kind of action in this way because this is 'what one does', that is, the tradition. This means that whatever the elder feels like at the time, and the way he perceives the situation, will be insufficient to explain, and is well known to be insufficient to explain, why he is using water at that moment. Compare this with a situation wherein he was merely reaching for water from a stream; in this case most observers would find it sufficient, not necessarily rightly, that, given his background knowledge, the twin facts that the person was thirsty and that he saw the water in front of him – that is, his beliefs and desires, in the psychological/philosophical sense of the terms – was all there was to it.

The fact that rituals involve, and are known by everyone concerned to involve, quotation, in the broad sense in which I have been using the word, is not all there is to a phenomenon such as a Malagasy blessing; but it is surely a highly significant part of it. In what follows I turn to an examination of what this fact might imply, given the centrality that has been accorded to the reading of the intentionality of speakers for semantics in general and for linguistic utterances in particular.

DEFERENCE, UNDERSTANDING AND TRUTH

Rituals therefore are acts of repetition or quotation. Such a remark places ritual within what externalist philosophers have identified as a central aspect of human thought and communication (Putman 1975) and which has been called by some 'deference' (Burge 1986), that is, reliance on the authority of others to guarantee the value of what is said or done. What makes such an observation particularly interesting for anthropologists is that deference fundamentally alters the relation between understanding and holding something to be true. It seems common sense that to hold something to be true one must also understand it. This, however, is not the case when deference is involved, especially when deference is linked to quotation.

Roughly, we can say that, in pragmatic theories of the Gricean family type (Grice 1971; Sperber and Wilson 1986), understanding meaning is seen to necessarily require not only knowledge of the lexicon and of the syntax employed, but also the unconscious reading of the mind of the speaker and of what she intends as she utters the sounds. Without such 'mind reading' the words are, at the very least, so open to a wide range of ambiguities that it is impossible for the hearer to process them successfully. Such a theory is all the more interesting in that it makes the understanding of language depend directly on what many would now argue is *the* key distinguishing feature of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, the so-called theory of mind, which enables a person to 'read' the mind of others and which separates mankind fairly sharply from all other animal species (Premack 1991).

Quotation implies an obvious modification of the simple Gricean principles considered above. It throws the hearer back to trying to read not only the mind of the speaker, but also the mind of the speaker who is being quoted. Given the metarepresentational ability of human beings, this is easily done, even if we are dealing with further degrees of metarepresentation (Sperber 2000). In this case, once the quoted sentence is understood, its truth or otherwise can be considered.

Quotation, however, offers another possibility. This is a kind of abandonment of the examination of the truth of the quoted statement, because one is only concerned with the fact that the statement has been made and that the speaker has been identified. If this speaker is worthy of trust, one can assume that what has been said is true without making

the effort of understanding. In such a case deference is combined with quotation, and it accounts for the rather odd possibility that one may hold something to be true without fully understanding it. If one trusts the source sufficiently, understanding is not necessary for the truth to be accepted, as is illustrated by the following example given by Origgi (2000). She tells us of a follower who is convinced of the truth of a statement made by a leader who asserted that there are too many neo-Trotskyites in their party, even though she knows that she has no idea what a neo-Trotskyite might be. She will then be happy to transmit the information to another without understanding it. This might seem an unusual scenario, but a moment's reflection will confirm that we are all, to varying degrees, in much this same sort of situation, most of the time.

DEFERENCE AND SOCIAL LIFE

What is particularly interesting for anthropologists in an example such as the one just given is that not only do such occurrences crop up continually but that their occurrence is not random in the course of social life. Situations when the truth of certain propositions is to be accepted through deference, and therefore not necessarily understood, are socially and culturally organized and regulated. Living in a partially institutionalized form of life, which is what is meant by living in society, means that there are moments, concepts and contexts the why and wherefores of which one may examine and moments, concepts and contexts where this is inappropriate. For the reason we have seen above, this means that the latter need not be understood.

Thus, social life 'manages', so to speak, the occurrence and the nature of deference through different types of institutional devices and therefore, at the same time, it establishes an economy of the necessity of understanding. It is clear that living in a socially organized system, even the apparently most *ad hoc*, nonetheless involves moments of compulsory deference, in the sense used above. There are moments when there are not only limits to understanding, but limits to the appropriateness of attempting to understand. The ordinary continual deference of practical life does not simply involve delaying our search for intentionality, but often apparently largely *abandoning* it. This means that all normal human communication involves a mixture of searching for meaning, our own

and that of others, and *also* not searching, moments of understanding and not understanding. When young children exhaust their parents by endlessly asking 'why' questions, they may well be training their judgement of when to search and when not to search. Consider the example of someone who tells us that the cat is on the mat; in such a circumstance we may well search for the reason why they want to inform us of this fact, but we would be very unwise to waste our time searching for the reason why they chose that particular sound to convey the concept 'cat'.

We have seen why deference makes holding something true without understanding it possible, but there is also a reason why social life makes this abandonment of the search for meaning common. The reason is that the experience of living in a historically constructed system means that deference continually occurs without the individual who is being deferred to being easily identifiable. As a result, intentionality cannot be 'locked' on to an intending mind and therefore understanding cannot be 'clinched'. People around us and ourselves are clearly deferring to others. But if we were so unwise as to want to examine these others more closely, they would turn out to be deferring to yet others, and so on, without the process having any clear boundary. This is because humans live and act within a set of conventions, which are no doubt the product of a long historical process of communication and quotation, and which are experienced as 'given', that is, without specific minds intending them. These are the conventions that have been so internalized as to be completely unconscious. Anthropologists sometimes call them culture or habitus and sometimes give them other names such as structure. In other words we are continually deferring to others, but we do not catch sight of the minds we are deferring to. For we are not simply reading human minds, we are reading historically constructed human minds. We do not simply understand others and ourselves; we always, to varying degrees, but semi-consciously, understand that people around us are deferring to invisible and indeterminable others and that therefore we should limit our attempt to understand them. What this means is that complete understanding is impossible because, as noted above, full understanding requires that, either immediately or at one or more remove, as in quotation, it is in the end possible to imagine the intentionality of some mind or other. But, if it is not possible to identify clearly an original intentional being, meaning can never be grasped.

Of course, such indeterminate deference is much of the time unconscious, but this is certainly not always the case. The case of the follower accepting the belief about the neo-Trotskyites is a case where it is quite possible that the act of deference becomes conscious, although, there, the person deferred to is clearly identified. What difference this consciousness of deference makes has not been, as far as I know, much explored in pragmatics, or in philosophy, but since it is so prominent in ritual and religion and so closely linked with the question of exegesis, we will have to consider the question.

There are therefore three elements in human communication that can be combined: (1) quotation and deference, (2) consciousness of deference, (3) lack of clarity as to who is being deferred to. When all three are present, we have the phenomena that in anthropological English are commonly referred to as ritual. Because the combination of these three elements is likely to lead to limited understanding, it is not surprising that this state of affairs is frequent in ritual.

DEFERENCE AND RELIGION

Now we have the tools to examine what all this might mean for ritual and religion. At first, I examine two apparently simple deference scenarios, both of which correspond quite closely to the Origgi story about the neo-Trotskyites. The first concerns learning the Koran in Muslim schools, and the second concerns spirit possession.

Reading or reciting the Koran, which is the central purpose of Muslim education, apparently involves a simple type of quotation on the part of the student since the speaker is merely quoting a single other intentional mind: that of God, to whom he defers totally (Eickelman 1978). The student should, ideally, learn the Koran perfectly by heart and so become a totally transparent medium just like Muhammad himself. He should become a sort of tape recorder, so that his intentionality, and thus his understanding, disappear or become irrelevant to the text. As a result, the speaker or the hearer can focus entirely on the presence of God in the words. The student should efface himself as much as possible.

Another example of such ideally 'transparent' quotation is spirit possession. Theoretically, the utterer of sound has totally surrendered her body, and especially her vocal organs, to the being who temporally possesses her. In this case too, the locus of emission of the sound should

ideally disappear. Asking the student of the Koran, or the medium, to explain her choice of words or content – that is, to provide an exegesis – would clearly be to deny her complete deference.

These two examples may seem simple, but in fact they involve two quite different elements. The student learning the Koran, and others around him, believe that what is proposed there is true and they must assert it whether they understand it or not. The medium has so effaced herself that the assertions that come from her mouth must be true, because the spiritual source speaks irrespective of her understanding. This is straightforward. However, one might expect that such practices might simply place at one remove the effort to understand. Having got the student or the medium out of the way, it should be possible to concentrate on understanding God or the spirit. This, however, does not seem to be the case. In such practices the act of deference takes centre stage and everybody joins with the student or the medium in abandoning their intentionality and in making themselves transparent to whoever's words they are quoting, which strangely fade out of focus.

The medium or the student is implicitly claiming truth for his utterance at very time that he is denying the relevance of his understanding what he is saying. The devout Muslim aligns him- or herself with the position of the student and therefore accepts the deference. It seems probable that the spectator at a séance never imagines a direct relation with the spirit but always a relation *via* the medium, in which case the deference comes into play also, probably because of the drama of self-attack. The effort in being transparent, that is, in deferring totally, is the real focus of the action.

In such cases we have two of the elements isolated above: deference and the consciousness of deference, even though this may ultimately disappear. What is not present, however, is the third element discussed above: the indetermination of the originating mind. It is clear that it is God who is the source of the Koran or it is Great-Grandmother who is the spirit. But what happens when such definition disappears? It is to this that I now turn.

RITUAL

It is the presence of the third element that characterizes much ritual and, more especially, those ritual elements that are most strongly resistant

to exegesis. In such instances quotation, and therefore deference, is obviously taking place, but it is not clear who is being quoted or deferred to.

As noted above, a very common experience among anthropologists who ask why someone is doing something in a particular way in a ritual is to be answered by such phrases as 'It's the tradition', 'It is the custom of the ancestors', 'It goes back to early history', and so on. Now, these apparently frustrating answers are nonetheless interesting in many ways, for they combine explicitness concerning deference and awareness of imprecision about who exactly is the originating mind behind the practice.

The reference to tradition, or the ways in which things have always been done, or to the ancestors, clearly does throw the attention of the participants *away* from the intentionality of the actor but *to where in particular* is not so clear. Sperber, in a famous earlier paper, gave an example of this sort of thing when talking of a man who had asked him to shoot a dragon. He, quite rightly, stressed that we should bear in mind the quotational character of such a request. The man was not fully committed to the existence of dragons but was quoting others whose minds were questionable (Sperber 1982). This situation seems to me different from rituals. Rituals are even vaguer as to who the individual mind originating the message might be. Scrutiny of the source of the authority inevitably leads the inquirer into an endless regress. Thus, although we normally think of tradition as something being handed forward from the past to the present, the appeal to the *authority* of tradition, something that is socially much more central, involves being handed back from the present toward an indeterminable past destination.

If we imagine the participants, or the observers, in such rituals as the Mass, or the Malagasy initiation ritual, or making the sign of the cross, trying to work out who intended what they are doing to be done so, in other words trying for exegesis, they are going to be in a difficult situation.

Exegesis, that is, the search for original intentionality, is in itself perfectly reasonable, and although frustrating, almost inevitable. After all, we are dealing with people with human minds, that is, with animals whose minds are characterized by an intentionality-seeking device that is normally exercised ceaselessly, one might almost say obsessively, sometimes consciously but often unconsciously, and that enables

them to read the minds of others and thus coordinate their behaviour with them. But in a ritual, these poor little animals, among them poor little anthropologists, appear to be faced with an impossible situation because the search for intentionality leads them ever further back, to ever more remote authorities, but without ever settling anywhere with any finality. This is the predicament of participants who might unwisely ask themselves why on earth they are doing this or that, as well as that of mere onlookers asking the same question.

This Kafkaesque nightmare of being endlessly referred back to other authorities can only be rendered bearable in one of three ways:

1. The first is the most straightforward. One can attempt to simply switch off the intentionality-seeking device, an attitude which could be described as retreat or 'putting on hold' or 'letting things be'. This switching-off requires some effort as, given the way our minds work, it is unnatural, but it can be done nonetheless. Saying that what you do, or what you say, is because of 'tradition' may in some cases be nothing more than an expression of this attitude. The refusal to look for intentionality, however, presents the participants with a disappointing propositional thinness. It is doubtful whether it is at all possible to entertain any relevant propositional content without placing it within the framework of propositional attitudes. And it is obvious that one cannot detect propositional attitudes without imagining a mind to which these attitudes belong. It is as if, when we are very tired and kept awake by a hubbub of voices, we apparently make out somebody or other saying, 'Raindrops are Jesus macaroons.' In such a situation, we might make no effort to discover the intentionality of the speaker and hope to go back to sleep as quickly as possible. My early memory of Catholic rituals is of this sort. It is probably accurate to say that such a proposition, totally devoid of attributable intentionality, has no meaning, or at least no utterer meaning, to use a Gricean distinction. The only thing we have got from it is the realization that it involves the use of proper language, therefore that it probably has potential for utterer meaning. Clearly there is here no understanding, and it is far from clear whether anybody in such a situation even holds the propositions to be true.

2. The second possibility is much more common but will also appear in a number of somewhat exceptional situations, being faced by an overly

inquisitive anthropologist being one, but not the only one. Then, for some reason, it will seem necessary to make an effort to understand what is going on. At first, one is tempted to search in the dark recesses behind the producer of the ritual acts, who after all we know is only quoting someone, somewhere, who might have meant to mean something. (Doing this without paying attention to informants is called functionalism in anthropology.) But it's dark behind there, for, as soon as persons seem to come into focus, they become transparent as they reveal other persons behind them. They are only deferring to someone else, further back, who, when focused upon, becomes similarly transparent, and so on. Finally, when we give up searching for meaning, though not in the same total way as the giving up I discussed in case 1 and for the following reason.

All this frustration only occurs over the problem of searching for the intentionality of the initiator of the message. By contrast, the intentionality of the speaker, the singer or the actor in the ritual is not more problematic than those of the spirit medium or of the student learning the Koran who were discussed earlier. The intentionality of all these people can simply be read as deferential, and this act is greatly valued. The search for intentionality is therefore switched to the unproblematic examination of the intentionality of the transmitter, the situation that Humphrey and Laidlaw describe for the Jain *Puja* (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994). And when people tell us that they don't know what such a phrase means, or why such an act is performed, but that it is being said or performed in this way because one is following the customs of the ancestors, they are surely telling us that what they are doing, saying, singing, is above all *deferring*. In such a case there is no exegesis to be expected from the participants, and it is indeed offensive to ask for it, as this denies what they are doing. The reason they do not understand the content of what they are doing is that its originators cannot be localized as intentional minds, and no speaker meaning can thus be attributed to them. However, this indeterminacy does not eliminate the authority behind the content, an authority that claims truth for it. It is this situation that so puzzles the decoding anthropologists, but that is exactly what is analysed by Burge: that is, claiming truth for what one does not understand. This situation is simply muddled by traditional worries about the presence or absence of exegesis, though it is possible that, in such a case, the people involved will accept that exegesis from somebody else is possible and that experts, somewhere or other, know the 'meaning' of what is going on.

3. It is possible, however, that even this solution to the problem is unsatisfactory. In rare but important moments, people are going to ask themselves, or others, why things are done or said in this or that way, and they will not give up in spite of the apparent difficulties encountered in their search. Their mind-reading instinct will just not leave them alone. Thus, one wants to attribute speaker meaning to what is going on but in order to do that one must inevitably create some sort of speaker. Normal speakers are not available since these will become transparent as soon as they are considered and will therefore perform the disappearing act discussed above. Again, this situation is identical whether we are dealing with frequently or rarely occurring rituals, since participants may wonder about the meaning of an action such as crossing oneself, or seeing others cross themselves, as rarely, or as frequently, as they might about the meaning of a plant in a New Guinea initiation ritual.

The solution to the problem of wanting to locate meaning without having normal originators to that meaning is to merge all the shadowy transparent figures into a phantasmagorical quasi-person who may be called something like 'tradition', 'the ancestors as a group', 'our way of doing things', 'our spirit', 'our religion', even perhaps 'God'. These are entities to which 'minds' may just about be attributed with some degree of plausibility, thus apparently restoring intentional meaning to the goings-on of ritual. The apparent specificity of such entities thus appears, at first, to solve the problem of the indeterminacy of the intentional source. After all, we are familiar with the attribution of human-like intentional minds to things like mountains, or dead people (Boyer 1996), so why not to an essentialized tradition? There we are in a situation that is somewhat similar and somewhat dissimilar to that of 2. It is similar in that the message is held to be true whether it is understood or not. Again, the act of deference is consciously present and valued in and of itself. However, the act of deference does not hold centre stage as much as in 2, because speaker meaning becomes an alternative point of interest. Nonetheless, this is no ordinary speaker meaning to the extent that the 'speaker' is no ordinary mind, the kind of mind we instinctively know how to interpret with great subtlety because of our probably innate 'theory of mind'. In fact, I would propose that the precision of our understanding varies with the degree that the phantasmagoric initiators are close or distant to ordinary minds. Thus, the mind of an entity called 'the tradition' would be more difficult to interpret than that of an entity called 'the ancestors',

but that is, in turn, probably more difficult to interpret than a singular spirit, simply because the concept of plural minds is not what we are equipped to understand. The difficulties of exegesis in such cases should thus correlate with the degree of the normal, human-like characteristics of the entities who halt the endless regress caused by deference.

The three variants discussed above are of course not distinct in time or place. Individuals may slide from one to another during a particular ritual. However, the form of the ritual and the entities invoked will ensure the general organization in most people's minds of relative degrees of understanding. This is because the problems of attributing clear meanings to what is done all result from the central fact that ritual involves high degrees of deference. This emphasis actually fits well with the quite different type of discussion of ritual I developed in *Prey into Hunter* (Bloch 1992), where I argue that the first element of ritual is a kind of dramatized self-attack by participants, an attack against their own intentionality, so that it may be replaced. What I identified as the preliminary violence in ritual (for example: the weakening of the sacrificial animal, which stands for the humans involved) can be seen as the theatre of deference. Rituals are moments when the actors make themselves transparent so that other intentional minds can be read through them. Once again what characterizes ritual is conscious deference.

However, as we have seen, deference is a common aspect of human life. It occurs whenever we do something, or believe something to be true, relying on the authority of others, something that we do constantly. If people are always partly, but very significantly, living in a sea of deference, this is largely an unconscious fact. But nevertheless, it is a fact that hovers not very far from the level of consciousness, and that can, and often does, cross into the level of consciousness. As Putman (1975) stressed, people are almost conscious of the fact that they are constantly relying on the understanding of others and that they normally act in terms of beliefs they do not fully understand, but which they hold valid because of their trust in the understanding of others. This is also the situation described by Hutchins, which he defines as 'distributed cognition' (1995). People therefore allow themselves to depend on others. By and large, this is a good feeling, while at other times it is oppressive. But, when one is in trouble, and one does not know what to do, one allows oneself to be taken over by the knowledge and the

authority of others; it is only sensible, and there is nothing much else that one can do.

Now I am arguing that ritual is just that – in a rather extreme form, rituals are orgies of conscious deference. But if this is so, the search for exegesis is always misleading. This is not because it is impossible. Clearly exegeses exist, whether private or shared, whether the secret of experts or available to all, whether conscious, semi-conscious, or unconscious. But they are beside the point of the central character of ritual: deference.

REFERENCES

- Bloch, M. 1974. 'Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation or Is Religion an Extreme Form of Traditional Authority?', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 5: 55–81.
- . 1986. *From Blessing to Violence: History and Ideology in the Circumcision Ritual of the Merina of Madagascar*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1991. 'Language, Anthropology and Cognitive Science', *Man* 26: 183–98.
- . 1992. *Prey into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boyer, P. 1996. 'What Makes Anthropomorphism Natural: Intuitive Ontology and Cultural Representations', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2: 83–98.
- Burge, T. 1986. 'Individualism and Psychology', *Philosophical Review* 95: 133–201.
- Eickelman, D. 1978. 'The Art of Memory: Islamic Education and Social Reproduction', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20: 485–516.
- Grice, H. 1971. 'Utterer's Meaning, Sentence Meaning and Word Meaning', in J. Searle (ed.), *The Philosophy of Language*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Humphrey, C. and J. Laidlaw. 1994. *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hutchins, E. 1995. *Cognition in the Wild*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Keane, W. 1997. *Signs of Recognition*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Leach, E. 1966. 'Ritualisation in Man in Relation to Conceptual and Social Development', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 251: 403–8.
- Lewis, G. 1980. *Day of Shining Red*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Origg, G. 2000. 'Croire sans Comprendre', *Cahiers de Philosophie de L'Université de Caen* 34: 191–202.

Premack, D. 1991. 'Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind? Revisited', in R. Byrne and A. Whitten (eds), *Machiavellian Intelligence*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Putman, H. 1975. 'The Meaning of "Meaning"', in K. Gunderson (ed.), *Language, Mind and Knowledge*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Rappaport, R. 1975. 'The Obvious Aspects of Ritual', *Cambridge Anthropology* 2: 3–61.

Sperber, D. 1974. *Le Symbolisme en général*, Paris: Hermann.

—. 1982. *Le Savoir des anthropologues*, Paris: Hermann.

— (ed.). 2000. *Metarepresentations: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sperber, D. and D. Wilson. 1986. *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Staal, F. 1979. 'The Meaninglessness of Ritual', *Numen* 26: 2–22.

Whitehouse, H. 2002. 'Religious Reflexivity and Transmissive Frequency', *Social Anthropology* 10: 91–103