

ISSUE INTRODUCTION

Fadwa El Guindi
Senior Co-Editor

Dwight Read
Senior Co-Editor

***Abstract:** This, the second issue of the journal *Kinship*, features a major article, “Crow-Omaha Kinship: Revitalizing a Problem or Generating a Solution?,” in which the author, German Dziebel (USA), argues that the Crow-Omaha terminologies should not be viewed on a case-by-case basis but from a systems perspective. The article is followed by five comments that discuss the issues raised in the article, followed by the author's Reply to the comments. The issue also includes the English translation of an important Russian article on Crow-Omaha terminologies referenced in the Dziebel article. Finally, there is a review of the film, *In My Mother's House*, that connects the present life of the film maker in the United States with her Italian and Eritrean past through her kin ties.*

This, the second issue of the journal *Kinship*, features a major article, “Crow-Omaha Kinship: Revitalizing a Problem or Generating a Solution?”, in which the author, German Dziebel (USA), argues that the Crow-Omaha terminologies should not be viewed on a case-by-case basis but from a systems perspective that invokes anthropological and linguistic approaches and takes into account semantic, etymology and speech pragmatic approaches to the study of kinship terminologies. Following the article are five invited critical comments written by Bradley Ensor (USA), Vanessa Lea (Brazil), Robert Parkin (United Kingdom), Dwight Read (USA) and Thomas R. Trautmann & Peter M. Whiteley (USA), and a reply to the comments by the article’s author. The goal is to create a space that enables and invokes debate and discussion without building a particular structured form for submissions. The process of submission for this particular article is a good example. It began as an extended review of a book. But the co-editors saw in it a platform on which debate invoking central issues in kinship terminologies could be built. So, they encouraged the author to modify it very slightly to become an article to be sent out to anthropologists working on the same issues brought up in the article. It ended up being a space for insightful critique.

It is possible that the issues raised in this platform will lead to further discussion and debate in reaction to the comments and reply. This would be fine. The goal of the journal is to enable

scholarly engagement with kinship issues. We want to meet this goal without rigidly fixing a particular form for submission.

Another goal we have for the journal is to make it international. This has been symbolized clearly in the design of the journal cover. Difference in language or country of origin should not be a barrier to scholarly discussion and debate. Interestingly, this same article and the comments it invoked have made evident this quality as well. In his article, Dziebel includes a Russian reference of significance for discussion focusing on Crow-Omaha terminologies. The work referenced is by Vladimir Popov (Russia) a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and is published in Russian, hence has not been accessible to most western scholars. Two of the commentators wanted to read an English translation of the original Russian work. So, one of the commentators commissioned an English translation that was sent to Prof. Popov in Russia for approval. The approved English translation was then made accessible to the commentators. The co-editors also decided that it would be valuable for anthropological knowledge, in general, to publish both the original Russian article and its translation into English. In this way, the whole project has ended up as a valuable contribution to kinship study while meeting exactly the scholarly goals set for the journal *Kinship*. The key quality being met here is flexibility versus a rigid structure regarding the form submissions should take on. So, a contribution intended originally to be a book review ended up becoming an article with comment and reply, and the citation of a Russian work in the article led to the inclusion in this issue of *Kinship* a translation approved by its Russian author. This is, indeed, a good way to build kinship knowledge and to keep kinship issues updated with new analysis, new ethnography and new theory.

This issue of *Kinship* also includes a review written by Alexander Moore (USA) of the film, *In My Mother's House*, filmed by the cultural anthropologist Lina Fruzzetti who is a Full Professor at Brown University. The film explores her kinship ties that link her life in the United States in the present with her family background in the past in both Italy and Eritrea, where her father worked in the Italian colonial administration. The film is “a very moving life history memoir, blessed with startling footage, especially footage of Lina’s family scenes of East Africa” (p, 145).