

# The punishments of space

## another look at Foucauldian carceral geographies



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# Family urges Yousaf over prison suicides

JUSTICE secretary Humza Yousaf has been urged to take action to halt the 'spiralling epidemic' of suicides in Scotland's prisons.

The plea came after Mr Yousaf held talks with the parents of Katie Allan (inset), who took her own life in Polmont Young Offenders Institution while serving a sentence for a drink-driving offence.

Four months after the death of the 21-year-old, another inmate, William Lindsay, 16, killed himself just 48

by STEPHEN DEAL

hours after being remanded there. Stuart and Linda Allan, together with lawyer Aamer Anwar, met the justice secretary and demanded an immediate inspection of Polmont in Stirlingshire.

Mr Anwar claimed there could be 12 suicides in Scots jails this year, adding this would represent the 'worst rate for over a decade'.

He said that, while 26 deaths have been recorded behind bars in 2018, only one had

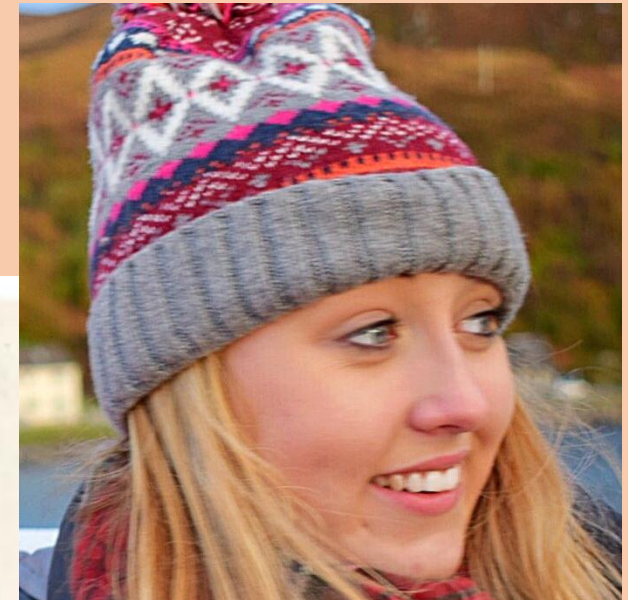
been formally noted a suicide. Mr Anwar said: 'We heard today that half of the deaths so far, they believe, are in relation to natural causes. That means approximately 12 deaths in Scottish prisons are potentially suicides.'

Mr Allan said: 'We have witnessed what happened to Katie, we don't want that to happen to anybody else.'

A Scottish Prisons Service spokesman said all deaths in jail are subject to a fatal accident inquiry, adding that one death this year had been confirmed as a suicide because an inquiry had taken place.



Action: Stuart Allan, Aamer Anwar and Linda Allan after the meeting



<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/prison-bullying/>

# 'The spatial' in carceral geography? spatial primitives? spatial hesitations?

Article



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## Carceral circuitry: New directions in carceral geography

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### Abstract

Despite the popular impression of prisons and other carceral spaces as disconnected from broader social systems, they are traversed by various circulations that reach within and beyond their boundaries. This article opens a new analytical window onto this reality, developing the concept of 'circuits' to critically enquire into the carceral. Drawing inspiration from Harvey (1982; 1985), the article makes circuits do fresh work, teasing apart the emerging carceral landscape to provide a new critical epistemology for carceral geographies. In so doing, a meta-institutional agenda for critical carceral geography is derived, and possible ways to short-circuit carceral systems are revealed.

### Keywords

carceral geography, circuit, circulation, counter-mapping, institution, prison

### I Carceral circuitry: Opening remarks

In February 2016 the BBC reported the increasing use of drones to fly drugs, mobile phones and other contraband into British prisons (BBC, 2016). While no instances of smuggling by drones were detected in 2013, 33 instances had

staff find them unremarkable (*The Guardian*, 2016a). Drone-drops, alongside the still-popular 'throw over' (the wall) method, are increasingly supplementing in-person smuggling, such as during visits, with prisoners 'ordering' drug 'deliveries' in ways which mimic home delivery services on the outside.

Commentary



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## The politics of conceptualizing the carceral: A commentary on Moran et al. (2017)

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### Abstract

This article responds to the call for debate opened by Moran et al.'s 'Conceptualizing the Carceral in Carceral Geography', arguing that how geographers define the carceral has political implications for the work produced in this growing sub-field. While Moran et al. propose detriment, intent, and spatiality as three conditions of carcerality, this commentary instead suggests that geographers adopt Foucault's metaphor of the carceral continuum as one way to conceptualize how carcerality is enacted across a range of intensities and sites, while avoiding strict typological categorizations of particular spaces. In advocating this more flexible approach, this article emphasizes that geographers must always attend to who is imprisoned, by whom, and to what ends. Failing to consider such structural factors risks de-politizing geographical analyses of incarceration.

### Keywords

carceral geography, prisons, carceral continuum, violence

Within geography, recent years have seen a burgeoning, thought-provoking, and much-needed literature on the spaces, landscapes, and practices of incarceration. Yet the concept of the 'carceral' itself has remained largely unexamined in geography. Thus, Moran, Turner, and Schliehe's new piece, 'Conceptualizing the

severe sites of incarceration are modeled. This framing allows for a wide range of "quasi-carceral" spaces' (p. 6) without undermining the centrality of the prison.

Beyond Foucault, Moran et al. suggest three 'conditions' of carcerality – detriment, intent, and spatiality – which they see as 'considera-

Article



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## Conceptualizing the carceral in carceral geography

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### Abstract

Carceral geography has yet to define the 'carceral', with implications for its own development, its potential synergies within and beyond geography, and effective critique of the carceral 'turn'. A range of explicatory alternatives are open, including continued expansive engagement with the carceral, and attendance to compact and diffuse carceral models. We trace the origins of the term 'carceral', its expansive definition after Foucault, the apparent carceral/prison symbiosis, and the extant diversity of carceral geography. We advance for debate, as a step towards its critical appraisal, a series of 'carceral conditions' that bear on the nature and quality of carcerality.

### Keywords

carcer, carceral conditions, carceral geography, Foucault, prison

## I Introduction

The 'carceral turn' – the deployment of a new range of strategies of social control and coercion – has seen resentful views of the poor and vulnerable inform punitive turns in both welfare and justice policy. This turn is epitomized both by growth in the legal, state-sanctioned incarceration of offenders sentenced to ever-longer

Technologies of surveillance and control enable a carceral 'fix' to operate beyond conventional carceral spaces and when persons remain mobile – for example through electronic tagging and the far-reaching stigma of incarceration. Nation-states out-source imprisonment to neighbouring countries: renting out surplus space in under-capacity facilities; funding over-

**Old Foucault, New Foucault?  
From 'exclusionary' Foucault to  
'inclusionary' Foucault?**



## Original publication in French

### Books

*Maladie mentale et psychologie* (1962) [itself a major revision of an earlier work, *Maladie mentale et personnalité* (1954)]  
*Folie et déraison: histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961; revised 1972) [often known only by its subtitle]

*Naissance de la clinique: une archéologie du regard médical* (1963)  
*Les mots et les choses: une archéologie des sciences humaines* (1966)  
*L'archéologie du savoir* (1969)  
*Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison* (1975)

*Histoire de la sexualité, 1: la volonté de savoir* (1976)  
*Histoire de la sexualité, 2: l'usage des plaisirs* (1984)  
*Histoire de la sexualité, 3: le souci de soi* (1984)

### Lecture courses

*Leçons sur la volonté de savoir: cours au Collège de France, 1970-1971* (2011)  
*Théories et institutions pénales: cours au Collège de France, 1971-1972* (2015)  
*La société punitive: cours au Collège de France, 1972-1973* (2013)  
*Le pouvoir psychiatrique: cours au Collège de France, 1973-1974* (2003)  
*Les anormaux: cours au Collège de France, 1974-1975* (2003)  
*'Il faut défendre la société': cours au Collège de France, 1975-1976* (1997)  
[no course, 1976-1977]  
*Sécurité, territoire, population: cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978* (2004)  
*Naissance de la biopolitique: cours au Collège de France, 1978-1979* (2004)  
*Du gouvernement des vivants: cours au Collège de France, 1979-1980* (2012)  
*Subjectivité et vérité: cours au Collège de France, 1980-1981* (2014)  
*L'herméneutique du sujet: cours au Collège de France, 1981-1982* (2001)  
*Le gouvernement de soi et des autres: cours au Collège de France, 1982-1983* (2008)  
*Le courage de la vérité - le gouvernement de soi et des autres II: cours au Collège de France, 1983-1984* (2011)

## Publication in English

*Mental Illness and Psychology* (1976/1987)

(a) *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1965, abridged translation)  
(b) *History of Madness* (2006, unabridged translation)  
*The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (1973)  
*The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1970)  
*The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972)  
*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1976)  
*The History of Sexuality, Vol.1: An Introduction* [also *The Will to Knowledge*] (1979)  
*The History of Sexuality, Vol.2: The Use of Pleasure* (1985)  
*The History of Sexuality, Vol.3: The Care of the Self* (1986)

*Lectures on the Will to Know: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1970-1971* (2013)  
No translation as of publication of present chapter  
*The Punitive Society: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1972-1973* (2015)  
*Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1973-1974* (2006)  
*Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975* (2003)  
*'Society Must be Defended': Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976* (2003)  
*Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978* (2008)  
*The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (2008)  
*On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979-1980* (2014)  
No translation as of publication of present chapter  
*The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-1982* (2005)  
*The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1982-1983* (2010)  
*The Courage of Truth - The Government of Self and Others II: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1983-1984* (2011)

**Table 1:** Foucault's principal published books and lecture courses in French and English (source: author's compilation)

### Lecture courses

Leçons sur la volonté de savoir: cours au Collège de France, 1970-1971 (2011)

Théories et institutions pénales: cours au Collège de France, 1971-1972 (2015)

La société punitive: cours au Collège de France, 1972-1973 (2013)

Le pouvoir psychiatrique: cours au Collège de France, 1973-1974 (2003)

Les anormaux: cours au Collège de France, 1974-1975 (2003)

'Il faut défendre la société': cours au Collège de France, 1975-1976 (1997)

[no course, 1976-1977]

Sécurité, territoire, population: cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978 (2004)

Naissance de la biopolitique: cours au Collège de France, 1978-1979 (2004)

Du gouvernement des vivants: cours au Collège de France, 1979-1980 (2012)

Subjectivité et vérité: cours au Collège de France, 1980-1981 (2014)

L'herméneutique du sujet: cours au Collège de France, 1981-1982 (2001)

Le gouvernement de soi et des autres: cours au Collège de France, 1982-1983 (2008)

Le courage de la vérité - le gouvernement de soi et des autres II: cours au Collège de France, 1983-1984 (2011)

Lectures on the Will to Know: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1970-1971 (2013)

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The Punitive Society: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1972-1973 (2015)

Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1973-1974 (2006)

Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975 (2003)

'Society Must be Defended': Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976 (2003)

Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978 (2008)

The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979 (2008)

On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979-1980 (2014)

No translation as of publication of present chapter

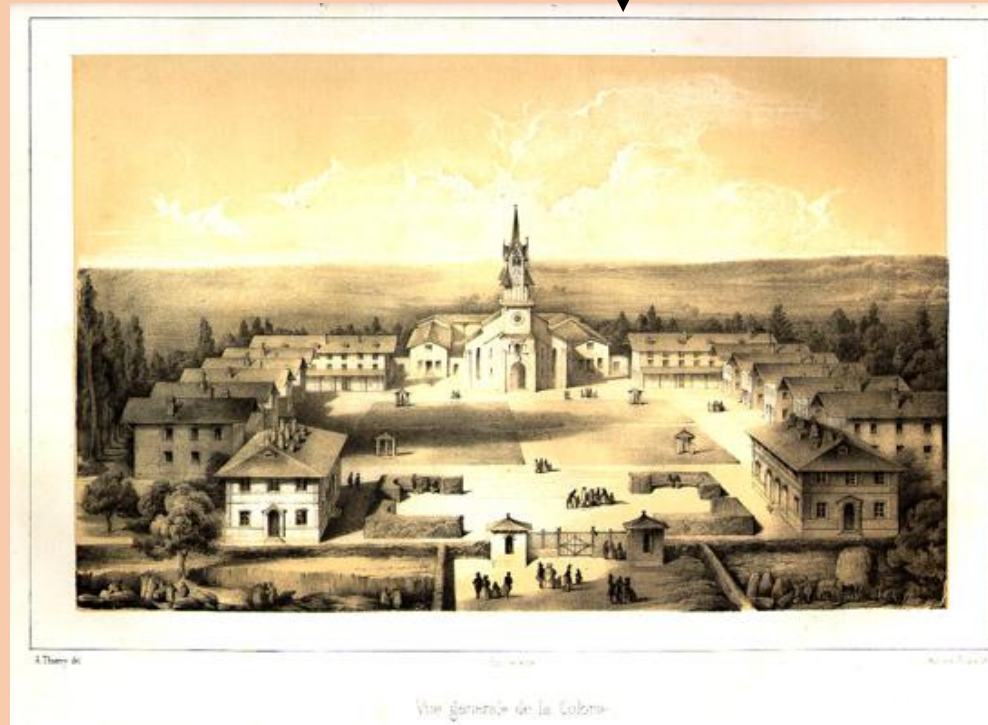
The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-1982 (2005)

The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1982-1983 (2010)

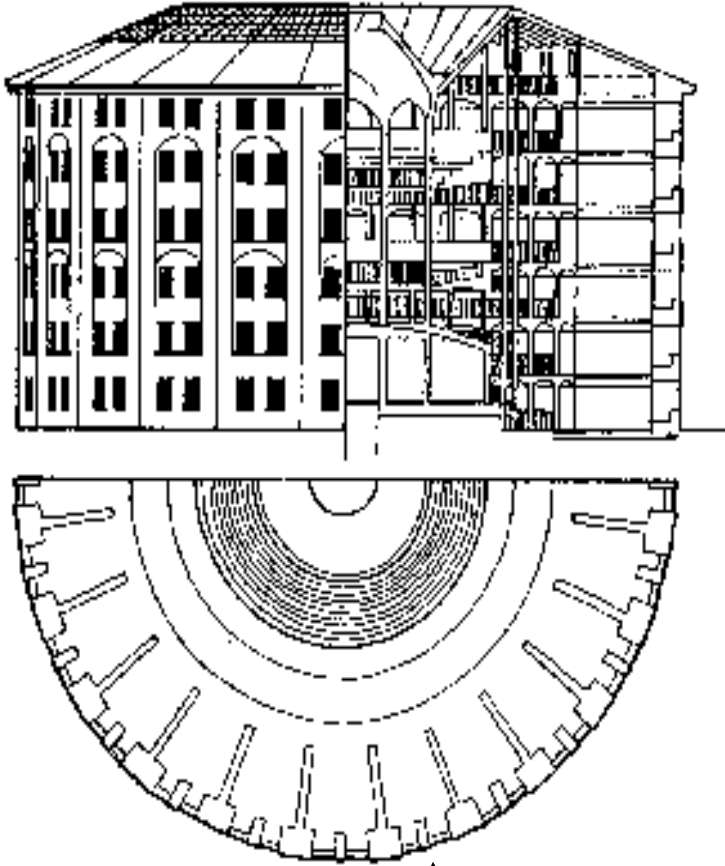
The Courage of Truth - The Government of Self and Others II: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1983-1984 (2011)

# *Discipline and Punish (1976 [1975])*

Mettray, colony  
for delinquent boys,  
c.1840s



Bentham's  
'Panopticon',  
c.1790s



## ***The Punitive Society* (2013 [2015])**

- Rethinking **exclusion**, initially with the help of some ‘anthropological’, alimentary constructs ...
- Contrasting societies that *vomit* out their troublesome individuals (**spatial ostracism**) ...
  - ejecting them, banishing them, abandoning them, chasing them away ...
- ... with societies that *ingest* their troublesome individuals ...
  - retaining them, holding them close (if still apart), with a view to assimilating them and hence neutralising their troublesomeness ...
- Partly a critique of his own earlier stance, notably in *Madness and Civilization* (1965/2006 [1961]) ...



## *The Punitive Society, 2*

- Exclusion remains “the general effect ... of a number of strategies and tactics of power that the very notion of exclusion itself is unable to get at” (PS: 3) ...
- **F.** asks why is it that exclusion becomes regarded as a form of *punishment* c.1700s into early-1800s (in Europe) ...
- He considers *four* “major forms of punitive tactics” (PS: 6):
  1. Compensation ...
  2. Marking ...
  3. Exclusion, “in the strict sense of driving, forcing out” (PS: 6) ...
  4. Confinement, “[t]he tactic we practice,” which “suppresses an individual’s “rights of residence” by “forcing him [*sic*] to look elsewhere for a place in the sun” (PS: 8 & 9) ...
- He hence returns to this spatial primitive of **confinement**, exclusion-*through*-inclusion – imposed inclusion in a place *not* of one’s own choosing – namely, in **prison**, “a new tactic” which, “despite appearance, is in fact not a very old punishment” (PS: 63) ...

## ***The Punitive Society, 3***

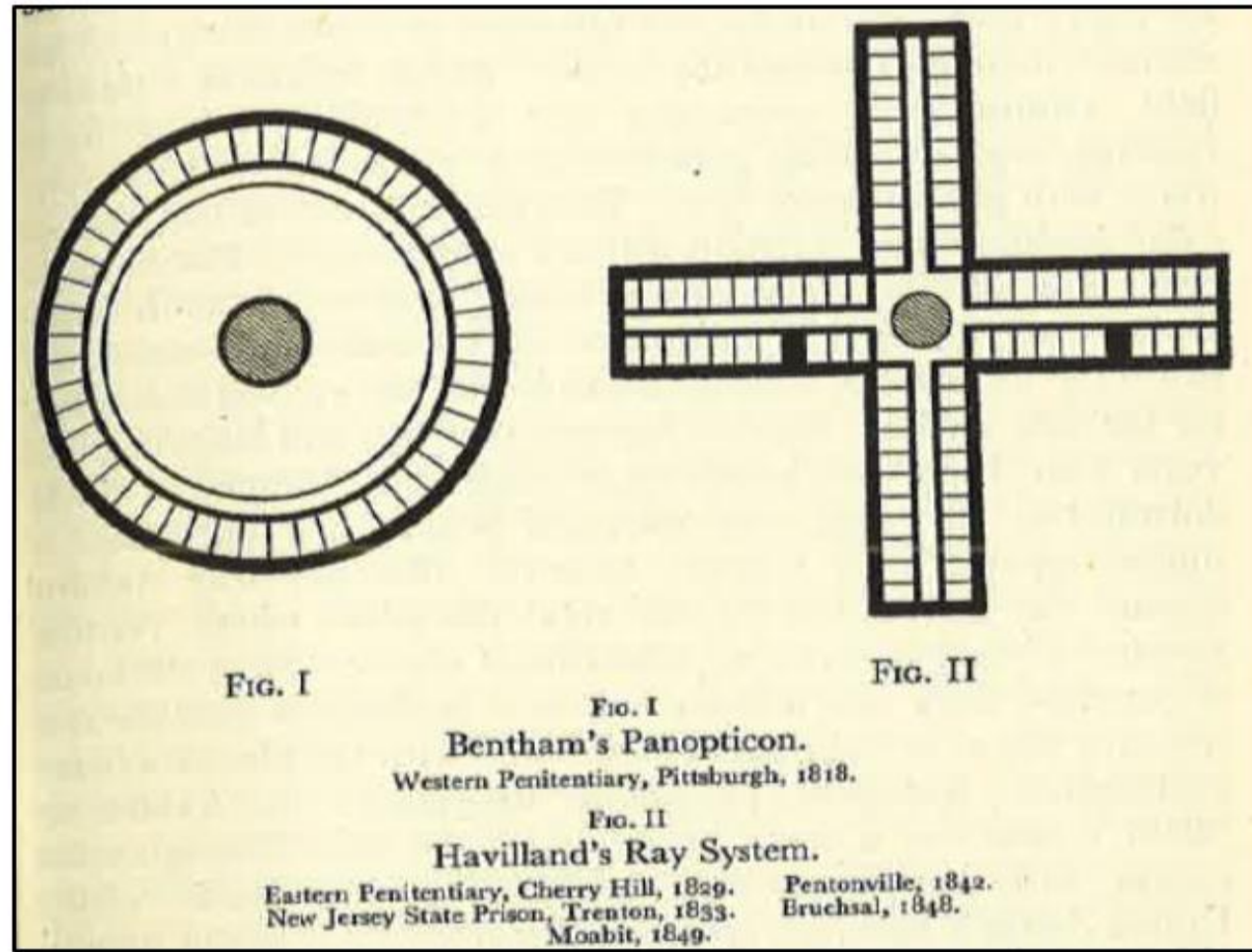
- To be understood in context of a ‘civil war’ against a ‘social enemy’ ...
  - committing ‘illegalisms’ against capital (through laziness/drunkenness, shoddy work, pilferage, injuring other labourers, etc.) ...
- ‘Doing time’ – which is also ‘doing space’! – was to be calibrated as equivalent to the time lost to capital ...
  - “just as the wage is given for a period of labour, so a period of liberty is taken as the price of the infraction” (*PS*: 71) ...
  - “the prison-form and the wage-form are historically twin forms” (*PS*: 71) ...
- With prisons, the authorities decisively control time and space:
  - controlling “a mass of time” but also “fixing locally” in “local confinement” (*PS*: 210 & 211) ...

## ***The Punitive Society, 4***

- F. engages with 1700s English/American Christian moralising missions to the unruly poor – especially the Quaker notion of ‘the penitentiary’ ...
- He sees these missions as generalised through embryonic modern state structures:
  - “the bourgeoisie respond[ed] with a gigantic operation of penal and penitentiary encirclement of lower-class illegalism in general” (PS: 161-162) ...
- Here, the lectures grope towards the concepts of “disciplinary power” (PS: 237) ...
- And towards some indication of not just **spatial confinement**, but also the significance of **spatial distributions** *inside* the prison ...

There is a certain spatial form of the prison: that of the star, with a centre that is the point of constant and universal surveillance, in every direction and at every moment; around the centre are wings in which the life, the work of the prisoners take place; and, constructed on the central point, a tower, which is the heart of the edifice in which authority is established, from which orders are transmitted and to which information flows in from the whole. This is an exact diagram of order as command and regularity; the architectural problems of the theatre, but reversed: showing everything, to a single individual; of the fortress, but reversed: for the latter defined a place that shields you and allows you to see everything happening outside, whereas with the prison it is a case of seeing everything taking place inside without being able to see in from the outside, and, at the same time, of the holder of power inside the prison being shielded from the very one he [*sic.*] sees. (Foucault, 2015: 226-227)





**Figure 2:** Contrasting the circular Panopticon and the cross-shaped Ray System (the simplest form of the 'star' system) (source: Grünhut 1948: 47)

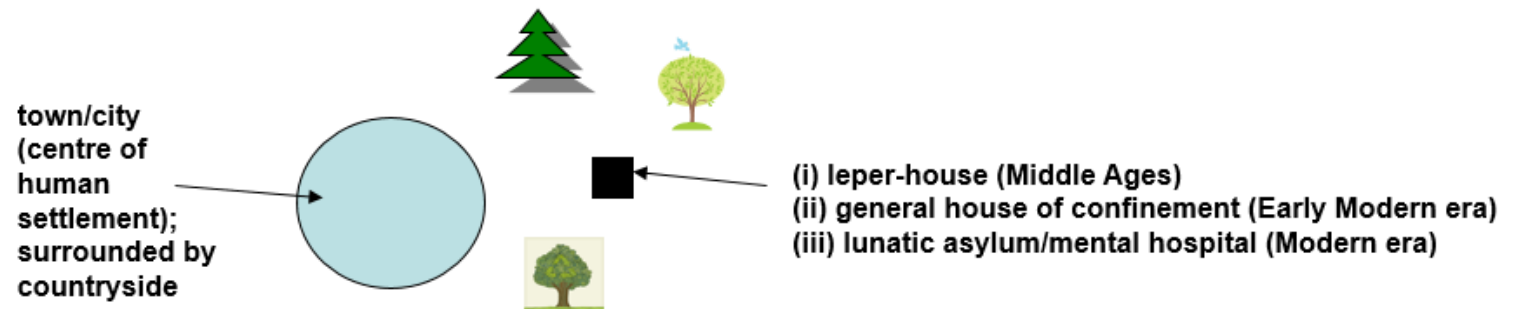
## Foucault's shifts?

- Larger shift signalled here within **F.**'s sense of social geography: shift from *exclusionary geographies* to *inclusionary geographies* ...
  - And, more subtly, from 'exclusion *through* inclusion' to 'inclusion *through* exclusion' ...
- From a blunt sense of space as physical distance (**spatial ostracism** or 'vomiting outside') ...
  - ... 'them / the other' exiled from 'us / the same', across the miles ...
- ... to a sense of space as physical container (**spatial confinement** or 'ingesting inside') ...
  - ... 'them / the other' set apart from 'us / the same', but locally, potentially even just next door (behind the wall and locked gates) ...
- ... to a sense of space as a malleable set of arrangements, networks, relays, etc. (**spatial distributions**) enabling 'operations' upon the 'troublesome' in the hope of reforming (re-including) them ...
- Reading *The Punitive Society* allows us to chart these mutations in **F.**'s thought; and, in so doing, to re-debate the **spatial primitives** of (inquiries into) carceral geographies ...

- F.'s first major work, *Histoire de la folie*, charts a long-term, historical-social *exclusionary geography* of 'the mad' ...

## But, a wrinkle in the narrative? or re-reading *Madness and Civilization* (1965/2006 [1961]), 1

Between labour and idleness in the classical world ran a line of demarcation that replaced the exclusion of leprosy. The asylum was substituted for the lazar house, in **the geography of haunted places** as in the landscape of the moral universe. The old rites of excommunication were revived, but in the world of production and commerce. It was in these places of doomed and despised idleness, in this space ... which had derived an ethical transcendence from the law of work, that madness would appear and soon expand until it had annexed them. A day was to come when it could possess these sterile reaches of idleness by a sort of very old and very dim right of inheritance. The nineteenth century would consent, would even insist that to the mad and to them alone be transferred these lands on which, a hundred and fifty years before, men [sic.] had sought to pen the poor, the vagabond, the unemployed. (Foucault, 1965, p.57)



## ***Madness and Civilization, 2***

- This text additionally reflects at length on exclusion-*through*-inclusion – on the locking away in ‘haunted places’ – of not just ‘the mad’, but also a rather larger population of ‘the unreasonable’ ...
  - The idle, the libertines, the debauched, the venereal, the ‘homosexual’, the blasphemers, the failed suicides ...
- ‘Madness’ was here part of a larger assemblage of ‘unreasonable’ people: it “faded into a general apprehension of unreason” (*HM*: 118); into a generalised carceral geography of unreason ...
  - “inmates suddenly found themselves prisoners rather than patients” (*HM*: 119) ...
- A *general confinement* that swept across Early Modern Europe (from 1600s onwards)
  - ‘*hopitals generals*’, ‘prisons’, ‘gaols’, ‘houses of correction’, ‘houses of industry’, ‘workhouses’, ‘poorhouses’ ...



## ***Madness and Civilization, 4***

- F. pictures this Early Modern landscape through references to the Marquis de Sade and (1740-1814) and Francisco de Goya (1746-1828) ...
- Sade, this libertine-‘pervert’, regarded as intensely ‘unreasonable’, locked away in bastilles and asylums ...
- And whose own writings often circulated around such fortresses and fastnesses ...

“... it is no coincidence that ... confinement figures so strongly in an *oeuvre* ordered around images of the Fortress, the Cell, the Dungeon, the Convent, the inaccessible island that seem to be the natural places of unreason. Neither is it a coincidence that the whole fantasy literature of madness and horror coincident with Sade’s work takes place primarily in the high places of confinement” (Foucault, 2006, p.362) ...|

## Madness ..., 5

- Goya's *Black Paintings* are centralised by F. ...
  - “a world in which ... there is no light” (Danto, 2004); “black in tone, relieved only by lurid shades of raw colour, and black in spirit without any relief of any kind” (Dave, 2011) ...
- Different editions of *HF/MC/HM* have carried different Goya images on their covers ...

“[Disturbing visions of madness] were also to be found in the half-light of Goya's *Madhouse*, or the twilight that enveloped the *Quinto del sordo* ... A whole imaginary landscape re-emerges, animated by the Fear that confinement now evokes. ... It was as though a new ... cultural role had been added to the fortresses of confinement, with their social role of segregation and purification. At the moment when on the surface of society they separated reason and unreason, they also kept, in depth, images where both seemed to mingle and fuse. They had long functioned like a great memory that had kept silent, and lurking in the shadows was the dark power of an imaginary that many hoped had been exorcised for good” (Foucault, 2006, p.361) ...|

***The Madhouse*** (*Casa de locos*) or ***Asylum*** (*Manicomio*) is an oil-on-panel painting by Francisco de Goya, produced between 1812 and 1819

***Yard with Lunatics*** (*Corral de locos*) is an oil-on-tinplate painting by Francisco de Goya, produced 1793-1794

- **F.** makes a complex historical-literary-aesthetic move here to disclose, at it were, the secret dark truths of **spatial confinement** ...
  - Tied to his specific arguments about ‘the Great confinement’ of ‘unreason’ in Early Modern Europe, but also configured as “timeless space” (*MH*: 361) ....
- The swarming multiplicities, animalities, excesses, follies, etc., of ‘unreason’ (and particularly ‘madness’) seething in the depths of *general confinement* ...
- That which, at some subterranean level of the Western social-psyche, is *feared*; that which must forever be shunned, shunted away, shut away ...
- Evoking what must be met with violence, with stone-work and blows: what must be *punished* ...
- Conjuring what might be termed a **phenomenology of dark space** ...



## Conclusions

- Disquisition on the spatial primitives for an emerging subfield of inquiry, carceral geographies ...
- Using Foucault as my spirit-guide:
  - (a) noting the centrality of a quite *simple* sense of **spatial confinement** to *The Punitive Society* (2013 [2015]) – prior to the spatial pyrotechnics of *Discipline and Punish* (1975 [1976]) ...
  - (b) noting the centrality of **spatial confinement** to *Madness and Civilization* (1965/2006 [1961]) – especially in an ‘imaginary landscape’ affectively produced by Sade and Goya ...
- But, in so doing, alighting on the horrors and terrors of **spatial confinement**: its dark secrets ...
- And, thereby, on the punitive exactions of carceral geographies: **the punishments of space** ...