

*Our society is not one of spectacle but of a surveillance...
We are neither in the amphitheatre, nor on a stage,
but in the panoptic machine, invested by its effects of power,
which we bring to ourselves since we are part of its mechanism.*

Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*

Panoptical Machines

The idea which links two buildings by the one projection comes out of a very special location of two buildings in Torun – the prison and the planetarium. They both share the distance of just about 40-50m. Paradoxically enough the both round buildings were designed for observation – the stars and the prisoner, so we could say they mirror each other as panoptical machines.

The planetarium arrests the viewer's centered perspective to the stars and the imprisoned finds himself arrested by the guard's gaze in the original Bentham's design building. On its bases the guard placed in the middle of the prison's building can simultaneously watch all prisoners in the cells around him. The only view from outside by the fenced windows which is accessible to the prisoners is the the actual skyscape. The metaphore of watching and being watched at the same time was represented by two projections linking up the two building by images of rotating crowds taken from the surveillance cameras – the one on the planetarium as ornament walking in circles as if in the prison's pathwalk, repeating the prison's windows, the one on the prison showing free floating crowd in two circles surrounding the building.

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