

full speech? Is not entry into its imperfect language of claiming, each time, a terrifying pleasure?

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Transitional Justice: Images and Memories. Edited by Chrisje Brants. Antoine Hol and Dina Siegel. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. 284 pp. £68.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Angi Buettner, Media Studies Program, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Kofi Annan, chair of the Elders group of former world leaders and former UN secretary general, was cited recently to the effect that “climate change would leave the living envying the dead” (Vidal 2015); Annan is echoing a phrase by Nikita Khrushchev talking about nuclear war in 1979. The point he is making is that political and environmental turmoil caused by droughts, floods, and the many other effects of rising temperatures will crucially transform our social life and times. *Transitional Justice* makes a contribution to the discussion of this issue, within the more general context of considering criminology as social theory tasked with analyzing a contemporary world marked by global political, economic, and environmental turmoil.

The book is an edited collection in Ashgate’s series “Advances in Criminology.” It makes a timely, well-organized, and thematically coherent contribution to the field in two ways: via its discussion of transitional justice and via its overarching theme of the role of criminology. Its particular strength lies in its multidisciplinary and international approach: its 13 chapters provide critiques of the various dimensions of transitional justice by criminal lawyers, cultural anthropologists, criminologists, political scientists, and historians. Transitional justice is concerned with the judicial, political, and cultural procedures of dealing with mass atrocity, or “the reckoning afterwards” (p. 2), as the editors articulate it. Such procedures range from international trials to grassroots memory initiatives, and this collection offers a detailed map of the discursive field of transitional justice. Each chapter is a case study of different procedures and landscapes of transitional justice, such as the role of political apology (Chapter Seven) and the emotional landscape of the India/Pakistan partition (Chapter 13). Although all these case studies differ in their disciplinary approach, rigorous research and clear editing results in

valuable contributions to each chapter's topic as well as the book's overall theme. The areas of the discursive field laid out in the book are: historiography and nation-building; state sovereignty and the rights of the individual; commemoration and the ideological control of space and history, through the *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) (Nora 1989) of atrocities; official versus grassroots commemoration or state appropriation and civic activism as political critique; and, finally, binding it all together, transitional justice procedures (political rituals, lynch mobs, trials, and so forth) and the moral questions of how to recompense victims and to actually do justice.

The book's aim is to provide a perspective on justice that goes beyond issues of legalities, in order to address the complexities of the different dimensions of transitional justice involved in dealing with the past. The wider question that the book asks is how to develop forms of empirical enquiry that respond to the social world in what Zygmunt Bauman (1990) calls "responsible speech" (p. 6). Chapter Seven is of particular interest in this regard: it considers which disciplines are crucial to a critical understanding of questions raised by transitional justice and makes a case for the arts and humanities to be involved in addition to the traditional law and political science focus. The role of ritual in addressing acts of atrocity is a case in point: its engagements in individual and collective actions, and the complex relationships between the two, cannot be grasped without accounting for the psychological and the performative. From within the framework of performance studies, this chapter demonstrates the value that the humanities can bring to the field of criminology by performing a sociological and deeply engaged reading of ritual and the formation of selves and what motivates us to action in the face of injustice. The author brings Pierre Bourdieu's work on how dispositions and actions are shaped into the analysis of contemporary operations and performances of the ritual (such as the political apology).

Other chapters are equally impressive. Chapter One provides a highly informative, sophisticated, and articulate historiographical account of Turkish history and current political situation both within the European Union and internationally; and Chapter Five deals with the cultural history of Semlin Lager (a Serbian *lieu de mémoire*) offering a truly innovative political economy account of real estate with historical importance. This chapter raises the key problem this edited collection is grappling with: to what extent can transitional justice processes, such as public commemoration, represent a means of recompensing victims and doing justice. This is the ultimate question raised by *Transitional Justice*: how to give true justice to the victims and how to really deal with the damage and trauma inflicted on both individuals and society by massive wrongdoing. By utilizing a holistic approach to the ethical complexities

involved in these questions, this book renews the necessary dialogue about criminology's place in public life.

The book is a useful resource for anyone working in social science disciplines dealing with these issues; however it would also be of interest to anyone curious about our international political landscape and questions of justice and injustice caused by global transformations.

References

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Inferno: An Anatomy of American Punishment. By Robert A. Ferguson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014. 337 pp. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewed by Jonathan Simon, School of Law, University of California, Berkeley

In this learned and emotionally charged book, Robert Ferguson, Professor of law, literature and criticism at Columbia University, asks questions usually elided by specialists in criminal law and criminology. Why are Americans so ready to punish fellow citizens with prison sentences, sometimes astoundingly long ones? Why do Americans seem to care so little about what the lives are like of people they actually exile to those prisons? Is the combination of mass incarceration and chronically overcrowded and inhumane prisons for which the United States is now globally infamous a result of good intentions gone awry? Or is this precisely our intention in voting for laws that produce, and approving elected public officials who preside over, prisons that deny human dignity in the words of Justice Kennedy's landmark *Brown v. Plata* (2011) decision capping California's prison population?

The basic figures and facts about mass incarceration in the U.S. today are well-known, but this book moves into topics and sources generally ignored. Ferguson takes far more seriously than most critics of mass incarceration the formal legitimacy of prison as