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INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

KASHMIR BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA: A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Master of Arts Thesis

Walid Ali KHAN

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Department: International Relations

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ABSTRACT

"If there is truly a piece of Heaven on earth, then it is here, and only here."
Mughal Emperor Jahangir said this when he visited Kashmir in the 17th century.

This thesis analyses are on the history of Kashmir and its dispute between India and Pakistan, who have been claiming it as their own territory since 1947. When I look back at the history of the conflict, it shows that Kashmir is a 'thorn'' for both countries because they are adamant on taking full control of the region, while disregarding the views of the Kashmiri people and their choice on the matter. By reading and analyzing the historical rule of multiple kingdoms both Muslim and non-Muslim in Kashmir, and then the post Indian partition governance, I can see that there is a case of immense mistrust and hostility between the Kashmiri people, Pakistan and India that has been going on since the past 72 years. In addition, I will point out the mistakes and wrong political decisions that had been taken by the past rulers of Kashmir and some Kashmiri politicians that had led to the start of the military conflict between Pakistan and India. Furthermore, I will be mentioning the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and militancy in Kashmir that resulted in the expulsion of the native Hindu Kashmiri population. Some positive aspects will also be mentioned such as the steps taken in the early 2000's between the governments of Pakistan and India that were almost successful in finding a peaceful solution. I am also going to explain the notorious political ambitions of the right-wing Hindu political parties in India and the Pakistan military and its secret service, which has led to diplomatic mistrust between both nations and the continuing insurgencies in the Kashmir valley, which has halted the peace process. I will mention and explain in detail the wars fought between India and Pakistan over Kashmir as well as the one single conflict that had involved China in 1962. The small skirmishes and recent military

standoffs in 2016 and 2019 will also be briefly explained. As this research is primarily historical based, I will provide historical accounts in chronological order starting from the time of Kashmir's origins until the events of August 2019. Finally, I will give a summarized conclusion of my findings and comment on the current situation in Kashmir stating how it could it could aggravate in to a future war between Pakistan and India if proper diplomatic steps are not taken both countries and mostly importantly, keeping the Kashmiri people in mind as they are the main affected party.

KISA ÖZET

“Eğer dünyada gerçekten bir Cennet parçası varsa, o zaman burada ve sadece burada.”

Babür İmparatoru Jahangir, 17. yüzyılda Keşmir'i ziyaret ettiğinde bunu söyledi.

Bu tez analizleri Keşmir'in tarihi ve 1947'den beri kendi toprakları olduğunu iddia eden Hindistan ve Pakistan arasındaki anlaşmazlığı üzerinedir. Çatışma tarihine tekrar baktığımda Keşmir'in bir 'diken' olduğunu gösteriyor. Keşmir halkının görüşlerini ve konuyla ilgili seçimlerini göz ardı ederken, her iki ülke için de bölgenin tam kontrolünü ele almaya kararlılar. Keşmir'de hem Müslüman hem de Müslüman olmayan çoklu krallıkların tarihsel kuralını ve daha sonra Hint bölünme yönetimini okuyarak ve analiz ederek, Kaşmirler, Pakistan ve Hindistan arasında büyük bir güvensizlik ve düşmanlık vakası olduğunu görebiliyorum. son 72 yıldır devam ediyor. Buna ek olarak, geçmiş Keşmir yöneticileri ve Pakistan ile Hindistan arasındaki askeri çatışmanın başlamasına neden olan bazı Keşmirli politikacılar tarafından alınan hatalara ve yanlış siyasi kararlara dikkat çekeceğim. Dahası, Keşmir'de yerli Hindu Keşmir nüfusunun sınır dışı edilmesiyle sonuçlanan İslami köktenciliğin ve militanlığın yükselişinden bahsedeceğim. Barışçıl bir çözüm bulma konusunda neredeyse başarılı olan Pakistan ve Hindistan hükümetleri arasında 2000'lerin başında atılan adımlar gibi bazı olumlu yönlerden de bahsedilecektir. Ayrıca Hindistan'daki sağcı Hindu siyasi partilerinin ve Pakistan ordusunun kötü muamelelerini ve her iki ülke arasında diplomatik güvensizliğe yol açan Keşmir vadisinde devam eden ayaklanmalara yol açacak olan gizli tutkularını açıklayacağım. barış süreci. Hindistan ve Pakistan arasında Keşmir üzerinden yapılan savaşların yanı sıra 1962'de Çin'in dahil olduğu tek bir çatışmadan bahsedeceğim ve ayrıntılı olarak açıklayacağım. 2016 ve 2019 yıllarındaki küçük çatışmalar ve son zamanlarda yaşanan askeri çıkmazlar da kısaca açıklanacaktır. Bu araştırma öncelikli olarak tarihi temelli olduğundan, Keşmir'in kökeninden başlayarak Ağustos 2019 olaylarına kadar tarihsel hesapları kronolojik

sırayla sunacağım. Son olarak, bulgularımın özet bir sonucunu vereceğim ve Keşmir'deki mevcut durum hakkında yorum yapacağım. Her iki ülkeye de uygun diplomatik adımlar atılmazsa ve en önemlisi Keşmirlileri ana etkilenen taraf oldukları için akılda tutulursa Pakistan ve Hindistan arasında gelecekteki bir savaşta nasıl ağırlaşabilirdi..

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviation have been used in the thesis

BOP Balance of Power

EU European Union

GOP Government of Pakistan

GOWT Global War on Terrorism

ISI Inter-Service Intelligence

IWT Indus Water Treaty

JET Jamat-e-Islami

JKLF Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front

LET Lashkar-e-Taiba

LOC Line of Control

MUF Muslim United Front

NAM Non-Aligned Movement

INCP Indian National Congress Party

RAW Research and Analysis Wing

SAARC South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation

SC Security Council

UN United Nations

UNCIP United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan

UK United Kingdom

USA United States of America

WOT War on Terrorism

CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

Background of the study

The main reason for choosing this topic is that I come from Pakistan and I have experienced firsthand how this conflict has affected the country for past 70 years. It has kept both Pakistan and India totally as security-concerned states. Three armed conflicts have officially been fought (1948, 1965, and 1999), the results of which have been inconclusive. Billions of dollars have been used on this conflict and thousands of lives have been lost, and no outcome has been achieved (Schofeild 2010). Strong diplomacy is now the only option available for both states in resolving this conflict. Since the 2016 Kashmir uprising, the situation has become extreme and constant border skirmishes between both states' armed forces had almost twice erupted an all-out standoff or showdown, which now would be far more devastating as both countries possess nuclear weapons.

Both South Asian countries experienced hostilities since their independence from the British Empire in August 1947. Due mainly to mistrust, Pakistan and India have taken on extreme measures and on many occasions violent ones to establish one another's dominance in the region as a way of undermining the other.

First, both spent and continue spending billions of dollars in strengthening their military, which resulted in both states to produce nuclear weapons (India in the1980's and Pakistan in the1990's).

Second, to achieve a balance of power, they both built an Alliance with the two superpowers at the time in which Pakistan aligned with the United States and India aligned with the Soviet Union. Third, Pakistan supported militant insurgencies throughout Indian Occupied Kashmir. Forth, as archenemies, both states had committed acts openly and discreetly to bring economic and political harm. Finally, both been accused of using

Afghanistan as a country to use proxy conflicts as a means of political interest (Mukherjee 2009).

Figure 1: Current political map of Kashmir.

Kashmir located in the farthest northern edge of the Indian Subcontinent, is divided between the countries of Pakistan, India, and China. As of 2019, it cooperates a large geographical land space which includes the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir (the Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh) also known as Indian Occupied Kashmir or IOK according to Pakistan, while the Pakistani-administered Azad Kashmir, Gilgit and Baltistan (also known as the Northern Areas) which India claims to be Pakistani Occupied Kashmir or POK, and the Chinese-administered regions of Aksai Chin and Trans-Karakoram Tract (Hilali 2001).

Throughout history, the Kashmir region had witnessed a huge influx of people crossing over from the north and south or vice-versa and all of them had left culture behind, from the third Century BCE. By the 9th century CE, Hinduism became the prominent

religion. The Hindu dynasties lasted until 1346 when they were completely defeated by the Muslim invaders, coming from Afghanistan, thus ending their hegemony upon the region (Stein 2010). After the Muslims, came the Sikh rule in 1820, where the Sikh armies led by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh took control of the Punjab region and Kashmir as well. They established the new Sikh Empire, which lasted until 1846, when the British defeated them, conquered the region, and assimilated it within the British Indian Empire (Stein 2010).

The majority of the state remained the same but also grew a bit more by land size, but in 1936, the British colonial powers had turned it in to the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir under the control of the Dogra Hindu/Sikh dynasty. This turned out to be an extremely ill-fated decision for the future (Stein 2010; Schofeild 2010).

British colonial rule in south Asia ended on the 14th and 15th of August 1947, resulting in the creation of two new countries India and Pakistan (Mohan 1992). An option was given to the Princely States in both Pakistan and India whether to become part of either country based mainly on religious grounds owning too the major religious group of people in state itself (Mohan 1992; Stein 2010). In 1947, Kashmir's population had approximately 80% Muslim while the remaining 20% was Hindu/Buddhist and other small religious groups, so it was expected that the ruler of Kashmir Maharaja Hari Singh would choose Pakistan due to the larger Muslim majority population (Mohan 1992; Stein 2010).

However, this did not happen as Hari Singh wanted the Princely State to remain exclusive from the political dominance of both nations so he followed a policy of tactical delay, which unfortunately backfired when the Muslim population protested violently because their hopes of joining Pakistan started to evaporate and the Muslim-Hindu riots across India did not help but further aggravated the situation (Akhtar 2010; Mayfield 1995). Hari Singh had been manipulated by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and other key Indian figures into signing the ''Treaty of Accession to India[1]'' in a desperate attempt to ask

for assistance against the unrest in the region on 26 October 19471. With India sending troops into Kashmir, Pakistan had done the exact same resulting in the first Kashmir War of 1948, which ended with a U.N ceasefire in 1949, and Kashmir being divided between both countries. Pakistan and India agreed on the terms which separated Kashmir on a running boundary called the Line of Control or LOC in the two Parts are placed known as AzadKashmir for Pakistan and Jammu & Kashmir for India (Wheeler 2010; Indurthy 2005; Mohan 1992).

[1]The Treaty of Accession was the act whereby a state accepts the offer or the opportunity to become a party to a treaty already negotiated and signed by other states. The instrument of accession in this current discussion is a legal document executed by the ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 26 October 1947 (Annad 2006, Bowers, 2004). By executing this document under the provisions of the India Independence Act 1947, Maharajah Hari Singh agreed to accede to the Dominion of India, which would later allow a Referendum for the people of Kashmir to decide their destiny.

Figure 2: Division of Kashmir's Territory

As this was merely a basic introduction to Kashmir's history and more precise details about this will be explained in the next chapter, we now move on to what exactly Kashmir's current political identity is supposed to be, that it is an internationally disputed

area between India and Pakistan stated under the United Nations Security Council and the after the events of the 1948 War. Resolution 47 had been adopted by the U.N on 21st April 1948 in order to grant a referendum or plebiscite to the people of Kashmir to choose their own destiny on whether to merge with Pakistan or India or whether to become an independent sovereign country (Bowers 2004).

India has since never allowed any referendum to take place and has kept a strong military presence in its controlled area. Nevertheless, India did allow Jammu and Kashmir to have its 'Special Status' under the Indian Constitution known as Article 370/35A in November 1949, which allowed political autonomy for the region in which Jammu and Kashmir would have the jurisdiction or right to make its own laws in all matters except finance, defense, foreign affairs and communications. It also allowed a separate constitution and separate flag from the Indian state as well as the right to deny the purchase of property in the land by Non-Kashmiri people. Later in 1954 sub section, 35A was added to the article, which officially permits the local legislature in Indian-administered Kashmir to define permanent residents of the region (Noorani 2011).

The thesis will focus more on this special article in the later chapter as this is one of the most important factors that have created new tensions in Kashmir, and between India and Pakistan, additionally resulting in international attention over the past few months of 2019. With the supervision of the United Nations, a ceasefire was established in January 1949 between India and Pakistan. Seven months later in July the cease-fire line which became known as the "Line of Control or LOC divided the two territories. This was originally supposed to be a temporary expedient but unfortunately, due both states unwilling to compromise, this division along the LOC still exists and continues to shatter peace and normalcy in the region (Indurthy 2005; Mohan 1992). It was obvious at the time in 1947 that the Muslim population was in a majority, almost 85 percent

(Bowers 2004), one could without hesitation say that Kashmir should have acceded or granted to the newly established state of Pakistan. Pakistan ‘’received’’ through conflict the part of Kashmir, which was relatively inaccessible and economically underdeveloped while India held on to or occupied the densely populated and economically developed, with the largest Muslim population in the Vale of Kashmir (Bowers 2004).

However, the question is why both countries are obsessed with Kashmir, as to what its importance and value to them is. An answer, according to Schofeild (2010) and Das (2001) is that the glaciers which melt during the summer and form the main rivers called the Indus, the Chenab and also the Ganges that are the lifeline rivers to both Pakistan and India. These rivers provide irrigation for farming to both countries as agriculture is the main source of their economies. In addition, the rivers mainly the Indus, which flows after Kashmir all through Pakistan, keeps the land fertile and livable. The other River, the Ganges, which flows through India, is considered a holy river by the Hindu population and is worshipped by them, so if one country has control of Kashmir then that has control of all the water sources (Schofeild 2010).

Another economic factor comes into play when asking about Kashmir’s importance is its geographical location and its border with China and Central Asia. Kashmir shares a border with China and Pakistan having very good economic and diplomatic relations with China needs Kashmir in its control to allow free movement of goods from both countries as it is directly in the middle and especially now with start of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor or in short CPEC in 2015. Pakistan also has a keen interest in the timber, mineral deposits, and hydroelectric power potentials of Kashmir due to the abundant water sources of the region, which are limited in Pakistan that wants to exploit those of Kashmir (Das 2001).

Research Objectives & Arguments

My objectives in this thesis are to first analyze the factors that led to the Kashmir problem. These factors are mostly about the historical religious animosities between the Muslims and Hindus that had started in the early 13th century and later developed into the form of national identity and communalism in the 19th and 20th century. In this regard, I will address the historical development of this problem and the events that had taken place such as the first Muslim invasion of Kashmir, then moving on towards the religious persecutions committed against the Kashmiri people under the Afghans, the Sikh Empire, the British colonial period, the partition of India and creation of the state of Pakistan, the main wars and skirmishes fought over Kashmir by these two states as well, and the roles both India and Pakistan have played in aggravating this conflict even further for their own political gains. Furthermore, I will determine why Kashmir's geographical position is so important to both countries economically and religiously, and that why they have not been able to find any solution to end this conflict.

Regarding my arguments in this thesis, the problem in Kashmir is both fueled by centuries of religious hostilities between Muslims and Hindus and since 1947; there is a huge political and economic factor involved. I also believe that the reason why India scrapped Article 370 is a deliberate plan to merge Kashmir within the Union of India as a means of creating a Hindu hegemony in the region. This was the plan that the current ultra-right-wing government of Narendra Modi had always had in which to re-populate Kashmir with a Hindu majority to prevent the current Muslim population to demand secession. Massive cases and reports of human rights violations have been going in Kashmir since the 1980's to the present day, with most cases being reported in the Indian administered area. Indian security forces and militants are both responsible for these acts against the local Kashmiri people. Both India and Pakistan's government are least

concerned about the wishes of the indigenous Kashmiri people and will not allow an independent referendum to take place.

Lastly, the Kashmir people are also guilty in this conflict due to their lack of unity and by allowing themselves to be manipulated by both countries.

Methodology

This research is a historical based study and the main sources that have used are books and articles written by acclaimed academics and scholars who have been involved with South Asian history and politics for many years now. I have gone through these books, which are both old and recently published and they provided me with the insight in regard to the historical backdrop of the Kashmir conflict. Furthermore, I used a few historical documentaries on the history of Kashmir, this provided me with the precise numbers, and statistics, especially when referring to the demographics of population in the Indian & Pakistani controlled part of Kashmir and the percent of the religious groups. The main emphasis in my research will be on the analysis of the books and the articles. Both these sources have assisted me in understanding and interpreting this dispute and to reach a non-biased conclusion about the situation.

Literature Review

In this literature review, I analyze certain books and articles written by Indian, Pakistani and foreign academics in which they describe the religious and ethnic factor that has been the major catalyst for the Kashmir dispute. Apart from that, I also review the question of human rights abuse and violations of Kashmiri Muslims during contemporary times, as they were the group that suffered the brunt of the Indian army's crack down. Furthermore, there will be an analysis on the economic factors of this conflict in response to the hidden agenda both India and Pakistan have in Kashmir.

Religious identity has been prevalent throughout the starting of the 19th and 20th century after the end of colonialism and the realization of self-identity among the newly created nations, which spread the rise of nationalism and state loyalty. However, when certain groups of people within the state do not feel the same nationalistic sentiments among the majority due to religious differences then off course a conflict is too rise (Devadas 2018). For more than 70 years, we have seen the issue rage on in the Kashmir valley since 1947, and the conflict continues to become more and complicated without any permanent solution. The historical background to the conflict is paramount in understanding why no solutions can be or have failed to be made in the past 72 years (Bose 2003).

According to James (2006) and Ozdamar (2006), the issue in Kashmir is a theory known as ''ethno religious conflict'' which is when religious polarization and mistrust is rampant among the local population such as the Muslims and Hindus, ethno conflict among them is bond to erupt as both groups had different political agendas and loyalties to different states based on their religious identities. They further document the origins of the Kashmir conflict from 1947 after the partition of India. They stated that Kashmir which at the time was an independent principality had a ruler named Maharaja Hari

Singh (according to some sources claimed be a Hindu whiles others state that he may have been of the Sikh faith), whose civilian population was 85% Muslim and 15% Hindu, decided after India's partition to keep the sovereignty of his princely state when asked about merging Kashmir with Pakistan or India.

Ozdamar (2006) states that this was a clever delay tactic used by him but it would later be his downfall. Two months following India's Partition, his state remained 'independent' however, in October, Pakistan had allowed large number of tribesmen from the neighboring North West Frontier province to invade the state in hopes of acquiring the entire portion and to merge with the Dominion of Pakistan. Out of desperation, he appealed to India for military assistance before the capital city of Kashmir Srinagar could fall. Schofield (2010) claims that Hari Singh had been coerced into joining India's Union in order to be provided with assistance against the invading tribesmen from Pakistan and the Muslim Kashmiris, by signing the document known as the "Instrument of Accession"[2] on 26 October 1947. She further argues that Pakistan had immediately contested Hari Singh's act because Kashmir was a Muslim majority state and should have been merged with Pakistan as the other Muslim majority provinces had done in August 1947.

Devadas (2018) points out that this was just the starting point of the conflict, in which religious and communal tensions would only flare up even further, as Pakistan, India would never accept this territorial demarcation to be permanent, and further escalations politically and militarily were to happen. According to Rajan (2007) and Mohan (2008), Pakistan is primarily to blame for causing the conflict in first place as it had sent tribal militias and later its army in the Kashmir valley, committing acts of violence against the minority Hindu pundit population.

[2]The Instrument of Accession is a legal document executed by Maharaja Hari Singh, ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 26 October 1947. By executing this document under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh agreed to accede to the Dominion of India.

He further accuses Pakistan for continuously campaigning a kind of ‘’Islamic Jihad’’ in Kashmir and as well in India by using the religious factor to its advantage and creating religious fervor among the Kashmiri youth to demand Kashmir’s succession from India, as well as using armed and funded non-state militias whose sole purpose is to target and create chaos within the region. They both also states that Pakistan is illegally occupying 37% of Kashmir, which it had taken after the 1949 ceasefire.

Bose (2003) refers to religious conflict even further, by providing insight about the daily freedom struggles that Muslim Kashmiri’s having to face during the Indian police and army crackdowns. His main focus is on the years after 1989 till 2001 (when the Indian parliament in New Delhi had been attacked by three Kashmiri freedom fighters) where he mentions the development of a new independence movement which had a more aggressive stance towards Indian administration and their main objective was to merge Indian Kashmir with the rest of Pakistan even at the cost of more violence. This organization was trained and well-funded by the Pakistan Government and had surprisingly gained huge amount of support from the people of the Kashmir Valley, which had not been seen in the years before. He further argues that the reason for this overwhelming support was primarily due to the constant repression and violence committed against the Muslim population not just by the Indian police and military but also by the Hindu Kashmiri population, who committed acts of murder, extortion and abduction of children for ransom, creating an environment of fear. He concludes by mentioning that the Indian reaction to this movement was far more severe as from 1990 to 2000 with approximately between 40,000 to 80,000 people had been killed in almost with majority being Muslims.

However, the fractured relationship between the Indian Kashmiri peoples especially its Muslim population and the Indian State is the core of the contemporary problem. The

guerrilla warfare in Indian Kashmir has passed through several phases since 1990, but the gap between self-determination and a repressive reality remains wide in India's Kashmir (Bose, 2003).

Ozdamar (2006) talks about the rise of right wing extremist Hindu nationalism in the Indian politics which has made the peace process of Kashmir even more difficult due to the nationalist ideological movement known as "Hindutva"[3], which considers all non-Hindu minorities especially Muslims in India to be suspicious. It does not show any kind of tolerance as there is no place for them in a Hindu dominated India. These groups in the government have been responsible for numerous attacks on Muslims in India and mostly Kashmiri Muslims have been lynched by Hindu mobs or secretly taken away to prisons by the police or armed forces stationed there.

Many researchers and academics have focused on the theme of human rights violations in Kashmir, and primarily the Muslim groups have been affected. For example, Sarkaria (2008) reveals a widespread, systematic human rights abuses occurring in Indian controlled Kashmir, which is the site of constant conflict and continuous uprisings. Keeping in mind the fact that Pakistani Kashmir is guilty of human rights concerns as well, she however compares and states that India's part of Kashmir is far worse when it comes to violations and freedom restrictions. She also accuses Indian armed forces of engaging in massive human rights violations in the form of arrest, torture, rape, forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, and other heinous crimes, which are completely ignored by the Indian government who is very well aware of the situation (Sarkaria 2008). She harshly scorns the Indian government for making Jammu and Kashmir into the world's most militarized area with the deployment of 400,000 army troops (that

[3]According to the Oxford English Dictionary, originally Hindutva is the state or quality of being Hindu; 'Hinduness'. In later use, it defines Hindutva as an ideology created by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, which is seeking to establish the hegemony of Hindus and the Hindu way of life in India. It is an Ideology comparable with that of Nazi Germany.

number has increased to 900,000 in 2019) in the Valley and surrounding areas. Agreeing on his research and analysis, Navlakha, (2012) characterizes the atrocities of the Indian armed forces as state sponsored terrorism against the Muslim Kashmiri citizens and a matter of "national shame" and "disgrace" on the principles of the Indian Constitution.

Tavares (2008) had conducted a study in which it showed that tensions between Pakistan and India has a long history and remains complicated for external parties such as the United Nations to resolve it. This case is however not at all uncommon because the hard-line view held by India is that the Kashmir dispute can only be resolved diplomatically and bilaterally by Pakistan and India. A further point, which is also consistent to the previous one is the point shared by scholars such as Habibulah (2004) who appears to be convinced that both nations are uncertain and, in some cases, even lackadaisical or affable in settling a 70 plus year old conflict that has divided them.

Vaish (2011) claims that the Kashmir problem stems from a mixture of geopolitical, historical, economic, sociological and finally yet importantly, identity/ethnic related factors. He also describes a few reasons concerning the immense hostilities between Pakistan and India by giving a clear example of the "Negative Legacy of Colonialism" in relation to the ideological differences of both states, after the 1947 Partition of India and different religious loyalties of the communities. Vaish (2011) justly presents his argument by stipulating that after the events of independence and the partition of India, the hostility and tensions drastically increased among the religious communities mainly the Muslims and Hindus, which had profound implications on resource distribution and territory especially land related issues between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas. Further illustrations show that when Pakistan and India got independence from Britain, Kashmir became the focal point of tension and hostility between them and religion was politicized by both nations in order to legitimize their claims. Both states

control a part of Jammu and Kashmir, which is divided along the Line of Control or 'LOC'.

This means that most of the explanations of the Kashmir conflict and its implications on Pakistan-India relations take into account its historical background prior to contemporary developments (Vaish, 2011). Apart from the religious and basic rights abuse aspects of the conflict, I have found that there is a massive political and economic game being played between by India and Pakistan with regard to Kashmir especially in case of water resources. James (2006) and Ozdamar (2006) claim that the Kashmir region, especially the central Kashmir valley is of great geo-strategic importance for economic and political security. However, they also state that in the case of Kashmir, economic dimension is not a significant source of the conflict: Kashmir simply has little substantial economic value for either India or Pakistan. According to Habibulah (2004), the Indus and Ganges rivers originate from the Himalayan mountain range and pass directly through Kashmir into both Pakistan and India. The Indus River is the lifeline of Pakistan as it feeds the fertile soil of the primarily agricultural based country so in the "Indus River Valley," the rich soil causes a surplus of food, which makes the surplus of vegetation to grow. Therefore, it is extremely vital that Pakistan has control of the waters for its own economic survival. The Ganges is considered a Holy River in the Hindu Religion, as it flows through northeastern India but like the Indus, it also passes through Kashmir and India has fears that Pakistan would try to block or divert the direction of the rivers to India. Furthermore, this is another point of contention regarding the dispute. Even with the signing of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty[4]between the countries, there are

[4] Indus Waters Treaty, treaty, signed on September 19, 1960, between India and Pakistan and brokered by the World Bank. The treaty fixed and delimited the rights and obligations of both countries concerning the use of the waters of the Indus River system. Mostly, the treaty resulted in partitioning of the rivers rather than sharing of their waters. Transition period of 10 years was permitted in which India was bound to supply water to Pakistan from its eastern rivers until Pakistan was able to build the canal system for utilization of waters of the western rivers.

still bantering by both of them on the supply levels.

Geo-politics has also become a major factor in the recent years with regard to the dispute. Kashmir's strategic location between Pakistan and China is a factor when talking in terms of trade between the two countries. The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC is an economic project between the states of Pakistan and China. The purpose of this project is to promote economic development, bilateral connectivity, road construction, and explore the potential trade capability between the two countries. This project lies directly in the Pakistan administered region of Azad Kashmir where most of the trade is currently taking place. The roads that have been built go straight through this part of Kashmir and it plays a vital land route for Pakistan's economic development. Furthermore, China has invested approximately $62 billion in this project so its personal interest in Kashmir has also been deeply planted in (Devadas 2018).

Another major contributor to the tense relationship between Pakistan and India is cited by Habibulah (2004) that refers the legal status of Kashmir that comes in the dimension of geo-politics (a disputed territory[5]). He illustrates that following the 1999 military confrontation (Kargil War) a sort of restoration of democratic peace in Indian Administered Kashmir might have seemed be a good way to provide an effective answer to religious based terrorism, which has been the dominant factor/variable in the issue, but later on it can be clearly seen that democratic transition made absolutely no changes to a peaceful resolution in region. Another consensus in the scholarly literature shows that the Indo-Pak relations concerning Kashmir can (now recently has) result in catastrophic damages for innocent civilian population if the arms race and this confrontation may result in a dilemma for international security due to both nations possessing nuclear weapons. Krepon (2013) claims that the easiest way to avoid a nuclear confrontation and

[5]A territorial dispute or boundary dispute is a disagreement over the possession or control of land between two or more territorial entities

safe guard the security of the subcontinent is for India and Pakistan to improve their relations and he adds on that the best way to do this is to increase economic and cultural trade as both countries at the end of the day were a single unit 70 years prior and the similarities outweigh the differences at greater scale. Once more, most scholars including Tavares (2008) have cited nuclear rivalry as a major factor that has been deterring the Kashmir peace solution, undermining security and normalizing the relations of the two countries. Majority of the literature on Kashmir has only focused and emphasized on reasons of the issue, instead of trying to find a permanent solution. There seems to be a growing consensus that the Kashmir issue has become very difficult to resolve with the new changes in government in both Pakistan and India, a much bigger gap exists as far as finding solutions is concerned.

The view of the Kashmiri people must also be pointed out in terms of their right of self-determination and sovereignty which has been granted to them by the United Nations. Vaish (2011) provides a distinct explanation to this issue, hypothetically stating that international law is highly complex when interpreting the claim of self-determination and self-rule. He also suspects that the primary obstacle in finding a solution to the Kashmir conflict remains with India and Pakistan's "blame game" of one another on the grounds of the violation of fundamental rights which each state derives from their own cherry-picked understanding of international law. Tavares (2008) similarly shares the same suspicions and stresses; “Kashmir” “is neither a territorial nor a religious dispute,” “it is mainly about sovereignty” (Tavares 2008:277). Furthermore, as the Kashmiri people presumably have given up on the institutions of democracy as they have witnessed the procrastination and ignorance of the Indian government, this has forced them to resort to extra-institutional methods through the power of guns to fight for what they refer to as the cause of self-determination and freedom (Tavares 2008). The clashes

are mainly between the Indian military and "religious militants" (who India calls terrorist but Pakistan claims them to be freedom fighters) who are waging a jihad to create a theocratic state, according to Tavares (2008). Apart from a blame game strategy, Jayasekera (2013) claims that Pakistan and India are caught in egoistic dilemma in which both states want to solve the Kashmir issue only on their own terms and conditions, without even a single compromise being put on the table and that has also been a factor of huge deterrence. "As we have seen that they have been several occasions of clashes between the two armies along the Line of Control dividing Kashmir since the 2003 ceasefire, both New Delhi and Islamabad have said that they want to prevent and contain tensions along the LOC from escalating into further confrontation, fearing it will undermine the "fragile peace dialogue" process between them" (Jayasekera 2013:02).

In regards to my main assumption when regarding religion as the main factor of the conflict, Vaish (2011) and Roy (2011) speak about the view that in the last 8 to 10 years, " The conflict has rested on the Twin prongs of "Identity" based on religion, culture, language, distribution of political, economic and social power" (Vaish 2011:53-54). Pakistan and India's issue regarding Kashmir has the major characteristics of religious identity, extreme communalism, and nationalistic fervor, which is clearly the conflict between Islam and Hinduism, which has been going on since the 8th century A.D when Islam first made contact with the Indian sub-continent. Kashmir according to Dasgupta (2012), Devads (2018), and Roy (2011) is just another chapter in this "unfinished religious war" between the two groups in which the winner will receive the complete territory. It is in the broader perspective that Hindus and Muslims fighting each other for their survival and dominance in the South Asian region. These claims have provided my primary research question with the answers I was seeking, in addition, I was also able to find the other factors as well in the Kashmir issue such as Habibuallah's (2004) and

James (2006) &Ozdamar's (2006) economic and political points on water resources and the involvement of China.

There is one other factor that needs to be mentioned which is the impact of 200 and plus years of colonial rule which had a hand in creating the Kashmir conflict. This theory is stated by academics in the field of postcolonial studies. According to Tharoor (2016), the British colonial period was in fact the time that the seeds of the Kashmir conflict were swoon when the British allowed then ruler of Kashmir Gulab Singh[6]to remain as regent of the state. He further adds that the British were oblivious of the tensions that had risen in Kashmir during the 20th century period of the independence movement and when the decision to partition British India in to the two new states of Pakistan and India was finalized, they left Kashmir's fate in the hands of inexperienced local politicians who played the religious card to gain popular sentiments. Sidhwa (1988) also claims that the British exit from India in 1947 was so hastily done that it is felt that the decision to leave Kashmir high and dry was a deliberate tactical ploy by them to keep both Pakistan and India in permanent conflict. Sidhwa (1998) again points out to the traditional British colonial mindset in which the policy of "divide and rule" play a part in which they divided the Muslims and Hindus by creating Pakistan and India but left Kashmir in a state of limbo so that the two religious groups continue fighting amongst each other.

As can be seen from this literature review, there are several explanations regarding the Kashmir dispute. In the next chapter, I aim to discuss the origins of the problem by writing a historical narrative, through which my point of view can be seen.

[6]Maharaja Gulab Singh Jamwal was the founder of royal Dogra dynasty and first Maharaja of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, the second largest princely state in British India, which was created after the defeat of the Sikh Empire in the First Anglo-Sikh War.

CHAPTER TWO
ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT

Kashmir's History

In order to understand the Kashmir conflict, one must go back to its origins and the events in time where the conflict stated and later developed into a political catastrophe. In this chapter, I will discuss Kashmir's history from its inception to the 16th century, followed by the events of the 18th and 19th century period, and finally the early 20th century from the 1947 partition of India to the Indo-Pak wars.

The history of Kashmir has shown that it has always been an independent state or kingdom in almost all sense and those who have tried to control it faced immense difficulties from the local resistance (Noorani 2013). According to some Hindu myths, the land known as Kashmir had been formed when ''a sage or holy man known as Kashyapa drained a lake to make a home for a people'' which had been recorded in the ancient Indian literature known as the 'Puranas'[7]. The Kashmir derives from the sage's name as well Kashyapamir meaning the land of Kashyapa. This land had been visited by the famous Greek/ Macedonian king Alexander the Great and the Mauryan King Ashoka who had been responsible in spreading the Buddhist religion across the region (Noorani 2013). Hinduism and Buddhism were the two primary religions at the time and their followers had lived together quite harmoniously. This is how the state of affairs had remained until the 14th century when Muslim travelers like Sharaf-ud-Din Abdul Rehman, Bulbul Shah, and Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani had come from Persia and made the first Islamic contact with the Kashmiri people (Dalrymple 2019). By 1339, the first Muslim kingdom had been established called the Sultan Dynasty under the rule of the

[7]The Puranas (Sanskrit: पुराणpurāṇa, "of ancient times") are Hindu religious texts that are part of the Vedas. They contain narratives about the history of the Universe from creation to destruction and the genealogies of kings, heroes, sages, and deities.

first king called Mir Shams-ud-Din Shah or Shah Mir. The Dynasty lasted until the 16th century and was responsible for making Islam the prominent religion in the Kashmir valley although it was accused of using its political power as a means of forceful conversion of the Hindu and Buddhist population. There was also a positive side to this dynasty because of Sheikh NoorudinNoorani or known locally as Nund Rishi, who became the patron saint of Kashmir due to his introduction of Sufi Islam[8] to the valley in 1377, which practiced co-existence among the religious communities that later on developed into a special identity called ‘’Kashmiriyat’’[9]. After a while, Islam became the dominant religion of Kashmir. The Hindus now in a minority had to think of a new strategy in order to survive in the situation. Therefore, they started to educate themselves in a superior manner in which they learnt Persian, which at that time was the administrative language of the ruling classes. Because of their superior educational skills, the Hindus were able to have control of trade and the bureaucracy, which helped them serve the Muslim rulers and their community in the Kashmiri society (Bose 2003).

As the 16th century arrived, it brought a new Muslim ruling class called the Mughal Empire, which defeated the previous Sultan Dynasty in 1586. The Mughals ruled Kashmir for 200 years until Afghan invaders defeated them in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani or Ahmad Khan Abdali who assimilated Kashmir’s territory within the Durrani Empire of Afghanistan (Vaish 2011). The 72 years of Durrani rule in Kashmir was known to be a period of immense religious oppression with accounts of enslavement, torture, and extortion (Dalrymple 2019). This oppression was not exclusively aimed at

[8]Sufism is defined as Islamic mysticism or the inward dimension of Islam or also the phenomenon of mysticism within Islam. It is mysticism in Islam characterized by values, ritual practices, doctrines and institutions which began very early in Islamic history and represents the main manifestation and the most important and central crystallization of mystical practice in Islam. Practitioners of Sufism have been referred to as "Sufis.” It one of the most liberal and tolerant forms of Islamic practices and is extremely popular within South Asia.

[9]'Kashmiriyat' is the ethno-national and social consciousness and cultural values of the Kashmiri people. The term Kashmiriyat has come to signify a centuries-old indigenous secularism of Kashmir. Emerging around the 16th century, it is characterized by religious and cultural harmony, patriotism, and pride for their mountainous homeland of Kashmir.

the Hindu and Buddhist population, but the Kashmiri Muslims received the same amount of suffering at the hands of the Afghans. The Afghan rule in Kashmir ended in 1819 when they were subsequently defeated by the invading Sikh forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who had already taken the control of the southern neighboring region of Punjab and moved upwards to Kashmir thereafter. After approximately 500 years, non-Muslim rule had returned to Kashmir with the arrival of the Sikhs. 1819 was one of the most important periods of Kashmir's history because it was the turning point of the modern conflict that had been formed, leading to the events of 1947 (Noorani 2013).

With Kashmir assimilated within the Sikh empire, Ranjit Singh appointed his most trusted General named Gulab Singh as Head of the State to rule the region in his place. Gulab Singh was in fact a native Kashmiri Dogra[10]from the city of Jammu and this was one of the reasons why he had been appointed to this position to let the local population know that they were being administrated by one of their own kin and not a foreign invader (Sarkaria 2008). Gulab Singh had been granted complete political autonomy over Kashmir and was allowed to maintain his own army. Furthermore, Maharaja Ranjit Singh granted Kashmir as a hereditary principality[11]to him. By 1834, Gulab Singh was able to control the northern region of Kashmir known as Ladakh, expanding the empire even further. Even after the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, Gulab Singh continued his expansion by taking over the western and north western regions of Himalaya, Gilgit and Baltistan and as well as Gartok in 1841 which was the place of the source of the Indus River (Schofield 2010). This campaign came to a halt after constant fighting between the Sikh Empire and Chinese/Tibet forces on the other side of the border with the last battle

[10]The Dogras are an Indo-Aryan ethno-linguistic group in India and Pakistan consisting of the Dogri language speakers. Dogra Rajputs ruled Jammu and Kashmir from the 19th century, when Gulab Singh was made a hereditary Raja of the state by the Sikh Emperor Maharaja Ranjit Singh, whilst his brother Dhian Singh was the empire's prime minister, until October 1947.

[11]A principality ruled by a prince whose family has controlled the principality for several generations. Hereditary principalities, according to Machiavelli, are generally 'easy to rule and maintain'.

known as the Battle of Toyo in 1841 when 4,000 Sikh troops had been killed including Gulab Singh's most reliable General Zorawar Singh. In 1842, the Emperor of China with the Dalai Lama signed the Treaty of Chushul with Gulab Singh to put an end to war, recognizing the expanded territories of the Sikh Empire (Arpi 2019). With the death of Ranjit Singh, his successors were unable to control the Sikh Empire; thus, its collapse seemed eminent. Gulab Singh, in order to secure his position and rule signed a deal with Colonel Henry Lawrence of the British East India Company. This was originally a trading company from Great Britain but gradually emerged as the new superpower of the Sub-Continent. Gulab Singh remained neutral in the first Anglo-Sikh War of 1845 due to his pact, which had tipped the fighting in favor of the British. By 2 April 1849, the Punjab Region, which was the center Sikh Empire, had come under the control of the British. The Treaty of Lahore (1846) allowed Gulab Singh to negotiate his terms with the victorious British and this granted him full independence and sovereignty of all his territory (Arpi 2019). The Treaty of Amritsar of the same year in March allowed the British to sell Kashmir to Gulab Singh for a sum of 10,000 British pounds, thus establishing the last monarchy before 1947 known as the Dogra Dynasty. This dynasty had been created as a political entity in which Gulab Singh would be its sovereign on paper, but the British would have the control of the defense, the foreign affairs, and communication of Kashmir (Schofield 2010).

After consolidating his power with the assistance of the British, Gulab Singh who was suffering from a sickness known as edema or fluid retention in his body abdicated his throne in favor of his Ranbir Singh on the 20th February 1856. Within a year, the 1857 war of independence or the great Indian mutiny had broken out across the Sub-Continent against the British East India. As agreed with his father and the British, Maharaja Ranbir Singh allied Jammu and Kashmir with the English in this war. The war ended in a year

and a half and was great victory for the British. As a reward for Ranbir Singh's loyalty, the Treaty of Amritsar had been amended in 1860 that allowed him more freedom in the administration of the princely state (Ragavan 2009). The local Kashmiri's under Dogra rule remained hostile towards it. Many developmental measures were taken to benefit the local population by providing them with a sense of security like the 'state subject act' that would safeguard the rights of all Kashmiri residents and improvement of the economy had been. However, high level of illegal taxes had been imposed on the subjects in 1861, especially on the Silk manufacturers, which was the biggest trade commodity in Kashmir at the time (Suri 2011). By 1865, the cruelty of Dogra rulers had increased but was not shown by violence but rather economically through the imposition of massive taxation on almost any type of commodity. Taxes ranged from Revenue, grain, rice, land, household, livestock, and places of worship to even graveyards (Suri 2011). In 1878, the new Dogra ruler Pratap Singh began to sell his Kashmiri subjects to the British in order to enlist them in the Anglo-Afghan War of 1878. Most of people sold were Muslim Kashmiris and they began to resent this treatment as they were taxed three times more than their Hindu counterparts were and then were sent to fight in Afghanistan, a country of fellow Muslims (Suri 2011). Almost all Kashmiris who were sent were killed in this war as it did not go in favor of the British and they had to abandon this campaign in 1891 (Suri 2011). Protests broke out in 1896 against the harsh policies of the Dogra rule in which all Kashmiris demanded a change in the policy of Government. They protested against discrimination and unfair treatment of the subjects and wanted a share in state's higher services, which were practically reserved for non-Kashmiris or British officers. Pratap Singh did reduce the level of taxation but did not compromise on the position of higher state services (Suri 2011).

By the start of the 1900's, a feeling of class-consciousness and communism begin to manifest in Kashmir as it did in the rest of India. In India, there was a rise in nationalism and movements towards independence from the British, however the movement was influenced by religious fanaticism from both Muslim and Hindu ideology and by 1910, this political and ideological divide was quite clear among the religious groups (Suri 2011). For Kashmiris, the primary antagonists were the Dogra rulers and the 'Kashmiriyat' still remained among the common people. However, the Dogra rulers who were Hindus by faith did show a more sympathetic side towards the Hindus of Kashmiri in contrast to the Muslims and by 1925, the religious hostility in Kashmir became more open but not violent unlike in India where there had been a few cases of religious attacks (Suri 2011). It was vital for the Kashmiris to organize themselves politically against the Dogra rule, so on the 21st June 1931; the formation of the first ever-known political organization of Kashmir- The Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Party[12] or JKMP was formed. The first act the JKMP did was to protest the closure of an old medieval mosque known as "Pather Masjid" or Stone Mosque. After some negotiations, the new Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh returned the mosque to the Muslim Community in 1935 (Suri 2011). In 1940, there was agitation among the Muslim Kashmiris and Hari Singh because of the arrest and trial of a Muslim newspaper and magazine editor Abdul Qadeer. Thousands and flocked to Srinagar central jail to witness the trial. Fearing that a riot would take place, the Dogra governor of Srinagar Tartilok Chand ordered soldiers to fire on the people resulting in the deaths of 22 (Suri 2011). The people carried the dead through the streets of Srinagar, chanting slogans opposing Dogra brutality. This incident

[12]The all Jammu and Kashmir Muslim party was a precursor to the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference, formed in 1931 as a political entity representing the Muslim population in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. It copied the idea from the Indian Muslim League that representing the Muslims in India. It later changed its name to National Conference to include all Kashmiris, irrespective of their religion.

shook the state, and a weeklong period of mourning was observed. The protests intensified as anti-Hindu riots began that led to the deaths of three Hindus and looting of atleast 20 Hindu owned shops and businesses. The Hindus did not stay quiet and retaliated, leading to more clashes between the two groups. The violence spread to the other Kashmir provinces as well as Jammu and Ladakh. Hari Singh requested the British for assistance and about 500 soldiers from the Punjab province were sent to support the Maharaja and restore law and order. This incident was the final straw for Hari Singh as anti-Dogra sentiments flared across the princely State and this also helped in the rise of a young Kashmiri student, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah whose rivalry with the Maharaja continued until 1947 (Suri 2011).

Kashmir during the partition of 1947

The end of the Second World War in 1945 had exhausted the British economy. Thus, the new British government had decided to end its control in India by granting independence. However, due to the years of religious hostilities between the Hindu and Muslim populations, the decision was to divide India into two new states based on religious grounds: The dominion of West & East Pakistan on 14th August 1947, and The Union of India on 15th August 1947 (Bose 2003). Mass exodus of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs followed the decision in which the majority of the Muslims moved to Pakistan and the majority of the Hindus and Sikhs moved to India. This also led to indiscriminate slaughter of innocent civilians in which approximately one million people had been killed on all sides (Schofeild 2010). During this time, the Principality of Kashmir was in a state of confusion and dilemma as whether to accede to India or Pakistan or remain sovereign. In order to understand this predicament, it is necessary to analyze the previous decades. In 1925, Maharaja Hari Singh, the descendent of Gulab Singh became the new ruler of

Kashmir, which at the time comprised of a 77% Muslim majority (Schofeild 2010). The fervor of nationalism had spread throughout India, which was against British rule. However, in Kashmir's case the majority of the protests were directed against Hari Singh (Bose 2003). In 1930, a young Kashmiri Muslim by the name of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah demanded new political and social reforms. He was also the founder of the Kashmir Muslim Conference Party (KMC) that he later changed the name to the Kashmir National Conference Party (NC), which aimed at uniting all Kashmiris against the Maharaja, as his rule seemed regressive and oblivious to the current changes.

However, with the creation of an Islamic Pakistan being a possibility, some members who did not agree with Abdullah's secular values decided to detach themselves and kept the name of the Muslim Conference in order to safeguard the Kashmiri Muslims interests. This was quite similar to the rivalry between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League in the rest of British India. Two very important core characteristics differentiated the Kashmir National Conference or NC in this mobilization phase from the Indian National Congress. First, the NC's ideology was specifically directed to the emancipation of Jammu and Kashmir from the post-1846 dispensation and was based ideologically on a deep sense of regional patriotism, centered on the Kashmir Valley. In this understanding, Kashmir and India were fraternal but ultimately separate entities, whose relations ought to be governed by equality and mutual respect (Bose 2003).

Nevertheless, both Muslim Conference (MC) and National Conference (NC) did follow the same campaign known as the "Quit Kashmir" movement against the monarchy and the NC never abandoned its Muslim heritage. According to Noorani (2003), the long-suppressed voice of the Kashmiri people erupted in the form of massive protests in 1931, due mainly to the centuries of foreign rule as well as the ignorance from the Dogra rulers who did not understand the wishes and demand of the people. On the grounds of sedition,

Sheikh Abdullah was arrested in 1946 on the orders of Hari Singh. This act had catastrophic repercussions for Hari Singh as waves of protests sparked across the Kashmir especially in the capital city of Srinagar, where Sheikh Abdullah was being held. Even the Indian National Congress leader Jawaharlal Nehru tried to persuade Hari Singh to release Sheikh Abdullah but this too ended in failure (Schofeild 2010).

Later in July 1947, the leader of the Indian freedom movement Mahatma Gandhi visited Hari Singh. He told Hari Singh that it would be his independent choice on whether he should choose India or Pakistan regarding Kashmir's accession after the withdrawal of the British forces. However, Gandhi urged him to release Sheikh Abdullah as protests across Kashmir had started to gain momentum and could possibly become violent (Zaidi 2015). The lapse of the British "paramountcy" meant that Hari Singh was free to choose whichever state he wanted to accede but also had the option to make Kashmir an independent state. The last British Viceroy of India Lord Viscount Mountbatten addressed the Maharaja and other Indian princes on July 1947 in Delhi, stating that the third option of independence was merely a theoretical one. Therefore, they should have decided on which state they would accede before the 15th of August 1947, specifically evaluating two very important factors: geographical embeddedness in or contiguity to India or Pakistan, and the wishes of their population (Bose 2003).

India's National Congress Party gave the responsibility of the transition of the Princely States (including Kashmir) to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was a Guajarati right-wing pro-Hindu politician and had motives to assimilate all the States within the Indian Union. For the soon to be founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the stakes were less high because these states had only economic and territorial benefits if they acceded to Pakistan but no religious or cultural significance that the Hindus had with them (Bose 2003). Jinnah, being a lawyer by profession, adopted the tactical stance that the princely

states would become “autonomous and sovereign states on the termination of paramountcy” and free to choose any of the three options before them, as the exact wording used in the 1940 Pakistan Resolution speech that had called for the creation of autonomous and sovereign states in Muslim-majority regions of northwestern and eastern India once the British withdrew (Bose 2003). This statement directly applied to Kashmir’s future state.

The Indo-Pak war of 1948

As August 14th and 15th 1947 arrived, the British Empire handed over responsibility to the governments of the newly created states of India and Pakistan and made its hasty withdrawal from the Sub-Continent at a time when Kashmir was in a state of utter pandemonium. With territories now allocated to each state respectively, only Kashmir’s decision remained undecided because Hari Singh was under immense pressure to make a solid decision (Asif 2015). Being a Hindu ruler of a state with a Muslim majority population, he needed more time to think. He did not want to jeopardize the minority communities of Kashmir because a biased or hasty decision would have had violent consequences, which had already happened in the other parts of India during the partition process. Pakistan was adamant on obtaining Kashmir not only because of the Muslim population but also because of the six rivers, which flow from Kashmir into Pakistan that formed the Indus river system[13] while India wanted to claim Kashmir due mostly to the ancient Hindu and Buddhist culture of the region (Bose 2003). As the Maharaja had not made any decision, the impatient Pakistan launched “Operation Gulmarg.” This was a series of incursions that aimed to annex Kashmir. As part of this operation, Pakistan instigated a "no-tax" uprising in the Poonch region of Kashmir, mainly by the Muslim

[13]The Indus System is one of the largest river basins of the world. It is also known as the Sindhu, is the westernmost of the Himalayan rivers in India. ....It receives a number of Himalayan tributaries such as the Shyok, the Gilgit, the Zaskar, the Hunza, the Nubra, the Shigar, the Gasting and the Dras.

population who were mostly decommissioned soldiers of the British Raj. This uprising aggravates into a full-fledged genocide of the minority Hindu and Sikh population in the western part of Kashmir (Schofield 2010). In return for the atrocities committed in Poonch, Hindus and Sikhs carried out attacks on the Muslim areas of the Jammu region, which turns the state of Kashmir into a burning cauldron with all three religious communities lashing out at one another in communal violence (Schofield 2010). India urged the Maharaja to release Sheikh Abdullah in order to calm the situation that was eventually done. However, his release put Pakistan on the back foot as the government felt that India would be gain the advantage, so they decided to send emissaries to Abdullah. These emissaries were actually his friends and they tried to convince him to join the Dominion of Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah had not made up his mind since his main priority at the time was fighting an independent battle and removing Hari Singh from power, but he stated that whichever state accepts his conditions of accession, Kashmir would join that state (Bose 2003). At the same time, a parallel attack took place in which the detached members of the armed tribal Pakhtoons from Pakistan attacked the Kashmir valley in October 1947. These men were under the command of the Pakistan Army Brigadier Akbar Khan and a local Punjabi politician Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan. This surprise attack caused Maharaja Hari Singh to flee Kashmir without any proper defense force and the one he did leave behind was completely obliterated by the invading tribesmen (Devadas 2018). Meanwhile, the rebels from the "no-tax" uprising led by a lawyer Sardar Ibrahim declared the western region of Kashmir that included Poonch, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad as "Azad Kashmir" (Free Kashmir) which would later refer to Pakistan occupied Jammu & Kashmir or POJK. With attacks by the multiple parties, Hari Singh desperately turned to India for military assistance, but his request was only granted when he agreed to accede Kashmir to India (Noorani 2003). On the 26th of October

1947, Maharaja Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. As a result, the Indian army was sent to stop the Pakhtoon and tribal forces. However, this attempt was not enough to keep Kashmir intact; it was divided between Pakistan and India (Bose 2003). Small clashes and skirmishes continued and had a devastating effect on the Kashmiri people and their relationship with India. As a result, India applied to the United Nations Security Council on April 1948 and asked Pakistan to remove all state and non-state actors from Jammu &Kashmir, while India was asked to reduce its military forces to a minimum to keep order and install a temporary or interim government keeping all the stakeholders in mind. The U.N was to hold a plebiscite in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. The first Kashmir war ended, but both countries did not welcome the outcomes because while India wanted the U.N to punish Pakistan for its interference, Pakistan was also not happy about the plebiscite proposal because now it would have to follow the U.N protocol and respect the choice made by the interim government (which was being led by Sheikh Abdullah) in Kashmir on accession (Schofield 2010).

CHAPTER THREE
THE CONFLICT PERIOD FROM 1950-1999

The Sino-Indian war of 1962

With both Pakistan and India having agreed to the ceasefire decision of the U.N, the interim government was setup in Kashmir with Sheikh Abdullah as Prime Minister and Maharaja Hari Singh as Titular Head of State. In order for the plebiscite proposal to take place, Maharaja Hari Singh was told by Jawaharlal Nehru to abdicate and renounce his claim over Kashmir. This was seen as a betrayal by India, but Hari Singh did not have the power to protest so he complied and this officially ended the Dogra Dynasty in Kashmir in 1948 (Bose 2003). Unfortunately, the plebiscite situation was not able to take place because of the difference in opinions and demands of the Kashmiri people. Pakistan had taken control of the northwestern region of Kashmir known as Gilgit and Baltistan during the war of 1948.The population there was in favor of a union with Pakistan owing the mixture of Punjabi and Kashmiri people, while the Eastern Region was under Indian administration known as Jammu and Ladakh that had the minority Hindu-Buddhist population who preferred to stay with India (Maxwell 1970). Only the central valley region where the capital city Srinagar was situated aimed at a possible independent state. The U.N proposed another alternative known as the Dixon Mission. This idea was proposed by an Australian Diplomat , Sir Owen Dixon who proposed the administration of different regions by the local authorities under the supervision by the U.N Commission, according to the "law and custom" of the state. India clearly opposed this idea because it believed that the local authorities would favor Pakistan at the expense of India, especially when treating the Non-Muslim Kashmiri population (Gupta 2012).

The Plebiscite plan had to be postponed as a new-armed conflict had begun in 1962. This time it was not between India and Pakistan, but China and India over the eastern

most region of Kashmir. In 1950, the Chinese Communist Party had won the long civil war against the nationalists in China. It had gradually acquired new territory in the west such as Sinkiang and Tibet. They had closed down the Indian consulate in Sinkiang. India, which was already involved with massive internal issues, ignored the incident (Verma 2016). In 1959, there was an uprising in Tibet against the Chinese government. That was harshly suppressed, however the leader of the Tibetan monks, the Dalai Lama had been granted asylum in India. Furthermore, India placed military outposts throughout the McMahon line, which was officially considered the international border between China and India, and China had viewed this mobilization by India as an act of provocation. Just like Pakistan, China had a territorial dispute with India over Kashmir, which was and is still known as the Aksai Chin[14]region (Maxwell 1970). The main reason for this dispute was the fact that China claimed Aksai Chin as a territory of Sinkiang that was annexed by the Dogra Dynasty in 1860 but India refuted this claim by stating that Aksai Chin was always part of Kashmir and the people living in this area had no ethnic or linguistic similarities with China (Arpi 2013). China needed Aksai Chin because it is geographically situated between Sinkiang and Tibet. In addition, China was building an important road network between these two regions to link it with the rest of the country (Verma 2016). This road was the catalyst that started the conflict. Nehru decided to follow a policy of appeasement, through which he gave up the Indian claims on the Indian Chinese borders. However, after China invaded the Ladakh region of Kashmir on the 20th of October 1962, war started. Most of the fighting had taken place on the mountains. Both countries did not deploy their air force so it was only a land battle. The Indian forces were not at all equipped to handle extreme weather conditions and they lacked proper supplies. They were also outmatched by the Chinese forces

[14]Aksai Chin (the name literally means "Chin's desert of white stones") is a very large high-altitude hot desert of salt with sand dunes and yareta (a type of cushioned plants) that reaches heights up to 4,500 metres.

because their military arsenal and equipment was far superior, and the Chinese soldiers were better trained to handle mountain terrain (Arpi 2013). This war ended in a month with a ceasefire, but the Chinese had decimated the Indian forces. Aksai Chin was completely taken over by China and the road network between Sinkiang and Tibet was completed following the withdrawal of the Indian military. Another reason for the Chinese success was the fact that during this conflict the USA and USSR were not involved to try to restrain both India and China due mainly to the 1962 Cuban missile crisis occurring at the same time (Barnard 1984). The situation was aggravated further when Pakistan had decided to exchange some of the Gilgit-Baltistan region (Shaksgam valley) with China, which on the 2nd of March 1963 gave Pakistan 750 square kilometers from the northern territory it had taken from India (Verma 2016). Both countries had not consulted India or the local population, which was shocked by the sudden administrative changes. India has never recognized the legality of the 1963 Pakistan-Sino territorial exchange and has claimed sovereignty over all the land (Arpi 2013).

The Indo-Pak War of 1965

After witnessing China's successful campaign against India, Pakistan felt that the time was right to launch another campaign of its own with the aim of taking the rest of Kashmir. Pakistan government under the leadership of Field Marshal General Muhammad Ayub Khan had wrongly assumed that India was physically and psychologically devastated by the defeat, therefore it would not be able to oppose any sort of military advancement by Pakistan (Bajwa 2013). In August of 1965, Pakistan launched Operation Gibraltar which was a covert plan organized by Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik. The main goal of this operation was to send soldiers known as the "Gibraltar Force" from the ceasefire line (later known as the line of control or LOC) into

the Indian controlled Kashmir, with the aim of precipitating an insurgency against the Indian government therein. For Pakistan, this operation backfired because the infiltrating soldiers were caught and arrested by the local police and in response to this, India retaliated by launching a full-scale war against Pakistan (Bajwa 2013). In the beginning of the war, India managed to gain the upper hand as the bulk of Pakistan's military was stationed in the northern part of the country and the eastern flank remained open for the Indian forces to advance without any problems. However, the tide for the battle changed in favor of Pakistan due to its air force and infantry which managed to push the Indian army back to the international border. This war lasted for 17 days, caused thousands of casualties on both sides, and furthermore, witnessed one of the largest engagements of armored vehicles and the largest tank battle since the Second World War (Higgins 2016). As a result of the negotiations known as the Tashkent Peace Talks[15]that were held under Soviet mediation in Tashkent Uzbekistan, both sides agreed on a ceasefire on January 1966. This agreement demarcated the borders based on the 1949 obligations. The result of this was a stalemate because Pakistan had not been able to achieve what it had hoped for but both states nonetheless claimed victory (Bajwa 2013).

The 1984 Siachen Skirmish

As so many players had political and economic stakes in Kashmir, a peaceful resolution seemed impossible. From 1966 to 1983, India and Pakistan were faced with massive internal issues mainly separatist movements such as the formation of the National Liberation Front[16]or NLF (later the name changed to The Jammu Kashmir

[15]The Tashkent Declaration resolved the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. Peace had been achieved on 23 September by the intervention of the external powers that pushed the two nations to cease fire, afraid the conflict could escalate and draw in other powers.

[16]The JKLF seeks independence of Jammu and Kashmir State from India, Pakistan, and China. The JKLF claims that they are not Islamist militants, but are Kashmiri nationalists, and opposes the emergence of their territories into either three states but rather wants the region of Kashmir to separate from these countries and become an independent country. In 1982, they established a branch in Pakistan-administered Kashmir as well.

Liberation Front or JKLF) and the rise of Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh). The tension between Pakistan government and the Bengali nationalists had erupted into a full-scale war in December 1971. India took this as an opportunity to weaken Pakistan and provided full military support to the Bengali nationalists (Bose 2011). This resulted in a massive defeat for Pakistan. It lost the eastern part of its territory that became to new independent state called Bangladesh on 16th of December 1971 (Raghavan 2002). Kashmir did not have any major conflict during the 1971 war. However, during this period, India managed to gain some territory that was previously controlled by Pakistan such as the Kargil, Chalunka and Tyakshi valley because Pakistan's military was preoccupied in the east and could not defend this area at that time and India surprisingly, did not advance further because further mobilization would have alarmed China, which would have not hesitated to intervene on Pakistan's behalf (Watson 2003). The 2nd of July 1972 saw the signing of the Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan in which the future settlement of Kashmir would be decided bilaterally and that both states would respect the current line of control's demarcation (Bose 2011).

Discontentment sparked again in the Kashmir valley over the Indian government's reluctance to allow the plebiscite or go back to the pre-1953 relationship between Kashmir, India as the times had changed, and a new agreement had to be made. India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had reached an accord with Sheikh Abdullah on the 24th of February 1975. In this accord, the committee that was responsible for the plebiscite had been dissolved and renamed the National Conference[17] and Abdullah had been reappointed as Kashmir's Chief Minister (Noorani 2013). Two years later, Mid-term

[17]The National Conference was in power in Jammu and Kashmir in one form or another until 2002, and again between 2009–2015. It implemented land reforms in the state, ensured the state's autonomy under the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, and formulated a separate Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah's son Farooq Abdullah (1981–2002, 2009–present) and grandson Omar Abdullah (2002–2009) have led the party after his death.

elections were held on the 17th of June 1977. Abdullah's party had won a majority in what was known as the first "free and fair" election in Jammu & Kashmir (Noorani 2013). Pakistan in 1979 was involved in the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan where it provided training and support for the Afghan Mujahideen[18]freedom fighters against the Soviet army. Apart from that, Pakistan saw these fighters as an opportunity to wage a kind of 'Jihad' in Kashmir and by 1980, training camps had been established in Pakistan administered Kashmir where preparations were being for a larger Kashmir conflict under the guise of training fighters for Afghanistan (Verma 2016; Gupta 2012).In 1984, a new problem between India and Pakistan had begun that mainly stemmed from an incomplete demarcation in the control line and from a water source that involved the Siachen glacier[19]. This glacier was not allocated to either Pakistan or India by the previous agreements owing to its high elevation, extreme weather conditions, and barren landscape (Raghavan 2002). Siachen's glacier is of vital importance to Pakistan and India because it is the largest single source of fresh water in the Indian subcontinent. At the time, India also feared that it could be used as an entry point into Kashmir by both Chinese and Pakistani troops, even though this was unlikely due to the weather conditions ranging from -18 to -60 degrees Celsius (Watson 2003). On the 13th of April 1984, India launched Operation Meghdoot as it suspected Pakistani military movement in the area (Noorani 2013). India managed to capture 70 kilometers of territory around the glacier, a small tributary, and a few key passes in the region that prevented Pakistan or China from advancing further. In total 3000 square kilometers of this inhospitable area

[18]The Afghan mujahideen fought against Soviet troops during the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989). Afghanistan's resistance movement originated in chaos and, at first, regional warlords waged virtually all of its fighting locally. The Pakistani, U.S., and Saudi governments aided them, and their primary source of funding was from private donors and religious charities throughout the Muslim world particularly in the Persian Gulf.

[19]The Siachen Glacier is the highest battleground on earth where India and Pakistan have fought intermittently since 13 April 1984. Both countries maintain a permanent military presence in the region at a height of over 6,000 metres (20,000 ft). More than 2000 people have died in this inhospitable terrain, mostly due to weather extremes and the natural hazards of mountain warfare.

had been captured (Raghavan 2002). Pakistan on the other hand was already preparing another insurgency against India that was masterminded by its military intelligence wing known as Inter-Service Intelligence or ISI. It was known as the 'Punjab Insurgency' led by General Akhtar Abdur Rahman who sent trained soldiers in to Indian controlled Kashmir once again to create internal sabotage within the local administration with the assistance of the anti-Indian elements (Verma 2016). The Siachen Conflict was the pivotal point that had given rise to the formation of the infamous militant and jihadist organizations that were trained and funded by Pakistan to create disorder and fear in Indian Kashmir (Watson 2003).

The Beginning of the Kashmir Insurgency 1987

After Siachen, Kashmir's situation had taken a backseat because India had to deal with the unrest in its Punjab region where the minority Sikh community had been targeted by Hindu extremists following the assassination of the then prime minister Indra Gandhi on the 31st of October 1984 which was perpetrated by her Sikh bodyguards. By 1986, tensions in Kashmir had started again. This was mainly because Farooq Abdullah, who had taken office after the death of his father Sheikh Abdullah, had fallen out of favor with the Indian government and was replaced by his brother-in-law Ghulam Muhammad Shah. Within a year, Farooq Abdullah had made an alliance with the Indian Congress Party[20]and new elections were held in the Kashmir valley that was allegedly rigged to favor Abdullah's victory (Balraj 2008). After Abdullah resumed office, he had signed

[20]The Indian National Congress Party often known as the Congress Party or just simply as Congress is a left-wing political party in India with widespread roots across the country. It was founded in 1885 and was the first modern nationalist movement to emerge in the British Empire in Asia and Africa. This party was mostly involved in the Indian Independence Movement during the 1920's. Other anti-colonial nationalist movements mainly influenced itsaims and goals.

another Accord with India, which allowed it to stage Operation Brasstacks[21] on 18th November 1986. This massive land exercise stationed the Indian troops just a few 100 miles away from the Pakistan border (Peer 2010). This Indian presence along the border alarmed Pakistan as it had already been weakened due to the 1971 War and the Siachen Event. Therefore, it needed to immediately balance the military power of India in the region or to face the danger coming from a larger India (Bose 2003). The 23rd March 1986 election in Kashmir was the opportunity that Pakistan was looking for. This election similar to the previous one, was also rigged (Bose 2003). Thus, unrest began in the region and Pakistan had prepared for 'Operation Topac', which has been known as the longest running operation in Kashmir (Peer 2010). The alliance between Farooq Abdullah and the Indian Congress Party had created a division within the Kashmiri people. Many regarded this situation as a betrayal to the aspirations of Kashmiri independence since the alliance with an Indian political party showed that India's claim over Kashmir was legitimate (Bose 2003). The biggest opposition to the alliance was the Muslim United Front[22]whose members also contested the elections in 1987. However, due to the rigging allegations they all lost while some of the members were even arrested. Some MUF members in order to evade being arrested crossed the LOC in to Pakistan Administered Kashmir (Peer 2009). Pakistan saw that the time was right to launch the first phase of Operation Topac, which was a series of low-level insurgencies aimed at destabilizing Indian Kashmir. Pakistan's side of Kashmir became a sort of training camp for the disenchanted Kashmiri youth that was frustrated with the political corruption in Indian Kashmir and wanted to change things not through voting but rather force and violence

[21]Operation Brasstacks involved numbers of infantry, mechanized, air assault divisions, and 600,000 army personnel who were massed to within 100 miles of Pakistan.

[22]The Muslim United Front or MUF was a mix coalition of Islamic Kashmiri political parties that contested the 1987 Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly election in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Jamaat-e-Islami of Jammu and Kashmir was a key constituent party of the coalition. The MUF won four Assembly seats in the 1987 election. However, widespread rigging of the election by the ruling National Conference party was reported. In the absence of such rigging, commentators believe that it could have won fifteen to twenty seats, a contention admitted by the National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah

(Jamar 2009). Pakistan's military trained them and sent them back to Indian Kashmir to start the insurgency (Bose 2003).

At that time, India had deployed the majority of its forces in the Punjab region to bring order after the events of 1984, which involved the assassination of Prime Minister Indra Gandhi. In addition, its army was not trained to handle militant insurgencies and guerilla warfare so it was completely unprepared on how to deal with that situation, which resulted in the Kashmir valley being overrun by insurgents (Jamar 2009). As this operation gathered momentum, these insurgents became more aggressive. For example, they assassinated a Hindu Kashmiri politician T.L Taploo, abducted the Kashmir Home Affairs Minister's daughter who was only released after a huge ransom was paid and the release of five members of the MUF from prison (Bose 2003). By 1989, India was in a politically and economically weak situation as the Congress Party lost the election to the opposition and its foreign exchange reserves were drastically low. India looked like it was almost on the verge of bankruptcy and in that situation Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) and army under the new command of Lieutenant General Shamsur Rahman Kallu had moved Operation Topac to its next phase that aimed at radicalizing the Kashmiri youth (Peer 2010). The situation seemed as if Kashmir would merge with Pakistan.

The Rise of Radical Islam in Kashmir

Pakistan's ISI during the second phase of Operation Topac had trained and created multiple militant groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Righteous), Hizbul Mujahideen (Party of the Holy Warriors), and Jamaat-e-Islami (Brotherhood of Islam). The main purpose of these groups was to create political and social instability within

Indian Kashmir. However, all these groups had an extreme right wing Islamic ideology, which was to Islamize the Kashmiri culture and its political setup that would create a suitable environment for the merger of the entire Kashmir region with Pakistan (Chitkara 2003). The period from 1989 onwards saw a massive shift from the old traditional 'Kashmiriyat' principles which aimed to unite all the people of the region regardless of the religion affiliations to a more radical mindset in which being Muslim came first (Chitkara 2003). Approximately 2500 villages in Kashmir changed their ancient names to more suitable Islamic ones and more communal hate speeches were delivered in mosques and public gatherings. In these speeches, the anger targeted the Hindu minority known as the Kashmiri Pandits[23] because they were suspected of being "mukhbars" or informers of the Indian government and army, because their loyalties remained with India rather than the Kashmiri people (Bose 2003). The presence of these Pakistani-backed militants greatly influenced the younger Kashmiri generation who had been marginalized in society. The Muslim youth had not been provided with the same type of opportunities mainly in education and jobs in contrast to the Kashmiri Pandits who despite being a minority were more prosperous, creating disparity, and harsh resentment within the Muslims (Peer 2010). The JKLF was also instrumental in the anti-Pandit rhetoric, which it claimed that they could not be trusted and therefore should be expelled from the valley (Bose 2003).

The Expulsion of Kashmiri Hindus

In 1990, the majority of the Hindu Pandit population in the Kashmir Valley had to flee because of the continuous attacks committed against them by the Jammu & Kashmir

[23]The Kashmiri Pandits who are also known as Kashmiri Brahmins are native Hindus who belong to Kashmir. They are a part of the larger Saraswat Brahmin community of South Asia. They belong to the Pancha (five) Gauda Brahmana groups from the Kashmir Valley, which is a mountainous region in the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandits originally lived in the Kashmir Valley before the Muslim influence entered the region after which the majority of them converted to Islam.

Liberation Front or JKLF and the Pakistan funded militant groups. 600,000 Hindus lived in Kashmir before the start of the pogroms and by 1990 only 3,000 had remained, and continuously living in fear (Chitkara 2003). All Kashmiri Pandits marked January 19th 1990 as the tragic 'Exodus Day' where they had been forced to leave their ancestral home due mainly on religious grounds (Swami 2007). The JKLF and militants used violent tactics such as burning and destroying shops, factories, homes, and temples that belonged to the Hindus and they even used propaganda such as circulating posters demanding all Hindus to leave Kashmir (Gigoo 2016; Sharma 2016). In March 1990, constant loss of electric power took place across Kashmir in which the militants deliberately cut off the electricity in the towns except inside the mosques that openly broadcasted violent and communal propaganda, demanding a complete purge of the Kashmiri Pandits (Gigoo 2016; Sharma 2016). From April to June of the same year, there were countless cases of rape and murder among the Kashmiri Pandits who were fleeing the valley and many other cases that Hindu women were kidnapped and forcibly converted to Islam (Swami 2007). The Indian Government and army were helpless and could do anything at the time because of the internal political turmoil, such as the Sri Lankan civil war scandal and the assassination of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (Bose 2003).

The Kashmiri Pandits blamed not only the JKLF and the militants but also the Kashmiri Assembly, which was led by Farooq Abdullah who did not take measures to safeguard the Hindu population. Abdullah was also accused of knowing exactly what was taking place in the valley. He had made a secret deal with the militants and Pakistan's ISI to create a division between the Kashmiri Muslims and the Kashmiri Hindus (Gigoo 2016; Sharma 2016). Waves of attacks continued in Kashmir especially in 1992 when a 16th century mosque in India known as the Babri Masjid was destroyed by Right Wing Hindus and approximately 20-30 Hindus were killed in Srinagar as a response (Bose

2003). For Pakistan's government and ISI, the communal tensions and internal instability in India were seen like a huge victory since it almost achieved the primary goal of Operation Topac, which aimed to force out the Hindu population and eventually make the remaining portion of Kashmir part of Pakistan (Swami 2007).

The 1999 Kargil War

As the situation in Jammu & Kashmir worsened, Pakistan was able to change the balance of power in South Asia because it successfully conducted its first nuclear test on the 28th of May 1998 and became the first Muslim majority nation to possess nuclear weapons. India had already conducted its test in 1974. This also brought the concern that if either state were provoked too far then they could use those nuclear weapons against each other with catastrophic outcomes for the region (Cheema 2003).

To prevent the situation from going out of control, both Pakistan and India signed the Lahore Declaration on the 21st of February 1999. The purpose of this declaration was to avoid any accidental and unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and added responsibility to both nations' leaders to prevent nuclear war at any cost (Singh 2000). The then Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif and the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee signed the Lahore Declaration[24]. A peaceful resolution regarding the Kashmir situation was also been mentioned. At that time, it seemed that both nations would eventually come to compromise and decide on a permanent solution (Cheema 2003). However, the Pakistani military and ISI had a completely different objective in finding a solution for Kashmir that involved yet another covert operation. Kargil, a small town in Indian

[24]The Lahore Summit or Declaration was a bilateral agreement and governance treaty between India and Pakistan. The treaty was signed on 21 February 1999, at the conclusion of a historic summit in Lahore, and ratified by the parliaments of both countries the same year. Under the terms of the treaty, a mutual understanding was reached towards the development of atomic arsenals and to avoid accidental and unauthorized operational use of nuclear weapons. It was a major breakthrough in overcoming the historically strained bilateral relations between the two nations in the aftermath of the publicly performed atomic tests carried out by both nations in May 1998.

Kashmir that is located 205 kilometers from Srinagar, facing towards the LOC, became the centre of this conflict when Pakistan sent elements of its armed forces disguised as local Kashmiri militants across the LOC in May 1999 (Singh 2000).

Pakistan had selected Kargil because it was just 173 kilometers from Pakistan administered Kashmir where the city of Skardu could provide logistical and artillery support to the forces. Furthermore, geographical terrain of the area was very suitable to conduct a preemptive strike against the Indian army. There were a few military posts and an ammunition bunker that was left unoccupied, so the Pakistani forces took the control of them without any difficulties. Apart from that, the covert Pakistani forces had the advantage of the higher ground as they positioned themselves on the mountain peak that faced the town below, and any attack from the ground would have been difficult due to high elevation and mountain covering (Musharraf 2006). The covert forces managed to be successful between May 3 and June 2, mainly because the Indian army's mobilization was extremely slow, since it was thinking that it was dealing with local Kashmiri insurgents.

The tide of the battle soon turned in India's favor on the 5th of June when its military intelligence service, the Research and analysis wing or RAW discovered secret documents from a captured covert solider that revealed Pakistan's complete involvement in the war (Singh 2000). India's army then launched a massive attack on the positions of the Pakistani soldiers above the town of Kargil. The Indian air force was also involved in the war because the land forces could not attack the Pakistani positions directly due their high altitude. With the support of the air force, the Indian army gradually took back the lost positions. Pakistan did not back down and continued to fight.

Only after widespread international condemnation from multiple countries and

especially from the United Nations and the United States Pakistan withdrew its forces from Indian Administered Kashmir on the 11th of July 1999 (MacDonald 2017). The aftermath of the Kargil War boosted the Indian moral and humiliated Pakistan diplomatically. Pakistan faced the serious risk of being internationally isolated as the world saw it as an aggressor and provocateur of war. As Pakistan's economy weakened due to the Kargil War, it greatly reduced its financial support towards the JKLF and the other Kashmiri militants and started to focus on its own domestic problems, especially the October 1999 military coup (Singh 1999).

CHAPTER FOUR
DIPLOMACY AND MISTRUST 2001-2011

Reconciliation Prospects

Before the start of the new millennium Pakistan, having suffered humiliation from the Kargil War had experienced a coup d'état on the 12th of October 1999. The country's army thought that the civilian government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was extremely incompetent in handling the Kashmir problem and damaged the country's image and reputation on the international stage (MacDonald 2017). A military coup was launched against Sharif's government by the Pakistan armed forces that later arrested him and placed General Pervez Musharraf, (who had been the commanding officer of the covert soldiers during the Kargil war) as the new head of state in Pakistan (Bose 2003). General Musharraf was extremely keen to find a solution to the Kashmir issue and as a result, a new set of high-level talks took place between Pakistan and India on the 14th of July 2001 in Agra, India. The 2001 Indo-Pak Agra Summit was praised internally by both states. However, the negotiations broke down after two days owing to three main reasons; First, the Indian government did not trust General Musharraf because he was one of the people who had been responsible for the Kargil war, which undermined the 1999 Lahore Summit. Second, India was extremely wary of Pakistan's promise to put an end to the cross-border militant insurgency in Kashmir. Finally, India was preoccupied with its regional elections for 2002, so the timing of this summit was not right (Schofeild 2010). Five months later, on the 13th of December 2001, five Kashmiri militants from the two organizations Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Righteous) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (The Army of Muhammad) had orchestrated an attack on the Indian Parliament building in New Delhi. This attack led to the death of nine security personals including the five militants. After a series of investigations, the Indian government concluded that Maulana

Masood Azhar, a radical Pakistani militant sympathetic to the Kashmiri cause, had provided the militants with ammunition, funding, and intelligence (Tankel 2011). Azhar had already been arrested in Indian Kashmir in 1994 on terrorism charges and remained in Indian prison until 1999. He had been eventually released when Indian Airlines flight 814[25] had been hijacked by Kashmiri militants who demanded his return to Pakistan along with other arrested members of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Peace negotiations between India and Pakistan were stalled after the parliament attack in 2001 and India reacted strongly to Pakistan, demanding that the leaders of these organizations should be arrested (Lavoy 2009). Furthermore, Indian troops were mobilized again towards the borders of Kashmir and Punjab. Pakistan denied any involvement in the parliament attack stating that the perpetrators were local Kashmiri freedom fighters from Indian administered Kashmir that had ties to the JKLF (Lavoy 2009). Pakistan also gave an ultimatum that it would react militarily at any sign of Indian aggression or hostility and then positioned its armed forces across its eastern border (Ragavan 2009). For a period of five months, Pakistan and India were at a military standoff in which any state could possibly use nuclear weapons if pushed to the limit. Only after diplomatic mediation from the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and the USA in October 2002 did tensions ease and nuclear war was averted (Lavoy 2009).

During this mediation, the United Kingdom's Prime Minister Tony Blair pressurized Pakistan's head of state General Musharraf to 'permanently' end cross-border infiltration in Indian Kashmir and to dismantle all militant training camps in Azad Kashmir (Lavoy 2009). In order to appease India and get its full support on the Global War on Terrorism, the USA declared Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad as foreign terrorist groups.

[25]Indian Airlines Flight 814, commonly known as IC 814, was an Indian Airlines Airbus A300 en route from Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal to Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, India on Friday, 24 December 1999, when it was hijacked and flown to several locations before landing in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, one of several Kashmiri militant organizations was accused of the hijacking with the support and active assistance from the Pakistan ISI.

During the time of extreme tensions when India and Pakistan were at a military standoff, Kashmir went through yet another political change in 2002. A new regional political party known as the Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democrat Party[26]or JKPDP came to the political scene. This party had been founded by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in 1999 and followed on the principles of political regionalism[27] (Tak 2016). The JKPDP won the regional elections on the 2nd of November 2002 and Mufti Mohammad became the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. This election brought a new political understanding and the people of Kashmir who were dissatisfied by the old political party's way of handling the situation thought that there might have been a hope for a peaceful solution with the JKPDP in power (Dulat 2015; Sinha 2015). In January 2003, Mufti Muhammad when addressing the Kashmir Assembly promised economic development and demanded that both Pakistan and India sort the Kashmir issue without the use of military force (Tak 2016). This statement made it clear that a military solution towards Kashmir's problem was not the answer, rather social developments in Kashmiri society would help in the near future.

Warming of Relations between India & Pakistan

The 2001 September 11 terrorist attacks on the USA prompted the US president George.W.Bush to engage Pakistan and urge General Musharraf to join the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan. The USA needed a solution to the Kashmir issue in order for

[26]The Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party or JKPDP or simply known as the PDP, is a political party in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, India. The PDP was headed and founded by Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, a politician from the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. He served twice as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, from November 2002 to November 2005 and again from March 2015 to January 2016. He was also Home Minister of India from December 1989 to November 1990. His daughter, Mehbooba Mufti, succeeded him as party leader and as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir following his death in January 2016.

[27]In politics, regionalism is a political ideology focusing on the development of a political or social system based on one or more regions. More specifically, regionalism refers to three distinct elements: movements demanding territorial autonomy within unitary states; the organization of the central state on a regional basis for the delivery of its policies including regional development policies; political decentralization and regional autonomy. It may be similar to Nationalism.

Pakistan to be fully committed to the campaign in Afghanistan, so it called both for an immediate ceasefire on the Line of Control (LOC) and for Pakistan to completely stop its support towards all militant organizations (Dulat 2015; Sinha 2015).

As a result, India and Pakistan re-established their diplomatic ties on the 2nd of May 2003 and Pakistan officially banned all militant organizations from using its territory to launch any attacks in Jammu & Kashmir or India (Roy 2011). An official ceasefire was put in to affect in 2004 and after 56 years, both nations opened trade across the LOC with emphasis made on infrastructure and development of the region. April 5th2005 saw the start of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service, which transported civilians across the administrated areas of Kashmir who had been separated since 1948 war. For the people of Kashmir, this was perhaps one the biggest achievements in the peace process (Bose 2011).

India's new Prime Minister Manmohan Singh referred to the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service as 'New Journey towards Peace' because this service allowed trade delegations, politicians, and civilians to cross over the LOC without any deterrence. Both nations in 2005 had also reduced their military presence along the LOC as a gesture of building mutual trust and confidence. On the 8th of October 2005, a massive earthquake at a magnitude of 7.6 struck the entire region of Kashmir and parts of northern Pakistan and India. The causalities that resulted from this earthquake numbered approximately between 85,000 to 87,000 on both sides and displacing 2.8 million people (Roy 2011). This disaster brought India and Pakistan closer on humanitarian grounds and five more crossing points along the LOC were opened in order to facilitate medical aid and the flow of relief workers from both countries as well as abroad (Snedden 2015). The act of mutual assistance was a clear sign that both nations were ready to cooperate further that resulted in the second round of peace talks in July 2006 and it seemed that an agreement

on the future of Kashmir would be reached (Raghavan 2009).

KashmirUprising during 2008

Just as the diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan seemed to be moving on the right path, problems occurred again in late 2007 when General Pervez Musharraf was forced to resign as Head of State due to internal political instability in Pakistan caused by high levels of inflation, rising unemployment, and pro-democratic demonstrations. General Musharraf in control of Pakistan's entire armed forces, but after his resignation, the other generals re-launched Operation Topac[28] (Kasuri 2015). Pakistan's army had been involved in the US led War on Terrorism in Afghanistan since 2002 and had officially banned the militant organizations after it had joined the US-led coalition. However, as the war on terror was going on, Pakistan was discreetly funding all these militant groups to go through with Operation Topac in Kashmir from 2003 until 2007. Militancy had reappeared in Jammu & Kashmir in 2003, leading a complete halt in infrastructure and development projects and even affected the tourism business that had recently increased. The opportunity for a peaceful agreement was lost again because of these continuous attacks from the militants and India could not trust Pakistan (Kasuri 2015).

On the 26th of May 2008, the government of India decided to transfer approximately 0.40 kilometer square (99 acres) of land mostly consisting of forested areas in the Kashmir valley to a Hindu foundation known as the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board in order to set up a temporary shelter and other facilities to accommodate Hindu pilgrims coming to the area for religious purposes (Devadas 2018). This was an extremely controversial decision and it resulted in mass protests and demonstrations of

[28]For a detailed analysis of Operation Topac, see the Chapter 3.

approximately 500,000 people across the valley. The protesters feared that this land reform was conspiracy against the Kashmiri people because it would allow non-Kashmiri Hindus from India to settle in the areas of Jammu and Ladakh where there was already a sizeable Kashmiri Pandit presence (Devadas 2018).

The Kashmiri youth were among the most agitated groups and they began pelting stones at the police and local authorities as form of expressing their protest (Noorani 2011). The police and security forces responded to the stone pelting protesters by fire, resulting in the death of six young Kashmiris. Pakistan's ISI capitalized on these events in Indian Kashmir and with the help of the militants, managed to convince the Kashmiri youth that they were all part of a global Muslim protest movement and urged them to continue with the protests (Schofield 2010). With continuous protests and violent clashes between the security forces and the Kashmiri youth, the Indian government revoked the land transfer on the 1st of July 2008. The decision to revoke was met with counter protests and riots in the Jammu region, this time by the Hindus who were in favor of land transfer. To control the situation and prevent any Muslim-Hindu clash from taking place, the Indian government sent more security forces into the Kashmir valley and the Jammu region.

By the 2nd of August 2008, the protests had stopped because the Indian authorities had restored the Hindu pilgrimage route but did not transfer the land to the foundation (Devadas 2018). These protests highlighted how massive the animosity between the Muslims in the Kashmir Valley and the Hindus in the Jammu & Ladakh region had been ever since the purge of the Kashmiri Pandits and that neither community was willing to compromise with one another (Noorani 2011). After the protests, the Jammu and Kashmir government fell, and another election took place in which the National Conference Party leader Farooq Abdullah's son Omar Abdullah won and became the new

chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir on the 26th December 2008.

4.4 Clashes between Security Forces and Protesters

After taking office in January 2009, Omar Abdullah promised that he would urge the Indian government to revoke or suspend the infamous Armed Forces Special Powers Act[29] as well as address the other grievances that the Kashmiri people had (Devadas 2018). The Indian parliament in response stated that as long as the Pakistan funded Operation Topac was in play in Jammu and Kashmir, the Special Powers Act could not be repealed because any withdrawal of security forces would allow more militants to cross over the LOC into Kashmir but also into India. This was what happened on the 26th of November 2008 when 10 militants from Lashkar-e-Taiba attacked the Indian city of Mumbai in which 116 people had been killed (Davadas 2018).

By June 2010, the Kashmir valley witnessed a series of violent protests and riots. The reason for this unrest was that the Indian security forces killed three young men who were suspected of being spies sent from Pakistan. The security forces found these men in a village called Nadihal in the Baramulla district of Indian administered Kashmir that was only a few kilometers away from the LOC (Devadas 2019). Rumors in the valley spread that these three men were not spies or armed militants from Pakistan but were local Kashmiris who had been lured to the Baramulla district for new job prospects by the Indian army. The Indian army then staged a false battle encounter in which they killed these men to claim a monetary bounty (money for killing militants) from the Indian government (Devadas 2019). The death of these men sparked outrage and protests erupted in the centreof Srinagar the 11th of June 2010 demanding the arrest of the people

[29]The Armed Forces Special Powers Act that was introduced in 1958 is an act of the Indian Parliament that grants special powers to the Indian Armed Forces the power to maintain public order in "disturbed areas." It also allows the forces to use any means necessary to keep control and this has resulted in numerous cases of brutal violence, kidnappings and human rights abuse in the Kashmir valley.

responsible for the murder. The police used brutal force such as beating the protesters with batons and used tear gas to disperse the crowds, which resulted in the death of a 17-year-old boy after a tear gas shell violently struck him in the head. Further demonstrations took place across the Kashmir valley. They were led by the All Party's Hurriyat Conference that demanded a complete demilitarization of the entire state of Jammu & Kashmir (Soz 2018). Factory workers also went on a strike in solidarity with the protesters, citing human rights abuses by the police and security forces. A curfew was implemented in the entire valley but this did not stop the protesters from gathering in public places shouting anti-Indian slogans and pro-independence chants such as "India Quit Kashmir" (Kumar 2018).

The police and security forces dealt with these strikers and protesters without mercy and used all violent means to maintain order and control. Massive amounts of teargas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition were used and in this chaos. 110 people died, while 537 were badly injured, and 1200 people were arrested (Soz 2018). The protesters also retaliated by throwing rocks to the police, destroying public property, and setting police and security vehicles to fire. The protests and strikes stopped in September 2010, when the Indian government announced new administrative measures that were in the interest of the Kashmiri people such far greater political autonomy. Actually, India only announced these autonomy measures because of the reports that came from the LOC where militants from the Pakistan Administered Kashmir side had been spotted crossing over in order to create further chaos in the valley (Kumar 2018).

By 2011, Omar Abdullah's efforts to convince the Indian Parliament had failed and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act had not been revoked and no military force had been withdrawn from the Kashmir valley even after the 2010 protests and riots that left 110 Kashmiris dead (Mahmood 2018). The Special Powers Act could not be revoked because

the Kashmiri Pandit community from the Hindu dominated region of Jammu and Ladakh as well as other Hindu nationalist parties in India pressurized the Indian Interior Minister Shri P. Chidambaram not to remove any security forces from Kashmir. According to them, doing so would jeopardize the safety and security of all non-Muslim Kashmiris in the region and thus all future dialogues must include their representation as well (Soz 2018). The violence and brutality used by the security forces were harshly criticized by international human rights organizations especially Amnesty International that blamed the Indian government for not taking action to prevent the huge number of deaths. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed concern over the number of civilians killed and asked for a revision over crowd controlling measures and urged the use of non-lethal weapons in dealing with violent protests (Devadas 2018). On the 15th of September 2011, Singh proposed All-Parties Conference in New Delhi in which all the interested parties on Kashmiri matters would attend, including the ruling Congress Party of India, the 2 Kashmiri political parties (JKNC & JKPDP), the separatist groups, and the Kashmiri Pandits. The Conference resulted in a sort of success since the Indian government agreed on several measures to defuse the tensions (Soz 2018). In accordance with the agreement made during the All-Parties Conference, all the civilians who had been arrested during the protests were released in 2012, schools were reopened, the decision on the limitation of security forces in the valley was revised, and financial compensation of $11,000 was given to the families of the deceased (Bukhari 2018). Based on a final measure, the individuals involved in the killings were prosecuted and convicted if found guilty. The Indian army convicted seven soldiers and two senior officers who were responsible for the "staged" murder of the three Kashmiri men and sentenced them to life imprisonment (Bukhari 2018). As a gesture of solidarity, the President of India Pranab Mukherjee visited Kashmir on the 27th September 2012. After

meeting with Omar Abdullah, he gave a speech in Srinagar and stated that the government of India would always ensure and safeguard the rights and dignity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and that the issue would be resolved only through dialogue (Soz 2018). He also stated that violence and force would only divide the people and create hatred. The Congress Party saw Mukherjee's visit to Kashmir as a positive action during that time however, he was incapable of understanding the deep-rooted animosity that existed in the common Kashmiri towards the Indian State and in particular towards the 700,000 Indian soldiers that had been placed there. The Kashmiri society was fragmented beyond repair (Kumar 2018).

CHAPTER FIVE
KASHMIR'S CURRENT SITUATION

The Rise of Right-Wing Hindu Nationalism in India

A drastic change in Indian politics took place after the results of the 2013 Indian general elections that had brought in the new Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi and his political party known as the Bharatiya Janata Party[30](Indian People's Party) or BJP to power (Rao 2019). Modi became the 14th Prime Minister of India when he took office in September 2013 and it was the first time in India's history that a political party, which represented an exclusivist ideology, won an absolute majority in the Indian Parliament without the need of any alliances or coalition from the other parties (Noorani 2019). For Kashmir's Muslim population the election victory of the BJP meant that there would be more restrictions imposed on them, increased level of security forces and social discrimination (Thapar 2016). To understand Narendra Modi and the BJP's political agenda for Kashmir, a historical reference to its inception and rise to power in India needs to be addressed in this chapter.

The BJP is known in India as the political arm of the much older organization known as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Organization) or RSS that was established on the 25th of September 1925 by Keshav BaliramHedgewar. This organization's original purpose was to teach character training through Hindu religious discipline in order to form a united Hindu community in India that would resist colonial rule and later help in creating a Hindu nation (Ambekar 2019). The RSS promoted Hindu culture and values in the society with great emphasis on spreading the ideology known as "Hindutva" or Greater India and this type of ideology had taken inspiration

[30]The Bharatiya Janata Party is the current ruling political party of the Republic of India. It is one of the two major political parties in India, along with the Indian National Congress. It is a right-wing party, and its policy has historically reflected Hindu nationalist positions.

from many European right-wing groups mainly the Nazi Party from Germany (Sharda 2018). Just like all other right-wing parties, the RSS believes in racial superiority in which the majority Hindu population of India is racially pure. Besides, the country should be a governed under the ancient Hindu laws. It also views other religious groups as inferior especially the Muslims and Christians (Ambekar 2019). Since its inception, the RSS has always had a hostile attitude towards Muslims and Christians because it regards both religions as "outsiders" as they are not indigenous to India. Furthermore, the historical animosity to Muslim invaders from Central Asia and Christian colonialists from Europe who were responsible for the mass conversion of the Hindu population during their rule sparked even more hatred (Noorani 2019). During the Indian Independence movement, the RSS refused to work with the Indian National Congress and criticized Mahatma Gandhi for trying to unite the Hindus and Muslims together in order to expel the British from India. After the partition of India, an RSS member Nathuram Godse assassinated Gandhi on the 30th of January 1948 because his organization blamed him for the creation of Pakistan and the appeasement for Muslims that had cost the lives of thousands of Hindus during the partition riots (Ambekar 2019). The Indian government banned the RSS on multiple occasions: in 1949 when it opposed Article 370 that provided the special status to Jammu & Kashmir: in 1952, when it criticized the Indian flag for its color formation in and in 1992, when its members were found guilty in the demolition of the Babri Mosque. But despite these measures, it has always made its presence known to a great deal in the country (Noorani 2019). To be active in India's governance, the RSS needed a political party that would counter the ruling Congress Party and impose its agenda on the mainstream Indian society. On the 21st of October 1951, The RSS provided substantial funding to Syama Prasad Mukherjee a senior and prominent member of the organization to establish a political party to protect

"Hindu norms & values" from the threat of secularism, westernization, multiculturalism, and to counter any sort of appeasement towards Muslims and Christians in India (Damle 2018; Andersen 2018). The original name of this party was Akhil Bharatiya Jana Sangh (All India People's Union), but after merging with smaller right-wing parties that were opposed to the ruling Congress Party and sympathetic to the "Hindutva" ideology, the name of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was finalized in 1977 (Noorani 2019).

The BJP became the second largest political party in India to counterbalance the Congress Party. However, it had never succeeded to win a majority in the Indian general elections because the Congress Party represented the entire population of India and had mostly members from each cultural and religious background whilst the BJP's political ideology focused on a single set of citizens and this prevailed until 2013.

The result of the 2013 elections was different because the Congress Party lost its popularity due to massive corruption scandals in the previous term and the lack of measures taken to stop militant attacks in India and in Kashmir. The BJP capitalized on this and used campaign slogans such as "India First" to attract the middle-class voters, having a tough policy towards Pakistan and promising to end the Kashmir issue (Rao 2019). Narendra Modi, who was the Chief Minister of the Indian state of Gujarat, was very popular among the Hindu population during the election campaign. Furthermore, he was a lifelong member of the RSS and believed in the notion of "Hindutva." Within a year of taking power in India, Modi and the BJP's Hindu agenda started to take its discriminatory action in Indian society. Modi appointed individuals who either were members of the RSS or supported the BJP's agenda as ministers across India and even in the Kashmir region of Jammu that had a Hindu majority. Large scales of discrimination against Muslims began to take place all across India and in Kashmir security forces were allowed to take any measures necessary to keep order and control such as night raids in

Muslim households they maybe suspected of militant activity and physical harassment of Muslim students in schools and Universities.

These measures were greatly abused by the security forces. The Kashmiri youth suspected of being a militant was arrested without proof; Hindu mobs constantly attacked Muslim shops and businesses especially those selling beef, about 1400 rape and abduction cases of young Kashmiri Muslim girls by soldiers and police went unreported and the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir refused to reveal the names of the perpetrators (Noorani 2019). India's secularism and democracy were under threat by the surge of right-wing Hindu nationalism and peace for Kashmir seemed to be almost impossible because the BJP had no intention of allowing the region to join Pakistan or choose independence but rather of merging the entire peninsula, including the Pakistan Administered portion with India (Damle 2018; Andersen 2018).

Kashmir Uprising during 2016

At the very start of Narendra Modi's Premiership, the tension between the Muslims of Kashmir and the BJP government in India was high owing to Modi's previous acts when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, thus his intentions were highly suspected (Noorani 2019). In November 2014, the elections for the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly took place. The BJP supported and campaigned for the People's Democratic Party (PDP) because it was willing to form a political alliance with it, as it needed an ally in the region. The alliance promised new development plans for the Kashmir valley. Even Modi himself visited Srinagar during the election campaign as a solidarity gesture. Omar Abdullah's Party the National Conference (JKNC) received no financial or moral support from the Congress Party as previously because the Congress lost the elections and became the lead opposition party in the Indian Parliament (Noorani 2019). On the 24th of

December 2014, the PDP won 28 seats in the Kashmir Legislative assembly, while the BJP that aligned with it won 25 seats, and this victory allowed the BJP to install Hindu ministers in Kashmir valley. As a result, Omar Abdullah resigned as Chief Minister and the PDP's founder Mufti Muhammad Sayeed's daughter Mehbooba Mufti replaced him (Sharda 2018). Many Kashmiris viewed the alliance made between the PDP and BJP as a betrayal because the BJP considered Kashmir a full part of India and disregarded its special status that existed even in the Indian constitution. Having 25 seats in the assembly legally allowed the BJP to change laws (Noorani 2019).

Non-stop border skirmishes and LOC violations took place between the Pakistani and Indian army in 2015. These involved low-level clashes on the border of both parts of Kashmir. However no major confrontation or escalation occurred. These constant skirmishes did have a psychological effect on the daily lives of the Kashmiri people on both sides because people feared for their lives as firing and bomb shelling occurred daily, constantly day and night, and sporadically without any kind of warnings. Around 80 people lost their lives on both sides (Jacob 2018).

Riots, protests, and violent clashes in the Kashmir valley returned in 2016. However, the situation had far greater consequences this time because of the BJP's power in the Kashmir assembly and the actions committed by the militants. On the 2nd of January 2016, an Indian air base in the town of Pathankot[31]just a few kilometers away from Jammu was attacked by six militants from the banned group Jaish-e-Muhammad that resulted in the death of 40 soldiers and wounding 25. Two of the six militants involved in the attack managed to escape (Rao 2019). After this incident, the Indian army began to

[31]The 2016 Pathankot attack was a militant attack committed on 2 January 2016 by a heavily armed group, which attacked the Pathankot Air Force Station, part of the Western Air Command of the Indian Air Force. The attack led to a breakdown in India-Pakistan relations, which remained largely unresolved as of September 2019. Reports have suggested that the attack was an attempt to derail a fragile peace process meant to stabilize the deteriorated relations between India and Pakistan, as several pieces of evidence were found linking the attackers to Pakistan.

aggressively check on all militants across Jammu and Kashmir. They were given full authorization by Modi and the BJP to arrest any person that they suspected of having links with militants or even having any kind of sympathy towards them (Geelani 2019). Most of the arrested individuals were among the Kashmiri youth between the ages of 18-25. They were completely innocent with no affiliations to any militant group but this did not stop the Indian security forces from committing acts of torture and violence on them to get information (Bhat 2019). Mass protests on the 10th of July 2016 after the security forces killed a Kashmiri separatist commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani. The Indian forces claimed that Wani was a commander from the militant group Hizbul Mujahideen that was trained in and funded by Pakistan; however, Kashmiris denied this claim stating that he was a native Kashmiri freedom fighter who aspired for independence, and was killed as a result (Rao 2019). Anti-Indian demonstrations erupted all over Kashmir and a strike was called by the JKLF to protest against Wani's killing. However, the protests turned in to violent clashes in which 20 police stations were attacked, and their weapons were stolen and used against the police and security forces (Noorani 2019). Stone throwing on the police was rampant, so tear gas was used to disperse the crowd. By the end of July, 25-30 protesters had been killed and 200 of the others had been injured. The Indian government sent an extra 800 security personals to maintain law and order and a one-week curfew was imposed in the valley (Geelani 2019). The riots were far from over, because on the 5th of August, a group of Kashmiri youth attacked the home of the Education Minister of Kashmir with petrol bombs but there were no causalities. The following day, stones were thrown on the car of the Justice Minister and a mob set ablaze the Additional Deputy Commissioner's vehicle resulting in the deaths of two protesters. The JKLF called for a complete shutdown of work and business.

By the 11th of August, the unrest reached Jammu, where protesters began shouting

pro-independence slogans. Another curfew was immediately imposed while the protests were going on. The security forces started arresting the separatist members that resulted in violent clashes, thus three people were killed and 670 were injured again (Geelani 2019). Most Muslim majority areas of Kashmir were placed under curfew since the 13th of August but this did not stop them from protesting from the roofs of their homes where they again chanted pro-independence slogans. On the 14th of August, which was the Independence Day of Pakistan, they hoisted the flag of Pakistan above their homes in solidarity (Devadas 2018). The curfew was lifted on the 31st of August but during the two months of this uprising, 80-120 people had been killed and the Indian government and the security forces had been criticized by the Human Rights Commission for the use of non-lethal pellet guns, which did not kill but permanently blinded civilians and physically damaged their facial appearances (Bhat 2019). Even Mehbooba Mufti, the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir was criticized for her lack of empathy towards the protesters and her failure to control the situation without the use of violence (Devadas 2018).

Uri Attack & Resurgence in Militancy during 2016

It was not just the Kashmiri people who saw the political alliance between the BJP and PDP as a betrayal to their cause, the militant organizations also regarded it as an illegitimate act (Bhat 2019). Since the Pathankot attack, militant presence in the Kashmir valley had increased due to the hostile atmosphere that the constant riots and protests taking place. On the 18th of September 2016, four militants armed with AK 47's, grenade launchers, hand grenades, and C4 explosives launched a pre-dawn ambush on the Indian Army Brigade Headquarters in the town of Uri that was located 2 kilometers away from the LOC (Devadas 2018). Most of the Indian soldiers had been asleep owing

to the time, which allowed the militants to gain access inside the base without any resistance and they bombarded the area with the C4 explosives and lobbed 17 hand grenades in a matters of minutes (Jacob 2018). A six-hour long gun battle ensued in which 19 Indian soldiers and all four militants were killed.

In the aftermath of the attack, officials from the Indian Home and Defense Ministry conducted an investigation. It was found that the militants had belonged to the Jaish-e-Muhammad organization and they had crossed over from the Pakistan side of the LOC with weapons that were used by the Pakistan military (Bhat 2019). India blamed Pakistan for orchestrating the Uri attack and threatened to retaliate with surgical strikes on the militant camps inside Pakistan administered Kashmir. Pakistan rejected India's allegations denying any sort of involvement in the attack. Furthermore, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry stated that the militants were Kashmiri separatists who belonged to the Indian Administered side and the continuous unrest and human rights abuse committed by the Indian forces was the cause of the attack (Noorani 2019).

Pakistan and India's relations dramatically deteriorated. Both countries armed forces were on high alert and strategically placed along the LOC border. On the 29th of September 2016, India claimed that it had conducted a successful surgical strike in Pakistan Administered Kashmir on "Terrorist Launch Pads" referring to the militant camps. However, no such evidence of a strike was found. Pakistan's government even allowed a United Nations team to conduct its own independent investigation, but they found neither sign of a military operation nor any militant camps (Geelani 2019). India and Pakistan bilaterally boycotted each other by suspending any form of business and trade and with the help of their media, accused each other for committing human right violations and supporting terrorist groups. Militancy and unrest continued in the Kashmir valley throughout 2017 & 2018 and the Indian government responded to this by

launching “Operation All Out” which was an offensive aimed at expelling all militants and separatists from the state Jammu & Kashmir. This operation gave the security forces absolute authority without question. As a result, curfews were imposed in Muslim majority areas, public gatherings were banned, and the use of violence and fear became common (Noorani 2019). Separatists and militants continued to avoid capture, carried out raids against the security forces, and attacked Hindu pilgrims coming from India. Between January 2017 and December 2018, 119 Indian soldiers and 470 separatists and militants had been killed (Bhat 2019).

Pulwama Attack & the Indo-Pak Military Standoff at 2019

The political alliance between the BJP and the PDP ended on the 19th of June 2018 due to security/terrorism related concerns in the Kashmir valley, which the BJP accused the PDP for incompetency and allowing militants across the LOC. It was also related to the actions of the Chief Minister of Kashmir, Mehbooba Mufti. She was taking unilateral decisions without the consent of the BJP, such as releasing of the jailed protesters, allocating land to outlawed religious groups, and criticizing the BJP for being lenient on the perpetrators of the infamous rape and murder case of an eight-year-old Kashmiri girl[32]in the town of Kathua (Noorani 2019). The Hindu dominated BJP had already a hawkish policy towards Kashmir ever since it had come into power and viewed the PDP as a political obstacle that was preventing BJP from carrying its agenda (Bhat 2019). After the end of the political alliance, direct governors rule was implemented in Kashmir, which meant that all political decisions would be taken by the Governor of Kashmir Narinder Nath Vohra who was a BJP member and would remove obstructions for the

[32]The Kathua rape case refers to the abduction, rape, and murder of an eight-year-old girl, AsifaBano, in Rasana village near Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir, India, in January 2018. A Hindu priest, Sanji Ram and other accomplices inside a Hindu temple had raped Asifa. Six of the seven accused were convicted by the Indian high court. The Verdict sparked religious and communal tensions across India in which right-wing Hindu groups protested in against the decision.

ruling party (Noorani 2019).

On the 14th of February 2019, a lone militant attacked an Indian military convoy in the town of Pulwama. The militants name was Adil Ahmad Dar and was a member of Jaish-e-Muhammad. Dar had planted a vehicle with 300 kilograms of explosives and driven it straight in to the military convoy on Srinagar-Jammu highway, killing himself and 40 security personals (Shah 2019). Within 24 hours, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi blamed Pakistan's military and ISI for masterminding the attack and promised swift retaliation after widespread anti-Pakistan demonstrations rose across the major cities of India. Massive anti-Kashmiri backlash took place in India's capital city New Delhi and Mumbai where Kashmiri students and businessmen were attacked and beaten by the Indian protesters (Shah 2019). Pakistan's new Prime Minister Imran Khan[33]stated that the perpetrator of the attack was born and raised in Indian Administered Kashmir and had never crossed the LOC. Khan stated that funding and protecting militants was not in the interest of Pakistan, and India should stop blaming Pakistan for its problems and come terms with the fact that it has its own home grown insurgency which it can't control (Rao 2019). Public pressure continued to mount with demands of a military strike against Pakistan. The fear of losing the upcoming general elections led Modi to launch a preemptive strike across the LOC against the so-called militant camps in Pakistan Administered Kashmir (Shah 2019). Two Indian warplanes crossed the LOC on the morning of the 26th of February 2019 and dropped bombs on a hilltop surrounding the town of Balakot. This town was not located in Pakistan Administered Kashmir but, in the Pakistan, northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), meaning that the Indian Air force had violated Pakistani airspace by crossing the international border (Geelani

[33]Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Pakistan Movement for Justice) or PTI is a center to center-left political party in Pakistan, founded in 1996 by former international cricket captain and current Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan. The party aims to create a welfare state, where the state is responsible for education, health, and employability of citizens. It promotes freedom of thought and dismantling religious discrimination in Pakistan.

2019). The Indian planes returned to Jammu & Kashmir without any confrontation from the Pakistan air force. Later the same day, the Indian government officially acknowledged the airstrike, claiming to have destroyed a terrorist training camp with a large number of casualties. This turned out to be an embarrassing situation for Modi and his government because the Pakistani media as well many international media channels reported from the Balakot area in which there were no militant bases or training camps (Rao2019). The claim about the large number of militant casualties turned out to be false as well, because the site of bombing revealed that only one of the bombs had exploded and a bunch of trees had been the only thing damaged. India's own media and public demanded proof from the government and the opposition, the Congress party, blamed the BJP for deception and spreading inaccurate information thus tarnishing India's image (Shah 2019). Because of the Balakot incident, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) retaliated on the 27th of February by conducting six different surprise airstrikes in Jammu & Kashmir. These strikes were part of "Operation Swift Retort" in order to send a message to India that it should refrain from any future acts of aggression against Pakistan or face retaliatory consequences (Shah 2019). The three Pakistani warplanes hit Indian military installations in Kashmir's Jammu and Ladakh districts and then immediately crossed back into the Pakistan side of the LOC. However, two Indian fighter planes followed them and crossed the LOC leading to an aerial dogfight, in which both the Indian planes were shot down and one Indian pilot was captured by the Pakistan Army (Rao 2019). India's government and especially Prime Minister Modi were humiliated publicly over this loss and the fact that Pakistan had captured an Indian pilot was more of a reason for public outcry in the country.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan took a very unorthodox approach in handling the situation by releasing the captured Indian pilot and sending him back to India on the

1st of March as gesture of peace (Shah 2019). Khan also stated that war was detrimental to both countries and peace talks over Kashmir's situation should be resumed. India did acknowledge the gesture but did not comment on the peace talks suggestion as the country's general elections were about to take place, which would decide the future of Kashmir (Geelani 2019).

The Scrapping of Article 370 & the Kashmir Lockdown

It was being predicted that the 2019 Indian general elections would be a huge loss for Modi and the ruling BJP government because of the mismanagement of the Pulwama event, the misinformation which was given to the public, and the confrontation with Pakistan that embarrassed India globally (Shah 2019). However, these predictions turned out to be inconclusive because on the 23rd of May 2019, the BJP won 303 seats in the parliament and 37.36% of votes, meaning a clear majority again against the Congress Party (Sardesai 2019).

The BJP was able to win even after the above-mentioned humiliation, because since 2013, India's majority media outlets, industry, business, and education came into the control of politicians and individuals that were either affiliated with or had sympathy towards the BJP agenda in India (Sardesai 2019). The media portrayed Narendra Modi as a great leader who would turn India into a superpower. Besides, criticism against the activities of Modi and BJP were suppressed to a great extent. The media channels and individuals that spoke against the government for the human rights violations in Kashmir were labeled as traitors to India and were violently attacked by right-wing Hindu mobs and BJP supporters (Shah 2019).

On the 30th of May 2019, Narendra Modi was again sworn in as the 14th Prime Minister of India. His new term as PM would have drastic consequences for the fate of

Jammu &Kashmir and its Muslim population. On the 5th of August, the Indian Home Affairs Minister Amit Shah announced in the Parliament that India would be revoking the special status of Jammu & Kashmir that was granted under the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. Furthermore, it was announced that the state of Jammu & Kashmir would be divided into three separate administrative regions; the Kashmir Valley, Jammu, and Ladakh which would merge with the Indian Union (Sardesai 2019). The BJP also added that after the merging process, non-Kashmiris would be able to purchase land and property in Kashmir (previously forbidden) allowing needed development in the area (Shah 2019).

This controversial decision made by the BJP sparked outrage and protest among all Kashmiri political parties, the opposition Congress Party, and Pakistan as well. They declared the decision as unconstitutional and illegal since it was not consulted to the Kashmiri people. Pakistan's PM Imran Khan and all other political parties of Pakistan criticized the BJP's decision and staged protest rallies across the country included the Pakistan Administered area of Azad Kashmir, stating that this had always been an agenda of the RSS which used its political arm, the BJP, to execute this act (Sardesai 2019). Imran Khan also stated that this act by the Indian government violated the UN Security Council Resolution of 1949 and that Pakistan would take any necessary steps to counter this illegal decision (Sardesai 2019). A day before to the decision to revoke Article 370, around 200 Kashmiri politicians had been placed under house arrest, including the two former chief ministers Omer Abdullah and Mehmooba Mufti. By the 6th of August approximately 4000, mostly political activists, were arrested. On the 8th of August, an official lockdown of the Kashmir Valley was placed in which all communication and movements were stopped, and a curfew was imposed together with long electrical blackouts (Shah 2019). Around 900,000 Indian security personals were placed all across

the valley to prevent violent protests. The Indian government forbade any foreigners or foreign media from travelling to Kashmir for "security" reasons but this travel ban was primarily to prevent any independent new coverage on the conditions of the Kashmiri people from dissemination (Shah 2019).

Kashmiri citizens living in the USA, UK and other European countries, made mass demonstrations across Indian Embassies demanding an end to the lockdown and held the BJP government responsible for human right violations (Sardesa 2019). Pakistan's PM Imran Khan addressed Kashmir's current situation in a proper manner on the 27th of September 2019 at 74th United Nations General Assembly where he blamed Narendra, the BJP, and RSS for committing genocide against Kashmir's Muslim population (Shah 2019). Khan also mentioned the fear of a nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan owing to India's aggressive foreign policy in the South Asia. He appealed to the international community to pressure India in ending the lockdown, reinstating the special status of Kashmir, and cooperating with Pakistan to find a permanent solution (Shah

2019).

Figure 3 : Imran Khan addressing the UN General Assembly 2019

Since August 2019, the lockdown continues in Kashmir. It is unclear how many people have been arrested, tortured, or killed since the travel bans on the region are still in place. India's ruling party refuses to compromise on any matter related to Kashmir's union with India, thus, only time can tell what the situation for Kashmir and its people will hold soon.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

As I come to end of this thesis, in which I explained Kashmir's history from the beginning to the present time, it seems clear that the future of Kashmir resting in the hands of both Pakistan and India is the biggest dilemma for the people of Kashmir. The main argument of my research was that Muslim-Hindu hostility constituted the prime factor for Kashmir's fate. The past events and more recently from 2013 to 2019 are proof enough and they clearly show that a permanent peace solution in Kashmir is not expected in the near future because India has been gradually transforming from a secular democracy in to a nationalist-Hindu dominated regime and the BJP ruling party made it clear that they have had no intention on holding a referendum for Kashmir or the U.N plebiscite as they have never considered Kashmir to be separate from India. The BJP also wants demographic changes in Kashmir, as it is the only Muslim majority state in India. Articles 370's removal was strategically done to achieve this object because allowing non-Kashmiri Hindus to purchase property and settle in the state would gradually alter the population demographics. The deployment of 900,000 security personals in the region and the ongoing lockdown are sufficient evidence enough to showing what India has intended for Kashmir.

Since there is no direct communication with the people in the region, the number of the human rights violations is hard to predict. As the international community criticizes India for its inhuman act on Kashmir, India states that Kashmir is its internal problem and only India has the right to resolve it. Furthermore, India uses a rhetoric that blames Pakistan and the Pakistani backed militant groups in creating problems in Kashmir from the beginning. Pakistan has continuously denied this allegation by stating that the unrest, militant presence in Jammu & Kashmir is a result of the constant abuse and violence

committed against the Kashmiri people at the hand of the Indian army, and that these militants are native to the Indian administered area and have no links to Pakistan. It is important remember that Kashmir is not an integral part of the Indian union or Pakistan but rather a disputed territory between these two countries as stated by the U.N security council in 1948. Therefore, India does not have the sole authority to deal with the situation and must cooperate with Pakistan. The U.N also states that the people of Kashmir have the right to self-determination through a referendum and both states are obligated to honor the resolution.

Pakistan's impatience in 1948 was the primary factor that led to the first Kashmir War when it had sent troops to occupy Srinagar. This was a period when Kashmir's fate was contested on whether to be included in India or Pakistan, eventually leading to a bifurcation of the state. Pakistan used the excuse of protecting the Kashmiri Muslims in 1948 as a pretext to invade Kashmir; however, it clearly had economic and political intentions on taking control of the entire Kashmir valley for its water resources.

The militant groups that caused the insurgency in Jammu &Kashmir, which India claims that they all received funding and training from Pakistan's military and secret service ISI had an extremist religious agenda in mind for Kashmir. Their agenda was to radically Islamize Kashmir in the same way as had happened in Pakistan during the 1980's period. Similar to the Indian security forces, these militants used tactics of fear and violence against anyone who opposed their ideology, whether Kashmiri Muslim or Kashmiri Hindus. There have been many cases of alleged rape of Kashmiri women as well as death threats towards moderate and secular politicians since 1991. Most cases according to the Human Rights Watch investigations have been difficult to solve due mainly to the reluctance of the Kashmiris to come forward and report them. For moderate and Secular Kashmiris whose believed in the ideals of Kashmiriyat, they were trapped

between the brutality of the Indian security forces and the violence from the militants.

Pakistan's government has always publicly spoken for the Kashmir people's right to self to determination because of its Muslim majority; however, just like India, it has never been in favor of the creation of an Independent sovereign Kashmiri State. The reason is that if an independent Kashmiri State were created, then Pakistan would have to relinquish its portion of Kashmir that it had taken during the 1948 War (Azad Kashmir) just as India and China would have to do the same. For Pakistan, this is also an economic issue because all the natural water supply that comes to Pakistan originates from the mountains of Kashmir. As a already water weary country which might also become water stressed by the year 2040, Pakistan's government believes that it should have the sole control of Kashmir as India possesses many other alternative resources owing to its much larger size.

India's BJP government that had won its votes using religion as a political tool has on numerous occasions stated that Kashmir had always been a religious and cultural centre for Hindus and that the first settlements and kingdoms in the region were all part of the Hindu faith and had shaped Kashmir. They further add that the Muslims were all invaders that had enslaved, massacred, and expelled the Hindus from Kashmir, and this is the reason why they intend to gradually change the religious population of the region. Article 370's removal was just the start. This claim is still under debt because the origins of Hinduism is nowhere near Kashmir and the closet evidence is around the Indus river valleys in modern day Pakistan and currently there is still research being conducted on when Hinduism actually came to Kashmir. The BJP is funded and controlled by the RSS and since it is inspired by European style fascism, it will do whatever it can to reduce the Muslim population of Kashmir through any means to achieve the "Great Hindu" state or Hindutava. That is why in the recent years there have been huge numbers of attacks on

Kashmiri Muslims, especially assault and rape cases against women. Even Muslim Kashmiri students have been arrested without any charge and tortured in jail by police who are sympathetic to the RSS ideology.

As far as the people of Kashmir are concerned, they not united as a single group and each group has their own aspiration with regard to self-determination. The Hindu majority region of Jammu and the Buddhist presence in Ladakh have always wanted to merge with the Indian Union since 1947. However, the Muslim majority of the Kashmir Valley has continued to be in a dilemma on whether they want to merge with Pakistan or chose Independence. Yet, after the removal of Article 370 and the on-going lockdown, even Independence is not possible anymore. In addition, Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Hindus do not trust each other especially after the expulsion of the Kashmiri Pandits by the militants and they accuse the Kashmiri Muslims for helping the militants or turning a blind eye when these atrocities were taking place. The current BJP government in India does not seem to allow a plebiscite or referendum in Kashmir as this is against its "Greater India" political agenda. Besides, some hard-liners in BJP have stated that they would sacrifice thousands of Muslim Kashmiri lives in order to safeguard the territorial integrity of India and further threatened that the Pakistan administered part of Kashmir shall be taken back by force. When this thesis was completed, lockdown in Kashmir is still going on. Therefore, there is not much information about the conditions of the people in the Kashmir Valley. It is worth mentioning that only the Muslim majority in the Kashmir Valley is under the lockdown, while the Jammu and Ladakh region with its Hindu and Buddhist population remain unaffected.

Even after analyzing all possible factors, finding a suitable solution to the Kashmir dispute is not as simple as it may seem because the problem lies with not only the religious hostilities between Muslims and Hindus, but also the political game that

India and Pakistan having been playing in Kashmir and with the Kashmiri people for the past 70 years. Kashmir's immense water resources and geopolitical placement has left it inseparable towards Pakistan's economic ambitions while India, holding on to its unstable cultural Hindu past does not intend to compromise on any political agreement that would result in the loss of Kashmir. Both states have refused to work with each other as Pakistan demands that India should immediately end the lockdown and withdraw the huge number of Indian soldiers while India states that this issue is its internal matter, dealing with the situation unilaterally and that Pakistan has not right to interfere. The main victims of this religious and political tussle are the Kashmiri people. Irrespective of their religious background, they have been used and manipulated by both countries through Islamic insurgencies, Hindu right-wing propaganda and even deceived by their own political leaders that had made secret dealings with the governments of India and Pakistan, betraying the "Kashmiriyat" ideology. Daily border skirmishes between the Pakistani and Indian forces continue despite the lockdown and civilians on both sides continue to be killed and as long as India and Pakistan maintain their political distrust of one and other, keep a hard line military policy towards Kashmir, and let their self-interests and economic gains come first this conflict will not end and the future for Kashmir and its people seems uncertain for the years to come.

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