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TRAUTMANN-WHITELEY COMMENT ON D. READ "GENERATIVE CROW-OMAHA TERMINOLOGIES"

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Our Crow-Omaha book (Trautmann and Whiteley, eds. 2012) came out of a 2010 conference at the Amerind Foundation.

The spirit of the conference was to draw together a wide diversity of perspectives on Crow-Omaha kinship terminologies, to see what progress could be made in their interpretation. The conference was conceived (by Whiteley) as a follow-on to the 1993 Maison Suger conference (of Maurice Godelier and associates), which dealt largely with crossness in its many forms, but only partially with Crow-Omaha. We hoped that the Amerind conference would complete the work of the Maison Suger conference by focusing on the interpretation of Crow-Omaha, and that the book that came out of it would stimulate the interest of others, generating further new contributions.

Dwight Read's response to our book, therefore, is exactly the kind of thing we aimed for, as an important new contribution to the literature on Crow-Omaha. Read's formal analysis of kinship terminologies is well known and widely respected, as is his leadership in promoting the formal analysis of kinship through the formation of panels and conferences, and his role in this journal. As in all his work the paper is strongly reasoned and draws upon a knowledge of the literature that is long and deep. All of these are reasons we welcome the piece before us. On the other hand, the spirit of this work is somewhat different from that of our book, engendering in us some reservations. Taking the strengths for granted, we will confine our comment to a couple of things in Read's article with which we take issue.

Generative logic is what Read calls his analysis; and *culturally appropriate* is a phrase he uses to signal his claim that what his analysis works upon resides within, and is not imposed from without, the culture of the *culture-bearers* who are the users of a given kinship terminology.

Generative logic analysis produces abstractions looking more like sculpture than algebra, appealing both for their beauty and their rationality. They are perfectly singular. Kinship terminologies are treated as self-contained wholes, as if they had no neighbors, suspended in history and geography, without a past. In the article before us the Thonga-Ronga (whose language is of the Bantu family) are compared to the Hokha Chin of Myanmar, on the other side of the world, and the Hadza, a very small group of hunter-gathers in distant Tanzania, speaking a language isolate. The overall tendency of the analysis is inexorably particularizing. Rather than making the world more intelligible through showing similarities, its tendency serves to magnify

differences. What looks to be the same is shown to be misleading surface features, hiding different generative logics which, unaccountably, deliver these convergent false likenesses.

There is much to comment on here, but we will confine ourselves here to two topics: Read's criticism of Lounsbury, and the analysis of Thonga-Ronga kinship terminology.

1. Read and Lounsbury

Read acknowledges that equivalence rule formalism introduced by Floyd Lounsbury (1964) was groundbreaking as a way to account for properties of terminologies, but is descriptive rather than explanatory since the equivalence rules are not culturally salient (Read pp. 3-4).

The assessment is uncharacteristically ungenerous. There are two issues here that require comment: the description/explanation distinction, and the concept of cultural salience.

As to description/explanation, anthropologists have long since become convinced that there is no absolute distinction here, but a partnership; that a good description, indeed, *is* a good explanation; that a better description, a "thick description", is a better explanation. This conception we owe to Clifford Geertz, developing it for anthropology out of the work of the philosopher Gilbert Ryle (Geertz 1973: 3-32, "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture"). The criterion by which we judge a description, then, is exactly its ability to improve our understanding of the object of study, its power of explanation.

Lounsbury's analysis was inaugurated in two classic papers published virtually simultaneously in 1964, one of them devoted to Seneca Iroquois and crossness, the other to Crow-Omaha skewing (Lounsbury 1964a, b). They address the very things that Morgan learned to his great surprise, that served to launch kinship analysis as a field of study and anthropology as a discipline. Morgan learned that for the Iroquois the father's brother "was equally a father" and the mother's sister a mother (crossness), and that for certain other Native American groups the son of an uncle was an uncle (MBS = MB) (skewing). Lounsbury's rules of "same-sex sibling merging" formalizes the nature of crossness, and the "skewing rule" that of skewing in its several forms. One of the gains of his Crow-Omaha paper was that his analysis enabled him to distinguish with great clarity four distinct kinds of Crow skewing, and four of Omaha.

Another outstanding example of the fruitfulness of this approach, from the first of these papers, delivers one result of the careful comparison that the formalization made possible, from the moment of its appearance: the hitherto unattended difference between Iroquois and Dravidian crossness. Lounsbury states that while he became acquainted with the fact that Iroquois might have "fathers" and "maternal uncles" in any clan, so that predictions of relations through the matrilineal clans were often false, "my colleague Leopold Pospisil was finding out the same thing for the Kapauku Papuans" (of West Irian in New Guinea). "My astonishment at discovering the real principle operative in the reckoning of bifurcation in an Iroquois-type kinship system was matched

by his. It was contrary to all of the expectations to which we had been led by the anthropological theoretical writings on the subject." (1964a: 1079, fn. 4)

The consequences of this important finding were many, starting with the revision of theoretical understanding on this point, from which we may estimate the value of Lounsbury's intervention. New forms crossness were found, beginning with Reay, in whose earlier work on the Kuma it was now seen that the type of crossness was different from Dravidian and Iroquois (Reay 1959). Lounsburian analysis was extended to resolve some of the questions about actual Dravidian kinship of South India and Sri Lanka, and to trace the deeper time-depth of Dravidian there (Trautmann 1981). The Maison Suger conference took up analysis of crossness at great depth. In the conference volume Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1998) identified eight actual types of crossness. Franklin Tjon Sie Fat undertook a mathematical assessment of Trautmann's Lounsbury-style rules for Dravidian, and devised a hypercube by which formal relations among 16 types of crossness could be visualized in the form of a small number (maximum four) of transformational "steps" separating any two types from one another (Tjon Sie Fat 1998; Godelier et al. 1998: 11-12, 18-25). Through analysis of neighboring societies in a single contiguous region of North America, that of the Great Lakes, Trautmann and Robert Barnes (1998) were able to show the close juxtaposition of systems with crossness of Dravidian and Iroquois kinds, and skewing. These and indeed all the contributions to the conference may be said to have been stimulated by the Lounsburian analysis and the better understanding of Iroquois and Dravidian that he supplied.

One must add the work of Harold Scheffler, his article surveying kinship systems of Melanesia (1971), his valuable structural typology of kinship systems (1972), his book surveying kinship systems of Australia giving Lounsburian rules for all the kinship systems examined (1978), and his collaboration with Lounsbury, on Sirionó (1971). The formalization of Lounsbury's rules by Sydney Gould (Gould 2000) should also be mentioned (regarding its specific Crow-Omaha explanatory value, see, e.g., Whiteley 2012). Scheffler, in David Kronenfeld's (2009:129) terms, became a "spokesman for a kind of Lounsburian "school"." However loose-limbed and elective, that "school" included some rigorous analysts of kinship systems, including A. Kimball Romney, Eugene Hammel, Charles Frake, Paul Friedrich, Harold Conklin, and Kronenfeld himself. Their "Lounsburian" contributions, uniting kinship formalism with empirical social and cultural contexts, can hardly be considered only "descriptive." For example, speaking of Lounsbury's treatment of conjunctive definitions vis-à-vis kin-terms, Kronenfeld (2009:121) emphasized "..the fact that Lounsbury could find one and only one conjunctively defined definition of cross-parallel in Seneca is nontrivial; and the complexity of that definition argues strongly for the social and cultural importance of whatever it represents." In other words, Lounsbury's formal analysis of Seneca-Iroquois crossness disclosed an otherwise obscured but robust structural underpinning of Seneca social relations: surely, this is precisely what constitutes genuine anthropological explanation. Or, in countering Needham's critique of Lounsbury's genealogical-extensionist convictions, "Lounsbury's assumptions are reasonable not because of his metaphysical or sociological beliefs but because empirically they work where nothing else does" (Kronenfeld

2009:125). They work exactly because of their heuristic, i.e., *explanatory*, capacity in application to actual ethnological phenomena, not because they entail mere description.

Finally, an article in this journal by Mauro Barbosa de Almeida (2010) gives a powerful new analysis of Dravidian crossness that builds upon Lounsbury-like rules by Trautmann (1981), showing yet again how Lounsbury's work continues to grow and extend its reach through the work of succeeding generations.

Dwight Read himself should be added to the list, and this very paper of his. He says (p. 24),

> The Fox example is of particular interest since their terminology has a qualitatively different generative logic than does the Thonga terminology, even though both are considered to be Omaha terminologies. The difference can be seen in the fact that the equivalence rules used by Lounsbury (1964) to generate the genealogical categories corresponding to the Fox kin terms do not generate the genealogical categories for the Thonga-Ronga kin terms. This qualitative difference traces back to the fact that, as will be shown next, the Fox terminology, with its Omaha skewing, can be derived from an Iroquois terminology.

Remove skewing from Fox, and a fully-formed terminology of Iroquois type (i.e. with crossness) remains. This confirms what we have said in our book, and it is pleasing to see Read show that Lounsbury leads us thither; we agree. Thus skewing is an overlay upon a system with crossness. By implication, it confirms the value of regional comparison, in the degree to which crossness and skewing may be found in the kinship terminologies of adjacent peoples, forming among them a field of variation. We are happy to think we have found common ground here.

None of our discussion of Lounsbury should be construed to imply that we think his two 1964 articles on equivalence rules are beyond criticism. Our point is that their contribution, as measured by the subsequent work that they have stimulated, is of the first importance--as we may see even in Read's article, in which reference to Lounsbury recurs throughout.

Criticisms that have been made of Lounsbury's equivalence rules involve such matters as genealogism or biologism, extensionism and the commitment to polysemy as its theoretical anchor, and metaphor. It is our view that these criticisms are misplaced. Lounsbury embraced extensionism as a theoretical underpinning for his sets of extension rules for kinship terminologies. There is nothing outlandish about the idea that some meanings are extensions of other, prior ones, an idea we encounter often, whenever we open a dictionary, for example. But in this context it has proven controversial, and Lounsbury seems to have recognized at the outset that it would. Our view is that there are no stakes here, and that one may be perfectly agnostic on the question and yet find the extension rules useful, even indispensable, as tools extending knowledge of kinship terminologies as ordered sets. Our view is that the extension rules are neither biological nor genealogical, but essentially pedagogical in nature, serving as a means to render unfamiliar terms

into familiar ones, and in so doing to make the structure of the different logics apparent.[1] We take them to be *translations*. In doing so we refuse to be scared off by the analysis of David Schneider(1984), which we consider to be extreme and, in the end, self-defeating, while acknowledging the impact his intervention has had in the promotion of a cultural approach at the expense of a mathematical one. If extension rules of the kind Lounsbury invented serve the purpose of shedding light upon the problem Morgan posed, by creating translation rules that properly predict kinship terms in systems with crossness and skewing that culture-bearers would affirm, they can hardly lack cultural appropriateness in any meaningful sense. Just as we would presume equivalence of some kind among different analyses that lead to correct results, we think the same would hold in respect to correctness of results as between a kind of formal analysis and the users of a given kinship terminology.

Let us close this consideration of Lounsbury with a dissent over the matter of metaphor. Lounsbury had included only human kin in his analysis of Seneca, not the personal beings of mythology, among other things. He is scrupulous in being transparent upon this point:

> I should confess at once that I have not included *all* of the meanings of the Iroquois kinship terms in the tabulation of data given in the paper. Not included, for example, are *the moon* in the list of denotata of the "grandmother" term, or *the thunderers* amongst the "grandfathers", or *the earth* as our "mother", or *the sun* as our "elder brother". Nor have I included the metaphoric uses of the "brother" and "cousin", "father" and "son", "elder brother" and "younger brother" terms, in ceremonial discourse, for divisions of the Longhouse and of the political confederacy of the Six Nations; or that of the "uncle" term for the Bigheads (certain masked dancers at the Midwinter ceremonies) or, formerly, for prisoners at the stake. There is no difficulty here in identifying these as "marginal" or "transferred" meanings, to use Bloomfield's terms.

Hallowell notably (though not in reference to Lounsbury) took the other tack, choosing to regard "other-than-human persons," such as thunderers and others whom one may encounter only in dreams, as on the same ontological plane as human persons for the Ojibwa (1960). McKinley, in a classic paper, agrees with this, and argues against Schneider that social kinship uses biological kinship as a metaphor; kinship is metaphor all the way up, one may say of his view (2001.)

Writing more directly in criticism of Lounsbury, James J. Fox published an analysis of the kinship system of the Rotinese of eastern Indonesia and Timor couched as an alternative to Lounsbury's approach, though a respectful one.[2] It is called "Sister's child as plant" (Fox 1971), and it thickly

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[1] Arizona University Press impressed on us the importance of keeping the conference book accessible for students, which led us to shape the text with pedagogy in mind; hence the English-language renderings in the book of Dravidian, Iroquois, Crow and Omaha terminologies. This work has convinced us that pedagogy and translation for purposes of understanding across cultural difference is what is in play here, not biologism.

[2] Fox (1971: 219) calls Lounsbury's Seneca Iroquois paper (1964a) "a clearly important and deservedly reprinted paper."

interprets the role of mother's brother toward the sister's child who is conceptualized as a kind of plant that has to be nurtured by the mother's brother. Instead of limiting the object of analysis to a bare vocabulary of kinship terms, relating only to human beings, Fox explains the social-structural, ritual and poetical aspects of the relation in great and loving detail. Briefly, a person must have a singular mother's brother, called the "stem mother's brother" or "mother's brother of origin" (the plant metaphor of a tree trunk) to serve five ritual performances from marriage to death. The mother's brother will in the normal case be older than the individual in question, so that should the mother's brother die before the sister's child, as will often occur, it is necessary to have a succession from among a large category of mother's brothers. In the general case the determination of the "mother's brother of origin" will be the mother's eldest brother, and his successor will be his eldest son; but the large class of mother's brothers from which this singular individual is drawn will be the whole patrilineage of the mother. From his analysis we may say, as Fox does not but as will be evident to someone who has read the classic articles of Lounsbury, that the Rotinese kinship system has both crossness (FB = F; MZ = M) and Omaha skewing (MBS = MB). The abstraction of these from the thick description of the relation and Fox's rendering of the liturgy of the ritual performances in which the mother's brother of origin acts, with its abundant imagery encompassing many species of plants, is immensely rich. Fox's expressions of respect for the Lounsbury articles in question seems to imply that he took his approach and that of Lounsbury to be, not as right to wrong, but equivalent in some sense; more exactly, as thick to thin. The same may be said, we think, of the approach of Hallowell and McKinley.

2. Thonga-Ronga as Omaha

The splendid ethnography of the Thonga people by the Swiss Protestant missionary-ethnographer Fr. Henri-Alexandre Junod, *The life of a South African Tribe* (2 vols), was first published in 1912. The Thonga nation (Junod uses "tribe") comprises six regional dialect "groups": Ronga,[3] Hlanganu, Djonga, Bila, Nwalungu, and Hlengwe. Thonga as a whole are fairly closely related to several other nearby Southeastern Bantu peoples (notably Chopi, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Venda, Tonga, and Ndau [spellings modernized]), whom Junod repeatedly references in his comparative treatment of Thonga-Ronga kinship terms.

Read gives a generative-logic analysis of Thonga-Ronga kinship terminology, resulting in an overall diagram. Comparison focuses upon *kokwana*, and its reciprocal sets, showing the wide semantic range of the word, which combines grandparents and mother's brother, well beyond the existing notion of Omaha. For comparison he invokes Hokha Chin of Myanmar and Hadza of Tanzania, as we have said, as well as Fox of North America. He argues that Thonga-Ronga is Omaha, but of a completely different kind than that of Fox (or, for that matter, other North American examples, including the Omaha themselves), implying a completely different generative

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[3] Junod's specific reference in comparative passages is to this group, i.e., as "Thonga-Ronga," alternatively just "Ronga," and occasionally "Ba-Ronga."

logic. As we have said, he finds Fox kinship is a complete terminology of Iroquois type, on top of which Omaha skewing has been added as a final layer—which agrees with the position we have taken in our Crow-Omaha book.

Comparison of widely disparate terminologies is a questionable decision. One key conclusion of the Amerind volume is that the close study of variation among the kin terminologies of neighboring groups is especially fruitful, especially in the first instance, rather than treating instances as self-contained objects.

Surely the most apposite direct comparisons for assessing the generative-logic approach would be those same Southeastern Bantu kin-terminologies that Read's source Junod relies on directly— and that use many of the same terms, though in variant fashion. Read's dependence on the first edition of Junod's work does not serve him well here. That edition contains intermittent comparisons with cognate kin-term usages among (non-Ronga) Thonga cases and other neighboring societies (Junod 1912:217-240). But Junod revised his book and issued it as a second edition (1927), in which he supplies excellent materials for exactly that kind of investigation. Here, not only does Junod (1927:232-236) offer more expansive remarks on some key kin-terms for the Omaha question (especially *kokwana*, *ntukulu*, *malume*, and *mupsyana*), he also includes comparative kin-term tables in a supplementary Appendix IV (1927: 496-503). Thonga-Ronga kin-terms are listed side-by-side with a set of neighboring cases: Thonga-Djonga, Chopi, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Venda, Tonga, and Ndau. These show many identical or cognate kin-terms with Thonga-Ronga, though with variable kin-type applications. Some variations suggest Omaha skewing (Chopi, Ndau, Tonga) and—crucially—others only Iroquois crossness, and no skewing (Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Venda). This is similar to the pattern found in the Great Lakes region of North America, of which Fox is one of the Omaha-type cases (Trautmann and Barnes 1998).

Read uses *kokwana* as the primary Thonga-Ronga term diagnostic of Omaha skewing, drawing on Junod's intermittent indications that this term may be applied to members of different generations in the matrilateral patriline. However, *kokwana* is much more encompassing, and as Read points out, Junod characterized the "proper essential"[4] meaning of *kokwana* as "paternal grandfather and all the ancestors on the father's side" - not an Omaha equation at all (as opposed to MF = MB = MBS). In Ronga usage overall, *kokwana* is used for the following kin-types: FF, MF, FM, MM, MB, "all male members of the mother's family" (including "brothers, fathers, and uncles"), and ♀MBW (Junod 1912:217-240 passim; 1927:232-236, 496-497, 500-501). If *kokwana* is the pivotal term to identify Omaha skewing down a matrilateral patriline, application to all these kin-types is puzzling. Polysemy transecting gender, descent, and affinity render the Omaha reading selective to say the least. We do not say there are no Omaha components (the MF = MB equation is noteworthy), but hardly in a simplex fashion that justifies straight comparison with the Fox system.

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[4] How Junod reached that conclusion is impossible to know empirically or analytically.

While Read concentrates on *kokwana* as Thonga-Ronga's Omaha hinge, he virtually excludes the more salient term *malume* (it appears in a brief quoted passage, but is otherwise absent from Read's discussion and tables), evidently treating it as a mere alternative to *kokwana*. Read even headlines a section on *kokwana* as "the mother's brother kin-term." Yet for Junod, *malume* is clearly the primary Ronga mother's brother term (Junod 1927:501), and in usage contains a diagnostic Omaha skewing equation, i.e., MB = MBS:

> The Ronga dialect makes a distinction between the kokwana, maternal grandfather, and malume, mother's brother; but people often call the malume kokwana. In the Northern clans the *uterine nephews*, viz. the sons of my sister, are always called   ntukulu which is the term corresponding to [i.e., reciprocal with] kokwana . . . ;   amongst   the Ba-Ronga, they bear a special name-*mupsyana*-which seems to be becoming   obsolete, being often replaced by ntukulu (Junod 1912:226-227)

In Junod's second revised edition, the comparative kin-term tables (1927:501) list *malume* as the only Ronga kin-term for MB, and it has close equivalents in almost all other languages of the comparison group except Chopi. Indeed Chopi is the *only* case where *kokwana* is cited as the MB term (for the Thonga-Djonga--but *not* Thonga-Ronga--the tables show *kokwana* as an alternate MB term to *malume*). And for Chopi, Junod's tables show a multiplicity of kin-type equations for *kokwana*: FF = MF = FM = MM = GGF = GGM = MB = MBW = MBS = MBSW. Neglecting *malume* (and its Ronga reciprocal *mupsyana*), and subordinating the non-Omaha aspects of *kokwana* to foreground only the oblique lineal equations (MF = MB = MBS) requires more explanation than Read provides. This appears in even sharper relief when we look at Chopi usages of *kokwana*: how and why does Chopi kin-term logic differ from its cognate Ronga applications? If the generative-logic argument is to prove persuasive, these questions must be addressed.

Our work confirmed Lévi-Strauss on the significance of marriage alliance for Crow-Omaha systems. These "semi-complex" structures entail an opening out, or dispersal of marriage alliances from crossness structures of more elementary form (Dravidian [Type A] and Iroquois [Type B]). Again, Junod's second edition provides important additional material that show Thonga-Ronga would profit from this perspective:

> What about the *children of the malume*, my cousins, or rather my cross-cousins, sons and daughters of my mother's brothers . . . ? In Zulu, Sutho, Pedi, there is a special term to indicate this relation, (mzala, motsoala, mudzwala, muzwala). And the main feature of the family system in those tribes is that a cousin has a prior right to marry the daughter of his maternal uncle,[5] his mzala. Amongst the Thongas there is nothing of the kind. The special term does not exist except in the Maputju clan, at the Southern extremity of Thonga territory, where it is met with in the form of *ntale*

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[5] i.e., prescriptive matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, suggesting a Dravidian-type equation MBD = W.

(corresponding to mzala, according to the law of phonetic permutation). . . . But the right of marrying this cousin is not recognized in the Thonga tribe. . . . [However] When the special relation of cross-cousins has been more or less forgotten [sic], marriage could take place between them [after a ceremony "killing" - i.e., "neutralizing" - the kin relation]. . .

This being so, how do cross-cousins behave toward each other in the Thonga system? . . . . As regards the son of my malume, he is also a malume or a kokwana, though he may be of the same age or even younger than I, *because he belongs to the family from which we take wives* . . . . (Junod 1927:234-235, emphasis added[6])

Junod's characterization here is critical, and helps explain Thonga-Ronga kin-terminology as it is seen from the vantage of marriage rules. Unwittingly Junod's contradictory remarks hint at the contradictory alliance imperatives of Crow-Omaha systems (McKinley 1971a, b) to both preserve (formally prohibited) elementary marriage exchange and to disperse marriages throughout a larger social field. In this regard Thonga corroborates our sense (Trautmann and Whiteley 2012) of Crow-Omaha as a development upon Iroquois crossness and its elementary exchange associations. And in sociogeographic space, the transition among North American Central Algonquian systems in a north-south vector from Dravidian to Iroquois to Omaha kin-terminologies (Trautmann and Barnes 1998) is relevant here. Zulu, Sotho, and Pedi are evidently the systems with Iroquois crossness and elementary exchange structures (the *mzala* term); hidden within Junod's remarks, it appears the Ronga "Omaha" element of *malume* especially includes persistent matrilateral cross-cousin marriages (indexing "the family from which we take wives," notwithstanding a formal proscription), as well as more dispersed marriage alliances.

In fine, if the *kokwana-ntukulu* (basically, GP-GC) or Read's neglected *malume-mupsyana/ntukulu* (basically, MB-ZS) reciprocal pairs that provide the Omaha hinge for Thonga-Ronga are to genuinely reflect a "generative logic," Read's argument should be tested against the operation of cognate terms in neighboring societies. The variation, including the absence of Omaha connotations for several cases, clearly calls for these kin-term sets to be considered as transitions upon a common base of crossness, consistent with the findings of our Crow-Omaha book. The purportedly distinctive generative logic in the Ronga case needs qualifying by its variations among closely related peoples and languages. Moreover, the apparent operation of marriage exchange in the Ronga case, and its contrast with explicit cross-cousin marriage prescription in the Zulu, Sotho, and Pedi cases, seems undeniably important here as elsewhere in global Crow-Omaha systems.

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[6] In the first edition, the abbreviated passage (Junod 1912:228-229) inter alia lacks the phrase "or rather my cross-cousins" in the opening sentence, and "because he belongs to the family from which we take wives" in the last sentence.

3. The thick and the thin of kinship

Schneider had it wrong: the problem with "kinship algebra", which he considered the enemy of cultural study, was not *biologism*, but *abstraction*, which pares away and simplifies the object of study to make it intelligible and comparable. It was the thinness of the object prepared for formal analysis, like tissue prepared by several operations (thinly sliced, stained . . .) to be put upon a slide for microscopic inspection, that has been the source of objection from those committed to a cultural approach thickly described. We who believe in the continuing value of formal analysis of kinship need to show that it is not in competition with, but is complementary to and supportive of, the "cultures of relatedness" approach, and the thickness of analysis that entails.

Readers of our book on Crow-Omaha will find the concluding discussion ("Crow-Omaha, in thickness and in thin") speaks to the issue in detail. Here we will only state briefly our sense of how Thonga-Ronga kinship terminology may best be made a useful part of the larger discussion. First, base it upon the best data, namely the details of the revised second edition of 1927. Second, compare it to neighbor systems. Only after, engage in comparison with distant systems of other world regions.

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