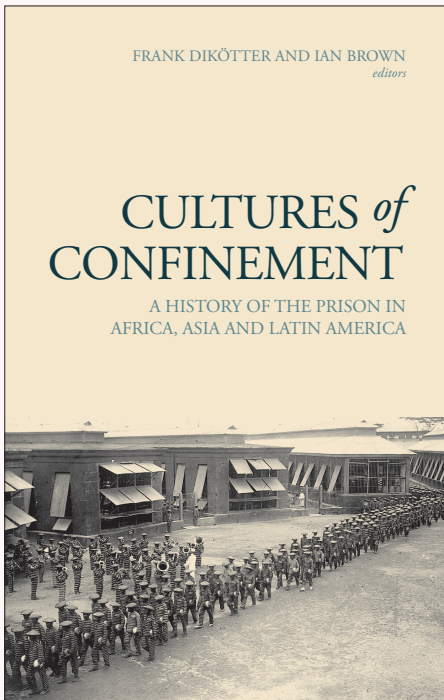


Cultures of Confinement

A History of the Prison in Africa, Asia and Latin America

FRANK DIKÖTTER AND IAN BROWN (EDS)



'Cultures of Confinement adds substantially and impressively to the already vast bulk of writing about prisons — bringing together in a single volume surveys of prison experience in most parts of the world beyond Europe and North America, and thus making it possible for the first time for readers to begin to grasp the shape of the global history of the modern prison.'

— Joanna Innes, University of Oxford

Prisons, it seems, are on the increase everywhere, from democratic Britain to communist China, as ever larger proportions of humanity find themselves behind bars. While prisons now span the world, we know little about their history in global perspective. Rather than interpreting the prison everywhere as the predictable result of 'globalisation', *Cultures of Confinement* underlines that — like all institutions — it was never simply 'imposed' by colonial powers or 'copied' by elites eager to emulate the West, but was reinvented and transformed by a host of local factors, its success being

dependent on its very flexibility. Complex cultural negotiations took place in encounters between different parts of the world, and rather than assigning a passive role to Latin America, Asia and Africa, the authors of this book point out the acts of resistance or appropriation which altered the social practices associated with confinement. The prison, in short, was understood in culturally specific ways and reinvented in a variety of local contexts examined here for the first time in global perspective.

FRANK DIKÖTTER is Professor of Modern Chinese History at SOAS. IAN BROWN's most recent book is *A Colonial Economy in Crisis: Burma's Rice Cultivators and the World Depression of the 1930s* (2005). He is Professor of the Economic History of South East Asia, also at SOAS.

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