

**TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES, NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES:
A STUDY OF CROSS-REGION MARRIAGE IN NORTH INDIA**

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A STUDY OF CROSS-REGION MARRIAGE IN NORTH INDIA**

by

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **Transcending Boundaries, Negotiating Identities: A Study of Cross-region Marriage in North India**, being submitted by **Ms. Paro Mishra** to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi**, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is a record of bonafied work carried out by her under my supervision. In my opinion, the thesis has reached the standards fulfilling the requirements for submission relating to the degree.

The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted, in part or full, to any other university/institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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Abstract

“Transcending Boundaries, Negotiating Identities: A Study of Cross-region Marriage in North India” is an ethnographic presentation of the practice of cross-cultural marriages in the rural North Indian context. The focus here is on the migrant brides from various parts of India who leave their familiar social worlds and move into a completely alien socio-cultural milieu post marriage with men who are unable to find spouses locally owing to demographic imbalance and other socio-economic disadvantages. Being very different from the conventional/normative models of marital relationships in North India, cross-region marriages are deemed *a priori* as problematic in the popular discourse. This thesis critiques the simplistic portrayals of cross-region marriages as trafficking in women by examining the ‘lived’ experience of these unconventional relationships. In particular this thesis explores the active and material ways in which female marriage migrants craft identity and belonging in their daily lives in an unfamiliar cultural environment, in relation to the broad stereotypes held of them as ‘trafficked women’ and ‘bought brides’ in the popular discourse and also amongst the local populace. Stressing on the need to ethnographically account for a wide variety of marital relationships in India, this thesis makes the case for moving away from an understanding of marriage as a structure, as has been done traditionally in anthropology, and think in the direction of looking at it more as a domain of emotional bonding, flexibility, negotiation and experience.

सारांश

"ट्रांसेंडिंग बाउंडरीएस नेगोशिएटिंग आइडेंटिटीएस: अ इस्ताडी ऑफ़ क्रॉस रीजन मैरिज इन नार्थ इंडिया" शोध का अध्ययन ग्रामीण उत्तर भारतीय परिपेक्ष में अंतर सांस्कृतिक विवाह का मानवजाति प्रस्तुतीकरण है। इस अध्ययन का प्रमुख केंद्र भारत के विभिन्न भागों में पाई जाने वाली प्रवासी नववधू हैं। इनके अंतर्गत विवाह के पश्चात महिला अपनी पारिवारिक सामाजिक दुनिया को छोड़ कर बाहरी सामाजिक सांस्कृतिक परिवेश में आती है उन पुरुषों से विवाह कर के जो की स्थानीय जनांकिकीय असंतुलन एवं अन्य प्रतिकूल सामाजिक आर्थिक परिस्थितियों के कारण अपने जीवनसाथी को पाने में असमर्थ हैं। भारत में परंपरागत/मानकीय प्रतिरूप के विवाह संबंधों से भिन्न होने के कारण अंतर प्रांतीय विवाह को लोकप्रिय प्रवचन में संभवतः जटिल माना गया है। यह शोध अंतर प्रांतीय विवाह के अतिसरलीकृत वर्णन जैसे की मानव तस्करी की आलोचना करता है। निश्चित रूप से यह शोध इन विवाहों के जैविक अनुभव को जानने की कोशिश करता है। इसके अंतर्गत यह शोध प्रवासी महिला की पहचान एवं उसके अपरिचित सांस्कृतिक पर्यावरण में सम्बद्ध प्राप्त करने के तरीकों का विश्लेषण करता है। इस शोध में विवाह को मानवशास्त्र में पारम्परिक रूप से देखने की अपेक्षा एक संरचना के रूप में, भावनात्मक श्लेषण के रूप में तथा सुनम्यता, समझौता व अनुभव के रूप में देखने का आग्रह करता है।

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