



The Frontier Crimes Regulation

A History in Documents

Edited by Robert Nichols

Readership / Level

The volume will appeal to academics across multiple disciplines, including history, political science, anthropology, international relations, post-colonial studies, and legal studies. A broad public audience will also be interested in the subject. Journalists, members of civil society organizations, and politically aware citizens will gain new knowledge of an issue still relevant today.

Description

In the 1840s, as British Indian colonial authorities displaced the Sikh government in the Punjab districts bordering Afghanistan, they attempted to replicate a pattern of rule that evolved from their previous military occupations of the north Indian regions. Certain 'structures of power' and an 'ideology of authority' shaped a hierarchical relationship between the colonial state and regional societies. A crucial concern was to establish a law and order regime that minimized conflict and legitimated British authority. Across British India, through the implementation of police, judicial, and ideological structures, authorities asserted claims of colonial pre-eminence and a monopoly over coercive power.

This volume contains primary source documents—correspondence and regulations—related to the writing of the Punjab Frontier Crimes Regulation of 1887 for what was to become the British North-West Frontier Province and ensuing years of debate over the need for additional revisions. They document the complex colonial adaptation of legal codes and levers of power to control what were seen as archaic but enduring social, moral, and cultural norms based on Pashtun customary social and devotional practices. Throughout this history, alternative voices disputed any claims to colonial legal or moral hegemony. Features of this history, including the latest version of the Frontier Crimes Regulation, continued into the early twenty-first century as active, highly debated features of state administrative policies.

In the years after September 11, 2001, a period of turmoil in Afghanistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, such debates were urgently continued, even as power relations meant they were less urgently acted upon.

About the Author / Editor

Robert Nichols is Professor of History at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, USA. He teaches South Asian and Indian Ocean history and has researched regional and interregional histories of the early modern and modern periods. His recent publications, including articles and chapters in edited volumes, have included work on the Pashtun communities of Pakistan and Afghanistan. He is the author of *A History of Pashtun Migration, 1775–2006* (2008) and *Settling the Frontier: Land, Law and Society in the Peshawar Valley, 1500–1900* (2001), and has edited *Colonial Reports on Pakistan's Frontier Tribal Areas* (2005).