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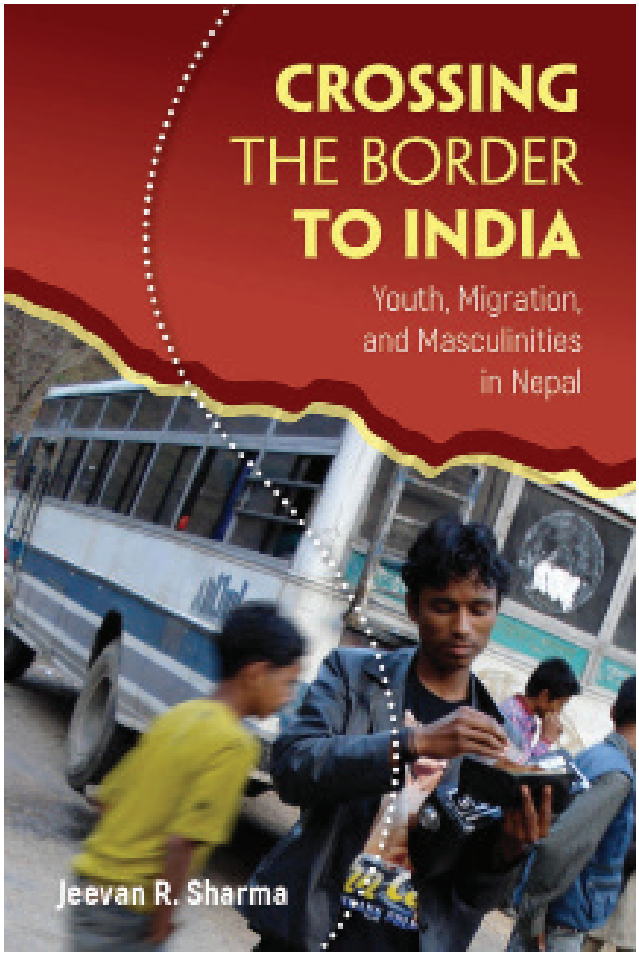

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How the changing political economy of rural Nepal informs the desire and agencyof young male migrants who seek work in cities

Given the limited economic opportunities in rural Nepal, the desire of young men of all income and education levels, castes, and ethnicities to migrate has never been higher. ***Crossing the Border to India*** presents an ethnography of male labor migration from the western hills of Nepal to cities in India. **Jeevan Sharma** shows how not only livelihood and gender but also structural violence impact a migrant's perceptions, experiences, and aspirations.

Based on long-term fieldwork, this study captures the actual experiences of those who cross the border. Sharma shows that Nepali migration to India not only allows young men from poorer backgrounds to "save there and eat here" but also offers them a strategy for escaping the more regimented social order of the village. Additionally, migrants may benefit from the opportunities extended by the "open border" between India and Nepal to attain independence and experience a distant world. In fact, however, Nepali migrants are regularly subjected to extreme ill-treatment. Thus, while the idea of freedom is an important factor in Nepali men's migration decisions, their actual experience often entails suffering and lack of freedom.

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