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Authors

Read, Dwight W
El Guindi, Fadwa

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BACK TO KINSHIP

A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Dwight Read
Department of Anthropology, UCLA
Los Angeles, CA USA
dread@anthro.ucla.edu

Fadwa El Guindi
Qatar National Research Fund
Qatar Foundation
Doha, Qatar
fg77@anthro.ucla.edu

Kinship is complex and fun to study. Kinship knowledge is integral to the cultural knowledge humans acquire and generate about what constitutes kinship and what it means to be a relative. Underlying manifestations of human sociocultural tradition is an irreducible, incredibly complex notion of culture, unique to humans. It is remarkable that the flurry of recent work on cultural evolutionary theory seems to equate sociocultural change (and the grandeur it provides as a view of life, as Darwin himself states¹) with transmission of a single or a few traits. This is not to deny that the evolutionary framework has yielded some challenging insights about human society. On the contrary. How else can we account for broad change? However, there is naïveté from lack of understanding of the knowledge that anthropology's almost two centuries of ethnography and theory of human culture has contributed. To clarify, for a social species, biological reproduction is not an individual act that can be done in isolation, but one for which the connections of the newborn to the members of the social group, or groups, into which it is becoming a member must be worked out. This is as true for the non-human primates as it is for human primates.

A primate giving birth already has social relations with other members of the group with which she resides. Some of these social relations may be biologically based, hence explained by reference to the biological premise of natural selection, as seen in behaviors involving close biological kin such as nursing a newborn. Other behaviors may arise through daily, face-to-face interaction. A newborn primate is introduced into, and becomes part of, an existing network of social relations that integrates into a socially cohesive group.

In human societies, the same process is even more pervasive. The insufficient fact of biological birth gives rise to an offspring that has to be integrated into the social universe. The details of what this involves is qualitatively different from non-human primates. Humans incorporate newcomers accompanied by complex ritual practices, as exemplified in the ethnography of Egyptian birth ritual (see El Guindi's visual ethnography, *El Sebou'* [El Guindi 1986]). Isn't it remarkable that humans put so much effort in incor-

porating new members, even though entry is into already existing kin groups? Granted, evidence shows that non-human primates recognize, by holding and grooming, the birth of a new member. No structured ritual activity accompanies such recognition, however. Reading some of the shallow and reductionist cultural evolutionary material makes us wonder if more effort were spent by those “newcomers” to the field in studying anthropology’s contributions to cultural transmission, evolution, and particularly kinship, they might perhaps avoid these missteps and would perhaps cease to spin wheels of armchair conjecturing.

Fully aware of such kinship richness and contribution to anthropological knowledge (obviously not to all, though), we went ahead and together organized major sessions at the American Anthropological Association meetings annually, starting in 2010, dedicated to presentations on kinship in its full range of complexity and simple beauty. Out of these sessions, we have assembled a number of original papers for this issue of *Structure & Dynamics*. The overall idea is to reinvigorate the ways anthropologists build kinship knowledge. We structured the kinship sessions around the idea of “Circulation,” the theme of the 2010 AAA meeting, and “Traces, Tidemarks and Legacies,” the theme of the 2011 AAA meetings. These articles reveal new links among bodies of knowledge that push kinship studies forward, leading to new legacies for future scholars just as the traces, tidemarks and legacies of past kinship scholars have had a formative impact on continuing developments in kinship studies (see article by Feinberg).

As anthropologists, we have long engaged in the task of eliciting knowledge about what constitutes kinship through fieldwork and then circulating it to other colleagues through publications and papers given in national and international venues. This circulation of knowledge has depended upon a community of scholars with shared understanding of the anthropological task of making comprehensible to others the particular kinship knowledge we elicit from the culture bearers among whom we work.

This common understanding was upset by the publications of Rodney Needham (1971), David Schneider (1984) and others, which got interpreted as there is no such thing as kinship, or at least kinship as it had been understood since the time of Lewis Henry Morgan (see article by El Guindi regarding the need to distinguish between kinship as a concept and kinship as a construct). One consequence has been that the well-developed anthropological understanding of kinship knowledge stopped being taught in American anthropology departments, as if kinship knowledge was not part of the societies of concern to anthropologists.

In this collection, we retrace some of the historical development of the anthropological study of kinship and go back to the concepts and ideas that we, as anthropologists, had previously been circulating about kinship knowledge. We do this not as a way to return to where we left off, as it were, but to reactivate the current circulation of kinship knowledge as we understand it from those among whom we work. At the same time, we address issues that have been raised about the study of kinship, the place of kinship in anthropological knowledge and what constitutes kinship on the basis of local knowledge. Reinvigorating the study of kinship requires detailed field data gathering on kinship and careful reexamination of assumptions, models and reconsidering notions of procreation,

and marriage and other overlooked forms of creating and transforming kinship relations (see article by El Guindi). Empirically exploring hidden forms can lead not only to enriching our kinship database but also to a reconsideration of the nature and form of kinship structure (see El Guindi's exploration of suckling and Read's delineation of structural differences among kinship terminologies). El Guindi's study not only sheds light on an overlooked form; it adds new light to our understanding of the two forms kinship specialists have been dealing with, namely procreative and affinal kinship. Our understanding of what constitutes kinship, kinship relations and kinship knowledge is thereby enriched.

Anthropology has produced more than a century of robust ethnographic knowledge that challenges the reductionist explanation and understanding of the humanness of culture and the culturalness of humans by those in cultural studies who overstretch culture out of recognition and by neo-Darwinists who narrow culture out of relevance. Rich and detailed ethnographic observations from numerous societies—from small to large scale—with people living under widely different circumstances, regardless of whether the differences are environmental, technological or social, make evident the pervasiveness, centrality and importance of kinship, however we may define it, in all human societies. These detailed ethnographies have provided, and continue to provide, the foundation for our understanding of what constitutes local kinship knowledge.

The earlier ethnographies have left an important legacy that helps frame our current studies of kinship systems as Richard Feinberg recounts in his article on changes taking place in Taumako in the southeastern Solomon Islands. Feinberg begins by referring to the intellectual debt he owes to Sir Raymond Firth, with whom he had the opportunity to interact while a graduate student when Firth spent time at the University of Chicago in 1970-71 as a Visiting Scholar. Feinberg relates that both in his fieldwork on Nukumanu, a Polynesian community in Papua New Guinea and in Taumako, one of the Solomon Islands, he attempted to emulate Firth's "thorough, integrated analysis of island life" (Feinberg, this issue:2) that was a hallmark of Firth's classic ethnography, *We, the Tikopia*. Firth's approach to field ethnography was very different from that represented by Needham and Schneider. Far more alert to the need to avoid ethnocentric imposition at the outset, Firth armed himself with a variety of subtle ways to guard against it. This can be seen in the details of his field elicitation that he carefully carried over into his finished monographs by combining descriptions of indigenous behaviors and ideas with descriptions of what he did to obtain these accounts and why he interpreted them as he did.

We see this legacy in Feinberg's account of various components of Taumako life today, ranging from local kinship practices to involvement in the global economy. Feinberg guides us through their system of kinship expressed through their kinship terminology, as it existed at the time of his fieldwork. By presenting the terminology from the perspective of three informants, Feinberg highlights variation that occurs among kin terms, whether for address or reference. He provides examples showing the effect that interaction between the Taumako and other Solomon Islanders has had on their kinship terminology, such as the use of the Pijin term *anti* (derived from English *aunt*) for one's

father's sister. In their indigenous language, father's sister is not called by a distinct term but is referred to by the kin term *nana* ('mother').

Kinship practice in Polynesia, Feinberg relates, is built around the concept of *aloha*, the 'love' or 'empathy' kin should have for each other expressed through means such as economic cooperation and support among kin. Feinberg compares his observations to those of Firth when Firth revisited Tikopia in 1952 after a hurricane and the *aloha* value was submerged. However, Feinberg notes that whereas the shift away from the *aloha* value (locally termed *arofa*) on Tikopia was temporary, the recent changes in Taumako regarding *aloha* appear to be more permanent as the Western notion of "individual competition" has become pervasive and "has been incorporated into their value system" (Feinberg, this issue:14), despite the Taumako recalling a more golden period when communities followed Polynesian principles of kinship practice based on *aloha*.

From the Taumako, we go to the Gulf Arabians of Qatar in the article by Fadwa El Guindi which, through her recent fieldwork, examines the conceptual basis for creating kinship relations. In this context, birth kin (*qarib*) are conceptualized as being constructed by the groin (paternity) and the womb (maternity), with relations (agnatic kin) bound together through 'asab (nerve). Suckling (*rida'a*), a societal practice that finds support in Islamic sources, is mentioned in the Quran and the Hadith as a form of kinship having the same prohibitions as occurs with birth kin. Through systematic field research, she determines that in Qatar (and in other Islamic communities), suckling is a practice that leads to "recategorizing existing kin relations..." (El Guindi, this issue:8).

El Guindi provides detailed, ethnographic analysis of two kinship cases showing the complexities introduced through kinship relations forged by suckling. In one case, suckling both creates new kinship relations and transforms existing relations. The mother's mother's sister's daughter of a girl had become the mother's sister of that girl because, much earlier, the mother's mother's sister of the girl had suckled the girl's mother when the latter was an infant. The suckling event also had the effect, she points out, of changing the mother's mother's sister's son of the girl (that is, a boy who is a parallel cousin of the mother of the girl who, prior to the suckling event, would have been a desirable, possible husband for the mother of the girl) into a taboo male (from a kinship viewpoint) and thereby prohibited as a husband. In the other case, El Guindi discusses how an "adopted" boy who otherwise is a non-kin, is transformed through suckling into a kinship relation, thereby removing the cross-sex avoidance behavior that normally applies to non-relatives and making it possible for the "adopting" woman to raise the boy as if he were her procreative son.

While kinship relations are constructed through the practice of which woman suckled what child, the ramifications of the kinship relations constructed in this manner cannot be understood except by reference to the structure and organization of kinship relations that is part of the kinship knowledge of community members, especially women. In this community, kinship knowledge, she observes, includes mental records of who has suckled whom and how this affects kinship relations and marriage choices.

Kinship is foundational in our ancestry. A deep time frame for kinship has been hypothesized as a way to account for the widespread occurrence of so-called nursery kin

terms such as *papa* and *mama* (Matthey de L'Etang, Bancel, and Ruhlen 2011). Matthey de L'Etang *et al.* argue that the widespread usage of these terms and their cognates is not due, as some have suggested (e.g., Jacobson 1960, Murdock 1959), to independent innovation based on the first sounds that infants universally make as they learn to speak, but rather each has a common origin in a proto-language.

The antiquity of kin terms suggested by the linguistic evidence opens up the possibility, as argued by Bojka Milicic in her article, that the conceptual development of kinship relations as a system of ideas that transcend the perspective of individuals in isolation may be part of the development of a fully modern, syntactic language through introducing symbolic reference and recursiveness—key aspects of kinship relations—into communication. Kinship terminologies, as pointed out by Milicic, not only have social functions but linguistic and cognitive ones as well. Human language is preeminently related to social interaction and in this way differs from communication systems found among the non-human primates by being centered on a self-other distinction that requires cognitive abilities going beyond the capacity of the non-human primates. Milicic observes that the first evidence for this kind of cognitive distinction occurs around 70 - 80,000 BP with pierced shells found in Morocco and the ochre pieces and pierced beads found in Blombos Cave in South Africa, thus placing this aspect of human language development within a plausible time frame for the appearance of conceptually formulated systems of kinship relations. Functionally, languages provide categorization and kinship terminologies consist of terms that categorize kinship relations and express semantic relationships among these categories. Kin terms are, as Milicic notes, some of the first words learned by a newborn. This involves, she says, fundamental cognitive capacities such as recursion, the concept of self as the reference point for relations, symbolic meanings, and the construction of kin relations. The last does not require a biological basis. In other words, the systems of kinship relations, as they occur in human societies and are expressed through kinship terminologies, are not simply a list of words identifying biological relations, but a conceptually well-developed and cognitively complex system that may have provided a “simple language” through which “full blown syntactic speech” could have initially developed.

The article by Laurent Dousset examines the concept of consubstantiality discussed by Julian Pitt-Rivers. Dousset points out that consubstantiality as used by Pitt-Rivers is a way to avoid either the extreme of kinship only being viewed as structure or only as particularism that has the effect, when carried to its limit, of making each individual seem “to have his or her own culture” and thereby “[c]ulture is transformed from a structure of existence to a mere role set” (Dousset, this issue:1). Dousset argues that Pitt-Rivers’ concept of consubstantiality makes it possible to integrate form (structure) and meaning (substance) with practice and context. Dousset goes on to say that although the concept of consubstantiality traces back to early Christianity, Pitt-Rivers redefined it to refer to sharing a common substance without requiring that the substance of what is shared be part of procreation. According to Dousset, Pitt-Rivers’ view of sharing could include the suckling discussed by El Guindi in her article on suckling practices in Qatar and other Mediterranean cultures. It could also include the sharing of names among the

!Kung San of Botswana determined through a name-giver/name-receiver relationship that is fundamental to understanding kinship relations as conceptualized by them (Marshall 1976). Dousset observes that for Pitt-Rivers, consubstantiality is the basis upon which the idea of self is extended so as to incorporate conceptually other individuals into a system of relations. Following this line of thought, Dousset points out that the substance of kinship lies not in the classification of genealogical relations, but in the system of meanings underlying the relations being classified. From this perspective, the underlying meaning of kinship is that of one individual being conceptually linked to another and where practice, in conjunction with context, gives substantive meaning to formally defined relations.

Kris Lehman, in his article, recognizes how a shift away from a logical positivist viewpoint of science influenced early kinship theorists such as Radcliffe-Brown, Fortes, and Murdock and later kinship formalists such as Lounsbury. Lehman points out that each, in his own way, subscribed to a Fregean, referential theory of meaning in which the meaning of kin terms is related to observables: in the case of Radcliffe-Brown, to structures such as clans, lineages and moieties and, in the case of Murdock, to similarity in behavior. The emphasis on the observable also comes to the fore, Lehman notes, in the assumption, going back to Lewis Henry Morgan, that kinship is first and foremost about genealogical relations determined through biological reproduction. Yet this is a viewpoint contradicted by abundant evidence that kin terms are not limited in their reference to genealogical relations determined through bio-reproduction. The consequence of these contradictions, he suggests, has been a growing realization—which reached its climax in the diatribes against kinship as a domain of study by Needham and Schneider—that the objective, logical-positivist motivated approach to understanding kinship knowledge appears to deny universality of kinship as a domain when genealogy is equated solely with relations determined through bio-reproduction. The contradiction, Lehman observes, lies in the failure to recognize that genealogy is culturally defined as “*a formal computational matter*” (Lehman, this issue:4, emphasis in the original) and not by bio-reproduction. That is, regardless of the importance (or lack thereof) placed on genealogical connectedness, all communities recognize that for any person there is a mother paired with a father, however these may be culturally defined, and from this it follows that genealogy is a culturally grounded, recursive computational system by virtue of the fact that the persons identified as a mother and a father in turn have associated with them a mother and a father, and so on. Critical, argues Lehman, is not whether kin categories are definable solely by reference to genealogically defined connections—which empirically they are not as discussed by El Guindi—but that universally there is a structure preserving mapping from a space of genealogical categories (what Lehman calls the Primary Genealogical Space [PGS]) to a space of kinship terms (what Dwight Read calls a Kinship Terminology Space [KTS]). This formally definable mapping from PGS to KTS establishes the universality of the genealogical computational system—however genealogical mother and genealogical father may be culturally defined—as the computational basis of kinship. The correction we need in our understanding of kinship knowledge, he argues, is not rejection of kinship as a domain but clarification of what we mean by genealogy and the relation-

ship between genealogy as a computational system and the structural logic of kinship terminology systems through which kin relations are computed through kin term products such as *cousin* is *child* of *uncle* or *aunt* for English speakers.

In the next article, Patrick Heady considers differences in the form of the kin terms in several European kinship terminologies from the perspective of systematic differences or similarities in the morphological form of kin terms used in different languages for the same kinship relation. He draws upon an argument made by Roger Keesing (1972) regarding the need to integrate the formal study of kinship terminologies with the complexities of kinship as it is actually lived, rather than seeing these two levels of analysis as being in opposition or that the one should supplant the other. The implications arising from the practicality of kinship as it is lived, the subject of his article, have to do with systematic differences in the linguistic form of kin terms for cousins versus siblings and for parents versus spouse's parents among three different European regions: the northwest part of Europe (exemplified by Sweden), the central portion (exemplified by France, Germany and Austria) and the south and east region (exemplified by Italy, Croatia, Poland and Russia). The regional variation in the form for kin terms is paralleled, though not precisely, by patterning in the spatial distances between residences for close relatives. Spatially, the proportion of close relatives living within 10 km of each other follows a clinal distribution as one goes from the north to the central region and then to the south and east, suggesting a connection between morphological form and practice reflected in the spatial distance between residences for close kin.

Heady considers several hypotheses that have been advanced to account for the regional pattern of variation in the form of these kin terms and argues that the data best support the idea (going back to Sapir [1985]) that the morphological form reflects whether or not speaker has equivalent sentiments for the relatives in question. Thus if, culturally speaking, speaker has a similar filial perspective for one's parents and for spouse's parents, this will be reflected in a kin term for spouse's parents that is a simple modification of the term for one's parents, such as the English consanguineal kin term *father* and the affinal kin term *father-in-law*, in contrast with the Italian kin terms *padre* ('father') and *suocero* ('father-in-law'). We also see this in the practice of English speakers addressing one's spouse's parents by terms of address for one's parent (Fox 2008). Heady argues that what he calls the Equivalent Filial Relationship hypothesis best accounts for the pattern of differences and similarity in the morphological form of kin terms in these three regions and how this relates to the spatial distribution of close relatives.

Heady recognizes that the formal structure of the kinship terminologies does not account for the morphological form of the kin terms. Rather than putting a formal account and analysis to the side, in response, and then focusing just on negotiation and practice as has recently been advocated, Heady shows how a formal analysis can be integrated with an analysis that focuses on practice and thereby arrive, following the suggestions of Keesing, at a more complete understanding of the relationship between the formal aspects of kinship terminology systems and social roles taken on by the users of kinship terminology systems as part of kinship practice.

Robert Trautmann refers back, in his article, to the writings of Lewis Henry Morgan, especially those regarding the League of the Iroquois. According to Trautmann, Morgan recognized that the League of the Iroquois cannot be understood without taking into account the interplay among the longhouse as a social unit, the system of matrilineal clans, and the logic of their kinship terminology. As Trautmann puts it, for Morgan, “Kinship and the longhouse suffused Iroquois social organization” (Trautmann, this issue:2).

Trautmann observes that Morgan’s writings on the Iroquois longhouse (and houses and house-life in other native American groups) presage the recent use of Lévi-Strauss’s (1982) idea of a *société à maison* (house society) as a social unit distinct from that of a descent group. The *société à maison* is said to provide the organizational structure in which kinship and other relations are worked out through the interaction of those recognized as members of a household. For example, there is a striking parallel between Morgan’s discussion of the organization of an Iroquois household under a matron and her role in distributing food to families (Morgan 1851) and a recent report (Margiotti 2011), using the rubric of the house society, regarding the role of an elderly woman as owner and dispenser of food in a San Blas Kuna household. Trautmann concludes that we should “integrate [formal with practice], as Morgan tried to do” (Trautmann, this issue:7).

Lewis Henry Morgan is also the subject of the article by Patrick McConvell and Helen Gardner, but with focus on the schedules that Morgan asked correspondents to fill out to obtain data on kinship terminologies. McConvell and Gardner discuss some of the problems with the schedules, such as Morgan’s assumption that there will be single ‘grandfather’ and ‘grandmother’ terms and not terms differentiated by maternal versus paternal. Of greater interest here, though, is the response made by Howitt and Fison when trying to use the schedules in Australia. They found the schedules framed the questions about kin terms in a manner that often neither made sense to them nor to their primary Aborigine collaborator, Tulaba, from the Brabarlong group that is part of the Kūnai peoples in the Gippsland region of Victoria, Australia. In particular, they had problems with the Kūnai terminology using sibling terms for both genealogical parallel and cross cousins and the pattern for elder-younger sibling terms when used for genealogical parallel and cross cousins. McConvell and Gardner discuss the changes Howitt and Fison made in the schedules in response to these problems and what appears to be a suggestion by Tulaba to use, and position, short sticks to represent the members of a genealogy so that one could frame the kin term questions more concretely in the form of the term that one person in the family tree would use for another person in that tree.

In brief, the stick system made it possible to convert the more abstract questions in the schedules about terms used for relations to the actual practice of the term used by this person for that person, a method that has been used to good effect, more recently, by photographing individuals and asking for the kin term one would use for the person in the photograph (e.g., Rose 1960, Denham 1975). As McConvell and Gardner discuss, it is not the use of genealogy as a reference for kin relations that was problematic, but how genealogy was expressed. Using sticks and their physical position to represent the members of a genealogy removed assumptions about the primacy of genealogy for kinship

relations. The sticks provided a physical way to transform the questions, from the culture bearer's viewpoint, from questions about how genealogy maps to terminology to the practice of kinship: What term does this person use for that person? The translation to genealogy could, thereby, be achieved analytically through the stick representations of genealogical relations rather than through the questions.

McConvell and Gardner point out that the Kūnai are not unique in using sibling terms for both parallel and cross cousins, as shown by a map locating areas where the same terminology pattern holds. They frame the issues by using concepts such as neutralization (which is primarily a way to describe differences between terminologies) and ask evolutionary questions about the transition from one kinship terminology structure to another, thus reviving Morgan's questions about the evolution of terminological systems, but without invoking the assumptions that were invalidated by research subsequent to Morgan.

That Morgan worked from assumptions that have not held up does not mean that evolutionary questions are unanswerable; rather, as suggested by McConvell and Gardner, we need, to revise our assumptions and to rethink what we mean by the evolution of kinship terminology systems, in particular, and by cultural evolution in general. The current vogue of defining culture to be whatever is transmitted phenotypically has led to a trivialization of the concept of culture (Wimsatt and Griesemer 2007) and to biologically based models of cultural evolution that treat cultural systems as if they can be equated with a list of culture traits, despite a century of intensive work on the concept of culture to the contrary.

The article by Ian Keen discusses a new typology for the Australian kinship terminologies made possible with the extensive, Austkin database (Dousset *et al.* 2010) developed over the last several years. For Keen, the question of concern has to do with the kinship criteria to be used when making a typology for the Australian kinship terminologies. Attempts to identify these criteria has brought to the fore unresolved issues regarding the analytical level at which terminology features should be identified when constructing a typology for kinship terminologies. As discussed by Keen, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown used type cases and variants on these for his typology of Australian kinship terminologies and Harold Scheffler worked from an explicitly genealogical perspective that identifies rewrite rules for relating kin type strings to kin terms. Keen considers the broad morphology of the terminologies with regard to consistency with 'two line', 'four line' or 'five line' Australian kinship systems and then considers a variety of features within these broad outlines that can be used to refine the typology. His final typology reaffirms, in a general way, the main insights of Radcliffe-Brown's typology, but refines it for several of the terminologies, as well as providing a more comprehensive typology due to the extensiveness of the Austkin database. If we go beyond the details of the typology, Keen's systematic comparison of Australian kinship terminologies reaffirms the fact that a terminology provides a framework within which individuals act, behave, decide on kinship relations and the like. His research also demonstrates that identifying errors in the assumptions made by earlier kinship theorists does not require rejection, but

reanalysis, of their work and data so as to bring assumptions into accord with new data and/or new theoretical approaches in our understanding of kinship systems.

According to Murray Leaf, as discussed in his article, excluded from the referential theory of the meaning of kin terms is the notion that they express ideas about kinship and, collectively, in the form of a terminology, constitute a system of interconnected ideas that are given concrete expression through cultural instantiation of that system of ideas. By viewing kinship as a system of ideas, he argues, kinship can be distinguished as a domain from other domains according to the ideas involved. Leaf suggests that all social systems are pluralistic in that they are composed of multiple idea systems: economic systems are composed of economic ideas, religious systems are composed of religious ideas, kinship systems are composed of kinship ideas, and so on. What is important about a kinship terminology from this perspective, then, is not the terms, *per se*, but the system of ideas—the kinship ideas—they represent and “out of which kinship relations are constructed” (Leaf, this issue:5). The system of ideas, he comments, may be analyzed objectively through “the kinship map, a kin term map and an underlying kinship algebra” (Leaf, this issue:7).

The kinship map, according to Leaf, is the structure of interconnected ideas elicited by beginning with the core kinship ideas about irreducible self-other relations represented in the kinship terminology by primary kin terms. In English, the primary kin terms are *father*, *mother*, *brother*, *sister*, *son*, *daughter* and (affinally) *husband* and *wife*. The kinship map is determined by recursively and systematically asking: “If this person refers to that person by a primary kin term, then what kin term does speaker use to refer to that person?,” e.g., for English speakers, one asks the question: “If the person you refer to as *mother* refers to that person as *father*, what kin term do you use to refer to that person?,” with answer, *grandfather*.

By carrying out the elicitation systematically and exhaustively, Leaf obtains a kinship map showing the elicited kin terms and how they are interconnected (see Figures 1-3 in article by Leaf), with form specific to the terminology in question. The different shapes of the kinship maps, Leaf points out, relate to different logics used to form an interconnected system of kinship ideas, much as Morgan discussed in his distinction between descriptive and classificatory terminologies.

Leaf outlines what he sees are the critical steps in the anthropological study of kinship systems with the terminology viewed as an idea system with a generative logic: (1) kinship is universal and a separate sphere of activity, (2) kinship relationships can be expressed diagrammatically, (3) a society has a social charter, (4) systems of representation can be compared topologically rather than absolutely (e.g., the kinship map and the kin term map are isomorphic structures), and (5) that social systems consist of multiple organizations, not a single, overarching organization. The result, he argues, is that “[t]he focus on kinship is justified” and what we need now is to “see where it takes us” (Leaf, this issue:15).

Read begins the structural analysis of kinship terminologies by graphing the terminology as a kin term map. He then uses the map to decompose a terminology into a set of elements (the kin terms), a product operation defined over those elements (the kin

term product), and a set of structural equations satisfied by the kin term product (such as, for English speakers, *parent of child = self* as an etic, formal equation capturing the structural property that defines *parent* and *child* to be reciprocal kin terms). Differences in the generating terms and structural equations for kinship terminologies provide a structural foundation for his typology.

The typology begins by taking into account the number of generating terms; that is, whether a terminology is generated from a generating set with one ascending kin term (namely the descriptive terminologies), from a generating set with an ascending term and a sibling term (namely the classificatory terminologies), or from more than a single generating set (namely the !Kung San kinship terminology and possibly others). The next level in the typology relates to differences in the sex marking of generating kin terms, such as the non-sex marked, ascending generating term, *parent* for the English terminology and the sex-marked, generating terms *ma* ('mother') and *bap* ('father') for the Punjabi terminology (see Figure 1 in the article by Leaf).

Generating terms are distinguished in the typology according to whether sibling terms are constructed; e.g., English *brother = son of parent*, or are primary terms and so they cannot be represented as a product of kin terms. Examples of the latter are the sibling terms *akka tankai* ('sister') and *anna tapi* ('brother') in the Tamil terminology (see Figure 3 in the article by Leaf) and *kaja* ('elder or ascending brother') and *turdu* ('elder or ascending sister') in the Kariera terminology (see Figure 5 in the article by Read). Primary versus constructed sibling terms accounts, he argues, for the structural differences between classificatory and descriptive terminologies.

Other levels in the typology take into account structural differences in the sex marking of kin terms, the inclusion of affinal terms, local structural properties of a kinship terminology (such as cousin terminology for English speakers), and so on. The typology, Read points out, highlights the way the difference between descriptive and classificatory terminologies stems from cultural differences in ideas about siblings. This gives us, he suggests, a more complete understanding of the meaning of the sibling relationship and how kinship ideas interrelate with other cultural idea systems.

Altogether, the papers in this collection have a strong message: the study of kinship is alive and well in anthropology. We have not had a demise of kinship but abandonment—an abandonment that has led us, as anthropologists, to turn our backs not just on past data and rich ethnographic research on kinship systems, but on all societies, for there is no society in which kinship and the expression of kinship ideas through a kinship terminology is not a central part of people's lives. Whether it be a small scale society explicitly organized around kinship relations or a large scale industrial and global society, kinship is pervasive, either in a positive sense with regard to lives being built around families, including considerations over new forms of what it means to be a family, or in a negative sense of separating the kinship domain from the work domain through anti-nepotism rules that, by their very existence, attest to the strength and importance of kinship relations in the everyday lives of people.

Kinship, as it occurs in human societies, is neither an epiphenomenon of behavior nor an extension of biological relations. The evolutionary trajectory from our primate

ancestors to ourselves is not one of a quantitative transition, but a qualitative one in which we made a major, qualitative shift from systems of social organization grounded in face-to-face interaction to relation-based systems of social organization in which we have constructed the relations we use to define and organize a kinship domain (Read 2012).

Anthropologists want to understand the basis for the “kinship house,” as Trautmann puts it, that Morgan erected to house anthropology. Whether we are eliciting new kinship data, reworking existing data in new ways, or revising our ways of understanding what is meant by kinship, the articles in this issue attest to the fact that the future of kinship studies lies in building from the secure foundations provided by our fore bearers.

¹ “There is grandeur in this view of life ... having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one and ... from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved” (Darwin 1964[1859]:489-490).

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