

## Back cover

At a time when the Covid-19 pandemic continues to cause ravages around the world and day by day transforms our mother earth into a "vast prison", if only to remind the reader of the title of Assia Djébar's novel, a no less broad study of the prison, the object of this work, cannot be more timely and even more pressing.

If, for Victor Brombert, "the prison haunts our civilization" and, for Joan Davies, "it is impossible to understand Western thought without recognizing the influence of the prison as a theoretical and literary subject", the present volume, from a definitely multidisciplinary perspective, offers to deal with the exclusively literary theme of prison less than with the *question* of prison. Because the prison truly raises questions and turns out to be a fundamentally complex and problematic object of study, as located at the crossroads of several fields of thought (history, sociology, literature, but also arts and philosophy), and as gaining from being apprehended from several tackling vantage points. That is how, throughout the four books that make up this volume, namely "Observing the prison", "Writing of the prison", "Writing in prison", "Thinking about the prison", researchers from various horizons probe the prison, according to different approaches, mostly historical, sociological, literary, aesthetic, phenomenological, and then, in turn, consider it in its empirical and material reality, and in its literary and imaginary representations, as well as in its theoretical and philosophical implications.