



Sudeh Akhondi

## **N a r r a t i v e   T r a n s i t i o n**

### **from city to cell**

Study of transformation of Wolvenplein prison in Utrecht

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## Abstract

Wolvenplein prison in Utrecht was founded in 1856 on a site out of Utrecht's old walls. The site was historically used as part of the defensive structure of the city from 1580. Dutch Justice system transferred the last detainee in June 2014. This made room for thinking about a new destination.

Living in an era with all claims and exercises of diversity, inclusivity, and liberations, one may expect that inserting a new layer of narrative on top of older layers of the disciplinary narratives of a former prison, this layer must imply some sounds of emancipation.

This project tries to find an overlapping realm between the subjective claims of embodied experience in the phenomenological approach and a heterogeneous characteristic with all its social and political discourses. The intention is to explore how architects can respond to places already charged with strong disciplinary connotations.

How do architectural interventions influence memory reverberance in the historical building that is already used as a prison? How do they influence behavior by generating new stories to locate the building in the urban context with a unique voice and encourage contemplative human involvement.

# Research Methodological Discussion

## First visit and theoretical research

I had my first visit to the site and took some vital information about the overall ambiance and specification of the Wolvenplein. In the next stage, I initiated Studying into the macroscopic political, economic, cultural discussion about the subject from which the structure of essay was formed. In this stage I look closely into the most relevant discussion about the subject like panopticon and disciplinary society, heterotopia and the idea of in-betweenness and the principles of phenomenological approach. At the same time, I looked into the geographic contexts in the relevant regions such as Utrecht city and its permanence and gradually narrowing down the target area to Wolvenplein prison.

## More on-site research and giving specific direction to theoretical research

I continued the research base on observation and documentation in the phenomenological view. I applied and combine various methods in the study, such as an enormous amount of photography and video filmed, sketches, writings, and mental maps. These offer a variation in the qualitative data recorded. Also, I tried to proximate the theoretical study to the context so that it gives me a clear understanding of my position toward a complex issue in a real context.

## Analyses & Interpretation

Study of the political and social discussion around the subject of prison in general, and investigating the previous successful or unsuccessful attempts in architectural intervention in prisons brought me a specific awareness of my position. On the other hand, The site research production consists of multi-media

images about real contexts and everyday practices documented my personal perceptual experience.

For the transition from research to design, I worked with the methodology of interpretation in the concept stage. I combined the theoretical research with context research and through analysis, deconstruction, reuse, and re-composition, I set up my structure of understanding of the site in the method of spatial narratives, and tried to reveal my position towards the specific spatial qualities and identities. The visualization technique such as collage drawing used in this process due to its high degree of freedom and flexibility.

Therefore, I wrapped up my journey in **five main chapters**.

*Essay* is the outcome of all the theoretical research. All the in-site and Online context research and the documentation are summed up in the chapter *looking into the context*. In the chapter *visual conclusion*, I brought my own interpretation of the combination of site and theoretical research. Based on that, In the next chapter the *concepts* are presented and finally the *design* main decisions and principles come in the last chapter.





## Chapter one

# Essay

The essay will start with introduction and defining the assignment or goal. In the part Methodology, I tried to explain how phenomenological approach transcends a method and shapes my framework through whole project. In the next two sections ‘Panopticon and Heterotopia’ and ‘from city to cell’ I elaborated on the main relevant theme around the subject. The outcome that is clearly connected to my architectural design are listed in conclusion.

## hypothesis|

By applying a layer of public activities as a new narrative, and with a phenomenological approach, Wolvenplein prison in Utrecht can represent a heterogeneous atmosphere while letting older spatial narrative and memories reverberate.

## introduction|

Wolvenplein prison in Utrecht was founded in 1856 on a site out of Utrecht's old walls. The site was historically being used as part of the defensive structure of the city from 1580. Dutch Justice system transferred the last detainee in June 2014. The closure of the prison announced in 2013 made room for thinking about a new destination. This is the case for many prisons all over The Netherlands.

Living in an era with all claims and exercises of diversity, inclusivity, and liberations, one may expect that inserting a new layer of narrative on top of older layers of the disciplinary narratives of a former prison, this layer must imply some sounds of emancipation.

This essay tries to find an overlapping realm between the subjective claims of embodied experience in the phenomenological approach and a heterogeneous characteristic with all its social and political discourses.

The intention is to explore how architects can respond to places already charged with strong disciplinary connotations. It might be useful to note that an architect has, through design, at least some measure of control over how existing stories resonate in the places they intervene in, as well as over the kind of stories that are more likely to shape themselves in their designs.

**How do architectural interventions influence memory reverberance in the historical building that is already used as a prison? How do they influence behavior by generating new stories to locate the building in the urban context with a unique voice and encourage contemplative human involvement?**

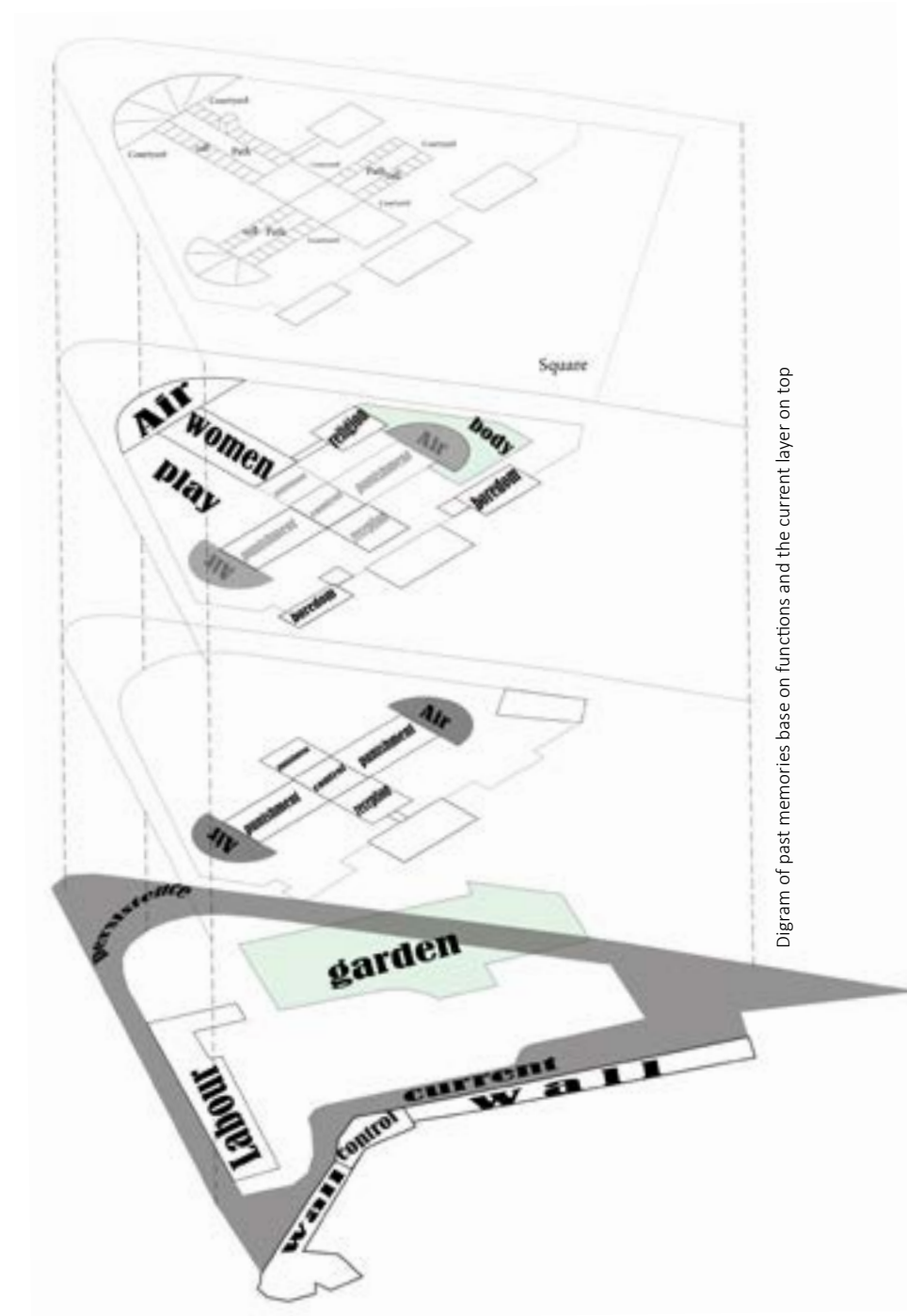
## assignment|

Laid on the old Utrecht's outskirts, lonely, subtle, and beautiful, is Wolvenplein prison. Now abandoned and awaiting its new character.

Having a new character means adding a new layer on top of old scenarios. What should this scenario be about? What could the new layer on top be when the underlying outstanding layers are about discipline and punishment and when the beneath layers are already conveying a strong connotation of institutional surveillance.

Let's go to an even older time, what this site that holds a particular character in the city was standing for in the previous era. How can they be revealed again?

Let's think that the building needs to gain a city character different from what it was famous for. My project wants to achieve that character while letting the old memory of the place still visible.



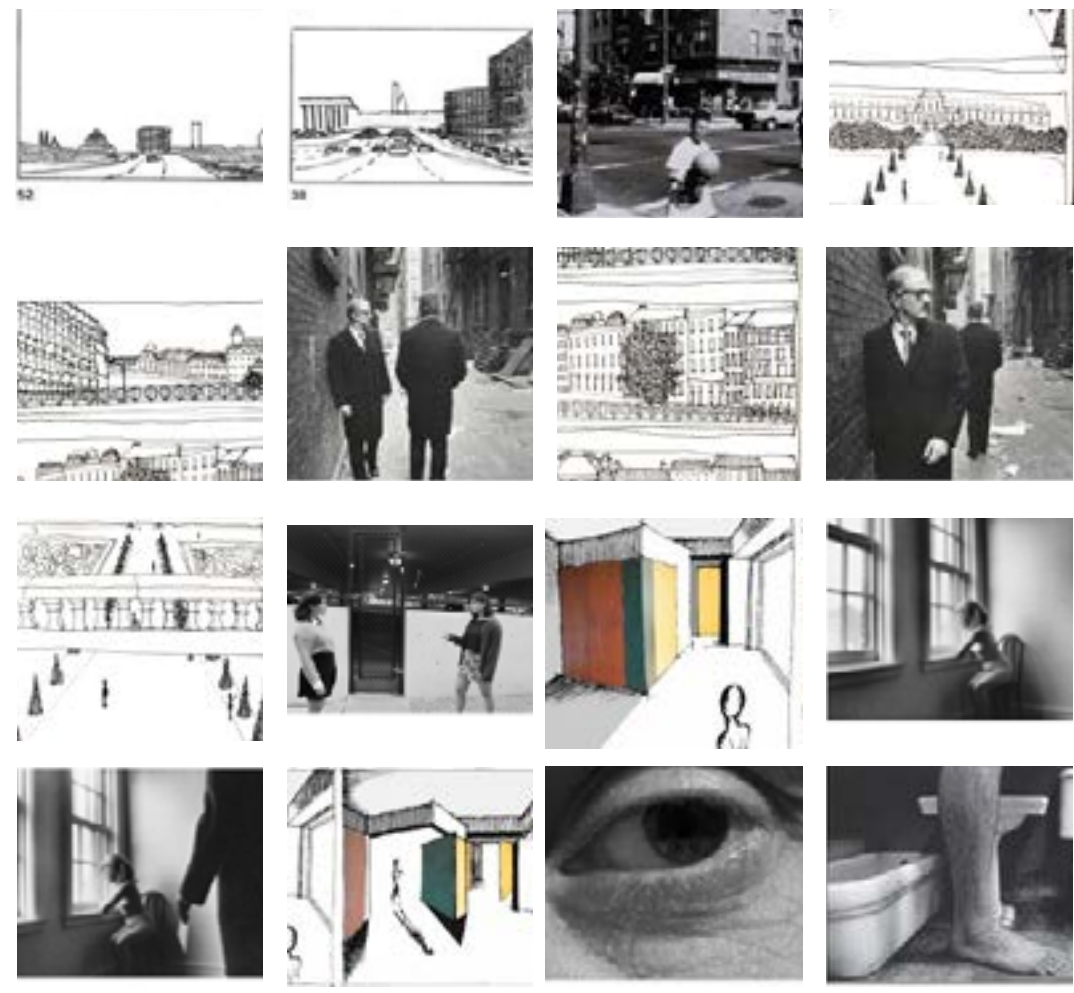
methodology|

Phenomenological research tends to understand “how people experience things and events” by examining “perspectives and views of various realities.”<sup>1</sup> The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines phenomenology as the study of “things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things; thus the meanings things have in our experience” and expresses an interest in a “conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first-person point of view.”<sup>2</sup>

In architecture, the impact of phenomenological thinking has been felt in two distinct phases. In the 1960s and 70s, particularly in Christian Norberg-Schulz’s work, inspired at least in part by Martin Heidegger. He focused on the symbolic structuring of places and settlement patterns following the philosophical, theological, and cosmological ideas across the landscape. He believed that these symbolic patterns allowed people to grasp their place within the larger scheme of things by establishing what Norberg-Schulz called an ‘existential foothold’ in space and time. The second wave of phenomenological influence from the early 1990s onward with a dramatic shift of interest from the macro to the micro-scale. With Keneth Frampton on top, the emphasis moves to the minutiae of architectural details, to questions of tectonics and materiality, and in particular, the sensory connections between the building and the individual experiencing the subject. However, socially and politically oriented, and generally ‘forward-looking’ thinkers tend to see that phenomenology is fundamentally conservative and backward-looking, apparently too preoccupied with nostalgia’s supposedly subject-centered world.

Therefore, a key question relates to the link between the individual and the social world and asks whether phenomenology can help us deal with the broader social and political context.

1 Muratovski, G. (2015). Research for designers: A guide to methods and practice. Sage.  
2 Smith, D. W. (2016). Phenomenology. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2016). Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University.



Our spatial understanding takes place in an objective layer and through mental processes in a personal account. However, Merleau-Ponty, the French philosopher, and theorist of phenomenology, challenges the convention of the duality of subject and object in western culture and mentions that we live in the city as the city is living in us. Therefore this constitutes an entity in which the perception of human occurs. He emphasizes the body with its all sensory units and its embodied experience as a multi-layered, complicated entity that perceives the environment by moving in space. As architects, we may need to feel and understand the space we designed so to be able to relate the people. This sequential collage trying to express this bodily experience.



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It is critical in architecture to see a transformation of a historical building through phenomenological understanding as it deals with intangible qualities of the place one could hardly transfer unless with the use of narrative and with subjective, autobiographical interpretation. But as the building is a prison and the new story is a public one with an urban role, it is also essential to see it from a socio-political perspective.

4 Hale, Jonathan, critical phenomenology, architecture and embodiment, 2013,



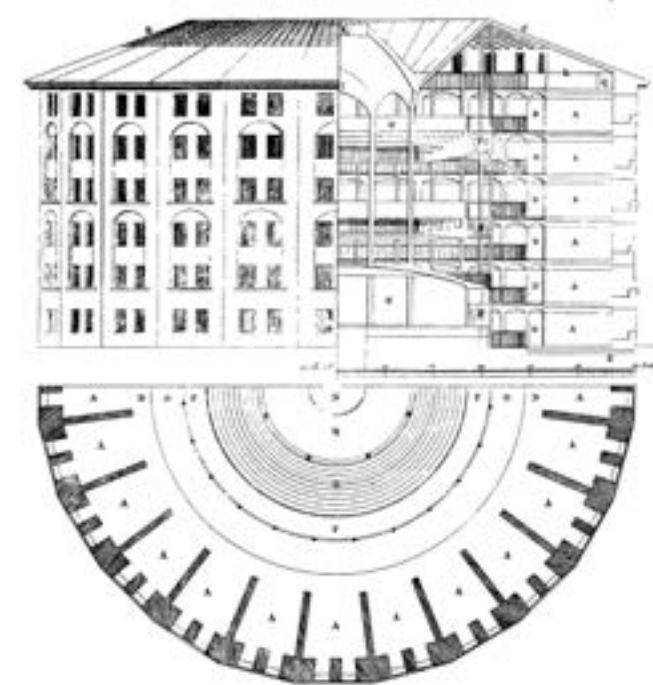
The city is a narrative constitution of mentally and bodily understanding of individuals. Memory is bounded with place and a place is conceived through memory.

## panopticon and heterotopia|

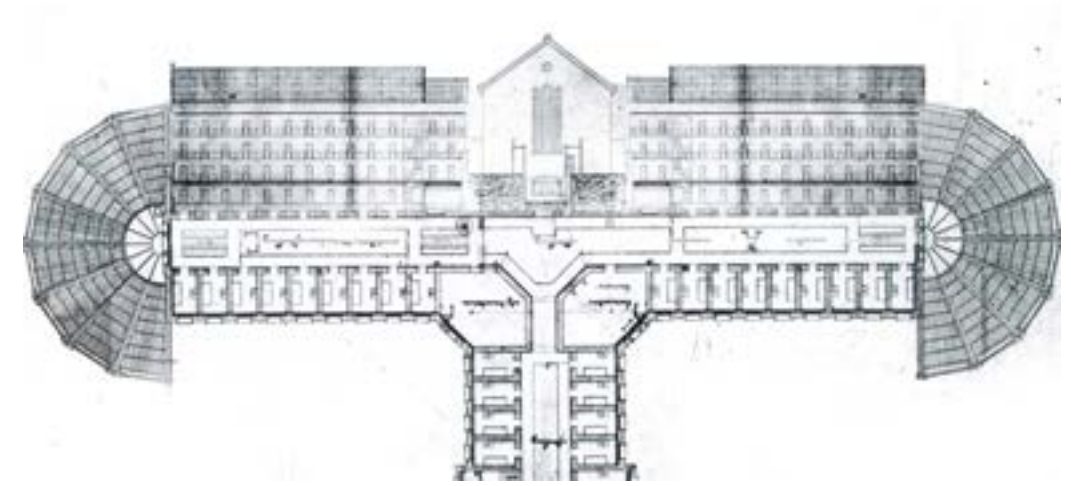
When it comes to the transformation of a prison, the attention would eventually turn to Jeremy Bentham's panopticon theory and Michel Foucault's ideas and his discourse on power, which had a crucial role in the intellectual and academic discussions of the 1970s. It is crucial as, at the same time, a similar debate about the in-between space emerged in architectural circles. The Panopticon architectural model consists of locating the cells on a circular perimeter and letting all the prisoners be observed from a single surveillance point situated in the center of that circle.

Bentham's Panopticon prison model had a significant influence not only in prisons' design but also in the academic circles. The person responsible for this was the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who considered this prison model a paradigmatic example of "the disciplinary society." In *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Foucault stated that the most crucial effect arisen by the Panopticon is "inducing the prisoner into a strong permanent and conscious belief that he is visible to the eye of who must control him, thus, guaranteeing the automatic functioning of power. Making surveillance permanent in its effect, even if it is not so in action. "That the perfection of power may turn useless its actual execution; that this architectural apparatus may become the machine capable of creating and sustaining a relationship of power independently from the who exerts it; in sum, that the prisoners find themselves within a situation of power of which they, themselves, are the bearers." <sup>5</sup>

Panopticon has initially been planned as a model for all types of institutions where humans' control, or even animals, was considered necessary. Even if it was supposed to be associated only with penitentiary architecture, Bentham thought it



Elevation, section and plan of Bentham's panopticon prison, drawn by Willey Reveley in 1791.



Elevation, section and plan of Wolfenplein prison Utrecht, though not a classic panopticon follow the same logic

<sup>5</sup> Foucault, M. *Le panoptisme*. In *Surveiller et Punir. Naissance de la Prison*; Gallimard: Paris, France, 1975; pp. 197–229.

<sup>6</sup> Bentham, J. *Panopticon or the Inspection-House*, &C. In *The Panopticon Writings*; Verso: London, UK, 1995; pp. 29–95

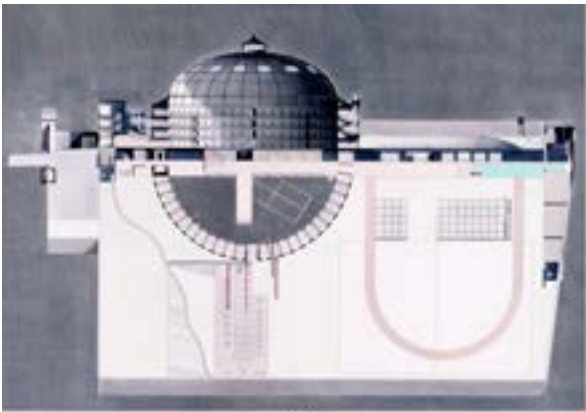


could also be useful for other purposes such as schools, hospitals, poor-plan buildings, etc.<sup>6</sup> This list reminds the one Foucault made when he defined heterotopia, which had a significant impact on architecture.

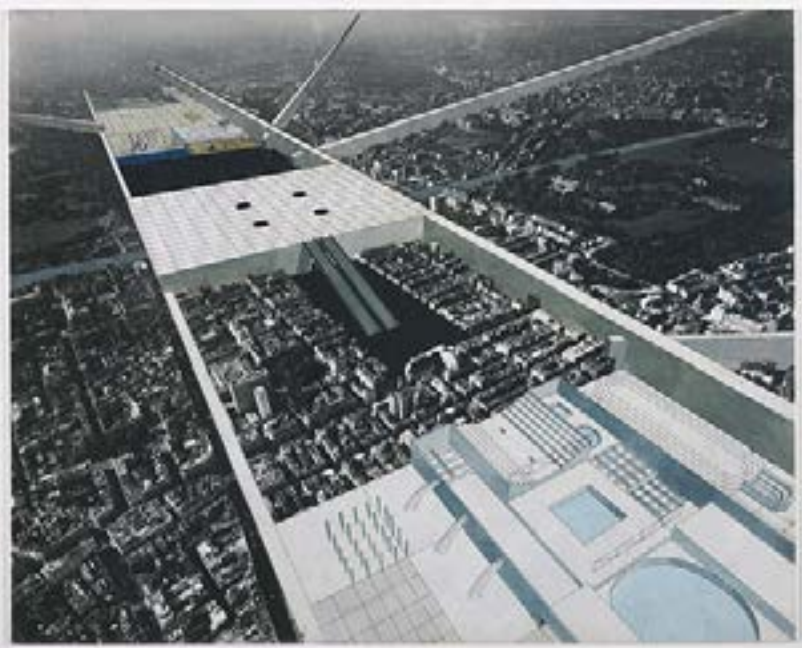
In the essay *Of Other Spaces*, Foucault introduces the concept of the heterotopia, maintaining how our lives are “governed by a certain number of oppositions that remain inviolable.” He called them “simple givens,” as they were “between family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space,” but more significantly, “between private space and public space.”<sup>7</sup> He explains these as ideals that are “nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred” and calls these heterotopias placeless places (like a mirror) because they deviate from the norm.

**In urban studies and design, the concept of heterotopia implies juxtaposition of the incompatible spaces where the different cultures co-exist while they are simultaneously represented and contested.**

While classical utopianism connotes the hegemonic and closed harmonization of total control, heterotopia represents an alternative perspective assuming the possibility (and even desirability) of the co-existence of the different cultural formations within a spatial context. Since heterotopia entails ‘space of multiplicity,’ it represents a certain kind of spatial comprehension critical for spatial designers and planners. It embraces multiple micro-utopias enacted in the same spatial context.



the intervention proposal for the Koepelgevangenis in Arnhem. (a) The project: interior perspective drawing, by R. Koolhaas/OMA, 1979-80; (b) a photogram of *Un Chien Andalou*, L. Buñuel and S. Dalí, 1929. Koolhaas compared this with the way in which the intersection of the new streets eliminates “the eye” of the Panopticon.



Exodus, or the Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture, (TOP)The Strip, Aerial Perspective, (bottom) The Allotments, Project, 1972. MoMA Collection © 2013 Rem Koolhaas

In terms of design, this understanding of heterogeneous space would hold that differentiation of use and complexity of form arise from spatial qualities. These qualities are inseparable from their material conditions. This space could produce controlled but varied atmospheric effects as well as different performative capacities that are not determined by 'programmatic' function. Such a space would necessarily be practical concerning the actors and agencies that traverse it, enfolding subjective perception with its material conditions. Moreover, these spatial effects would not be distinct or the result of formal organizations of matter. Still, they would be means through which material and programmatic organizations would be configured and manifested. Therefore, heterogeneous space in architecture is neither difference produced by form within an overall uniformity (modern space), not a collage of distinct formal elements (Post-Modern space). Instead, the proposition of a heterogeneous space would produce and permit differentiation and discontinuity of both quality and organization across multiple conditions within an overall coherency.

One of the most radical approaches toward transforming a prison was achieved by OMA in Koppel panopticon prison in Arnhem. The close examination reveals Rem Koolhaas's discursive attitude in executing some theoretical discourse into a disciplinary architecture.

The most significant change, though, is the replacement of the central guardhouse by two lower-level streets intersecting in a cruciform manner, containing several functions and opening access to the rest of the complex. The former observers are now themselves being observed by the prisoners, who are no longer kept locked in their cells at all times but could circulate freely on the rings and access the ground floor. The result is a case-study about architecture and philosophy's interaction.

The other Rem Koolhaas project, 'exodus' the voluntary prisoners of architecture, is also in a different way tightened to the philosophical and theoretical ideas. While these projects are intellectually robust, they all lack the subjective aspect expected for an architectural project.



Las Meninas is a 1656 painting in the Museo del Prado in Madrid, by Diego Velázquez,

Foucault explains the link between utopias and heterotopias using the metaphor of a mirror. A mirror is a utopia because the image reflected is a 'placeless place', an unreal virtual place that allows one to see one's own visibility. However, the mirror is also a heterotopia, in that it is a real object. The heterotopia of the mirror is at once absolutely real, relating with the real space surrounding it, and absolutely unreal, creating a virtual image.



# From city to cell

In the *Le corps utopique* Foucault gives a narrative definition of heterogeneous space: ‘one does not live in a neutral and white space; one does not live, die, or love, within the rectangle of a sheet of paper.’ Rather, ‘one lives, loves, and dies in a space that is gridded, cut up, variegated, with light and dark zones, differences in level, stairs, holes, bumps, hard and fragile regions, penetrable, porous. There are regions of passage, streets, trains, and subways; there are regions open to momentary pause – cafés, cinemas, beaches, hotels, and then the closed regions of rest and being at home. Yet, among these places that are distinguished from each other, there are those that are absolutely different: places that are opposed to all the others, that are destined in some way to efface them, neutralize them and purify them. These are in some way counter-spaces. These counter-spaces, these localized utopias.’<sup>8</sup>

**In this description, Foucault gives a character of in-between to the concept of heterotopia, the obscure passage, and the transition between certain moments that are more clearly defined. In-between darkness and light, indoor and outdoor, and between individual and social, public and private, and city and building.**

As Suzanne Hall says, “A frontier exemplifies a state of change or a paradox of perpetual impermanence, and is as much space as it is a practice of transition.”<sup>9</sup>

An excellent example of this transition between architecture and city, in which twin phenomena keep their independent character while representing a form of blurring the conceptually important boundaries, is in Aldo Rossi and recent German architect and thinker ‘Uwe Schroeder.’ They tend to call architecture spatializing the form of life.

<sup>8</sup> Michel Foucault, *Le corps utopique – les hétérotopies*, presentation by Deniel Defert (Paris: Éditions Lignes, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Suzanne Hall, *City, street and citizen; the measure of the ordinary* (London: Routledge, 2013), 33.



Open/Public space:  
the square



Open/Private space  
the Courtyard

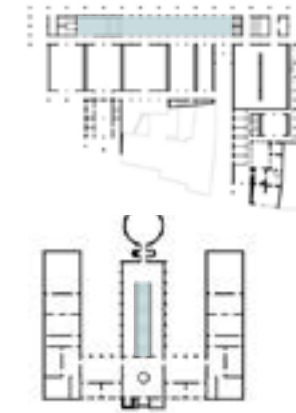
If for Mies, «what determines the transition from life to shape is the function» (Monestirol, 2003); For Schröder, the passage is possible only by reasoning on the broader meaning of living and, therefore, on the use of space. In this way, the German architect reaches the definition of archetypal symbolic spaces of urban social living, attributable to the three types of the square, the courtyard, and the cell. «This constellation of differentiated types of space is superimposed by a hierarchical arrangement of the three nucleus spaces distinguished from each other according to their dedication and adjacent spaces: square, courtyard, and cell are the archetypal space formations of city and house.

Regarding the idea of body-schema, the movement thorough this articulation of spaces with different quality is productive of a narrative.

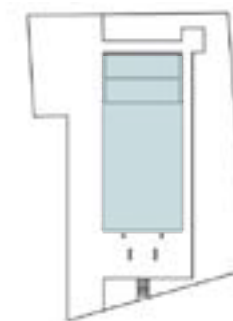
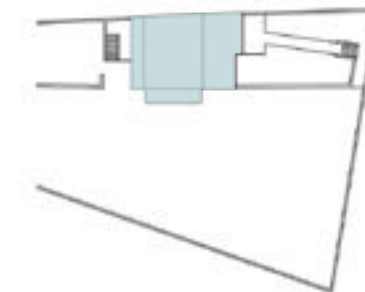
The place is considered a constructive product of human perception so that without human participation, the place would lose its sense and definition. Our built environment evokes stories, and everyone has their own stories connected to it. Narratives are always linked with two components of the context: time and space. The time dimension creates a sequence.

**Thereby narratives can function as a form of representation, framing, tied to that sequence, space, and time. With framing, the reader or observer is directed towards a particular perspective, through a set route, attracted to specific staged out elements formed by the designer.**

Applying the narrative communication model to architecture explains that when we use narratives for framing the environment, the architect is the author. The building can be the narrator because it tells the architect's story or emphasizes certain elements, manipulating the observed perspective. The media can be symbols, details, materials, sculptures, routes, or voids expressed by the building.



Close/Public space:  
the Path



Close/Private space:  
the Cell

21



the square



the Courtyard



the Path



the Cell

22

# Conclusion

To straighten up the complex project as much as possible I would like to summarize the multi-layered investigation within three main approach.

## 1- How the project should be conceived and reinterpreted?

The relevant personal memories combine with the realities of the project. This process synthesis a new voice which is more of a real essence than a true one. Therefor the phenomenological understanding plays its role in the level of conceiving the project as well as translating the conceived layer to a new voice through architectural expressions.

**2- What the new voice must include?** As Georges Bataille says there is violence inherent to architecture because with making walls we resist the bodies and determine who is included and who is not. This goes up to the level that a building or an architectural typology works as an apparatus of reproducing the mechanisms of violence. (As in Panopticon) The heterogeneous character does not involve removing the wall or accentuating it but mainly creating situations in which contradictory concepts such as inside and outside are tend to blurring. A clear message should be delivered? I believe creating natural and active situations in which users are like players will do the work. It brings up the practices of how equations of power are transmissible and interchangeable. This may involve having some spaces without a clear pre-written programs.

**3- How the new voice should be heard?** To make a building connect, I need to have a good story. As long as it is related to the body movements and user's background it is always likely that parts of the story are missed or skipped. But ,as well, it is probable that parts of it will success to connect to people from different walks of life. It is important the story to be clear and freed from distractions; narrated in the sequences which while being linked together bring distinct situations. The work of designing rigid stages for unknown players to be involved without a pre-written script.





## Chapter two

# Looking into the context

In the following section I try to represent the place in the way it actually revealed to me in the first place. Therefore, it does not include all the information regarding to the Wolvenplein prison and Utrecht, but the combination of the available information that seemed crucial to me and the assignment and my personal understanding of the context. Therefore, in this special situation it seemed logical to me to combine logbook which is personal interpretations with objective research.

## The fortified city

Although there is some evidence of earlier inhabitation in the region of Utrecht, dating back to the Stone Age (app. 2200 BCE) and settling in the Bronze Age (app. 1800–800 BCE),[11] the founding date of the city is usually related to the construction of a Roman fortification (castellum), probably built in around 50 CE. A series of such fortresses was built after the Roman emperor Claudius decided the empire should not expand further north. To consolidate the border, the Limes Germanicus defense line was constructed along the main branch of the river Rhine, which at that time flowed through a more northern bed compared to today (what is now the Kromme Rijn). These fortresses were designed to house a cohort of about 500 Roman soldiers. Near the fort, settlements would grow housing artisans, traders and soldiers' wives and children.



The city walls formed the largest construction in medieval Utrecht. The five-kilometre long defensive works had to be modified regularly, which was obviously a huge undertaking. For example, the walls had to be lowered and reinforced to permit the installation of cannons with iron cannon balls in the 15th century. This renewal effort largely coincided with Emperor Charles V's take-over in 1528. As an outpost of the immense Habsburg Empire, Utrecht had to have strong defences



Hundreds of artists were inspired by Utrecht's fortifications. Herman Saftleven was so fascinated by the walls that he spent many hours drawing them, in great detail. His drawings form a marvellous period document, giving us a wonderful sense of what it was like to stroll along the walls some 400 years ago.

[https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/en/exhibitions/the-fortified-city?set\\_language=en](https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/en/exhibitions/the-fortified-city?set_language=en)



## Looking into the larger context

Utrecht's ancient city center features many buildings and structures, several dating as far back as the High Middle Ages. It has been the religious center of the Netherlands since the 8th century. It lost the status of prince-bishopric but remained the main religious center in the country. Utrecht was the most crucial city in the Netherlands until the Dutch Golden Age when Amsterdam surpassed it as its cultural center and most populous city.

Utrecht is also famous for its university, for its closeness to the Rhine river, for its train station that hosts the highest number of passengers per day in the Netherlands. These are all true, but how a city reveals itself to an observer is through the way you move in a town, the cityscapes you encounter, the shops you go and the people you meet. The journey has started for me through the station, and what I was perceiving was a charming city with all its old and authentic buildings. A significant number of beautiful and historic narrow alleys seemed to reveal mysteries in every turn. And also a large number of young people who were gathering along the streets.

The contemporary architecture, as far as I saw, had some iconic meaningful presence in the city.





# The permanence



Aldo Rossi

## The Architecture of the City

City and region, agricultural land and forest become human works because they are an immense repository of the labor of our hands. But to the extent that they are our “artificial homeland” and objects that have been constructed, they also testify to values; they constitute memory and permanence. The city is in its history. Hence, the relationship between place and man and the work of art—which is the ultimate, decisive fact shaping and directing urban evolution according to an aesthetic finality—affords us a complex mode of studying the city.



The permanences of a city constitute and enrich the city’s collective memory and, therefore, part of its inhabitant identity. Wolvenplein prison is among the permanence that creates a network in which a city dweller finds meaning.



# Zocher's Green Belt

33



Design J.D. Zocher jr. From 1835 for the section Singels Utrecht from Manenburg to Zonnenburg



Considering the Grift park at the northern side of the site, the Wolvenburg seems an interruption in the green path's continuity.



34

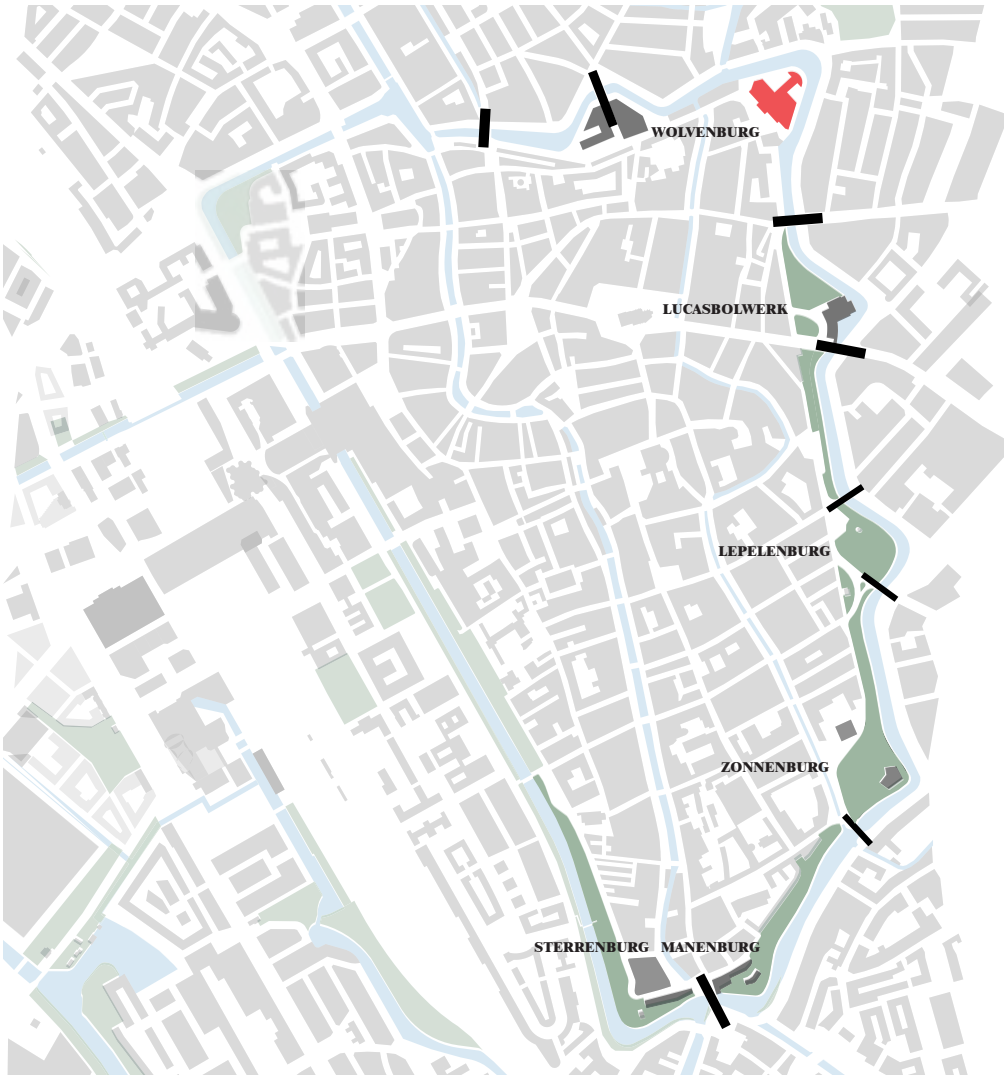
In 1828 the city of Utrecht received permission from the king to demolish the old city walls. Because the Wolvenburg bulwark and the De Wolf tower with accompanying verges were still issued on long-term leasehold, relatively little happened in the northeast corner of the city for a long time. When the land registry was established in 1832, the plots 278-282 were owned by ‘fabrikeur’ Cornelis van Weede .

It was only after the death of Frans van der Hoop in 1844 that plans emerged to include Wolvenburg in the city’s beautification plans of architect Zocher .

The architectural, historical value, particularly as an expression of the military historical building development over the centuries, is an excellent example of the historical garden development in which The military works were demolished and converted into a park.

This historical layer seemed vital to me.

# Strongholds & bridges



In the mid-16th century, the bastions or strongholds de Morgenster, Sterrenburg, Manenborgh and Sonnenborgh were built under the direction of Emperor Charles V and under the direction of master builder Willem van Noort. In 1577, five more large earthen strongholds were added: Lepelenburg, Wolvenburg, Lucasbolwerk, Mariabolwerk and the Begijnbolwerk. Incidentally, the strongholds have never been used for acts of war.

# Wolvenburg



The Wolvenburg was located in the north-eastern part of the city center. The stronghold was named after the tower de Wolf that stood directly south of the city wall. Like many other defenses, the fortress was gradually used for non-military activities.

As there located several bridges over the canal, it naturally influences people's circulation and therefore at-least their accidental encounter with the Wolvenplein. Currently, Wolvenburg looks like a dead-end ally. The diagram shows how different placement of old and new bridges may have influence people's involvement with the site.



# Wolvenburg changes of spirit

Wolvenburg was founded around 1580 as a military stronghold. In the 18th century, the city of Utrecht rented out the fortress. Mulberries are planted for silk cultivation. In 1753 a completely new destination followed: a litmus factory. This polluting dye plant was in operation until 1839. The last owner of the litmus factory also has a nursery for floriculture on the stronghold: Flora's hof. After a brief use as a shooting range, the city of Utrecht sold the stronghold to the State in 1852.



It is crucial to see any new intervention/function as a moment in a multi-layer continuous history of the place; A layer that may still be surpassed by a new one in the future.



?

-1500  
% The city wall gets **towers** with the name of animals here is the wolf tower- fox tower Plompstoren

-1580  
% Creating the **stronghold** to strengthen th city

-1723  
% **Mulberries and silkworms**

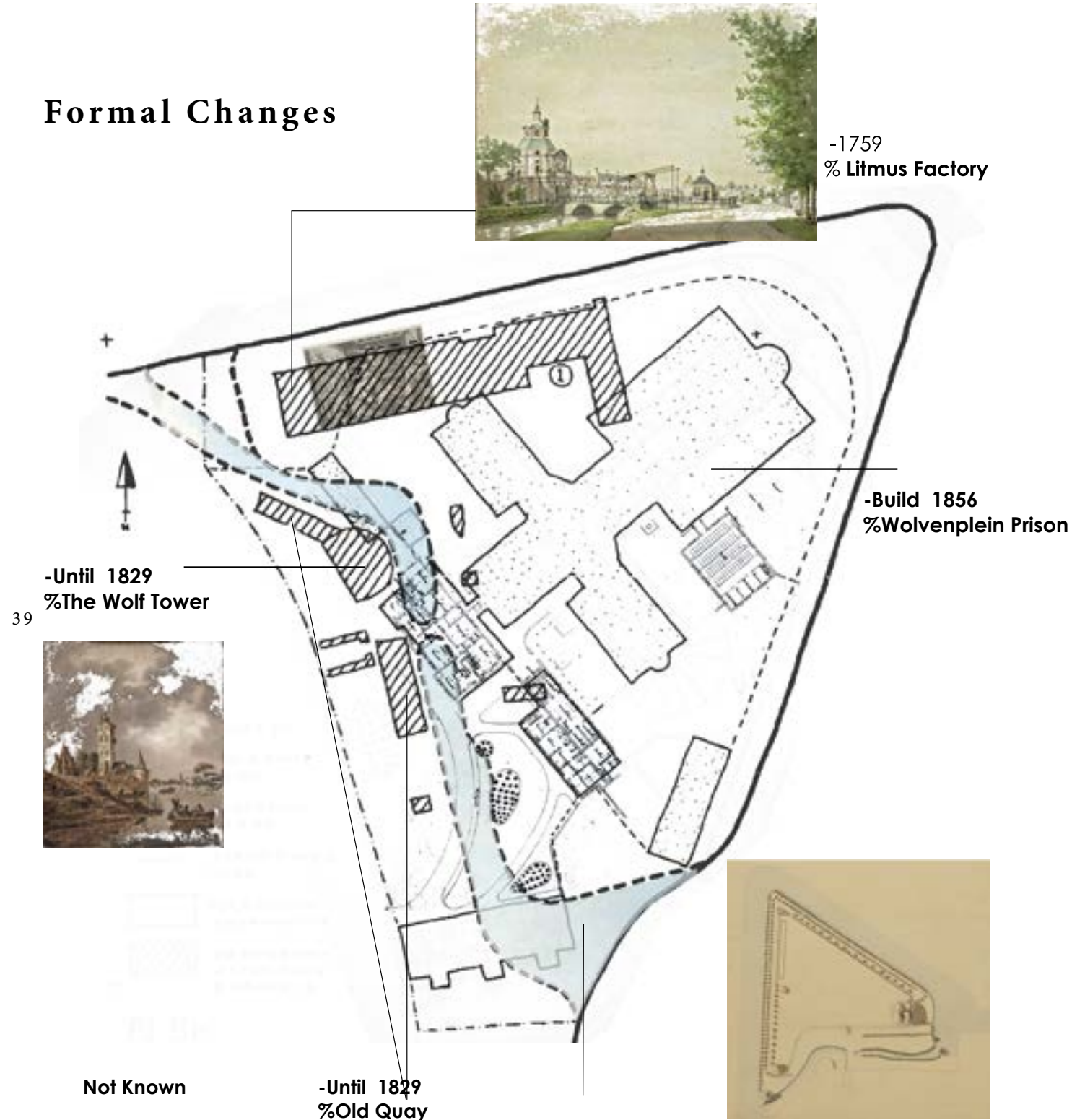
-1759  
% **Litmus Factory**

-1829  
% **Flora Court for exotic plants**

-1856  
% **The Wolvenplein Prison**

-2020  
% **? The Wolvenplein public building**

## Formal Changes



## Summary

- The first layer of study consist of an objective + subjective understanding of the place. Due to the extreme complexity of the place and that it includes multiple layers of history, memory and spatial narratives the study of the context will continue during next stage.
- The main target is to specify the function and the atmosphere that needed to be assigned to the building. I believe this atmosphere is mostly a matter of discovery, not a decision.
- As this building is an indicator of the city's identity and its presence would contribute to the neighborhood's well-beings, it should be a Living -Room for the region.
- Considering the green belt and Zocher's design and vision, Garden must play an essential role in the new outcome.
- The temporary current functions is workshops and workplaces. It seems that these kinds of collective activities, in contrast with the previous function and seeing the upcoming generation with different way of working and living, should be considered in new program.
- Finally, I believe the building should be lightened, opened, and be accessible to the public. It must be a place for children to play in the traces of memory of their ancestors. The place must be one for pleasure while being encouraged to contemplate—a combination of play and contemplation.

# Spatial changes

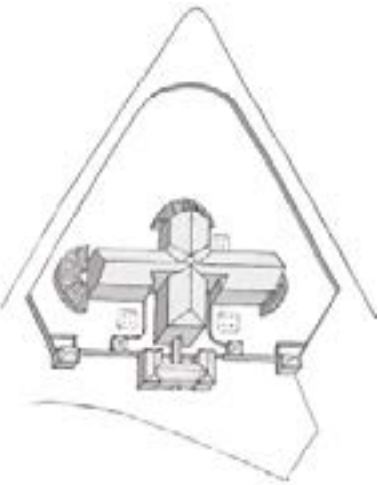
The buildings on the Wolvenburg bulwark in 1832 have been made visible on the current cadastral map. The oldest layer shows the bulwark’s original shape, the original cadastral parcels, the disappeared buildings on the bulwark and bank, and the filled-in water. The complex is projected over it in its current size.

The development of the complex has roughly five phases:

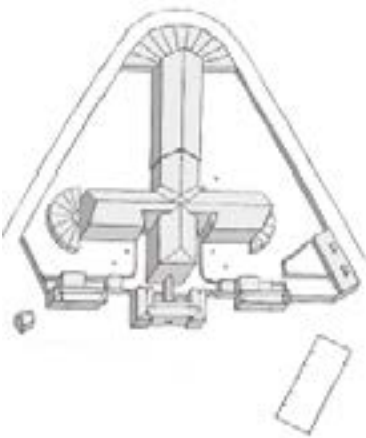
1. Construction in 1853 (I. Warnsinck)
2. The extension of the north wing in 1877 for women(J.F. Metzelaar)
- 3.Construction of the church on the east side in 1903 (W.C. Metzelaar)
4. The construction of the gymnasium, bath, and work areas on the east side in 1974
5. The renovation of the entire complex around 2000 (M. van Roosmalen).

Besides, various (internal) renovations have taken place over time.

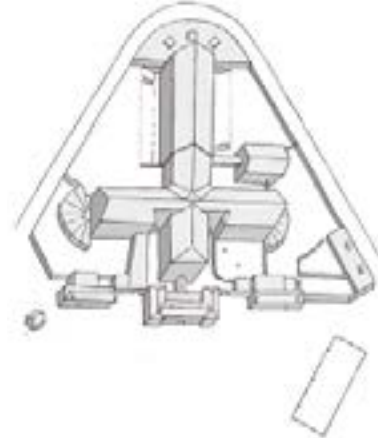
1853



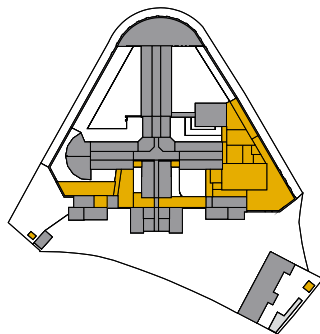
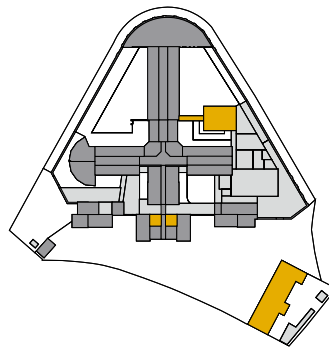
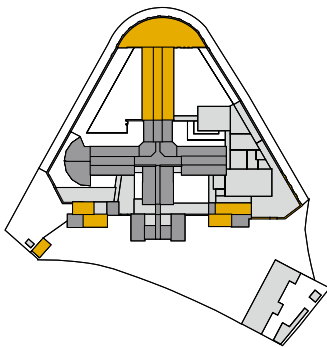
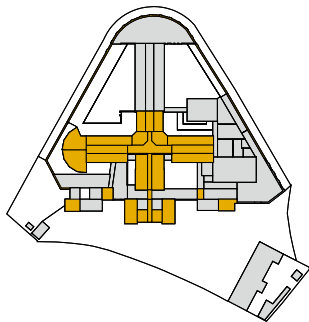
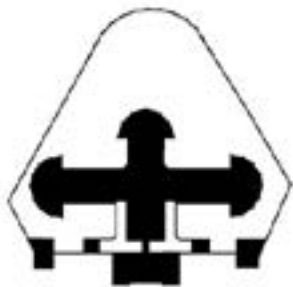
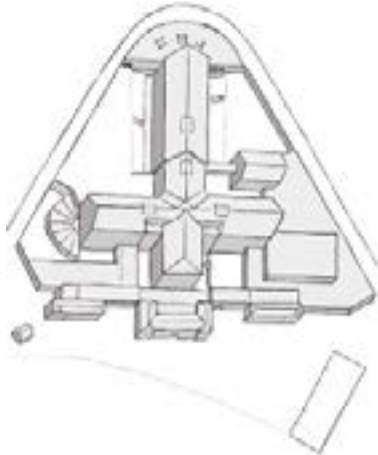
1877



1903



1974



# Historical function

43

1853 individual cells and air sites  
1969 part air space replaced by cells  
1982 reorganization of cells

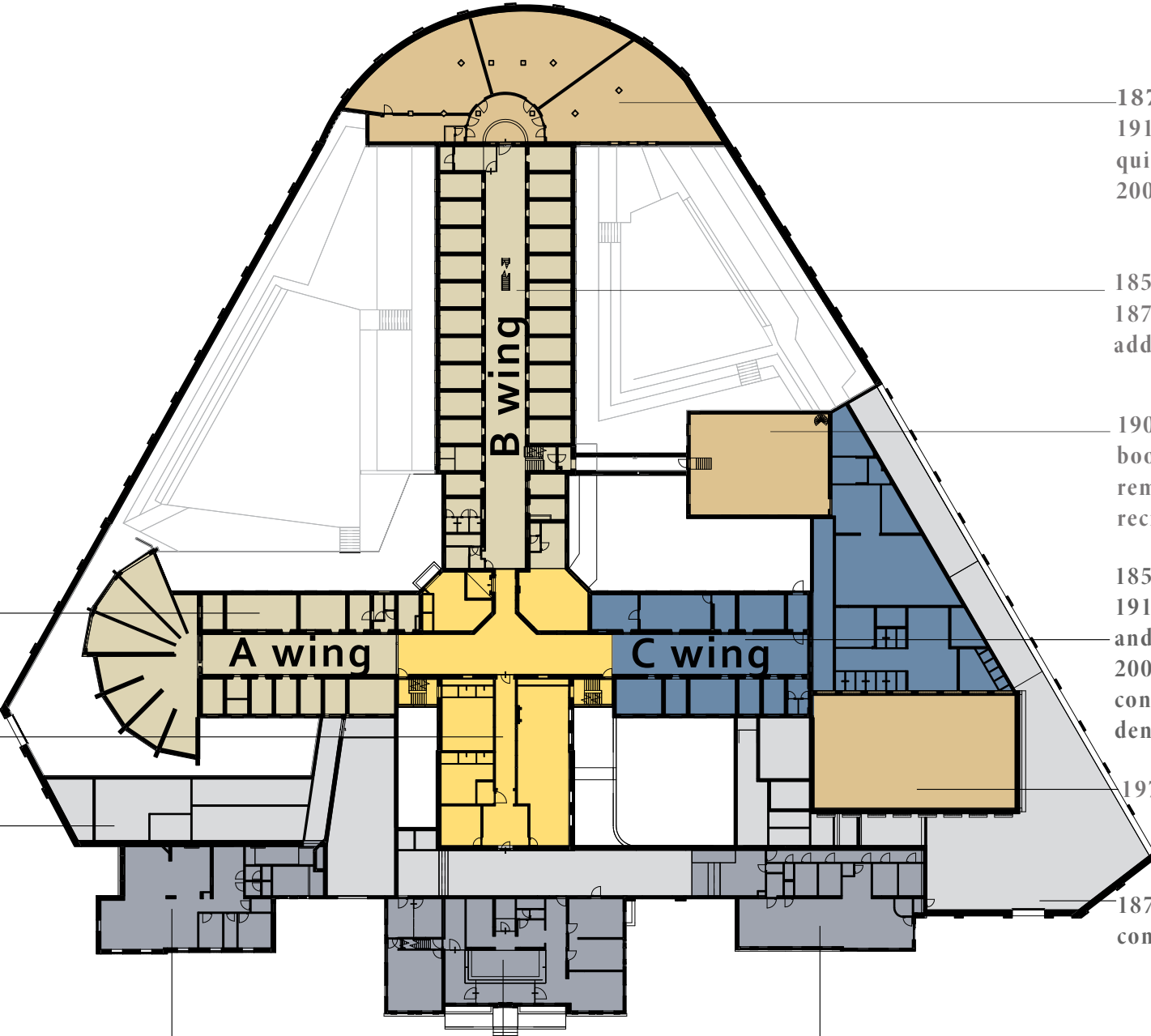
1853 meeting / waiting rooms, office  
director and small secretariat  
2000 converted into a canteen

warehouse storage

living

living

living



1877 individual air places,  
1913 converted into a library and  
quiet rooms. Renovated again in  
2000, library

1853 cells for women  
1877 expanded with  
additional cells (men)

1903 church, 52 captured individually in  
booths in grandstand. 1949 grandstand  
removed and used as classroom teaching and  
recreation room

1853 cells, ca  
1913 cells converted into workshops, library  
and warehouse.  
2000 renovated and put into use as a  
consultation room, treatment room, pharmacy,  
dentist, hairdresser, after-school care

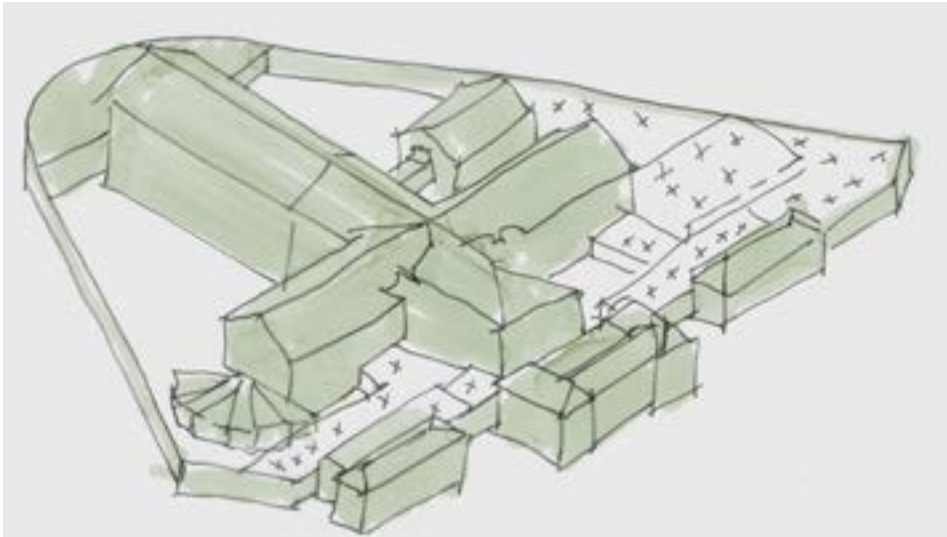
1974 gym

1877 infirmary, 1913  
converted to warehouse

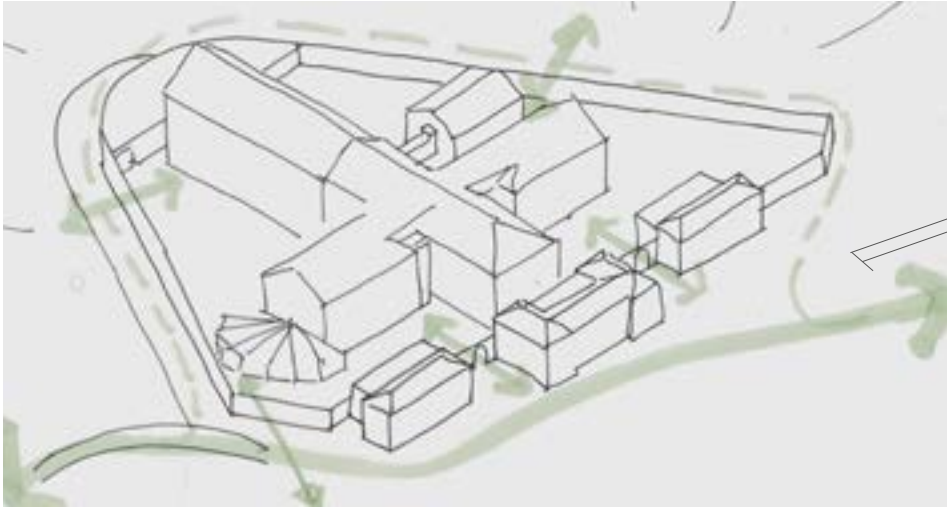
44



Project in the city



Non-monumental parts will be wholly or partly demolished to give the main building its original voice

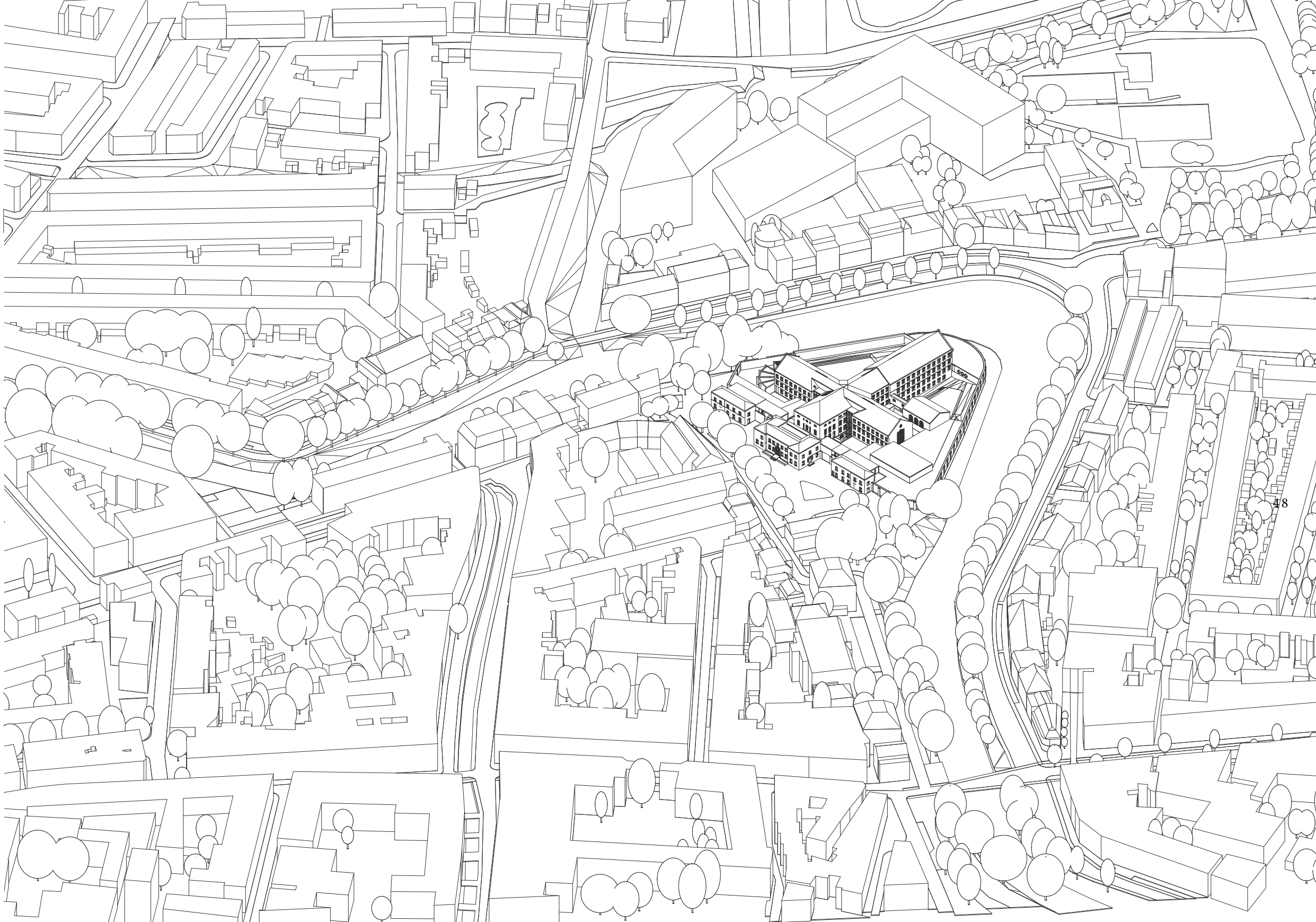


The goal is to know how the complex will relate to the water, to the neighborhood and eventually to the city. This mutual relation between the building and the city would define the character or the atmosphere of the building and the new program.





3D print model-SC 1:1000



While studying the city, I was making the precise 3d model of the surroundings and the existing situation of the prison. The in-place investigations in combination with 3d-modeling provided a more comprehensive knowledge of the context.



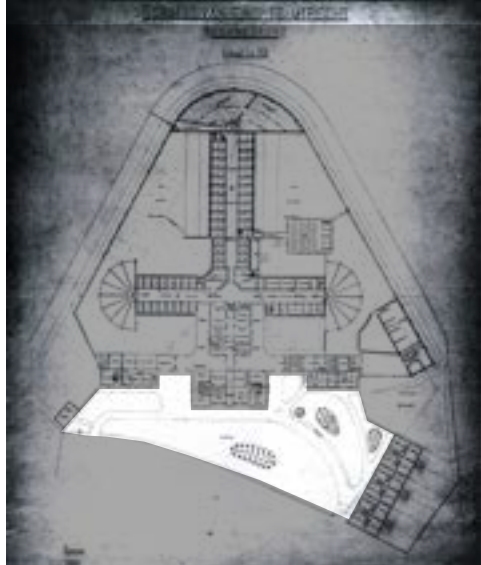
# Changes in connection to city



Around 1580



1851



1875



1950

Connection to the city has evolved from a separate area out the city wall to a complex connected with a foreground square. Filling the old canal that secluded the site with a square is especially important in the district's evolution process. The first encounter with the structure is these old facades that do not express what they hide behind. The front buildings were historically used for the employees to live.

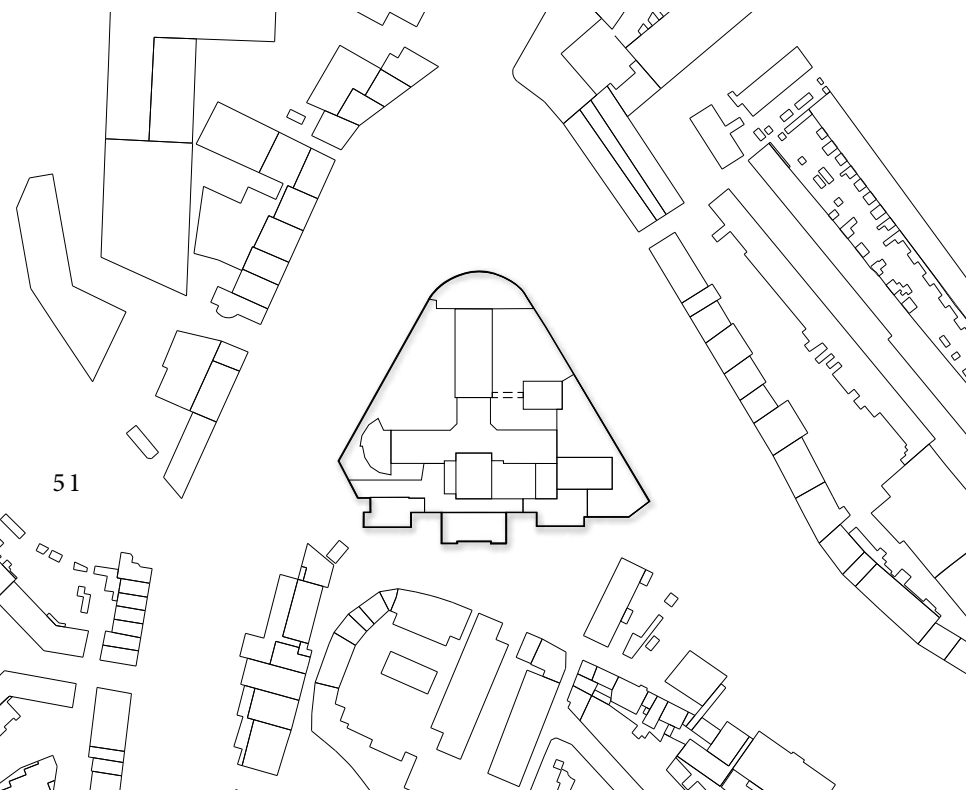


2004

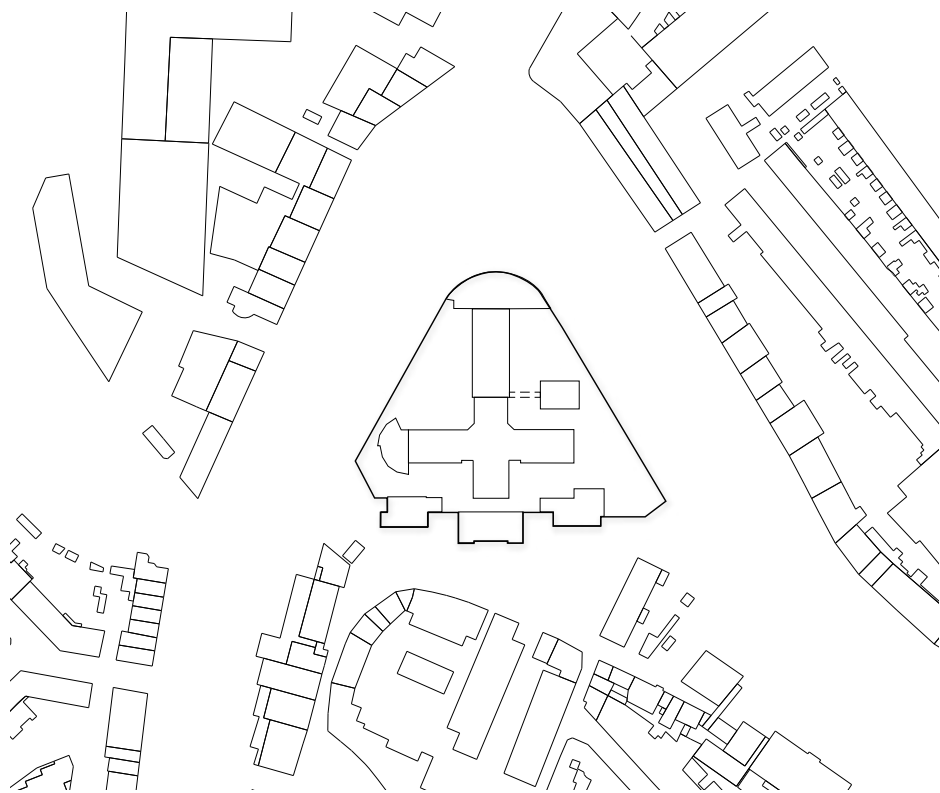


2020

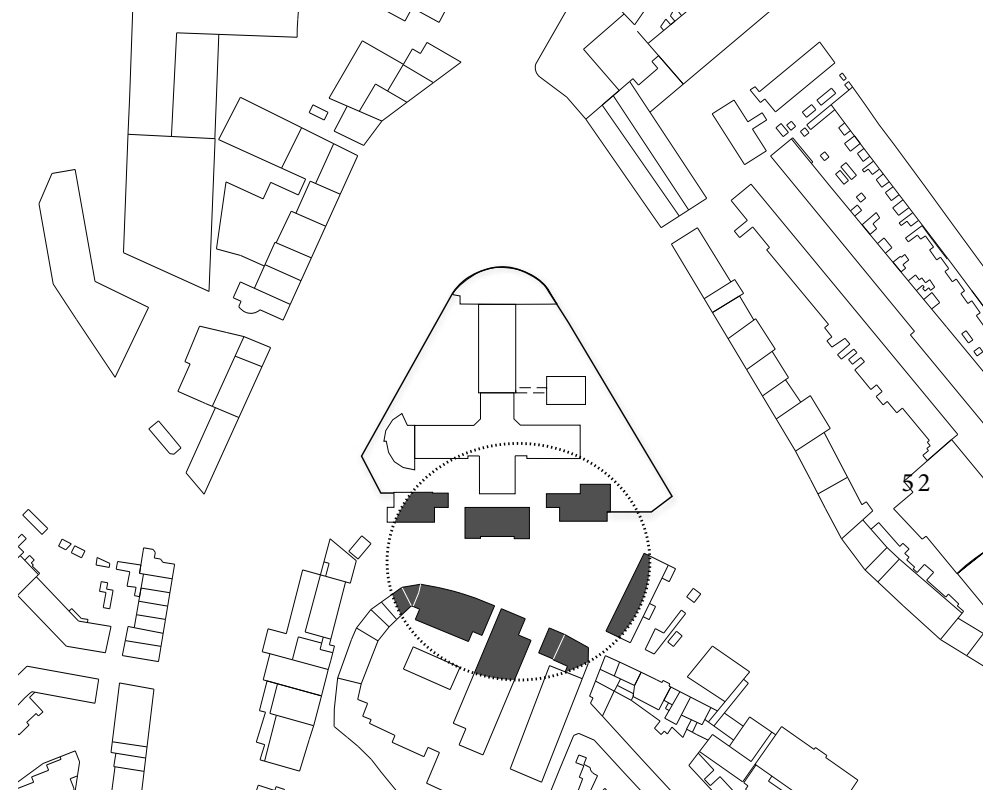
Connection to the city



The building is working as an inseparable entity in the city.



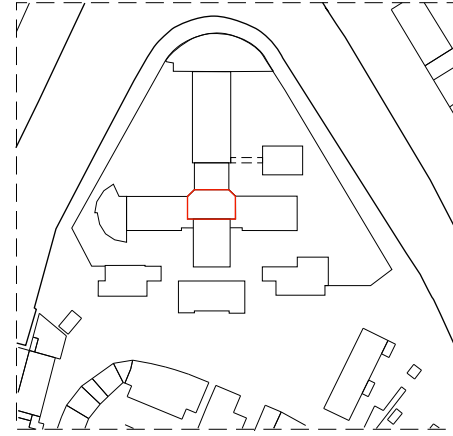
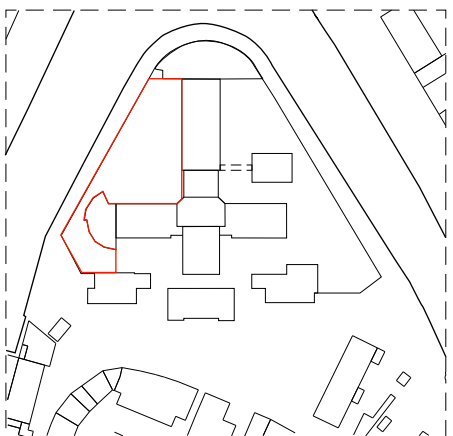
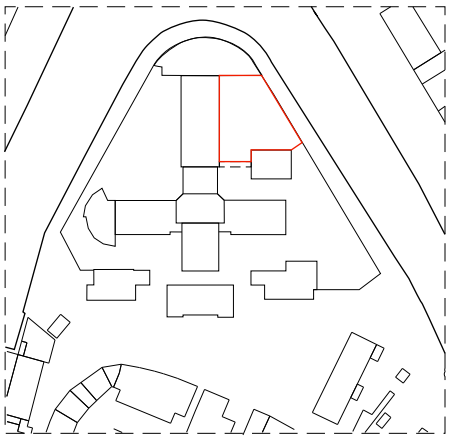
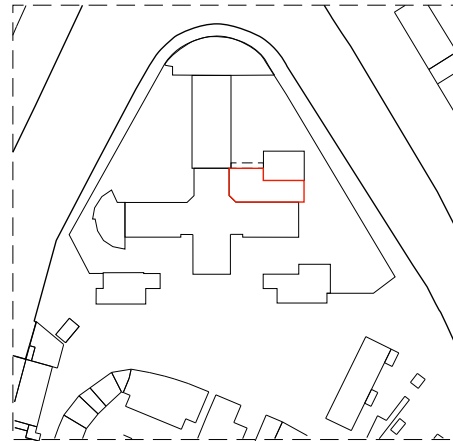
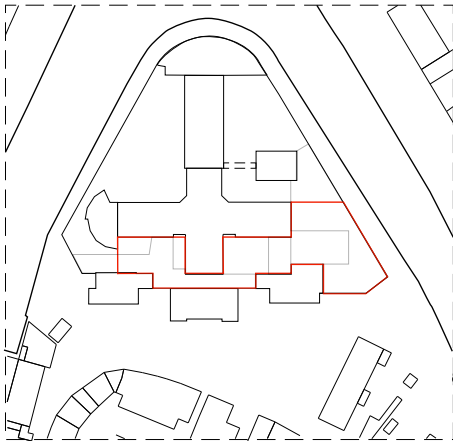
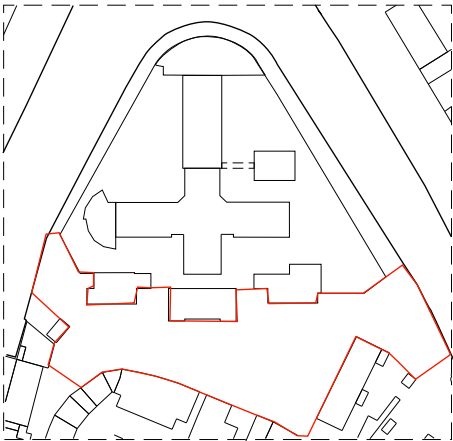
Removing the additions would resolve the whole into parts.



Removing the wall would help the frontal building to integrate with the urban fabric around with its small-size texture.

# Among the parts

Trying to integrate the indoor spaces with its surrounding open spaces highlights the importance of the areas which is already there or are created after demolishing the parts among the build space. These divisions are based on my personal understanding of the importance and quality of that part and are also rooted in historical traces. I was hugely impressed by the difference in the feeling each parts evoked while walking through the spaces. Often when I opened a random door there was a distinct realm with some interesting specifications in front of me.

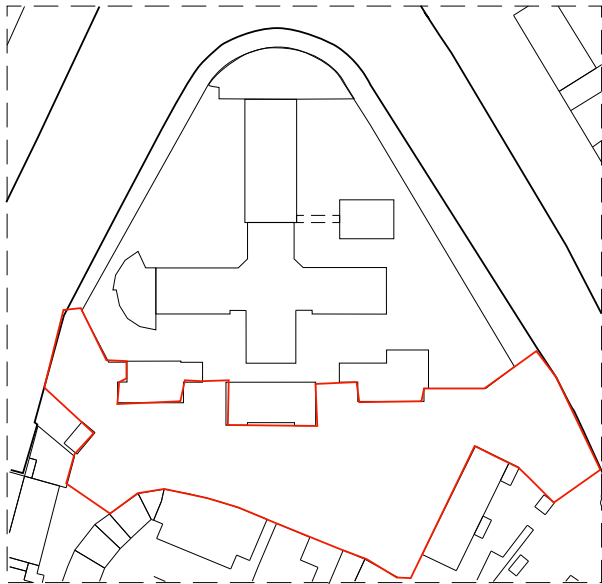


**I produced lots of images, footage, and sketches from them but maybe non would be able to thoroughly express the feeling it evoked in me. So what I am doing in this section, is an effort to convey those moments through some real or slightly but precisely manipulated images. However, what an image can convey is limited and it requires a combination of still images, movies, text, and sketches to be accomplished..**



The first encounter with the building and neighborhood

55

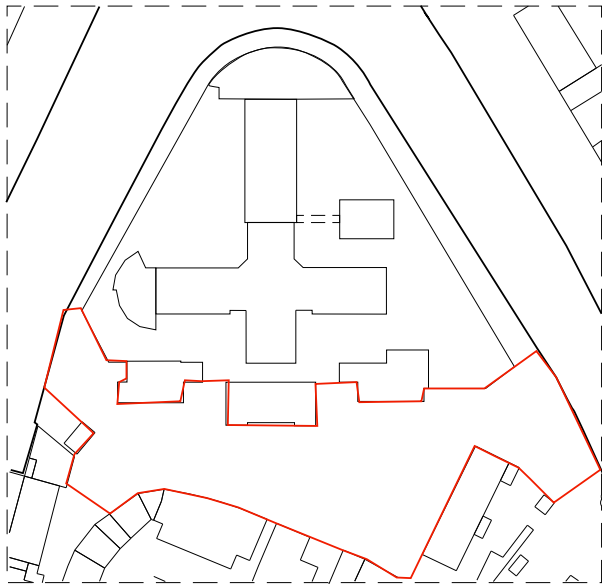


The first encounter with the building's facade does not involve a particular feeling as if there were no fences; it doesn't indicate a recognizable difference with its immediate surroundings. However, knowing the building's history put the adjacent canal, its peaceful ambiance with its bird sounds in sharp contrast.

56



# Open up the building



This part is currently covered with a roof, though it does not affect the original building. Space created can hardly be identified as qualitative space. Removing the additions and giving the blue of sky and the green of tree would help to bring back the quality.

— Current buildings  
— Potential gardens

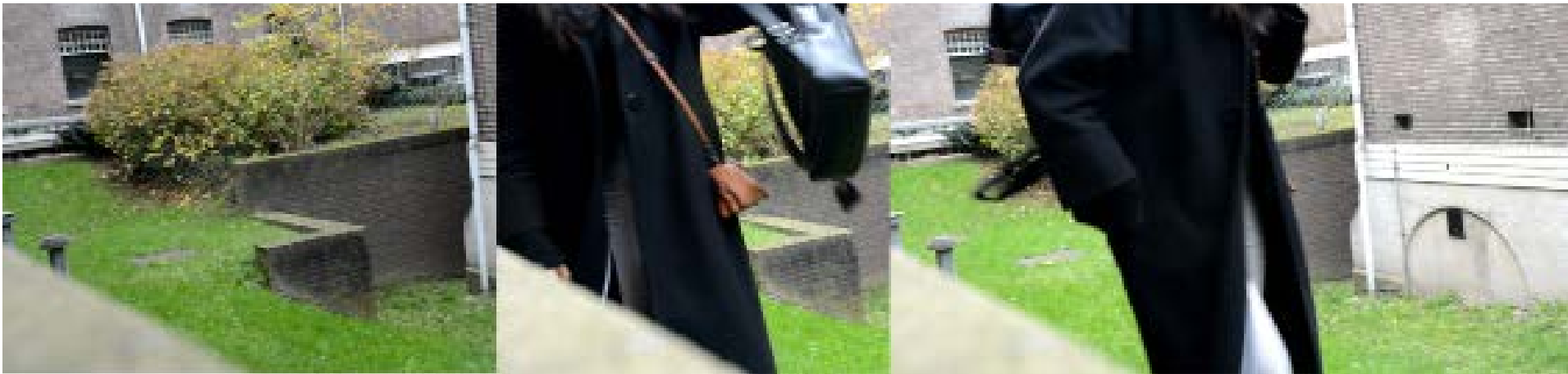
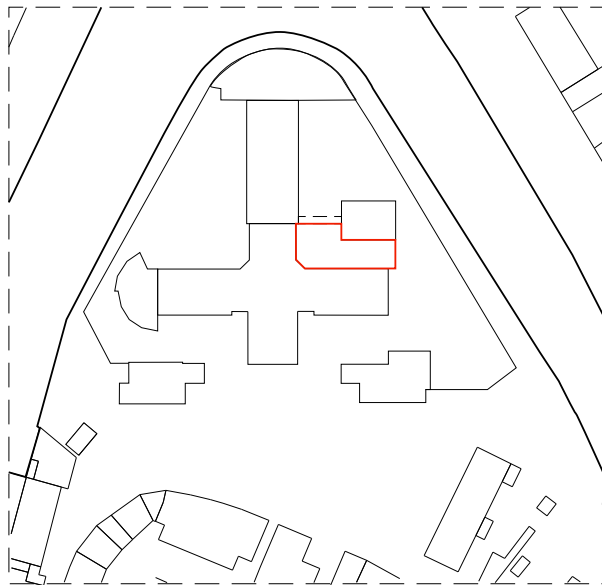
The front building was initially a building with a small courtyard. A path was cutting through the building in the main ax. It was later filled in with buildings and so lost the quality





# Small Garden

59



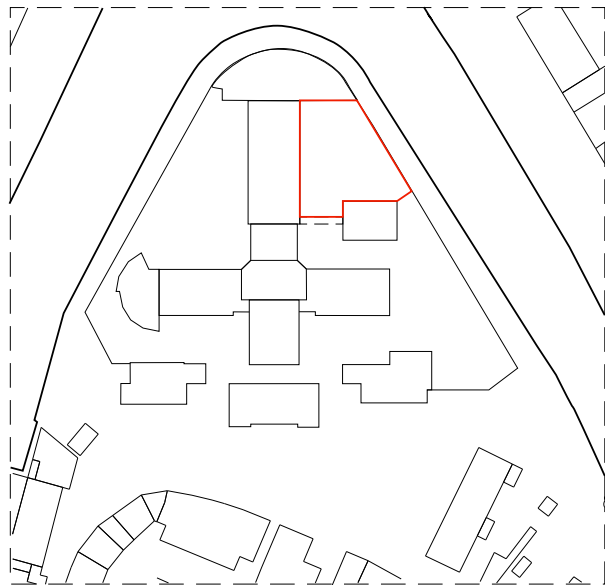
The enclosed small gardens that have been created evoke an ambivalent feeling. On the one hand, with the silence already there, the memories are shouting, the spatial quality made from a beautiful proportion of surrounding walls and the paths in and out the gardens create a cinematic view that is worth preserving. On the other hand, I felt it is interesting to bring more people to be involved in the space.

60

The bridge to the chapel has positively affected the space, and it can be an element to be used in other areas, creates a porous space, and increases the mystery of the garden.



Garden 1

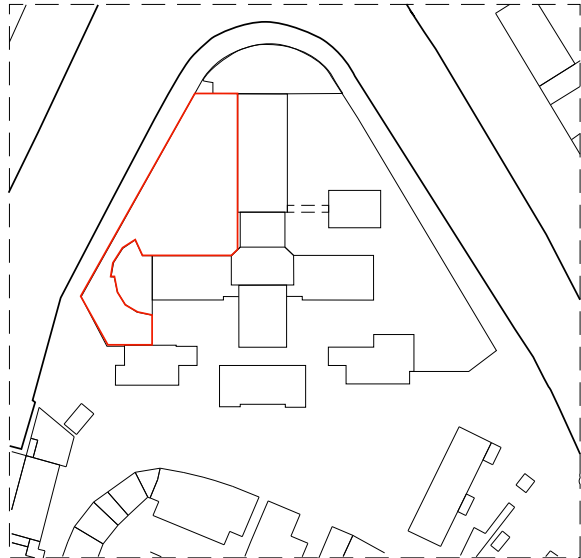


The character of the gardens is critically entwined with the encompassing rigid wall around the prison. The wall is the main element that separates the building from the outside world and creates a kind of enigmatic feeling inside. It was fascinating to see how removing the wall and opening the garden to the outside would drastically change the spirit and to what extent and with what strategy this openness should be involved.



# Garden 2

63



64

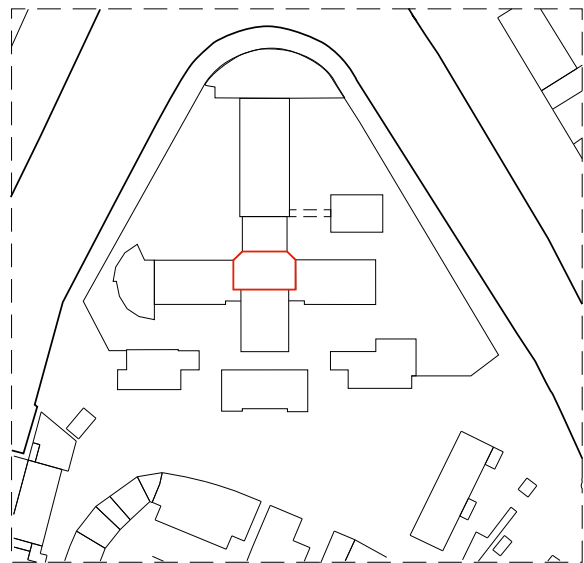


The most significant open space in the building is the northern yard used for inmates to play. Wandering in the place, one could find traces of these playing, and the arrangement of objects recalls its unique choreography. This area is being remembered as a noisy space, the voices of prisoners used to go over the walls to the neighborhood. Despite the large open area, it also contains some more silent and private spaces that embark curiosity and make a perfect combination of peace and clamor.



# Het Vlak

65



View from panopticon spot towards the wing B



he Presidio Modelo was a “model prison” with panopticon design, built on Isla de Pinos (now the Isla de la Juventud) in Cuba. It is located in the suburban quarter of Chacón, Nueva Gerona.



1999\_Vlak\_met\_balie\_huismeester\_foto\_Menno\_Boermans\_gevangenis\_Wolvenplein

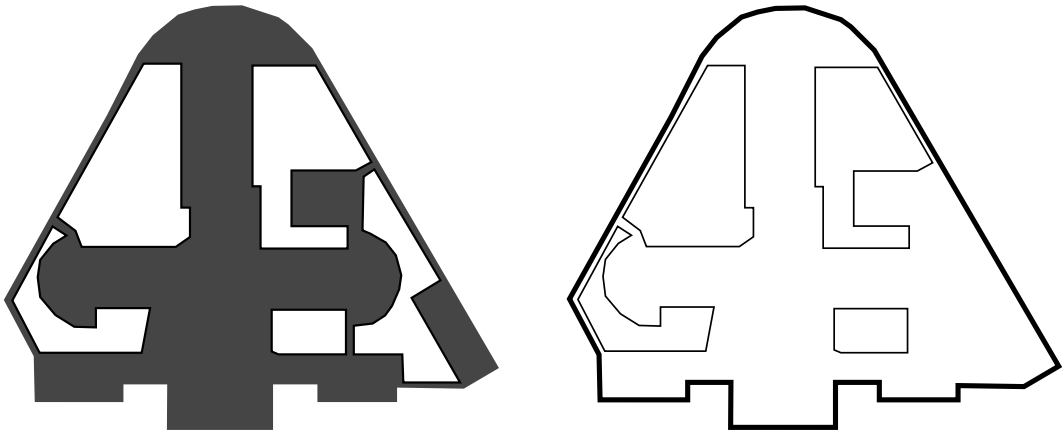
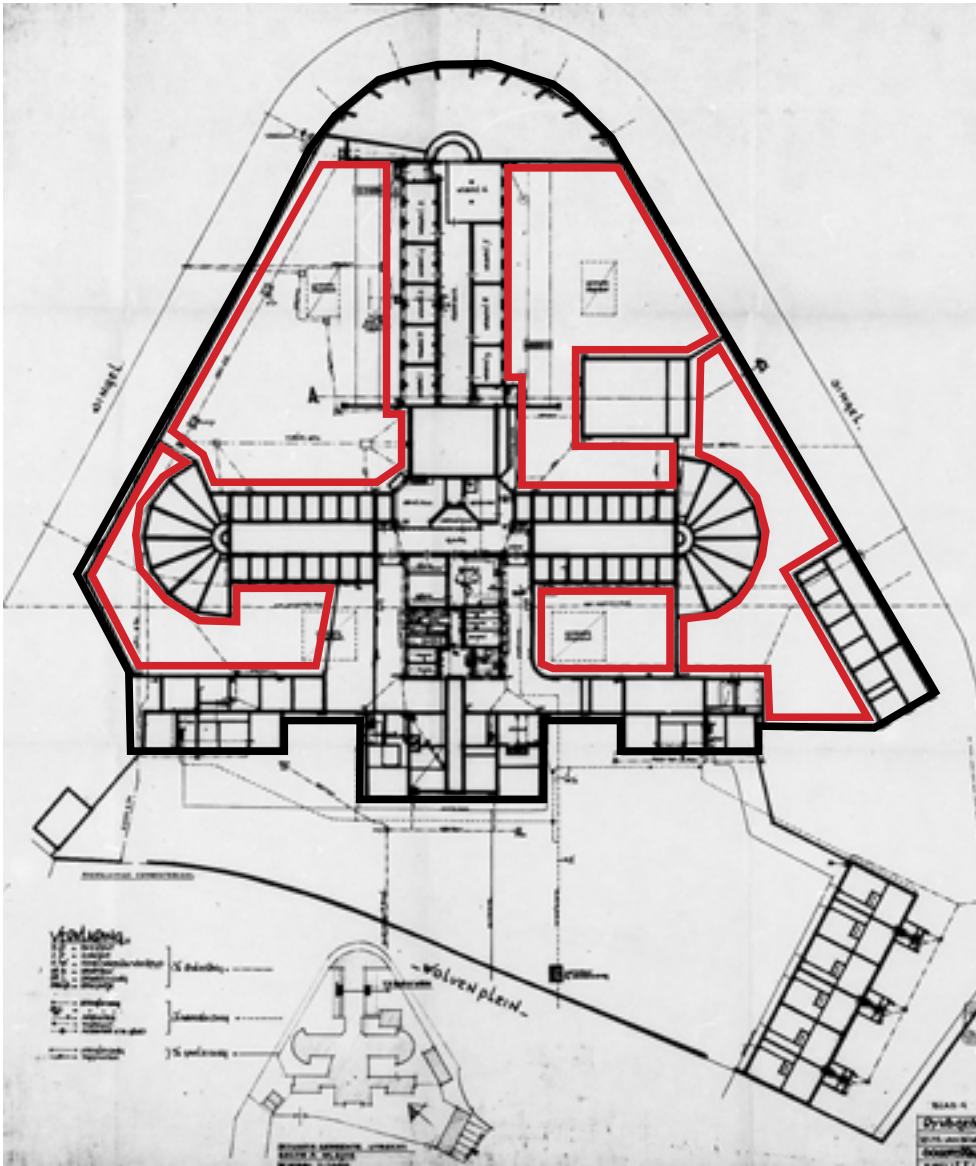
Although the ponopticon spot in Wolvenplein lacks that outstanding character comparable to the classic circular panopticon typology, it reproduces the logic. While having a crucial centrality it historically had the least possibility of access for the inmates. Old photos show ‘Het Vlak’ mostly occupied with guards. It is currently reduced to its smallest size as it was gradually filled with some needed spaces. Therefore, lots of distraction has reduced its historical strength and its importance and centrality for new character require freeing it from obstacles.

66

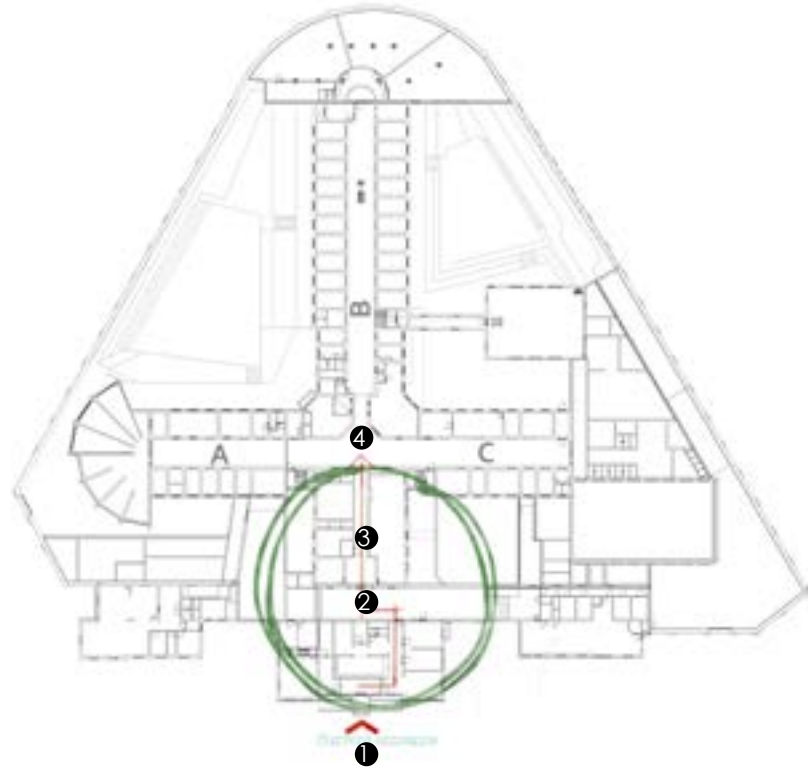


The most central spot of the prison

Perception of the walls







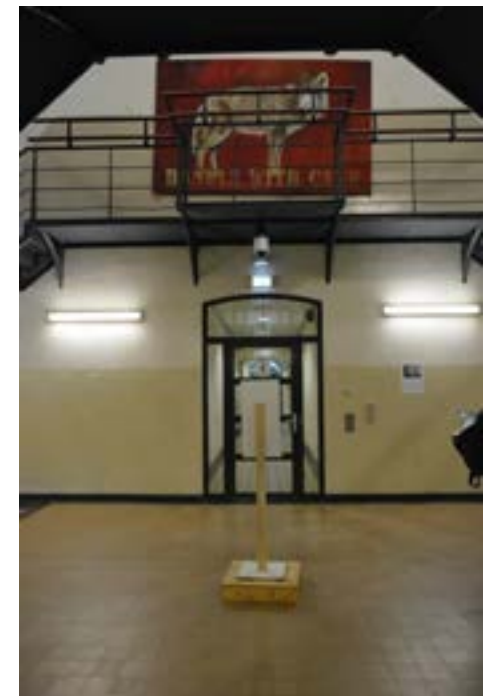
1.entrance



2.new-built(2000) connection corridor



3.Corridor To main prison



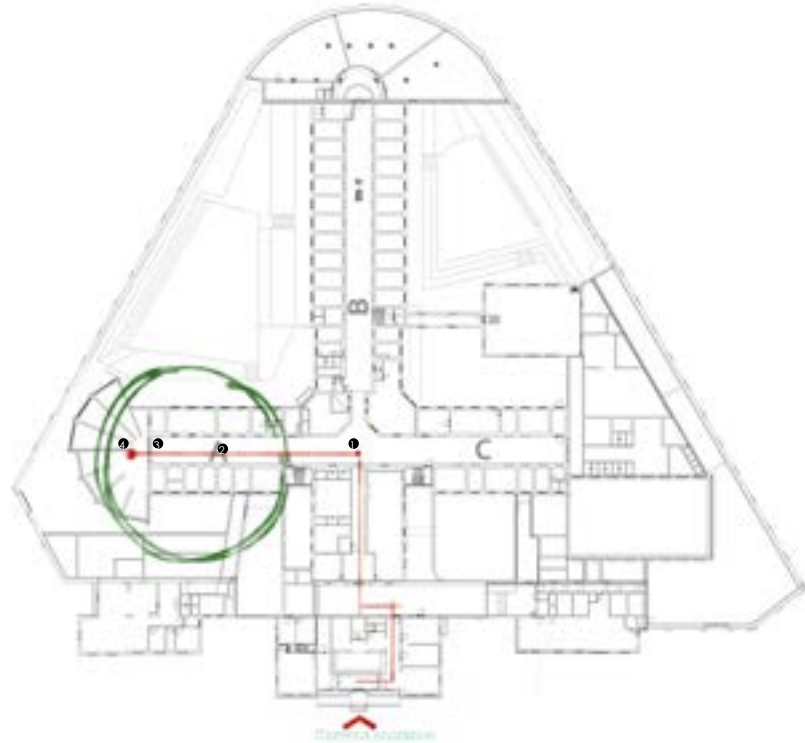
4.panopticon eye

The narrative starts from the front door. After a whole new reception area and lockers for visitors, It follows a perpendicular corridor that is newly built (in 2000). The connection from the front building to the next building was historically realized In a small narrow building and replaced with this new building.

Building G is part of the wing (1853 architect I. Warnsinck and 1877 architect J.F. Metzelaar) on the south side of the prison complex, consisting of the entrance building, flanked by guardhouses and a storage room on both sides. The different buildings were connected by walls. The entrance building (G) contained a central part in which on either side of the prominent (covered) corridor were located a porter's lodge with waiting or bedroom and a waiting room, as well as two small courtyards, two office staff's residences on the left and the director's resi-dence on the right

Building part D, the administration building (I. Warnsin-ck, 1853), forms the connection between the entrance building and the central hall, followed by the three cell wings (A, B, and C). There is currently a covered corridor (G “) between the entrance building and the administra-tion building. Initially, both buildings were connected by a narrow passage.





1.wing A from the 'vlak' 2020



2.wing A, from second floor



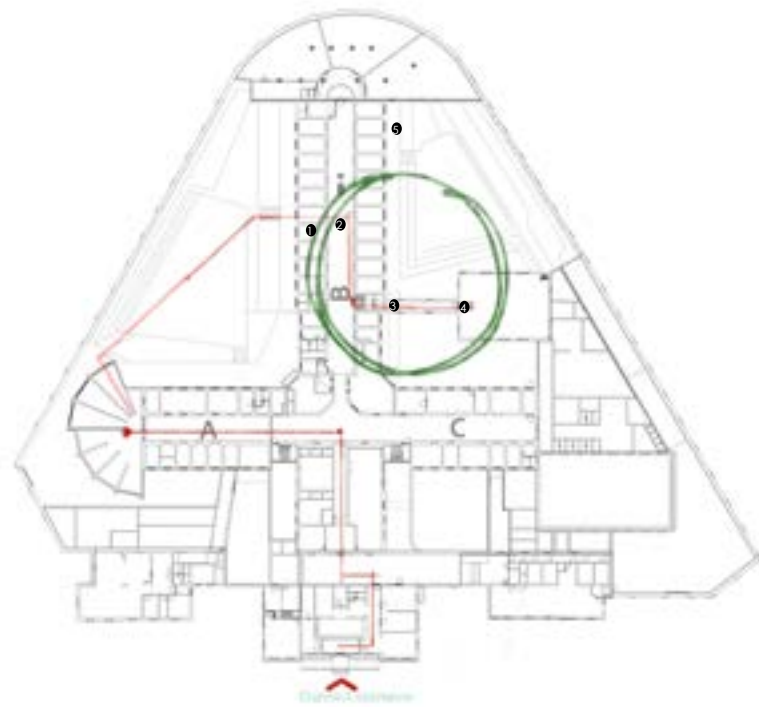
3.air cell doors



Wing A is the western (northwestern) wing of the three cell wings. With a depth of eight bays, this wing was built in 1853 after a design by architect I. Warnsinck. The wing has three stories under a gable roof; there is no basement but a vaulted crawl space. At the far end, there are cellular air spaces, three of which date back to the construction period.

Major renovations took place in 1939, 1951, 1969, and 2000 (architect Marc van Roosmalen).

The new glass intervention, which divides the floor into separate parts and is part of more recent policies to enhance the inmates' quality of life, was an obstacle to letting the whole space be conceived in one go.



2.Wing B



3.path to the former chapel



4.Former Chapel

Wing B belong to the long northern (north-eastern) cell wing. This wing was built in two phases: the oldest part (B) with a depth of four bays in 1853 (architect I. Warnsinck) and the extension of twelve bays in 1877 (architect J.F. Metzelaar). The part from 1877 is recognizable because it is slightly higher and slightly wider than the part from 1853. In addition, the roof of the building part from 1877 has an overhanging gutter on brick blocks. In the interior, there is a difference in the roof construction. The total wing has three stories under a gable roof, whereby under the part from 1853, there is only a crawl space, and the piece from 1877 has a basement.

The series of cellular air spaces from 1877 was converted in 1913 into a single-storey semicircular extension (architect W.C. Metzelaar).

Significant renovations took place in 1939, 1951, and in 2000 under government architect Marc van Roosmalen.

The church was built in 1903 to a design by W.C. Metzelaar. The building is located between wings B and C and is connected to wing B via a brick corridor from the stairwell in the extended part B (1877 JF Metzelaar). The church could accommodate 52 prisoners, whose booths had to stand or sit, the so-called stalls so that people in the stands could not see each other, but only the predecessor. For the women, who had been housed in Wing C since 1877, a narrow corridor along the airfields was designed as an entrance on the south side. This was only realized later.



## Chapter three

### Visual reflection

Integrating theory & site research

This part is assigned to interpretation and reinterpretation of all the materials and observations. An effort to bring together the theory studies and the site analysis and make some visual or spatial conclusion. I hope that Recomposing the conceived process in free style would help achieving a robust concept and narrative.

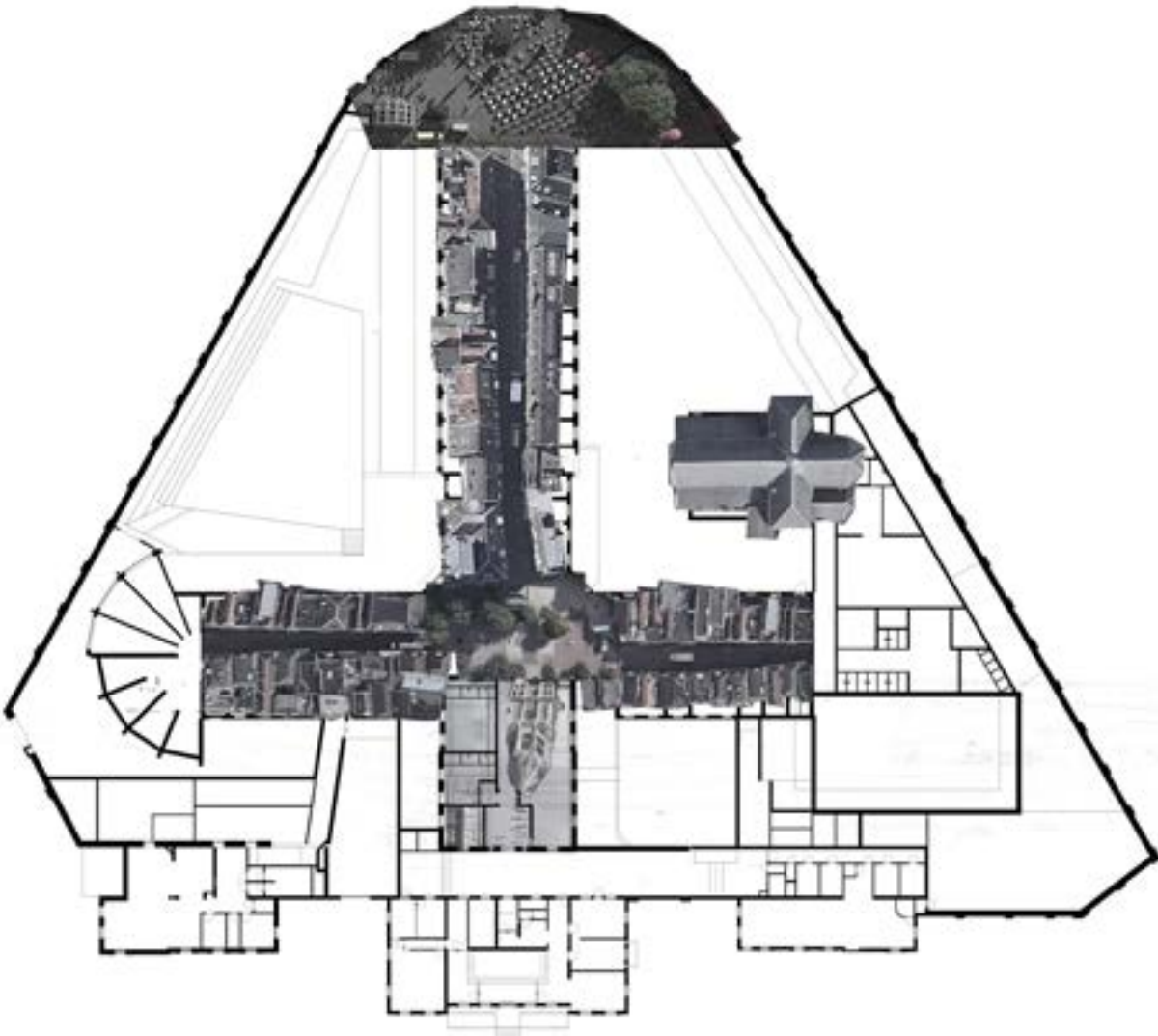


# Building as the reflection of the city

The heterogeneous city is the stimulating city: diverse, complex, tolerant. The heterogeneous ideal town has a dynamic equilibrium; the real one is frequently, if not constantly, involved in struggles over terrain and influence. To me, though not scientifically studied, Utrecht has acquired heterogeneous qualities. It is especially interconnected with its size as it is not too big and not too small. Therefore, it is a context where the micro-eutopic and micro-dystopic realms are constantly traceable—narrow, chaotic allies with lots of unexpected openings to cozy squares with their dominant tranquility. Would the building’s character transcend a regular and specified functionality and represent a quality of constantly oscillating between two poles like the city?



**Utrecht, part of city center**  
The Schematic plan shows how the city is characterized by narrow alleys and cozy squares.



Utrecht in the Wolvenplein prison- collage

# Heterotopia / path

“Heterotopias can be defined negatively, by what they are not. Here and nowhere, they are neither real, nor utopian but both at the same time. Places out of all places but still recorded on maps, they are the physical locations of utopias, utopias that have become matter. Their first principle of otherness is that they have an ambiguous relation to reality.

These other spaces are detached from the commonly established relation to time and have entered a temporality of their own. “<sup>1</sup>

The corridors in prison correspond with a kind of neutrality that leads to a suspension in time. The illusion it provides as if there is no end to this repetition, as if there is no difference to which point to belong. Can this hallucinating image help reach the quality of other space with its particular temporality?



Heterotopie-  
photography by  
Vincent J. Stoker

1 Vincent J Stoker, Heterotopia, a brief introduction, accessed 10.3.21 <http://www.vincent-j-stoker.com/en/articles-and-essays/a-general-introduction>



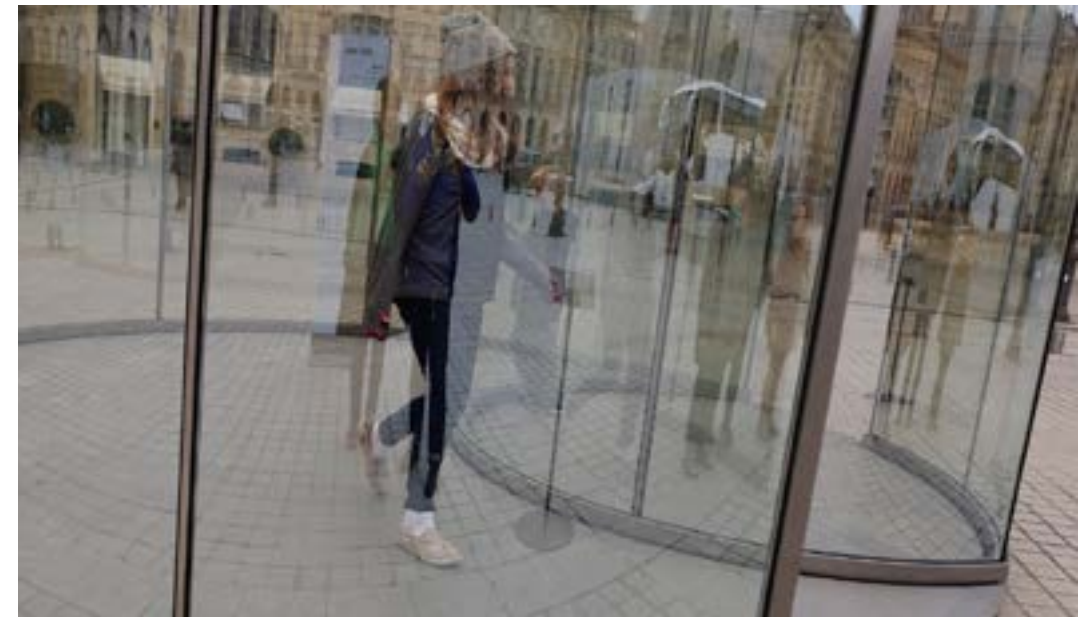
Wing B- Wolvenplein Prison  
top-collage  
bottom-real

**“Heterotopias are worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside.”**

Thinking of prisoners being kept within the walls, one can imagine how the inside and outside image can be drastically different for them. Still, this duality, especially regarding the surrounding world's infinite monotonousness, can hardly imply the same meaning for a free man. How is this dichotomy the same, and how is it different? How can the inside and outside be intertwined? How can it be like one is merging into and emerging from the other? Should these two worlds approximate, merge or intertwine at all? What is the other world's space (heterotopia) like when it comes to inside/outside and open/close dualities? For me, it is defined as

**the combination of inside, slightly deviated to outside, and vice versa.**

Therefore, while both realms persist in their character, there are some points in which the user of space faces moments of bewilderment.



Dan Graham, two nodes, 2015. semi-reflective glass, stainless steel 490 cm x 230 cm. photo Eric Mezan



Wolvenplein Prison- inside/outside  
collage



## Heterotopia-cell

### To see or to be seen/ Interplay of Gazes

As a work of architecture, the panopticon allows a watchman to observe occupants without the occupants knowing whether or not they are being watched. Regardless of Bentham's panopticon theory and when it comes to the equations of power among individuals, there is a long history about how seeing and being seen creates subjective power differences. But to give this basically political issue a social weight, it is also interesting to see how a change in gaze position would lead to a shift in pleasure. In his writing on shame in *L'être et le néant* (1943), Sartre suggests that the voyeuristic experience describes our relation to others and ultimately with ourselves. Sartre uses the image of looking through a keyhole to explain the situation in which we observe others, thereby objectifying them, but are not yet capable of seeing ourselves:

It is only when the voyeur is caught (or anticipates being caught) looking through the keyhole that they can see themselves through the Other's objectifying gaze, which reveals the voyeur's own objectifying gaze.

For me, the whole arrangement of the prison with cells at two sides of a long corridor with small windows on historic doors, performing like a mask for the gazer, is mostly constituting a platform for the practice of gazes. And how these potentially unequal gazes can later lead to a change in social interaction in a former prison's heterotopic atmosphere.



wolvenplein prison- photo  
of cell from door window



In the movie 'eyes wide shut' the idea of look and power was delicately expressed- collage Wolvenplein.





## Chapter Four

### Concept

## Design research

In this part, first 3 approaches to design are investigated and advantages and flaws are discussed. Following that, the main concept was chosen and based on that some main decisions were made.

Approach one

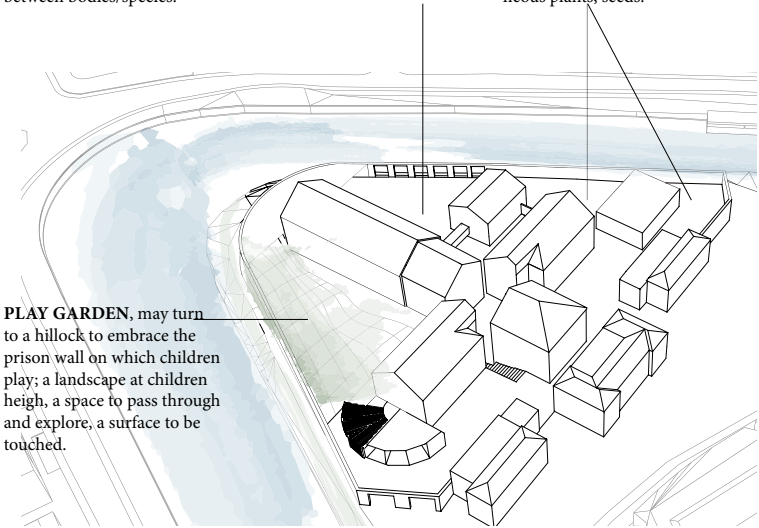
All in Dream,



So ironic when I first figured out that the prison site was used to be a garden for producing silk. **BUTTERFLY/BIRD GARDEN** is an exercise in coexistence between human and bird. The aim of the garden may be to specialize the relation between bodies/species.

**CULTIVATION GARDENS**, landscape to sit on and inhabit. Its niches and holes on the surface become temporary ponds of water reflecting the sky when raining, or new habitats for spontaneous plants, seeds.

**FREEDOM GARDEN**, takes the spot of panopticon eye, the very place reflecting the idea of discipline and punishment. It may instead be filled with Nothing but people.



**PLAY GARDEN**, may turn to a hillock to embrace the prison wall on which children play; a landscape at children height, a space to pass through and explore, a surface to be touched.



Clay Model



Butterfly/bird Garden



Play Garden

Prison is not a fun place even when it is abandoned. This fact imposes itself in every step one takes in the building; the closure, the musty smell, horrifying sound reflections, boring perspectives, never-ending paths, and the harsh memories shouting.

However, visiting the site revealed how its privacy, silence, and enclosure gives space for imagination. Gardens provide those moments of being exposed to the outside world while still in a limited dimension. These small quiet gardens exemplify moments of paradise in hell. Could the process of revitalization be in tight with the gardens and the identity they gain? Can gardens turn into a link between the city and the indoor spaces? Aren't these small gardens an equivalent of the town cosy squares? Can this shape the meaning that helps people to connect?

PROGRAM

The first approach is based on this thinking and would be programmed as a space of uncertainty, the place to address curiosity, the site of sudden encounters, and free space as a **Garden of Intersections**. In this approach, the gardens will gain characters based on the city identity and in a continuous series of spots in the city walk, and the indoor space is being defined on the base of the gardens' psych. Its function is therefore non-fixed and **FLOATING** and is mainly to serve the gardens and relevant events occurring in them. It may be a combination of permanent and temporary exhibition, workshops and cultural events with relation to gardens. The contemplating atmosphere will be the main focus and it would be a place for divers people and artists to meet.

Approach two: Maintain the place psych, but

All in Demand,

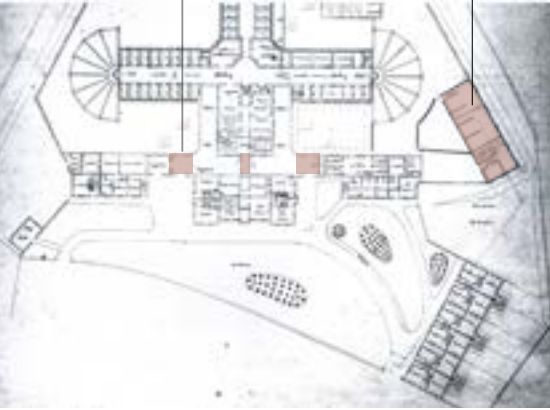
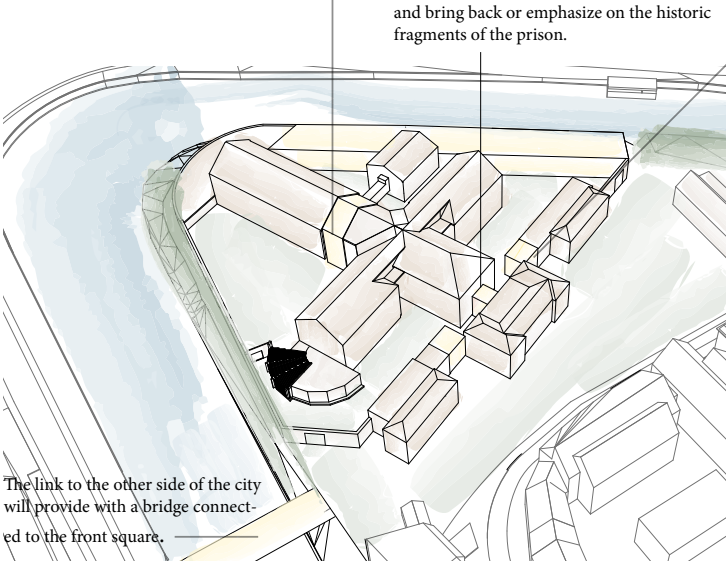


Emphasize on the fraction created due to old extension of the wing fro the women cells.

Local people like to see the history visible and want the complex to be in service of the neighborhood. Using an old drawing of prison I chose to demolish all newer additions and bring back or emphasize on the historic fragments of the prison.

Reviving the old entrances to let the enclosure once again lives with different life within.

New additions to the complex in the place of an old building and for residential purposes. Also, gemeente suggestion.



PROGRAM-  
VOTE447

- A combination of the above (48%, 230 Votes)
- History must remain visible (17%, 81 Votes)
- Creatives should be given a workplace (14%, 69 Votes)
- There must be hospitality (12%, 49 Votes)
- There must be homes (10%, 69 Votes)

- Jeroen Roose-van Leijden, Centre Manager at Centrummanagement Utrecht  
**'It lends itself to a mix of hospitality and small entrepreneurship'**
- Bettina van Santen, adviseur Architectuurhistorie for the municipality of Utrecht  
**'It would be nice if you could see what it once was'**
- Floris Zwolsman, van Guarded & Inhabited, manager building Wolvenplein  
**'Make it a complex with homes and cultural events'**
- Bert Poortman, Secretary of residents' initiative Stadsdorp Wolvenburg  
**'Realize that this neighborhood has a quiet character'**



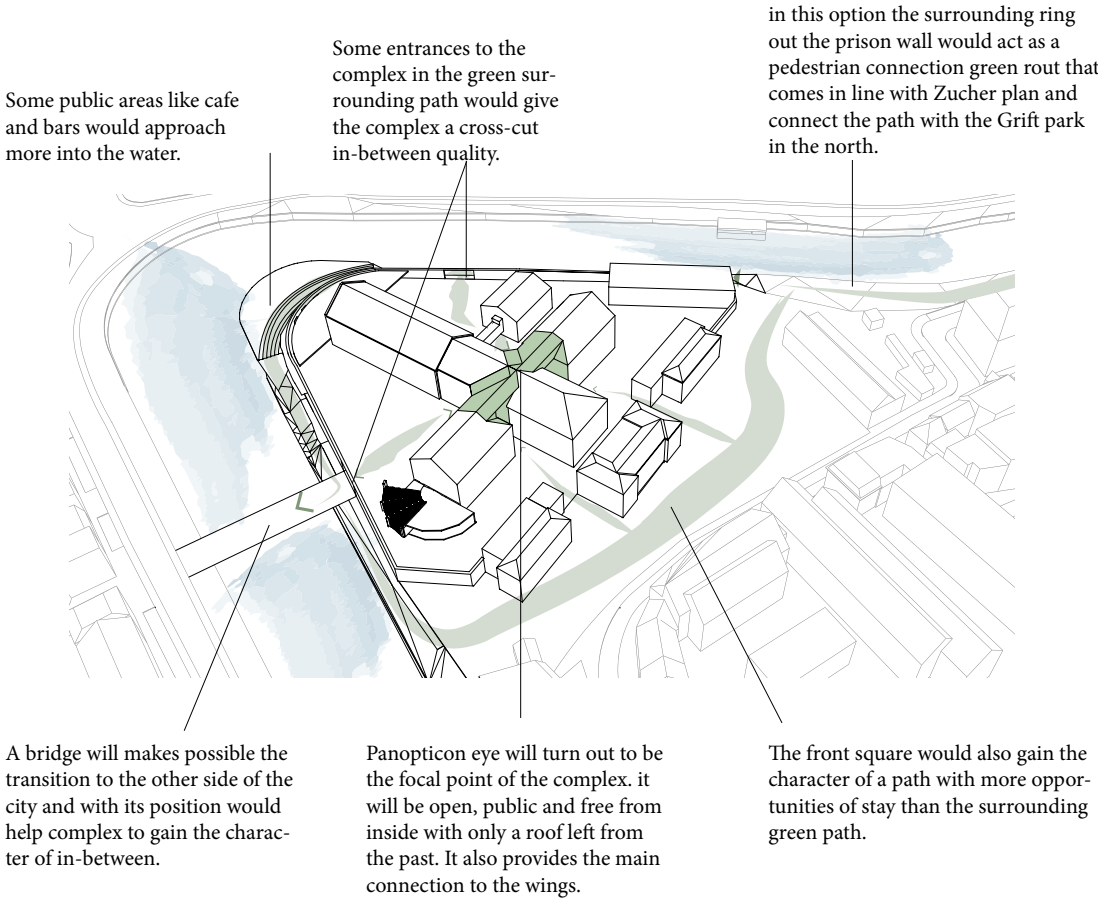
# All in Between,



- Workshop & workspace for artists and starters and start-ups
- Residential
- Front-building, lobby, entrance
- Inner garden
- Meeting places in the scale of city- cafe, bar, cultural venue
- Gardens

The third approach is in-between. In between reality and Dream. A program in between being well defined and being floating. Houses and imaginative gardens will be entwined as well as inhabitants and visitors, static and dynamic, private and public, indoor and outdoor, old and new, etc.

This way the sequential relationship will be expressed in sequences of the square, path, courtyards, path, cell, courtyard, path, square. The place would gain the character of a heterotopic in-between, in which access to the different spaces is a matter of hesitation and discovery.



**PROGRAM** The front part would address the sense of permanency and will assign to permanent residential purposes. Entrances to the complex are not fixed and limited but thorough different spots. Panopticon eye would gain a character of inside garden and will be open to all public. The wings will be assigned to temporary inhabitants with the purpose of innovative work, start-ups and artistic workshops and exhibitions. It will be combined with public spaces that work in the scale of city such as front bar and restaurants. The chapel would also be turned to a public cultural venue. Gardens may not be defined with a specific program( like first option) but they remain the focal points around which activities are accruing. The surrounding green paths would also play crucial rolls.

# The Jacoby Studios, Chipperfield

a new urbanistic whole out of fragments

"Almost sculptural demolition works"



Very similar to Wolvenplein in Utrecht, The former ‘St. Vincenz hospital’ is situated in the medieval town center of Paderborn in Germany. David Chipperfield’s Berlin studio transformed it to the new headquarters for Tap Holding,



This involved removing various extensions added in the aftermath of the second world war, revealing the historic walls that were previously covered, and adding three new office wings. The existing ensemble originates from a former seventeenth-century Capuchin monastery. The buildings, which were used as a hospital from 1841 onwards



This project fascinated me as it is related to Wolvenplein and my approach to design in 3 ways,

First is how to maintain the history in a delicate process of demolition and how to expose and invent ruin parts that are influential in the new intervention,

The second is understanding how a complex can work simultaneously on the local and urban scale. Here the arrangement of the newly added wings is in the service of connecting it to the city.

Third, how a historical garden can turn into a focal point of the project and how the old facades are treated to let this space’s playfulness be expressed.

The conversion for the Jacoby Studios involved the removal of the post-war additions, exposing the historic building fabric of the monastery once again. In particular, the chapel facade, the cloister, the east building wing, and the seventeenth-century cellar were preserved and restored, creating a picturesque ruin structure made of quarry-stone masonry with the former cloister at its heart. The complex of monastery and annexes is embedded in a garden.





## Blokhuispoort by Twa

The first buildings on this site date from 1499. It was a so-called forced castle. In the centuries that followed, the Blokhuispoort functioned as a prison. The design of the building in its current form dates from 1870. The prison closed in 2008. Temporary rental to small companies ensured that the complex did not become empty.

In 2014 BOEi bought the Blokhuispoort with the aim of developing a cultural meeting point.



The interesting aspect about this project is that it is almost the same as Wolvenplein. It is already transformed to a successful meeting point in the city.

The only difference is that its location is not as critical as Wolvenplein. Their main concern in the new intervention was also how they can integrate the secluded complex with the city with new function.

TWA has left the walls to be there but only with some critical opening to the outside. It left the general atmosphere intact and added some small but important part to the prison in a very influential points. They try to facilitate the access to the building.



## In-between City and Nature,

### Traces of old Liege Walls and Saint-Leonard Prison

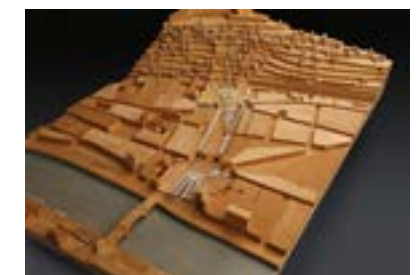
One sees, on the big slab, the kids playing football, the skaters twirling and the children prancing on their bikes. Students picnic in the orchard, moms gather on the big benches, the young people watch from the top of the bridge, school children walking behind their gym teacher, tour guides lead visitors, dogs pull their master, lovers sunbathe on the deckchairs, poets dream, barefoot children cross the wire of the water ...This is the explanation of Saint-Leonard esplanade in Liege. It was the place for Liege's old town walls, which separated the city from nature up to the 16th century. It also contains traces of Saint-Leonard prison, which was mainly a cage for the political prisoners and mine workers and was eventually demolished in 1982. It connects the mountain to the city and has already arch context full of history. I was standing there, overwhelmed with a peculiar feeling layered with the place's background and personal memories. How is it that a place evolves in a way to be actively present in city life? What within a given area makes the people feel connected? How an architecture or an urban square empower the freedom of people? How does a place take 'time' into account and connect itself to its past and future?

These questions were entangling my mind when I encountered the Saint-Leonard esplanade and were the initial point to an enchanting journey whose next step is this graduation project.



This project is critical to me because, first and foremost, it triggered a kind of peculiar feeling in me. It achieves it by almost no particular element or the presence of objects but their absence, by its emptiness and its now and then delicate reference to the place's historical narratives.

It is also crucial as it pictured a process of transition; The transition from the city to nature and vice versa. It taught me how creating an in-between public space is tightly entwined with spatial narration and how the designer let it obsessively swing in the space.



# Chapter five

## Reflection and design decisions

After looking into the assignment via three different approaches, I tried to put all the investigations, analysis, and studies together. I managed to sum up them into some basic keywords and titles leading to equivalent design strategies. In following section I elaborated on these outcomes.

LAYERS FROM RESEARCH;  
Theoretical + Site Research

RESULTS IN  
DESIGN;

HETEREOTOPIAN CHARACTER



- ..... RECLAIMING THE ISOLATED CHARACTER/ REACHING 'OTHER SPACE'
- ..... JUXTAPOSING THE DUALITIES:  
Open & close- individual& social  
Visitors & dwellers- dark & light
- ..... TAKING A HETEROGENEOUS APPROACH IN DEFINING THE PROGRAMS

GUIDING GAZES



- ..... HEIGHTENING AND LIGHTENING THE PANOPTICON
- ..... INVERTING THE GAZES  
CHALLENGING THE POSITIONS

REACHING PURITY



- ..... REMOVING DISTRACTIONS  
+ REVIVING CANALS
- ..... GARDENS EMBRACE THE BUILDING

INTERNALIZE THE SPACE



- ..... REVEALING MEMORIES  
Individual+collective
- ..... SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE
- ..... MATERIAL (STRIP-REUSE-TACTILITY- REFLECTION)  
(last page)



# Hetereotopian character

## 1-Reclaiming the isolated character/ reaching ‘other space’

As Michelle Foucault referred to in 1979, some spaces such as prison can represent a third space other than utopia and dystopia. He likes to call them heterotopia which refers to a deviation from norm or normal. He presented several characteristics for these spaces from which their particular temporality (perception of time) and the ritual in access are outstanding. Foucault gives a character of in-between to the concept of heterotopia, the obscure passage, and the transition between certain moments that are more clearly defined. In-between darkness and light, indoor and outdoor, and between individual and social, public and private, and city and building.

“Heterotopias presuppose an ambivalent system of opening and closing, entry and exit, distance and penetration simultaneously. Their control systems entail some specific codes of the entry (i.e. gestures and permissions) that keep the level of spatial permeability at a certain level.”



Map of a part of the city wall of Utrecht near the Wolvenburg stronghold, around 1600



The municipality has invested much in restoring the original canal structure, which in the 1970s was partly removed to create space for grey infrastructure (roads, a planned motorway that eventually was not built, offices, etc.). There is no decision for restoring the old quay in Wolvenplein. However, I think reviving it would help reach the isolated ‘other space’ that I am looking for.



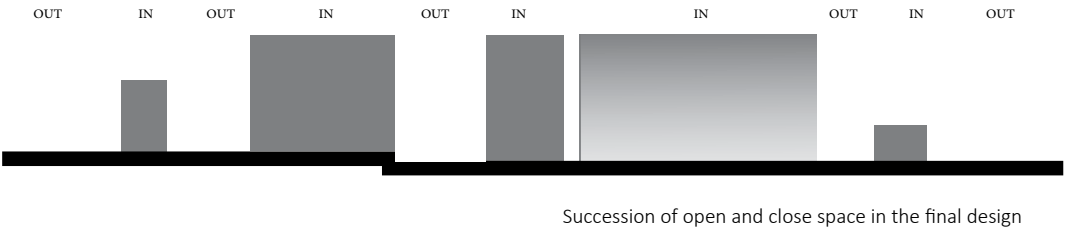
The surrounding ring out the prison wall would act as a pedestrian connection green rout that comes in line with Zucher plan and connect the path with the Grift park in the north. Some entrances to the complex in the green surrounding path would give the complex a cross-cut in-between quality.



# Hetereotopian character

## 2-JUXTAPOSING THE DUALITIES:

Open & close- individual& social- Visitors & dwellers- dark & light



## 3-Taking a heterogeneous approach in defining the programs

Concept of heterotopia implies juxtaposition of the incompatible spaces where the different cultures co-exist while they are simultaneously represented and contested.

While classical utopianism connotes the hegemonic and closed harmonization of total control, heterotopia represents an alternative perspective assuming the possibility (and even desirability) of the co-existence of the different cultural formations within a spatial context. Since heterotopia entails ‘space of multiplicity,’ it embraces multiple micro-utopias enacted in the same spatial context.

For me, heterogeneous design strategy operates mostly in the level of programmatic definition rather than forms and shapes. In this regard, I tried to put in some incompatible activities or inherently contradictory dualities together but also to define some in-between space on which collaboration would naturally takes place. These dualities exemplify in individual activities- group works, work space, exhibit space, bodily works, mindful workouts and so on. This way the building would gain an internal vibe together with a high inclusivity and diversity.

Collage: Wolvenplein prison is a multi layered and mysterious one. This characteristic is even more expectable in the time of being used as a prison. This quality can contribute to the building’s new identity in the city, and this heterogeneous feature can be sustained, maintained, elevated, and nurtured. The images of the past, versatile activities of the present, and moments of pause and emptiness would help achieve this.

# Guiding gazes

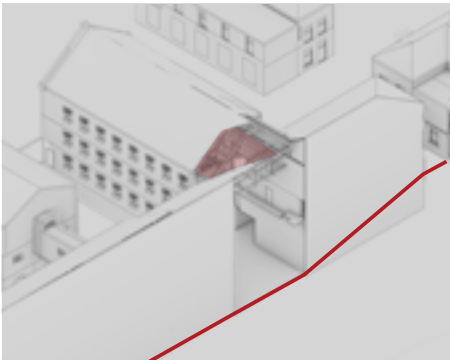
## 1-Heightening and lightening the panopticon

Panopticon logic in prison branched from the Utopian mindset, the realm of rigid dualities. The devil is being controlled by the sublime and not necessarily by the presence of the controller but also by the feeling of its existence. What, as Foucault says, resulted in a disciplinary society. To see and to be seen has historically defined both sides' position in the equations of power.

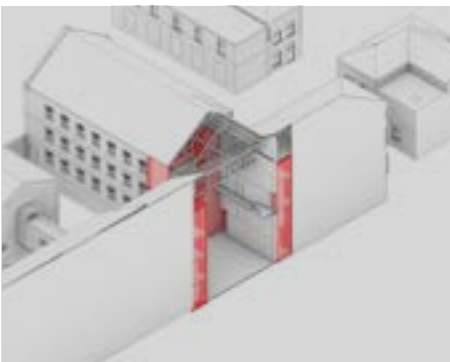
109



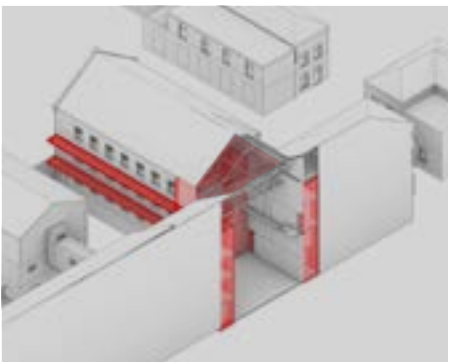
The central hall as built



Lightening and heightening the central hall  
-Removing the roof/ - One level deeper to basement



Inverting the corridors  
Creating a new circulation ring



Breaking the panopticon logic/Providing new access to cells/Providing indoor in-between space

## Inverting the gazes-Challenging the positions



a photograph of Un Chien Andalou, L. Buñuel and S. Dalí, 1929.

Cas Oorthuys/nfa,coll.Nedlands fotomuseum



1999\_Vlak\_met\_balie\_huismeester\_foto\_Menno\_Boermans\_gevangenis\_Wolvenplein

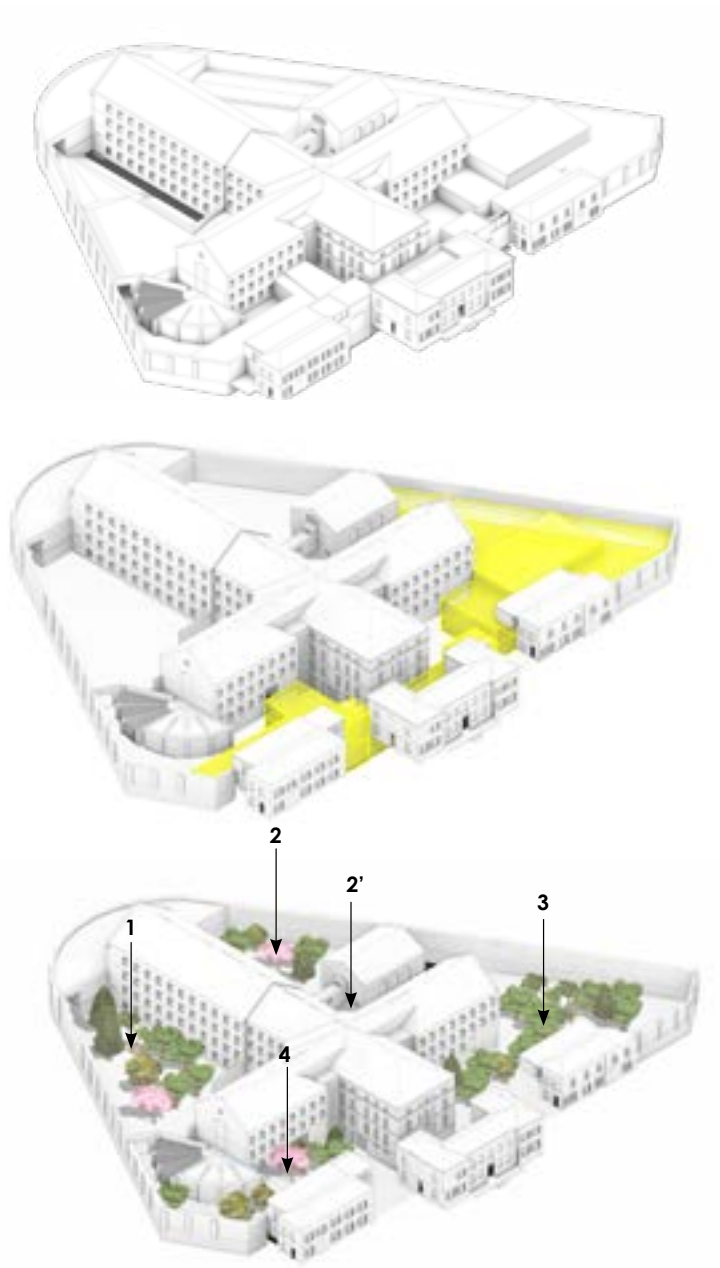
Concept image-inversion of gazes



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# Reviving the green character of the land

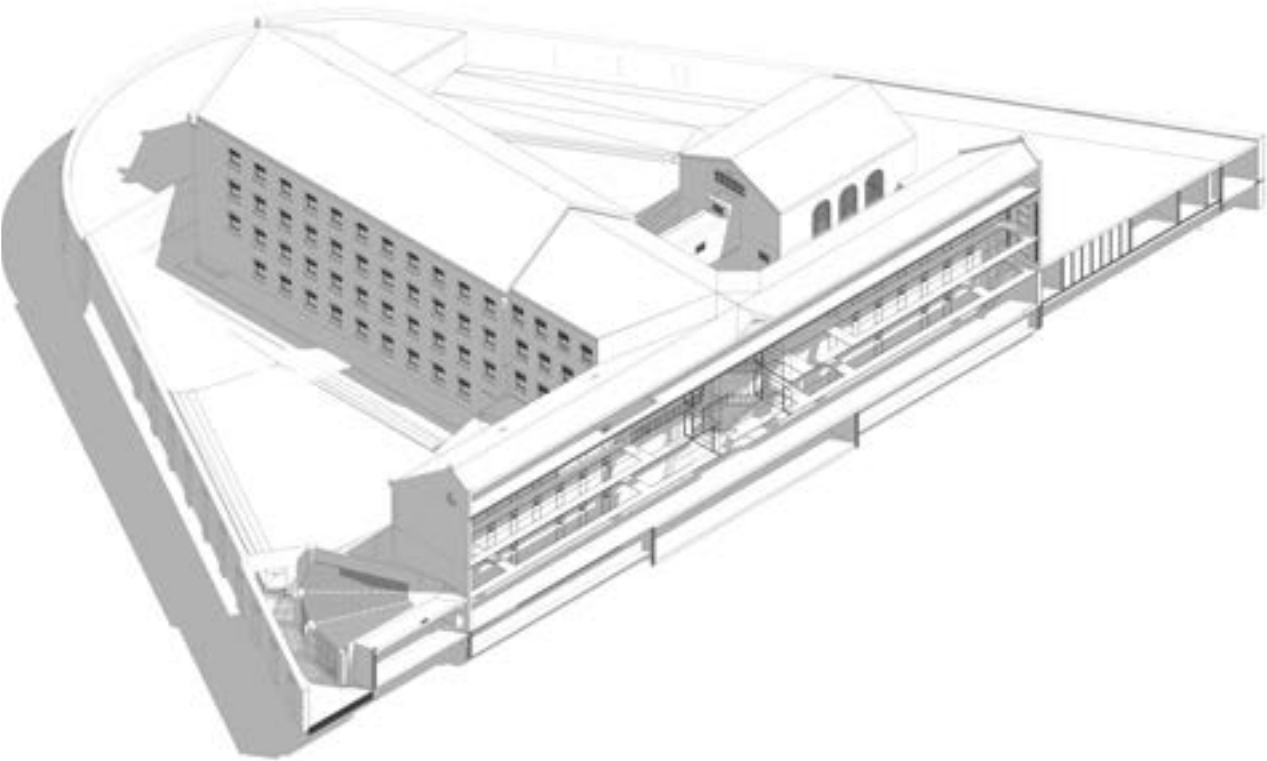
Besides having a fortification role, the land has repeatedly been used as a garden in its history. Hence, this green character would be revived, and the building would be seen as an entity in the green background. The building in the green land would naturally bring about four divisions of open space (gardens). All small parts may be considered as one whole greenery group, but it is also possible that each garden expresses a specific character. Play garden would replace the yard that used to be for prisoners to play in. This garden would recall the old characteristic of the yard full of vibration and sounds. Butterfly gardens would try to reflect the ancient usage of the land for exotic plants and flowers. Cultivation garden would be tied with the new program of the space intended to base on the collaboration activities and promote a self-sufficient lifestyle.





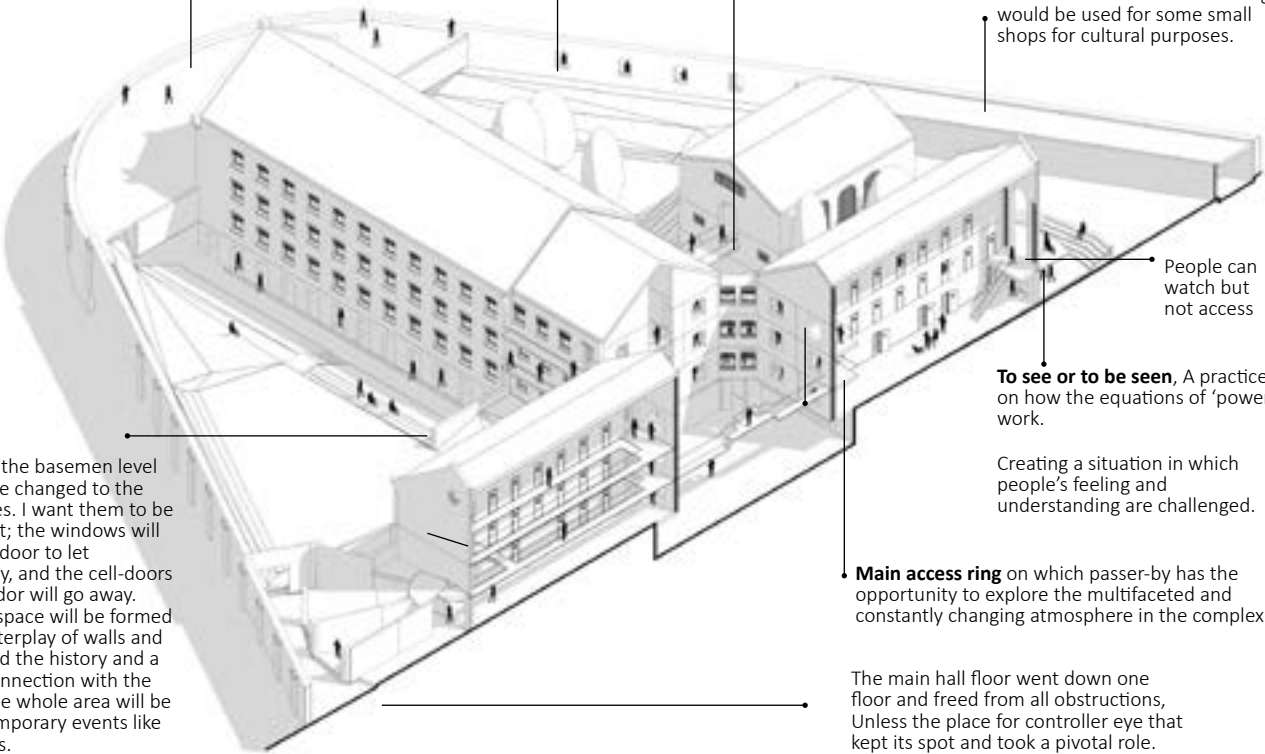
perliminary design

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Existing view

The cells in the basemen level already have changed to the office spaces. I want them to be stripped out; the windows will turn to the door to let permeability, and the cell-doors in the corridor will go away. Therefore, space will be formed from the interplay of walls and columns and the history and a constant connection with the gardens. The whole area will be used for temporary events like day-markets.



The last apace in the new narration of the complex is a place for meeting, a place to talk, and a place to observe life and digest the observations.

The surrounding green path will still operate on the neighborhood scale and will be a tread to connect to the city on the one hand and the Grift park in the north on the other hand. The opening in the way to the site would help the complex to gain a cross-cut in-between character.

The path to the church will join the newly defined circulation but will be opened up and brightened. The church would be used as a meeting and event space.

The new building will be added in the place of an old building that has been removed. The building would be used for some small shops for cultural purposes.

People can watch but not access

**To see or to be seen**, A practice on how the equations of 'power' work.

Creating a situation in which people's feeling and understanding are challenged.

**Main access ring** on which passer-by has the opportunity to explore the multifaceted and constantly changing atmosphere in the complex.

The main hall floor went down one floor and freed from all obstructions, Unless the place for controller eye that kept its spot and took a pivotal role.

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- New or mostly new walls
- Existing old wall with the doors and all the traces



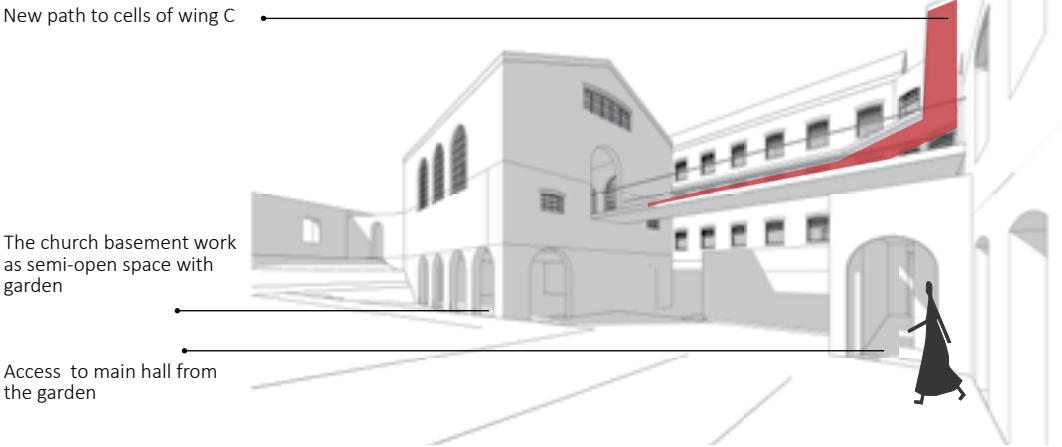
The impression of what the extend wing may look like. The windows turn to pass through openings and create an spatial playfulness.



The new material would be completely different from the old but preferably not a big contrast in color



A **space with interplay of gazes** creates complicated situations. The ground floor will mainly work as an in-between realm on which to reduce tensions of natural diversity.



New path to cells of wing C

The church basement work as semi-open space with garden

Access to main hall from the garden



Section A-A



Sequential narrative

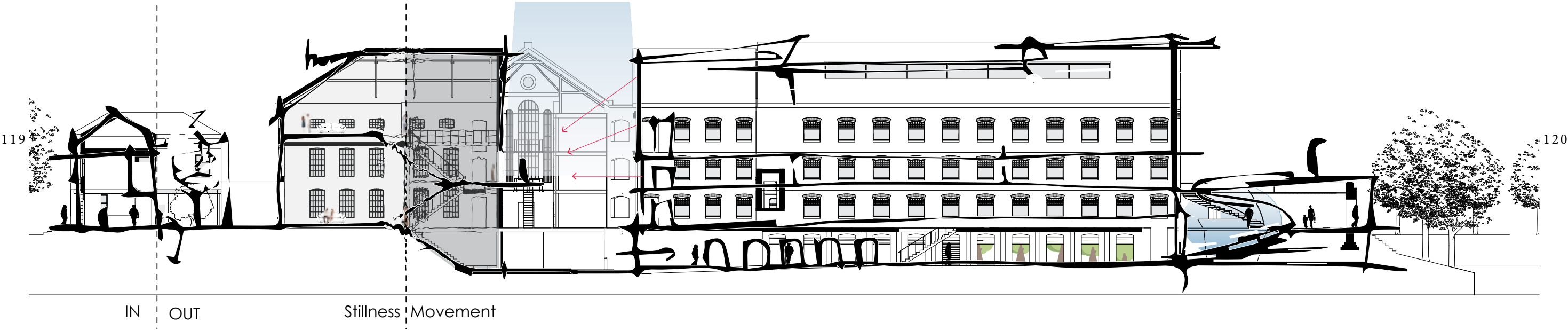
Sequence 1  
reception

Sequence 2  
encounter  
with others  
&  
with ways

Sequence 3  
suspense  
inversion of gazes

Sequence 4  
pathway  
exploring life

Sequence 5  
release  
observe, eat, drink and talk



# Sequential narrative

## Sequence 1 reception

- Introduction
- Information
- Cafe



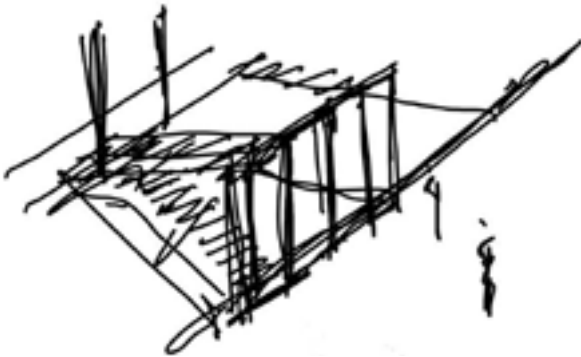
Velázquez's Las Menina-1656

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Foucault explains the link between utopias and heterotopias using the metaphor of a mirror. A mirror is a utopia because the image reflected is a 'placeless place', an unreal virtual place that allows one to see one's own visibility. However, the mirror is also a heterotopia, in that it is a real object. The heterotopia of the mirror is at once absolutely real, relating with the real space surrounding it, and absolutely unreal, creating a virtual image

## Sequence 2 encounter

- with others  
&  
with ways
- Clash of visitors & dwellers



Encounter with some neutral and same-weight ways leads to bewilderment, which is the intention.

At the same time, the place has been designed to be a platform to encounter strangers. So the whole space turned to a merged combination of movement and stillness.

## Sequence 3 suspense

- inversion of gazes
- panopticon hall
- Central garden



eyes wide shut, a movie directed by stanley kubrick in 1999, is a good refrence of how the situation of power is interchangeable. it also provides an spatial refrence.

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Panopticon space or the main central area is the focal point of the ideological definition of the project. The spot that used to be a significant point of observation will conceptually and physically transform to a target of seeing, the object of observation. The way the gazes and their directions change directly influence the position of power for the users. By using this inversion, the former most dominant spot reveals its vulnerability. People will be standing while they are aware as being an object of gazes. They can enjoy the fresh air and the blue sky, but they also may like to join others looking at themselves, to look inside.

# Sequential narrative

## Sequence 4 pathway

exploring life

- Exploring pathway
- Temporary exhibitions



Vincent J. Stoker



collage of indoor and out door

The path is the place for the viewers to experience life most authentically; to involve with nature, plants, kids, and animals, explore the space that is occasionally filled with artwork, come across other people doing other activities, and to feel suspended time for a while.

## Sequence 5 release

observe, eat, drink and talk

- Cafe-bar-restaurant
- Observation platform



The final sequence is designed to be a shocking moment of relief to see the sky and to breathe the air. To observe the city and to have joyful moments. But most importantly, it is a place to talk, share the experience, feelings, and thoughts. It is intended to be a collective reflection on life while embracing it.

the combination of inside, slightly deviated to outside, and vice versa.

Therefore, while both realms persist in their character, there are some points in which the user of space faces moments of bewilderment.



# MATERIAL

## (STRIP-REUSE-TACTILITY-REFLECTION)

The space talks, besides the intangible qualities, it does it with its tangibles and its materials. Materials are important as they must be in a place for a reason and they must be able to show the traces of time and to get old as the building grows up. The perception of the spaces is enhanced by the tactility of the material. The aesthetic experience is extended with that of the sense of touch. For me, it was important to let the old materials of the prison sustain their old voices but also to combine them with some new materials of the same nature( brick). This duality which is sometime not immediately noticeable is a context of dialog in the material condition. But also for some parts which is closely tightened to the duty of creating the new voice, I made a concrete with dust of demolished brick as the aggregate. The outcome was a block of concrete with an interesting pinky outlook. It still resembles the existing materials in terms of color. Therefore, the intention is not to intervene brutally and with a cluttering voice, but rather a whispering one.

Green concrete is a form of eco-friendly concrete that is manufactured using waste or residual materials from different industries, and requires less amount of energy for production. Compared to traditional concrete, it produces less carbon dioxide, and is considered cheap and more durable.



Solid waste produced from construction and demolition activities amount to several million tons globally, and one of the prominent wastes is brick waste. In recent years, there have been increasing number of researches carried out on recycling brick wastes to produce a more eco-friendly concrete. This review summarizes the usage of brick waste as potential partial cement and aggregate replacement materials whereby the performance in terms of the mechanical strengths and some durability-related properties of the concrete were discussed. It was found that the most feasible usage of recycled brick is in the form of brick dust, whereby up to 20% cement replacement could enhance the strength and some durability properties of the concrete due to the potential pozzolanic reactivity of the brick dust particles. On the other hand, the inclusion of recycled brick as aggregate does not give profound improvement of the properties of concrete as it is governed by the inherent porous nature of the aggregate. Hence, the use of recycled brick as partial aggregate substitute should be confined to low volume replacement levels and when environmental consideration necessitates its usage.

[/https://www.stonecycling.com](https://www.stonecycling.com)

MATERIAL  
(STRIP-REUSE-TACTILITY-REFLECTION)



I tried to make the material I was intended. Concrete that is using the recycled brick of the demolished part as the aggregate. These photos show two different types of concrete based on the different scales of brick dust. The last images show the material after 5 & 6 days, respectively. As I looked for a kind of pinky color in the concrete, the result clearly indicates that this try was a success.



Final result of the material

To make the building energy-sufficient one of the main issues are the windows. How to keep beautiful windows but to proof them from wasting energy. I came up with the idea to cover the windows from inside with another glass frame so that the air between two frames provides enough isolation. For the places that windows needed to be open the second frame can be openable as well.



A test render of the prison wall with added glass frame to old windows

in some parts (like the pathway sequence) which I needed to partly demolish the brick wall, and especially because this part has already lost its authenticity due to several renovations, I chose to bare the walls and combine old brick with the new plaster.



in some parts (like the main hall) which I needed to partly demolish the brick wall, but also to repair it using new bricks. I'd like the way this keeps its traces between new and old. And I like that this slight distinction will diminish through time.





REFLECTION

In all the processes of research and design, I had a lot of struggle to be able to clearly define the assignment and come up with an accurate question. Seeing the complexity of the project, this wasn't always easy. However, at some point during the design process, I realized that different aspects of the story are coming together to constitute a whole. The contradictory concept started to find their position in my mind and the design. They were not violating each other anymore but rather even strengthening one another. Therefore, the outcome in the design is the logical and feasible combination of theory, research, and experiments in the period of the journey and dus confirming the hypothesis.

Consultant

Joep van As- technical information

Hamed tabatabaei -Studio Hartzema- technical information

Jannik Beton - material information and consultant

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Stadsdorp Wolvenburg (<http://www.wolvenburgutrecht.nl/gevangenis-wolvenplein-historie/>)

Historie  Stadsdorp Wolvenburg

PI Wolvenplein op bolwerk Wolvenburg in Utrecht: de historie van militair bolwerk en

fabriekslocatie tot stadsgevangenis. Het is sinds

