

Notes on Nyinbe Brothers

Nyinba: ethnic Tibetans of northwest Nepal practice polyandry. Remained relatively isolated and self-sufficient in their Himalayan valley. Number 1,300, living in four villages

– when a woman marries a man she is marrying all his brothers as well – have too little arable land to divide among brothers if each wanted to start own family. Its instructive to notice that Nyinba, that while polyandry is norm, are tolerate alternative arrangements such as polygyny and monogamy

Zumket talks about importance of showing no favoritism to any of her husbands, lest family harmony be upset.

“Women always hold the family together. We hold them at night and make them feel like men and we hold them in the day.”

But the balance is becoming more difficult to sustain – as more Nyimbans, educated with western values, threaten cohesion of family