

# Contents

Preface	ix
1 Culture in a Landscape: Situating Religion	1
<i>Beyond Culture</i>	1
<i>Sociobiology?</i>	8
<i>A Common World: Reduction and Validation</i>	23
2 Escape and Offerings	34
<i>Finger Sacrifice</i>	34
<i>Biology, Fantasy, and Ritual</i>	40
<i>Castration and Circumcision</i>	47
<i>Scapegoats</i>	51
<i>Life for Life</i>	53
3 The Core of a Tale	56
<i>“Caught up in Tales”</i>	56
<i>The Propp Sequence: The Quest</i>	58
<i>From Biological Programs to Semantic Chains</i>	63
<i>The Shaman’s Tale</i>	67
<i>The Initiation Tale: The Maiden’s Tragedy</i>	69
4 Hierarchy	80
<i>The Awareness of Rank</i>	80
<i>Rituals of Submission</i>	85
<i>The Strategy of Praise</i>	90
<i>Two-Tiered Power</i>	93
<i>The Language of Power: The Envoy</i>	98

5	Guilt and Causality	102
	<i>Religious Therapy and the Search for Guilt</i>	102
	<i>Present Sufferings</i>	108
	<i>The Foundation of Cults</i>	113
	<i>The Mediators: Risks and Opportunities</i>	116
	<i>Explanatory Models: Fetters, Wrath, Pollution</i>	118
6	The Reciprocity of Giving	129
	<i>Le don in Perspective</i>	129
	<i>Giving in Religion</i>	134
	<i>Genealogy of Morality?</i>	138
	<i>Failing Reciprocity: Religious Criticism</i>	141
	<i>Failing Reciprocity: The Facts of Ritual</i>	145
	<i>Gift and Sacrifice</i>	149
	<i>Aversion and Offerings: From Panic to Stability</i>	152
7	The Validation of Signs: A Cosmos of Sense	156
	<i>Accepting Signs: Divination</i>	156
	<i>Decision through Signs: The Ordeal</i>	163
	<i>Creating Signs: Territory and Body</i>	165
	<i>Language Validated: The Oath</i>	169
	Conclusion	177
	Abbreviations	183
	Notes	187
	Bibliography	237
	Index	249