

FAMILY TRANSITIONS AND THE PRACTICE OF BRIDESERVICE IN THE UPPER ANKHU KHOLA: A TAMANG CASE¹

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To any long term resident of the country, the fact of striking social change, both-planned and unplanned, in Nepal is as obvious as a drive through the Kathmandu Valley or a walk through nearly any village. New roads, the extension of electric power, the building of factories and schools are the concrete manifestations of the Nepali government's development efforts since the end of the Rana era. Striking as these changes are, equally pervasive transformations have come to characterize the lives of Nepali people and these, too, are easy to discover with a minimum of questioning. One finds increased participation in wage labor work and in the mobility of village residents as they take advantage of new opportunities in the labor market, for example. All of these trends have been widely documented for Nepal at both community and national levels (Hitchcock 1963; Macfarlane 1976; Dahal 1983; Fricke, Thornton, and Dahal 1990; Gurung 1989; Sharma 1989).

Less evident are the implications of these kinds of change for the relations between people and the social networks by which Nepalis have historically organized their lives. Increased schooling, certain forms of wage labor participation, and physical mobility are sometimes uncritically taken to be universal social goods. We have no quarrel with this. Yet, these new activities are likely to have profound impacts on the historical practices which have proven adaptive for Nepali communities located in some of the world's toughest environments. Identifying and understanding these impacts are an essential element of sound development planning.

This task speaks to the frequent tension one finds in Nepal between the development and scholarly communities. Development workers are often frustrated by the social scientist's concern with apparently arid theories and arcane analyses. Social scientists, for their part, are often needlessly provoking in their failure to draw out the practical implications of their work.

In this paper, we try to bridge this gap through a theory-driven analysis of change in family-organized cooperative behaviors among the Tamang of a single Nepali village. We focus on the practice of husbands providing labor services to their wives' families after marriage. Such services have historically characterized a wide range of distinct ethnic groups in the Himalaya, notably but not solely those classed as Tibeto-Burman (Toffin 1986; Campbell 1994; Acharya and Bennett 1981). As important components of social support networks, their transformation in response to the social changes mentioned above is an element of the future well-being of Nepal's people. Our analysis begins with the social theory that draws attention to these processes and relationships but quickly moves into the empirical case of Timling in the upper Ankhu Khola. We discuss some of the implications of this analysis in the concluding remarks.

Theoretical Considerations

Among anthropologists few insights have achieved such canonical status as that which links marriage structure to other dimensions of social life. Marriage in most societies is seen as a singular life course transition with implications for subsequent experience and family relationships. Classic anthropological treatments of these implications have tended to focus on the structural correlates of marriage systems. These figure in typologies which define whole societies in terms of the content of obligations associated with marriage.

Levi-Strauss (1969) concentrated on the macro-patterns of reciprocal exchanges; Leach (1961) and Dumont (1983) on the hierarchical implications; and, more recently, Collier (1988) on the intersection of marriage, politics, and production.

The tradition of comparative family sociology and demography, on the other hand, has tended to ignore the structure of obligation between groups joined by marriage to focus on individual life course transitions and the structure of relationships among lineally connected kin. Studies in this tradition are likely to concentrate on obligations between generations and to characterize societies along a continuum from those in which most individual activities are familially organized to those in which familial organization is more limited (Goode 1970; Caldwell 1982; Thornton and

Fricke 1982; Thornton and Lin 1994). Even where practitioners of this tradition note the content of interfamilial obligations, such details are secondary to their focus on individual transitions. Thus, Caldwell and his colleagues provide striking evidence for changes in the practice of cross-cousin marriage and bridewealth in South India but fail to pursue the implications of these changes for the structure of South Indian alliance patterns (Caldwell, Reddy, and Caldwell 1988). Goode's treatment of brideservice (which he calls "groom-service") and decline in various forms of cousin marriage are similarly couched in a discussion of increased individual autonomy (1970: 167, 213, 329).

Recent developments in social theory argue for an approach to social processes which gives attention to both structure and individual agency. They suggest a reconfiguring of classic problems in the study of kinship and marriage which takes action as embedded within multiple contextual levels that give meaning and inspire strategy for social actors (MacIntyre 1981; Ortner 1984; Alexander 1988). While earlier treatments of family processes from this perspective have not addressed the issue of change, they nevertheless suggest a need to focus on the mechanisms by which larger structural relationships are reproduced across time (Bourdieu 1976). By extension, they suggest that one of the keys to understanding social transformation is in the differential experience and social position of individual actors themselves.

This implies attention to both contemporary context and to the changing contexts of individual experience through time. In practice, variation in behaviors of interest--in this case brideservice--are viewed as outcomes of a temporal sequence of antecedent environments and experiences throughout a single person's life course (see, for example, Alter 1988; Thornton and Lin 1994). We have used such a framework giving attention to structure and experience to explore variation in a number of dimensions associated with family and kin processes in cross-cousin marriage systems. Past analyses have examined marriage strategies in the reproduction of hierarchy (Fricke 1990) and the timing of marriage and childbirth (Dahal, Fricke, and Thornton 1993; Fricke and Teachman 1993; Fricke 1995a).

Here, our substantive focus is on variation in the practice of brideservice obligations within a population characterized by a shared ethos of reciprocity. We directly examine the issue of individual agency within a single structural environment by analyzing changing familial and individual relationships, changing marriage processes, and their implications for brideservice. In doing so, we test in an alliance setting the effects of variables widely shown to affect participation in spouse choice and kin marriage on subsequent interfamilial relationships.

Our data, described below, include ethnographic and survey material gathered in different field periods from 1987-88, 1991, and 1993 for the Tamang Family Research Project (TFRP).

These data permit direct exploration of the relative impact of family and individual experiences on interfamilial relationships in the Tamang and Ghale community of Timling, in which the alliance components of marriage are explicitly recognized.

Tamang Family and Social Organization

The Tamang are a Tibeto-Burmese language speaking ethnic group inhabiting the mountainous territory around Nepal's Kathmandu Valley. Thought to be Nepal's single largest non-Hindu ethnic group, they share alliance forms of organization with the large number of other Tibeto-Burmese language speaking groups in that country.² Although themselves often divided into three dialect areas by ethnographers, nearly all Tamang share common traditions of ancestral migration from Tibet, bilateral cross-cousin marriage preferences, and the practice of Tibetan forms of Buddhism.

The Tamang are an excellent group within which to explore the issues raised above. Their organization overlaps key elements of those societies variously described as having a family mode of production or a family mode of organization (Caldwell 1982; Macfarlane 1986; Thornton and Fricke 1987). Household economies have, in the past, been primarily agro-pastoral and subsistence oriented. In spite of well-developed systems of labor exchange, their domestic units were the core units of production, consumption, and reproduction in which children were seen to confer economic advantages for the whole household. To this extent, they resemble general models for family organized societies (Caldwell 1982; Macfarlane 1986; Thornton and Fricke 1987).

Certain characteristics, however, distinguish the Tamang from other societies within these models. Consistent with the anthropological models for alliance societies cited above, Tamang marriage has historically united families in enduring networks of cooperation involving the exchange of goods, labor, and services. Thus, during earlier fieldwork in Timling, a woman expressly mentioned the value of children in tying households together through marriage (Fricke 1994:183). Kin terms and majority practice stressed bilateral cross-cousin marriage as the preferred way to replicate beneficial links between families and patriline across generations. In our study areas, a mother's brother was spoken of as having a "right"³ to his sister's daughter for his son, although it was of course possible that parents may not always honor that right. While the Tamang do not pay other than small, ritually significant amounts of bridewealth,⁴ some of the

benefits of marriage for a woman's family came from the practice of brideservice. Such labor was provided on the demand of a woman's family, a process made easier by the relatively high levels of village endogamy.

In spite of the highly familial character of marriage among the Tamang, all ethnographies report a range of marriage options which included strict arrangement by seniors and varying participation by the spouses themselves (Höfer 1969; Holmberg 1989; Fricke 1994). Marriages contracted solely by spouses were approved of if they did not conflict with the already expressed intentions of household seniors; indeed, they were often tacitly agreed to by sets of parents who wished to reduce the expense of marriage. Our informants also saw them as a likely outcome of young people meeting "on the road" and one 62 year old man reported that in the past women did not travel "without the company of men from their own families." Furthermore, our informants in Timling agreed that, while arranged marriages were more likely to reflect the specific interests of parents, marriages contracted by spouses were not necessarily a bar to the culturally expected labor exchanges between families.

As with most areas in Nepal (Hitchcock 1963; Dahal 1983; Ahearn 1994), Tamang communities have undergone a series of changes in this century. Central among them is the increasing monetization of their economies as people combine wage labor with longstanding local subsistence activities (Fricke, Thornton, and Dahal 1990; Fricke 1994). These processes of monetization draw Tamang from their rural communities--many of them without roads, electricity, or piped water--into the urban environments of Kathmandu and cities in northern India. One of our informants spoke of how when he was young, "Calcutta was only a name," and contrasted it to the present when many young people had been to that and other cities (Fricke 1994). Similar processes have increased young people's autonomy in many societies and we expect them to do so for the Tamang. But because the Tamang social context explicitly ties marriage to organization beyond the individual family, we expect family, individual, and interfamilial characteristics to be implicated in these changes.

Timling and the Nature of Brideservice

Data for these analyses come from a western Tamang community at the headwaters of the Ankhlu Khola in north central Nepal. Timling, at the time of our 1987-88 census, numbered 142 households and lay some five to six days walk from the roadhead at the nearest market town of Trisuli Bazaar. For nearly every household in Timling, local subsistence pursuits dominate the economy; nevertheless, the last 30 years has increasingly

exposed the population to seasonal wage labor opportunities in portering and road construction. Even women have been involved in these activities at high levels; for some cohorts their wage work equals the involvement of men.

The general features of Timling's adaptation have undergone similar changes. Village political relations involving whole patriline, for example, were historically organized through marriage, but the extent of patriline bounds and those included in obligation networks has undergone decline (Fricke 1995a, 1995b). Access to land in Timling continues to be the primary source of wealth and relative advantage--young men earn money to invest in land for their households. While in other areas (Fricke, Thornton, and Dahal 1990), one finds cases of men selling land to invest in businesses of their own, this is virtually impossible and unheard of in Timling. The wagework we report for Timling women is nearly all seasonally available road construction and portering, rather than year-round factory work as can be found elsewhere. Groups of young people who leave the village for travel or in search of work are likely to form around a core of related people in Timling and to include peers who are potential spouses from the same village. Groups from Timling tend to grow as they pass through villages further along the trail and these travelling groups as well as the distant worksites are more likely to contain marriageable non-kin than the initial group. Finally, the contrast between home community and urban Kathmandu is huge for Timling--many days walk from the nearest market, roads, and electricity. Some young women from Timling have begun to express a desire to live in the excitement of Kathmandu rather than their natal village.

Marriage continues to unite families in Timling; the advantages come in cooperative labor between families who actively work in each other's fields, share herding, and offer support in the form of land use. While the political uses of marriage have declined since the 1950's and 1960's, these other practical advantages continue. Marriages are expected to involve individuals and their closest kin in relationships of specific obligation throughout the life of the union. The key obligations established or ratified by any single Timling marriage involve a central wife-receiver and those classified as his wife's fathers and his wife's brothers. This is an obligation of debt entered into by virtue of having taken a woman from their household and, by extension, from their patriline. Wife-receivers are expected to provide labor and services throughout the seasonal round as well as at specified ritual occasions, most dramatically at the funerals of members of their wife-giving households. Of course, these primary units of relationship do not exist in isolation. Nearly every wife-receiver will in turn have a wife-receiver

beholden to him if he has consanguineal kin classified as sister or a daughter.

That marriage structures a variety of real labor exchanges and other cooperative efforts in Timling is revealed by the behavioral evidence we gathered in 1987-88 fieldwork. Among the questions asked in our 1987-88 fieldwork to the 184 ever-married women of Timling was whether or not their husbands provided free labor to their natal families in the first year after marriage. A majority (69%) reported that they had. (Our translation of the actual question asked of all ever-married women is: Did your (first) husband work for your family without pay after your (first) marriage?)

This labor can include a wide range of activities from chopping and hauling firewood or hauling loads to the full complement of agricultural and pastoral tasks. In the past, one powerful village leader was able to use affinal labor in the salt trade with Tibet (Fricke 1990). Others used it to clear new arable land from the forest. In another task we discovered that of 55 householders who built their own dwellings in Timling, 67% reported receiving help from their affinal kin and only a quarter of these reported payment in cash. Finally, when we gathered lists of names of people living in other households who had helped in the agricultural harvests of the previous 12 months, 25% of the first three names mentioned were of affinal kin. An additional 35% of these names were of consanguineally related women, a majority of whom were already married and resident in their husband's households and, therefore, representing in some sense a contribution from affinal families (Fricke, Dahal, Thornton, Axinn, and Rimal 1991).

The enduring normative force of affinal obligations was revealed in numerous taped interviews with Timling informants during 1991 and 1993 field periods. One 41 year old Tamang man was emphatic about the structure of obligation:

TF: And in Timling, is there the custom where the new husband has to give the wife's family help without payment?

RT: Yes that help is given... Sometimes you help with harvesting potatoes; other times it's not necessary; sometimes you help carrying firewood... sometimes you help grinding flour...

TF: Yes, but why does a husband have to give most?

RT: Why? Because he's married to your clan woman, of course! He's a wife-taker.... [I]f you take my daughter then I call for you; and if you

take his daughter then he calls for you. [Interview: T. Fricke and RT, Timling, 1991]

Similar sentiments were expressed in other taped interviews from a variety of informants in Timling as they reflected on the qualities of a good husband and the causes for divorce:

BT: What sorts of habits and character should a boy have for a good marriage?

PJ: He should do good work for his in-laws--for his mother- and father-in-law and for his wife's younger sisters. He should do good work for his own family. If he goes outside the area for wage work, he should bring back gifts such as clothing and fine things. By doing this, people are made happy. [Interview: B. Tamang and 34 year old woman informant, Timling, 1993]

LL: When you were married as husband and wife, whenever some big tasks needed to be done at your [father's] house, your husband would come over and help wouldn't he? Wouldn't he come by to help?

SR: Well, one of the reasons we separated is because he wouldn't do such work. That's how it goes. If he doesn't do work for your parents, then they'll definitely want to split you up. He didn't come around. [Interview: L. Lama and 39 year old woman informant, Timling, 1993]

These transcripts suggest a continuing ethic of obligation in Timling even as the last excerpt simultaneously suggests that individual husbands fulfill their obligation to varying degrees.

Data, Expectations, Variables

Our quantitative analyses focus on data for the first marriages of 184 ever-married women in Timling. These data were gathered by a fieldstaff including 16 Nepali interviewers who had undergone both classroom and field training sessions conducted by senior project staff. The standardized questionnaires were designed with a life course perspective in mind and focussed on the content and timing of pre-marital events and the marriage process itself. Response rates were 100% for all respondents resident in the villages during the data collection period. For those who could not be met, information was gathered through proxy interviews with near kin.⁵

Theoretical approaches attempting to link structure and agency suggest that the dispositions of individual actors are a product of temporal sequences

of experience and environment. Analysis of later events of experiences in a person's life requires that the characteristics of key early events, particularly those related to issues of personal autonomy and exposure to novel ideologies or meanings, be accounted for. These analytical categories take on concreteness when applied to any particular group. Thus, theoretical concerns and the empirical literature from anthropology and family sociology motivate our attention to the family organization of pre-marital experiences while our understanding of Tamang organization and structures of meaning compel us to explore the implications of variable marriage practices for brideservice.

The TFRP surveys include data for testing how differences in family background, individual life course experience, marriage process and interfamilial relationships affect the practice of brideservice. For pre-marital life course experience we have data for first events of working at family-organized income work, wage labor organized outside of the family, living away from parents, and living away from the natal village for periods of one month or longer. Aspects of marriage process, including spouse choice, relationship between families, ritual transfers, and relationship between families have been measured for all first and subsequent marriages. Here we examine the practice of brideservice after marriage; this variable is a dichotomy coded 0 if a woman's first husband provided no free labor to her natal kin after marriage and 1 if he had.

Of critical interest for models that link individual experience to structural context is whether changes in the marriage process alter subsequent elements of social organization historically tied to it. Within Tamang society, the normative expectation of brideservice draws attention to institutionalized advantages of marriage for a woman's natal household. To the extent that women are involved in the actualization of these interfamily ties, we expect their experience and autonomy to have an impact on wider social relations. Further, since these ties are interfamilial, the relative position of families should make a difference in their expression.

Woman's Natal Family Characteristics

Since brideservice is provided at the request of a woman's family, we expect to see a positive relationship between numbers of parents working before a woman's marriage and the propensity for a woman's husband to provide free labor. Assuming that parental work before marriage is associated with their work after marriage, it is likely that these parents would be in greater need of the assistance that brideservice can provide and, hence, more likely to request it.

Woman's Life Course Experience

Similarly, we expect to see a positive relationship between a woman's premarital participation in family income enterprises and the provision of brideservice. Where daughters provide such work, their loss to the family economy has a greater impact than in those families where they work for non-monetized home consumption only. Parents with daughters such as these may be expected to be more inclined to ask for compensatory labor. Since non-familial travel and work experiences for Timling women are predominantly seasonal and temporary, we expect no direct relationship with brideservice in this setting.

Marriage Characteristics

In Timling, our informants tell us that parents may receive the immediate labor advantages of brideservice irrespective of their daughter's choice; we would therefore expect no effect for this variable except for a slight negative relationship through its association with choosing non-relatives.

We have argued elsewhere (Fricke et al. 1993) that formalized exchanges of cloth from a groom's family to that of his wife's at marriage represent an affirmation of interfamilial connections irrespective of other elements of the marriage process. We therefore expect that such exchanges would be positively associated with the provision of brideservice, assuming that parents would be most likely to ask for this labor where a publicly recognized interfamilial connection exists.

Our informants suggest that family connections along multiple dimensions will strengthen a marriage and lead to yet more interactions between families. Since a kin link between spouses before marriage indicates already existing relationships and established patterns of interaction, we expect marriage to non-relatives to be negatively related to the provision of brideservice in both settings. Kin are not only more likely to be asked for help because of familiarity and multiple connections, but they are also more likely to feel the opprobrium of refusing help.

Relative Affinal Characteristics

Although, brideservice is expected to be provided at the request of a woman's natal family, the person from whom it is requested must be expected to weigh his own labor needs and obligations before acceding to these requests. Our measure of relative family landholding at marriage gives some indication of these competing claims on time and our expectation is that brideservice will be less forthcoming in cases where a husband's family holds relatively more land than his wife's. Families with relatively more land would have greater demands for labor. Among those cases in which a

woman's family has less land are kin less likely to ask for help simply because they have less need for it.

Finally, we recognize that all things equal the distance between families may make a difference in the provision of brideservice simply because distant families are not as easily asked for free labor nor can they as easily provide it. In Timling, where men rather than women engage in seasonal migrations to herd sheep and goats and where marriages are often contracted to provide access to seasonal pastures (Fricke 1994), even distant sons-in-law are likely to come near their wife's families at various times of the year, effectively moderating the effect of distance. Since this variable is not of direct interest to the issues we address, we enter it as a control. Affinal distance is measured as a simple dichotomy coded 0 if a woman and her first husband were born in the same village and 1 if the villages differed.⁶

Trends in Life Course and Marriage Transition

Older informants in Timling often reflect without prodding on the changes which have occurred in their lifetimes. Changes are spoken of with great drama, both in the exposure to new experiences through travel and work and in the consequences for individual behavior, especially of women. Thus informants in Timling speak of the growing freedom of women to travel, to gain independence through their earnings, and to counter the authority of their parents. In Table 1 we see that these perceptions of change are supported by cohort trends in individual experience.

Table 1 shows the distribution of ever-married women by parental characteristics, non-familial living and work experience, and characteristics of their first marriage process for three birth cohorts of women in Timling. Our choice of birth cohorts roughly captures historically relevant periods of socialization for Nepal as a whole--the earliest group born before 1946 was socialized in a period of stability when Nepal was more dramatically closed to direct foreign influences; the middle group born between 1946 and 1965 was socialized in a transitional period that included a series of experiments in government and the formal opening of Nepal's borders; the last group were socialized in a period of well-established national transformations in schooling and economy. The figures demonstrate patterns of considerable change and some continuity.

The first panel displays trends for the practice of brideservice for Timling and gives a behavioral illustration of the transformations discussed above. In keeping with the transcript testimony of our informants the figures show a continuing practice of brideservice in the village. This is in spite of a drastic decline in the practice from over 80% to just 50% of first marriages.

Turning to the panel showing parental experience of income generating work, we can see that many domestic economies have included monetary activities throughout the 20th century. In Timling, only 17% of these oldest women are from families in which at least one parent performed such work. The rates of increase in women whose parents worked for income have, however, been dramatic. Percentages of daughters from the youngest cohort whose parents worked for income are more similar in the two settings. Indeed, if the presence of two working parents is taken as an indication of greater involvement in diversified domestic pursuits, then Timling's rate of increase considerably outstrips that of another TFRP research site closer to Kathmandu where sentiment continues to work against the participation of married women in jobs outside of the immediate area (Fricke, Thornton, and Dahal 1990).

Turning to individual life course experiences before marriage for these ever-married women, the next three panels display trends in the experience of living outside of the natal village, living away from parents, and working at family and non-family organized income work. These panels again illustrate the heightened change characterizing Timling. For example, unsupervised living arrangements and the experience of living outside of the village area for a month or longer has always been at relatively high levels in Timling. Part of this is, of course, simply a result of community location. For Timling residents, the nearest market continues to be Trisuli Bazaar where the current motorable road from Kathmandu comes to an end. It follows from this that we would expect an association between non-family work experience and living arrangements for Timling. The following panel for trends in various forms of work activity indeed shows very similar rates for Timling women who have lived in unsupervised living arrangements and women involved in non-family organized work before marriage.

The percentage of women who have never worked at income-generating work has declined through time. Among Timling's oldest cohort, 80% had never performed any work for money before their marriages while the last cohort includes only 35% who lacked such experience. The association between the various forms of non-familial experience is illustrated by the summary panel for total number of non-familial experiences (in living environment, living arrangements, and wamework) reported by women. Having any one of these experiences for Timling women means a high likelihood of having multiple experiences in that significant periods before marriage.

These trends are consistent with the expectation of a link with parental involvement in the choice of spouse. Individual spouse choice has

dramatically increased for women, from 18% of first marriages for the earliest cohort to 42% for the most recent. Joint choice of spouses by seniors and women remains roughly constant across this period so that there is a substantial decline in the parental direction of their daughters' marriages.

The next panel establishes that Timling has experienced almost no trend in the propensity to marry husbands who are categorical cross-cousins.⁷ The final three panels illustrate the lack of identifiable trends in variables having to do with relationships between families joined by marriage. Thus for relative family land, there is a more even distribution across time. Similarly, the practice of cloth transfers shows no dramatic pattern across cohorts. Finally, the last panel indicates that there is little identifiable trend in marriage between families from different villages. Timling is fairly endogamous with about two thirds of the first marriages occurring within the village.

Multivariate Results

Since all of the variables used in these analyses are categorical, with the dependent variable, brideservice, constructed as a dichotomy, we have estimated the multivariate equations using logistic regression with dummy variable predictors (Morgan and Teachman 1988; Hosmer and Lemeshow 1989). The results of these multivariate regressions are summarized in Table 2. This table lists the expected proportions of spouses providing brideservice for each category of the predictor variable, fixing the other variables in the equation at their observed distributions. These values reflect the proportion of women whose first husbands provided brideservice to their families adjusted for the influence of the other variables in the model.⁸

As an example, we can look at the unadjusted proportion column for birth cohort. The results here show that of those women born before 1946, 82% of their husbands provided brideservice to their natal families; of those born between 1946 and 1965, 63% of their husbands provided brideservice; and of those born after 1965, 50% of their husbands provided brideservice. The unadjusted proportion is the same as an observed proportion, as can be seen by a simple comparison of trends for brideservice in Table 1. Looking at the fourth column under adjusted proportions for birth cohort, we see a change in the proportions to 90% in the earliest birth cohort to 40% in the latest. This change reflects the levels one would find across cohorts if the effects of all the variables in the full column were taken into account at the same time.

Following the implications of the life course perspective outlined above, our presentation of models one through four in the adjusted columns replicates a temporal sequence. Variables occurring before the marriage

itself are presented in earlier models with parental work experience entered into equations before a woman's pre-marital experience. In our table, we enter the interfamilial variables separately. We follow this strategy since an examination of a variable's effect in temporal sequence must control for prior experiences and characteristics of the marriage process. Since brideservice is not a negotiated part of the marriage process and occurs after marriage it is in the proper temporal relation with the independent variables. Our strategy of sequentially entering the intervening variables for marriage process (spouse choice, cloth exchange) and interfamilial relationship (non-kin, relative land) reflects our interest in the logical difference between these two categories rather than their temporal order since they are, again, simultaneously determined.

Finally, although we present and discuss significance levels, these levels are strictly speaking relevant to data based on a sample drawn from the whole population. Since we have total coverage of the relevant population in Timling, we give more attention than usual to trends which are not statistically significant.

Our table presents the results of equations which explore the familial, life course, and marriage process effects on the giving of brideservice in the study community. Here, the Timling patterns by themselves are quite consistent with expectation. Looking at the results, we see that zero-order effects are strong and negative for birth cohort. A woman's family organized income work and the transfer of cloth are both positively and significantly related to brideservice as expected. Some of family income work's effect is indirect through its impact on marriage process as shown by the decline in effects and significance in model 4, but cloth exchange continues to have a strong positive effect across models. Having a previously unrelated spouse is negatively related to the practice of brideservice as expected and this effect is strengthened when entered in the equation in model 4. Similarly, a husband with more family land than his spouse is less likely to provide brideservice, an effect again strengthened in the full model. Non-family experience has no effect while participation in spouse choice has no effect in the zero-order case but moves toward a positive effect when other variables are considered.

One of the more interesting patterns for Timling is the strengthening of cohort effects across models together with the jump in significance and effect for the relationship between parental work and brideservice when entered with birth cohort in Model 1. These results suggest that the decline in brideservice would be even more dramatic than it already is without parental work experience acting to increase the practice. They also suggest that another variable with a marked cohort trend is pushing the decline in

brideservice. We suspect that this is the increasing participation of men in the non-familial monetized economy. Although we lack a direct measure of husband's work in the present models, we know it to be increasing through time; it is plausible that our cohort measure captures some of this mechanism. We suggest that these husbands are less likely to contribute free labor to their affines because of time constraints and absence from the village for long periods.

Discussion and Conclusions

We opened our theoretical discussion by addressing a range of issues in the study of relationships between social change and family and marriage transitions: (1) whether the widespread association of non-family organization of earlier life course experience with increased participation in spouse choice would prevail in societies where institutionalized relations between families are organized by marriage; (2) whether these changes and their consequences for marriage process would result in transformations in specific interfamilial relationships common among such marital alliance societies. Our findings generally provide a good deal of support to expectations developed in light of our attention to cultural and local context while suggesting some implications for theories of family change.

With respect to the first issue, our straightforward trend analysis results underscore the general association between larger processes of change and the increased autonomy of young people as measured by their participation in marital decision-making. In spite of the various mechanisms for increased participation in marriage decisions, the parallel transformations of parental work experience and non-familially organized individual experiences across cohorts describe trajectories replicated in nearly all known settings. The issue of whether these lead in turn to changes in interfamilial relations was addressed in subsequent analyses.

When we explored the impact of these changes on an actual exchange practice, that of brideservice, the results were somewhat more clear than in the trend data for other markers of interfamilial relationship such as kin marriage. These findings indicate that social transformations in family and individual life course experience do affect subsequent interfamilial relationships. Some results were as one would straightforwardly expect from standard theory. Thus, marriage to non-kin was associated with a large and significant reduction in brideservice. To the extent that non-kin marriage is a function of changing intergenerational relationships, as is hinted at by the association between participation in spouse choice and marriage outside of cross-cousin relationships in Timling, one finds a link between monetization, children's autonomy, and change in interfamilial

relationships. Less obvious associations between variables also held, as with the paradoxical strengthening of brideservice by parental work experience.

What of the future? Our results indicate marginally significant associations between the provision of brideservice and parental work or autonomous spouse. Yet, there is no reason to expect brideservice levels to rise through time simply because these other practices are increasing. Indeed, we suggest that these relationships in Timling are largely a result of the special context of still overwhelming reliance on agro-pastoralism for subsistence. The more compelling links between other ritual exchanges at marriage and cross-cousin marriage are more likely keys to what the future for Timling holds. Although these are not yet in dramatic decline some evidence indicates the beginnings of a downward movement in some forms of cross-cousin marriage (Fricke 1995b). Given that cross-cousin marriage and brideservice pertain to common themes of family organization, we might expect further declines in brideservice. Supporting evidence comes from another TFRP study site, much more monetized than Timling, that shows far lower levels of labor exchange and brideservice (Fricke, Dahal, Thornton, Axinn, and Rimal 1991).

The single outcome variable we have investigated is, of course, merely one of numerous forms of labor and exchange within Tamang communities (Toffin 1986; Campbell 1994). We argue, however, that it is a significant indicator of more widespread supportive relations across affinal boundaries. It is clear from the testimony of our informants and of other unpaid forms of work in Timling that affinal contributions to a married woman's parents can be important to their well-being in both direct and indirect ways. Moreover, given average ages of marriage and departure from natal homes for the Tamang, these links are likely to occur at points in the parental life cycle when men and women are in increasing need of assistance (Fricke 1994). To the extent that the decrease in these practices is tied to other changes in individual lives and larger social contexts, they have the potential of creating needs for new support mechanisms.

An examination of relationships within a single community in Nepal constrains the extent to which conclusions may be generalized. Moreover, we have examined a limited set of variables relevant to interfamilial relationships defined by marriage. Declines in brideservice may be balanced by increases in other forms of assistance as is hoped for by those who attempt to attract well-connected sons-in-law in South India (Caldwell et al. 1988). Nevertheless, our results suggest that, in alliance settings as we have defined them here, family transformation involves components which are interfamilial in addition to those intergenerational dimensions more

commonly addressed in the literature. If marriage which includes continuing forms of interfamilial transfer is considered broadly, then these interfamilial dimensions will be profitably investigated in changing societies in Nepal; elsewhere in South Asia, parts of Southeast Asia, and many parts of sub-Saharan Africa (Leach 1961; Lindenbaum 1981; Acharya and Bennett 1981; Barnard and Good 1984; Caldwell et al. 1988). Other research suggests the importance of these links to issues such as women's social security and demographic change (Dyson and Moore 1983) in addition to its self-evident relation to more general social transformation.

More generally, this analysis of changing marriage transition in an explicitly alliance setting reaffirms the importance of approaching questions of social and family change in terms of dimensions provided by the society of study itself. Where marriage organizes relations between families, it is reasonable to assume that transformations in a wide range of individual-level experiences will have important structural implications for these links.

Notes

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- 2 The 1991 Nepal census actually lists a greater number of the Tibeto-Burman Magar than Tamang. The Magar are, however, far more Hinduized than the Buddhist Tamang, and a far smaller number claim to speak their native Tibeto-Burman language than do Tamang. In Timling, Ghale and Tamang effectively share a common Tamang ideology of kinship and marriage. For examples of related groups, see Jones and Jones (1976), Macfarlane (1976), Levine (1988), Ahearn (1994), and some of the societies studied in Acharya and Bennett (1981).
- 3 Throughout this paper words and phrases in quotation marks indicate a direct translation of an informant's words in informal, taped interviews.
- 4 Practicing, instead, what is called indirect dowry (Goody and Tambiah 1973), in which a groom's family presents money and goods to a woman's parents at marriage. These valuables are eventually transferred to the bride herself and are not retained by her natal kin.

- 5 Extended discussion of the TFRP data collection may be found in Axinn, Fricke, and Thornton (1991).
- 6 Because of extremely low rates of migration, the practice of virilocal residence, and the strong ties to patriline land the comparison of husbands' and wives' birthplaces is an effective measure of affinal distance.
- 7 Because of the potential truncation biases introduced by confining analyses to ever-married women only, we have also examined all trends and performed multivariate analyses using marriage cohorts. There were no substantial changes in the results. See appendix B in Thornton and Lin 1994 for a discussion of truncation bias in survey data.
- 8 Other equations were estimated in addition to those summarized in the table. One set included a woman's age at marriage as a continuous variable. Another substituted marriage cohort for birth cohort. All of these equations produced results which were substantially the same as those presented here. We also estimated multinomial models for the 3 category version of participation in spouse choice. Results were consistent with those presented in Table 2 except that parental work was not significant as it is in the presented models.

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Table 1. Living Arrangements, Work, and First Marriage Processes in Timling, Upper Ankhu Khola.

Birth Cohort	<1946	46-65	66-75	Total
Number of Women	76	82	26	184
	%	%	%	%
Brideservice				
No	18	37	50	31
Yes	82	63	50	69
Parental Work before R's marriage				
Neither Parent	83	56	35	64
Mother Only	4	5	4	4
Both	3	17	35	14
Father Only	11	22	27	18
R Live out of village before marriage				
Never	99	79	69	82
Yes	11	21	31	18
R lived away from parents before marriage				
Never	86	68	39	71
Supervised	3	10	15	8
Unsupervised	12	22	46	21
Wagework before marriage				
None	80	63	35	66
Family Only	4	11	8	8
Fam & Nonfamily	8	7	12	8
Nonfamily Only	8	18	46	18
Number of Non-Family Activities Before Marriage				
None	82	63	42	68
One	7	16	8	11
2-3	11	21	50	21
Who chose spouse				
Entirely Senior	51	33	27	40
Together	31	30	31	30
R alone	18	37	42	30

Marriage Type				
Cross-cousin	72	70	69	71
Unrelated	28	30	31	29
Cloth Transferred				
No	57	48	58	53
Yes	43	52	42	47
Relative Land of Families at Marriage				
Wife's greater	36	36	19	34
Equal	35	31	50	35
Husb. greater	29	33	31	31
Affinal Distance				
Same Village	58	74	54	65
Outside	42	26	46	35

Table 2. Multivariate Analysis of Brideservice after First Marriage.^a

	N	Unadjusted Proportions ^b	Adjusted Proportions ^c			
			1	2	3	4
Birth Cohort						
<1946	76	.82	.85	.86	.89	.90
1946-1965	82	.63	.62	.62	.63	.64
1966-1975	26	.50	.44	.44	.46	.40
Significance ^d		****	****	****	****	****
Parental Work Before R's 1st Marriage						
Neither Worked	118	.68	.65	.66	.70	.71
One Worked	41	.68	.75	.76	.77	.75
Both Worked	25	.76	.86	.86	.88	.90
Significance ^d			***	**		*
Woman's Family Organized Income Work before 1st Marriage						
None	155	.66	---	.67	.71	.71
One	29	.86	---	.89	.90	.89
Significance ^d		***		****	***	**
Woman's Non-Family Organized Experience before 1st Marriage						
None	125	.70	---	.72	.75	.74
Some	20	.75	---	.72	.76	.79
2-3	39	.64	---	.70	.74	.76
Significance ^d						
Choice of Spouse						
Seniors	73	.70	---	---	.70	.69
Jointly	56	.64	---	---	.76	.74
Respondent	73	.73	---	---	.79	.82
Significance ^d					*	*
Cloth Given to Bride's Family						
No	97	.60	---	---	.66	.63
Yes	87	.79	---	---	.83	.85
Significance ^d		****			***	****

Kin Link between Spouses before Marriage						
Cross-cousin	130	.73	---	---	---	.81
Non-relative	54	.59	---	---	---	.57
Significance ^d	****	****				
Relative Family land						
Wife Greater	62	.69	---	---	---	.76
About Equal	65	.80	---	---	---	.84
Husband Greater	57	.56	---	---	---	.59
Significance ^d		***				***
Affinal Distance						
Same Village	119	.71	.74	.75	.77	.76
Outside Village	76	.66	.65	.66	.69	.73
Significance ^d						

- a Dependent variable is whether first husband provided free labor to wife's family after marriage; 0=no free labor, 1=free labor provided.
- b These are the observed proportions of the dependent variable within categories of the predictor variables.
- c The adjusted proportions are predicted values on the dependent variable within each category of the predictor variables. The predicted values were estimated from logistic regression equations including all of the variables in the model columns.
- d These rows designate statistical significance under the assumption of simple random sampling. Significance of χ^2 : *=.15 level; **=.10 level; ***=.05 level; ****=.01 level.