

**KINSHIP AND RELATEDNESS IN COMMERCIAL
GESTATIONAL SURROGACY IN INDIA**

ANINDITA MAJUMDAR



DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

JANUARY 2015

KINSHIP AND RELATEDNESS IN COMMERCIAL GESTATIONAL SURROGACY IN INDIA

By

ANINDITA MAJUMDAR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Submitted

in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

to the



Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

January 2015

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Kinship and Relatedness in Commercial Gestational Surrogacy in India**” is being submitted by **ANINDITA MAJUMDAR** to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**. This thesis is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my guidance and supervision. In my opinion the thesis has reached the standards fulfilling the requirements for award of the doctoral degree.

The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted to any other University/Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

Prof. RAVINDER KAUR

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

January 2015

Acknowledgements

At the very outset I would like to express my gratitude to all those who participated in this research and gave me access to their personal life stories.

This thesis would not be complete without the guidance and support of my supervisor Professor Ravinder Kaur. She has been an inspiration in every sense of the term—from giving meaningful direction to my doctoral research to extremely constructive feedback and criticism.

Thanks to my academic committee: Dr Farhana Ibrahim who was extremely helpful in providing timely criticism and comments on my thesis; and Dr Rita Brara for her critical inputs at crucial stages of my thesis writing.

Financial support for my doctoral research and fieldwork was provided by the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D) through an institute fellowship, for which I am extremely grateful. My thanks to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT-D for providing institutional support in the form of conference funding and in facilitating other academic endeavours.

Faculty members at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi have always encouraged me in my thesis—providing information, advice and support—thanks to Professors Amrit Srinivasan and Sanil V., Drs Sarbeswar Sahoo and Reetika Khera.

To my colleagues at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences: Paro Mishra for our shared companionship over ethnography and anthropology, and for being an active critic of my work (which made it better); and thanks to Gurmeet Kaur and Mahendra Shahare for reading and providing suggestions on my writing.

Thanks to Payal Kumar, Aimee Ginsburg, Srividya Rajaram, Jitin Chadha, Meghna Aggarwal, Simran Chadha and Aparna Gupta for facilitating contact with key respondents in my fieldwork.

Thanks to Gayatri Koshy for her support and help; and to Chandan Bose and Amrita Ibrahim for their fellowship during the PhD.

Finally my heartfelt thanks to my parents, Archana and Gautam Majumdar, whose infinite patience, support, love and belief have helped me reach my goal.

And to Mayabhushan Nagvenkar for having faith in me.

Anindita Majumdar

New Delhi

2014

Abstract

“Kinship and Relatedness in Commercial Gestational Surrogacy in India” is an ethnographic presentation of the practice of commercial gestational surrogacy in a transnational context. The focus here is on the different participants who enter the arrangement to produce a baby (or babies). Such as: the commissioning couples/ intended parents from all over the world and India who come to have children by engaging Indian medical expertise; the doctors and surrogacy agents who help couples and individuals navigate the assisted reproductive technologies, such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF), the choice of foreign and/or Indian gamete donors (egg and sperm), and gestational surrogate mothers; and the Indian commercial gestational surrogate mothers who help incubate an artificially fertilized pregnancy. Embedded in an Indian setting but involving a transnational engagement with technology, laws, people and relationships, this thesis seeks to explore the ways in which kin are made and understood. The cross-cultural navigation of kinship beliefs, especially those regarding genes, biology and blood, is mapped through the process of the commercial gestational surrogacy arrangement. Through the choice of the arrangement, the surrogate pregnancy, and the seeking of state identity and membership for the newborn—kinship and relatedness are constructed, understood and dismantled through multiple other processes that inform the commercial gestational surrogacy arrangement in India. Debates on biology and the social within the anthropology of kinship are revisited through the process of commercial gestational surrogacy in India, especially in the ways in which motherhood and fatherhood are re-imagined through the socializing role of technology.

Table of Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	<i>ix</i>
1. Introduction: Transnational Surrogacy and the Making of Kin	1-52
The transnational commercial gestational surrogacy arrangement	
Mothers, fathers and others: Identifying parentage in surrogacy	
Re-invoking kinship: Sex, biology and the social	
The ethnography: Doing fieldwork in a difficult setting	
Outline of chapters	
2. Identifying Intention: The Negotiations involved in Entering a Commercial Surrogacy Arrangement	53-126
On intention: Choice, agency and emotion	
Intention as contracted: The commercial gestational surrogacy agreement	
Matchmaking genes: Medical doctors as matchmakers	
A look at the notions of motivations and choice as defining intention	
Conclusion	
3. Waiting with the Womb: Nurturance and Kinship in the Surrogate Pregnancy	127-165
The embodied pregnancy: Motherhood, emotions and relationships	
Nurturing an “alien” pregnancy: Caretakers in commercial gestational surrogacy	
Conclusion	

4. Reworking Kinship? The Identification of Genes and the Identification of Kin	166-223
The reproductive state: Nations, citizens and kin	
Seeking origins: The process of verification and authentication	
Seeking identity: The process of gaining legitimacy	
Reclaiming fatherhood?	
Conclusion	
 5. Conclusion	 224-242
Conflicted kinship	
Conclusion: A brave new world?	
 <i>Bibliography</i>	 243-280
<i>Bionote of the Author</i>	281