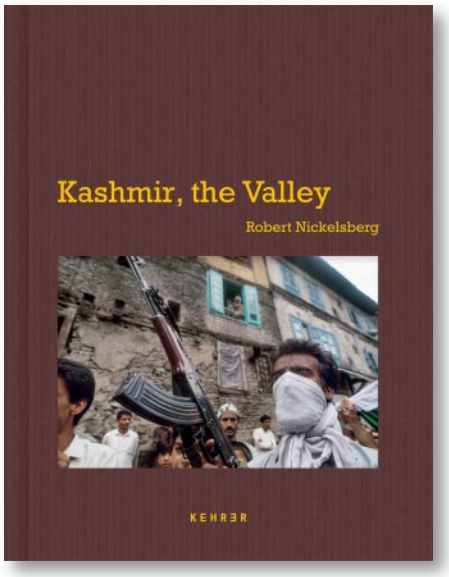
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Robert Nickelsberg
Kashmir, the Valley

Texts by Steve Coll, Robert Nickelsberg, Mirza Waheed
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More than two decades of photographs document the Kashmir conflict and its impact on everyday life

In 1989, as a popular uprising against Indian rule began in Jammu and Kashmir, American photographer Robert Nickelsberg started documenting the unfolding conflict while working as a contract photographer for Time magazine from New Delhi. Over the following twenty-two years, he repeatedly returned to the region, building an extensive visual record of a conflict shaped by the longstanding rivalry between India and Pakistan.

From 1989 to 2011, Nickelsberg captured demonstrations, funerals, military operations, militant groups, religious rituals, elections, displacement and ordinary life. His access extended across the Line of Control into Pakistan-administered territory, allowing him to document the conflict from both sides.

Kashmir, the Valley brings together this long-term body of work, following the conflict through militarization, destruction and displacement while remaining closely attentive to the people living within its consequences. Muslim families, Hindu Pandits, soldiers, local politicians, children and pilgrims inhabit the same visual landscape, where checkpoints, armed searches, mourning and uncertainty become part of everyday experience.

Nickelsberg documented the evolution of the conflict as India and Pakistan developed and adapted their respective strategies, continually testing the limits of confrontation while stopping short of outright war. His photographs reveal the consequences of these shifting policies on the ground. To this day, caught between the competing interests of the two countries, the people of Indian-administered Kashmir remain vulnerable to violence largely beyond their control.

Across more than two decades, Nickelsberg's photographs trace not only political and military upheaval, but the ways in which conflict becomes embedded in the fabric of everyday life. They offer a sustained portrait of Kashmir's people and places, where displacement, loss and uncertainty exist alongside work, worship, family and ordinary routines.

The book is accompanied by essays by Robert Nickelsberg, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Steve Coll, and Kashmiri novelist Mirza Waheed. Together, they bring photographic testimony into dialogue with historical and political context and lived experience from within Kashmir.

Robert Nickelsberg worked as a Time magazine contract photographer for nearly 30 years, specializing in political and cultural change in developing countries. He is the author of *Afghanistan – A Distant War* (Prestel, 2013) and *Afghanistan's Heritage: Restoring Spirit and Stone* (2018). His previous book with Kehrer Verlag, *Legacy of Lies: El Salvador 1981–1984*, was published in 2024 and brought together a collection of black and white images shot for Time magazine during the civil war in El Salvador in the early 1980s.

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Press Images



01_A pro-Pakistan Kashmiri militant, brandishing a Kalashnikov rifle, marches in a demonstration against India, on Pakistan's Independence Day, Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, August 14, 1992. © Robert Nickelsberg



02_Moderate and militant Kashmiri separatists take part in a heated discussion at a mosque, Anantnag, Indian-administered Kashmir, October 8, 1989. © Robert Nickelsberg



03_Indian Army troops stand behind weapons and explosives seized in a neighborhood suspected of harboring Kashmiri separatist militants, Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, October 9, 1991. © Robert Nickelsberg



04_Members of India's Border Security Force, center, position a civilian for identification by a captured militant inside a vehicle, during a neighborhood crackdown on potential insurrectionists in Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, July 28, 1994. © Robert Nickelsberg



05_Dr. Karan Singh, son of the last ruling Maharajah of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, holds a press conference at his family compound in Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, November 1993. He has also urged India to empower Kashmiris. © Robert Nickelsberg



06_A Pakistan Army soldier, left, points to the bottom of a river valley where a Chinese 57mm anti-aircraft gun will take aim at an Indian Army truck convoy 6 kilometers away. The soldier is at the Mumtaz Camp, Northern Areas, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, June 27, 1999. © Robert Nickelsberg



07_Pakistan Army soldiers stand back as they fire a 105mm howitzer shell at Indian Army forces during the Siachen conflict, Siachen Glacier, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, June 1989. © Robert Nickelsberg



08_Mourners grieve the death of assassinated Kashmiri law minister Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, Sogam, Indian-administered Kashmir, September 12, 2002. Lone, a moderate,had been in favor of dialogue with the Indian government, and was reportedly killed by militants allied with Pakistan. © Robert Nickelsberg



09_Indian paramilitary soldiers set off a large explosive charge in a house occupied by three Kashmiri militants, Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, September 24, 2002. © Robert Nickelsberg



10_Pakistan Army soldiers load a 155mm artillery shell before firing on Indian Army positions 10 to 12 kilometers away along the Line of Control at the Khalid Camp, Northern Areas, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, June 25, 1999.
© Robert Nickelsberg



11_A Kashmiri man suffering from temporary eyesight loss is treated by pir Munshi Syed Hussain Kazmi with prayers and curative Koranic verses, Srinagar,Indian-administered Kashmir, January 24, 2008. © Robert Nickelsberg



12_A 21-year-old Kashmiri male who has thrown stones at Indian security forces stands outside Jama Masjid, Kashmir's main mosque, Srinagar, Indian-administered Kashmir, October 15, 2011. © Robert Nickelsberg