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DLA-THESES

Disciplinary Spaces – Roles and opportunities of architecture in correctional service



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**DISCIPLINARY SPACES – ROLES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF ARCHITECTURE
IN CORRECTIONAL SERVICE**

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ABSTRACT

Crime and punishment are accompanying the history of mankind from the very beginning up to these days. Crime must be punished – it's a fundamental social and ethical norm. However, semantic meanings of crime and punishment have changed significantly through the different eras and according to the types of societies.

Imprisonment could only have developed into a general punishment when freedom has become recognised as a value and wrongdoers started to be punished by depriving them of this particular value, freedom. Surprisingly enough imprisonment as a form of punishment and the prison as an institution to implement it are modern concepts, "inventions" of early capitalism.

The present paper attempts to show prison architecture of our times in the context of changes. Practice of correctional service has been very much affected by the social and ideological changes of the second half of the 20th century. Humane approach is getting more and more important instead of the exclusionary aspect of the earlier ages. Focus has been placed on human right issues. It has become essential to handle social problems, to help offenders reintegrate into the society, to rehabilitate them. Punishment of the body is being taken over by nurture of the soul.

Prison architecture also needs to meet these requirements. Contemporary building complexes with their spatial organisations, massing and interior design must take part in the rehabilitation process. Apart from this, they also must be economical with efficient operation, adequate employment of the prisoners and reduced number of staff.

Most prisons nowadays however are not new buildings, but ones with about hundred years of history. Out-dated structures are hardly if at all suitable for implementing new ideas. Therefore, historical overview is needed to examine the background of currently operating penitentiaries. Foreign (European) and Hungarian prison history are in close relation with each other. With a small delay Hungary has always been following European ways of development. Morphological typology of prisons offers a conceptual account of massing and spatial organisations of buildings in use. Possibility opens within this context to demonstrate the principles of operation, systems of control, and the changes in prison concept.

Expectations of modern times make it necessary, and social sciences provide a wide-range of possibilities to approach contemporary prisons from different perspectives: Philosophy provides the means to understand the operation of power and total institutions. Ethical questions emerge from social and professional explanations. Methods of prison psychology and environmental psychology illustrate the widespread information available. International and national examples prove not only architectural diversity, but the fact that appearance of buildings becomes a part of educational psychology, while being an effective tool of implementing reintegration goals.

THESES

THESIS I

Layouts and spatial organizations of historical prisons form geometrical shapes, while campuses - belonging to the new-generation prison concept – have more free, pavilion-like arrangement. Difference demonstrates the changes in control systems that can be linked to changes in attitudes of pedagogical methodology.

Authoritarian punitive methods are used by indirect supervision of historical prisons, while direct surveillance of campuses focuses on correction, development and follows democratic educational principles based on responsibility and partnership.

THESIS II

Clear-out design (massing, spatial organisation, layout, use of materials) places the detention in an environment that suggest order and unity, which has an important role in rehabilitation process.

Order and structure are the starting point for every educational discipline. Architectural appearance is the part of the educational and rehabilitation programs of the correctional institutes, which manifests mainly in layout, massing, spatial organisation and use of materials.

THESIS III

Every penitentiary works as a small town (society) where certain urban (social) functions must be integrated (e.g. education, sport, healthcare, practice of religion, etc.).

Educational units are the most significant from the aspect of personal development. Institutions providing vocational training and re-training are important both for the economy and the society. Sport facilities serve the physical fitness of the inmates, which is a basic requirement for rehabilitation.

THESIS IV

Convicts released from correctional facilities designed by considering human rights, ethical norms and basic human needs can be reintegrated into the society more easily.

Both local and foreign correctional institutions maintain relevant statistics. According to the observations time spent under Spartan circumstances seriously affect inmates' soul and view of the world, and their future actions are likely directed against society. Accordingly, punishment does not help to achieve the desirable goal of correction.

Quotation on back cover:

Inscription about the modern concept of punishment from the facade of S. Michele boys' prison in Rome constructed by Clement IX.

„Parum est coercere improbos poena, nisi probos efficias disciplina“
„It avails little to punish the wicked unless you reform them by discipline.“

