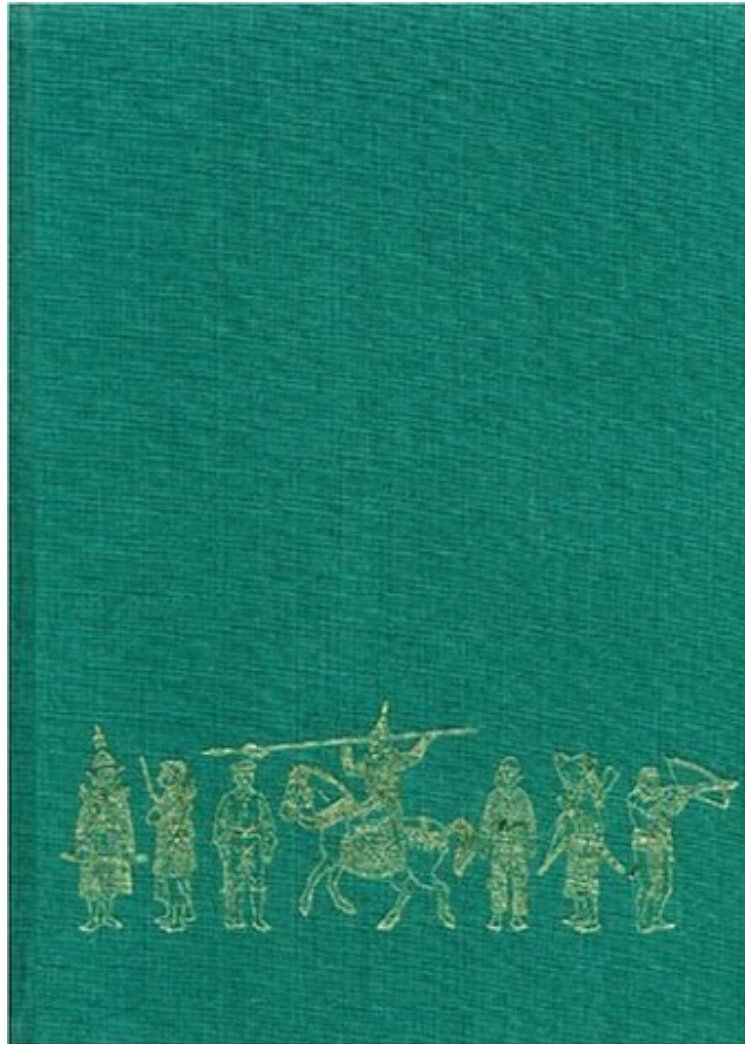


(Ebook pdf) Burma and Indo-China (Armies of the Nineteenth Century: Asia)

Burma and Indo-China (Armies of the Nineteenth Century: Asia)

Ian Heath

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Ian Heath : Burma and Indo-China (Armies of the Nineteenth Century: Asia) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Burma and Indo-China (Armies of the Nineteenth Century: Asia):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Introduction to an Obscure Subject By Paarko Seitaar Ian Heath's volume is an exhaustive study of a much overlooked (if not forgotten) subject, and as such should be owned by any enthusiast of 19th Century colonial warfare. Although it is exorbitantly priced, its content more than makes up for this: in addition to having 196 information-packed pages, the book is lavishly illustrated with reproductions of original engravings as well as the author's own drawings of individual soldiers. The book's chapters are categorised by nationality (a convenient if not entirely accurate reflection of the region's states during that period), with the major

ethnic groups of Burma - the Kachins, Karens, Wa and Shans - having their own sections. The organisation of the individual chapters follow a set pattern: each begins with a brief historical synopsis of battles and wars before moving on to topics of organisation, methods of warfare, and uniforms and arms and, finally, descriptions of the various illustrated figures. Unlike many of the Osprey books, the information here is anything but brief; not only is the make-up of a Burmese regiment explored, but so are the salaries of its soldiers and officers. What holds me back from the awarding this book five stars, however, is the author's near-exclusive reliance on western sources. While there may be an understandable lack of access to local primary sources in places such as Burma, Laos and Cambodia, the same cannot be said of Thailand. Mr. Heath chooses to quote and speculate on the accounts of contemporary western observers (many of which are available as reprints from White Lotus Press) while apparently ignoring the records and acts preserved by the various ministerial archives of the modern Thai government. Cadet uniforms, for example, are not mentioned nor described in the text, despite the fact that four different examples from between 1887 to 1898 are displayed in the Royal Thai Army Museum in Bangkok. Similarly, there exists a coffee-table-type book published by the Thai army that is filled with photographs portraying Siamese soldiers from the mid-1860s to the early 1900s, some of whom are wearing uniforms not depicted in the book. This isn't to belittle Mr. Heath's herculean effort, but to remind readers that the work isn't as definitive as it could have been. For all my criticisms, there's no doubt that this book will delight and inform anyone with a passing interest on the subject. The fact that it is published at all is enough for me to heartily recommend it to the average wargamer - it deserves a place on every military history bookshelf.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book
By Peter Huston
This book delivers what it promises. Although the cost is high, I finally purchased it and felt it was worthwhile and worth the money. It contains information similar to the Osprey books (but without color prints) and contains as much information (and of similar type) as several of them, making it, arguably a better deal despite the high price. Why not five stars? Mostly for not living up to scholarly academic standards such as citing sources in a uniform manner, identifying and using a consistent form of romanization for foreign names, not providing an appendix of native names in native scripts, etc. Stickler stuff. I still think it's a great book. Finally, just FYI, potential readers might wish to know that the Chin-Lushai peoples of Western Burma and the campaigns in retaliation for their slave raiding are not in this volume of the series but instead in the Northeast India volume. All in all a great book for people interested in the subject.

This is the fourth volume in what has now become the ultimate reference series on "native" armies of nineteenth century Asia. This time the subject is mainland South East Asia, with the armies of Burma, Vietnam, Siam, Cambodia and the Lao and Shan states, plus minor tribal groups, being covered in considerable depth. There are details of each army's history, organisation, tactics, dress and arms supported by 168 drawings of warrior types and 75 photographs, illustrations and maps, plus comprehensive bibliographies.