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*Book Review for Carceral Geographies Working Group*

Moran, D. and Schliehe, A.K. (2017) *Carceral Spatiality: Dialogues between Geography and Criminology*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

As I pause to open this edited collection I am struck by the alluring front cover. The image depicts the inside of a decaying prison wing; flecks of peeling paint reveal the walls literally crumbling in on themselves. The space is void of people, leaving only echoes of past inhabitation to fill the darkened corridors. Yet a selection of small glass skylights plotted across the concave ceiling offer refractions of light that trickle down the walls to the prison floor revealing new insights into the space. In many ways it is the light that first catches the eye, drawing attention to issues of possibility, hope and what lies beyond the decaying institutional space. In all kinds of ways this image hints towards what this collection so remarkably conveys, a unique ability to both dig deep into the depths of a range of carceral spaces and also to push *beyond* what is already there in the scholarship – empirically, methodologically and conceptually – lighting the way for innovative future dialogues in spatial carceral studies.

The initial striking feature of this collection lies within its emphasis on co-production. The editors, Dominique Moran and Anna Schliehe both human geographers by trade, convey from the outset the importance of collaboration and cross-disciplinary conversations to the ongoing development and longevity of carceral geographies. Described as ‘a hybrid creature’ (p.1), this collection showcases a range of critical conversations across geographical and criminological work that seek to simultaneously open up and break down ‘the carceral’ in innovative, challenging and, at times, controversial ways. One may be forgiven for questioning the need to stress aspects of co-production within carceral geographies as a wealth of ongoing literature in the field has continued to demonstrate the interdisciplinary nature of the sub-field (see Moran et al., 2017; Turner and Peters, 2016; Moran, 2015). However, the specific exploration of co-production in this volume offers exciting new insights into the limits and boundaries of the carceral. Within the ten chapters of this text (including the introduction and conclusion written by the editors) a real sense of writers and researchers grappling with their subjects and sites of interest emerges, forcing new insights into ‘carceral spheres’, incarceration and the very ‘place’ of the prison itself. A notable example is Sarah Armstrong and Andrew Jefferson’s experimental piece that fascinatingly re-thinks prison’s agency, its authority and its fluidity. Using the framework of disavowal, the authors seek to showcase the importance in critically considering the question of what ‘the’ prison is and therefore where it may locate itself – in concrete, imaginative, political and embodied forms. In doing so, this collection is setting the scene for further expansion of the limits of studies into the carceral, exposing the porous nature of boundaries between disciplinary research and its potential to insight new ways of thinking and working with carceral spaces.

The collection itself is split into three core sections: Mapping Beyond Carceral Identities, Moving Beyond Carceral Walls and Imagining Beyond Carceral Spaces. Each of the sections are designed to think through different carceral spheres and to explore and examine the interactions between borders, identities and the (embodied) materiality of confinement. The range of contexts, sites and scales that this relatively small collection covers is commendable, with discussions ranging from the street in Cape Town by Lorraine van Blerk, a visitors' centre at HMP Edinburgh by Rebecca Foster, through to the production of the 'prison-city' in Belgium by David Scheer and Colin Lorne. This diverse attention is also relayed in the range of societal concerns illuminated by the chapters. This includes issues of social control, welfare policy, surveillance and the privatisation of public space to name but a few. Each of the chapters highlight a desire to creatively respond to current societal debates with the pressing shadow of the dawning era of hyperincarceration weighing heavily on many of the discussions. A desire to implement social change lies at the heart of many of these narratives and provides a compelling body of evidence for the need to reconsider the use of incarceration in contemporary society.

Conceptually this collection is incredibly rich and innovative with an expansive range of theorists utilised from across geography and criminology. Stand out chapters here include Anna Schliehe's attempts to conceptualise a distinct 'feminist carceral geography' through attention to women's agency and resistance in prison. Jennifer Turner's innovative attention to 'touch' in relation to prisoners' engagement with artwork is extremely effective in exploring the permeable possibilities of prison boundaries. Furthermore, Clemens Bernardt, Bettina van Hoven and Paulus Huigen turn to the unconscious and the impact of memory practices to deconstruct the asylum procedure. Throughout all of the chapters there is an interweaving of theoretical concepts and theorists – some more familiar to geographers than others – that pave the way forward for a critical expansion of the terrains of the carceral both conceptually but also methodologically.

Both a diversification of conceptual frameworks and sites and scales of analysis leads to a very enriching mix of individuals, groups and places coming into view in this collection. Caitlin Gormley's insight into the lived experience of individuals with a learning disability in carceral settings gives important space to marginalised voices. In a similar way, Bernart, van Hoven and Huigen highlight the experiences of the asylum seeker, giving attention to the traumatic, fragmented and sometimes unspeakable memories of these pollicised individuals. Further to this, an increased set of insights into groups that remain marginal in carceral geographies, particularly young people and children, come to the fore including Schliehe's opening up of the exceptional and exclusionary geographies of young women's imprisonment and Foster's moving encapsulation of children's experiences of visitation to the prison. All of this culminates in a rich and engaging set of dialogues that give foresight into the possibilities of what could further be reached, investigated and challenged within geography and criminology.

Overall, this is an exciting piece of scholarship that seeks to pull apart, reveal and re-make the borderlands of carceral geography. Real attempts are made throughout to move beyond traditional disciplinary understandings and to work towards reshaping the future of what carceral geography could or should be. There is an *aliveness* to carceral geographies -conveyed in this collection and elsewhere in the literature – that is exciting, admirable and infectious. The collection of work here represents a sub-field that is furiously pushing at the limits of its remit, refusing to settle on what has gone before and building a sense of critical momentum as it strives towards undertaking social transformation.

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