

The last twenty years have characterized the difficult relationship India and Pakistan have shared since Independence. It is almost impossible to separate Kashmir from this relationship. This period from 1987 to the present has influenced and affected impacted the region then every before, insurgency, violence, terrorism, human rights abuses, economic stagnation, war and global events like the collapse of the Soviet Union and 9/11 have all had an effect in South Asia. While briefly covering history, geo-politics and past rhetoric till 1987, this thesis focuses on the major events that have occurred in Kashmir in the last twenty years and the underlying Indian and Pakistani strategies, which have influenced these events. Consequently the thesis analyses the implications of these events today, and what they portend as we move towards the future. It also pays due attention to changes in the world order, that have affected Kashmir: the significance of the NATO led *War on terror*, in the light of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism cannot be overstated, and the constant changes in the dynamics of the US – India- Pakistan relationship.

The last few years may have seen a reduction in the insurgency, along with overtures made by both countries - CBM's and official peace talks, however a solution has remained elusive. Looking forward, this thesis explains why and how events in the last twenty years, will lead to a solution in the future. It also debates the possibility and time line of a conceivable solution, rooted in a settlement along the LOC (something that India seems to want albeit not yet officially and what Pakistan may agree to). It also analyses the paths towards the future, both countries will have to take to end the violence. Conclusions are drawn from the analyses in order to understand the implications the past will have on the future.