



The Pathan Unarmed (World Anthropology)

Mukulika Banerjee

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The Pukhtun (Pathan) of the North West Frontier are regarded as a warrior people. Yet in the inter-war years there arose a Muslim movement, the Khudai Khidmatgar (Servants of God), which adopted military forms of organizations and dress, but which also drew its inspiration from Gandhian principles of non-violent action and was dedicated to an Indian nationalism rather than communal separatism. Virtually erased from the national historiography of post-partition Pakistan, where they now reside, the ageing veterans of the movement are still highly respected by younger Pukhtun. This is an account of rank and file members of the Khudai Khidmatgar, describing why they joined, what they did, and how they perceived the ethics and aims of the movement. It attempts to answer the questions of how notoriously violent Pukhtun were converted to an ethic of non-violence. It finds the answer rooted in the transformation of older social structures, Islamic revisionism and the redefinition of the traditional code of honour. India: OUP; Pakistan: OUP Series Editors: Wendy James & N.J. Allen



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