Spaces of confinement

a banality of good

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Abstract

'Let the crime then become a starting point for a real dialogue, and not for an equally clumsy answer in the form of a spoonful of pain.'[1]

People make mistakes. But how does society treat them when they do? For architecture to be involved in this process, is to be at least called arbitrary, as it frames the spaces in which we punish and reform. For architects to design prisons is a paradoxical task because of conflicting interest and changes goals. Spaces of imprisonment deprive people of freedom, whilst at the same they want to create a healthy humane environment that is helpful to the detainee's rehabilitation. So how should architects intervene in such spaces? In what way should view spaces of punishment? How could we approach prison design in such a way, that it creates humane spaces of confinement?

Introduction

On the June 15th, 1960, Argentina began building a new prison called Caseros. The hypermodern building symbolized the national progress. The prison would house detainees during the process of being heard in the courtroom, in the adjacent building. Although the courtroom was never built, the prison stood as a giant hotel with single occupant detention cells. For the society of Argentina, it offered the dream of swift justice and high-qualitative living conditions even for offenders of the law.

But democracy did not last. When the building was finished almost twenty years later, on April 23th, 1979, it was inaugurated under the administration of military dictatorship of Jorge Rafaél Videla. The cells were cramped with political prisoners and regular detainees, forced to live together for long periods, initially meant to be used only for a few weeks at a time.

Although the dictatorship fell in 1983, the government kept using the jail in use. Space was cramped and the design started to become fragile. Unable to cope with the conditions, the inhabitants started to demand things that the design could not offer like natural daylight, recreation and intimacy for couples. The government reacted to the poor living conditions, by giving in to the demands of the prisoners. Inmates were allowed to move freely within each cell block. Guards were forced to make deals with inmates to secure their own safety and ended up in the criminal culture.

A year after, the conditions gave rise to a riot, largely reconfiguring the internal works of the design. Holes where knocked in the floors and outer walls, allowing prisoners to move freely through the building and communicate with the outside world. Girlfriends and family would gather around the streets below the building every day, to chat with their loved ones inside, exchanging goods. Cigarettes, drugs, photos and weapons would be hoisted into the prison on bundles through the holes. There where even cases of prisoners that would leave the prison at night to preform robberies, returning in the morning. By 2001 the building became known for its criminality to such an extreme that the government saw no other option but to close the prison and demolish it.

Caseros shows the delicate and symbolic status that the institute of the prison has in our societies. Within our modern society we are constantly searching for a physical answer to punishment, in accordance with our ethical standards. Like the example of Caseros, a place of power within the wrong hands, easily becomes the symbol criminality and the degradation of basic human live.[2] While the example may be an extreme one, the presence of power within these building represents a problem for prison design. For architects it is at least to be called an arbitrary occupation. The prison elements like the wall, door, cell and gardens are part of their design vocabulary, but the prisons mandate the limit, confine, interrupt and severe are less part of our everyday designs. Especially if we are to think that these design elements are used to create spaces of torture, cruelty and degrading.

2 *Caseros became the "other face" of the basic principles of the penitentiary system.* Bullrich, P. (2004). Caseros: *Life and death of a model prison.* Domus.

3 In 2011 a petition asked the A.I.A. to censure architects who designed death chambers and solitary confinement facilities, which, as constituted and employed in countless American prisons, often function as instruments of psychological and physical torture. AIA. (2020). 2020 *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.* New York: The American Institute of Architects.

4 Some architects have declared part of the mission statement to refuse to design correctional facilities. Source: Kimmelman, M. (2020, June 13). *There's No Reason for an Architect to Design a Death Chamber.* The New York Times, p. C1.

It is therefore no surprise that the topic of designing prisons is much debated as architects are trying to counteract the design of spaces indented to violate human rights.[3] For an architect the contradictions of prison design questions to the ethical boundaries of the profession. It is an architect's job to design the best spaces possible for the building's function, but if these functions are acts against humanity, it undermines our civic cause in criminal justice and our care about humane design. It could indicate that architects should not design prisons in the first place.[4] But as contradictory as the design of prisons may be, there is also a possibility for architecture to reevaluate the prison. In fact, it is extremely important to develop strategies and a future vision for these spaces as they house a marginalized part of society that are extremely vulnerable for the excessive use of force, especially within the realm of power and control. How society treats its unlawful members is a delicate matter as it balances between punishment and reform, suffering and acting good. Although prison design has become more humane in time, there is still a delicate balance of power that can be explored. As the physical environment is the frame in which this struggle is played out, it only advocates the need for architects be involved in the design of penitentiary structures.

Although prisons are very complex structures in which many social and physical levels take part in terms of security, punishment and humanity and therefore the issues related to them need to be tackled through a multi-disciplinary approach, this brief paper will focus the attention mostly on social aspects that are inherent to the architecture of the prison. They can be interpreted both at the urban scale and that of the building itself, with references as well to some issues which include management, organizational and social appreciations within penitentiary structures. The essence of the punishment (which is envisaged by limitation of the freedom of movement within a specific enclosed space) is not to be put into question here. Rather this paper considers the physical representation, the architectural elements like walls, doors as the frames in which the struggle for a humane existence is present.

Asking how these elements can be used as part of a solution to humane confinement. How can architects approach prison design, as a physical place to hold prisoners, without limiting their human condition? This paper aims to uncover new directions that could be applied to prison design, the place where architectural elements and humane conditions create a dialogue. In this paper, the first section gives an insight on the meaning of prison in both historically and in different societal contexts. Then, in the second section the architectural limitations of modern prisons spaces are presented. In third section explains how societal ideology influences can hurt humane design, whilst the fourth section proposes a different humane turn towards prison design. The last section gives insight how architecture can use the framing of spaces, as a helpful design tool for humane prison design.

A brief history of prison design

The idea of imprisonment as a form of punishment is still a relatively short one in our human history. Although spaces of imprisonment have been around longer then the typology of the prison itself, these spaces were solely designed to hold the body for a temporary moment, whilst pending trail or infliction, the real punishment being physical penalty on the body in the form of torture, enslavement or death. A criminal reformation line of thought in the early modern period saw the rise of new types of buildings for confinement as punishment. Looking at this short history we can see that the prison has been a changing entity, with different means according to time and space. Over time prisons took distinct forms meant to solve different societal problems, signaling the changing character of this architectural entity.

In the XV century we see the first real use of the design to create a prison that includes a specific ideology. The abstract clarity of the design scheme created new relation between prisoners and treatment regime. the means of imprisonment changes when religious institutes started to conceive the possibility to treat offenders, rather than merely preform affliction on them. Reclusion was considered as an essential tool for the correction. The offender was subjected to religious therapy indented to transform social behavior to become a better person and not just a social reject to be discarded of. Both prisoner and punishment became part of the logic of design as they were *'buried in the geometry of the building.'*[5] With the establishment of Correctional homes, the Catholic Church created the first architectural intervention considering spaces of holding that where designed at the treatment of the individual.

In the XVIII century the rise of a new political power creates a new the classification of people, changing the distribution of power throughout society. The change comes from a new consideration of human body is no longer a subject of power that can freely and arbitrarily be disposed of or even be destroyed. Rather it is a useful entity for society that can be used for its economy. Torturing and public executions, like described by Foucault, with their disruptive attitude towards the body, are discarded with the establishment of the prison as an institute.[6]

The prison is part of a central system of institutes, a series of control mechanisms, that is created to control and influence. The institutes, like prisons, schools and hospitals, form an find their applications in all layers of society, not only for delinquents but also workers, students and so on.[7] The prison forms the alternative to the excessive punishment. It forms a historical turning point for the prison as it starts to implement design as a means to change the human body. Over time, prisons became the spaces of exclusion meant to solve the problems and behavior of the inmates.

Towards the end of the XIX century, spaces of exclusion that isolated each prisoner in the solitary confinement had become too costly. The start of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of capital lead to an increased focus on production and vocational training in prisons, which was expected to lead to character reformation. This

5 Evans, R. (2011). *The Fabrication of Virtue: English Prison Architecture, 1750-1840.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 26

6 Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison.* England: Penguin Books.

7 Ibidem. p 466

8 Timetables, ranks, exercises and other examples where used to discipline the bodies.

9 A good example of this new approach is the development of the Panopticon by Jeremy Benthem,which by its design can be seen as a mechanism of knowledge and control

10 Foucault, M. (1979) p. 202

11 In the Netherlands the establishment of the Beginselwet Gevangeniswezen in 1953 provided a new shift in prison design. Tweede Kamer 1948-1949. *Bijlage 1189, Vaststelling van een nieuwe Beginselenwet gevangeniswezen,* nr 3.

12 Foucault, M. (2002). *In L'Arcéologie du savoir, Gallimard, Paris; English trans.* Archaeology of Knowledge. Routledge: London. p. 139

idea is translated into a system of discipline which helps to reform, rehabilitate and reintegrate prisoners towards a working ethos.[8] The soul of and mind are targeted to create 'willing bodies' that better suit society. Bodies are useful as they can be used as they provide the workforce for economic growth.

These developments changed the logic of imprisonment, redefining the power relations of from punishing the body to the control of the mind and soul, creating new perspectives on how to approach the condemned trough space. Confinement is articulated into a diagram based on knowledge and surveillance that creates a power mechanism in which a number of people require supervision.[9] Power is a visible yet unverifiable, inducing the inmate in a state of consciousness and permanent visibility. This visibility makes it hard for prisoners as they are seen but cannot see the supervisor, guaranteeing order.[10] The prison is projected to be an all-seeing institute, which illustrates the change of power society that uses to influences its prisoners.

The most recent ideological shift has occurred after the second World War when the penal regulations and European penitentiaries experienced a change, creating our modern approach prison design. The prisoner is viewed as an equal human being that is part of our society, with according human rights. They are prepared for their return in society. Functions in prisons are consequently transformed to create a place for re-socialization.[11] Although confinement is still the punishment, normalization and reform are as equally of importance to the sentence. In this period new prisons like the Dutch Bijlmerbajes are envisaged, which are designed around communal live to stimulate individual treatment. Prisoners are prepared for their live after the sentence and the pain of imprisonment is kept to a minimum. This is a design concept that is still present in our modern-day prisons, where the attention is placed on the interaction between the different individuals.

In a relatively short period of time, in less than fifty years, Western Europe moved from a society that preformed public executions to one of exclusion, reform and discipline. These changes in time is something that Foucault also mentions in his work. Rather than changes or shifts, Foucault's calls this discontinuity. According to Foucault history is not a constant reality, but rather a physical expression of social gesture according to time and society and is constantly able to change. History should not be seen as a traditional line, but a continuous series of facts and consequences that can be 'suddenly reversed after centuries of continuity'.[12] Even the long periods of historical movement can be seen as a system of constant readjustment, as they constantly gather force by underlying tendencies finally causing a new shift. This means that our current prison system is not to be seen as something static, rather it is in a process of constant reevaluation and readjustments to fit the changes of time.
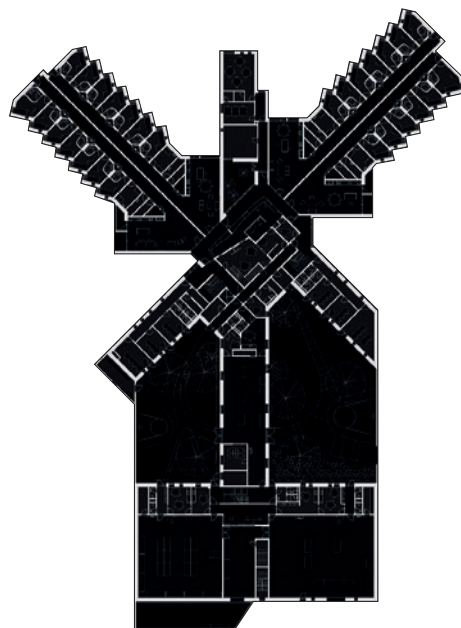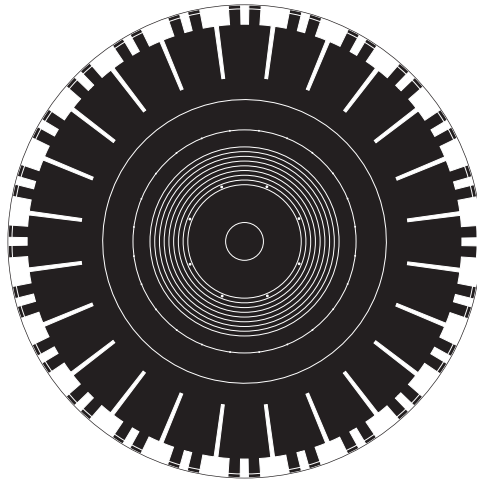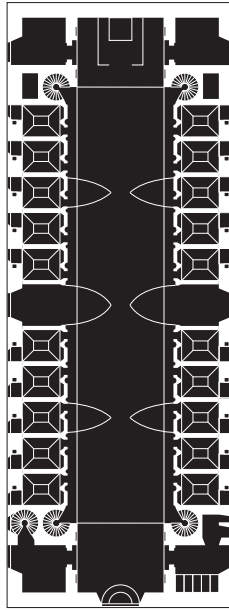
I. Shifts of the different prison designs through the years

Cultural differences

Not only can we see differences and shifts in penitentiary structures in time, also in place do these changes occur. Whilst most Western societies have banned the degrading and inhumane treatment in prison design, the United States is still constructing new prison including isolation cells and solitary confinement specifically designed to violate human rights. For this reason, as stated in the introduction, architects have petitioned the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to prohibit the design of spaces for killing, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. However, there is still a need for specific penitentiary structures, that satisfy the certain requirements and specific standards of the location and social context that are present. And with every location, different social contexts are present.

Analyzing the penitentiary systems in Western countries (Norway, Italy, the United States, etc.), the difficulties and incoherencies in prison design are still present to this day, regarding the role the institute has in our contemporary societies, as well as the objectives they pursue. Because prison activities are carried out according to the law and international regulations, they have a specific spatial structure that satisfies societal standards, making spaces of punishment not only differentiate time to time, but also between different societies.[14] How a prison is built is largely a result of criminal policy and society's attitude to those who commit crimes. This means that there is no one single solution to prison design. Even within the same country the prison institute can be designed to function completely different. Rather it forms a structure, a framework, that is susceptible to change according to time and place.

The Scandinavian and American prisons form a good example in showing the contrast between design philosophy and the resulting environment. Most importantly this has to do with the primary goal of imprisonment. The spatial and material structure are designed towards this goal and emphasize the possibilities for individual growth and. Spaces, activities and materiality form a connection with the outside live as much as possible. In the United States, the justice system is primarily focused on punishment. This means that prisons are heavily controlled and the materiality representation forms a reaction to the prisoner's bad behavior. Spaces are limited and the cells and interior are kept to a minimum to be cost effective. In doing so they form a constant reminder of one's past problems, inadvertently making it an environment difficult to live in filled with tension, violence and suffering through sensory deprivation.[15]

It must be noted that mechanisms though which the penitentiary activities are performed in the US, from a cultural, social and economic view, are very different from that in Scandinavia. The Scandinavian justice system has no life sentences.[16] This means that prisoners eventually will return to society. Therefore, the prison system emphasizes on the rehabilitation of the detainees, rather than just punishing them. There is no need to punish through materiality as the loss of freedom is the punishment. Instead the primary goal is to reintegrate and rehabilitate the detainee.

14 For a good overview on the international standards of these spatial requirements see Deutinger, T. (2017). *Handbook of Tyranny.* Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers.

15 A good example of this is the handbook written by the American friends Committee about the effect of solitary confinement. Kerness, B. (2012). *Suvival in solitary, A manual written by and for people living in control units.* Newark: American Friends Service Committee.

16 The Norwagian maximum sentence is 21 years. Source: https://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/ (accessed at December 21, 2020)

The Scandinavian model is results-based instead of cost-based prisons of America. Another important aspect to the difference in penitentiary activities is the cultural view on crime. In America crime is sensationalized. The portrayal of criminals and prison conditions by politics and media have an effect on the public opinion on justice. In turn, this has a significant effect on the design and operation of prison facilities as they also form a reaction to the public opinion on the treatment of crime. It is therefore no surprise that America is one of the last western countries to practice the death penalty.[17] The cultural factors cause for fundamental ideological shifts, that accordingly change the approach towards the organization, management and design of the penitentiary structures.

Not only are the differences between Europe and the US apparent, the same applies when taking a closer to prison design in Europe. The northern countries like Norway and Denmark have designed innovative modern penitentiary structures, both in terms of spaces and material representation, which collaborate with treatment methods to rehabilitate the prisoner. Whereas other southern countries like Italy and Spain have mostly aimed at transforming the penitentiary models by, partially, modifying the existing penitentiary structures. Like the Giudecca women's prison in Venice, which is located in at the edge of the city in an ancient monastery. The prison differs from other prisons in Italy - not only because of the 100 women that live there, it differs because almost all the inmates work. Each of the prisoners takes their own path to re-education, rehabilitation and freedom. The law requires spaces to be designated for study, do recreational activities and work in the broad range of work facilities, including tailoring, a cosmetic laboratory, a vegetable garden and there is a special section for mothers.[18] Vegetables are sold ones a week at the doorstep of the prison and clothes are sold in the shop close by. This is not to say that this example is preferable over the material tranquility that Norwegian prison offrt. Rather, they are different approaches that have been designed according to the specific social values. In both approaches an institution is designed that focuses on different elements of what is considered to be an humane form of punishment in that specific social context.

17 In the USA 27 states still have the death penalty as punishment. Source: https://deathpenaltyinfo. org/state-and-federal-info/ state-by-state (accessed on July 5, 2021)

18 Source: https:// meraglievenezia.com/ en/women-in-prison/ (accessed on December 10, 2020)

II. Guidecca womens
prison, Venice

The difficulties of designing a prison

As society has the need to defend itself against illegality and crime, there will always be the need for a structure of power, detaining criminals according to its own standards. This means that as long as there is crime, there is a need for prisons. the prison institute is a distinctive, repressive built form, that is symbolized by its security and coercive nature. This has to do with same fundamental ideology they all share. Punishment is proposed through a series of architectural limitations; the wall. Within this structure of walls, open and closed spaces create a highly controlled treatment regime. If the prison continuous to be envisaged only in the ideology of power and control, with a sentence in the form of segregation and social exclusion, it will remain the institute that we know. To differentiate in prison design, we should take a critical look at the social difficulties the architectural elements bring.

In the purest essential form, prison design is a series of architectural elements that force its inhabitants with physical boundaries. This approach to prison design creates limitations in the way a sentence can be executed, as philosopher Yngve Hammerlin points out in Architecture, Humans and Prison, because it still holds on to an 'associated historical orthodoxy'.[19] According to Hammerlin the prison structures and interior show that modern aesthetic material design does not hide the feeling of a prison-like existence.[20] Prisons designs are still based on diagrams like the Philadelphia model, the essential totalitarian orthodoxy is remains. While its material representation has changed the ideology of power and control has not been weakened. With visible and non-visible technological improvements, the system has only been enhanced making the power structure evermore present.

19 Hammerlin, Y. (2018). *Materiality, topography, Prison and 'Human turn'– A theoretical Short Visit.* In E. Fransson, Giofrè, B. Johnsen, & (Eds.), Prison, Architecture and Humans (pp. 241-266). Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk. p. 261

20. Ibidem. p 262

On the urban scale the power structure is represented in our conception of a sense security that. High concrete walls form architectural limitations and create a barrier between the live on the inside and on the outside. As the two realities have become disconnected from each other, the prison has been on the move ever since. Historically the prison maintained a link with the city to which it belonged. However, the division between inside and outside has caused most important penitentiaries to move away from urban centers, as space at the edge of (our even outside) the cities is less restricted and easier to develop. Therefore, most prisoners today are located on the outskirts of large cities and have become part of the margins (both physically and figuratively) of society.[21] This has a negative effect on the prisoners inside, as they are disconnected with live surrounding the penitentiary structures. The lack of stimulus and interaction limiting prisoners to actively engage with society.

21 Ibidem.

On the building scale, the structuring of walls and door create highly regulated structures that are helpful for detaining the mass. All places are 'functional sites' that are useful in to the regime in some way.[22] Daily movements are controlled with strict routines. Each prisoner should be at a specific place at a certain time during the day, with the staff controlling the bodies that should be present. All else is superfluous as the regime predicates which actions can be performed at a specific location in

22. Foucault, M. (1979) p. 143

23 Moran, D. (2012). *"Doing Time" in Carceral Space: TimeSpace and Carceral Geography.* Geofgrafiska Annalar. Series B, Human Geography, 305-316.

24 In Italy, for example, approximately 45 % of the detainee population is serving a sentence of less than 5 years, whereas only a small percentage is serving sentences of more than 30 years to life (approximately 4 %) as a result of serious or very serious crimes Source: *Final report of statical Survey 2015*, Istituto Nazionale di Statica.

25 Vessella, L. (2017). *Prison, Architecture and Social Growth: Prison as an Active Component of the Contemporary City.* The Plan Journal, 63-84.

26 Ibidem.

time. The prisoners' possibility to act, be affected or creating relations with the surroundings becomes limited. Bodies follow the spatial functionally designed arrangements in the prison structure, like pathways, which may be surrounded by more or less visible and invisible borders. Keeping the bodies in place is part of the safety and security regime and maintaining a good order However, with the exercise of spatial control, prisons have reinforced the separation between the prisoners and their activities. As there is an integral relationship between time and space in the prison experience of 'doing time', which is also referred to as 'carceral TimeSpace'.[23] This separation creates an unhelpful situation for the person inhabiting the structure as time and space are simply served to the prisoners.

Besides this, detaining a mass poses another problem. Looking at the detainee population in Europe, the majority of people are detained due to misdemeanors, generally of a non-violent nature (theft, bankruptcy fraud, use of illegal drugs, illegal immigration, etc). Despite this, the detainees are subject to the same regime as prisoners that are in jail for the commission of violent crimes.[24] The current conditions of our modern penitentiary structures, with a few exceptions, are not adequately organized to differentiate in progressive approaches to the variety of detainees housed in them and can present problems in terms of results in the envisaged penitentiary treatment.[25] Detainees who belong to different typologies need different terms of security, control and rehabilitation treatments, rather than making a structure that is "good for all cases". Considering that the composition of the prison population it would be preferable to organize and differentiate the design to accompany the different typologies of prisoners.

The torment of humane punishment

Prison design can be considered as totalitarian distinctive, repressive and totalitarian entity. The prisoner has almost no influence over the activities (s)he can or cannot do, as (s)he is forced to comply to the prison structure. This process is unhelpful as it denies the prisoner from an active role in the design. Instead we tend to prefer to deal with an abstract representation of punishment role that is represented in architecture. Ineffably this only result in for friction in prison design. So how does our societal view of the punishment shape our design of humane spaces for the individual?

For this, it is interesting to understand what our normative idea of punishment is in our society and what this means for the individual. Punishment has to do with the conception of modern society that doing something outside of what we find socially acceptable should be rejected. In this sense, punishment has a twofold. Firstly, it keeps social order, preventing people from committing a crime. We all learn not to steal, because we know that there is retribution for the thing we do, and therefore we will think twice before doing something wrong. Secondly, the idea is that punishment makes people reflect. It makes people more mature and receive deeper insight, which could also help in the growing of character. People who have experienced pain might benefit from it. The latter however is still much debated, as it might also be the opposite as pain brings growth to a stop, can make a person hurt, resend and become more bitter.[27]

27 Christie, N. (1981)

What makes punishment so difficult, is that it is closely linked to our moral judgement of what is right and wrong. If we have done something wrong, we should be punished. In our modern societies our prisons form the abstract representation of this punishment. This also means that architecture is part of this moral judgement and therefore should be aware of the ethical dimensions of the understanding of right and wrong to avoid what political theorist Hannah Arendt's noted in 'the banality of evil'. The subtle trajectory from accepting the morally questionable into becoming familiar enough with a problematic client that one stops questioning the problem altogether.[28] Because if we stop questioning the ethical dimensions in which we punish, we are at risk of blurring the lines between being wrong and being punished, as they are two different things.

28 Arendt, H. (1963). *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banility of Evil.* New York: Viking Press.

This difference between being wrong and being punished lies in the understanding of Arendt's 'the banality of evil'. The expression refers to a lack of self-reflection in crimes committed against humanity and the insignificance of the persons motivation to do so.[29] This means that prisoners have committed a crime, an act that to be considered evil, but are not intrinsically evil as a human being. They are in prison, because they have broken the law, often harming others, sometimes horribly. Yet, their sole purpose is not to break morale laws or preform acts against humanity. They have a conscious and know their actions where morally and legally unjustifiable. And because of this conscious, they are able to show remorse for actions committed.

29 Ibidem.

30 Of course, there are people that commit crimes against humanity and show no remorse, like the example of Eichmann. The problem with people like Eichmann, as Arendt describes, is that they show no remorse for their actions. It has less effect to start a dialogue with them, as they show no remorse for their crimes committed.

31 Source: https://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/may/18/halden-most-humane-prison-in-world (accessed December 10, 2020)

32 Brottveit, G. (2018). *The Becoming of Punishment as an Unpredictable and Moveable Torment.* In E. Fransson, F. Giofrè, B. Johnson, & (Eds)., Prison, Architecture and Humans (pp. 201-225). Copenhagen: Cappelen Damm Akademisk. p. 216

33. Ibidem. p. 210

Otherwise they would not have known their actions were wrong.[30] Therefore, it is unhelpful to read the inmates for their past actions or behavior, based on specific or general understandings or certain personality traits. Focusing on the past bad behavior only pushes prisoners towards the image of them being criminal. It is exactly at this point, that architecture comes into play, because people's experiences cannot be seen independently form the materiality that surrounds them. Humans are in constant dialogue with their surroundings. Therefore, it is not possible to approach punishment without relating it to its non-human materiality. The composition of the walls, buildings, fences, open spaces all contribute to the way the we view the prison and the way this prison is experienced.

An attempt to humanize punishment by raising material standards, making the prison environment more comfortable, does not help to ease this pain. An example can be made of Halden Prison, Norway. The prison has attracted cons (Kapteijns, 2010)iderable international attention, due to its high degree of material and comfortable humane environment for which it is judged to be a humane prison.[31] The inside was designed with forest areas that were preserved during the build and now form defined green areas in the prison landscape use of landscape to. Human compassion, a high level of comfort and a homelike atmosphere in the prison are intended to make the atonement more humane. The contrast is therefore great when we move our focus from the outer descriptions of luxurious prison conditions and start looking from experiences on the inside. Like Frederik, prisoners are unable to make own choices.

'I have read in newspapers and magazines about how nice it is in this prison and that the becoming of punishment as an unpredictable and moveable torment there are no bars here. That is right, but imagine that you cannot go out and breathe the air when you want to. Life inside prison is completely different from life outside.'[32]

While people on the outside can freely walk, run, and interact with green spaces, this is not possible on the inside. Prisoners can only go into the parks according to the prison regime. The outside becomes part of the total disciplinary procedures and measures. The forests become a primarily pleasure for the eye and prisoners can only watch how the seasons change outside the window, but not feel the air or touch nature. The material luxury that surrounds Frederik has no value added to this experience, as it does not give back the ability to act. Rather the attempt to humanize the prison environment with luxury, only seems to reinforce the feeling of imprisonment, because it forms a reminder of the everyday life of which the prisoner is deprived.

Like the parks, all places are framed by the prison machinery and become part of Fredrik's momentary experience in prison. With all the different elements mixed into the machinery they form a continues spaces of incarceration. They form new assemblages that make him feel the limitations of the prison spaces and which moves into all the small aspects of his live. It becomes part his experience and the materiality that surrounds him. As he has no possibility of influencing his own situation, it is puts him into a *'process of becoming a prisoner'*.[33] This state of not being able to react to the situations only leads Frederik deeper into his role of being bad:

'As I read Fredrik's narratives, he is constantly struggling for his self-worth and against the process of becoming as a criminal. He fights for his identity and to be seen as the person he feels he is. Meeting with prison machinery has led him deeper into the prisoner role and contributed to creating a static picture of him as a criminal offender.'[34]

34 Ibidem. p. 215

From the moment that people are put into prison, they start a process of being a prisoner, which is caused by their interaction with the material structures and the prison environment. The prison environment puts prisoners into a static state that only reminds him of past behavior. Although the humanistic ideas behind punishment give the idea that it would preferable to make the the material representation as comfortable possible. In reality it only contributes to covering over of the pain with new forms of punishment.

Being good as a design philosophy

As has been brought to the attention in previous the chapters, the time spent prison harms people. Architecture and the material presence play a fundamental role in the execution of the punishment. However, the challenge is in creating a penitentiary system that is both efficient and useful to society. If we continue to envision prisons only as a place of segregation through materiality, we are in charge of adding more problems to the prisoner on behalf of the state, making them even worse threat to larger society. Once prisoners have done their prison sentence, they will return to society. It is therefore in the publics best interest to bring the prisoner as close to the norm as possible. This is not a matter of comfort or easing their punishment. Their punishment is the loss of freedom and is not to be questioned. The words of a prison director are in this sense exemplary:

35 James, E. (2013, February 25). *The Norwegian Prison where Inmates are treated like People.* The Guardian.

'In the law, being sent to prison has nothing to do with putting you in a terrible prison to make you suffer. The punishment is that you lose your freedom. If we treat people like animals when they are in prison they are likely to behave like animals.'[35]

This struggle between punishment and the build form, advocates the need for a different approach to prison design, because our current societal view will ineffably result in a totalitarian structure. Luckely, attempts are made to overturn these principles that make material presence a suffering as part of the penalty. To do this, Yngve Hammerlin proposes to take a different approach towards prison structures in what he calls a 'human turn'.[36] Rather than starting from our common sense of security and control, he proposes to as see prisons as social spaces. The expression form as a framework where the material representation creates a relationship with and between social conditions and the everyday live. In an effort to make the prisoner a proactive and creative entity, who can have an inner dialectical relationship with the outside world's natural and man-made conditions. Starting from this turn, prison design should not begin from a system, but rather start from the prisoner's ability to interaction with their surroundings. Hamerlin states the following about such an approach:

36 Hammerlin, Y. (2018). *Materiality, topography, Prison and 'Human turn'– A theoretical Short Visit.* In E. Fransson, Giofrè, B. Johnsen, & (Eds.), Prison, Architecture and Humans (pp. 241-266). Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk. p. 256

'Turning should enable more concrete studies of the activities of individual prisons, and thus reveal local conditions and a better view of the detailed everyday life of prisoners and employees. The various turns also inspire the study of topographical, material, architectural and interior-related layouts and practices in prisons … 'The individual is not only surrounded by walls and restraints imposed by the prison – he/she also forms himself/herself and the surroundings within the prison space and its various consequent constraints and opportunities.'[37]

37 Ibidem p.262

Not materialism but relationships should be the focus of humane practices of punishment. Instead of focusing the on the material experience, the prison environment should allow prisoners to interact with their surroundings. With the ability to affect, be affected and, prisoners can from new relationships with their

environment and break free from their static state of being imprisoned. This is approach to prison sentences is not a new phenomenon and is already put into practice in Bastøy, a small island in the bay of Olso, Norway. The island is a prison which is characterized by its lack of fences and walls.[38] The atypical prison is designed as a community and has been planned in such extents that it creates an environment that provides opportunities to allow prisons to rehabilitate. The lack of limitations make it easy for prisoners to move freely around the island during the day and the prisoners are only locked up during the night in one the small houses scattered across the island. Each prisoner has a job or task to preform for the community. In doing so, they are given a personal responsibility and asked to deal with all the challenges that entails. It gives the prisoners an arena in which the mind can heal, allowing them to gain self-confidence, establish respect for themselves and for others.[39] As the prison is self-sustaining in terms of energy and waste, inmates have plenty to do as they are made responsible for their environment. This gives meaning to their stay on the island and also gives plenty of interaction with nature - the farm animals, wildlife, fresh air and sea.

But, although Bastøy may seem as an open prison do to it is still a very much a closed entity that is surrounded by a barrier. The reach the prison it takes a 45-minute ferry journey. The traditional prison walls are replaced by water, which means that the prisoners on the island are separated, and have limited interaction with society.[40] What makes Bastøy so different from other prisons, is the way it puts the prisoners in an active state of being. For a static prisoner the most banal of actions are a difficult assignment. Cells are reduced to the extent of the human proportions, the disposal of excreta, and sleeping and limited means of bathing. It becomes hard to preform even the most fundamental activities as practices of personal care, meaningful work and leisure activities mostly happening in controlled places. In contrast to the static prisoner, the environment in Bastøy contributes to an active a state of being. Something that prisoner John K. also writes about in his experiences of both prisons:

'In Halden Prison, I was constantly being reminded that I was a prisoner, of less value than prison officers, and I existed at their mercy. There were some good employees who tried to improve the daily lives of us inmates but there was little they could do. When I came to Bastøy Prison, I was given responsibility and shown trust. I have a job where I sometimes forget that I am in a prison.' [41]

In a place like Bastøy, the body can connect to its physical and social context. It enables the body to affect and be affected by its surroundings. Therefore, prisoners are able to live an active life, a vita active, that corresponded closely to the normalness of the everyday live outside the prisoners.[42] The normalness of their actions making them feel less incarcerated, as prisoners are free to participate in the fundamental human activities.[43] By being responsible for their job, important for the community and in nature and feel it change, it provides them with normal experience, they would also have outside the prison.

In doing so, they can experience the normalness of everyday live, which does not only ease the pain of being punished, but shows themselves and their environment that they are not the bad person they are expected to be. They are able to show that

38 Kapteijns, M. (Director). (2010). Bastøy: *Een gevangenis zonder tralies, Bastøy: A prison without bars* [Motion Picture].

39 Source: https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/moslive/article-1384308/Norways-controversial-cushy-prison-experiment--catch-UK.html (accessed on Oktober 15, 2020)

40 The island is not exclusively a prison area, but also a popular site for visitors, particularly in summer.

41 John, K. (2018). Humanity Rather than Materialism – A Short Essay About the Prison Environment. In E. Fransson, F. Giofrè, & B. Johnsen, Prison, Architecture and Humans (pp. 19-38). Olso: Cappelen Damsk Akademisk. p.34

42 Arendt, H. (1958). *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 19

43 Ibidem. Arendt proposes every human has three fundamental human activities in which they can participate: Labor, Work and Action. Labor is the means by which we provide for ourselves, work is the production of manmade products and actions are the means to disclose ourselves to others.

they can be good, just by preform everyday normal actions. Becoming a normal person as close to society as possible. This 'banality of good', the simplicity of just being good by acting normal, creates a helpful state of being for the prisoner in his process of rehabilitation.[44]

44 The reason to choose for 'the banality of good' is that it can serve as reflection, both literally as discursively, to the 'the banality of evil' stated in Arendt, H. (1963).

III. Hallway of Halden Prison, Norway (above) and Coast of Bastøy Island, Norway (under)

Breaking the boundary of prison design

As compelling as images of a prison island may be, the reality is that most architect will be challenged to design punishment in a different setting. The situations will force them to take security measures, that will already frame live both inside and outside. Interestingly this problem is not something specific to prison design. Every building mediates power in some sort or form.[45] From the moment we start designing, both architecture and urban design frame spaces.

Because all our lives take place within the clusters of rooms, buildings, streets and cities, all the actions that are permitted are structured by designs decisions. Discursively framing meaning to what experience. Most of the time we are capable to live our lives uninterrupted. It is therefore easy to take our build environment for granted. We only tend to notice that there are limitations to our actions when someone or something possess a limitation to our capabilities. Streets, walls, doors and windows frame our actions, as they show, hide, separate our connect actions between people and the surroundings. Often this is not even noticeable in our everyday life. This is because architects and urban designers engage the construction of our reality with the best social interest.

In this sense the prison is no different. The only difference is that prison spaces are designed the other way around, limiting actions and interactions and only allowing them to a certain extend. Prison use architectural elements like the closed wall to force its inhabitant into a framed environment. However, the problem with forces, is that it prevents any actions more easily then it creates, because it removes all agency from the subject.[46] As the build form has 'power over' the prisoners it limits their 'power to' interact.[47] With the use of force, live becomes only what the prison allows it to, framing any activity within the boundaries, giving meaning and legitimacy to the experience of space. In doing so, authority and control become grounded in the prison landscape as they define where the prisoner might move and which distinct functions that can happen in different places. As the previous sections describe, such a punishment will only result in a painful experience in the form of a comfortable material frame. In the general well-being of the prisoner this is something we want to avert.

Starting from the meaning of 'framing', we can start to understand that there is a helpful in ambiguity in framing that can help the prison become more than a closed static place. To frame something is both to 'shape' and at 'enclose' that thing within a boundary or border. With closed prisons this boundary is sharply represented in space and time with the wall. They admit some people while excluding others. Making everyone on the inside part of a whole, and doing the same for the people on the outside. In each case both spatial and social exclusions operate to enforce spatial boundaries and exclude non-members of both sides of the wall. In doing so, the frame creates a stabilized territory, establishing a zone of order that keeps chaos and difference at bay.[48]

45 Dovey, K. (2014). *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Build Form.* London: Routledge.

46 Ibidem p. 7

47 Ibidem.

48 Dovey, K. (2010). *Becoming Places.* Oxford: Routledge.

However, what we should be aware is that this boundary is mostly there to keep up a construct that is imposed by society. Prisoners are behind walls to keeps them inside. This does not mean that being inside the prison one should is allowed to act, interact or contact the outside. The wall is there to keep up our social construct of punishment and dictates in to which territory the prisoner is bound and excluded. This does not mean that the prison territory can't be part of other spaces. It implies that the it should be clear to which territory the prisoner is bound and can be part of. This opens up new possibilities for what the prison boundary can be. Like a more dynamic entity that can be part territories and in doing so, form new ones. Deterritorializing elements and recombining them into new through a process of reterritorialization.[49] Something that also happens our daily lives as Dovey describes about the public spaces:
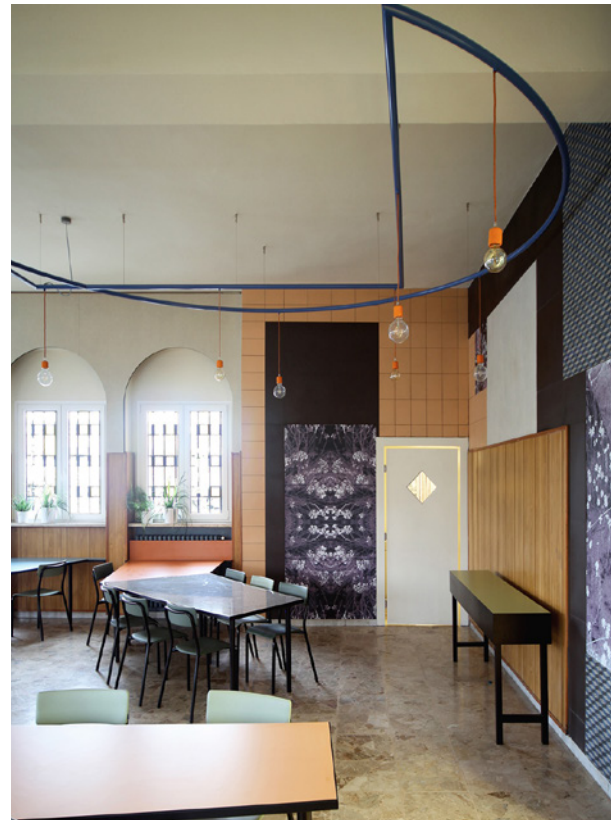
49 Ibidem. p 17

'The public space of an urban street is relatively deterritorialized and interconnected with other streets; public territories such as parking spots, café tables and public benches are claimed and vacated; shops and businesses open and close; private housing may overlook from the sides.'[50]

50 Ibidem. p 18

However small or large, these territories can form in-between spaces where interactions between different worlds take place. Small openings in the wall can carry outside sound into the prison, or functions can be place inside the boundary that can switch between territories or even connect them. Such an intervention already exists in the Italian prison Turin, called Liberamensa. On the outside of this Italian prison, just behind the gate there is an organized place that functions as a lunch break for correction officers and all those who work inside the prison on a daily basis, and which opens to the public in the evening. As it shifts between territories, it provides new opportunities for both sides of the boundaries. The outside gain greater awareness of what happens inside, while offering those who have to stay inside a real opportunity for training and work experience.[51] Although it might appear to be a minor location, it forms a central element in terms of community due to the symbolic sharing of food. At the same it raises awareness for the existence of the correctional facility itself and forms an intricate part of the community.

51 Source: http://www. marcante-testa.it/en/ portfolio/liberamensa-design-enters-the-prison/ (accessed at December 19, 2020)

IV. Liberamensa, Turin

Conclusion

To conclude, I will go back to the beginning of this paper, with the example of Caseros. A filled with some much force, that it literally and figuratively made the prisoners destroying the prison itself. Prison is about punishment. But the question is, do people get better from being punished in prisons? This is a viable question to ask ourselves.

Since the moment architecture became involved in the design of punishment, the practice been an interactive reality, subject to constant shifts in time and ideology. Both time and space are important to the way punished in envisaged, meaning that there is no one way to design punishment. The makes the results of this paper on the one hand temporal and should therefore always be viewed according to the specific rules that are bound to by time and space.

On the other hand, whilst most Western countries have banished the design of inhumane spaces, there is still a need for specific penitentiary structures that satisfy or requirements and specific standards to human condition. The problem is that prison have to deals with an abstract material representation of reality akin to common ideas about punishment: safety, security and control. Safety and security define where the prisoner might move in the prison landscape. Control, territorializes the places and the distinct functions that can be used, giving the activities and places meaning and legitimacy. Our current perception of the prison structure provides a static and regulated live within, which is perceived as unhelpful situation for the lives of prisoners.

Even though we implement humane material design practices to increase the general wellbeing in prison live, like Halden, they only seem to put the prisoner further into a state of being. Reminder them of past bad behavior and limited capabilities to interactions with their surroundings. The material reality forms a constantly reminder of the prisoner's state of being. The same environment makes it unable to act to their state of being, as the prison machine prevents any actions. Our societal view has posed limitations on prison design in the executing of a sentence, because our current approach to the representation of punishment prevents us from creating unhelpful state for prison to react rehabilitate.

Prisons like Bastøy forms a compelling alternative to more common humane practices focused on material presences. The treatment of its prisoners, that are just respected as any other human being, serve as starting point for future humane designs. Not materiality, but wat happens in between is of importance. They put prisoners in a different state of being, that is closer to our everyday lives and puts them in to position to show their 'banality of good'. The simplicity of being good by just acting normal. But to make this happen, prison first have to become the platform in which they can act and display they action. Only then will they be able to show their ability to be good.

Therefore, the way we frame the boundaries of our correction facilities, the connection to society, should be critically evaluated in prison design. By connecting the prison territory on both material, functional and social levels with the surroundings, it allows prisoners to experience the everydayness of live, contribute to society and give meaning to their prison sentence and public image. As a tool for rehabilitation it could not only help regain the experience of live during their sentence, but also create a political role that has been denied thus far. To put in the words of the prisoner, 'things mean nothing, relationships mean everything'.[51]

41 John, K. (2018). p.35

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