



Nursing and Empire: Gendered Labor and Migration from India to the United States

Sujani K. Reddy

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In this rich interdisciplinary study, Sujani Reddy examines the consequential lives of Indian nurses whose careers have unfolded in the contexts of empire, migration, familial relations, race, and gender. As Reddy shows, the nursing profession developed in India against a complex backdrop of British and U.S.

imperialism. After World War II, facing limited vocational options at home, a growing number of female nurses migrated from India to the United States during the Cold War. Complicating the long-held view of Indian women as passive participants in the movement of skilled labor in this period, Reddy demonstrates how these "women in the lead" pursued new opportunities afforded by their mobility. At the same time, Indian nurses also confronted stigmas based on the nature of their "women's work," the religious and caste differences within the migrant community, and the racial and gender hierarchies of the United States.

Drawing on extensive archival research and compelling life-history interviews, Reddy redraws the map of gender and labor history, suggesting how powerful global forces have played out in the personal and working lives of professional Indian women.

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