



Crafting Peace in Kashmir: Through A Realist Lens

Verghese Koithara

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The chronic conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir has generated a great deal of scholarly and popular literature. The dominant and prevailing view is that the conflict is essentially beyond solution. This book examines a contrary hypothesis that such a view, though widely held, is unjustified. In this regard the author presents a realist study of the possibilities of bringing peace to Kashmir and compares it with three relevant, protracted and violent conflicts elsewhere in the world.

Verghese Koithara argues cogently that the main difficulty with regard to resolving the conflict in Kashmir lies not in the stakes involved, but in the patterns of attitude and behaviour that have developed over the years. The `structure` of the conflict is actually more capable of being resolved today than is generally believed, maintains the author. Through an analysis of the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and Palestine, he provides a useful perspective on conflict dynamics and how conflict resolution can be more realistically sought through a `peace strategy` rather than a `war strategy`. More specifically, the author:

- Looks at the history and the current context of the India-Pakistan conflict through a lens of political realism.
- Draws relevant parallels between the India-Pakistan conflict and the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and Palestine with regard to both the evolution of the conflicts and peace efforts.
- Presents reasons why a durable peace—based on the Line of Control becoming the settled border and the two parts of Jammu & Kashmir being given parallel and substantial autonomy—can be achieved in today`s conditions.

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