



# Gender, Identity and Migration in India

Edited by  
**Nasreen Chowdhory**  
**Paula Banerjee**

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“This compelling anthology of case studies and critical reflections offers new insights into our understanding of the nexus between gender, identity and migration. Offering a substantial contribution to the growing body of research related to displacement and dispossession in South Asia, the volume powerfully rectifies the silencing of experiences from the Global South and feminist methodologies.

The editors have brought together a range of innovative scholars, who collectively, address a gap between knowledge production in academia and the lived experiences of people and communities who constitute both the subjects and objects of forced migration. Readers who want to understand the lived experiences of migration will see farther and more clearly through the authors’ lenses.

The collection provides a solid foundation for students, academics and policy makers of the main questions being asked around migration and identity, with gender as the central figure.”

—Professor Giorgia Doná, *Co-director Centre for Migration, Refugees and Belonging, University of East London*

“This anthology brings together a set of carefully researched and logically argued papers, which deepen our understanding of the gendered nature of migration and the questions of identity, belonging, and citizenship. The chapters look at the phenomenon of forced migration and displacement arising out of conflict, coercion, and social and state practices that produce different kinds of ‘mobile’ populations. The book makes a significant contribution to displacement studies by examining displacement through conceptual lenses which are sensitive to the contexts of the global South. The deployment of feminist methodology unsettles ossified categories that have hegemonised the field of enquiry, prompting questions which are framed to elicit answers from people’s lived experiences. The focus on life histories and narratives have made the book a rich repository of ethnographic accounts of lived experience of migration. The contributors persuade the reader to look at borders and borderlands, conflict and resistance, work, lives and livelihoods, camps, and homes as spaces and sites constitutive of these experiences. An excellent anthology for those academics and policy makers who are looking for a rigorously researched and intellectually stimulating work.”

—Professor Anupama Roy, *Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences-II, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi*

“Understanding displacement, refuge, mobility and new labour regimes as gendered processes and to conceptualize the migrant as a central figure of contemporary history as part of a feminist epistemology – these are key points of departure the authors of this edited volume share. Their explorations focus on South Asia and India and are doubly challenging standard paradigms in migration studies: by conceptualising South-South migration as key for knowledge production in the field as well as by giving the limelight to scholarship from the Global South. In other words: via understanding Indian migration, this volume is challenging global migration discourses.”

—Professor Lydia Potts, *Coordinator of EMMIR (European Masters in Migration and Intercultural Relations. It is a European Commission run Masters Program), Carl Von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, Germany*

Nasreen Chowdhory • Paula Banerjee  
Editors

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ISBN 978-981-16-5597-5      ISBN 978-981-16-5598-2 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5598-2>

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The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

## FOREWORD

*Gender, Identity, and Migration in India* opens up a horizon of conflict studies where social contentions find their place of significance. This is in marked contrast to the usual crop of conflict studies which, in the name of realism, see conflicts as self-originating and do not go beyond the usual reasons of state and resources. This book takes us in a different direction that points towards our bodily existences and the deep physicality of the conflicts. Mobile human bodies, their gendered existences, the ways these bodies encamp or are quartered, and the dislocated presence of development in this age—all these in place of generals, politicians, strategic analysts, and diplomats, occupy centre stage in this book.

Remarkable in this context is the pronounced presence of the narratives of displacement in this book—primarily because these narratives, besides bringing out the variegated contexts of displacement, tell us of their interrelations, and more crucially, the centrality of experiences as the object to be theorised in forced migration studies. As has been suggested, experiences themselves become a critical part of the migration process.

Displacement transforms labour under a continuously globalising regime of capital, and as the volume suggests, politics plays tango with this regime of capital by transforming the army of mobile labour into various categories of footloose population. Dislocation in this way becomes a tool to create new modes of supervising labour. Yet these new modes of supervision do not succeed in controlling population movements and regulating them to suit the needs of democracy and an orderly polity. What we observe instead is something named today by many migration theorists as

autonomy of migration, which speaks of the range of legal, semi-legal, and illegal ways in which labouring bodies move and survive.

The story of development is threaded in this global time of displacement, refuge, mobility, and new labour regimes. The book presents as parts of that story episodes that form chronicles of moving bodies, of towns in transit, other accounts of dislocation, modes of studying these phenomena, illegalities, the spectrum of experiences of dislocation, our policy world, and most importantly, the filling up of an entity called “space” with social meanings like gender and caste. Therefore, while at one level the book may seem to throw dispersed light on our age, this very dispersal and diffusion make possible for the book to show the various apparatuses of power and conflict-shaping processes of migration and forced migration.

We are, it seems, moving from an old realist optic to a new one, and the new realism signals the arrival of the migrant as a central figure of contemporary history.

Kolkata, India

Ranabir Samaddar

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Someone mentioned a while back that collaborative works allow us to forge deep friendships. Writing any book is a collective process that brings together an assemblage of contributors, friends, colleagues and well-wishers. Similarly, the journey of this book begun quite early on and personally I am very grateful that all contributors allowed us immense time to shape this important scholarship on Gender, Identity and Migration. Both Paula and I are very grateful to our peers for their guidance and direction given in this work. Paula would like to acknowledge the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta and Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, and Prof. Ranabir Samaddar.

Friends and colleagues are a very critical part of any journey, and Nasreen is very grateful to the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, and to all colleagues and especially Prof. Veena Kukreja (who passed away in April 2021). I would like to thank my mentors in the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, Prof. Ranabir Samaddar, Prof. Samir Kumar Das and Prof. Sabyasachi B R Chaudhary.

Family constitutes the backbone of my academic work—my parents who continue to be part of my existence, even though they seem far, and yet not so far, my sister Parveen Chowdhury, my nephew Amaan Chowdhury, and my partner Adlul Islam are my source of strength. To each one of them, I remain forever grateful.



I dedicate this work to my parents, Azharul Islam Chowdhury and Nuron Nessa Chowdhury, and Prof. Veena Kukreja.

Lastly, we are grateful to all contributors, especially Nergis Canefe for sharing her powerful illustrations in the book, anonymous reviewers and Ms. Sandeep Kaur of Palgrave Macmillan for their inputs and immense patience.

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Gender, Identity and Displacement: Nexus Requirements for a Critical Epistemology

*Nergis Canefe, Paula Banerjee, and Nasreen Chowdhory*

## INTRODUCTION

The Global South categorically receives a generic and parochial treatment because of the historical inequalities underlying the North-South divide. It is generally framed as the source for ‘raw data’ or a beneficiary of theoretical work produced ‘elsewhere’, thus further reinforcing a conceptual hierarchy obscuring both historical asymmetries and violent power dynamics (Chimni 2009). There is a deep-seated need for the recalibration of established positions of intellectual power. Still, despite the genuine interest in including

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Singapore Pte Ltd. 2022

N. Chowdhory, P. Banerjee (eds.), *Gender, Identity and Migration  
in India*, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5598-2\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5598-2_1)

and ‘empowering’ research partners in the Global South, international partnerships often reincarnate and reproduce neocolonial dynamics of inequality (Binka 2005). Including a southern partner, and any academic work produced in the Global South or referring to it in the curricula, if done in a manner that glosses over the politics of inclusion/exclusion, does not constitute an end in and of itself. Instead, this interaction needs to be framed as a first step towards an engaged, ethical and transformative relationship.

Suffice to say that the same set of conditions apply to engaging with feminist methodologies and especially so in the context of forced migration studies (Hyndman 2010). In both cases, such critical work is directly informed by the logics of inequality. Meanwhile, efficiency/output, parameters of recognition, neocolonial tutelage and conceptual splits continue to play a major role in global academia. Working, teaching and publishing with the acute recognition of the homelessness and yet profound influence of such bridging acts constitute the first step towards establishing a critical epistemology of engagement. All of the contributors insist on working with an expanded concept of gender, social reproduction and belonging in order to tell more layered and complicated stories about the critical relationship between gender and dispossession. This kind of framework, combined with the critical and self-aware stance emanating from the Global South, has the capacity to underpin the dominant narrative structures operative in migration studies.

The second key dimension of a politically engaged commitment to scholarship in the confines of academia is to remain involved or indeed to start the kinds of conversations that not only are transdisciplinary but also make a courageous attempt to address the gap between the academia and communities whose voice and participation are vital to the sustainability of local, regional and global understandings of the phenomena we seek to understand. As scholars, we not only do witness and analyse but also could challenge and change through our scholarship, research and teaching. The overarching argument presented here is that scholarship, despite its immense relevance, needs to be perpetually authenticated in order to create intellectual and political space for alternative ideas that are relevant to global historical realities. To this end, we must strive to explore the limits to the critique of capitalism, nationalism, refugee law, gendered division of labour, humanitarian and human rights law, etc. above and beyond reinstating their hegemonic dimensions. In seeking post-neoliberal, post-imperial and post-colonial insights, our work must address issues of injustice in order to establish a counterpoint and to introduce initiatives in research and capacity-building for genuine societal change.

In this context, all the contributions to this volume embellish the argument that there is a direct correlation between an academic researcher's positionality and the methods and trajectories of critical knowledge production. In particular, feminist epistemologies with specific emphasis on post-coloniality utilised in conjunction with scholarship related to transnational migration studies constitute a distinctly powerful vantage point for challenging methodological nationalism and the syndrome of 'seeing like the state' in the area of forced migration studies. Opposing the dualistic understandings of membership, crisis, exclusion and dispossession, it proposes a new set of norms that pertain to working with human suffering. Under the aegis of ethics of witnessing, this epistemological framework could provide a conceptual mapping of historical and emergent hierarchies vis-à-vis neocolonial as well as decolonial practices of knowledge production and dissemination pertaining to global patterns of displacement. These methodologies of dismemberment are uniquely inscribed acts of systemic violence resulting from state-society alliances, and it is high time that we attend to gendered forms of such dismemberment as a paradigm for understanding the overall pattern of dispossession across South Asia.

Work on fluid borders, gendered forms of political engagement, intersection of power, identity and place, legacies of partition as conquest, and transnational readings of forced migration in the Asian context allow us to reflect upon the borders, borderlands, borderlines and spaces in between identities, languages and cultures. Similarly, rethinking historical geographies and contested readings of borders creates spaces for introducing a qualitative methodology for analysing contested identities, disputed national politics and territorial claims. Generating a new debate that makes it explicit that the fluidity of boundaries and uncertainty in histories of partitions are cartographic, historiographical and political debate is a crucial step towards establishing a new nexus for a critical epistemology. Extended conflicts, repeated partitions and seemingly unresolvable boundary issues are not just unique problems of South Asia. Mixed and massive population flows, large-scale population movements and exchanges, as well as statelessness occur globally as a result of actual practices or threat of violence, discrimination, natural disasters, man-made famines and floods, climate change, resource crises, environmental catastrophes, complex emergencies and civil wars alike. What makes the region distinct is not so much the chronic nature of displacement itself, but the normalisation of it and the rendition of borders as fixed when in effect they remained porous since India's independence back in 1947. Narratives and life stories

of displaced women within this larger context of redrawing of boundaries, partition of states, xenophobic policies, minority persecution, civil wars, and state-endorsed violence for the past 73 years unravel a unique history of a markedly gendered displacement.

Bridging the gap between existing knowledge concerning displacement and dispossession which is often quantitatively constructed and the ground realities of the people whose lives are shaped by these phenomena at multiple levels needs to be challenged. Epistemological questions associated with the forced migration studies include the outlining of the gendered nature of forced migration only in a nominal fashion. This volume directly addresses the gap existing between knowledge production in academia and the lived experiences of people and communities who constitute both the subjects and objects of forced migration. Asking questions such as what is feminist about studying women's forced migration, or treating camps as essential loci within forced migration studies while critically addressing the place of exceptionality, or working on policy reviews with an eye for mapping the profiles of sustainable livelihood and socio-economic rights of marginalised communities across South Asia, or establishing links between development, displacement and meanings associated with place, or treating partition not just as a method of conflict resolution but as a means of population engineering, looking at communities in the margin up close and personal and with a view of state policies and practices concerning sustainability of the rights of such communities, all of these points of entry constitute interventions.

Forced migration has become an integral and naturalised part of everyday life for millions of girls and women in South Asia. While much of the academic and policy debate and related discourse centred on their movement across the borders and from one country to another, uprooting and displacement are also a reality from within, particularly when it concerns periodic back and forth and 'temporary displacements' as forced migration flows are often characterised as. Notably, a growing segment of these populations also experience uprooting and dislocation from their families and communities, husbands and children. For many, these multiple forms of individual and systemic violence have become a central feature of their lives. And yet, these issues continue to receive treatment as sub-headings with very little if any methodological bearing on the overall framework of forced migration studies. Overall, feminist analyses of forced migration in South Asia challenge the traditional forced migration studies framework on two counts: offering a lens that looks at dispossession from within the

Global South, and, prioritising the lived experiences of displaced persons and recognising the gendered nature in which dispossession takes place. The ethical and pragmatic grounds for broadening our analytical focus from states to people cannot be achieved without investigating the social and political construction of dispossession or the destructive role that sexist and racist stereotypes play in constructing the category of victims of forced migration.

Scholarship that emanates from marginalised and under-privileged geographies point to profound experiences of disconnection and formidable barriers to re/establishing connections after displacement, which altogether generate dangerous spaces of death and dispossession sustained by interlocking systems of oppression (Canefe 2019). In negotiating new spaces by dedicated and often confrontational scholarship, we underline the potential for the forming and re-forming of alliances among different sectors of the society and seemingly separate sources of knowing and telling the truth. In turn, these constitute new sources of understanding and insight that hold the promise of hope. It is within these alternative spaces of hope and forms of engagement that connections between academia and everyday life could offer a renewed sense of belonging and well-being for the society at large.

The findings on gender, displacement and conflict brought forward in this volume highlight the relevance of studying the multi-faceted nature of uprooted-ness in women's lives for providing new beginnings in terms of formulating critical epistemological interventions. Comprising a substantial contribution to the growing body of research related to displaced and dispossessed girls and women in South Asia, this volume offers a toolkit for future research for revealing the ways in which women's lives are positioned in relation to other narratives, multiple audiences and the grand narratives of nationalism, war and conflict. It invites us to think and work in terms of how women position themselves vis-à-vis conflict, and are in ownership of discourses, strategies and performance devices reflecting significant changes in the life and times of societies that they are surviving against all odds. Their voices challenge the dominant narratives of war as well as peace and resist categorisation.

As conditions of displacement became an integral part of decades-long ethnic conflict, border rearrangements and ensuing civil wars in South Asia, women's life experiences were increasingly shaped by continuous ethnic conflicts and militarised projects of nation-building. They were forced to internalise their displaced state of existence and survival as an

essential part of the price paid by the society at large for ongoing forms of structural violence. The queries engaged in this volume and the resultant collaborative effort sheds a new light to our understanding of the state, power, authority, privilege and territory by dislocating notions of place and border as fixed categories. By recovering the fluidity and mobility of geographies of systemic exclusion in the midst of seemingly settled political, cultural and economic realms, scholarly work of this kind pushes the envelope in terms of questioning the dominant epistemological certainties in the field. Such a fruitful discussion on the gendered consciousness of the displaced classes ultimately undermines traditional notions of displacement and dispossession as relatively homogenous experiences.

The Asia-Pacific region has witnessed its share of conflicts; however, what is specific to this region is the nature of conflict, partition and boundary issues. South Asia region has the features of fluid borders, cultural commonalities with its neighbours which make it crucial for policy makers to recognise the unique nature of the problem in the region. The two broad issues that need to be reflected upon are – on the one hand mixed and massive flows, provoking desperate governmental methods, on the other hand innovations at a furious pace in humanitarian methods, functions, development of institutions, and principles. Large-scale population movement occurs as a result of threat of violence, torture, and discrimination, natural disasters, man-made famines and floods, climate change, resource crises, environmental catastrophes etc. The urgency to have a commensurate humanitarian response has grown accordingly in range. Governments realise the need to gear up not only to emergencies but also to ‘complex emergencies’ – a scenario that alludes to a complicated assemblage of factors and elements leading to the emergency situation. At the same time it is clearer than ever that the responsibility to protect the victims of forced migration must be wrenched away from its ‘humanitarian roots’, and located anew in the context of rights, justice, and the popular politics of claim making today. The rights of the migrants, in particular the victims of forced migration, becomes noticeable in this light. The responsibility on part of the governments to protect the victims and devise strategies of protection of those migrant’s rights then becomes a necessary corollary. The way in which the government wanted to stabilise the population flow as the humanitarian method, simplistically as a non-dialogic mechanism, becomes important to analyse.

Refugee flows are consequent to political and social reasons, redrawing of boundaries, partition of states, xenophobic policies, minority

persecution, civil wars, and foreign aggression. Without a proper understanding of these causes, durable solutions, the ‘right to return’, burden sharing in refugee protection, and the interface of human rights origins and humanitarian dimensions of refugee protection cannot be thought of. The unique features of this ‘new reality’ need to be highlighted by focusing on the relevant experiences of strategies of protection of victims of forced migration, particularly in the *post-colonial world*.

The book is divided into four parts. **Part I: Methodologies and the Production of Knowledge in Forced Migration Contexts.** The **Chapter 2: Production of Knowledge and Methodologies in Conflict Induced Displacement and Forced Migration**, by Manish Jha and Shagun Saklani Pande, examines how people around the world have been forced to flee owing to diverse factors, like political instability, conflict, natural and man-made disasters making this form of migration mostly, conflict induced, development induced and disaster induced. The involvement of different actors and institutions in the production of knowledge in situations of forced migration raises numerous epistemological questions, which relate in particular to the concepts and categories we use to make sense of the phenomenon and lived realities. The production of knowledge in conflict situation has generated mostly out of large-scale quantitative studies that have influenced policies and programs. The chapter attempts to bridge this gap and qualitatively bring forth the subjective experiences of one such set of forced migrants living in a camp in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. The lived experiences of internally displaced people in a conflict zone are a rich repository for understanding the process of construction of knowledge by the actors and agencies involved. The chapter highlights the everyday lived experiences of forced migrants, particularly children. Through the camp life knowledge is produced and reproduced by them in the very act of living the life of a forced migrant. Paula Banerjee in **Chapter 3: What Is Feminist About Studying Women’s Forced Migration** poses the question as to how forced migration studies is neither a new field and nor has it lacked innovative research methodologies. But just as in most other fields of study traditionally the study of forced migration has also been marked by a male bias among other biases. About two decades earlier there was not just a paucity of women working on these issues but the issues privileged were largely those that are often designated as ‘male issues’. There was a proclivity to view forced migration from the perspective of law, legal and official discourses. In the last two decades a group of social scientists from the Global South have challenged

the major theoretical assumptions of the field of forced migration as set by the Global North. Feminist objectives include some of the following characteristics: it presupposes gender as a central category of analysis; it questions what is recognised as ‘normal’; it serves as a corrective to andro-centric notions by generating new knowledge; it accepts women’s own interpretation of their identities and experiences. Feminists over the last two decades not only have feminised the discourse of forced migration but also had created an alternative discourse through asking different question and creating a different value system by recognising women’s agency and agency of other vulnerable groups and this can loosely be termed as a feminist methodology. And looking all methodologies, it is neither full proof nor without closures. In **Chapter 4: Interrogating Camps in Forced Migration Studies: The Exceptionality of South Asia**, Nasreen Chowdhory and Shamna Thacham Poyil examine how camp space becomes the paradigmatic of the stratification and diversification of membership prevalent in contemporary society. By first segregating and later confining the outcasts of the body politic to a demarcated space, the camp emerges as a zone in a state of suspension (Agamben 1996). It is at once both inside the ambit of normal spatial organisation of the nation-state and yet outside it. Being physically located inside the borders of the state, the camp is ‘inside’. But by challenging the hyphenation between territory of a state and population it embodies, the camp falls outside the normal spatial organisation of the state. The chapter will engage theoretically with camps as loci within forced migration studies while critically addressing the place of exceptionality. The camps in South Asia exhibit a situation of ‘exception’ within the space of exception that camps are generally tethered to. The blurred cultural boundaries that were not analogous to the borders established by the modern nation-states of South Asia occasioned the emergence of a common sense of belonging among the people. In the absence of a legal framework for refugee protection, the ‘exceptionality’ of refugee camps in South Asia is constituted by a sense of belonging that the refugees develop towards their host state and society.

Nergis Canefe in **Chapter 5: Gender, Dispossession and Ethics of Witnessing: Method as Intervention** explores specific ways in which forced migration scholarship could bring about learning opportunities hand in hand with analyses of displacement and dispossession. The aim of the chapter is threefold. It proposes that a new ethics of witnessing as applied to the work of scholars of forced migration is to be construed as a form of responsibility; it sheds light on pedagogical/curricular



interventions which could produce a targeted and radical-justice oriented form of scholarly engagement, especially in context of gender-specific historical trauma and wide-spread and state-sponsored or condoned violence; and, it provides a roadmap concerning how progressive pedagogies based on witnessing can motivate scholars and researchers to develop an articulate understanding of affect that could encourage transformative political responses and processes. Giorgio Grappi in **Chapter 6: On Research, the Politics of Migrations and the Materiality of the Global: Views Out of Place** attempts the exercise of linking together a critical assessment of the role of militancy in migration studies, with the perspective suggested by the study of forced migration in the global context. Grappi's departure points will be some of the insights raised by the workshop on migration and militant research, hosted by the Politics department of Goldsmiths, University of London—which resulted in a special issue of the *Postcolonial Studies* journal entitled 'Challenging the discipline of migration: Militant Research and Militant Investigation'—and the collective text 'New Keywords: Migration and Borders' published by *Cultural Studies* journal in early 2014 (Garelli and Tazzioli 2013; Casas-Cortes et al. 2015).

In the **Part II: Labour, Development and the Migrant Body**, Shailaja Menon's **Chapter 7: 'If Only I Were a Male': Work, Value and the Female Body** asserts that across India three quarters of women older than 21 have left their place of birth, almost all on marriage. Women are typically married young, between 16 and 20, and are generally illiterate or have less than a primary school education. Sent to a new village, new brides are often subject to violence, and are forced to create a new life in a strange place only rarely of their own choosing. Within the contours of the universally and culturally sanctified marriage norms, women have very little space to manoeuvre. Once, they reallocate to a new geographical space post marriage, their spatial negotiations depend on their spousal/extended family relationships, education and skill levels and economic background. Many a time, they are forced to contribute their labour for the family, willingly or otherwise and their body is valued for its capacity to toil for economic gains. The chapter revolves around the life histories of four women belonging to different castes and economic backgrounds, who migrated to Delhi, post marriage. Depending upon their socio-economic location, they negotiated with their changing life conditions. The researcher's close proximity with these women who worked as domestic help over a period of time and the daily conversations with them induced novel meanings of labour, work, space, motherhood, notions of

gender and caste and the bodily aesthetics which would be discussed. In **Chapter 8: Forced Displacement Studies in India: An Overview**, Biswajit Mohanty asserts that development is a polysemic concept. Nevertheless, the core to the process of development is co-existence of adversative phenomena of progress/growth and displacement/dislocation, growth and poverty, growth and inequality and progress and inequality of place. Whereas development with displacement is justified by managerial theory of displacement, the primitive accumulation theory of displacement deals with capitalist system of production and displacement not only as moments of dissolution that expropriate powerless from their sources of livelihood but also to produce and normalise labour forces for the system. Theories of displacement have hardly taken into account the analysis of meaning of displacement and its relation to 'spatial consciousness': 'the social production of space is implicated in the reproduction of inequality and injustice' and 'spatial justice' of challenging structures of domination and oppression through meanings of place. Place becomes 'product of social activity' whose meaning is acquired through spatiality of life-worlds of displaced people. The aim of the chapter is to explore linkage between development, displacement and meanings associated with place.

Namreeta Kumari, **Chapter 9: The Facilitators and the Reproductive Laborers of the Indian Gestational Surrogacy Market**, suggests surrogacy market or business, which is also referred as 'market of lives', is a highly contested market due to various moral and ethical issues associated with this market. This market is perpetuated by patriarchal mindset which controls women bodies, in an attempt to do so particularly in case of conception since they are alien to it with the help of science they have evolved assisted reproductive technologies like in vitro fertilisation (IVF) which resulted in gestational surrogacy. This chapter highlights the key facilitators of this market who are the surrogate agents who play a crucial role in this market of lives as they bring women who intend to become surrogate mothers or egg donors to the IVF clinic. The chapter engages and analyses these crucial actors in the gestational surrogacy market where 'life itself' is traded. Skylab Sahu, in **Chapter 10: Gender and Invisible Migration: Understanding Sex Trafficking in India**, suggests that millions of people around the world are moving away from their homes, villages to towns or to cities within own country or across countries. Migration could be voluntary in nature where the individual or family takes a decision independently to live a better life after migration. Similarly, migration also

could be forced due to nature-led disaster, drought and other natural disasters. The phenomenon is explained in terms of push and pull factors and its implications are viewed both positively as well as negatively by scholars. The chapter is based on the primary data of qualitative analysis of the 15 girls from Kolkata, who were trafficked and pushed to prostitution. The chapter while using case study of the five girls three from Bangladesh and two from Nepal and analyses how girls were trafficked for sex trade and faced severe socio-economic and health implications. The chapter critically analyses role of the state towards addressing cross border and within state sex trafficking.

In **Part III: Identity, Borders and Borderland, Chapter 11: Being with Difficulty and Uncertainty: Young Rohingyas in Children's Homes of West Bengal**, Suchismita Majumdar points out how the exclusion and persecution of a group of people namely Rohingyas, mainly a Muslim ethnic minority from the Northern Rakhine state of Western Myanmar for several decades and their colossal displacement in 2017 has recently attracted the attention of the world at large and come to be known as 'Rohingya crisis'. The study attempts to highlight how the lack of a protection system is destroying the young generation of a community. In **Chapter 12: Negotiations and Navigation: Migrant Lives in a Borderland District**, Anindita Chakrabarty probes the undocumented population from erstwhile East Bengal as well as the present Bangladesh to India and consciously engage with questions on citizenship, residency, identity, belonging, legality and illegality. The study locates itself within the broader arena of migration research, while focusing on the Indian context in relation to cross-border migration between India and Bangladesh. The chapter unravels the migrant identity as a politico-religious category that is shaped by historical impulses over the decades following partition. It also brings out how the migrant population is controlled by the state, being subjected to the surveillance mechanisms, devised by the former that simultaneously decides the extent of the populations' presence in the country. In doing so, it excavates how membership as a citizen is contingent upon the ideological differences over identity of the post-partition Indian state, and is motivated by subjective constructions of citizenship in everyday life beyond the legal discourse. This eventually poses questions around construction of a migrant identity as a 'citizen-outsider', and portrayal of a migrant in mainstream discourse. Jagroop Singh Sekhon, in **Chapter 13: The Legacy of Partition and Structural Victimisation of the People of Borderland: A Case of**

**Punjab**, attempts to study and analyse the problems and issues of the people residing in the border villages of Punjab. The term ‘border village’ is used for those villages which are located on zero line, i.e. Radcliffe Line which divides India and Pakistan border.

In **Part IV: Gender, Conflict and Migration**, P.V. Ramana, **Chapter 14: Women in India’s CPI (Maoist) Ranks**, asserts that the association of women with armed Communist movement dates back to the Telangana Armed Struggle of 1946–51 when women, especially from the middle class, were involved in non-combatant roles, such as maintaining dumps, managing safe houses to facilitate secret meetings and in transporting weapons. Thereafter, the role of women transformed and they were involved in combatant role by fielding weapons and engaging the security forces in gun-battles in Naxalbari as well as Srikakulam Armed Struggle (1969–1970). More than a decade later, women were involved in the Jagityal Rytanga Poratam (Jagityal Peasants’ Struggle). After taking root in Dandakaranya (Bastar), a conscious effort was made from the very beginning to start women’s organisations. Gradually, in the late 1980s – early 1990s, following internal discussions and the aspirations of women themselves in Telangana, a conscious decision was taken not to limit the role of women to non-combatant roles such as maintaining dens/managing safe-houses in urban areas, and they were given the choice of going into the forests to organise the movement/join the armed squads as fighters. The chapter makes a modest attempt to understand why women join in India’s Maoist movement, their role within the outfit, their equation with the leadership and fellow cadres, why they quit, and their lives after they surrender to the authorities.

In **Chapter 15: Gender, Gun and Guerrillas: Narratives from Maoist People’s War of Nepal**, Amrita Pritam Gogoi narrates ‘woman should take up arms and fight against exploitation; it is us, the women cadres in the People’s War (PW) of Nepal, who taught the world’, a claim made by the Comrade Kranti, a battalion commander of the PLA. One might ignore the above statement as untrue considering the variety of role women has been playing in different conflict societies. However, it does in a definite sense point to a certain kind of law making or law altering claim in a society where women are not allowed even to kill a chicken. Laws written and unwritten, of and outside the institution of the state, laws of the body, mind or the tongue were challenged. It is in the light of claims like these, the chapter tries to understand how violence as an idea or an institution provided the ground for many legal, social, corporeal forms of

liberation for women cadres in the PW of Nepal. By exploring the relationship that the cadres developed with the gun; using field notes, transcripts, letters, poetries and autobiographies the chapter highlights how the gun and their relationship has continuously been used to perform and establish their new identities as brave fighters, articulate policy makers and as questioning citizens. Shubhra Seth in **Chapter 16: Victims to Vanguard: Displaced Yet Determined** examines how those forced to flee and not being able to return home, become Internally Displaced Persons (henceforth IDPs). A large mass of people who do not cross the defined borders of their states unlike refugees and continue to combat conflict in their homelands amidst changed meanings and contours of their citizenship. In **Chapter 17: Gender, Identity and Migration: Concluding Remarks**, Paula Banerjee and Nasreen Chowdhury suggest that the knowledge formation has been skewed in forced migration, hence the need of the hour is to bridge the gap. The volume is therefore an attempt to do the same based on new kind of scholarship emerging in the Global South.

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