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Not "From the Natives' Point of View"

Why the New Kinship Studies Need the Old Kinship Terminologies

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Abstract. – The so-called "new kinship studies," inspired by David Schneider, have proceeded with only scant attention to kinship terminologies. The argument here is that analyses of these terminologies undercut the main claim of the new kinship scholars, i.e., that they get at "the native's point of view." Instead, such analyses provide overwhelming support for the rival extensionist position. *[kinship, history of anthropology, cognition, performed kinship, extensionism]*

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The "new" kinship studies – the expression derives from Carsten (2000: 3) – are no longer new. For decades now, since David Schneider's first attempt to "deconstruct" the old kinship studies (Schneider 1965) and especially since his "A Critique of the Study of Kinship" (Schneider 1984), we have been told that kinship in human communities is not constructed only from ties of procreation but, as well, from nurturance, coresidence, and other "performative" acts, and that, therefore, to render it "from the native's point of view" (Geertz 1983: 55), we need to consider such acts. I have absolutely no quarrel with this position. But its exponents also put forward the proposition that reliance on procreative ties in kinship studies – even when, apparently, such ties are viewed as "constructions" or "ethno-genealogies" (Conklin 1964; Scheffler 1973: 749) – is somehow "ethnocentric," and that these ties are in no way "privileged."[1] My goals here are to show that this latter assertion is utterly false; and that, if one examines kinship terminologies especially but, as well, other notions of substantial connection, there is every reason to believe the new kinship scholars do *not* render kinship in the communities they study "from the native's point of view." I have pursued this project elsewhere.[2] Here I want especially to present evidence from "native" anthropologists – certainly appropriate in these "postmodern" days – that indicates that "the natives" themselves do indeed assign special status to ethno-procreative ties.

My presentation unfolds as follows. First, I review certain achievements of the old kinship studies that seem to me especially pertinent to my argument. Second, I note research in cognitive psychology which supports these achievements. Third, I suggest a *rapprochement* between this research and what I consider to be the most fruitful variety of extensionist theory in anthropology. Fourth, fifth, six, and seventh, I deal with four ethnographic "cases" which, I believe, support extensionist theory and upon which the new kinship studies shed at best only a little light, and for which we have data from both "native" and foreign scholars. Eighth and finally, I proffer some concluding remarks on the relative

1 E.g., Bodenhorn (2000: 140); Bowie (2004); Carsten (2000); McKinnon (2005); Nuttall (2000: 46).

2 Shapiro (2005, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012).

efficacy of the old kinship studies and the new ones at getting at "the native's point of view."

Throughout, I employ single quotes to indicate glosses, i.e., exact or at least approximate translations of native terms, as is conventional in ethnosemantic analysis.

A Bit of the History of the Old Kinship Studies

It is well known that anthropology, especially in the United States, was first given a systematic empirical base by Morgan's monumental comparative study of systems of kin classification – what would soon come to be called "kinship terminologies" (Morgan 1871), thence incorporated into a progressivist scheme which Morgan (1877: 4) called "the evolution of … mental and moral powers." Early in the twentieth century Morgan's ideas were criticized by several scholars, most but not all of them anthropological professionals in a newly established academic discipline and most of *these* writing on systems of kin classification. In a remarkably underappreciated analysis, Westermarck (1903: 88 f.) collated reports of "parent" and "child" terms in various languages and noted that they often mean (or are etymologically related to terms for) parturition, childbearing, begetting, and other unmistakably procreative notions. Kroeber (1909), in a much better known contribution, argued that systems of kin classification encode a number of conceptual dimensions, all of them procreatively-based (Shapiro 2009d: 27 f.). Lowie (1920: 147–185) pointed out, that the nuclear family is nearly universal and hence, *contra* Morgan, that it presumably therefore antedates more communal regimes, thus suggesting both the structural and the historical primacy of close procreative kinship. Thomas (1906) and Malinowski (1913) did much the same for the extant Aboriginal Australian materials, which had provided the basis for much of Morgan's arguments. Malinowski further declared that "[t]he individual meanings [of kin terms] … start with a main or primary reference; which then through successive extensions engenders a series of derived meanings" (1962: 138), though he never actually demonstrated this and his "initial situation of kinship" (138) conflates ontogenic order with structural primacy (Scheffler and Lounsbury 1971: 9–12) – the latter illustrated by the logical relationship between English *father* and *godfather*. But subsequent Trobriand research substantiated Malinowski's assertion.[3] Much the same remarks apply to Radcliffe-Brown's assertion, for the Kariera of Western Australia, that "[a]lthough the use of the terms of relationship is based on actual relations of consanguinity and affinity, it is so extended as to embrace all persons" (1913: 150). This went undemonstrated for Aboriginal Australia until Radcliffe-Brown, in a remarkable reanalysis of Warner's kinship material from northeast Arnhem Land (Warner 1930), showed that certain kin terms are derivations of certain others, the latter probably based on native ideas of procreation (Radcliffe-Brown 1951; see also Scheffler 1978). Radcliffe-Brown's analysis is, it should be noted, entirely consistent with current marking theory in semantics, which supports the primacy of procreative ties in kin classification (e.g., Greenberg 1987; Scheffler 1987). This can again be illustrated with English *father* and *godfather*, the latter said to be a *linguistically marked* version of the former. A decade and a half later I myself confirmed Radcliffe-Brown's analysis firsthand (1981: 32 f.). Around the same time, Mayer (1965), in an outstanding analysis of the conceptualization and social use of kin terms among the Gusii of Kenya, showed that these terms, though applied to everyone in a Gusii's social universe, nevertheless have as their primary referents close procreative kin. Meanwhile, on the other side of the pond, and quite independently, Murdock (1957: 673) noted the very considerable frequency of what he called "derivative bifurcate merging" in systems of kin classification, in which the father's brother is called "by a derivative of the term for [father], e.g., 'little father'." And Lounsbury and Scheffler were reanalyzing ethnographic reports of kin term data by positing that each term had a primary or *focal* referent supplied by close procreative kin and from this base its significance was extended by a small number of rules to other referents (Lounsbury 1964, 1965; Scheffler and Lounsbury 1971). Critics pointed out that this procedure mostly *assumed* the primacy of close kin and the cognitive reality of the extension rules.[4] But there were too many ethnographic reports coming in that supported both this primacy and, as well, the native use of extension rules, to dismiss this position[5]; and, besides, Scheffler was quick to respond to critics by citing native semantic distinctions between close kin and others as well as native ex-

3 See Montague (1971: 357); Powell (1969: 178, 192); see also Fathauer (1961: 237). – I need in fairness to add that this interpretation has been challenged by Montague (2001) and Weiner (1979), to count only those with firsthand ethnographic experience in the Trobriands. But this is plainly not the place to attempt to settle the matter.

4 E.g., Buchler and Selby (1968: 44 f.); Coult (1967); D'Andrade (1970).

5 E.g., Dentan (1970); Kensinger (1984); Kronenfeld (1973); Meggitt (1964); Shapiro 1981: 34 f.).

tension rules (see esp. Scheffler 1972). By the late 1980s, his extensionist position was so substantially supported that Schneider's alleged "deconstruction" of the old kinship studies (1972, 1984) seemed to some of us, myself included, atavistic.[6]

Prototype Theory and Practice

A coincidental but apparently independent development was the emergence of prototype theory in cognitive psychology by Rosch (1978) and others. We now know from a wide variety of domains of classification that human beings seem to construct categories that have typical referents or "prototypes," and that these prototypes are regularly associated with other properties, like being the first encountered in ontogeny and the most readily nominated as class members (D'Andrade 1995: 118 f.; MacLaury 1991). Let me give some examples from my own research in northeast Arnhem Land. I asked informants, "Who is your *bapa*?" – *bapa* being the term applied to one's father but also to many other men. After some reflection I thought this an ethnocentric question, because my goal in asking it was to collect genealogies, and it presupposes that the term is meaningful primarily in terms of a genealogical grid. Further reflection and data collection convinced me, however, that the presupposition was in fact correct. Everyone I interviewed nominated his (presumed) biological father, often adding in a native dialect something like, 'He's my true *bapa*, the one who "found" me.' Other members of this class *might* be considered to be 'true' members, especially if they were actual father's brothers or otherwise close procreative kin of the father, but even of these – and certainly others – it was sometimes said that 'He's only a partial *bapa*' or 'He's not really my *bapa*; I just call him *bapa* by virtue of the kinship terminology' (Shapiro 1981: 38–41). It bears noting here that 'finding' refers to a dream experience in which one's father encounters the spirit of his child-to-be and directs it to its mother; it does *not* imply that paternity is created spiritually, that, as was once thought, Aboriginal Australians are "ignorant of physical paternity." My informants knew quite well that sexual intercourse was necessary to create a child (cf. Warner 1937: 23 f.), though in certain contexts, especially those in which a ritual frame was established, they preferred to stress 'finding' (Shapiro 1981: 16–19).[7] Note, too, the expression *bapurru* (lit. "through the father"), which refers to an individual's paternally linked spirit and to his or her primary ritual heritage, obtained through the father. And note, finally, the phonetic similarity between *bapa* and "papa," the sort of regularity in kin terms first noted by Westermarck (1903: 85 f.) and later demonstrated cross-culturally by Murdock (1959).[8]

The results I obtained when I asked about *ngama*, the "mother" term, were comparable, except that no spiritual elements were nominated: informants said that their *ngama* 'bore' them, and that they 'came out of her abdominal area.' Again, note the phonological similarity between *ngama* and "mama" – this, too, observed on a larger scale by Westermarck and Murdock.

Further, kin classes can be signaled by touching parts of the body, and the part of the body corresponding to *ngama* is the nipple. Still further, when kin terms are used without modifiers or linguistic markers, they invariably pertain to close procreative kin. Thus, in referring to people whose names are tabooed because of recent death or avoidance rules, one may use such expressions as "X's *ngama*," with the individual referenced being linked to the one whose name is avoided by an actual (in this case) mother/child tie. It bears noting that this is a phenomenon that has been repeatedly documented in the ethnographic record.[9]

A final exemplification comes from rules of kin-class extension in northeast Arnhem Land. Each kin term is paired with another such term in such a manner that, if I call a man A and he sires a child, I call that child B; and if I call a woman C and she gives birth to a child, I call that child D. My informants called these two principles 'following the *bapa* path' and 'following the *ngama* path' – again, with no modifiers before *bapa* and *ngama*, thus, again, suggesting the focality of the genitor and the genetrix in their respective kin classes. I would stress that the quoted expressions are translations of express native statements (Shapiro 1981: 34 f.) and not

6 E.g., Kuper (1999: 122–158); Scheffler (1978); Shapiro (2005).

7 Scheffler (1978: 6–13), basing his argument on reports from other parts of Aboriginal Australia, has concluded that "finding" generates foetal quickening, not formation of the foetus in the first instance. This possibility did not occur to me in the field, nor did the even more nuanced structure that I have since discerned in the materials from the Western Desert of Australia (Shapiro 1996).

8 Patrick McConvell informed me that in many Aboriginal Australian languages *mama* is the "father" term. It would be of considerable interest to know how frequently this is the case cross-culturally, but I am unaware of any systematic study on the matter.

9 E.g., Banks (1974: 47); Burch (1975: 68–70); Feinberg (2004: 82 f.); Heider (1978: 238); McKinnon (1991: 117).

"virtuoso manipulations" (Schneider 1989: 166) on my part.[10]

Prototype Theory and Structural Semantics

Scheffler and Lounsbury (1971: 8 f.) distinguish between a *logical* relationship between kinship lexemes (*father*/*godfather*), which they call "structural primacy," and what prototype researchers find, which they call "saliency," and which Scheffler and Lounsbury tend to dismiss. I think this is a mistake, that both analytical procedures, though admittedly different, tap much the same cognitive processes. This, at any rate, seems to be the prevailing opinion in cognitive science.[11] Still, the conflation of the two can raise problems. Thus Watts (2000: 89), one of the few new kinship scholars acquainted with prototype theory, asked her Zuni informants to nominate the best exemplar of the Zuni "father" category. Most named their actual fathers, but one of those who did not was estranged from her father, and, given the question frame, nominated another man as best exemplifying the "father" class (Watts 2000: 129). I have taken Watts to task for thus testing for saliency and not structural primacy (Shapiro 2009a: 12 f.), and although I stand by my remarks in that context, I now think that the results of both procedures bear upon the problem of prototypes.

The Ethnographic Analysis of "the Couvade" and Similar Institutions

Also pertinent here is recent ethnographic research on and analysis of "the couvade," another object of considerable interest to Victorian social thinkers, particularly Crawley (1902: 390–398) and Tylor (1865: 287). For what couvade and similar institutions emphasize is the separateness of the mother/father/child triad, which is to say, primary procreative kin ties. This is especially clear from Doja's recent presentation of his materials from rural Albania (2005). Taking account of these materials and others, he summarizes the matter as follows:

> Most ethnographic accounts of couvade insist that both parents are protecting the infant's vigor and assisting its fast growth through fasting. But it is important to stress that violations of the taboo not only harm the child but can also turn against the father or mother … Both father's and mother's fasting and inactivity strongly identify them with the newborn *with whom they form a community of substance* … (Doja 2005: 930; emphasis added).

Doja further points out (2005: 931) that sometimes a wider network of kin is emphasized. But this is not true in all cases, and when it is the injunctions to more distant kin are attenuated, on the grounds that *they are held to share less substance with the child*.[12] Which is to say that, *from the native's point of view, ties to close procreative kin are deemed more substantial than to others*. This finding thus replicates *precisely* what we have learned from extensionist theory in the old kinship studies.

It is well worth pointing out here that Doja is an anthropologist who happens also to be a native Albanian. So from at least this "native's" standpoint the new kinship proposition that close procreative kin are not especially distinguished among "his" people is patently false.

More Examples of "the Native's Point of View"

Fiji

Doja is by no means the only "native" anthropologist who has reached conclusions that are pertinent here. In the examples that follow, I shall intersperse the ethnographic analyses of such anthropologists with those of foreign scholars in the same ethnographic domains, both within the new kinship tradition and, like myself, outside of it.

Fiji provides a useful starting point. Sahlins, in his critique of sociobiology, argues that the parallel/cross distinction in Fijian kin classification runs counter to what one might expect from genetic theory, which, he therefore claims, is irrelevant to human kinship constructions (Sahlins 1976: 35; see also McKinnon 2005: 122–124). But is this true? In his study of the Fijian island of Moala, Sahlins found that each Moalan has a circle of close kin which cuts across the cross/parallel divide. His words (1962: 157):

> A … notable distinction within the kindred is between near and distant kin. … here Moalans have … categorical phrases which discriminate degrees of kin distance. They

10 Readily resolved complications occur when someone is supposed to call the child B through patrifiliation and D through matrifiliation. A choice is then made between the two alternatives, with matrifiliation being statistically predominant overall and patrifiliation being so in the patri-lodges of oneself, one's mother, and one's mother's mother. The relatively recent "subsection" system poses a further complication, especially in the northeast Arnhem Land Interior (Shapiro 1977; 1981: 135 ff.).

11 E.g., D'Andrade (1995); Kronenfeld (1996); Lakoff (1987).

12 E.g., Aijmer (1992: 8) and associated references; Carsten (1992: 38); Shapiro (2009b: 41–44) and associated references.

commonly make a distinction … between [what they call] "true relatives" … and distant relatives [those related] "by descent" … The precise lines between the two will vary somewhat by speaker and according to context … Generally speaking, the offspring of one's own grandparents are "true relatives" … I have pressed people, moreover, into a further distinction between [the closest kin, by Anglo-American standards, like parents, children, and siblings] … and [kin less close, like aunts and first cousins] …: the former become [what are called] "very true relatives" …

Note the "gray area" – the variance "by speaker and … context." This squares with my own findings from northeast Arnhem Land and a very considerable corpus of other ethnography.[13] Note, too, the hierarchy of contrasts: first, between "relatives by descent" and "true relatives," with the latter further divided into "very true relatives" and all others. And, finally, note the concordance among this classification and the one we commonly employ in classifying kin.

Further support for this conclusion is provided by a general survey of Fijian systems of kin classification, some of which depart in relatively minor ways from the Moalan model, by Nayacakalou (1955), at once an anthropologist and a native Fijian. Nayacakalou tells us that there are throughout Fiji native terms which he translates as "real" and "classificatory," with the former applying to individuals more closely related by ethno-procreative ties (1955: 50). In other words, the unmodified terms *really* mean "mother," "father," etc. – just as we saw for northeast Arnhem Land. Moreover, in Fiji, when kin terms are applied to people less closely related, they are sometimes defined *with reference to* those more closely related. For example, the father's brother, if older than the father, is called by a term translatable as "big father," whereas a father's brother who is younger than the father is called "little father" (Nayacakalou 1955: 45–48). This exemplifies Murdock's "derivative bifurcate merging," noted above, although probably more common ethnographically, as Murdock suggests, is the rendition of all father's brothers as "little fathers," suggesting as it does that his brothers are diminished versions of the father. In any case, we are faced again with the *structural primacy* of close procreative kin.

Nayacakalou's findings are supported by another study of a particular Fijian community, carried out by Quain. Quain (1948: 244) begins his analysis of kinship by insisting that it "does not stem from genealogies," but by the end of the very same paragraph we learn of an extension rule such that two people "call each other cross-cousin because … the parents of each have had brother-sister relationships with those of the other." Later Quain (1948: 247) tells us that classificatory kin are distinguished from closer kin by prefixing a lexeme he translates as "small" in front of the pertinent kin term, as in "a smaller version of," something other than the Real McCoy. In this context "small" refers not to one's size but is instead the semantic equivalent of "partial" in northeast Arnhem Land and, as such, is exceedingly common as a marker of nonfocality in systems of kin classification, as Murdock's setting up "derivative bifurcate merging" as a separate type suggests. Apparently, close kin are subclassed without linguistic marking, something we have already encountered. A term translatable as "big," in any case, is used to signal "extremely distant relationships," and it "refers to the scope of extensions" (Quain 1948: 247). It needs to be added here that unmarked status "is not necessarily 'biologic'"; it pertains also to relationships of "long traditional standing" (Quain 1948: 281) – a datum which provides some support for the new kinship scholars.

Quain (1948: 248) notes another example of linguistic marking – this one involving individuals in the "brother" relationship "who do not know what relationship terms their parents applied to each other [and who] qualify their brotherhood by calling themselves 'brothers in moiety'" (the part of Fiji in which he carried out his fieldwork has a matri-moiety system) and, again, he expressly calls such usages extensions. Still another instance of marking is the expression Quain (1948: 272) translates as "sister-cousin," applied to first cross-cousins, who, unlike more distant members of their kin class, are not marriageable. Note in these examples the native use of genealogies, including rules of extension.

Quain (1948: 351 f.) also notes certain couvade-like notions in the community he studied. Thus a man is supposed to refrain from sexual relations with his pregnant wife, as well as with other women, lest the infant be malformed. When the child is delivered, the father abstains from work, because this is alleged to have ill effect on the infant.

Hawaii

We have even more data on notions of kinship and kinship behavior in the Hawaiian islands. Here it should be recalled that the Hawaiian materials were especially influential in Morgan's thought, exemplifying, he believed, the stage of "lower savagery" and its "community of husbands and wives" (1877: 49).

13 E.g., Burling (1963: 350); Feinberg (2004: 79); Inden and Nicholas (2005: 77 f.); Meggitt (1964: 193); Myers (1986: 193).

Indeed, Morgan named the results of such marriage "the punaluan family," drawing on the Hawaiian institution of *punalua* (1877: 424 ff.). We now know that this term refers to the relationship between present and former paramours of particular men or women, though it seems also to apply to genuinely plural unions, with some degree of shared childcare (but see Forster 1960: 96 f.). But such unions by no means constitute a majority of Hawaiian domestic arrangements (Forster 1960; Handy and Pukui 1972: 56 f.). Moreover, there is considerable concern with genealogy, especially by the nobility but also others, and with generation level. Thus, Handy and Pukui (1972: 45 f.) report a term they translate as "genealogy," another as "my descendant" (apparently applied to one's own grandchild), still another as "the token of my fertility" (to distinguish one's own child from classificatory "children"), plus another expression which distinguishes one's own grandchild from the grandchild of close kin (though at a higher level of classification all such individuals are terminologically merged, in the manner of "Hawaiian"-type terminologies of introductory textbooks), as well as special terms for cousins depending on generation (see also Handy and Pukui 1972: 197 f. for further detail on genealogy).

Close kin are said to be related by 'blood,' to be one's 'own flesh,' as in English, to be one's "own bone," and to have a relationship which 'cannot be untied' (Handy and Pukui 1972: 48, 65). Kenn (1939: 46) reports a term which he translates as 'one's very own relatives or immediate family.' By contrast, more distant kin are said to be 'related through ancestors' (Handy and Pukui 1972: 47). This seems to imply a more distant relationship which is nonetheless based on ethno-procreative ties. Moreover, when close kin argue, it is said, in native parlance, that 'the umbilical cord is cut,' and there are standardized procedures for restoring the relationship, which should not be left "cut" (Handy and Pukui 1972: 49 f.). (Recall that close kin are those with whom a relationship 'cannot be untied'). A guest in a household must be fed, and when he is, he is referred to as a 'face-to-face relative' (Kenn 1939: 7); and, in this connection, a 'calabash' relationship is said to exist "in which one family claims relationship to another because in the past their common ancestors ate together out of the same calabash" (Kenn 1939: 7). This emphasis on common ancestry, again an ethno-procreative notion, suggests, as we have seen, distant kinship.

Because of the occasional occurrence of the plural marriages that so fascinated Morgan, it might be thought that, at least in these instances, there would be no recognition of individual paternity – an idea which also attracted Morgan's attention (1877: 477 and elsewhere).[14] But this is not at all the case, Handy and Pukui (1972: 53) report that one's father can be distinguished from others of his kin class by an expression they translate as "my father who begot me." Correspondingly, one's own children can be separated from others of *their* kin class by prefixing to the 'child' term a lexeme translatable as "true" (Handy and Pukui 1972: 65) – something which we have already seen in northeast Arnhem Land and Fiji and which in fact occurs much more widely: indeed, it provides the commonest ethnographic argument for focality (Scheffler 1973: 766 f.). There are comparable expressions to distinguish one's own parents from others of their kin classes. These expressions include a term translatable as "youth," which appears to stress the fertility of young parenthood (Handy and Pukui 1972: 67). Moreover, first degree collateral kin can be terminologically distinguished from more remote kin (Handy and Pukui 1972: 67). Anyone who nurtures someone can be classed with a parental sibling and is said to be acting 'like a parent,' i.e., he/she is *likened* to a parent, who perforce provides a *model* for that position, as in the English expression, "He was like a father to me" (Handy and Pukui 1972: 68; see also Scheffler 1970). Also likened to parents – here by an expression translatable as "parents in name" – are "a distant relative in the parent's generation," parents-in-law under certain conditions, close kin of the parental generation of one's stepfather or stepmother, and "close friends" of one's parents (Handy and Pukui 1972: 68). Stepparents themselves are referred to by a parent term modified by another term, much like English *stepfather* and *stepmother* – both, obviously, derivatives of *father* and *mother* (Handy and Pukui 1972: 68 f.). In much the same vein, first cousins (i.e., classificatory siblings) in Hawaii are addressed as "older" or "younger" siblings, but the age difference pertains not to them but to the relative age of their parents (Handy and Pukui 1972: 67). Forster (1960: 101) reports several cases in which co-residence affects terminological usage. Thus one man defended his use of a "brother" term in regard

14 This is not the same as what is been called "ignorance of physical paternity." The latter expression implies that the father, whoever he might be, makes no substantial contribution to the formation of the foetus, whereas the former acknowledges the possibility of such a contribution but, because of the prevailing sexual regime, the specific contributor cannot be identified with any certainty (Wolfe 1999: 203 f.). It has been claimed that "partible paternity" in Amazonia instances this, except that it provides for contribution by two or more men (Beckerman and Valentine 2002), but this argument has serious logical and empirical flaws (Shapiro 2009b).

to a housemate by saying, "[W]e lived together all our lives and we were *like* brothers so I call him brother" [emphasis added]. Note once more the existence of *likening*. Finally, there are ritualized friendship involving two men or two women, with each partner referring to the other's parental generation kin as "parents-in-name" (Handy and Pukui 1972: 73), i.e., nominal parents, as contrasted with substantial ones.

All this suggests that in Hawaii kinship is based on close procreative ties, that it is extended genealogically on the basis of procreative ties, and that it can be extended *non*-genealogically by shared residence and food. The new kinship scholars would emphasize this last fact, though they would ignore its derivative quality. I return to this in my concluding remarks.

Sahlins (1976: 48 f.) further argues, as does McKinnon (2005: 112 f.), that the high frequency of adoption in Hawaii points to the unimportance of genealogy in Hawaiian life and thought. This is anything but the case. Most sources report that adopters are usually close procreative kin of the natal family,[15] that the latter retain ties with the adopted child, including the right to retrieve him/her,[16] and that adoptive kin relationships involve the "parent," "child," and "sibling" terms with a linguistic marker, indicating nonfocality (equivalent to English *foster mother*, etc.).[17] These same sources translate this marker as "feeding," which squares with new kinship scholarship, though, again, its derivative nature would go unrecognized.

Handy and Pukui (1972: 71) report that an adopted child is describable by an expression they translate as "reared to serve the true children of the family." This not only underscores the nonfocal nature of their subclass – they are not 'true children of the family' –, but, as well, it suggests that they have a lower behavioral status than 'true children.' When a more loving attitude is directed towards the adopted child, the adopting parent is said to be a 'parent making child his own,' another indication of nonfocal status (71). In most instances of this sort the child remains with his/her natal parents (71). Kenn (1939: 47) reports that if an adopted child is not a 'blood relative,' he/she is singled out by a special term suggesting liminal incorporation into the household.

It now needs to be noted that, among the scholars relied upon in this subsection, Kenn and Pukui are native Hawaiians; that there seems to be no disagreement about "the native's point of view" between "native" and foreign anthropologists; and that it is decidedly *not* the "point of view" of the new kinship scholars.

Yup'ik

The Yup'ik are an Inuit people of northwest Alaska who were first brought to the attention of anthropologists by Hughes (1960). More recently they have been studied by Fienup-Riordan (1983, 2001, 2005) and Jolles (2002), the last named a native Yup'ik scholar. This last fact, plus Fienup-Riordan's indebtedness to Schneider and other new kinship scholars in one of her publications on Yup'ik kinship (2001: 229), make the Yup'ik materials especially pertinent in the present context.

Fienup-Riordan (1983: 164) tells us that "consanguineals are held to be related … by the stomach or womb. Siblings born of the same mother with either the same or different fathers are said to be 'of one stomach'". But there is more: "The father's contribution, on the other hand, to the creation and maintenance of the child, is conceptually given in terms of meat, including responsibility for the flesh of the child [and] for the seal meat necessary to grow and maintain it" (164). Which is to say that this latter contribution is conceptualized both in terms of native views of nature, which the old kinship studies emphasize, and in terms of native views of nurture, the domain of the new kinship studies.

Yup'ik kin classification fits Murdock's "derivative bifurcate merging" model. Here is Fienup-Riordan (1983: 145) on the matter:

> [T]he terms for mother's sister and father's brother are etymologically related to those for mother and father respectively … Parallel cousins' children are distinguished by the use of suffixes from one's own children … The terms for stepmother and stepfather are etymologically related to the terms for mother's sister and father's brother respectively … This … may relate to the common practice of adoption by the mother's sister or father's brother, in case of the death of one's own parents or the inability to produce offspring by one's parents' siblings.

Note especially here the "common practice" of adoption by close kin of the parents, something to which I return shortly.

15 Forster (1960: 97); Howard et al. (1970: 24, 32); Kenn (1939: 47). – The maternal grandmother is sometimes mentioned here (Handy and Pukui 1972: 72; Howard et al. 1970: 38), though Goodenough (1970: 404) has rightly pointed out that this likely reflects her rights *simpliciter* rather than adoption in the usual sense.

16 Handy and Pukui (1972: 72); Howard et al. (1970: 26, 32 f., 38, 45); Kenn (1939: 47).

17 Handy and Pukui (1972: 71); Howard et al. (1970: 24, 43); Kenn (1939: 46).

The 'father' term is *aata*, which conforms to Murdock's generalization (1959) that in human languages the initial consonant of the 'father' term is usually a b, p, d, or t (compare, e.g., Yiddish, an entirely unrelated language, *tateh*). The 'father's brother' term is *ataata*, which suggests derivation; hence the father is the focal member of a larger "father" class. Analogous remarks apply to the relationship between the 'mother' (*aana*) and 'mother's sister' (*anaana*) terms (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 146; see also 2005: 192). More generally, primary kin relationships seem to provide the bases for extension in Yup'ik kin classification, as Fienup-Riordan (1983: 148) notes expressly:

> Terminologically few large categories exist grouping close and distant kinsmen. Instead, descriptive terms are used for distant relatives, such as "cross-cousin's wife" and "wife's parallel cousin" … Besides the use of suffixes to differentiate within kin categories, reference to close relatives is made through extensions, even where the appropriate kin terms exist, e.g. "my mother's sister's husband," "my mother's mother."

Moreover, actual siblings are distinguished from parallel cousins by an expression translatable as "woman-related ones" (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 214 f.). First cross-cousins are distinguished from others in this category as 'one's own' in native parlance (215). Fienup-Riordan (2005: 215 f.) also notes native rules of kin term extension, with one of her informants focusing on a married couple and moving outwards according to parent-child and sibling-sibling links. Such extension is also accomplished by knowing how a close kinsman classes a particular individual, i.e., through the internal logic of the system of kin classification (209, 228) – comparable, it would seem, to the patrifiliative and matrifiliative rules I noted for northeast Arnhem Land. Finally, if two men (or two women?) call each other by a certain kin term, their children may use that same term for one another (232).

When a Yup'ik child is born, the mother and the father seclude themselves from the rest of the community for several days (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 111 f.). Fienup-Riordan (2005: 185) generalizes: "The relationship between parent and child was the foundation of Yup'ik social organization. Elders orphaned at a young age attested to the desperation they felt, and even with the emphasis on compassion [among people] they were the first to know want during lean years." Further, we are told that "[s]tepchildren invariably maintain allegiance to their living parent, either father or mother" (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 164). Fienup-Riordan (2005: 186) reports an expression which she translates as "our real (biological) relatives," which applies between siblings and, presumably, between parent and child. A further expression translatable as "become like siblings" is applied to two or more unrelated women married to brothers (2005: 188). Note here the focality of siblings, as well as the process of *likening*, as in English "He was like a father to me."

This likening is applied performatively in several other ways to create a class of people denoted by an expression translatable as "one whom you made a relative or treat like a relative," as opposed to those who are called by a "relational term" (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 198). I take this to mean that, as we have already seen elsewhere, such a term when unmodified pertains to close procreative kin. Quoting an informant, Fienup-Riordan (2005: 198) continues:

> [T]hat [performative kinsman] will not feel sorry for you during desperate times and will not go to you if they do not want to, even if they see your need for help. Your [procreatively-linked] relative [on the other hand] cannot ignore you but would feel compassion for you and help you.

And, in the same vein, another informant reminisces:

> It was *like* the whole village was [procreatively] related. Men worked together building boats and kayaks. Women helped each other [as well]. [Native term, translated as] "It is a way of encouraging closeness …, and those who were like that were *like* those who were [procreatively] related (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 199; emphasis added).

Note again the *likening*, the *modeling*, on procreative kin ties. Similarly, a few pages later we learn that native notions of generosity involved giving foodstuffs normally obtained by men "to a woman who did not have a man as a provider. Our ancestors helped each other that way and [thus] treated each other *like* relatives" (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 204).

Nor is this all. Fienup-Riordan's list of "Yup'ik relational terms" includes one for a "pretend relative," also applied to a "steprelative," and another for an "extended family member," which she translates as "one who *acts like* a relative" (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 212; emphasis added). Another highly pertinent datum is that when Fienup-Riordan asked her informants about kin classification in an open-ended way they began by naming the kin terms for "immediate family (parents, siblings, grandparents)" and only subsequently mentioned the pertinent terms for collateral kin (213–215, 231).

One of the commonest ways of performatively establishing kin-like ties among the Yup'ik is adoption. There is a special expression for an adopted child (and adopting parent?) which consists of the appropriate kin term marked by an expression which Fienup-Riordan (1983: 165) translates

as "what is arranged mended, fixed." Once again the focality of natal kin is apparent. Correspondingly, "the relationship between an adopted child and its natal parents and siblings is maintained," because 'relationship through the stomach' is held to be "inalienable" (165). Finally, "adoption is most often between families already related (i.e. a woman taking the child of either her daughter, son, or sister …" (165). Adoption by the mother's sister seems to be especially common (165), as suggested above.

The Yup'ik also establish kin-like ties through naming; indeed, it would seem that naming can override even the closest consanguineal ties, as when a female child is named for her mother's mother and is, therefore, called 'mother' by her own genetrix. This is part of McKinnon's argument (2005) for a "multiplicity of mothers" in Fourth World kin classification, as contrasted with maternal singularity in the West. Elsewhere (Shapiro 2008: 140–144) I have shown that the other bases for this argument are unfounded, mostly because they show no awareness of the matter of focality. I shall, therefore, confine myself here to the Yup'ik materials.

The first thing to note is that the application of the same kin term on the basis of having the same name as a procreative kinsman in itself assumes the focality of that kinsman, i.e., he or she provides a *base* from which the extension rule applies. The rule can be stated thusly: if an individual has the same name as someone I call X, then I call that individual X (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 153 f.; 2005: 220). This raises the question as to how the basic X came to be called X, and, at least in the case noted in the preceding paragraph, and by McKinnon (2005: 111), this base is supplied by procreative kinship. But even this may be conceding too much. Thus Jolles (2002: 114 f.) cite a case in which an infant boy was named for his recently deceased paternal grandmother – Yup'ik names are not necessarily sex-linked –, and that woman's children at first addressed the boy as 'mother.' But over time this practice was discontinued and, presumably, procreatively-based kin terms were used for the child. In a hypothetical instance put forward by Fienup-Riordan (2001: 231 f.), a boy is named for his deceased paternal grandfather, whose own son – the boy's father – "later laugh[s] when the baby calls him 'son'" (see also Fienup-Riordan 1983: 153 for another such example). Such a reaction suggests an awareness of the fictive character of name-based kin classification, and its own basis in procreative kinship.

I had a comparable experience in northeast Arnhem Land. The wife of a certain man had just given birth to a boy, and since one of my informants – a man whose age at the time I estimated as seventy-five – called the man 'sister's daughter's child,' and since the son of a man so called is himself called *bapa*, my informant announced that he would call the infant by that term. He then chuckled, adding 'I'm an old man and he's a baby, but I call him *bapa*!' If *bapa* is simply a term of "relatedness," as Carsten (2000) would have it, there would have been, I shall guess, no chuckle. But, as I have already shown, the primary meaning of *bapa* is 'father,' and it is surely preposterous, for both us and northeast Arnhem Landers, that a newborn should beget an elderly man.

I suspect from these examples that, when it comes to close procreative kin, and *contra* Fienup-Riordan (1983: 153 f.), kin classification by naming among the Yup'ik does *not* override such classification by procreative links; and that an individual uses *two* sets of rules to assign others to kin classes, one involving naming, the other procreative links: Hughes (1960: 267) seems to suggest this, as does Fienup-Riordan (2005: 232) herself. So, too, does the very logic of kin class extension by naming: if somebody I call X by naming has a child, I call that child Y, regardless of his/her name, because the child of an X is a Y according to ethno-procreative connection (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 153 f.). The Yup'ik appear to play with the idea that only naming is ontologically crucial, only to recognize their own ludic principle. And the fact that they plainly attach great emotional importance to the "reincarnation" of a close kinsman through naming (Fienup-Riordan 2001: 228 and other places) is still more evidence of the importance of such kin in their lives.

Moreover, since at least some names are regarded as magically powerful and, therefore, not to be spoken in everyday conversation, an individual possessing such a name may be addressed and referred to teknonymously, as 'X's parent' or 'X's child' (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 152; 2001: 230; 2005: 219 f.). Again, note the importance of ethno-procreative notions.

I would also suggest that Fienup-Riordan overstates the importance of naming in establishing personal identity among the Yup'ik when she writes that "procreation is not the addition of new persons to the inventory of the universe, but rather the substitution of one for another" (1983: 153). She tells us that an individual has several names, and that each combination is unique (Fienup-Riordan 2001: 225; 2005: 220, 230); hence, even if someone's identity is exclusively name-derived, he or she would perforce be similarly unique. This is precisely her own conclusion at one point (Fienup-Riordan

2005: 230), but it is obscured by the bulk of her argument. Moreover, the same name may be shared by two or more individuals, who, therefore, become what Fienup-Riordan (1983: 151; 2001: 225; 2005: 220) calls "name-fellows," and there is no indication that they are regarded as in any sense the same person. Finally, there is the case noted above in which an infant boy was initially called 'mother' by his own mother because he bore the name of his mother's mother. Here is Jolles (2002: 15) on the matter: "By the end of his first year … his family … ceased to address him with kinship terms evoking his grandmother's presence and considered him *his own small person*, based on the gradual emergence of *his own personality*" (emphases added; see also Fienup-Riordan 2001: 227).

Finally, when travelling to previously unknown areas, an individual identifies himself parentally, as a child of X and/or Y, in order to ingratiate himself with his host (Fienup-Riordan 2005: 226).

Concluding Remarks

What is involved in all these ethnographic instances, but perhaps most profoundly in the Yup'ik case, is *modeling*: new relationships are *likened to* close procreative ones, with the degree of likening varying. The range would seem to be something like from my northeast Arnhem Land informant's mirth at the very thought of considering a newborn boy as his father, to the Yup'ik taking quite seriously the naming principle in kin classification. But even *they* seem to limit this seriousness. All this being so, my main conclusion is that, accordingly, *we* should not take seriously the claim of the new kinship scholars that they achieve "the native's point of view," in contrast to the old kinship studies, supposedly trapped in a "Eurocentric" model. On the contrary, if we attend seriously to how "the natives," including "native" anthropologists, talk about kinship, especially to the semantic distinctions *they* make in kin classification, and, to a lesser extent, their couvade-like notions, it seems clear that the model of the old kinship studies is not "Eurocentric" at all. It also seems clear that people everywhere attach great semantic and behavioral importance to close procreative kinship – so much so that they *liken* other relationships to it.

This last conclusion is of course that of the "old" kinship studies, working above all with the "old" kinship terminologies. Much as the new kinship studies are not new, these terminologies are not old. They are, however, remarkably neglected by the new kinship scholars – something which several of these scholars have admitted,[18] but which they treat as a matter of intellectual fashion. One can, of course, study what one wants to in the field, including "performative" kinship exclusively; and, as I have shown in the body of this essay, this has some ethnographic merit. But when one goes on to make claims about kinship in a particular community, or humanity at large, without the knowledge anthropologists have historically gleaned from the study of systems of kin classification, he or she is on the shakiest of ground.

We should be grateful to Schneider for questioning the assumption of the procreative basis of kinship made by previous scholars. But we should also recognize that his answers were egregiously – and demonstrably – incorrect; and that this is so because he was, apparently, unaware of clarifications in and expansions of the extensionist position, including parallel developments in cognitive science.[19] Why these answers should have been swallowed whole-hog by a generation of kinship scholars is the real question.

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18 E.g., Carsten (2000: 3); Schweitzer (2000: 214); Weston (1997: xiv).

19 Schneider chose to ignore these more nuanced arguments and focus instead on the extension rules, expressed by intimidating quasi-algebraic notation: hence the "virtuoso manipulations" quip. He also failed to see the implications for extensionist theory in the Fijian and Hawaiian materials, all of which were available during his lifetime and which pertain to his primary area of ethnographic expertise (Shapiro 2012).

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