

Architecture of Power: The Power of Architecture and its effective Use in Law

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between law and architecture and their mutual effects. It is focused on the subject of the prison system where these two fields intertwine, and concludes that the prison system should react to the changing conception of punishment and adapt the appearance of prison buildings. The thesis is divided into six parts which are further subdivided into chapters and subchapters.

The first part introduces generally architecture and its mission. First, it deals with the concept itself then with the circumstances under which architecture arises, and also the functions that architecture has in society. It also deals with the impact of a space on humans, with the interconnection of architecture and power or with the representative role of some buildings. This part is a general introduction and it illustrates the nature of the chosen topic of this thesis.

The second part deals with the relationship between law and architecture, i.e. how architecture projects into law. The first chapter focuses on architectural works representing law and its symbolism, the second chapter on the criminological approach CPTED which is directly based on architecture and urbanism.

The main part of this thesis deals with the prison system and prison architecture. The prison system serves as a prime example of a field in which law and architecture are widely applied and cooperate. The third part explains the meaning of punishment and its gradual transformation in time, then it briefly outlines the history of punishment and describes the basic of penological systems. This is followed by a passage introducing the Czech prison system, its historical development and the current state. In the end, the new conception of the Czech prison system is analysed, including its systematics and objectives.

The fourth and fifth part are the key passages of the thesis, focusing on prison architecture and the new trend of open prisons. The fourth part describes the influence of the prison environment on prisoners and their correction, it mentions a specific prison, its architectural design, and analyzes the current state of Czech prisons and their possible development. The fifth part discusses the concept of open prisons and its use in practice, both abroad and in the Czech Republic. Legal aspects of open prisons are discussed as

well. The last chapter of the fifth part presents an illustrative example of an open prison – a project of an open prison designed by an architecture student.

The final sixth part deals with other aspects of the Czech prison system and considers possible improvements in other fields except architecture. It mentions the importance of improving the design of custodial prisons, as well as the importance of postpenitentiary care. It evaluates the prison guard profession and considers the overall change of understanding of punishment and a more dignified approach to prisoners.

The purpose of this work is to show on the example of prison architecture what influence architecture has on its users and how this can be used in the penology. The aim of the thesis is to highlight the importance of prison architecture and to accentuate that this element of the prison system plays a crucial role in the process of correction.

Key words: architecture, law, prison