A Global History of Exile in Asia, c. 1700–1900

Clare Anderson

This chapter explores banishment, exile, and penal transportation within and between South and Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean during the period circa 1700–1900.¹ Banishment and exile were important elements of the penal repertoire of precolonial states and polities, with prisoners cast out of their home district or city and refused the right of return. From the end of the eighteenth century, as the East India Company monopolized trade and so expanded its legal authority across large areas of India, Burma, and the Malay Peninsula, and the British Crown colonized islands including Ceylon, Labuan, and Mauritius, the British continued to use such punishments, but they altered their character in significant ways. Like previous rulers, they removed political prisoners from areas under their control, but rather than refusing them the right of return, they confined them in forts, barracks, and camps or shipped them to distant locations. Coalescing with the confinement and transportation of these political prisoners was perhaps the most significant British penal innovation of all in Asia and the Indian Ocean: the establishment of overseas penal settlements and colonies for ordinary criminal offenders. Convicts were transported to and from locations across India, the Bay of Bengal, and beyond, where they were put to forced work for life or a term of years. In this way, the banishment of political prisoners became intertwined with the flow of ordinary convicts into penal transportation and hard labor.

This chapter opens with an examination of continuity and change in the precolonial and colonial use of banishment, specifying in particular the way in which the British invoked their understanding of the importance of culture and religion in India in order to create what they viewed as a peculiarly deterrent new punishment: transportation. I move on to argue that transportation was more than a penal sanction, though, and that it underpinned a larger imperial agenda of forced migration and labor extraction for the

purpose of colonization and frontier expansion. Within this broad penal, social, and economic framework, the foci of my argument are on some unintended consequences of transportation as well as on how exiled, banished, and transported people experienced the geographical, religious, and cultural dislocations that were perceived as so important for their effective punishment. Necessarily, then, my account is located both within and beyond Asia and the history of punishment, for I seek to bring together the penal history of exile, banishment, and transportation with a larger global history of cultural production, subaltern experience, and coerced labor. In this respect, my underlying contention is that exile in Asia can be understood only through an appreciation of the inter- and transcolonial networks of which the continent was a part.

Before I begin, it is valuable to note who constituted these flows of “political” and “criminal” convicts, the large majority of whom were men, and to define the geographical scope of the chapter. The convicts whom I refer to as “political” were usually elite rebels, and the British generally referred to them either by name or by community. “Criminal” convicts were transported for ordinary offenses. Though political offenders constituted only a small minority of overall transportees, the lines between who was a “political” and who was a “criminal” convict were sometimes blurred. This was because elites were often tried in specially constituted or summary courts, but peasant rebels usually appeared before ordinary criminal judges, and sentences of banishment or penal transportation were awarded to them without explicit reference to what we might view as their “political” crimes. In addition, after removal to penal settlements and colonies, convict treatment hinged on status rather than offense. Social elites were usually lodged separately and exempted from hard labor, while peasant rebels were accommodated and worked together with ordinary convicts. For the small minority of female convicts in the settlements and colonies (never more than 10 percent), gender trumped altogether crime and status in organization and management. In transportation, subaltern rebels and women alike were, in many ways, rendered politically and socially invisible.²

As for their crimes, ordinary convicts were predominantly convicted of murder, *dacoity* (gang robbery), or violence against the person and were sentenced to terms of seven or fourteen years or life. According to the regulations, any Indian prisoner, including those serving sentences of imprisonment, could apply for the commutation of his sentence to transportation, and a few did just that. There was, then, some room for agency and maneuver, even in the most unpromising of circumstances.³ In terms of where they were sent, Indian convicts were transported to penal settlements and colonies including in the Andaman Islands; Bencoolen; Amboyna; Arakan and Tenasserim

(Burma); Singapore, Penang, and Malacca (Straits Settlements); and farther afield to Aden and Mauritius. Chinese, Malay, and Indians from the Straits Settlements, Burma, and Hong Kong were transported to the Andamans, Labuan, or mainland Indian jails. Overseas transportation operated multidirectionally, then, and with its networking of East India Company and British Crown (and occasionally other European) territories, it also connected Asia to a much larger imperial agenda of colonization and expansion.

BANISHMENT, IMPRISONMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION

In those areas of precolonial South Asia that later constituted Britain's Indian Empire and now form a significant part of the Indian republic, banishment and exile were viewed as particularly useful punishments for high-caste Hindu Brahmins. This was because, for cultural and religious reasons, their flogging or execution was taboo. Thus punishments included confinement within the limits of a city or subjection to public exposure, seated backward on a donkey, with a blackened face.⁴ As it gradually expanded its territorial control during the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries, the East India Company continued to use banishment, expelling offenders from their homes, sometimes keeping them in forts, and forbidding them to return. As in precolonial regimes, the British saw it as especially useful for high-caste offenders, the harsh punishment of whom risked social approbation.⁵ Increasingly, as its jail building program gained momentum during the first half of the nineteenth century, Company courts sentenced criminals to imprisonment in banishment, and ordered prisoners to large central jails like Alipore, in the suburbs of Calcutta. Banishment was also used to punish prisoners for further offenses committed in jail, and men and women who became riotous or refractory could be sent to prisons in other districts. The Indian presidencies stretched across such huge distances that as well as attempting to break links with family and community outside the jail walls, important elements of this punishment were the linguistic and other cultural crossings of removal and confinement over large distances, including in social association but also in food, climate, clothing, religion, and religious practice.⁶

The East India Company also sometimes used banishment as a means of extracting labor from jail inmates, for it saw work as a means of both reforming prisoners and compensating the state for their crimes. Indeed, sentences of simple imprisonment—that is to say, without labor—were rare. As early as 1797, the governor of Bombay wrote that hard labor restrained prisoners from “habits of idleness and dissipation” and reduced the strain on the public purse that incarceration implied.⁷ For the next three decades those

male prisoners fit to work were employed in three ways: on the station roads, on the district roads, or on the main roads, notably by the mid-1830s the New Delhi-to-Calcutta trunk road. As the Bengal Committee of Convict Labour put it in 1837, it was of the utmost importance to trade and the movement of troops that roads were kept open and in a good state of repair.⁸ In Bengal, in 1838, a staggering average of thirteen thousand prisoners was employed in this way.⁹ Some district officers reported that the geographical removal associated with working on the roads was greatly disliked by inmates. As one East India Company surgeon wrote in 1836, "Being sent to the New Road they consider a banishment and have the utmost abhorrence of it."¹⁰ Despite its apparent value as a deterrent, in 1838, the Prison Discipline Committee (which was by then considering larger questions of imprisonment and transportation) recommended an end to road labor. This ought to have closed off one main stream of subcontinental banishment, though in practice prisoners continued to work outdoors.¹¹ Colonial administrators in India were far more attached to this important source of labor exploitation than were their counterparts in Britain. There, outdoor work was gradually abolished on the grounds that truly penal labor ought to promote self-reflection and rehabilitation rather than underpin productivity or profit. Separate, cellular confinement and the turning of the crank handle or treadmill were, therefore, ideal types of penal work. The prolonged employment of Indian prisoners on the roads was an important line of distinction in this respect, with colonial labor preferences overriding metropolitan ideas about the purpose and ideal practice of incarceration. Indeed, as Satadru Sen has shown in a study of the penal colony in the Andaman Islands during the second half of the nineteenth century, convict labor was linked to broader attempts to mold Indians into rational, useful, and orderly political subjects. But there was a fundamental contradiction here, for productive forms of work were supposed to both demean *and* reform convicts.¹² It was this contradiction that the British were never able to resolve.

Though it clearly changed the nature of precolonial banishment, to incorporate incarceration and outdoor public works labor, without doubt the East India Company's greatest penal innovation was the introduction of convict transportation. This had the same intent as overland banishment with respect to physical removal and displacement, but because it necessitated travel overseas, which they believed to be culturally degrading, the British perceived it as a particularly deterrent punishment in the Indian context. In its deliberations of 1837–1838, the Prison Discipline Committee concluded that the large majority of Hindus had a horror of sea journeys, over what they called the *kala pani* (black waters), because their common chaining and sharing of cooking pots, water pumps, and latrines compromised their caste.

Thus the actual journey into transportation was a key part of the entire punishment.¹³ Despite these closely held views, it is important to appreciate that although in India some convicts were outcaste by the voyage over the *kala pani*, this was not always the case (or they could perform particular ceremonies to wipe out the effects of it), and so there was never universal antipathy to it. There was dissent even within the deliberations of the Prison Discipline Committee, when official witnesses made distinctions between the various attitudes of city dwellers, seafarers, high-caste Hindus, low-caste Hindus, and Muslims to crossing the ocean.¹⁴

Besides the sea journey, the other main difference between banishment and transportation was the latter's explicit connection with the East India Company's desire to secure a cheap and malleable labor force for the purpose of territorial expansion. In this respect, transportation was something more than punishment or forced labor, for it constituted a form of coerced migration. Convicts were highly mobile, convict flows were often circulatory, and Asian penal settlements and colonies were interconnected in significant ways to the timeframe and geography of other forms of bondage, including enslavement, servitude, and indenture.¹⁵ There were significant parallels also between British and other European colonial powers, and important comparisons to be made, with respect to the penal and labor intentions of transportation in Asia and its geographically dynamic and networked character. Earlier, the Dutch East India Company had transported considerable numbers of convicts between the East Indies and the Cape of Good Hope (1602–1799).¹⁶ Portugal transported convicts between its Indian and African colonies, including Goa and Mozambique, over a long period from the eighteenth to the twentieth century.¹⁷ Following an early disaster in the establishment of a penal colony in French Guiana, in the late eighteenth century, when most of the convicts died of fevers and other diseases, *bagnards* (convicts) were transported from France to Guiana and *Communards* (convicted in the wake of the uprising of the Paris Commune in 1871) to the Pacific colony of New Caledonia. Receiving convicts from French colonies in Africa and Indochina, French Guiana remained open until 1952.¹⁸ Other Asian polities also incorporated penal transportation into their judicial process. Mid-Qing China used convict exile for colonization purposes from the mid-eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Convicts were moved over huge overland distances.¹⁹ Feudal Japan exiled prisoners offshore, and when it passed a new penal code in 1880, the Meiji Restoration systematized island *tokei* (servitude) and *rukei* (exile), to set up penal colonies in newly secured northern Hokkaido.²⁰ But beyond these *parallel practices* was the *intertwining* of empires. This was particularly the case in those parts of Southeast Asia that were transferred between Dutch and

British rule at the turn of the nineteenth century. In Ceylon, for example, immediately after the British takeover, sentences of banishment were passed under Dutch law.²¹ In the western Indian Ocean in the first half of the nineteenth century, the British colonial state even sent transported Indian convicts from South Asia on to Madagascar, their subsequent servitude constituting part of British diplomatic negotiations with the Merina empire.²²

The East India Company banished or transported a small number of convicts for treason, rebellion, and other political crimes, though in sum never more than 5 percent of the total. The British faced endemic resistance to their colonization of South Asia, and they used banishment and penal transportation as a symbol of their political power, as a warning against revolt, and as a means of punishing rebels. Such convicts were sometimes sentenced by courts-martial and included various individuals and communities. Following the ceding of Malabar to the East India Company in 1792, leaders of the Poligar rebellion of 1799–1802 were, for instance, banished from their home districts²³ or sent to Penang. All were permitted to return home in 1814, though initially those returning from overseas remained banished from the districts of Coimbatore, Tinnevelly, and Madura and were only later allowed to return to what the superintendent of police in the Madras Presidency described as “their country.”²⁴ In the aftermath of the Anglo-Sikh wars of the 1840s, Sikh officers and their followers were sent long distances, including to Allahabad jail, Calcutta’s Fort William, and Benares’ Fort Chunar. They were also transported to the Straits Settlements and Burma.²⁵ There are many other such examples. The founding convicts of the Andamans settlement in 1858 were mutineer sepoy (soldiers) and rebels, sentenced to transportation by special tribunal for offenses committed during the Great Indian Revolt of 1857–1858.²⁶ They were followed in the 1860s by Wahabis (at the time called Muslim “fanatics”), in the 1870s by Kukas (Namdhari noncooperation movement), and beyond the scope of this chapter, in the early twentieth century by Mapilahs from Kerala and Indian nationalists. We might consider all of them political prisoners or freedom fighters.²⁷ There is evidence that for at least some of these convicts transportation was chosen over execution because it was seen as a more severe punishment. Wahabi Maulana Muhammad Ja’far Thanasari, who was transported to the Andamans in 1866 for conspiring to smuggle funds to Afghan mujahideen,²⁸ served nearly eighteen years in the colony and subsequently wrote a quite lengthy autobiography.²⁹ He recalled that the judge had addressed him thus:

You seem to be very eager to get hanged and consider it as martyrdom.

Therefore, the government will not give you the punishment that you are

looking forward to. Your capital punishment has been converted into exile for life.³⁰

The best-known exiles were undoubtedly members of deposed royal families who, like the rulers and monarchs discussed by Aldrich, Margana, Paterson, and Ricci in this volume (chapters 2, 5, 9, and 4, respectively), were sent away from their home districts and confined in colonial towns, islands, and enclaves. Wajid Ali Shah, the deposed king of Awadh, was detained in Garden Reach in Calcutta from 1856 to 1859, for example. The Mughal emperor of Delhi and his entourage were sent to Rangoon in the aftermath of 1857–1858, and the Nawab of Farrukhabad was exiled in Aden in 1859.³¹ Following the Anglo-Manipur War (Assam), in 1871 members of the Manipuri royal family were shipped to the Andamans, where they were kept separately from the transportation convicts in the cool climes of Mount Harriet. In 1877, Sultan Abdullah of Perak was deposed and exiled in the Seychelles after he was accused of involvement in the murder of British resident James Birch.³² King Thibaw and Queen Supayalat were forced into exile in South India at the end of the third Anglo-Burmese war (1885).

Other British colonial (as opposed to East India Company or Indian Empire) territories became imbricated in this regional network of political, aristocratic punishment. Groups of Kandyan rebels were, for example, sent from Ceylon to Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Vellore in the Madras Presidency, and to the island of Mauritius, after the Great Rebellion of 1817–1818. Some were directed to be removed in what Governor Robert Brownrigg described as “the public interests of this island,” some had been sentenced to banishment in courts of law, and some had had sentences of execution commuted to banishment.³³ Another group of a dozen Kandyans was sent to Mauritius in 1823, each convicted of high treason.³⁴ As I have argued elsewhere, “Sentences of transportation and banishment were often viewed as more appropriate than capital punishment because they ruptured networks of political ‘intrigue’ without risking the elevation of rebels to heroic status.”³⁵

The British transported other rebels overseas too, but many of them have been hidden from history, for they were convicted under *ordinary* criminal law. They were usually from peasant or tribal (*adivasi*, or indigenous) communities. Unlike all the social elites mentioned previously, these convicts were not at the time always described as “political” offenders. However, their recorded offenses can be mapped against the district in which they were convicted to produce a startling portrait of the widespread penal transportation of subaltern rebels. Tribal Khonds from central Orissa in the Bengal Presidency were transported to Moulmein after military campaigns against their rebellion in 1835, for example.³⁶ Some of the first transportation

convicts to Mauritius (1815) were rebels from the tribal areas of Midnapur, another Bengal district that was in open revolt against the British, during the Chuar Rebellion (1797–1800) and Naik Revolt (1806–1816). Most were convicted not of political offenses per se, but of crimes such as violence, joining bandit groups, or armed extortion; some had been in prison for a decade before they were embarked across the Indian Ocean.³⁷ Another good example of the flow of rebels into transportation was the shipment of Santals, India's largest tribal group, to Akyab in the aftermath of their 1855 *hul* (rebellion).³⁸ But for all these groups, despite the context of their transportation, unlike their high-status compatriots, these convicts were ordinary men and women who were treated no differently from other convicts, but with them became absorbed into the general body of convict workers.

The transportation regime was underpinned by the use of convicts as labor at the frontiers of empire, and officials stressed continually the public advantages of transportation. For this reason, rather than the judicial departments of the Indian presidencies, it was the penal settlements themselves that drove supply, and they became anxious about interruptions to it.³⁹ Once the immediate needs of newly settled territories had been met, with land cleared and basic infrastructure established, convicts were sent to other locations, and eventually the character of their work expanded to include digging ditches, building and repairing roads and bridges, working in sawmills, with kilns, and on looms, and laboring as brass founders, brick and tile makers, servants, grooms, blacksmiths, boatmen, cart drivers, or grass cutters. Convicts were also engaged in experimental industry and agriculture, including, in Burma, tin mining, and in Mauritius, silk and cotton production and sugar and coffee cultivation.⁴⁰ Women—never more than 10 percent of the total number of convicts—were largely kept at “domestic” work in the barracks. This inattention to convict women’s status in the allocation of work was part of a larger colonial “de-casteing” of women, though it shared much with comparable convict regimes in the convict colonies of Australia, with respect to the production of a gendered distinction between the nature of work and domesticity in “public” and “private” space.⁴¹

For men, class-based systems operated in the penal settlements and colonies through the threat of punishment and the promise of reward, and convicts were able to rise through the ranks until they enjoyed relative freedom. Sixth-class “incorrigible” convicts were kept in a chain gang, and first-class convicts were employed as overseers (*tindals*), so that eventually prisoners became their own warders. A convict’s goal was the acquisition of a ticket of leave, with permission to live outside the barracks and take paid employment.⁴² In early Bencoolen, ticket-of-leave convicts were even given land, seeds, livestock, and their families the right of inheritance.⁴³ Such incentives

coexisted with the threat of severe punishment. I have noted elsewhere that convict resistance was endemic in all penal settlements and colonies, and it included feigning sickness, downing tools, desertion, attacks on overseers, and escape. Convicts could be punished with demotion down the penal classes, or subjection to fetters, flogging, imprisonment, execution, or retransportation to either Robben Island in the Cape of Good Hope, or even the Australian penal colony at Van Diemen's Land.⁴⁴ This serves to underline the relationship between Indian Ocean penal settlements and other spaces of confinement and punishment, like the jail, the road gang, or the gallows, and their place within a larger geography of empire and convict transportation.

Although some company officials believed that transportation destroyed caste, somewhat in contradistinction, it is evident that administrators used it as a basis to organize the penal settlements. Administrators sought *mehtas* (sweepers), *dhobis* (washermen), and barbers from among convicts of the relevant caste. In this way, high-caste convicts were able to avoid particular types of "degrading" work. We see this from an example dated August 1835, when Goberdhone Baboo, a Bengali convict who had been shipped from Calcutta to Tenasserim (Burma) for a seven-year term in December 1834, petitioned Calcutta's supreme court. Begging for the removal of his fetters and a transfer to either Singapore or Penang, he wrote:

I am suffering the troubles and labours as follows.

From 6 O[']Clock in the morning till 9 I labour by taking one and half mounds of stone upon my head and go and come about 3 miles with the same every day, and sometimes by taking woods &c.

The time for my eating only half an hour after the 9. Again after half past nine I engage in the above several works by the order of the head man of the jail till half past 4—Sometimes I am forced by the head man to clear the dirties of the place Moarny. Sometimes if the merchants inhabitants of the place require me and other prisoners the head man of the jail orders me and them immediately to accompany them who pays the head man of the jail for my labour and other prisoners and take work from me and others more than the others.

I engage in the above labours with iron chain on my legs and at the night when I lay in bed with a large iron chain put and bind my legs with other prisoners whereupon I am unable to turn my back on my side and no order to go into privy at the night should I feel unwell myself, I sheet [shit] in the bed and clear the dirty myself in the next morning.⁴⁵

The petition was enclosed in a further appeal from his father, Chadiloll Baboo, from which it emerged that Goberdhone was a wealthy man from

the Burra Bazaar neighborhood of Calcutta and "a higher class of people amongst the Hindoo nation." If his living and working conditions did not change, his father pleaded, his son would be dead within six months.⁴⁶ The supreme court referred the petition to the Bengal judicial department; if the claims were true, it said, they would take action to alleviate the man's condition. When the court contacted the Burmese authorities, they, however, dismissed it, writing that this convict in fact worked far less than other convicts and was one of the healthiest men in the jail.⁴⁷ The petition perhaps reveals something of one high-caste man's feelings about some of the hardships and indignities of transportation and hard labor. But the response to it suggests that transportation convicts were subject to differential treatment on status grounds.

The exchange of letters regarding just one of many tens of thousands of transportees also throws into sharp relief one of the problems facing penal administrators in colonial Asia: how to equalize punishment between prisoners from a wide range of social backgrounds, especially those of high caste. In short, if high-caste Hindus felt the deprivations of transportation more acutely than those of the lower castes, should they be made subject to the same treatment, or was transportation in and of itself a severe penal sanction? As one sessions judge put it during the Prison Discipline Committee's consultations in the 1830s, high-caste prisoners suffered a "double punishment . . . by being placed in compulsory juxtaposition with persons who, and things which, are his abomination."⁴⁸ This issue also blew up regarding the treatment of Anglo-Indian (Eurasian) convicts transported from India to Southeast Asia during the first half of the nineteenth century. In the Tenasserim Provinces, in 1844, a new commissioner, George Broadfoot, introduced measures that put them to the same work, and issued them with the same clothing and rations, as Indians. In numerous petitions to the government, these convicts complained of what they saw as a gross injustice, and it was not long before the measures were rescinded and the separation of Indian and Anglo-Indian convicts was once again enforced.⁴⁹ As it was, white convicts convicted in South Asia (mainly court-martialed soldiers) were sent not to the Indian penal settlements of Southeast Asia but to mainly white Australia. Race, then, was also an organizing principle in India's penal settlements, as well as in Britain's larger carceral empire.⁵⁰

Beyond caste and race, the politics of "offense for which transported" was relevant to penal management. As I described earlier, in many penal settlements and colonies, political convicts were subject to quite distinct treatment. The Kandyans transported to Mauritius in 1818 lived at quite a distance from the convict headquarters at Grand River, in a place called Powder Mills, and some of the Bengal transportation convicts even worked

as their servants. Indeed, the instructions issued to William Stewart, the overseer who accompanied them into exile and then took charge of them, noted, "[I]t is expected that you will conduct yourself towards the Prisoners, with as much humanity, gentleness, and condescension to their wants, under circumstances foreign to their established habits, as lies in your power."⁵¹ They directed him to supply the Kandians with the same kind of food that they had eaten in Ceylon, as well as betel leaf and tobacco, and to attend to their medical needs. Though Stewart himself was fluent in Singhalese, the government also employed an interpreter.

Such special treatment does not mean that the prisoners did not feel confined or suffer from the deprivations of their situation. Indeed, the Kandians were prolific petitioners of the Ceylon, Mauritius, and Madras Presidency governments. One collective petition in 1820 pleaded,

[W]e are placed in a situation the most trying and distressing, imprisoned in a country where we do not understand the language of the people, deprived of our wives and children, and our property—when we cast a melancholy glance on the number of dreary years of a miserable existence that are perceptibly before us, we desire to die.⁵²

In another example, from 1828, one of the Kandyan exiles, Mallendeya Ganettaya, petitioned Governor William Nicolay in a vernacular that the government translator represented thus:

The government has dignified me with the Title of "Raja," or "King"—and made me a Prisoner—but no Allowance whatever equal to my high title has been conferred on me, and they will not allow me even to return back to my native country—therefore I hope your Excellency will give me the value of a good piece of Cloth, and a Handkerchief, which I beg for the sake of the great King of England and the Seven Churches.⁵³

Money and other allowances loomed large in such pleas. Indeed, after numerous Kandyan complaints about their inability to marry off their daughters in Madras (in Tanjore), the British even agreed to fund their lavish weddings.⁵⁴

Sikhs transported in the aftermath of the Anglo-Sikh wars in the 1840s were not put to hard labor in the Straits Settlements and Burma, either. "Saint soldier" Bhai Maharaj Singh and his disciple Khurruck Sing lived quite separately in Singapore, apparently revered by many ordinary convicts and townspeople.⁵⁵ One Sikh rebel, Narain Singh, eventually became the head jailer of Moulmein prison in Burma, an extraordinary position for a transported con-

vict to achieve.⁵⁶ The first sepoys sent to the Andamans in 1858 were even used to oversee ordinary peasant rebel convicts, whom they apparently viewed with contempt because they found them so socially inferior.⁵⁷ There are many other such examples. But low-caste and in particular tribal convicts, even when transported for what we might consider “political” offenses (rebellion or revolt), enjoyed no special treatment but were massed together with their ordinary criminal compatriots. Just as women were de-casted in transportation, low-caste and tribal convicts were de-politicized.

TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

In the preceding discussion of convict labor, distinction, and privilege, I have suggested the importance of taking a multipronged approach to understanding the social production of penal settlements and colonies as spaces where status, caste, race, gender, and politics intersected to produce variegated outcomes and experiences. I would like to expand this point a little more, by examining some of the unintended consequences of transportation with respect to its formation of new cultural forms and connections. When the Andamans became a penal colony following the Great Indian Revolt of 1857–1858, the other Southeast Asian settlements were closed to new convict arrivals. The Andamans were very different from the earlier penal settlements because the only people living on the islands at the time were indigenous people, who were often hostile to the penal colony. There were no other free residents, settlers, or migrants. Like penal settlements in the Straits Settlements and Burma, the Andamans introduced a class system and worked the convicts at productive labor. But the islands were different because they also encouraged family emigration, convict marriage, and permanent settlement.⁵⁸ Ultimately, with no free population to merge into, as was the case in places like Singapore, Mauritius, and Burma, ex-convicts and their descendants forged an altogether new kind of society. Though convicts in the other settlements married into free communities and were occasionally joined by their mainland families, the outcome of the penal colonization of the Andamans was the emergence of a culturally distinct place where religion, caste, gender relations, and language were all transformed. By the end of the nineteenth century the growing convict-descended community had a clear social identity as “local-born.” In this we see that transportation and its implied exile were not necessarily destructive—of communities, families, and kinship ties—as the colonial administration intended, but could be socially *creative*, too, of new modes of living, marrying, worshipping, and speaking. The Andamans today are celebrated as “Mini India,” a place of “unity in diversity” that is a model for the entire nation.⁵⁹

"Arracan [Arakan] 14th Febr'y [1849] Kyook Phoo (Kyaukpyu) Ghat & Prisoners carrying water in Buckets, Isle of Ramree." (Watercolor by Clementina Benthall. Benthall Papers, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge.)

In relation to this idea of exile as creative, recently Uma Kothari has suggested that, across a range of colonial sites in the Indian Ocean, though political exile was supposed to break political associations and isolate political threats, in important ways it enhanced and deepened anticolonial networks, too. This was because exiles carried ideologies of resistance with them and inspired political agitation in their host localities.⁶⁰ We can locate a similar process for colonial Asia and its links to other colonial nodes of rebellion. In 1845, for instance, a group of rebel convicts transported from Kohlapur to Aden for "insurrection and bearing arms" inspired a violent attempt to escape from their chains after they arrived in port.⁶¹ Sikhs shipped from the Punjab to Burma in 1854, following the Anglo-Sikh wars, led a transportation ship mutiny of such catastrophic (for the British) proportions that it produced the largest criminal trial the Bengal Presidency had ever seen. The men had killed many of the ship's crew, grounded the ship on a Burmese beach, and marched inland in the mistaken belief that they could offer themselves for the anticolonial army of an as yet imperially unincorporated rajah. Unfortunately, they were two years too late.⁶² North Indian sepoys and mutineers sent to the Andamans in 1858 escaped en masse in the belief that they could join forces with a sympathetic rajah living in the islands or find a road to Burma where they could serve a king against the

East India Company, work for double pay, and, in the words of one British officer, return and destroy “the handful of English on the Settlement.”⁶³

Later, the transportation of Wahabis, who were so literate that they were almost immediately elevated to clerkships, from North India to the Andamans facilitated the flow of news and information between the colony and the mainland. This both compromised the penal intent of the colony and produced networked resistance. Indeed, Shere Ali, the famous assassin of the viceroy of India, the Earl of Mayo, during his visit to Port Blair in 1872, was said to have read out loud a letter from his *bhai* (brother) giving news of the murder of Justice Norman on the steps of Calcutta’s supreme court, the night before he killed the viceroy.⁶⁴ It is clear, then, that neither banishment nor transportation produced “total” exile. Colonial officers noted the detailed knowledge mainland prisoners and transported convicts had about conditions in the settlements: they often petitioned for transfer depending on what they knew about particular destinations. Officials also complained about the difficulty of preventing communication between convicts and their kin.⁶⁵ And penal settlements and colonies could become imbricated in the political contests that played out in widespread resistance to British authority in nineteenth-century India.

EXPERIENCES OF EXILE

So far, this chapter has described banishment, exile, and penal transportation within and beyond Asia to make four points about colonial punishment: first, that beliefs about the social and cultural ruptures of forced movement across large distances of land or sea were central to the appeal of banishment and—especially—transportation as penal sentences in the region; second, that convict labor exploitation was absolutely critical to the expansion of imperial frontiers; third, that particular knots of gender, race, caste, status, and sentence were important in the organization and management of work in jails or penal settlements and colonies, whether prisoners and convicts had been banished or transported; and fourth, that whatever its intended aims as a penal sentence, convict transportation could and did extend or generate political resistance as well as new social formations. Though we have already glimpsed snapshots of prisoner and convict perspective in the chapter so far, next I would like to turn to other unintended outcomes of transportation, through a more explicit analysis of how prisoners and convicts imagined, represented, or remembered transportation. The kernel of my argument is this: that at least some convicts experienced transportation as “exile” and felt acutely their distance from family and kin, as intended by the colonial judicial process, at least as they expressed

it in the largely English-language petitions that they presented to the government.

During a tour of Arakan in 1856, Bengal inspector general of jails, F. J. Mouat, wrote of how he had heard one convict speak "very feelingly of his wife and family," noting, "[B]anishment is much dreaded by the Natives of Hindustan."⁶⁶ His sentiments resonate in colonial archives across Asia and its penal satellites, where we can read numerous petitions in which convicts center exile in their expressions of anomie and loss. "Your Excellency's humble Petitioner most respectfully, begs leave," convict John Herman Maas wrote in 1828, "to submit his unfortunate and sad circumstances for Your Excellency[']s serious consideration." Of Dutch-Singhalese parentage, but able to articulate his feelings in English, Maas elaborated his transportation from Ceylon to Mauritius and lamented a recent sentence of retransportation from Mauritius to New South Wales for a further offense. Maas' biography is one of many convict lives that present a kaleidoscope view of networked colonial cultures and societies in the Indian Ocean in the early nineteenth century, including his eventual fate as one of the last men to be executed for forgery in colonial Australia.⁶⁷ What I am interested in here is the language of exile, incarceration, and family dislocation that he used in two 1828 petitions against his shipment to Sydney. He had, he wrote in his own hand, already been "banished from his native land".⁶⁸

Banishment from his native Country to this remote distance for these Thirty Nine Months in exile from the bosom of his Family, and the Imprisonment for these Twenty Three Months in being deprived of his Liberty is no small punishments for Him to repent for what he has done.⁶⁹

There is a remarkable number of surviving petitions presented by convicts or ex-convicts seeking permission to return to what they or their petition writers usually described as their "native country," sometimes after several decades of transportation and, often, after their liberation. Political prisoners, including Sikh general Narain Singh, whom I mentioned earlier, presented some of them. Singh ended the first of many such petitions, in 1863, with a plea to the viceroy of India to "close his long exile by a gracious permission to return to his native land."⁷⁰ A group of eighty Bombay convicts awaiting liberation in Mauritius invoked the language of exile too, writing in 1855 of their anxiety to go home after almost twenty years of penal servitude on the island.⁷¹ Kunnuck Mistree had been transported to Bencoolen in 1818, and after its transfer to the Dutch in 1825 he was moved to Singapore. In 1858 he petitioned for return home, the petition noting that he had suffered

thirty-eight years of “banishment.” He would, he said, like to spend his last years in his native country:

[T]o a Hindoo the punishment of Transportation is more terrible than death itself and the only consolation left to a Hindoo under such circumstances is the hope of returning . . . to die on the Banks of his beloved Ganges.⁷²

In 1865, after fifteen years of liberation, and an astonishing thirty-five years after his original transportation to Mauritius, fakir convict Munsha Bin Baboosh presented a document that elaborated how

your petitioner is now more than sixty years of age, and is most desirous, before he departs this life, to revisit his own country and to see his brothers and sisters still living . . . he is old, infirm, and has but a short time to live . . . his return to his country after thirty five year’s exile, cannot, possibly, prove of the slightest inconvenience.⁷³

One major concern of these men seems to have been the proper conduct of funeral rites by their families. Ironically, then, for some convicts the passing of time in transportation did not promote the forgetting of kin or lessen their feelings of “exile,” as the British hoped in rendering them potential permanent settlers, but enhanced them. There are important parallels here with convict transportation from Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, where the British thought that Malay and Chinese convicts especially feared transportation because after their death their families would not be able to carry out the burial rites necessary for their support in the afterlife.⁷⁴ For this reason, they chose “distant and strange” destinations on the Indian mainland for transportation convicts, rather than penal settlements in the Straits Settlements and Burma, which were closer and more culturally familiar.⁷⁵

Though it is unlikely that all of the English-language petitions discussed were written by the convicts who presented them, we have two examples of Andaman convicts writing Persian poetry in which they foregrounded the experience of exile, especially as experienced through the social, cultural, and political ruptures of transportation. Fazl-i-Haq Khairabadi (1797–1861), an Awadhi scholar who was alleged to have joined the 1857 revolt, proclaimed his loyalty to Bahadur Shah, and drawn up the constitution of liberated Delhi, wrote a poignant description of his feelings about transportation, circa 1858–1861. He described himself as “a heart-broken and suffering prisoner.” He detailed his deprivations, separation from family, and yearning for them:

He is dejected, lonely and forlorn and subjected to drudgery; he has been exiled from his country and town. He is distressed, afflicted, and in banishment; he has been made to suffer, and separated from his family and children. . . . The tyrant oppresses him and maltreats him and has kept his family and neighbours away from him.⁷⁶

In a remarkably complex and skillful *qasida* poem, Lucknow poet Mohammed Ismail Hussain ("Munir") Shikohabadi (1819–1881) wrote more generally of the cultural effects of convicts' sea crossing and the misery and terror of transportation:

When they had to leave India and come to this island
The prisoners' evil fate made the water black [*kala pani*]⁷⁷
From the time they [the convicts] left home, thousands of
demons and djinn appeared
In the darkness of the evening of exile, they were granted the
kohl of Solomon⁷⁸
A dark night, terrifying waves and so fearful a whirlpool
Crowds of physical suffering, abundance of mental distress
How do those lightly laden ones upon the shore know of the state
we are in?
Or in what ocean of torment the ship of our existence is tossed?
On the day that death dived into the sea and reached this island
It does not emerge, being so frightened when it sees the water.⁷⁹

The very existence of these lyrical and sophisticated Andaman narratives makes them far from typical, for most convicts were neither literate nor educated enough to write such poetry.⁸⁰ Moreover, they resonate with jail literature as a textual genre, for they purposefully sought to inspire solidarity between authors and readers, between those who had been incarcerated or transported and their sympathizers outside the prison walls or over the black waters. This was especially the case for Fazl-i-Haq, who is said to have smuggled his poetry out of the Andamans on pieces of torn cloth, through a released convict, who passed it on to Fazl-i-Haq's son.⁸¹ It is in this sense that such narratives simultaneously *expressed* the social and geographical dislocations of transportation and positioned them within, *and potentially expanded*, larger political networks of anti-imperial resistance.

We cannot be entirely sure of the precise translations of words such as "banishment" and "exile," but the distress and longing for home described by these convict petitioners and poets find resonance in several contemporary medical reports on transportation. Its "depressing effects" usually be-

gan on board ship, it was said, when Hindu convicts usually refused cooked food. In the words of the superintendent of Alipore jail, "The ill effects of improper diet are in many cases aggravated by the despondency which a first sea voyage and banishment from their native country must produce."⁸² An 1859 report on the Andamans noted that the elderly "felt the depressing effects of banishment and separation from family and friends far more keenly than younger men."⁸³ I quote an extract from this report at length:

No one can expect that a new Penal Settlement can enjoy the same state of health as a new colony, where the settlers have left their homes to better their condition, and to secure an independence for themselves and children. . . . All natives of India look with horror at the idea of crossing the black water, and would rather face death than the ocean; and not one of the convicts now toiling in these islands can entertain a hope of seeing their daily toils become a benefit to their families, from whom at first the separation must have been considered eternal, and in many cases those dependent on them were reduced to poverty or to the bounty of their relatives.⁸⁴

The social reduction of those who were left behind is certainly more than evident. Later on in the nineteenth century, two high-caste women wrote of the enormous impact of their *zemindar* (landlord) husband's transportation on a charge of *dacoity*:

The banishment of the Zemindar is a standing stigma on their family, and many are the social difficulties in the way of giving away their daughter, or getting a bride for their son (now under the Court of Wards) from the Royal Family of Pudukotah or from other Zemindar Families. . . . They have a mother-in-law, now aged 65, who while she raves for her only son in a distant land, merely heightens their sorrow.⁸⁵

In the meantime, the transportation of men of ordinary means often left their families in abject poverty. When the Andamans administration wrote to India regarding the release of a man named Mamoo in 1882, for example, the district magistrate of South Canara (Madras Presidency) went to his home-place and discovered the existence of a stepbrother, three stepsisters, and a female cousin. They were all living in extreme poverty, he reported.⁸⁶

Of further interest in this respect is that sometimes convicts who escaped or returned to India at the expiration of their sentence could not overcome its long-term effects. One extraordinary petition to the government, from an escaped Bombay convict who had returned to Gujarat, articulated

how he had since lived in the mountains and jungles and suffered hugely: "The punishment I have been already subjected to is greater than death itself. I am in great distress."⁸⁷ In such cases, ex-convicts were often so old that it was nearly impossible for them to provide for themselves without the support of their brothers, sons, and nephews.⁸⁸ But such convicts often found their families gone, their land occupied, or their property stolen, and with few life options those of greater youth decided to sign contracts of indenture and sail into the unknown once again, to find work on the sugar plantations of Mauritius and the Caribbean.⁸⁹

This chapter has developed a framework for understanding the history of exile in British colonial Asia. It has invited us to consider the continuities between precolonial and colonial penal forms, particularly with respect to the banishment of elite offenders; the introduction of transportation in the context of its perceived strength as a cultural punishment, for some administrators believed that it was peculiarly appropriate for Indians because of their horror of sea voyages; and the significance of British penal innovations in the use of transportation convicts as extractive labor. Further, it has suggested that exile in British Asia can be situated within a narrative of penal transportation by other European empires, and China and Japan, and in some instances within histories of imperial interconnectedness. It is notable also that the lines between the treatment of political prisoners and the treatment of ordinary convicts were at once both distinct and indistinct, and that the nature of their punishment was the product of particular constellations of status, caste, and gender, rather than the offenses for which they were transported. Thus peasant rebels became ordinary convict workers, while royal exiles were separated from them and made subject to different treatment.

Further, the chapter has noted that notwithstanding great differences of opinion about the caste degradations of crossing the *kala pani*, transportation had some significant if unintended consequences. These included the production of new forms of identity, particularly in the previously uncolonized Andaman Islands, as well as the spread of knowledge about transportation, and anticolonial sentiment more broadly. Moreover, the cutting of ties with family and home in the penal settlements impacted deeply on at least some convicts, particularly older men who left families behind, and who especially as they aged expressed in petitions and other writings their aching to see home again before they died. Here, one should not forget the profound impact of transportation on families left behind, bringing shame to the wealthy and destitution to the poor. Placing exile in Asia within the larger history of punishment as well as the history of labor migration enables us to appreciate its character in these respects and to connect it to the opportunity that migration to

the sugar colonies seemed to present to some ex-convicts. Moreover, in situ-ating convict mobility in this broader sense within punishment, labor, and colonial expansion, a focus on penal settlements opens out to view a larger history of connectedness within and beyond Asia.

NOTES

1. The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2007–2013) / ERC Grant Agreement 312542. It is based on archival research in the India Office Records of the British Library (IOR), the National Archives, London (TNA), National Archives of India (NAI), National Archives of Mauritius (NAM), and Tamil Nadu State Archives (TNSA).

2. This resonates with the arguments of Ranajit Guha in his *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).

3. IOR P.139.66 Bengal judicial consultations (hereafter cited as BJC) 1 February 1831: J. Master, Superintendent Alipore jail, to J. Thomason, Deputy Secretary to Government Bengal, 21 January 1831; Thomason to Master, 1 February 1831; IOR P.139.66 BJC 15 February 1831: Thomason to Master, 14 February 1831.

4. For an overview of East India Company legal and penal innovation, see Tapas Kumar Banerjee, *Background to Indian Criminal Law* (Calcutta: R. Cambay and Co., 1990); Radhika Singha, *A Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also note the contemporary text Frederick John Shore, *Notes on Indian Affairs*, vol. 2 (London: John W. Parker, 1837), 307–345.

5. Singha, *Despotism of Law*, 98, 101–102.

6. On the broader disciplinary context of incarceration, see David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

7. IOR P.128.34 BJC 1 September 1797: John Shore, Governor of Bombay, 23 July 1797.

8. IOR P.141.9 BJC 14 March 1837: Second and Concluding Report of the Committee of Convict Labour, 28 January 1837 (hereafter cited as Second Report CCL).

9. IOR V.26.170.1: *Report of the Committee on Prison Discipline, 8 January 1838* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1838) (hereafter cited as PDC), 61.

10. IOR P.141.9 Second Report CCL, Appendix: J. Macrae, Civil Assistant Surgeon Monghyr, to W. Adam, Secretary to the CCL, 10 June 1836.

11. IOR P.141.40 BJC 29 October 1839: F. J. Halliday, Secretary to Government Bengal, to F. C. Smith, Superintendent Police Lower Provinces, 29 October 1839 (order no. 1156, 2 October 1838). On Indian convict road labor generally, see Chitra Joshi, "Fettered Bodies: Labouring on Public Works in Nineteenth-Century India," in *Labour Matters: Towards Global Histories*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Prabhu P. Mohapatra (New Delhi: Tulika, 2009), 3–21.

12. Satadru Sen, *Disciplining Punishment: Colonialism and Convict Society in the Andaman Islands* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), chap. 3.

13. Clare Anderson, "The Politics of Convict Space: Indian Penal Settlements and the Andamans," in *Isolation: Places and Practices of Exclusion*, ed. Alison Bashford and Carolyn Strange (London: Routledge, 2003), 41–45.

14. PDC, Paper C.

15. Clare Anderson, "After Emancipation: Empires and Imperial Formations," in *Emancipation and the Remaking of the British Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper, and Keith McClelland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 113–127.

16. Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

17. Timothy J. Coates, *Forced Labor in the Portuguese Empire, 1740–1932* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

18. Isabelle Merle, *Expériences Coloniales: La Nouvelle-Calédonie, 1853–1920* (Paris: Belin, 1995); Peter Redfield, *Space in the Tropics: From Convicts to Rockets in French Guiana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Alice Bullard, *Exile to Paradise: Savagery and Civilization in Paris and the South Pacific* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); Miranda F. Spieler, *Empire and Underworld: Captivity in French Guiana* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Stephen A. Toth, *Beyond Papillon: The French Overseas Penal Colonies, 1854–1952* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

19. Joanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang, 1758–1820* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

20. Daniel V. Botsman, *Punishment and Power in the Making of Modern Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Hideki Hatakeyama, "Convict Labor at the Sumitomo Besshi Copper Mine in Japan," *International Journal of Social Economics* 25, nos. 2–4 (1998): 365–369; Osamu Tanaka, "The Labour Form of the Initial Stage of Capitalism in Hokkaido: With a Focus on Convict Labour" [*Shibonsbugi kakuritsuki Hokkaido ni okeru rodo keitai: Shujin rodo o chushin toshite*], *Keizaironshu* (March 1955): 67–112.

21. IOR F.4.421 Transportation of persons banished from Ceylon to certain parts of the Company's dominions: Extract of Bengal political consultations, 21 May 1813, R. Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon, to Lord Minto, Governor General in Council Fort William, 19 April 1813.

22. Clare Anderson, *Convicts in the Indian Ocean: Transportation from South Asia to Mauritius, 1815–53* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 48–49.

23. TNSA Madras judicial consultations (hereafter cited as MJC) vol. 152A: W. Ormsby, Superintendent of Police Madras, to D. Hill, Secretary to Government Madras, 25 September 1820; Hill to Ormsby, 27 October 1820.

24. TNSA MJC 152A: Ormsby to Hill, 25 September 1820. For a detailed account, see Anand A. Yang, "Bandits and Kings: Moral Authority and Resistance in Early Colonial India," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66 (2007): 881–896.

25. *Documents relating to Bhai Maharaj Singh [Died as State Prisoner on 5th July, 1856, at Singapur]*, by Nahar Singh, with an introduction by M. L. Ahluwalia (Gurdwara Karamsar, Distt. Ludhiana: Sikh History Source Material Search Association, 1968), xxxi; IOR F.4.2527: H. P. Burn, town major Calcutta, to C. Allen, officiating secretary to Government of India, 16 May 1853; minute of the Governor-General of India, 4 July 1853. IOR P.143.45 BJC 24 April 1850 names the "Sikh sirdars" confined in Calcutta and Benares as Chuttar Sing, Shere Sing, Ootar Sing, Hakim Bal, Kishn Kano, Korjun Sing, Lal Sing, Mushtah Sing, Oomed Sing, and Juggut Chund—List of convicts embarked per *Enterprize*, 10 April 1850. For detailed accounts of the Sikh prisoners, see Clare Anderson, "The Transportation of Narain Sing: Punishment, Honour and Identity from the Anglo-Sikh Wars to the Great Revolt," *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 5 (2007): 1115–1145; Clare Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), chap. 4; Anoma Pieris, "The 'Other' Side of Labor Reform: Accounts

of Incarceration and Resistance in the Straits Settlements Penal System, 1825–1873,” *Journal of Social History* 45, no. 2 (2011): 453–479.

26. Clare Anderson, *The Indian Uprising of 1857–8: Prisons, Prisoners and Rebellion* (New Delhi: Anthem, 2007, repr., 2012), chap. 5.

27. Clare Anderson, Madhumita Mazumdar and Vishvajit Pandya, *New Histories of the Andaman Islands: Landscape, Place and Identity in the Bay of Bengal, 1790–2012* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Sen, *Disciplining Punishment*, 264–272.

28. Literally “strugglers for Islam.”

29. Sen, “Contexts, Representation and the Colonized Convict: Maulana Thanasari in the Andaman Islands,” *Crime, History and Societies* 8, no. 2 (2004): 117–139.

30. Maulana Jafer Thanasari, *In Exile (A Strange Story)*, English translation by Satadru Sen, n.p. I extend my deep gratitude to Satadru Sen for sharing his translation of the text with me.

31. Abu Muhammad Sahar, ed. *Intikhab-e qasa'id-e urdu* [Selection of Urdu qasidas] (Lakhnao: Nasim Book Depot, 1975), 358.

32. Uma Kothari, “Contesting Colonial Rule: Politics of Exile in the Indian Ocean,” *Geoforum* 43 (2012), 700–703; NAM RA2525: correspondence Straits Settlements and Mauritius, May–November 1880.

33. NAM RA54: Governor Robert Brownrigg to Major-General Hall, Acting Governor of Mauritius, 18 May 1818; TNA CO54/73: Brownrigg to Colonial Secretary Lord Bathurst, 8 January 1819. See also IOR F.4.421 Transportation of persons banished from Ceylon to certain parts of the Company's dominions [1813]; IOR F.4.1594 Proceedings relating to the Kandyan prisoners [1836].

34. NAM RA229: Chief Secretary to Government Ceylon to Chief Secretary to Government Mauritius, 16 August 1823.

35. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*, 108.

36. TNSA MJC vol. 304B: H. G. A. Taylor, Commander Northern Division, to H. Chamier, Secretary to Government Madras, 26 January 1836.

37. Anderson, *Convicts in the Indian Ocean*, 31–32.

38. Clare Anderson, “‘The Wisdom of the Barbarian’: Rebellion, Incarceration, and the Santal Body Politic,” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 223–240.

39. For instance, IOR P.133.22 BJC 10 March 1818: W. A. Clubley, Secretary to Government Bengal, to A. Trotter, Acting Secretary to Government Bengal, 2 January 1818.

40. IOR P.141.18 BJC 5 December 1837: E. A. Blundell, Commissioner Tenasserim Provinces, to R. D. Mangles, Secretary to Government Bengal, 17 September 1836; IOR P.141.66 BJC 9 July 1842: Blundell to G. A. Bushby, Secretary to Government of India, 22 June 1842; Anderson, *Convicts in the Indian Ocean*, 46–48.

41. Some of the key theoretical issues concerning gender and subaltern history are laid out in Kamala Visweswaran, “Small Speeches, Subaltern Gender: Nationalist Ideology and Its Historiography,” in *Subaltern Studies IX*, ed. Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 83–125. Also see Clare Anderson, “Gender, Subalternity and Silence: Recovering Women's Experiences from Histories of Transportation,” in *Behind the Veil: Resistance, Women and the Everyday in Colonial South Asia*, ed. Anindita Ghosh (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 145–166; Satadru Sen, “Rationing Sex: Female Convicts in the Andamans,” *South Asia* 30, no. 1 (1999): 29–59.

42. IOR P.129.32 BJC 1 January 1807: Rules for the management of convicts in Bencoolen, 18 June 1800; A regulation for the management of the convicts transported

from Bengal to Fort Marlborough, 5 August 1806; IOR P.136.66 BJC 19 May 1825: Minute on the Management of Convicts at Prince of Wales' Island (Penang), 8 March 1825; IOR P.142.37 BJC 17 September 1845: Regulations for Convict Management Singapore, 23 June 1825 (revised 1 December 1825). For a contemporary summary of the convict system in Bencoolen and the Straits Settlements, see J. F. A. McNair, *Prisoners Their Own Warders: A Record of the Convict Prison at Singapore in the Straits Settlements Established 1825, Discontinued 1873, Together with a Cursory History of the Convict Establishments at Bencoolen, Penang and Malacca from the Year 1797* (Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co., 1899).

43. IOR P.129.32 BJC 1 January 1807: A regulation for the management of the convicts transported from Bengal to Fort Marlborough, 5 August 1806.

44. For more details of secondary punishments, see especially Clare Anderson, "The Execution of Rughobursing: The Political Economy of Convict Transportation and Penal Labour in Early Colonial Mauritius," *Studies in History* 19, no. 2 (2003): 185–197.

45. IOR P.140.70 BJC 25 August 1835: A. Holroyd, Clerk of the Crown, to Mangles, 15 August 1835, enclosing abstract translation of the Bengal letter of Goherdhone Baboo, n.d.

46. IOR P.140.70 BJC 25 August 1835: Petition of the Defendant above named and now a prisoner of the Jail of Moarny Island, n.d.

47. IOR P.140.73 BJC 15 December 1835: H. Macfarquhar, Officiating Commissioner in the Tenasserim Provinces, to J. P. Grant, Secretary to Government Bengal, 10 November 1835.

48. PDC Appendix IV: J. S. Shaw, Sessions Judge Conkan.

49. IOR P.142.13 BJC 20 February 1844: Petition of the East Indian convicts at Moulmein, 12 January 1844; IOR P.143.8 BJC 27 October 1847: Commissioner J. R. Colvin to F. J. Halliday, 22 September 1847.

50. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*, chap. 3.

51. TNA CO54/73: Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8 January 1819, enclosure. Instructions to Lieutenant William Stewart of His Majesty's 2nd Ceylon Regiment, proceeding in charge of the Kandyan Prisoners to the Mauritius, 21 February 1819.

52. TNA CO54/77: Barnes to Bathurst, 18 August 1820, enc. Petition of Kandyans in Mauritius, n.d.

53. NAM RD3: Petition of Mallendeya Ganetteya, translated by Don Bastian, the Modiliar interpreter, enclosed in letter from Henry Bates, Superintendent of Kandyan Prisoners, 12 September 1828. "Seven Churches" refers to the seven churches of the New Testament's book of Revelation. I thank Sujit Sivasundaram for arranging a modern (2013) translation of the original document, which reads, "I am lost and miserable. I am writing to Your Lordship to ask for some money to buy some cloth and a handkerchief and some food. I do not spend money in vain, and therefore only need some money, for my clothes are worn out. I do not travel overseas, and am in need of simply surviving my life. I beg Your Lordship and the Great King of England to give me some money, which is a great charity." One might choose to interpret the difference in tone between the two documents as evidence of the nineteenth-century translator's sympathy for the plight of his regal charge.

54. IOR F.4.1594 Proceedings relating to the Kandyan prisoners: Extract Political General Letter from Fort St George, 16 August 1836.

55. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*, chap. 4; Pieris, "The 'Other' Side of Labor Reform."

56. Anderson, "The Transportation of Narain Singh."

57. Anderson, *The Indian Uprising of 1857–8*, 152–154.

58. Sen, "Rationing Sex."

59. Anderson, Mazumdar and Pandya, *New Histories of the Andaman Islands*. There are important parallels here with patterns of creolization in former sugar colonies like Mauritius and Trinidad, which received large numbers of Indian and Chinese indentured workers during the British colonial period. For a theoretically innovative interpretation of identity formation, see Marina Carter and Khal Torabully, *Coolitude: An Anthology of the Indian Labour Diaspora* (London: Anthem, 2002).

60. Kothari, "Contesting Colonial Rule."

61. IOR P.403.47 Bombay judicial consultations (hereafter cited as BomJC) 13 August 1845: Political Agent Aden to W. Escombe, Secretary to Government Bombay, 27 June 1845.

62. Clare Anderson, "'The Feringees Are Flying—The Ship Is Ours!': The Convict Middle Passage in Colonial South and Southeast Asia, 1790–1860," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 41, no. 3 (2005): 143–186.

63. IOR P.206.61 India judicial proceedings (hereafter cited as IJP) 29 July 1859: Dr Browne's report on the sanitary state of the Andamans, n.d. July 1859.

64. Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. Ms 7490 Mayo Papers: 94: Events of assassination, 8–13 February 1872: notes from verbal and written statements made by Major General Stewart, superintendent of Port Blair, 10 February 1872. *Bhai* indicates close social kin, not necessarily a blood sibling. For a detailed life history of another convict Wahabi, Liaquat Ali, in the Andamans, see Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*, chap. 5.

65. NAI Home (Port Blair) A Proceedings, February 1876, nos. 53–55: Note of C. A. Barwell, 18 November 1875.

66. F. J. Mouat, *Reports on Jails Visited and Inspected in Bengal, Bihar and Arracan* (Calcutta: F. Carbery, Military Orphan Press, 1856), 185.

67. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*, 44–46.

68. NAM RA377: The humble petition of John Herman Maas, a Native of the Island of Ceylon [to Governor Charles Colville], Civil Prisons, 23 June 1828.

69. NAM RA376: The humble petition of John Herman Maas, a Native of the Island of Ceylon [to Colville], Civil Prisons, 31 July 1828.

70. IOR P.205.44 Foreign judicial proceedings, December 1863, no. 59: Petition of Narain Sing, formerly a sikh sirdar now a prisoner in Moulmein jail prays for remission of sentence and permission to return to native land.

71. NAM RA1182: To His Excellency James Macaulley Higginson Esquire C. B. Governor and Commander in Chief of Mauritius and Dependencies &c. &c. &c. The humb[l]e petition of Seewarpar, Sidjide, Tarabapoo, Tookarom, Nottoo, Abdallah, Harry Bapojee, Bymah, Harry Norasa, Diaroom, Mahomed Khan, Sucarom Singh, Pondoo, Rana, Bapoo, Ynapah, Sadoo, Sheik Munsur, Peratapoo, Mossoo Mytil, Bogarne and others in all 80 [Bombay convicts], 24 February 1852.

72. IOR P.146.12B BJC 14 Jan. 1858: The humble petition of Kunnuck Mistree a convict now undergoing his sentence of transportation in the settlement of Singapore, n.d.

73. NAM RA1792: To His Excellency The Governor of the Bombay Presidency. The humble petition of Munsha Bin Baboosha, Faqueer of the District of Grand Port in the Island of Mauritius, 18 June 1865.

74. Christopher Munn, "The Transportation of Chinese Convicts from Hong Kong, 1844–1858," *Canadian Historical Association* 8, no. 1 (1997): 113–145; IOR P.142.38 BJC 1 October 1845: J. Davis, secretary to government of Hong Kong, to Lord Stanley, colonial secretary, 29 January 1845.

75. IOR P.404.3 BomJC 11 August 1846: W. A. Bruce, colonial secretary Hong Kong, to Bushby, 30 April 1846; Bushby to Bruce, 11 July 1846.

76. Moinul Haq, "The Story of the War of Independence, 1857–8 (being an English translation of Allamah Fadl-i-Haqq's Risalah on the War)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 5, no. 1 (1957): 26–27. An early, annotated draft of this article is located in the P. C. Joshi Collection of JNU Library. I thank Deborah Sutton for locating and copying this file.

77. The literal translation of "evil fate" is "black-fatedness," black waters = *kala pani*.

78. Solomon's kohli allowed the unseen world to be seen.

79. "A Prisoner's Appeal" (*firyad-e zindani*). I am enormously grateful to Chris Shackle, who uniquely in the UK had the skills to translate Munir's complex and sophisticated *qasida* poetry and was generous enough to share his translations with me. See Christopher Shackle, "Munir Shikohabadi: On His Imprisonment," in *Nationalism in the Vernacular: Hindi, Urdu, and the Literature of Indian Freedom*, ed. Shobna Nijhawan (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2009), 235–250.

80. Sen, "Contexts," 118–119.

81. Jamal Malik, "Letters, Prison Sketches and Autobiographical Literature: The Case of Fadl-e Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman Penal Colony," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 43, no. 1 (2006): 77–100; Haq, "Story of the War of Independence," 23n1; Mahdi Husain, *Bahadur Shah II and the War of 1857 in Delhi with Its Unforgettable Scenes* (New Delhi: M. N. Publishers, 1987), 298, 372–392.

82. IOR P.434.25 IJP 9 July: State of certain convicts per SS *Scotia*: J. Fawcus, Superintendent Alipore Jail, to Mouat, 25 April 1870.

83. IOR P.206.61 29 July 1859: Report by Dr. G. G. Brown on the sanitary state of the Andamans, n.d. March 1859 (hereafter cited as Brown's report).

84. Brown's report.

85. TNSA MJP 28 April 1887, no. 927: J. P. Hewett to the secretary to Government Madras, 13 April 1887, enc. To the Earl of Dufferin, Viceroy and Governor-General of India. The humble Memorial of Ayiammal Ayiar and Nallamuthalakammal Ayiar, wives of Atchutha Pandarathar, Zemindar of Ghandharvakotai, Tanjore District, 4 December 1886.

86. TNSA MJP 14 December 1882, nos. 2135–2136: J. Sturrock, Acting District Magistrate of South Canara, to C. G. Master, Chief Secretary to Government Madras, 24 November 1882.

87. NAM RA1616: Chief Secretary to Government Bombay to Chief Secretary to Government Mauritius, 22 February 1861, enc. Substance of a petition from Thakore Bhugtajeel Jalumjee, 21 August 1860.

88. TNSA MJP, 4 February 1884, no. 300: N. A. Roupell, District Magistrate of Anantapur, to Chief Secretary to Government Madras, 26 January 1884.

89. Clare Anderson, "Convicts and Coolies: Rethinking Indentured Labour in the Nineteenth Century," *Slavery and Abolition* 30, no. 1 (2009): 100.

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