Contents

Contributors v

Preface vii

1. Introduction 1

Maurice Bloch

Why oratory? 1
Merina oratory and social control 5
Formalisation and power 12
Limitations on the power of formalisation and practical politics 22
Conclusion 28

2. Speech-Making and Authority in Tikopia 29

Raymond Firth

Tikopia public assembly 30
Structure of the assembly 31
Selection of speakers 35
Examples of Fono 38
Theoretical considerations 40

3. Mana Makes The Man: A look at Maori Oratory and Politics 45

Anne Salmond

4. Orators and Patrons: Two Types of Political Leader in Balinese Village Society 65

Mark Hobart

The background 66
Local political arenas 68
Council procedure 73
Leadership in the assembly 76
Patronage 80
Factions in the Banjar 82
Political arenas and alliances 85
Assembly debates and decisions 87
Conclusion 92

5. A Sliding Sense of Obligatoriness: The Polystructure of Malagasy Oratory 93
Elinor Keenan

Pre-Kabary discussions 99
Arguments in Kabary 100
Adherence to contrastive approaches 100
A sliding sense of obligatoriness 103
Kabary as match of wits 110

6. The Rhetoric of Responsibility: Bureaucratic Communications in a Kenya Farming Area 113
David Parkin

Poor and prosperous farmers 120
Three speeches: plan 126
Quasi-plan 129
From quasi-plan to ideology 132
Conclusion 136

7. Talking Politics: Oratory and Authority in a Tswana Chiefdom 141
John Comaroff

Introduction 141
The indigenous model of incumbency 144
Oratory and authority 149
Conclusion 160

8. The Relationship between Oratory and the Exercise of Influence among the Mursi 163
David Turton

9. Veiled Speech in Mount Hagen 185
Andrew Strathern

10. Ambiguity in Political Discourse 205
Gill Seidel

Ambiguity markers 205
Pronouns as shifters 207
Corpus of political tracts 207
Setting 208
Participants 209
Ambiguity and the pronominal reference system: an analysis of four political tracts 210
Conclusions 222

References 227
Subject Index 233