Call for Papers

**Framing the penal colony**

**Conference in Nottingham, England**

**22-23 November 2019, National Justice Museum, UK**

Whether presented as a tabula rasa onto which all the hopes, desires, pathologies and detritus of Empire might be projected, as a brilliant story of nation-state building via a hearty mix of backbreaking labour and genocide, or as an abandoned scarred landscape of failed utopian dreams, the penal colony is a space as much imagined as real.

This conference will explore historical and contemporary representations of the penal colony as philosophical concept, political project and geographical imaginary.

While direct challenges to existing historiographies are anticipated, the intention is to consider the role of visual culture, maps, photography, cinema, graphic novels/comics, museums in ‘framing’ the penal colony alongside literature, philosophy, politics.

If the penal colony is generally considered to belong to the past, its legacy remains in the form of the prison islands and convict labour camps still operative across the globe.

What can historical and contemporary representations of the penal colony tell us about its continuing legacy and what opportunities do such representations offer for thinking critically and creatively about our own ‘carceral’ present?

We welcome proposals for papers or panels. Please send 250-word abstracts and a short bio to sophie.fuggle@ntu.ac.uk by 30 June 2019.

The conference is funded by the AHRC as part of the ‘Postcards from the bagne’ project and will be held at the National Justice Museum in Nottingham, UK. The project blog can be visited here: http://cartespostalesdubagne.com

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http://postcardsfrominside.com