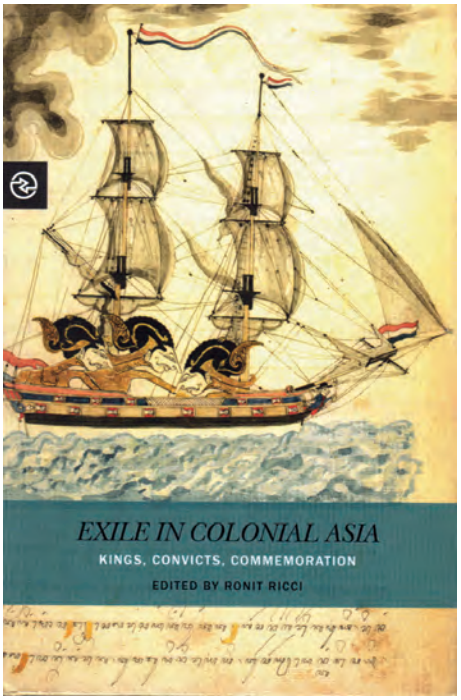
the other two of Weber's three types of authority – in northern Thailand. This might be due to such factors as the end of the Chiang Mai monarchy, the region's geographic and cultural distance from Bangkok, the relative lack of economic development, the high degree of ethnic diversity, and the fact that the contiguous regions in Myanmar and Laos have also been relatively freer from state authority, as James Scott argued in his provocative 2009 book, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*.

Nevertheless, this is a strong collection of essays. It avoids the pitfalls of many edited volumes by maintaining a strict thematic coherence throughout its eight essays. There are few incidences of repetition of themes. Most of the contributors have spent much of their careers working in this area so the quality of the essays is high. The volume will make a valuable contribution to the field of Thai Buddhist studies.

Patrick Jory

Exile in Colonial Asia: Kings, Convicts, Commemoration, edited by Ronit Ricci. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-8248-5374-7. US$68.00.[2]



Exile in Colonial Asia is a compact book, but it is a large book in its treatment of forced migration, prisoner resettlement, and exile across the globe from East Asia to Africa. The ten essays cover people up and down the social hierarchy: rulers (kings, princes, sultans); pretenders to thrones; convicts; and a few pirates and smugglers. The life of a slave might be better than that of a prince, and a prince one day might be a rebel the next, and soon after on a ship to another part of the world. Commemoration in the subtitle means memory. To restore lives lost to the historical record, the authors pick their way through grudging source material – letters, notes, trading company documents, and lists. It is amazing what a detective-author can resurrect from the dry lists of people and objects buried in archival records.

In the period covered by the book the world was mapped not by countries, but by empires: Portuguese, Dutch, British, French, Belgian and Italian. Colonial authorities and trading companies like the Dutch East India Company (VOC), a quasi-state, removed people from their homelands and exiled them to foreign lands. The globe is criss-crossed with the movements of these people,

[2] This review originally appeared on the New Mandala website on 4 October 2017.

shown on maps drawn by Robert Cribb. Exile was not a peculiarly Western imperialist measure. Indigenous political systems – the Chinese and the Vietnamese, among others – also used exile and prison colonies to expand their territories. Not all the people sent into exile became alienated in their new surroundings. Some adapted by converting to a new religion, or by seizing opportunities in commerce or agriculture.

From ports in the Indonesian archipelago the VOC transported prisoners to the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa. From the French colonies in Indochina 600 prisoners were sent to Gabon on the west coast of Africa and the Congo. The French also sent prisoners from Indochina to French Guiana, New Caledonia, Madagascar, Martinique and Guadeloupe. High-level political prisoners in the French colonies went to Algeria, Tahiti and the Marquesas. The British sent Indian convicts to the Andaman Islands, which became a penal colony after the Great Indian Revolt of 1857-58. Rebels against British rule in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) were sent to Mauritius.

Prisoners built and fed European empires. Convicts laboured as brick and tile makers, blacksmiths, boatmen, cart drivers and grass cutters, or were engaged in experimental industry and agriculture. Convicts worked in tin mines in Burma, and in Mauritius in silk and cotton production and the cultivation of sugar and coffee.

This historical study on Asia is one of the few that sees fit to include Australia, in this case to illustrate a place that was both colony and penal settlement. In Asia proper, we find ourselves in India, Sri Lanka, Java, Singapore, the Malay world, Vietnam and Burma. Siam is not among the case studies, because it was not colonised, but when the King of Siam visited Java in the early 1870s he saw what might become of him if the British and French decided to take away his crown and carve up his realm. He observed the Sultan of Jogjakarta (Yogyakarta) being marched around and guarded by troops. The Javanese sultan displayed the paraphernalia of royalty, but he was a prisoner in a gilded cage, dethroned and demoted within his own country. Native rulers could be packed off to other outposts of empire. Amangkurat III was exiled from Java to Ceylon. The last King of Kandy in Ceylon was sent to Madras (Chennai). Maharaj Singh was banished from the Punjab, where he was considered a threat to colonial consolidation, and sent to Singapore. Sultan Hamengkubuwana II of Jogjakarta was exiled to Penang after he opposed the British takeover of Java in 1811. Some exiles became submissive, some were moderate; some became militant, some were already militant.

The book is not sentimental, but exile, banishment, and forced migration are melancholy topics. I came away empathetic not only with the individuals affected by dire circumstance, but also with the authors' struggles to salvage memories of those uprooted and sent away. Exiles pined for home, and if they were rulers they dreamed of regaining their thrones. Several authors discuss the emotional pain in the exiled life of their subjects. Anand Yang refers to his chapter as a meditation, and Ronit Ricci's story of the return to Batavia (Jakarta) of Amangkurat III's remains after his death in Ceylon is told with sorrow.

The final essay by Penny Edwards is a fitting end, if not a conclusion, to the volume. Prince Myngoon, the son of a modernising Burmese king in the mid-19th century, was an embodiment of the Burmese monarchy the British had just eradicated. Edwards calls him a trickster, who outwitted the British as he darted from Rangoon (Yangon)

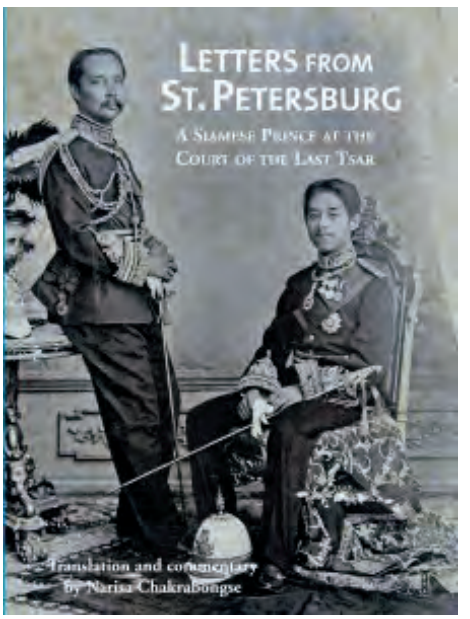
to Pondicherry to Benares (Varanasi) to Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). The prince was a subversive figure able to elude colonial administrators trying to keep track of him. His story is shaped by subterfuge that challenged colonial surveillance. Colonial power had its limits.

The book is not divided into sections, a bold decision by the editor assisted by Maria Myutel. Cross references cite other essays within the volume to make comparisons and contrasts, but not in a false or jarring way. The book began life as a workshop, that familiar factory of academic production, and the authors apparently arrived soon enough at a consensus about what to discuss. Clare Anderson's introduction is a masterful account of exile as a global phenomenon that ties the essays together, and the book's striking cover depicts wayang figures on a Dutch ship that convey movement, one of the volume's themes. It is no surprise that the International Convention of Asian Scholars this year awarded *Exile in Colonial Asia* an accolade for the best edited volume.

Readers of this book cannot fail to reflect on today's accounts of refugees forced from their homelands by repression and civil war. History is present knowledge, and each author in his or her essay reaffirms human possibility in an inhumane world.

Craig J. Reynolds

Letters from St. Petersburg: A Siamese Prince at the Court of the Last Tsar. Translation and commentary by Narisa Chakrabongse. Bangkok: River Books, 2017. ISBN: 978 616 7339 58 0. 1,200 Baht.



Narisa Chakrabongse's translation of nearly 300 missives in *Letters from St. Petersburg* offers a treasure trove for historians of Thailand who seek insights into the worldviews and affective lives of Prince Chakrabongse and King Chulalongkorn. Tracing the arc of the relationship between a father and a son, the letters begin with the thirteen year-old prince's departure for London in 1896 and end with the king's death in 1910. They cover the prince's educational journey, experiences in the Corps des Pages and the military academy in Russia, interactions with the Tsar and other European royals, return to Siam after his "scandalous" marriage, and his quiet reconciliation with the king. Prince Chakrabongse, born in 1883 to King Chulalongkorn and Queen Saowapha, was the full brother of the heir to the throne, Prince Vajiravudh. His position as a high-ranking prince and one of his father's favorites charge their communication with the promise of familial intimacy.

The volume's compiler and translator, Narisa Chakrabongse, is the granddaughter