Ronit Ricci (ed.)

Exile in Colonial Asia: Kings, Convicts, Commemoration. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016, vii + 294 pp. ISBN 97880824853747. Price: USD 68.00 (hardback).

The origins of *Exile in Colonial Asia* lie in a workshop that was held in July 2013 at ANU in Canberra. In the book's first pages, Robert Cribb's maps already depict the British, French, and Dutch routes by which people were forcibly moved over large distances and the places where royal exiles in colonial empires were brought. This geography presents the wide array of topics, places, and themes of the book, as editor Ronit Ricci further explores in her introduction to the volume. Ricci and several other authors in the volume also point to the fact that colonial powers did not invent exile and banishment; these were policy measures already set in place by precolonial polities in Asia. The ability of colonial powers to employ the different spaces in their realm as destination, however, did constitute a new element. Obviously the usage of the term exile brings its own challenges, as one could wonder whether enslaved people brought from Asia to the Cape of Good Hope would consider themselves or would be considered exiles. The term does seem to apply more to members of indigenous elites that opposed colonial rule or were considered an obstacle to the plans of the colonial powers.

Besides several chapters that give an overview of the policies of the British and the French, ranging from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries and covering Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, and dealing with the early phase of the quasi-state trading companies and the colonial states that followed, the volume has some wonderful chapters on the exile of Sri Vikrama Rajasinha, the last king of Kandy by Robert Aldrich (chapter 2) and the different places of exile of sultan Hamengkubuwana II by Sri Margana (chapter 5). These high level exiles were closely monitored, leading to a paper trail that provides historians with archival material to read along or against the grain. As Margana shows, indigenous sources (if available) such as the Babad Mangkudiningratan open up the possibility to encounter the perspective of the exiled party, providing an important layer to the story. The two chapters together with the stories of the elusive prince Myngoon of Burma by Penny Edwards and Bhai Maharaj Singh in Singapore by Anand A. Yang almost constitute a subsection within the volume and might have been grouped together.

On the other end of the spectrum of people forcibly transported over large distances were the enslaved Asians, which Jean Gelman Taylor addresses in her chapter on the Cape of Good Hope. Using a variety of documents such as testaments and inventories, Taylor tries to trace the trajectories and sometimes social mobility of enslaved Asians, combining European and Asian perspec-

tives, and bringing out the individuality of the people involved. That is a common feature in many of the chapters. The authors succeed in depicting their protagonists as people who, sometimes in very dire circumstances, try to retain some agency. This even applies to the Bandanese in the chapter by Timo Kaartinen. After having fled the massacre and the depopulation of the Banda-islands in 1621, the villages of Banda Eli and Banda Elat in the Kei-islands refuse to see themselves as exiled, and instead opt for more neutral ways to commemorate their journey from Banda.

It is clear that *Exiles in Colonial Asia* is a fine example of current scholarship on colonial empires working with concepts of migration, networks, and exile. Hopefully, it will inspire further research, for instance on the relation between these exiles and their new host communities. Ronit Ricci's own chapter on the Sri Lankan Malay points down that avenue of investigation.

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