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Marriage Change as Moral Change: *Culture, Virtue, and Demographic Transition*

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Surveying the field today, it is impossible to imagine an anthropological demography that fails to acknowledge the extraordinary impact of Jack Caldwell. In a series of watershed articles, papers, and books ranging across substantive, theoretical, and methodological themes, Caldwell has helped to confer a new demographic legitimacy on the research strategies of anthropologists. Methodologically, the micro-demographic techniques formalized by him have encouraged more anthropologists to pursue demographic field research while also drawing members of the demographic community towards new syntheses of these two traditions (Kertzer and Fricke 1997). Theoretically, Caldwell's modification of demographic transition theory and his development of the wealth flows theory of fertility decline continue to motivate new studies and commentary. Substantively, his contributions to the study of fertility and family transitions in multiple contexts are landmark empirical studies for their settings.¹

Like that of most demographers, Caldwell's research is continually marked by the reasonable tendency to move outward from the demographic variables of interest. Thus, his interest in fertility anchors the questions asked throughout fieldwork, indeed constituting the point of entry into the research setting itself. This approach, differing in important ways from the avowedly more 'holistic' concerns of anthropologists, is well illustrated by Caldwell's report of his procedures in South India (Caldwell *et al.* 1988b).

Sociocultural anthropologists, on the other hand, tend to consider behaviour as much more thickly contextualized than do demographers. They enter societies with a concern for localized patterns at multiple levels including the cultural, social-organizational, and behavioural; they are

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likely to call on data beyond the level of individuals in formulating their models; and they are prone to admit different and variable standards of proof and argument into their discussion (Fricke 1997; Hill 1997).² To be sure, demographers, notably Jack Caldwell himself (1985) and Geoffrey McNicoll (1988), have criticized the limitations of once-standard demographic reliance on survey approaches, but the pull of anthropology towards local context and towards the larger cultural themes of worldview and motivation continues to chafe against demography's tendency to confine the entry into a society to the more demographically proximate variables.

The importance of these ideational realms to demographic process is illustrated by Susan Greenhalgh's (1988) criticism of the rigid cross-cultural application of fertility-transition models that assume childbearing aspirations to be ends in themselves. Greenhalgh identifies unique cultural and institutional motivations, separate from the values of children to social security and household maintenance, influencing childbearing in a region defined by Chinese state and cultural influence. She frames her argument as a critique of those approaches focusing on a narrow universal economic rationality as the primary explanation for fertility limitation. She suggests that research move beyond the reliance on individual-level explanations alone to include attention to localized institutional and cultural contexts. These contexts mediate the relation between straightforward economic goals to affect demographic processes (Greenhalgh 1988: 631).³

In this paper I follow the lead of Greenhalgh (1990, 1995) and others (Hammel 1990; Kertzer 1995; Townsend 1997) to elaborate on what a distinctly anthropological approach has to offer to our understanding of demographic transitions. I do so by expanding on themes already present in much demographic work. While their presence intersects with the anthropological focus on cultural systems, however, they tend to receive less attention in demographic research. For example, while Caldwell, like Greenhalgh, emphasizes that 'fundamental goals are social goals [and that there] is no such thing as an economic satisfaction which is not also a social satisfaction' (Caldwell 1982: 336), he tends to leave the connection of those social goals to wider cultural currents unexamined. Similarly, Caldwell's account of familial morality intersects with frequent anthropological attention to moral systems as a foundation for understanding cultural motivation (Firth 1963, 1964; Fortes 1978: 125), but his account focuses on the undergirding of production systems rather than on the motivational structures themselves.

Here I attend to culture and morality as components of family transition within societies in which marriage and the relations it institutes are fundamental organizational principles. These societies have been characterized in the anthropological literature as 'alliance' societies, or societies in which relations of affinity are as significant as those of descent

in organizing social membership (Dumont 1957; Leach 1961; Barnard and Good 1984). Their characteristics tend, with a few exceptions, to receive cursory treatment in the demographic literature even though they are common to a wide range of settings and are arguably crucial aspects of the social world of their adherents.⁴

Appeals to morality and moral systems make more frequent appearance in demography, usually in the form of normative statements about rights and obligations regarding relations between people.⁵ My attention to these themes makes use of convergent works by cultural theorists and sociologically sensitive moral philosophers which stress the internalized motivations of social actors (D'Andrade 1984, 1992; MacIntyre 1984, 1992; Taylor 1989; Flanagan 1991; Strauss 1992).

In what follows, I will first briefly review the recognized demographic significance of marriage and marriage systems, raising the issue of what special features in alliance settings may have demographic relevance. I follow that discussion with an outline of an anthropological approach to understanding behaviour and moral motivation in cultural context. This is followed by an illustration with empirical material from my own research within a distinctly alliance setting, after which I draw out the implications for method and theory in the study of family and demographic transitions.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC RELEVANCE OF MARRIAGE

The significance of marriage to the explanation of fertility is already acknowledged by nearly every demographic practitioner. Davis and Blake (1956) included a discussion of the factors surrounding marriage in their seminal essay on social structure and fertility. Further along the continuum of demographic interest, even the most formal of proximate determinants models must consider the impact of marriage timing and frequency of intercourse within marriage (Bongaarts 1976, 1978). Such considerations open the way to anthropological approaches that embed marriage within wider systems of kinship and culture, which define group boundaries, relationships, internal obligations, and the significance of affection (Fortes 1978: 124-5; Barnard and Good 1984; Macfarlane 1986). In those societies where family and kinship organize the widest array of social and production processes, variations in marriage form are critical to the understanding of social life.

Marriage as System

Alan Macfarlane illustrates these anthropological concerns with marriage in social and cultural context. He asserts that marriage is so central to

demographic processes that the contrast between pre-transition and transition societies effectively turns on the nature of their marriage systems. Analysing the cultural assumptions of Malthus about the nature and purposes of marriage, Macfarlane writes:

Malthus assumed monogamy, though most societies at his time practised polygamy; a fairly egalitarian relationship between husband and wife, while most societies assumed male dominance; unbreakable marriage, though most permitted easy divorce; permissive remarriage, though the majority either forbade remarriage or made it mandatory; independent residence after marriage, though the majority of societies have been virilocal or uxorilocal; a fairly equal contribution to the conjugal fund, though the usual situation was for wealth to flow preponderantly from either bride's or groom's group. (Macfarlane 1986: 35)

Macfarlane (1987) also argues for parallel contrasts at other levels between the peculiarly English definitions of personhood, nature, evil, and love and those typical of other settings. In short, marriage practice is tied to a whole array of culture-laden conceptualizations that embed it within distinct forms of kinship and systems of meaning.⁶ For England, these attributes involve cultural conceptions of the person (autonomous individualism),⁷ the organization of families (nuclear, conjugal-based units), and the emotive power of cultural goals (romantic love).

The variety of marriage systems, of course, goes far beyond the simple contrast of the English system against all others that a narrow reading of Macfarlane would imply. Looking at the institution solely in terms of its role as a marker of rights, Edmund Leach (1961) once suggested the following incomplete shortlist:

- A. To establish the legal father of a woman's children.
- B. To establish the legal mother of a man's children.
- C. To give the husband a monopoly in the wife's sexuality.
- D. To give the wife a monopoly in the husband's sexuality.
- E. To give the husband partial or monopolistic rights to the wife's domestic and other labour services.
- F. To give the wife partial or monopolistic rights to the husband's labour services.
- G. To give the husband partial or total rights over property belonging or potentially accruing to the wife.
- H. To give the wife partial or total rights over property belonging or potentially accruing to the husband.
- I. To establish a joint fund of property—a partnership—for the benefit of the children of the marriage.
- J. To establish a socially significant 'relationship of affinity' between the husband and his wife's brothers. (Leach 1961: 107-8)

Yet the transfer of rights is only one dimension among several possible candidates for determining the diversity of marriage systems.

Marriage and Alliance

Leach's last item is a characteristic of many societies in that important group which has come to define alliance societies. The principles organizing these societies were defined in a series of debates around the wider application of models derived from African ethnography where descent was taken as a central organizing principle. Proponents of alliance theory argued that, in many contexts, relations of affinity were at least as important as descent (Kuper 1988). Characteristically, these relations were found in settings where various forms of cross-cousin marriage receive organizational emphasis (Dumont 1957; Leach 1961; Fricke 1990a), a potentially vast range with representation on every continent. Jack Goody, for example, reports that some 48 per cent of the 673 societies enumerated in the *Ethnographic Atlas* permit some form of cousin marriage; the majority of these focus on the marriage of cross-cousins (Goody 1973: 32).

In spite of its widespread representation, few demographic studies have focused on the demographic implications of cross-cousin marriage. Those studies that do exist, however, suggest that important differences distinguish them from societies organized along other dimensions. Dyson and Moore's (1983) now classic comparison of regional patterns of fertility and sex-differentiated mortality in India provides the best evidence of systematic differences related to kinship organization. They distinguish at the extremes between the classic North Indian and South Indian systems. Three characteristics define the northern system:

First, spouses must be unrelated in kinship reckoning, and often too by place of birth and/or residence . . . Second, males tend to cooperate with and receive help from other males to whom they are related by blood, frequently their adult brothers. Third, women generally do not inherit property for their own use, nor do they act as links through which major property rights are transferred to offspring. (Dyson and Moore 1983: 43)

In contrast, the southern system is characterized by (1) a system of cross-cousin marriage or, in cases where marriage is not between actual cross-cousins, the treatment of marital relatives (affines) as though they were, in fact, related in such a manner; (2) a system in which 'males are at least as likely to enter into social, economic, and political relations with other males with whom they are related by marriage (i.e. affines) as they are with males with whom they are related by blood (i.e. by descent)'; and (3) a system in which women may inherit or be important links in the transfer of property (Dyson and Moore 1983: 44).

Dyson and Moore point to additional features contrasting the southern system with that of the North, many of which, like those above, are widespread in those societies addressed by alliance theory. Thus, in the South Indian case affinity and descent are equally important organizational

principles; female chastity is less highly sanctioned; women are closer to and interact more with their natal kin after marriage; affective ties between spouses are less threatening to the descent group; married daughters are more likely to be on hand for assistance to their parents in later years; and women are more active in the income-generating economy (Dyson and Moore 1983: 45). Most of these features have been noted in contrasting other cross-cousin, or alliance, systems with the more patrilineal, patriarchal extended families emphasized by Caldwell's models (Acharya and Bennett 1981; Fricke *et al.* 1993).

Dyson and Moore suggest that these structural differences result in a higher level of autonomy for women with consequent higher levels of family planning, labour force participation, and literacy. They also note the lower indices of son preference and fertility and higher ages at marriage in these settings. Some of these findings have again been replicated in cross-societal comparisons elsewhere (Acharya and Bennett 1981; Ross 1984).

A somewhat different point emerges from my own research, in which I have explored variations along types of marriage *within* a society organized along alliance lines. My colleagues and I have found significant differences in fertility and other outcomes linked to the degree to which individual marriages conformed to alliance models. Thus, women whose parents married cross-cousins and who engaged in formal marriage rituals were more likely to marry later than those whose parents had entered into other marriage forms (Dahal *et al.* 1993). On the other hand, women who were in unions with a cross-cousin chosen by their parents entered into childbearing more rapidly after marriage than did women whose parents chose a non-relative (Fricke and Teachman 1993). Other analyses confirmed the relevance of marriage forms to ages at marriage and the subsequent nature of affinal relationships (Fricke *et al.* 1993; Fricke 1995).

The evidence therefore indicates that the structure of marriage systems and the individual practice of marriage make a difference for demographic processes. Taking Macfarlane's point that these systems are connected to more encompassing cultural characteristics, it remains to develop a framework for making these links.

TOWARDS A CULTURAL DEMOGRAPHY OF MARRIAGE TRANSITIONS

The new *rapprochement* between anthropology and demography has generated several important, and not always reconcilable, statements of anthropological approaches to culture and demographic events (Greenhalgh 1990, 1995; Hammel 1990; Kertzer 1995; Fricke 1997).⁸ Disparate as these

statements are, they are fundamentally united in their orientation towards cultural models that posit a dynamic relationship between individuals and the strategic manipulation of behaviour towards a range of cultural goals.

Culture, for these anthropologists, is no longer the static construct with which demographers are most familiar from the anthropology of forty years ago (Hammel 1990: 456). It is historically contingent and subject to rapid bouts of change in ways that should disturb any demographer's hope of finding a convenient proxy for culture in multivariate analyses. Just as the structural models of both descent and alliance theorists collapsed under their own rigidity (Kuper 1988), no contemporary anthropological demographer adheres to those older foundational models of culture. Nevertheless, for all of its flux, cultural analysis can have demographic relevance, as the Greenhalgh analysis referred to above indicates.

Cultural Models

An approach I have found useful in my own work takes its departure from cultural theorists who are especially insistent on the complexity and partial autonomy of cultural processes (Alexander 1988), treating culture as, in part, yet another contextual level with parallels to social and institutional contexts.⁹ Within this tradition, Clifford Geertz (1973) developed the notion, important to theories of meaning and motivation, of cultural patterns as both models *of* and models *for* reality.

As models *of* reality, cultural patterns constitute the perceived worlds of human actors and define the significance of behaviours and institutions for the analyst. Importantly for theories of family transition, these models define the relevant sets of actors and the bounds of local groups in culture-specific terms. Beginning with these models of reality also allows demographers to discover what is behaviourally significant from the point of view of the actors themselves. Behaviours that are trivial in one setting may take on significant meanings in another and these meanings may have demographic relevance. Knowing what behaviours actors find significant to choices of potential demographic importance requires attention to the background horizons that give them meaning.

Taken as models for reality, cultural patterns offer a partial resolution to the problem of establishing motivation for actors within a common cultural context. Actors are necessarily aware that their actions have meaning for those around them. Behaviours, apart from their implications for demographic outcomes, are also statements or symbols of relationship and subject to interpretation. While a useful heuristic category for beginning to understand cultural motivation, Geertz's account of these models is somewhat unsatisfying without a discussion of the plausible means by which they are internalized for actors.

Analytic Levels and Demography

Although cultural patterns can be analysed separately and in their own terms, their linkage with other analytic levels is a central issue for demographers. Geertz developed the approach to culture sketched above while still acknowledging the Parsonian framework emphasizing the three analytic dimensions of culture, society, and the individual. Just as Parsons never seriously developed the mechanisms by which context and behaviour were connected, Geertz's own later development had the effect of disconnecting culture from its reciprocal relations with individual behaviour and subjective experience. This model left little room for the demographic interest in dynamic causal analyses (Hammel 1990). Since then, culture theory has moved back towards the direction of linking culture, individual motivation, and behaviour (Ortner 1984).

Jeffrey Alexander (1988) explicitly discusses this linkage in his own work. In this perspective, behaviours are viewed as strategies carried out within constraints and with resources that are culturally and materially defined. This analytic model shows great promise for reconceptualizing analyses of demographic outcomes by striving to link levels of analysis without asserting the priority of one over the other. The cultural level both constructs and provides evaluative meaning to the social reality of actors. The social-system level provides normative constraints and guidelines and allocates social resources. Individuals pursue strategies in terms of these larger contexts and in terms of their own life-course experiences within these contexts.

Recent work in cultural psychology has also modified earlier failures in cultural theory to accommodate variation among individual actors. While continuing to recognize that cultural models may have motivational force, Strauss (1992) and D'Andrade (1992) argue, for example, that knowing the 'dominant ideologies, discourses, and symbols of a society' (Strauss 1992: 1) constitutes a first step in analysis that must be followed by attempts to link these intersubjective symbols or meanings to individuals. They suggest that actors vary with respect to their internalization of culturally defined motivations and that the differential experience of buttressing events throughout the life course may explain some of that variation. It follows that we might expect those individuals who engage in practices closely linked to cultural models of the good or the moral will be more likely to have internalized cultural motivations than those who do not (D'Andrade 1992).

Morality and Culture

Anthropological concern with moral behaviour is as old as the discipline itself. Early approaches, however, conflate different aspects of moral systems and collapse cultural morality into ill-defined concepts running from

values to norms to rules. One property of these approaches, still found within both anthropology and demography, is the distillation of morality to rules and norms governing relations between people (Firth 1963; Caldwell 1982: 208–11; 336–9). Added to the confusion is a tendency, inspired by utilitarian epistemologies, in some of the more recent actor-oriented approaches to decision-making, to assume rational actors who calculate their relative options against a single standard of value.¹⁰

These approaches are inconsistent with the recent developments in culture theory recounted above because they focus on negative sanctions, control, and enforcement mechanisms rather than on the culturally various internalized motivations for behaviour (D'Andrade 1984: 97–8). Moreover, they unduly constrict the reach of the moral in social action (Taylor 1985b; Flanagan 1991: 17; MacIntyre 1992; Johnson 1993: 104–7).

The writings of Charles Taylor and Alasdair MacIntyre offer solutions to some of the conundrums bedeviling the anthropological discussions of morality and values. Taking the issue of the differential weight of values and norms first (Firth 1964), Taylor suggests that we evaluate our desires in one of two ways: by weak evaluation, in which 'we are concerned with outcomes', or by strong evaluation, in which 'we are concerned about the quality of our motivation' (Taylor 1985b: 16). Elsewhere, Taylor links these strong forms of evaluation to identity (1985b: 34), cultural notions of the good, and motivation (1985b: 236–7).

These notions of the good are internalized by actors as an outcome of their practice (MacIntyre 1984; 1992). Moreover, descriptions of this process by which the goods of social practice are internalized are consistent with current accounts of life-course theory as applied to social transition (Elder 1987; Thornton and Lin 1994: 7–15). The internalization of goods proceeds sequentially in the progressive experience of individuals as they enter into the activities that constitute social life for their time and place. Their introduction is naive and is driven by the authority of others who have already internalized the goods in these practices. Individuals are, in effect, enculturated into the good. Of course, 'what has to be learned always can be mislearned' (MacIntyre 1992: 7; Strauss 1992), and this is part of the process by which cultural goods and the practices that embody them can change.

Finally, it is not necessary for cultural actors to be able to give a complete account of the relationships between practices and goods; their reasoning need not rise to the analyst's level (MacIntyre 1992: 16–17; Flanagan 1991: 21).¹¹ Indeed, most anthropologists—especially in their first ethnographic fieldwork—have had the experience of asking an informant the reasons for a particular practice, either ritual or social, only to be confronted with the answer (or its equivalent). 'Because our grandfathers told us to do it this way'. Thus, the discovery of culture-based motivations requires analysis.

An Approach to Marriage

The pursuit of analyses in these terms implies research styles in addition to those that currently dominate demography. Selection of appropriate variables aside, much demographic analysis would proceed as it has up to now, but the placement of levels of analysis within an overall framework would reveal new possibilities for incorporating meaning into analysis. At the very least, cultural analysis would not be straitjacketed into the formal causal models of individual-level analyses. In so far as cultural patterns provide a necessary context for understanding meaning and motivation, these issues call for explorations beyond those that already incorporate social and community contexts into individual-level analyses, resulting in a thicker, more culturally grounded, demography (Fricke 1997).

Methodologically, the approach emerging from these considerations argues that we begin by establishing cultural models of reality (Geertz 1973; D'Andrade 1992; Strauss 1992) and the cultural notions of the good that pervade them. These models, and the goods to which they are closely tied, are available to the analyst in ways that should not deter the empirically minded (Wuthnow 1987). Thus, Sherry Ortner argues for the presence in all societies of a finite number of recurrent or 'key elements which, in an ill-defined way, are crucial to [their] distinctive organization' (Ortner 1973: 1338). These elements may be symbols, themes, or scenarios and their various functions may include the orientation of conceptual experience and the provision of cultural strategies for behaviour. The elements have a reality discoverable from a variety of indicators by 'even the most insensitive fieldworker' (Ortner 1973: 1339); one critical method of discovery is their repetition in many different contexts.

As with cultural goods, a society may be characterized by more than one of these key elements (Ortner 1973: 1339; Taylor 1985a), but it is likely, where marriage is as central an organizing practice as it appears in alliance settings (and probably most other settings), that they will be embodied in those practices. Procedurally, we would want to explore the relationship between marriage practices and those goods and draw the connection between specific behaviours as enactments of these moral principles. The meaning of practices, the individuals involved, and the boundedness of groups all require the application of a localized cultural lens before their significance for such demographically relevant processes as familial nucleation and the like can be discovered.

TIMLING: MARRIAGE CHANGE AS MORAL CHANGE

In order to make these connections more concrete, I briefly illustrate the relationships highlighted by this approach with published and ongoing

analyses from a remote setting, Timling, where my colleagues and I have been conducting anthropological and micro-demographic research since 1981.¹² Because substantial and observed changes in marriage practices and more general social life have occurred in the community throughout my period of association with its people, I will characterize its moral climate in terms of a starting point before discussing the evidence for these transformations.

Timling is a central Himalayan community inhabited by an ethnic group, the Tamang, notable for their adherence to anthropological models for alliance societies. In 1988 when the last detailed census was conducted, Timling was a nucleated village of 142 households and 669 people located near the Nepal-Tibet border on a narrow shelf of land at about 7,500 feet in elevation. Its residents are Tibeto-Burmese language speakers bearing social-organizational similarities with other Tibeto-Burmese groups throughout the Himalayan arc from Nepal to Burma and South-West China (Leach 1961; Levi-Strauss 1969; Acharaya and Bennett 1981). Like these other groups, the people of Timling are notable for their exchange ethic, their organization into exogamous patrilineal clans, and their expressed preference for and practice of various forms of cross-cousin marriage.

Timling's economy overwhelmingly centres on subsistence agriculture and pastoralism within the local territory, although community members are increasingly drawn into the wage labour economy outside the region. The society's character throughout the research period matches those categories that Caldwell (1976) calls 'primitive' or 'traditional'. Consistent with those categories, its people tended to stress the economic values of children when recounting their importance in 1981. Another important value was intermingled with these, however:

Having many children divides the work and makes sure there are more if some die. Parents will be taken care of. Children tie us to other households. They teach each other their skills. (32-year-old woman quoted in Fricke 1994: 183)

This value of tying households together points to the need to consider Timling's demographic regime in connection to marriage and larger contexts.

An Ethos of Exchange

If, as for key symbols (Ortner 1973), the criterion of repetition in many different contexts can define key cultural goods, then Timling (and more general Tamang) culture is characterized by an overarching ethic of exchange and reciprocity (March 1983; Holmberg 1989; Fricke 1990a). The theme emerges in daily activity, in myth, and in ritual; it is a defining good in the practice of marriage. In daily life, an example is the nearly

inescapable sharing of food that marks each social encounter. Walk into even the poorest household, and the first offering after being seated near the hearth will be from the cooking pot of boiled potatoes or porridge, depending on what food is in season. If there is beer, it is immediately offered. The offering and acceptance of vegetable food and beer, the staples of local life, connote a common identity among the sharers. As Timling people express it, they are of one stomach.

In our recent 1993 collection of taped discursive interviews in Timling, we asked our informants what sort of character or habits they looked for in a good spouse. The first response was usually that he or she should have 'good' habits and character. To a Tamang, it was already understood what this implied, but elaborations for the anthropologist on the meaning of 'good' nearly always included a reference to knowing how to give, and actually giving, food to visitors to the household, as in the following translated excerpt from a taped interview with a 34-year-old man:

For me, I want a girl who has good habits and character. . . . And these are: when other people come to visit she has to give them some food and other things, or when children or people from this village need something like liquor or beer, she has to give that to them. Or if there isn't any liquor or beer, then she should roast some corn and give it. That sort of habit is what I mean by good.

Giving carries no threat of diminishment. Even more, giving food is itself a requisite of abundance, a view that finds ratification both in mythic themes and in practice. Thus, Holmberg (1989: 53) recounts a myth in which the sharing of a tiny bird snared in hunting results in the redoubling of its meat to an extent requiring two people to carry it on a pole between them. Variants of this myth are widespread throughout the Tamang area. Similarly, when a group of households has purchased an animal for slaughter, any person who comes later and requests to be included in the subscription is automatically given a share of meat. There is always enough.

Underscoring the centrality of these core social values are the sanctions levied against those who violate the ethic of sharing. The failure to give without obvious calculation from the produce of one's hearth is the source of accusations of greed. Such accusations are directed against any household and its members in which whatever food or drink is present is not shared with a visitor. They are also directed against one's own family members who fail to give labour or service where they are expected to do so. Those who flout the requirements of reciprocity are subject to accusations of witchcraft and more serious breaks with social networks.

Marriage as practice

If any set of associated practices can be said to embody the cultural good of reciprocity, it is those that define Timling's culture of marriage.

From the kinship structure of marriage itself down through the labour and ritual exchanges organized by marriage, the common thread running through relationships is that of reciprocity. At the kinship level, the Tamang practice of bilateral cross-cousin marriage structures exchange relationships between joined families and larger units. Ideally, the exchange of daughters continues through successive generations, but even marriage between unrelated men and women is regarded as opening up new alliances and the expectation of future relationships marked by the exchange of daughters.

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 fathers¹³ 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 labour 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 daughter.

Such structured obligations are consistent with the full range of cross-cousin marriage societies addressed in the ethnographic literature (Leach 1961; Levi-Strauss 1969; Barnard and Good 1984). Within the Tamang system of preferred bilateral cross-cousin marriage, ideally realized, they create at minimum an oscillating equilibrium across generations in which the overall relationship between patrilines is balanced. The people of Timling phrase their preferences quite explicitly in terms of a son having first claim to his father's sister's daughter. The logic of repeated marriages of this type would result in a balanced reciprocity of obligation for members of two families in the same generation; the values of acquired labour therefore redound only to the senior generation, since a man and his wife's brothers break even in the exchange of classificatory sisters.¹⁴

That marriage structures a variety of real labour exchanges and other co-operative efforts in Timling is revealed by the behavioural evidence we gathered in 1987-8 fieldwork. Among our data collection techniques was administration of a lengthy questionnaire to all community residents aged 12 and above (Axinn *et al.* 1991). Among the questions asked to the 185 ever-married women of Timling was whether or not their husbands provided free labour to their natal families in the first year after marriage. A majority (69 per cent) reported that they had.

This labour 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 labour in the salt trade with Tibet (Fricke 1990a). 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 per cent 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 twelve months, 25 per cent of the first three names mentioned were of affinal kin. An additional 35 per cent of these names were of consanguineally related women, a majority of whom were already married and resident in their husbands' households and, therefore, represented in some sense a contribution from affinal families.¹⁵

The person and the group

Alan Macfarlane draws attention to the relevance of cultural notions of personhood in marriage systems, while others suggest that notions of selfhood are key elements of cultural morality and the evaluation of responsibility (MacIntyre 1984; Taylor 1989). Anthropologists exploring selfhood have often contrasted the individualism of Euro-American societies with more categorical understandings of the self in other settings. Those working in South Asia have been particularly insistent that individual and group identity are merged in these areas. Ernestine McHugh (1989), in her work with the Himalayan Gurung, suggests that such dichotomies obscure the existence of multiple dimensions of identity in these contexts. She argues that the Gurung recognize elements of both group identity and the autonomous individual in their conceptions of personhood: a kind of 'middling' case, as Macfarlane (1976) has suggested on other grounds.

Tamang notions of personhood are closely related to those of the Gurung as well as to the range of Tibeto-Burmese societies throughout the Himalaya (Levine 1981). Important to the argument here is the Tamang cultural theory that each individual is created by contributions of necessary substance from both clans united by marriage. A mother contributes flesh, and the father contributes bone, to the substance of each person at birth. These notions are again widely shared across a range of societies (Levine 1981); Levi-Strauss (1969: 393) has argued that the presence of this cultural theory is closely associated with particular forms of cross-cousin marriage.

From the point of view of identity, the important point is the cultural recognition that each person receives essential substances from each side of the alliance constituted by parental marriage. This ideology underwrites a pattern of emphasis in genealogies that include both maternal and paternal lines. It is also an important element in a woman's retention

of her natal clan identity even after marriage and in the extraordinarily tight bonds between male and female siblings, all patterns that have been found to varying extents for other alliance settings (Macfarlane 1976; Acharya and Bennett 1981; Ahearn 1994).¹⁶ Married women, in this context, take on a symbolic role which embodies the marriage alliance itself (March 1983; Fricke *et al.* 1993).

The bounds of groups that enter into alliance at marriage follow the contours of patrilineal organization for the Tamang. A good indicator of their boundaries is found in the people who are important in the marriage process itself as well as in other life-cycle rituals. These people are the same people who incur obligation and suffer sanctions in the event of transgressions. The extent of these boundaries is currently under severe pressure in Timling, as discussed below. But in ideal discussions of marriage there is a tendency to include a patrilineal group of from two to three generations' depth as the primary actors in a marriage. Thus, prestations in an ideal (or 'good') arranged marriage are generally made to a woman's parents and to the brothers of her father in seeking their permissions for a woman. These families are not coresident but usually reside in patrilineally defined neighbourhoods of adjoining structures.

The words of a Tamang man make clear the importance of assent from a large group of kin in the process of a formal, a good, marriage:

[The second prestation of liquor and beer] is called *pong shiba*. And the first is *shyalgar*. . . . For the one called *shyalgar*, it's not necessary to gather together our lineage brothers. One house or maybe two households only do you need to gather together. Those that are nearby.

So the *shyalgar* is the first And then later there is a large *pong* [flask] brought. At the time that the leg of meat is brought, however many lineage brothers we have, each of them must be gathered and given a small share.

They talk about whether [the marriage] should or shouldn't happen.

On that day . . . the girl is not taken. On that day the words [of marriage] are made strong and formalized. So, on that day they talk about how to go about it [make arrangements] and they ask all the *pong* consuming members of the girl's natal family [extended kin], 'Should they drink the *pong* or not?' And if along with everybody else there is agreement to the marriage, then they drink. And if there's not, then they say 'Return to your home, we will not drink this *pong*.' Two or three things need to be considered. For instance, suppose they say 'yes' and drink and what if the girl herself does not drink—they need to think, 'Maybe this girl is against the marriage, so we ourselves cannot drink.' And then they would have to pay a penalty, 1,000 rupees.

Well, then you are bound. [And to do otherwise] would be to make things bad for your patriline brothers. After doing that, it's finished—done. I will then take your daughter into my care. Whether I die or whether I live, it's bigger than me. On that day, she's in the care of others—just like that.

Markers of practice

These behaviours are themselves enactments of cultural goods and, as such, bear meaning beyond the merely instrumental:

We cannot, that is to say, characterize behavior independently of intentions, and we cannot characterize intentions independently of the settings which make those intentions intelligible both to agents themselves and to others. (MacIntyre 1984: 206)

There is no such thing as 'behavior', to be identified prior to and independently of intentions, beliefs, and settings. (MacIntyre 1984: 208)

This makes it possible to identify behaviours within a practice such that these behaviours become indicators of adherence to a cultural morality. It helps, too, if the members of a group use these indicators to define excellence in a practice.

For the people of Timling certain behaviours tied to marriage fulfil this role exactly.¹⁷ Just as our informants responded that they be 'good' when asked to characterize the desirable habits of a spouse, people in Timling also referred often to 'a good marriage' when speaking of their own or other people's marriages. When asked to elaborate on the meaning of 'good', they spoke of elements of the marriage revolving around parental choice of spouse, the exchange of ritual flasks of alcohol called *pong* (described at length above), and cousin marriage. Similarly, a good marriage would include the practice of indirect dowry, a category of transaction in which the groom or his immediate family present money or gifts to a bride's parents, who then pass a substantial portion of these prestations on to their daughter. All of these practices ratify the good of reciprocity and exchange, symbolically buttressing this moral good among the Tamang. Other practices surrounding marriage also contribute to its evaluated excellence. In addition to indirect dowry, the Tamang practice a form of female inheritance, called *djo*, in which movable property passes from mother to daughter at or shortly after marriage.

Marriage signifies the establishment, or re-creation, of alliances between families. Because of the Tamang classificatory kin terminology, cross-cousin marriage may refer to marriages between people more diffusely related than as first cousins. While all marriage constitutes an alliance in Timling, marriage between first cousins is much more direct in the sense of ratifying the close ties between actual brothers and sisters through the marriage of their sons and daughters. Another element of this connection between families is the practice of brideservice, already described above. Divorce, of course, is related to these practices in that it severs relationships of reciprocity.

A final behaviour has a more complex relationship with these issues because it ties into Tamang conceptions of personal identity for women.

TABLE 9.1 First Marriage Practice by Choice of Spouse among Ever-Married Timling Women (%)

Spouse choice	Senior	Joint	Self	Total
Number of women	73	56	56	185
<i>Pong</i> exchange	92	39	18	54
Cross-cousin marriage	84	71	52	70
First cousin marriage	38	34	4	26
Indirect dowry	68	38	29	47
Receipt of <i>djo</i>	60	36	50	50
Natal visits	25	46	59	42
Brideservice	70	64	73	69
Divorce	30	25	25	27

Among the Tamang, as among other societies in which cross-cousin marriage is a central practice (Dyson and Moore 1983), married women make frequent visits to their natal homes. This practice has obvious implications for the ties between households, the status of women, and the nature of the marriage relationship itself (Fricke *et al.* 1993). In addition, it relates to women's identity as continuing members of their natal families and clans even after marriage, and symbolizes the dual emphasis on the descent and alliance ideologies that coexist within Tamang culture.

To show how these practices relate to the interests of the primary decision-makers in the choice of spouse, Table 9.1 presents percentages of women's first marriages in which these practices were carried out by whether or not their husbands were chosen entirely by senior members in their families, were chosen jointly by a daughter and her seniors, or were chosen entirely by a woman herself. In this table we can see the strong association of senior choice of spouse and many practices associated with reciprocity. *Pong* exchange is particularly notable here, as are the practices of cross-cousin marriage and indirect dowry. When the choice of spouse reflects senior interest, either through involving seniors alone or in a joint decision, the direct alliance between families embodied in cross-cousin marriage is strikingly higher than when daughters make their own decisions.

Receipt of inheritance (*djo*) is only slightly higher for senior-choice marriages than for daughter-choice marriages for reasons that probably have to do with the practice of daughters themselves contributing to this fund when they pass earnings on to their mothers. Since independent daughters are more likely than others to have worked at wage labour, they are also more likely to have contributed to this fund.

The general pattern is for those practices that contribute to the alliance and reciprocity dimensions of marriage to be more highly engaged in if seniors are involved in the choice of spouse. But even when daughters choose, there continue to be generally high levels of practices embodying

this good, as can be seen with cross-cousin marriage and brideservice. One interesting pattern that diverges from the rest is higher percentage of natal home visits when a daughter is involved in spouse choice.

Marriage Change and Moral Change

Caldwell has characterized a portion of the change occurring in demographic transition in terms of emotional nucleation, a narrowing of interests, loyalties, and obligations from more distant, largely generationally defined, family members. He is particularly concerned with the narrowing of emotional bonds within the patrilineal family in the direction of the conjugal pair. But narrowing is a process that can transcend these bounds, and, in alliance societies of the kind that Timling exemplifies, initial transformations may occur within much wider networks. The evidence for such transformation is quite strong for Timling, as the cohort trends in Table 9.2 indicate.¹⁸

Shifting practices

In many of the key practices surrounding marriage, we can see evidence of substantial decline. Seniors are much less likely to be involved in the choice of spouse, suggesting that their interests are less often reflected in the marital decision. This is consistent with the models of nucleation stressed in Caldwell's transition model. At the same time, the practices that ratify alliance are decreasing. *Pong* exchange has declined. There is evidence of at least a slight decline in the practice of marriage to first cousins; these marriages represent the most direct exchanges across generations. Indirect dowry has declined. Brideservice is in decline. Divorce appears to be on a dramatic upswing, especially when the marriage cohorts are looked at; these are probably better indicators since many of the marriages in the youngest birth cohort are still new and have been subject to the risk of divorce for shorter periods.

Where the trends are more mixed or less dramatic, as with all categorical cross-cousin marriages, other factors tend to make the practices less solid indicators of commitment to the cultural good of reciprocity. Thus, the classificatory nature of the kinship system means that large portions of the available population for marriage will be classified as cross-cousin at some degree of distance. High levels of village endogamy assure that high percentages of marriages will be with cross-cousins at some degree of kinship relation. Similarly, the receipt of *djo* is somewhat ambiguous, since women contribute to their own *djo* by turning earnings over to their mothers; we might expect *djo* transfers to be affected by the increasing propensity of daughters to gain employment in the wage labour economy outside of the village.

TABLE 9.2 Birth and Marriage Cohort Changes in First Marriage Practice among Ever-Married Timling Women (%)
(a) Birth cohort

Birth cohort	<1946	1946-65	1966-75	Total
Number of women	76	82	27	185
Who chose spouse				
Entirely senior	50	34	26	40
Together	32	29	30	30
Respondent alone	18	37	44	30
<i>Pong</i> exchange	63	48	44	54
Cross-cousin marriage	72	69	67	70
First cousin marriage	32	21	30	26
Indirect dowry	57	43	33	47
Receipt of <i>djo</i>	54	49	41	50
Natal visits	33	46	52	42
Brideservice	82	63	52	69
Divorce	14	38	30	27

(b) Marriage cohort

Marriage cohort	<1960	1961-74	<1975	Total
Number of women	61	44	80	185
Who chose spouse				
Entirely senior	49	41	31	40
Together	36	18	33	30
Respondent alone	14	41	36	30
<i>Pong</i> exchange	66	50	46	54
Cross-cousin marriage	70	70	70	70
First cousin marriage	31	25	24	26
Indirect dowry	61	39	41	47
Receipt of <i>djo</i>	49	61	44	50
Natal visits	30	50	46	42
Brideservice	80	73	59	69
Divorce	13	34	34	27

To the extent that these practices, as MacIntyre argues, embody commitment to culture-based moral goods, these trends suggest a real transformation of the moral world of Timling. But the story is more complicated than a simple linear transformation from a wider to a narrower net of interests, and this is where the cultural notions of personhood become important to interpretation.

Shifting loyalties

Charles Taylor (1989) has argued that, for Euro-American contexts, the transitions towards an emphasis on the autonomous individual were

marked not so much by the introduction of entirely new ideas as by a reconfiguration of the relative stress placed on already existing cultural themes. In an earlier interpretation of the initiation of family planning in Timling (Fricke 1997), I have addressed the puzzle for contemporary transition theory presented by the fact that, among the first contraceptors in the village, all men who received vasectomies were not innovators in any other relevant behaviour. Compared with men within the same age group and with the same numbers of children, their practice was consistently characterized by adherence to the general models of the good discussed above. I suggested in that paper that their motivations involved a reconfiguring of already present themes in Tamang cultural models rather than the creation of something entirely new under the sun. The processes occurring in marriage and associated practices are similar.

For Timling, as argued above, the identity of persons already included elements of individual autonomy and membership in the natal clan as well as an emphasis on affinal relations. The change towards increased natal home visits by women after marriage needs interpretation in this light. Dyson and Moore (1983) have suggested that contacts such as these are important indicators of women's autonomy, and my colleagues and I have been motivated by that argument in one of our own analyses (Fricke *et al.* 1993). Within the larger structure of Timling's cultural models, however, these increased natal visits represent a new balance between women's retention of their natal home identities and their symbolization of the links between households. Their enhanced level of contact with their natal kin suggests a new stress on their natal identity that is simultaneously a de-emphasis of the alliance practices ratifying the cultural good of reciprocity—in effect, behavioural evidence of a change in the notion of personhood.

That this is a process still playing itself out is indicated by other evidence for change in Timling's social and moral boundaries. I suggested above, for example, that group boundaries were identifiable by the collection of relatives who were involved in the marital process in the 'good' marriage. This group overlaps with those who are subject to sanction in the event of transgressions of rules of conduct. Some of the negotiations of those bounds occurring today in Timling are linked to women's actions.

Thus, in the 1987–8 field period I witnessed a lively discussion brought about by a pregnant woman's return to her natal home where she gave birth in contravention of Timling practice. While all agreed that a spiritual pollution of the natal group had occurred, the boundedness of that pollution was in dispute. When one man offered another a prestation of beer, it was refused on the grounds that the offerer's entire patriline was polluted and not yet purified. The offerer denied his pollution, arguing that since the birth had occurred in his brother's household and not in anybody else's, the pollution was confined to that narrow group of kin.

This resulted in an argument, left unresolved, in which young and old took different sides on the extent of this spiritual pollution.

Nucleation

While I argue that, in a setting such as Timling's with its stress on affinal relations and the importance of marriage practice to the reproduction of cultural goods, these changes were necessary preconditions for further changes towards demographic transition, this does not mean that transformations more familiar to Caldwell's readers are not also important. In ongoing analyses of transcript data from discussions of marriage practice in Timling, my colleagues and I have noticed provocative shifts in the discussion of marriage in Timling. For example, I quoted a woman above who commented in 1981 on the values of children for tying households together. But even this discussion was embedded within the expectation that children would provide for parents in old age and diversify the household labour force before then.

Interviews from 1993 brought many of the same themes to the fore. A majority of informants even mentioned the labour and social security values of children as reason enough for early marriage. But themes appearing only in the interviews with men and women under 30 began to introduce new sentiments. For the first time, people in Timling were mentioning the obligations to children as a reason for delaying marriages:

Well, that's [before the early 20s] a bit young [for a boy] to get married. And if babies come he won't be able to earn enough. He needs to give his babies food and he needs to give them clothing. If he waits until he has matured before marrying, if he waits until he has earned money before marrying, then things will be better for the babies, don't you think?

You see, if he's earned money before and then has children, he'll be able to send them to school for an education. He'll be able to give them good food and nice clothes and other things. If an earning through wage labour can't be had and he gets married, then he is committing a kind of sin against his children.

At the same time, younger informants focus more emphatically on the husband's responsibility to provide for his wife, in addition to his children, with a decreasing emphasis on the responsibilities towards his affines.¹⁹

SOME IMPLICATIONS

Lengthy as this discussion has been, it remains just a sketch of the processes of moral and demographic transition that characterize Timling. It is clearly 'anthropological' if by that we mean the distance it has gone

from standard demographic questions. Yet I claim demographic relevance for the issues it raises. I suggest that it continues the spirit of Jack Caldwell's original insight that we should pay closer attention to the specific organization of societies whose demographic processes we hope to understand.

The paper differs somewhat from Caldwell's approach in at least two ways: (1) its argument begins with cultural models of kinship before circumscribing the range of relevant actors in Timling's familial system; and (2) its approach to familial morality is in terms of cultural structures of motivation and cultural images of the good.

In defining relevant actors, more than a little evidence suggests that the cast of characters important in Timling may be important in a wide range of other settings. What little we know of the processes of familial transition in societies where cross-cousin marriages were important organizational features in the past suggests that similar changes in the relations between affines are occurring. Ahearn's (1994) work among the Magar and Macfarlane's (1976) work among the Gurung both suggest transitions of a similar sort. Caldwell's own work in South India (Caldwell *et al.* 1988b) alludes to transitions in the structure of marital alliance that antedate some of the intergenerational changes he focuses on.

Even without appeals to culture and motivation, the importance of kinship and familial structures is an enlargement of the demographic enterprise in that it draws attention to the behaviour of procreating couples in social and institutional contexts (McNicol 1978, 1980). While the number of family and kinship systems defined in these terms is small, it is clearly more varied than the received models which appear to place more-or-less nuclear family systems in opposition to 'extended family systems'. One implication of this paper is that those extended systems require unpacking into relevant subtypes.

Such attention to variations in the identity of relevant kin has practical advantages in, for example, tests of wealth flows theory. Within the range of societies conforming in some respects to alliance models, attention to affinal actors and to the continuing relationships of exchange that occur between families after daughters leave the home are crucial to these tests. Two elements of that theory and its reception are important here. The first is Caldwell's definition of wealth, which is strikingly anthropological in its application to a variety of settings, and the second is the tendency to discuss these flows as though they occur only for intergenerationally connected kin.

Criticisms of the wealth flows theory have generally confined themselves to empirical arguments centring on the first component, which ties the flow of wealth to the rationality of high or low fertility. That point is actively contested, although a good deal of confusion turns on a misunderstanding of the breadth of the Caldwell definition, which necessitates

an empirical examination of its localized meaning in each new setting. As I have noted elsewhere (Fricke 1990b: 112), his writing is unambiguously inclusive. Guarantees, safety, the pleasures of organizing family activities, and promises of future activities are all included, in addition to actual monetary or labour transfers that can occur in the short term.²⁰

On the second component, there is a curious tendency to truncate the measurement of flows to a point when children leave the household or to limit the discussion of intergenerational flows to one's own children. This is bad enough in any society having one variety or another of classificatory kinship. Its impact is even more limiting in societies where affinal relationships are central, as among the Tamang, where it ignores the contributions from affinal kin. Moreover, as Greenhalgh (1990, 1995) persuasively argues, capturing the whole historical process of transition is critical to the understanding of all contemporary patterns. This means that the definition of affinal contributions can include more than that of a daughter's husband or even his closest kin. A single marriage may unite groups at the patriline level or not, but these are empirical issues to be ascertained anew in each instance and for antecedent historical periods. History does not necessarily open with systems that emphasize vertical relations between generations; such contemporary patterns may constitute the outcome of an earlier narrowing of affinal responsibilities.

While these are important implications of my argument, they are only minor extensions of existing directions in demographic research. More controversial, although closely connected to the definition of relevant familial actors, is the point that the study of demographic transitions looks for culture-specific theories of motivation. This has received recent attention from some (Santow and Bracher 1994; McDonald 1994), although in the context of motivational structures that are still fairly close to the family. The argument here is, again, similar to Greenhalgh's (1988). The childbearing practices of demographic interest are embedded within motivational systems in which childbearing is not always an end in itself. Yet, knowing what other ends are available to cultural actors may, nevertheless, have importance for uncovering variables, in the form of practices, relevant to demographic processes. I argue that these alternative ends are less easily discovered if we begin with childbearing and work upward through the levels of social structure and culture. Instead, a fully contextualized understanding of demographic process requires that we begin with a search for the more general motivations of actors, and this means an analysis of their moral systems in terms of internalized cultural patterns.

In the case of Timling, general notions of cultural good lead quickly to marriage as a set of practices (practices as defined by MacIntyre, 1984). These practices, as behaviours, may be more general but their cultural meanings are likely to be location-specific. Thus, the choice of whether

or not to include them in demographic analysis depends on the empirical context of each case. For Timling, cross-cousin marriage, marriage prestations, and the provision of brideservice have been shown to have important demographic implications in analyses cited in this discussion. Elsewhere, they may not.

Greenhalgh's approach to culture demands that it be taken in its own terms before developing hypotheses of demographic relevance:

In my reading of the demographic literature, where culture is not simply 'everything else', it tends to be seen as something concrete and fixed, something that, like education or occupation, once correctly described and measured, can be added to the list of determinants and called upon whenever an explanation of unusual behavior is needed. In my view culture does not belong on the list of determinants, because it is qualitatively different from the other factors on that list. . . . Culture is thus highly variable, capable of taking different forms through different recombinations of its constituting elements; it is historically contingent, not easily caught because it is always in process. At the same time, however, it plays a crucial role in demographic behavior, and for this reason deserves more sustained attention than it now receives. (Greenhalgh 1988: 668)

The argument in this paper is consistent with this approach. It exemplifies a cultural analysis that can open up, for demographers, the concrete practices in a local setting which are demographically relevant and which are presented by the culture itself rather than by an already existing list of variables lifted from other settings. At the same time, it suggests the possibility that structural systems in which affinal relations are stressed may require an expansion of our conceptualization of general processes such as emotional nucleation and changes in familial morality.

NOTES

1. For examples of Caldwell's work in methodology, see Caldwell (1985) and the volume edited by Caldwell *et al.* (1988a); important theoretical and substantive statements appear in Caldwell (1982); see Caldwell *et al.* (1988b) for an extended study relating all three domains.
2. It is important to note that demographers other than Caldwell have also moved beyond models that focus overwhelmingly on individual-level mechanisms. Santow and Bracher (1994), for example, write of the power of cultural symbols such as idealized notions of the family in motivating behaviour; and Geoffrey McNicoll's (1978, 1980) work has long called for attention to the structural and institutional correlates of demographic behaviour.
3. Greenhalgh's discussion parallels movements internal to the demographic community which stress renewed attention to cultural systems and elements

of meaning in the understanding of fertility transition. But Greenhalgh goes further in suggesting that culture is not static and fixed, but rather 'highly variable, capable of taking different forms through different combinations of its constituting elements . . . [and] historically contingent, not easily caught because it is always in process' (Greenhalgh 1988: 668). She concludes that research needs to look beyond the family unit to larger levels of context in order to understand the motivations for bearing children in any setting.

4. One striking example of the failure to consider these systems as distinct is in Caldwell's own work in South India, one of the canonical sites for their depiction in the anthropological literature (Dumont 1957). Although acknowledging certain features of the alliance system, especially those that have been transformed in recent years (Caldwell *et al.* 1988b: 85-8), Caldwell and his colleagues do not take this supra-household kin context as a central organizing principle in the society.
5. For interesting demographic exceptions that treat the motivational elements of culturally informed moral images, see the recent work of Santow and Bracher (1994) and McDonald (1994).
6. Regardless of where it is found. See David Schneider's discussion of *American Kinship* (1968) and Carl Schneider's discussion of the moral assumptions underlying American family and marriage law (1985; 1994).
7. For discussions of culturally variable meanings of 'person', see Fruzzetti *et al.* (1982), McHugh (1989), Taylor (1989), and the essays in Carrithers *et al.* (1985). Discussions often contrast the atomistic individual of Euro-American cultures with the collapsing of individual and group identities elsewhere (Fruzzetti *et al.* 1982), but McHugh (1989) shows how a culture—in this case, Himalayan—can incorporate both dimensions.
8. Hammel, for example, argues against the very search for culture-based motivation that informs this paper (Hammel and Friou 1996).
9. I emphasize that this autonomy is *partial*. Wuthnow (1987) and others (Alexander 1988; Geertz 1973) make strong cases for the analysis of culture in non-reductive terms, but it is also clear that culture is complexly linked to subjective individual experience and, indeed, must be considered as such if any dynamic analysis is to make sense (Ortner 1984; Alexander 1988; Strauss 1992; D'Andrade 1992).
10. Firth (1964: 220-4) summarizes the different senses of value and norm while also trying to develop a useful categorization. See Hammel and Friou (1997) for a spirited argument against attempts to get into people's heads. For a discussion and critique of utilitarian and related movements in philosophy, see Taylor (1985a: 230-47).
11. Compare the MacIntyre and Flanagan points to Caldwell's account of the values of children in transitional societies. 'Disaggregation is a product of external observation or, even more significantly, of hindsight. In relatively unchanging societies no one sees the separate bonuses conferred by fertility. The society is made by a seamless cloth. . . . Indeed, the respondent's ability to see clearly the separate aspects of children's value shows that the old system is already crumbling and that children's roles are not as certain as before' (Caldwell 1976: 343).

12. Intensive data collection was carried out in Timling during 1981-2, 1987-8, 1991, and 1993 fieldwork. See Axinn *et al.* (1991) for a discussion of the general methodology, which compares it to Caldwell's well-known version of micro-demography.
13. Tamang kinship terminology groups people having different biological relationships into common categories. The person we refer to as father in English is referred to by the Tamang with the same term that is used for that person's actual brothers and patrilineally related male cousins. Similarly, the words used by Tamang for the people we call brother and sister include, on the paternal side, all those people we refer to as cousin. Individual Tamang may, of course, recognize the possibility of closer or more distant ties of affection and authority among people called by the same term. Indeed, changes in the bounds of groups having recognized rights and obligations is a central component of the Tamang version of the process of emotional nucleation that Caldwell makes a key to demographic transition.
14. For a demonstration of this among the Tamang, see discussions in Höfer (1969), Holmberg (1989), and Fricke (1990a). More general discussions are in Dumont (1957), Leach (1961), and Barnard and Good (1984).
15. These figures are reported in Fricke *et al.* (1991). As a comparison with another project fieldsite, much more monetized and considerably closer to Nepal's major urban area of Kathmandu, the figures for help in agricultural harvest in the previous 12 months included 15% affinally related people and 17% consanguineally related women.
16. Interestingly, the pattern is absent in many societies that follow classic descent models more closely, as in the North Indian system described by Dyson and Moore (1983). These descent models are the implicit stereotype for much of the demographic image of pre-transition settings—a point that relates to Arland Thornton's (1992) critique of contemporary models of family and demographic transition.
17. For more elaborate discussions of the practices described below, see Fricke (1990a, 1997), Fricke *et al.* (1993), and Dahal *et al.* (1996). Discussions of their demographic relevance in Timling may be found in Fricke and Teachman (1993), Dahal *et al.* (1993), and Fricke (1995).
18. Table 9.2 provides cohort trends for both birth and marriage cohorts. Because these data are for ever-married women, they are subject to truncation bias, particularly in the last birth cohort where large numbers of women remain unmarried. For a complete discussion of the issue, see methodological app. B in Thornton and Lin (1994: 419-24).
19. Most of this paper has been concerned with establishing a framework, and the example of Timling is presented in descriptive rather than causal terms. The mention of earning wages by informants points to potential causes for the destabilization of Timling's morality of kinship, some of which lie in the nature of capitalization. See Caldwell (1982: 353-69).
20. See Fricke (1990b) and Turke (1991) for an exchange on this issue. One argument is that easily measured wealth allows for better falsified hypotheses (Kaplan 1994). It does at that, but see Taylor (1985b, 1993) for relevant reflections on the tyranny of epistemology in social research. An overweening concern for falsifiability runs the risk of losing touch with social reality.

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