

# Introduction to Volume 3, Issue 1

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## Introduction

We are happy to introduce Volume 3, Issue 1 of *Kinship*. Firstly, it is the first post-COVID issue and that says much already. Secondly, this new journal, called *Kinship* and which we co-founded, continues to be strong and creative. When we extended our Kinship Circle network to beyond the United States, it became evident to us that serious kinship research, is alive and well around the world. Our network began with a mailing list which we then called The Kinship Circle. The network has never been institutionalized: no fees, no membership, no elections, no committees, in other words, just a focus on kinship research and scholarship. And this format has worked. The Kinship Circle has expanded worldwide and recently sponsored its own journal, called *Kinship*, published through the University of California eScholarship program. We are pleased to report that the most recent data from eScholarship shows that *Kinship* is doing very well, according to access rates, downloads, etc.

The aim and scope of the journal is simple. From the journal 's webpage:

The journal is dedicated to the study of kinship in all of its facets, is international in scope ... and offers a scholarly site for research publications dedicated to the ethnography and theory of kinship ... in its four sub-disciplinary components - the biological, the sociocultural, the archeological and the linguistic. *Kinship* is ... one of only a few worldwide, [journals] dedicated to the study of, and research on, the whole of kinship ... considered both as an experientially bounded, culturally identifiable sphere of human life differentiated from all other societal relations and as a construct with universal analytical value distinguishable by well-defined criteria....

## Publication Report

In this issue of *Kinship* we are publishing a Publication Report called *Chapeau Kinship* written by two representatives of the Equipe de Parenté of the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale du Collège de France. The Equipe has been masterfully and creatively steered by Klaus Hamberger for over 10 years and who led the Atelier d'Analyse Anonyme. We were fortunate to be able to attend the Atelier in person several times and to join virtually when we could not.

The Report briefly summarizes the imaginative avatar kinship project, started in 2018 that has just now appeared as a publication in the French journal *Terrain*. We, the Senior Co-editors of *Kinship*, have been involved in this project from its start, but given its character of authors represented by an avatar with a name reflecting the concept of kinship expressed by the scholars making up the avatar but whose identity is not revealed, we cannot disclose which avatar 'we secretly embody'.

The entire project is organized around the question: Can we think about kinship without reference to procreation? If yes, how? If not, why not? This question is further broken down into five sub-questions: (1) the conceptualization of the link between kinship and procreation, (2) the role of non-procreative kinship, (3) the role of the incest prohibition in kinship relations, (4) the status of kinship terminologies in the study of kinship relations and behavior, and (5) the heuristic scope of the intercultural variation in kinship systems.

The project avatars are:

Hominidae, Paratio, Generatio, Kingen, Correlationnel, Sexus Nexus, AnthropOïkos & Comparator.

The scholars making up these avatars are:

Olivier Allard, Mauro W. B. de Almeida, Laurent Barry, Laurent Berger, Juliana Caruso, Diane De Morais, Anna Dessertine, Fadwa El Guindi, Maurizio Esposito La Rossa, Pietro Fornasetti, Corinne Fortier, Laurent Gabail, Klaus Hamberger, Michael Houseman, Vanessa R. Lea, Clara Hyun-Jung Lee, Diego Madi Dias, Leandro Mahalem de Lima, Delphine Manetta, Noémie Merleau-Ponty, Aude Michelet, Marika Moisseeff, Ismaël Moya, Enric Porqueres i Gené, Dwight W. Read and Charles Stépanoff.

To make it convenient for our readers, the constituent content of the avatar structure, expressed in the form of the motion advanced by each avatar, is listed below along with a link to the relevant section of the project report published in *Terrain*. The avatars and their motions are as follows:

Motion de Hominidae: La parenté comme interface entre phylo- et ontogenèse

Motion de Paratio : The deep history of kinship takes us back to procreation, but procreation is not the story of kinship

Motion de Generatio : Comment peut-on être parents ?

Motion de Kingen : Kinship philosophizing gender

Motion de Correlationnel : Parenté et corps relationnel

Motion de Sexus Nexus : Hétéronomie de la parenté

Motion de AnthropOïkos : Les relations de parenté dans et par l'espace

Motion de Comparator : La parenté comme vecteur de comparaison

Pietra Peneque is the avatar for the two anonymous co-authors of the project article published in *Terrain* and who were the creative drivers and managers of the project.

After reviewing the motions offered by the avatars and discussing when there is agreement and where there is disagreement, Pietra Peneque concludes:

... les questions qu'a soulevées le débat des avatars sont pour partie très anciennes, et les réponses qu'il a avancées ne sont certainement pas définitives. En effet, l'objectif de cette rencontre animée n'est ni de déplacer ni de clore la controverse sur la parenté. Il s'agit plutôt de la redémarrer, en la sortant du carcan des dichotomies manichéennes dans lesquelles des polémiques académiques de plus en plus polarisées et politisées l'ont enfermée. ... À aucun moment ne se sont formés deux camps clairement opposés l'un à l'autre. *Une fois libérée des enjeux personnels, institutionnels et militants communément attachés aux noms propres, la confrontation des idées et des arguments auxquels les avatars ont prêté leur personnalité retrouve spontanément toute sa diversité* [emphasis added]. C'était le sens de l'exercice : restituer au débat sur la parenté la complexité qui le rend passionnant et fécond. Si cette expérience permet de nourrir chez l'un ou l'autre l'envie d'explorer plus avant ce paysage théorique polymorphe et plein de surprises, plutôt que de se contenter de choisir son camp, elle aura atteint son but – surtout, elle pourra se poursuivre, car l'auberge de Pietra Peneque ne ferme jamais. Parenté !

**Google translation:** ...the questions raised by the avatars debate are in part very old, and the answers it has put forward are certainly not definitive. Indeed, the purpose of this heated encounter is neither to displace nor end the kinship controversy. It is rather a question of restarting it, taking it out of the shackles of the Manichean dichotomies in which increasingly polarized and politicized academic polemics have locked it up. ... At no time have two camps clearly opposed to each other formed. *Once freed from the personal, institutional and militant issues commonly attached to proper names, the confrontation of ideas and arguments to which the avatars have lent their personality spontaneously regains all its diversity* [emphasis added]. This was the meaning of the exercise: to restore to the debate on kinship the complexity that makes it fascinating and fruitful. If this experience allows one or the other to nourish the desire to further explore this polymorphic theoretical landscape full of surprises, rather than simply choosing sides, it will have achieved its goal – above all, it can continue, because the Pietra Peneque hostel never closes. Kinship!

As Senior Co-editors of the journal *Kinship*, we see in the summary of the avatar project made by Pietra Peneque the same goals that we have for *Kinship*, namely to provide a forum in which the debate goes in directions established by developing kinship ideas, theory and data and not by biases due to individual pedigrees and institutional standing.

We are proud to share information on this creative avatar project through our Journal *Kinship*. We invited our 'anonymous' colleagues who make up the avatar Pietra Peneque -- themselves prominent kinship anthropologists residing in Paris -- to Café Hugo, overlooking the historical and beautiful square of the Place des Voges, for coffee and discussion about our suggestion for Pietra Peneque to provide a summary, for our journal *Kinship*, of the project going from idea, to implementation, to publication in the journal *Terrain*. The ambience was right and

we all agreed that a brief submission of a report about the project with links to appropriate parts of the *Terrain* publication would be useful. *Chapeau* to kinship indeed!

### Research Article

In addition to the Publication Report this issue of *Kinship* includes a research article co-authored by Vanessa R. Lea and Andrés Pablo Salanova that discusses the triadic kin terms that have been documented as part of kinship terminologies in the Brazilian parts of the Amazon and in the west and northwest parts of Australia, though in different ways in these two regions. Lea and Salanova use the expression *triadic kin terms* to refer to terms whose linguistic construction identifies both the kinship relation of addressee and speaker to the person who is the referent in their discourse. Thus, when a man's sister, as speaker, addresses her brother and refers to his nephew who also happens to be her son, she uses a triadic term indicating that the boy she is talking about is not only a nephew to her brother, but is her son, thereby identifying not only the kin relation of the addressee (her brother) to the referent (who is the nephew of her brother) but also the kin relation of that referent to her (namely that the referent is her son). In contrast, when the English kin term nephew is used by a man's sister to refer to her brother's nephew, this only identifies that the nephew is the son of *someone* who is the addressee's sibling but this does not identify the relation of that someone to speaker. Lea and Salanova point out that in most societies, rather than developing a system of triadic kin terms to identify both the kin relation of the addressee and the speaker to the referent, personal names have the same function. By referring to her brother's nephew by his name, her brother then knows, based on, for example, an event such as the nephew's birth ceremony, his relation and the relation of the nephew to his sister.

Lea and Salanova's comment brings out the important fact that one of the functions of kinship terms is to make it possible for speaker to work out a currently unknown kinship relation of addressee to referent— a task, they comment, that can be done with personal names due to contexts in which an individual's identity with a personal name is linked to a kinship network in which that person is embedded. As they discuss, this can also be done by using the instance of a kin relation to identify other kin relations by using the fact that a kinship terminology is not simply a list of kin terms used to express the kin relation of one person to another, but is a logically ordered, hence computational, system that makes it possible to work out kin relations between person A and B by reference to the relation each of A and B has to a third person C.

Both triadic kin terms and the kin terms that make up most kinship terminologies involve three persons, but in different ways. Kinship terminologies formed as logically organized computational systems enable a currently unknown kin relation of A to B to be computed, using kin term products, from the kin relation of A to C and the kin relation of B to C. But this requires first determining, empirically, a third person C for whom the kin relations of A to C and of B to C are both known.

With triadic kin terms the kin term relation of both B (the addressee) and of A (the speaker) to C are already part of the triadic kin term. Thus, one simply needs to know a triadic kin term that A (the speaker) uses to refer to person C in order to know the kin term relation of A to C and of B (the addressee) to C, and from that information the relation of A to B may be determined.

The triadic kin terms provide more information about kinship relations than do the kin terms in most kinship terminologies but at the cost of replacing the logic of structure with factual information. This places a greater demand on memory recall, which may be the reason why triadic terms are rare despite their utility in conveying more extensive information about kinship relations.

### **Request for Comments**

Finally, we wish to convey that any scholars of kinship reading this issue or earlier ones are encouraged to comment in writing on any part or aspect of the journal issues and to submit their comment for publication consideration. Engagement with kinship issues is highly encouraged. Until the second issue of Volume 3 appears in July, continue kinshipping.