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Urban Prison Design with emphasis on Behavior of Prisoners: Psychological Implications and suggestions

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Abstract
Prisons come at great cost to society and still result in inmates disassociated from society. Incarceration is however our primary forms of punishment; therefore we need to define the purpose of punishment to be integrated into our goals for prisons. Prison architecture is a complex area of study, the classification proposed in this paper can be an important research tool by taking into consideration a holistic approach to the domain. The physical environment of the users is a large factor, but architecture can only be influential when coupled with policy reform. To achieve this, one must look after both the physical and psychological well-being of the inmates. We can observe four models of prisons: the rehabilitation model, the safety model, the repressive prison model and the hybrid model. Each model is a response at the social and cultural characteristics of the area were the prison is build. Each model is different from the others, by the architectural approach. The main variations between the models are concerning the security systems, the prison facilities and the design. The philosophy behind this concept is the understanding that an occupied prisoner is less violent and is less likely to assault the staff or other inmates.

Key Words: *Prison Design, Behavior of Prisoners; model of prisons, Psychological Implications and suggestions.*

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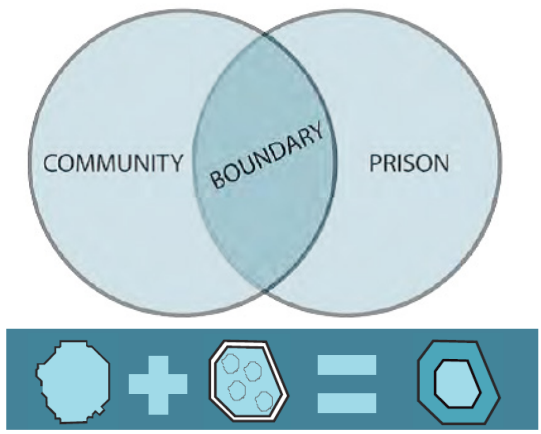
"The history of prison architecture stands as a discouraging testament of our sometimes intentional, sometimes accidental degradation of our fellow man. Prison structures have continued to be built in a way which manages by one means or another to brutalize their occupants and to deprive them of their privacy, dignity, and self-esteem, while at the same time strengthening their criminality. The 19th century allowed vast and dreary buildings and physical cruelty to grind down the prisoner. The contemporary prison seems to allow mechanical contrivances to dominate the prisoner. Architects in the future must share some responsibility for the unintended indignities made possible by their works" (Johnston 1973:53).

1.Introduction

A prison is a place where people that break the law are looked up as a punishment for their crimes. The prison has different characteristic in different cultures, there are places of punishment and isolation or places for the treatment and rehabilitation of those convicted of a crime, and even places of repression and symbols of terror. Attention to the specific nature of a prison as a "place" illuminates the ways in which features such as architecture, acoustics, and larger socio-political forces penetrate correctional institutions and create a unique kind of total institution in which the presence of medical care and access to it is continually negotiated. The planned space of a prison can be understood as a leading example of the intentional translation of power relations into the organization of space and movement for the purposes of production (Massey, 1995). In the case of prison, the production includes the production of prisoners (Foucault) as well as the economic wealth generated by the employment of staff and by prison labor. The prison as reformatory in the sense of being a place where workers are produced is based on the notion of salvageable humanity, albeit a humanity that is already destined, by virtue of being prisoners, to a unique and damaged salvation. At various periods and differentially within individual societies, the emphasis may be either on a discourse in which the prisoner is only temporarily a criminal and potentially salvageable as a worker or more on an essential zing discourse in which the prisoner can only be reformed into a permanent criminal.



▲ Fig 1. Interactive Boundary Diagram & Fig 2. Formulaic Diagram: Prison as a Wall

In the first part of the paper there are presented the main classifications regarding the prison domain, following a description of the new classification introduced here, the classification by objectives and the characteristics of each type of prison found. The question of how the immediate environment affects individual behavior has attracted considerable attention in recent years. In studying this phenomenon, it is necessary to separate out extraneous factors as much as possible to determine what behavioral aspects are contingent mainly on the environment. For the most part, it is a hazy area in which much of the work is theoretical. Researchers employ various means in trying to understand the influence of design on, for example, violence.

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Fig 3. Prison Goal Breakdown; source: authors.

Prison as a "place"

The primary contemporary goals of correctional institutions in the United States are punishment, custody, and discipline, with little attention to learning marketable skills. Since prisons are institutions designed to manage movement and restrict individuality as much as possible, they can also be understood as locations which make the creation and protection of a personal sense of place extremely difficult (Kantrowitz, 1996; Philo, 2001). Even the prisoner's cell "sanctuary" is under surveillance and can be invaded by guards at any time. Although weakly theorized, the notion of place is widespread in the understanding of contemporary incarceration. At a global level, Amnesty International (1998, 1999) and Human Rights Watch (1998) examine the degree to which various states and local governments meet basic human rights conventions in the treatment of prisoners. At a micro level they raise questions about impacts of the internal geographies of prisons on the health and life of prisoners (Coomaraswamy, 1998). A human geography perspective has also been used to address class and race aspects of the siting and internal structure of prisons and jails (Gilmore, 1998; Parenti, 1999). In their commentary on prisons in the United States and elsewhere, Grayson and Taylor (2000) demonstrate that these ultra-secure fortresses where prisoners typically male and dark-skinned can be confined in isolation up to 24 h a day for years at a time are especially conducive to such analysis (Kupers, 1999). The prisoner's daily life is essentially over determined by the geography and management of space within such institutions.

In his classic work, Discipline and Punish, Foucault, ([1975] 1995) emphasized the prison's management of its inmates through surveillance, organization of spatial activity, and classification. In Foucault's broad theory of society, the system, like other fundamentally modern institutions, was designed to "reform" the inmate through this management. Foucault argues that the primary goal of this re-formation is the creation of the prisoner/criminal. The prison, he noted, created future prisoners through the labeling power of institutional commitment, the prisoners' internalization of the dominant discourse concerning their own nature, and through various outside technologies used to identify potential prisoners and manage them after release. Casey's notion of "anti-place" (1997) can be usefully applied to the prison as a way of understanding the apparent lack of empathy for the incarcerated by those who "care" for them, as either their custodians or their health care

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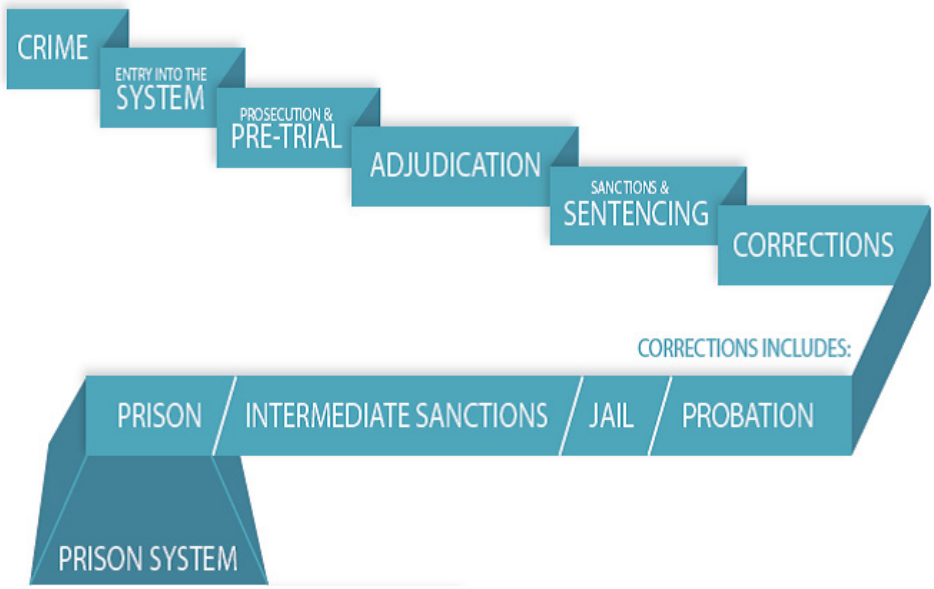

Fig 4. Process through the Criminal Justice System; source: authors.

providers.

In other words, the architectural and regulatory construction of prison naturalizes the prisoner as a depersonalized unit, teaching both the staff and the prisoner that this hyper-management and loss of agency is normal within the walls of this total institution. Prison becomes a dangerous and hostile place to negotiate. In prison, the body is all that the prisoner has. She is a number, a body to be counted for the regime, but she is also a person. The objective and subjective tension in the prison is between the prisoner as body/ number and as person. Staff members and prisoners learn the system of rules and the limits of life within them. This learning is structured by the process of negotiating the material location of prison, as it is experienced daily. Over time, each prison's culture comes to be seen as a "natural environment", within which health care services are situated.

Background of the research

The Bureau of the Census is involved in research of this type, though somewhat indirectly. In 1979 the Bureau distributed questionnaires to state facilities, both regular and community-based. Among the questions asked were several concerning the number, capacity, and square footage of the institution's confinement units (cells, rooms, dormitories, and so on). Estimates were requested of the average number of hours per day that the inmates were not permitted to leave the confinement units. The final item on the questionnaire regarded the number of inmate deaths during calendar year 1978, and the nature of those deaths: natural causes, suicide, accidental injury to self, injury by another person, or other causes, When the data from these questionnaires are compiled and interpreted, it may be possible to draw some connections between the amount of living space allotted to inmates in a facility and the number of violent deaths there.

Another factor possibly related to living space is mental or emotional stress; the questionnaires inquire as to the number of inmates receiving prescription medication for the treatment of these ailments. It will be very interesting to read the findings of these questionnaires. Prisons are indeed an extreme an extreme social and, therefore, psychological configuration. The Society of Captives, by Gresham Sykes, is a well-known analysis of the quality of life in prison. Above all, Sykes emphasizes the psychological pains

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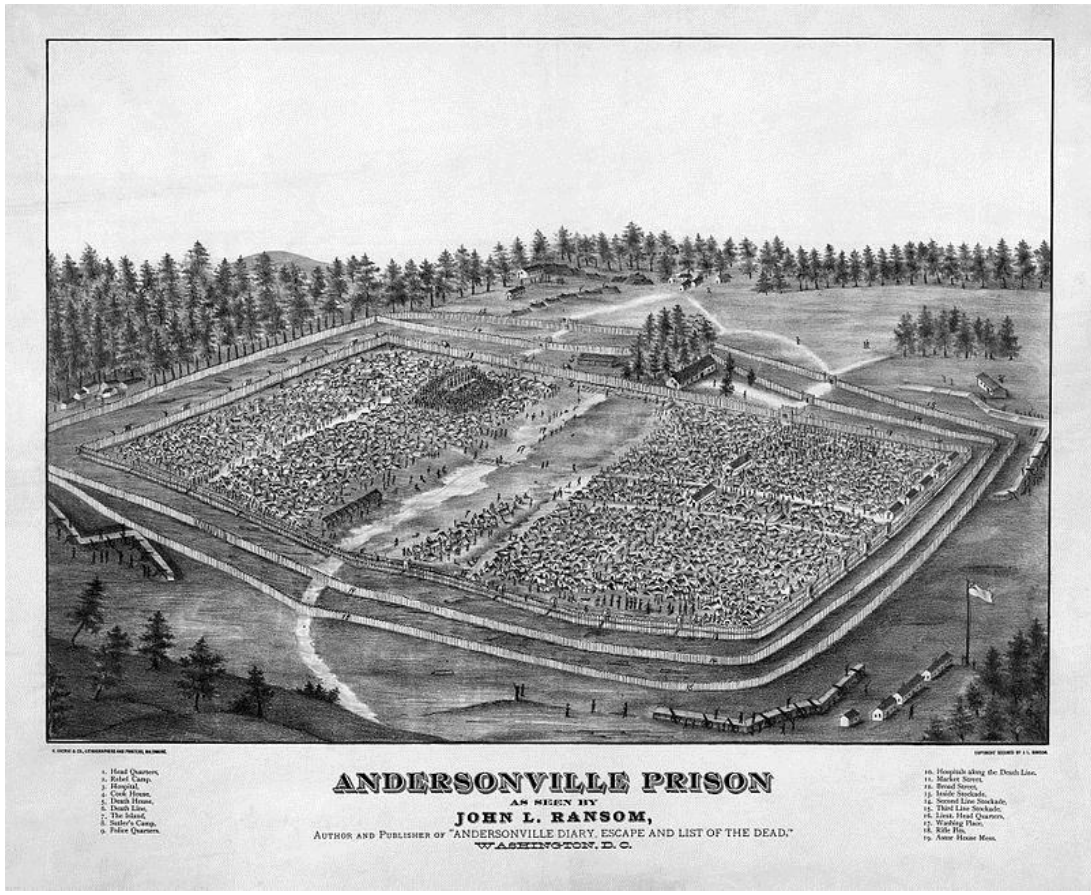

Fig 5. A depiction of Andersonville Prison by John L. Ransom; Robert H. Kellogg, sergeant major in the 16th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, described his entry as a prisoner into the prison camp, May 2, 1864: As we entered the place, a spectacle met our eyes that almost froze our blood with horror, and made our hearts fail within us. Before us were forms that had once been active and erect; stalwart men, now nothing but mere walking skeletons, covered with filth and vermin. Many of our men, in the heat and intensity of their feeling, exclaimed with earnestness. "Can this be hell?" -"God protect us!" and all thought that He alone could bring them out alive from so terrible a place. In the center of the whole was a swamp, occupying about three or four acres of the narrowed limits, and a part of this marshy place had been used by the prisoners as a sink, and excrement covered the ground, the scent arising from which was suffocating. The ground allotted to our ninety was near the edge of this plague-spot, and how we were to live through the warm summer weather in the midst of such fearful surroundings, was more than we cared to think of just then.

of imprisonment: the loss of liberty, of autonomy, social identity, material possessions to a large extent, heterosexual relationships, and even the loss of security---it is clear that prison is not a safe environment for the inmates (Sykes 1958:65). (The basic role of the self as perceived by the individual is forfeited upon admission to the prison, and this loss is reinforced by the all-controllmgnature of the institution. Choice is extremely limited; dehumanization characterizes prison life. It is not surprising to find pathological and aggressive reactions to such an unnatural social environment. The individual entering a correctional institution is entering a new existence: one apart from home, family, job, friends, and social life, for as long as several decades; Even if only for a term of a few years, incarceration for such a period of time is frequently devastating (Cohen and Taylor 1972:43). The prisoner does not wish to be where he or she is; residence in the new environment is quite against his or her will.

Prison Classifications

In order to talk about prison architecture we first need to take into consideration the different types of prisons and, of course, of prisoners. The prisoners are classified using criteria such as: sex, age, race, physical and psychological state and sentence. And the prisons are

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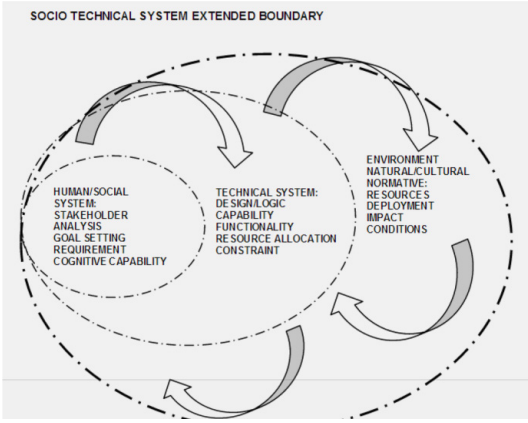

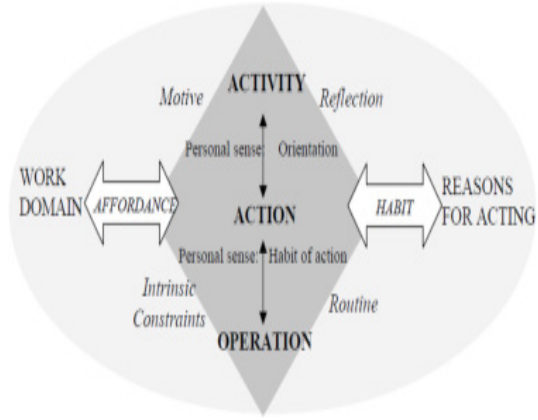

Fig 6 & 7. Activity, action and operation in boundaries of prison; source: authors.

ranked by the type of prisoners and, also, by an administrative criteria[1]. As of the early part of the twentieth century, prison architecture reverted to being merely stylistic variations on a theme no longer were "systems" of penal treatment exemplified in institutional design. At this time, then, three different styles were dominant: the radial plan; the Auburn or inside-cell plan; and the telephone-pole plan, a high-security plan soon to be described. The last evolved with the need for increased prisoner mobility within the prison buildings due to vocational training and educational classes conducted in various parts of the institution (Johnston 1973:41).

K. L. McReynolds, a Canadian research consultant, puts forth a succinct comment on prison design and construction today:

"Building a correctional facility is a complicated process characterized all too often by an unsatisfied customer. Sometimes this dissatisfaction comes about because the client, usually a senior representative of a provincial or federal government, does not or cannot define the requirements of the new facility in a manner which can be synthesized into physical form. In other instances, the client may, unknowingly, hold preconceptions which are either obsolete or unrealistic. Thus it is not until the prison is built that their inappropriateness becomes apparent" (McReynolds 1973:26).

Prisoners have no option but to conform in their movements, their arrangements of meager possessions (usually limited to what will fit in a small locker), and their daily schedules, even within their cells, to the rules of the larger institution. Nevertheless, prisoners do create "homes" for themselves. One prisoner I have been visiting for 25 yr said, "I have to admit that this is my home. I no longer have a home outside in the sense of knowing a place. If I ever leave, I want to go to the desert somewhere, on a reservation perhaps, to a place which is empty." "Homes" made within prison are fragile places (Malpas, 1999) that can be disrupted at any time by a unit-wide search or an unannounced transfer. Prior to this time, all that was expected of a prison architect was the production of a secure, relatively sanitary institution which included work facilities. The development of a penal philosophy was not the architect's responsibility. As inmate populations grew and inmate activities (aside from labor) increased, however, there arose a need for designs which could cope with the greater prisoner mobility and extensive programs (Johnston 1973:52).

1.Considering the administrative criteria there are the following types of prisons: state prisons, private prisons and hybrid prisons. State prisons are built and run by the state, the guards are public officials. This type is found in the US, UK or Romania. Private prisons are built and managed by an independent administrator and are popular in the US. The state pays a fee for the inmates in the prisons care. Hybrid prisons are the ones run in a partnership between the state and a private investor. There are two type of hybrid prisons: built by a private company and run by the state (in France and Brazil) and prisons build by the state and managed by an independent administrator (in the UK).

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Fig 8. Holding cells in the Colosseum, Rome, Italy & Fig 9. Steps to Lowering Recidivism

Contemporary architecture and prison

There are many perspectives and considerations involved in the concept of correctional institutions as physical entities. A prison's location, age, general layout, and security provisions are of importance at the micro level; the type of housing, dining areas, dayrooms, and specialized structures are significant at the relative micro level. There are several reasons why new institutions are most frequently erected in rural areas. A few are as follows:

a) Many states own land in the country, or real estate is cheaper there.

b) Legislators with power arrange for institutions to be built in their rural districts to combat unemployment there.

c) Urban citizens lobby against the construction of penitentiaries in their neighborhoods.

d) Some officials honestly believe that a rural setting promotes rehabilitation better than an urban one (Nagel 1973:49).

Preferably, a prison should be located near the centers of population, not only to facilitate visiting by the families but especially to enable the hiring of a racially balanced staff: racial tensions are the source of much prison violence, and it is only reasonable to attempt an approximation of equal percentages of blacks, whites, and Hispanics between the prisoners and the personnel (Nagel 1976, 112). In addition to this, it is important that prisons be as close as possible to places of learning and employment; proximity facilitates the implementation of educational and, perhaps, work-release programs for the inmates. Correctional institutions far from these resources have difficulty keeping abreast of many penological advances in related areas.

Professionalization and accreditation

Litigation has been a key factor in improving the quality of prison medical staff (Barry, 1996). This trend has been fostered by the development of a variety of standards and accreditation programs. Accreditation of health services in prisons and jails, offered initially by the American Medical Association, is now

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Fig 10. Renderings of the New Danish State Prison.

overseen by a National Commission on Correctional Health Care, which operates similarly to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). In addition to their emphasis on properly trained and licensed staff, accreditation standards include requirements concerning the material environment: clinic space, visibility, and equipment; regulations concerning cleanliness, air quality, environmental and occupational safety; and prompt availability of handicapped accessible medical, dental, and mental health services. The prison as physical–social space is addressed in standards requiring separation of custody and health roles and mandating systems of effective request and approval for prisoners to get to see a doctor or other health care in a timely manner. Additionally, rules about lab tests and reports of results and the organization, storage, and confidentiality of medical records and doctor–patient conversation have changed the ways that information travels within correctional settings and between them and hospitals and other medical locations.

Privatization

The replacement of health services under the direct control of a corrections department with services managed by an outside agency appears on first consideration to provide a

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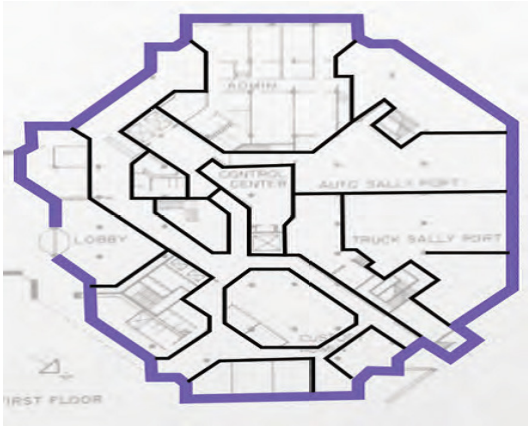

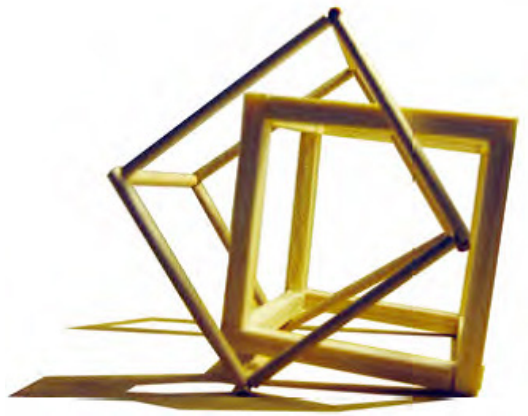

Fig 11. Example of Building Skin as Boundary (Hamilton County Justice Center) & Fig 12. Example of Fence Boundary (Maryland Reception, Diagnostic, and Classification Center)& Fig 13. Model exploring the possible fluidity of boundaries.

better chance for prisoners to receive care from providers whose primary goal is health. This is not necessarily the case. The outside firm may be part of a larger for profit correctional corporation that provides health care as one of its specialties. Or it may be part of a corporate corrections-specialized firm. Profit seeking also reduces resources available for care. Solutions to these problems of profit have been sought by contracting through a public health department and a non-profit provider. Additionally, extensive independent oversight (by a publicly accountable agency) can counter some of the secrecy of corrections, the weakness of prisoners as advocates for themselves within the system and in court, and the very strong possibility of collusion (due to development of a shared world view) between medical practitioners and corrections staff. However, the problems of medicalization and the limitations of practice within a correctional environment are difficult to solve, even if the latter limitations can be mitigated somewhat.

Models of prison in architectural aspects

The purpose of a prison is to rehabilitate the people that committed an illegal act and to separate them from the community until they pay their dues. But also we can identify a symbolic role, a symbol for power and reparation in a totalitarian society. So, we identify the following models of prisons:

1. The rehabilitation model
2. The safety model
3. The repressive prison model
4. The hybrid model

The safety model

By safety we talk about the attention to the supervision of the prisoners and to their isolation from society. The bases of this model are the continuing search for new ways to put a stop to the escapes, the contraband and the violence between inmates or inmates and guards. This type of prison models is common in the US. The safety model prisons are genuine fortresses, a succession of layers that have the only rationale to keep the prisoners in. The never ending fight against the violence and escape leads to some sacrifices concerning the quality of life for the inmates. Are sacrificed the socialization and education spaces in order to create more livening space, more bed space for more and more prisoners. Is sacrificed the inmate's right to outdoors exercise in order to reduce the potential violence between prison gangs in the courtyards. This way of thinking is the bases for the construction of super-max prisons. The super-max is the strictest regime. It is based on isolating the prisoner in a singes bed cell. The prisoner spends 23 hours a day in complete isolation and he is allowed to exercise in an outdoor space, a metal cage, also in complete isolation. This treatment can cause severe and perma-

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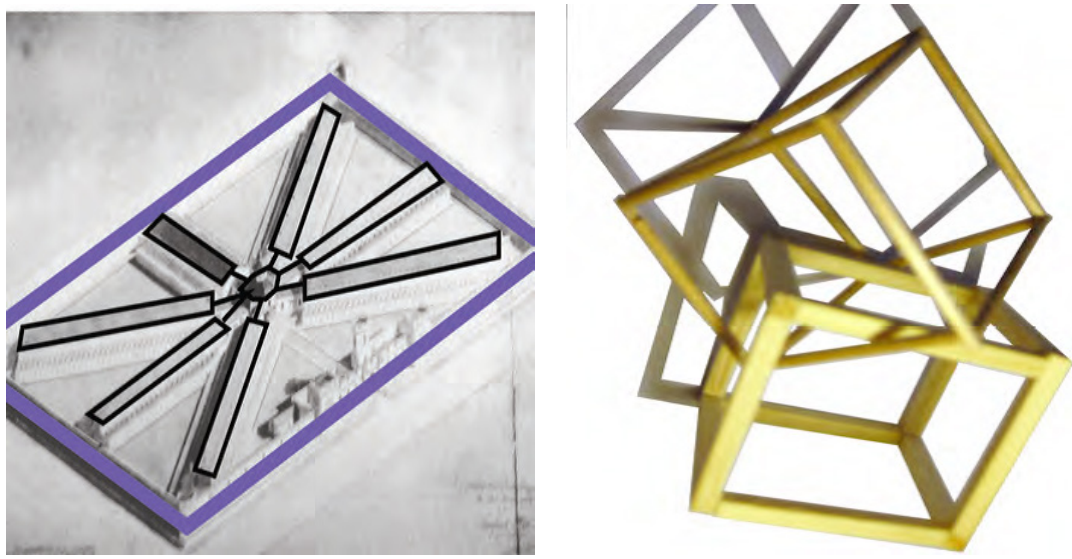

Fig 10. Renderings of the New Danish State Prison.

nent psychological problems. On important feature of the safety prisons is the lack of consideration for the human psyche and for the human needs. Other main concern is the economical efficiency of the prison, reducing the cost, sometimes by extreme measures like reducing the quantity and the quality of food. These measures have a negative impact on the living conditions. The cells are designed and furnished in order to prevent escape or vandalizing and the elimination of potential hiding places for contraband. Surprisingly the measures taken in order to reduce the violence behind bars are the cause of intense hostility towards the staff.

Fig 14. Halden Prison

The rehabilitation model

The model is based on a profound understanding of the human nature, taking into consideration the human need for socialization, for comfort, for understanding. The prison's objective is to integrate the inmate in society after ones release, to better the live of those people. The healing process begins from the first day. The inmate is treated with respect and trust and is prepared for the life after prison. The prison architecture is based on a communion with nature and the design of a relaxing environment. The accent falls on the day areas, the areas dedicate to socialization and communication. By using color, light and textures as design instruments the spaces created offer a pleasant ambiance not only for the inmates but also for the staff. The guards and the prisoners aren't put in antigenic positions but work together for the common goal, the rehabilitation. The day areas are dedicate for treatment and work, to social interaction and contact with others. The night areas are dedicated to solitude and introspections. The cells are design in a comfortable manner, for one inmate.

This model of prison is specific to Central and North Europe in countries like Norway, Denmark, Austria, Belgium or Holland. Some of the prisons contained in this model are the Hoogvliet Prison in Holland, Danish State Prison in the Folster Islands, Leoben Justice Centre and Prison in Austria and perhaps the most prominent example Halden Prison in Norway.

The repressive prison model

This is the roughest, cruellest and inhumane of them all, by the constant and intentional violation of human rights. This model is particular to political prisons in countries under the domination of a totalitarian regime, under a regime that uses violence and terror to repress the people. These repressive prisons are characterized by secrecy and introversion; the

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horrors taking place here are hidden from the world or used as an example for the ones that try to challenge the practices of the regime. The prison buildings are mainly in a deteriorate state and lack the minimum facilities. The lives of prisoners are put in danger not only by the torture of the guards but also by the improper living conditions: insufficient food, water and heat and lack of medical and legal assistance. The cells are poorly furnished and not able to offer half decent living conditions. The distribution of prisoners in cells isn't based on any criteria, minors and adults, young and old, male and female, common criminals and political prisoners are often put in the same cells, putting their life in danger. We can't talk about the number of prisoners in this case of prisons because this number is not known not even by the authorities. We can only know about an acute phenomenon of overcrowding. We find the model specific for the communist prisons in Romania, before the revolution or to the Iraqi prisons under the control of Saddam Hussein, prisons like Abu Ghraib.

The hybrid model

This model combines the rehabilitation and the safety model with an influence from the past, from the repressive prison model; specific to the countries that were under a totalitarian regime; like the Eastern Europe countries, Romania or Ukraine. The prisons have an institutional and correctional ambiance. The concept focus around the rehabilitation masers combined with strong safety measures. The cells are designed for more them one person, the intimacy of a prisoner is almost inexistent.

Conclusion

Indeed, it is imperative that prison planners realize that the total impact of the penal experience is a product of a number of aspects taken together with the type of housing and the architectural environment in general. Physical elements of housing must be regarded in conjunction with program, staffing, security, and a great many nonphysical considerations. In short: a correctional institution's acceptability, and therefore its impact on the residents, is a function of the psychological and sociological attitudes in addition to the physical facilities involved. A prison design is only as good as the personnel and programs entailed. The full context of the correctional process must be carefully scrutinized in order to arrive at conclusions which may improve today's prisons: one must penetrate the surface of an attractive facade and examine its workings. If the goal of imprisonment is to prepare the criminal for reentry into society, it is obvious that this can only begin to be achieved by attempting to alleviate the problems that caused the criminality in the first place. Here, the assumption is that crime is symptomatic of maladjustment of some sort; the prison must try to resolve the maladjustment. Architecture may be adapted to aid this problem-solving process, says Gill, by providing the most normal environment possible without undue emphasis on any specific programs-educational, vocational, or industrial. The key principle is one of humanity - treat people like animals and they will continue to behave as such, but give them the opportunity and surroundings to realize their inner humanity and build on it, and the people who are released may be more human than those who went in.

A. The following is an interesting note on how architects' decisions on institutional design are made: "In developing the statements of requirements which follow and the space requirements for each activity and function, operations were observed at Institution X and operational practices and needs were discussed with operating and staff officials. The very serious limitation of facilities, staff and equipment at the present time, coupled with the overwhelming number of residents in the Adult Services complex, virtually rules out chances of obtaining any useful information from staff or residents except for such generalizations as more, small correctional centers

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Fig 14. Halden Prison[1]

with more programs, staff, equipment and facilities; The more useful information comes from ideals or goals which the practitioners express".

B. In addition to enforced standards, we need to eradicate the economic yoke around the neck of the correctional officials. Certainly, money is not a plentiful commodity at this point in time; and yet, it is self-defeating to continue to save a few dollars on ineffective designs while failing to find or implement better ones. The last section clearly presented institutional design and size as being directly associated with the facilitation, promotion, and provocation of inmate violence. It is, at the least, unfair to perpetuate prisons which not only do not rehabilitate but endanger the prisoners who populate them.

C. The community prison would be appropriate for most minimum-security and many medium-security individuals. For other medium- and maximum-security offenders, custodial prisons such as that discussed by Gill would serve the purpose of removing the offender from society as necessitated by the nature of his or her crime. Careful consideration of individual inmate personality and history characteristics will be instrumental to the success of this correctional system. Whatever the custody rating, all institutions must have indi-

1. The Most Humane Prison in the World, published in 26 July 2011http://all-that-is-interesting.com/ accessed in 12 May 2012

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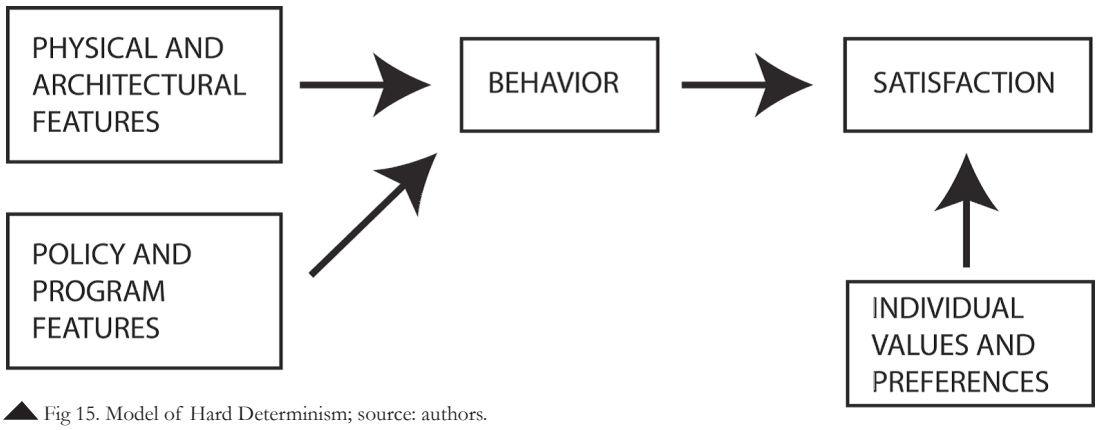

Fig 15. Model of Hard Determinism; source: authors.

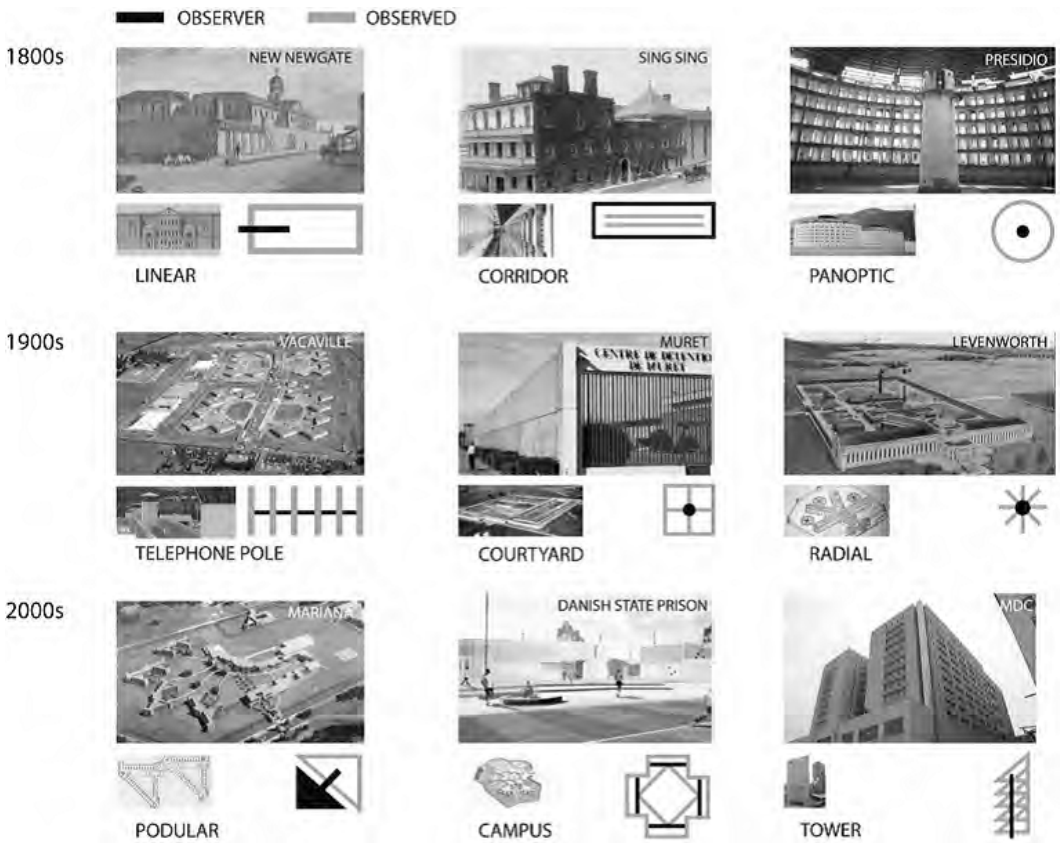

Fig 16. Prison Models throughout Time; source: finding the research.

vidual-occupancy rooms, with no exceptions.

D. Aside from all concrete design proposals, there is a strong need for further research in the field of corrections as to the types of institutional designs which will cease to promote violence and other pathologies. Prisons can no longer be ignored by the public; we must expose, inspect, and improve the conditions which we continue to employ for the incarceration of certain members of the society; The more that is understood, the better the possibilities for the creation of a more humane and effective system of correct ions. To reduce current prison problems such as violence, overcrowding, and high recidivism, we do not need to build more and more prisons, we need to design a model for better prisons. The goal is not strictly to punish, but to lower recidivism. We can begin to create environ-

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ments that are conducive to education, rehabilitation, and reentry into society. The face of the prison can be changed into one that the public can interact with, creating a more normal existence and therefore a chance to successfully integrate back into society.

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