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Title: Main Bhi to Hindostaan Hoon': gender and nation-state in India's Border Roads Organisation

Authors: Sabhlok, Anu (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Sabhlok%2C+Anu)

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Abstract: In this ethnography of India's border roads, I follow the circular/seasonal journeys of migrant road labourers from Jharkhand to the upper reaches of the Himalayas and back. I pay particular attention to the notions of masculinity and nation-building as they reveal themselves in their travel narratives. These migrants travel every May to work as road construction labour for the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) of India working in the Himalayan frontiers. While the BRO advertises its roles through various road signs claiming to be 'creating, connecting and caring' (for) the nation – it is the ambivalent construction of the labourers gendered national subjectivities emerging in the narratives of and about the migrant labour that is of particular interest to this article. One of the central contributions of this article is to show how hierarchical domains of the nation and the hierarchical structures within masculinity intersect and rely upon each other to build gendered national subjects. This research is based on over five years of a very mobile ethnography.

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