

Kashmir

On the seventieth anniversary of Indian independence, partition and the creation of Pakistan, this ground-breaking collection brings together fourteen cutting-edge scholarly essays on multiple aspects of both the region and the issue of Kashmir. While keeping the political dimensions of the dispute over the territory in focus, these innovative essays branch out from the high politics of the conflict to consider less well-known aspects and areas of Kashmir.

They examine the continuities and ruptures between Kashmir's past and its present situation; re-evaluate the contemporary political scenario from the perspective of gender, economic and political marginality, everyday experiences and governance; and analyse the ways in which the region of Kashmir and its people are represented and (re)present themselves in films and literature through their regional and religious identities and commodities.

As a whole, the objective of the volume is to reflect on the limits of postcolonial nationalism and citizenship as exemplified by the situation in contemporary Kashmir and to introduce readers to the new directions in Kashmir Studies that have emerged in the past two decades. These pioneering interdisciplinary perspectives transform our understanding of the region and the conflict, while bringing to light new sources in multiple languages for the study of this region.

Chitrlekha Zutshi is James Pinckney Harrison Professor of History at The College of William and Mary, USA. Her research and writing explore the intersections among religious affiliations, regional identities, nationalism, and historical thought and practice in South Asia. She has written widely on these themes in the context of Kashmir and is the author of *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir* (2003/2004) and *Kashmir's Contested Pasts: Narratives, Sacred Geographies, and the Historical Imagination* (2014). She is currently working on a biography of the Kashmiri leader, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

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For
The People of Kashmir – Past, Present, Future

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Acknowledgements

The publication of this book coincides with the seventieth anniversary of Indian independence, partition and the creation of Pakistan, a moment that compels us to reflect on the meanings, memories and legacies of these events in the subcontinent. Kashmir, perhaps more than any other place in the region – rent asunder as it is by conflict, displacement, uncertainty and the near absence of governance – stands out as the symbol of the failures of the postcolonial era. This is particularly apropos given that this book came together during a time – in the summer and autumn of 2016 – of renewed crisis in the Kashmir Valley, characterized by an uprising against the Indian state and the possibility of war between India and Pakistan, with no hope for reconciliation in sight.

The book, therefore, acknowledges foremost the three generations of Kashmiris on both sides of the border whose lives have been engulfed in a state of perpetual war since 1947. The objective of this volume, however, is to discuss them and their homeland not just from the perspective of the high politics of conflict, but perhaps more significantly, to illuminate the diversity and range of experiences, ideas, institutions, individuals, forms of resistance and interactions with the outside world that have shaped, and continue to shape, Kashmir and its people. The volume is thus dedicated to Kashmiris – past, present and future.

I also wish to acknowledge the intrepid contributors to this volume, who have devoted their professional lives to at times the near impossible task of researching and writing about this part of the world. They have surmounted many a barrier to conduct their research, unearth novel sources and bring fresh perspectives to bear on our understanding of Kashmir. Thanks to all of them for responding to my call and sharing their ideas on Kashmir and its people with such warmth and enthusiasm. It was a pleasure to work with all of them.

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Chitrlekha Zutshi
November 2016
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Map 1: Pre-Partition Jammu and Kashmir



Source: Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (C. Hurst & Co., 2015). **Courtesy:** Sebastian Ballard.

Map 2: Contemporary Kashmir



Source: Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (C. Hurst & Co., 2015). **Courtesy:** Sebastian Ballard.