

Why is a film on the creation of Pakistan important?

Almost daily, in the month of August 2008 alone, Pakistan and Kashmir have been in the news for different reasons: the President of Pakistan let go of the reins of power after nine volatile years in an increasingly volatile country; and the surface layer of calm in Kashmir crumbled once again in the people's quest for their voices to be heard, indicating a more than viable anti-India movement.

Living in America it is easy to ignore these events. Yet, in this case, ignorance is not bliss. Americans are directly affected by this region. This is partly of its' own accord, partly due to the change in geo-politics, and partly due to the Subcontinent's own complex past. Pakistan was created by using the political tool of partition. Partition may be employed as a 'solution' to Iraq. Will the example of instability in the Subcontinent be seen in a tri-partite Iraq?

For these reasons and many more, it is imperative to seek a variety of sources of information to better understand the history and people of the Subcontinent. For two years, I explored this dynamic region in search of cultural history and the politics of divide and rule. That exploration culminated in a documentary, **THE SKY BELOW**.

THE SKY BELOW

a new film by Sarah Singh
narration by Sanjna Kapoor

From the shared, ancient history of the Indus Civilization, the people of the Northwest region of the Subcontinent have connections that go back millennia. **In 1947, the partition of this region resulted in a legacy of suspicion and a profound inability to reconcile this political divide.**

In this feature documentary, a contemporary portrait of this region from Kutch to Kashmir, from Karachi to the Khyber Pass emerges by exploring some of the **ground realities of the lingering fallout; and most importantly, if reconciliation is possible** between two countries with interwoven histories, cultures, and faiths...after 60 years of strained relations and the ever-present, unresolved crisis in Kashmir.

Featuring first-person stories from the time of Partition, as well as former terrorists, politicians, royalty, ordinary citizens, historians, and many others who share their insights of the past, present, and future of this **volatile, yet emerging, South Asian economic bloc.**

Folk singers recorded live in their surroundings, found footage, reality based and conceptual location shooting, still photography, and some archival footage are merged to emphasize the contrasted realities which compose this **culturally connected, yet politically disconnected, region.**

PAKISTAN Interviews (partial list)

Chdy. Pervez Elahi, CM of Punjab

Tahira Mazar Ali, social and human rights activist, mother of Tariq Ali

Raza Kazim, lawyer, dir. of SIPA

Dr. Mubashir Hasan, fmr. Finance Min and co-founder of PPP, member of Indo-Pak Track II diplomacy

Mira Philbaus, director of Kinnaird College

Majid Nizami, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of The Nation group of papers

Ayesha Jalal, historian/author on history of subcontinent; Prof of History, Tufts University

Sharyar Khan, fmr head Pakistan Cricket Board, fmr. Ambassador, and direct descendent of Bhopal family of India

Salim Khan, director of National Documentation Centre, Islamabad

Ahmed Salim, director of SDPI and Coordinator of SARRC

Ibrahim Joyo, intellectual and journalist

Comrade Sobho Gianchandani, legendary freedom fighter, author

Khalid Aziz, fmr. Chief Sec. NWFP, chairman of RIPORE

Nadir and Abida Shah, relatives of Mohammed Yunus (Jawaharlal Nehru's 'adopted' son)

INDIA Interviews (partial list)

Shiv Shankar Menon, Foreign Secretary

Raj Mata Patiala, Mohinder Kaur

K. Natwar Singh, fmr. Ambassador, fmr. Ext Affairs Minister, current Rajya Sabha member

Urvashi Butalia, author 'The Other Side of Silence'

Ashis Nandy, senior fellow CSDS

Dr. Salil Misra, professor IGNOU

Tirath Ram Amla, fmr. member of Rajya Sabha (J&K)

Lt. Gen Kaul (Retd.), fmr. head Western Command

Romila Thapar, historian

Kanyalal Kewalramani, owner Sindhi TV

Pramod Kapoor, owner/ publisher Roli Books

Uma Chakravorti, fmr. Head of History Dept, Delhi Univ

Malwinderjit Singh Waraich, freedom movement historian and author, curator Chandigarh Portrait Gallery

KASHMIR Interviews (partial list)

Sofi Ghulam Mohammed, owner, publisher, and editor of Srinagar Times, MLA

Zahir Ud Din, editor of Greater Kashmir

Hashim Kureshi, fmr. terrorist, chairman of JKLF

MAJOR SITES COVERED

Moenjodaro
Harappa
Dholavira
Katasraj
Khyber Pass
Dara Adam Khel
Taxila
Takht I Bahi
Jain temples of Nagarparker and Gori
Gurudwaras in Hassanabdal and Katarpur
Shrine of Shah Abdul Latif
Shrine of Seven sisters
Sadh Belo
Lahore Fort
Badshahi Mosque
Jama Masjid
Patiala Fort
Wagah/Attari border ceremony
Mardan Temple

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Sarah Singh is an artist, filmmaker, freelance journalist, and descendant from one of India's royal families. She was born in Patiala, Punjab, INDIA and has lived in the United States since 1974.

Sarah has worked in the film and television industry in New York for over 5 years. Her work as a cinematographer, editor, director, and writer has been featured in MTV, Showtime, History Channel, along with many independent films.

The Sky Below is her first feature-length documentary which has been featured in almost 20 festivals and won the Best Film Debut at the Film South Asia Festival, the largest documentary festival for South Asia.

More info:

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www.sarahsingh.blogspot.com

www.youtube.com/user/theskybelowfilm

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