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# SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES ON IMPRISONMENT.
# A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

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*Sociological Studies on Imprisonment. A European Perspective*

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# CHAPTER 3

## ADAPTATION TO IMPRISONMENT
## IN LITHUANIAN MEN'S PRISONS

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### 3.1. Introduction

According to the European statistics on prison population, the rate of incarceration in Lithuania is one of the highest and longest (amounting to years) in the European Union[56], meanwhile, in the Western countries it consists of a few months (Sakalauskas 2007). Lithuania is also among the countries, which, in the context of the EU, had done little to improve prison conditions (Sakalauskas 2014). The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) has recommended the country to take urgent measures to improve living conditions and security among prisoners in some correctional facilities[57], and has en-

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[56]  For more information, see: International Centre for Prison Studies. Word Prison Population List (tenth edition), available at: http://www.apcca.org/uploads/10th_Edition_2013.pdf [accessed 12 June 2014]

[57]  For more information, see: Report to the Lithuanian Government on the visit to Lithuania carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

couraged Lithuania to review a strategy of correctional institutions' reformation.

Post-Soviet countries tend to have a specific form of custodial sentence defined by researchers as carceral collectivism that also includes the architecture and organizational structure of penal institutions (Piacentini, Slade 2015). Lithuanian prisons called correctional facilities resemble Soviet-style correctional colonies with 10–20 prisoners housed in one dormitory, living in barracks and free to wander around them. Because of this form of custodial sentence in which the concentration of prisoners is high, but their contacts are poorly controlled the informal convict code is of utmost importance. This inmate code called prison subculture is universal in the country's penal institutions and serves as an essential regulatory element of convicts' daily life and interactions (Piskinaite-Kazlauskiene 2001; Petkus 2004 and 2006; Petkeviciute 2010 and 2014).

The structural components of a custodial sentence embedded in the Lithuanian penal institutions – poor living conditions, a high concentration of inmates, an extensive duration of prison sentences, the organizational structure and the importance of the convict code – prompts us to consider how incarcerated men experience their imprisonment, what kind of ways they use to adapt to the prison environment and what difficulties they experience in this environment. Although recent research admits that currently the pains of imprisonment might not be as strong as described by the early prison researchers (Sykes 1959; Goffman 1961), it is doubtful whether the present institutional changes make imprisonment an easier experience. The pains and difficulties of imprisonment acquire the new anonymous forms of bureaucratic power. Therefore,

(CPT). 2014 (18), available at: http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/ltu/2014-18-inf-eng.pdf [accessed 2 November 2014]

it is necessary to analyse convicts' adaptation and survival in prisons in order to grasp the reasons for imprisonment pains (Liebling 2004; Crewe 2009; Jewkes 2012). The research on adaptation in prisons may also help to increase the prison management efficiency, to strengthen the prevention of misconduct in the correctional institutions and to make convicts better integrate into society (Gover et al. 2000; Dhami et al. 2007).

Adaptation is comprised of the various ways of adjusting to prison environment, issues of prisoners' conduct and assimilation, as well as the difficulties they face in the process of adaptation (Crewe 2009). Moreover, the term of adaptation in this article is not equivalent to exemplary behaviour and successful adaptation. In analysing the adaptation of imprisoned men, we intend to reveal a wide range of dynamic adaptation techniques that can be either successful or unsuccessful. "Success" or "failure" in everyday adaptation techniques of the convicts is presented from the research participants' point of view. Therefore, we focus on a variety of adaptation techniques, asking how the inmates "tame" the prison routines, what kind of difficulties they experience in their attempts to adapt to the prison environment and, finally, what factors contribute to the choice of different ways of adaptation and their dynamics.

## 3.2. Rethinking Models of Adaptation: Deprivation or Importation?

The deprivation or indigenous model associated with G. Sykes's (1958) classical study on the social organisation of prison emphasizes tensions and frustrations caused by imprisonment and the loss of freedoms and rights. According to Sykes, a custodial sentence is inevitably accompanied by psychological shock and difficulties, in other words, pains of imprisonment and restrictions

that challenge the imprisoned persons' personality, their self-worth and privacy (Sykes 1958, 63–64). Isolation and restrictions experienced by the imprisoned have a significant influence on the social organisation of prisons since they encourage the creation of prison subculture or convict code in correctional facilities (Sykes 1958). In Sykes and Messinger's (1960) opinion, the convict code serves as a cultural mechanism that elevate the pains of imprisonment by the positive impact of collective identity, solidarity, loyalty, mutual help and hostility to the institution (cited from Crewe 2007, 126).

Analysing total institutions, Goffman (1961) also argued that by exploiting the mechanisms of humiliation and devaluation they carry out the function of mortification of the self. The total institution produces tensions between life before and after imprisonment and uses these tensions to maintain control and management. Roles important behind the walls of prison in which the inmates' relationship to the outside world weaken are suspended in the total institution. The new role of being an inmate or patient becomes the only one required and supported by the total institution. The process of individual depersonalisation is implemented by the use of regime, control, and decision making for inmates, prohibition for them to express opinions, dissatisfaction or resistance. Like Sykes, Goffman emphasized the inmates' response to the attempts of the institution to reconstruct their personalities. He distinguished secondary adjustment of the imprisoned individuals characterized by the construction of an inmate code. Fraternization, a certain idea of brotherhood comprised of solidarity, loyalty, collective resistance and mutual support, becomes the basis of this code. Collective discontent with the legal system, impermissible behaviour, informal social control of inmates, their stratification and their access to some resources and informal trade define secondary adjustment. Secondary adjustment or inmate code helps the imprisoned restore

their mortified self and give them power to resist the system and satisfy some forbidden needs (Goffman 1961, 56–57).

Early studies on prison sociology (Sykes 1958; Goffman 1961) that conceptualized the inmates' survival and adaptation forms in prisons laid the foundation for the analysis of social organisation and social relationships within the imprisonment institutions. However, an exaggerated emphasis on inmates' solidarity and their homogeneity and the understanding of a social system of imprisonment as a stable and balanced environment prevented the formation of multi-sided and critical studies of prison subcultures. The prevalent functionalist perspective failed to explain conflicts and changes that they entailed in the social organization of prisons (Matthews 2009). Thus, the deprivation model could not explain the inmates' choice of adaptation strategies i.e. could not answer the question of why inmates who had served similar custodial sentences in a very similar environment chose different ways of adaptation (Dhami et al. 2007).

The importation model presented by researchers as a critique and opposition of the deprivation model argued that the inmate code is a part of the criminal culture existing behind the prison walls (Irwin, Cressey 1962). Experiences and features imported and brought from outside determine adaptation to the prison environment, thus, the research on the inmates' behaviour cannot rely only on the analysis of prison subculture which is not an isolated system formed exclusively by the conditions of imprisonment (Irwin, Cressey 1962, 145). Irwin and Cressey (1962) proposed to divide inmates into three groups: the inmates oriented to thief subcultures, the ones oriented to convict subculture and the third group oriented to "legitimate" subcultures. For men belonging to the thief subculture criminal behaviour is a craft that they know best. In this subculture, the values of solidarity, mutual trust and reliability prevail.

Anticipating an inevitable incarceration, participants in the thief subculture construct subcultural rules that help them survive and endure in prisons. At the same time, they attempt to earn a status recognized both in correctional facilities and beyond. The second subculture characteristic of the lower classes covers the majority of prison population. Men of the convict subculture usually start their criminal careers in juvenile facilities and have a considerable experience of imprisonment. They attempt to establish their status in prison environment that they know well. To make their prison lives as comfortable as possible, they are often involved in illegal activities and offer various services for other inmates. Finally, the last group oriented to a conventional culture adheres faithfully to the institutional rules and attempts to earn the officers' trust. Men of this group are not interested in criminal perceptions; all they want is to leave prisons and live according to the laws.

By criticizing the deprivation model, later prison research (Jacobs 1977; Zamble, Porporino 1988) supported arguments of the importation model. Analysing the prison subculture, J. B. Jacobs (1977) discovered a fragmented community of inmates divided into hostile ethnically based gangs that had formed not in prison but on the streets of Chicago (quoted from Crewe 2007, 131). Zamble and Porporino proposed a design for the analysis of adaptation that consisted of the main variables of the importation model divided into several groups: 1) general social factors including race, age, sex, education and professional experience; 2) a criminal career comprised of conviction numbers and time spent in the correctional facilities; 3) criminal attitudes; 4) self-perceptions and individual traits; 5) social, political, racial and religious views (Zamble, Porporino 1988, 8). However, emphasizing the relation between the issues of adaptation in prison and behind its walls, in their longitudinal research, Zamble and Porporino failed to notice

specific difficulties of adaptation experienced by the inmates in correctional facilities. According to these authors, the immense pains of imprisonment are one of most common myths of criminological research (Zamble, Porporino 1988, 149).

However, the importation model has also been criticized because it could not account for different characteristics of the inmates and measure precisely the influence of life before imprisonment on criminal behaviour (Dhami et al. 2007, 1087). Contemporary research of adaptation to imprisonment attempts to combine the models of deprivation and importation and supplement them with new theoretical insights. According to P. Gendreau et al (1997), the metaanalysis of 39 studies demonstrates that chances to predict variables of both models are almost equal. Age, criminal career, antisocial attitudes can be regarded as the most important criteria for the importation model, and the most significant factors of the deprivation model called situational consist of specific imprisonment environment, imprisonment conditions and time spent in prison (quoted from Warren et al. 2004, 628).

It should be mentioned that, in various research studies, imprisonment conditions, the relationship between inmates and officers (Rocheleau 2013a; Liebling 2004; Van der Laan, Eichelsheim 2013), overcrowding of imprisonment institutions (Lahm 2008; Wooldredge et al. 2001), employment and participation in different programs (Gover et al. 2000; Luccioni 2012; Rocheleau 2013a; Steiner, Wooldredge 2009; Van der Laan, Eichelsheim 2013), and provision of justice and safety (Griffin, Hepburn 2013; Gover et al. 2000; Liebling 2004, Rocheleau 2013a) are considered as the important variables of imprisonment environment. The main variables of the importation model include familial status (Gover et al. 2000), age (Lahm 2008; Lucioni 2012; Steiner, Wooldredge 2009; Tewksbury et al. 2014), the nature of crime and gang membership

(DeLisi et al. 2011; Tasca et al. 2010; Tewksbury et al. 2014), and the duration of imprisonment (Jiang, Fisher-Giorlando 2002; Steiner, Wooldredge 2009).

Thus, the research points out to the importance of different factors in the adaptation to prison environment, which can be explained by the choice and number of different variables, their definition and explanation, volatile imprisonment environment and different cultural and penal contexts (Dhami et al. 2007, 1097). However, many prison researchers forget that imported factors are influenced and modified by the environment of deprivation and difficulties in prisons (Slotboom et al. 2011). H. Toch and K. Adams's (2002) longitudinal research on the inmates' inappropriate and aggressive behaviour in imprisonment institutions confirms the above-mentioned insights. Their research demonstrates that their age helps to predict inmates' hostile and aggressive behaviour and that convicts' maturity is an essential factor influencing their behaviour in prisons. However, the inmates' maturity could also be determined by the environmental factors; for instance, their transfer from a juvenile correctional facility to an adult correctional institution could accelerate the convicts' maturing process and change their behaviour. In this case, the imprisonment can either solve the imported problems or, on the contrary, intensify them.

In order to supplement the deprivation and importation models with new theoretical approaches, scholars began to pay more attention to the changes determined by situational factors and the dynamic of adaptation (Camp et al. 2003; Jiang, Fisher-Giorlando 2002). In analysing violent behaviour in correctional institutions, S. Jiang and M. Fisher-Giorlando (2002) defined the most important factors of the situational model based on the categories of place, time and situational participants. Emphasizing the significance of all three models, these authors remark that the regime type, living

conditions and their transformations correlate in a statistically significant way with disciplinary penalties. For instance, inmates living in the labour sectors are less violent than those housed in the general sectors. The marital status and a number of children also determined the inmates' behaviour. Moreover, individuals who before their imprisonment were alcohol abusers or who were sentenced for crimes related to drugs are more likely to commit disciplinary violations (Jiang, Fisher-Giorlando 2002, 352–354). Thus, various situational factors not only could determine changes in individuals' lives but also could influence their adaptation to prison environment. According to D. J. Cooke et al. (2008), situational factors such as the physical surroundings, inmate security, officer professionalism, organizational and management strategies and life quality must be reflected both in scholarly discussions and penal practices. The mechanisms of administrative control should also be taken into account since the lack of a clear, coherent and enduring control makes the inmates' behaviour unbalanced while transparently implemented control functions as a means of preventing violent behaviour (Huebner 2003). Such situational factors are important to all inmate population.

Contemporary research of adaptation to the prison environment not only combines the importation and deprivation models but also rethinks and reconceptualises them. Liebling (2004) and Crewe (2011) argue that the pains of imprisonment experienced by contemporary inmates cannot be compared to those described by prison sociologists more than fifty years ago. However, it is doubtful whether because of the institutional changes individuals experience their imprisonment more easily and adapt to the correctional facility in a less complex way. After all, in this context, it is more important to reflect not on the intensity of pain but on the reasons

that produce it: the issues of humanity, relationships, respect and support; the questions of officer professionalism, bureaucratic legitimacy; inmate security, adaptation and exploitation; the aspects of inmate welfare, autonomy, individual growth and their relation to their families (Liebling 2004).

In analysing the pains of imprisonment in contemporary prisons, Crewe (2009 and 2011) notes that the unpredictable nature of penal power causes the feeling of insecurity. This power does not manifest itself in a pure form but functions independently and anonymously. It is no less frightening because this power is unpredictable and difficult to recognize; it produces uncertainties and tensions. The feeling of insecurity is also related to the omnipotence of bureaucracy: in the inmates' words, their lives often depend on one stroke of a pen. Parole serves as a means of inmates' control; therefore, some imprisoned individuals constantly worry about their behaviour that can erase many years of strenuous efforts and good conduct. The inmates' experience and identity become formalized and institutionalized and knowledge about them is stored in the psychologists' offices and evaluation reports on the risks of the imprisoned. It is paradoxical that despite the reduction of the pains of imprisonment, the measures used to improve the conditions of imprisonment turned into reasons for inmates' frustrations and insecurities.

Researchers emphasize that the importation model has been undeservedly forgotten due to the lack of attention to the development of criminal careers in prisons in developmental and life-course criminology largely based on the works of D. Farrington (1992) and his colleagues that occupy an important place in contemporary criminology. The importation model and its application in researching prison adaptation should be closely related to the theoretical approaches towards criminal career and life course and

should be their integral component facilitating the analysis of imprisonment as one of the important life stages (DeLisi et al. 2011, 1188).

To conclude, previous research experience, the existing data bases, the methods of data collection and analysis, different local contexts of correctional facilities and specificity of forms of imprisonment – all these factors may determine the choice of theoretical approaches. Therefore, instead of favouring one or another model, it is more important to acknowledge their limitations. For instance, in applying the importation model it is not sufficient to emphasize the importance of some variables in the process of adaptation; it is also necessary to take into account the fact that a concrete environment might either accelerate or slow down the development of inmates' imported characteristics. Although the deprivation model helps us describe a specific context of the imprisonment institution, social world and everyday life of inmates, it is incapable of contributing to an in-depth analysis of inmates' characteristics and their relation to the inmates' behaviour in prisons. Both models focus on individuals' adaptation to imprisonment in a definite moment of time and place but fail to account for the changes and dynamics of adaptation.

### 3.3. Typologies of Adaptation

Different components of life in prison such as types of correctional facilities, imprisonment conditions, goals and power relationships influence the specific modes of adaptation and make some of them more accessible than others (Crewe 2009, 149). Besides various environmental components, the stage of adaptation is also important in the adaptation process. A person sentenced to imprisonment might drift from one adaptation type to

another depending on circumstances. S. Wheeler (1961) argues that adaptation may depend on the duration and stage of prison sentence. To describe the dynamic of custodial sentence, this author uses the U curve. According to him, the beginning and end of custodial sentence are the most difficult periods that make an inmate strained and stressed out. The middle time of serving a sentence can be considered as the most successful period of adaptation to imprisonment.

R. Merton (1938) and Goffman's (1961) works are most frequently used to analyse different types of adaptation (Matthews 2009). Merton (1938) explained individuals' non-conformist behaviour in society by referring to the mismatch between the objectives enforced by a certain culture and institutionalized means to achieve these objectives. He distinguished five types of individual adaptation related not to people's personality but to their behaviour in specific situations. Moreover, he raised the question of how individuals located in the different ladders of social hierarchy adapt to cultural values. Goffman (1961) identified similar types in his analysis of total institutions. Current research extends, complements and specifies these adaptation strategies. Crewe (2009) described adaptive styles based on rich empirical data that reflected the everyday of contemporary imprisonment institutions and their inhabitants. By using Merton's (1997) analysis of adaptation in society, Goffman's (1961) research on total institutions and Crewe's (2009) work on adaptation in contemporary prisons, it is possible to distinguish the following types of adaptation to the prison environment:

**Table 3.1: Typology of individual adaptation in society and prison**

| Typology of individual adaptation (Merton 1938) | Typology of adaptation to imprisonment (Goffman 1961; Crewe 2009) |
|---|---|
| **Conformity**<br>Individuals accept the goals of society and the socially legitimate means of achieving them. | **Conversion**<br>Inmates accept the official rules of staff and try to act out the role of perfect inmate (Goffman 1961, 63).<br>**Enthusiasts**<br>See incarceration as an opportunity for self-improvement and moral reparation (Crewe 2009, 157). |
| **Innovation**<br>Individuals accept culturally defined goals, but reject or lack the socially legitimate means of achieving them. | **Players**<br>Perform compliance with institutional discourse in public, but use manipulation and concealment to mask backstage forms of resistance (Crewe 2009, 200). |
| **Ritualism**<br>Accept a lifestyle of hard work, but reject the cultural goal of accumulating wealth or power. Legitimate means are more important than cultural goals. | **Colonization**<br>Attempt to maximize satisfaction within the institution; inmates may be accused by his fellow inmates of having found a home (Goffman 1961, 62).<br>**Pragmatists, stoics.**<br>Achieve compliance in instrumental way and share a perception that the prison has monopoly on power, therefore, to resist it is either impossible or imprudent. Pragmatists serving short or medium length sentences have little awareness of how power operates upon them. Stoics serving long-term sentences use well-known strategies of accomplishing compliance (Crewe 2009, 179). |
| **Retreatism**<br>Individuals reject both the cultural goals and socially legitimate means of achieving it. | **Situational withdrawal**<br>Inmates prefer disinvolvement and withdraw attention from everything except events immediately around their bodies (Goffman 1961, 61).<br>**Retreatists**<br>Engaged in institutional structure in minimal ways, they lack an external focus for their future hopes (Crewe 2009, 191–195). |
| **Rebellion**<br>Individuals reject both goals of society and legitimate means and substitute new goals and means. | **Intransigence**<br>Intentionally rebel and challenge the institution by refusing to cooperate with staff. Intransigence is typically a temporary initial phase of reaction (Goffman 1961, 62). |

Adaptation to the prison environment can be analysed in three ways: firstly, it is possible to identify adaptation with correction and good behaviour in imprisonment institutions; secondly, it can be associated with the quality of life, satisfaction of needs and

everyday existence; and, thirdly, adaptation can raise the question of how criminal and antisocial attitudes influence the inmates' behaviour in prisons (Van Tongeren, Klebe 2010). The types of adaptation distinguished in Crewe's (2009) ethnographic research can be aggregated into two crucial forms of adaptation to imprisonment. The first form encompasses a passive quiet resignation or, in other words, floating above the water as well as withdrawal and isolation. The second form describes the inmates' attempts to strategically, reflexively and actively construct an acceptable, friendly and comfortable environment or reform the existing one.

It should be mentioned that these types of adaptation are ideal ones; moreover, they are not universal or static. The adaptation itself is a dynamic process and the same individual can try out different modes of adaptation. Many research studies consider a successful adaptation as an example of good conduct in the imprisonment institution and equate it with the observance of institutional rules or involvement in rehabilitation programs. However, these studies fail to ponder the question whether individuals who look like exemplary inmates in the eyes of prison officers feel safely and comfortably among other inmates. Thus, in analysing typologies of adaptation it is important to learn about the specific context of imprisonment and define, on the basis of inmates' testimonies, the variety of adaptation types.

## 3.4. The Origin of Lithuanian Imprisonment Institutions: Collective Imprisonment and Prison Subculture

After the World War II, when Lithuania was incorporated into the Soviet Union, all state institutions became centralized according to the Moscow orders. Custodial sentences were tightened and individuals would be transported to serve their sentences to

penitentiary institutions all over the Soviet Union (Petkus 2004, 125). In the Soviet bloc countries, this period saw the establishment of the network of imprisonment institutions distinguished by a specific structure of physical space and everyday life and the penal system more oriented to punishment than to correction. Analysing imprisonment institutions of the Soviet period, L. Piacentini and G. Slade (2015) call carceral collectivism a characteristic form of the Soviet imprisonment. "Carceral collectivism is grounded by three elements: a system of penal governance based on mutual peer surveillance, the dispersal of authority and governance to prisoners themselves, and communal living engendered by the spatial and temporal structuring of prison life through the housing of prisoners en masse in dormitories" (Piacentini, Slade 2015, 180). According to Piacentini and Slade (2015), specific spatial forms are mobilized for mutual peer surveillance but they do not correspond to *panopticon* in which the few are watching many, in the Soviet prisons that can be described by the concept of *polyopticon* the many are watching the many. In *polyopticon* inmates themselves are both executers and objects of surveillance and the institutional order is maintained by group standards guaranteed by reciprocal control. Inmates became involved in the institutional governance through different posts they took in the organisational structure: from labour in the production sectors to offices designed for the maintenance of order and the collection of information about the inmates. The official institutional structures represented by prison officers supported this involvement of inmates in reciprocal control. Finally, the dorm-type accommodations bedrooms of which were often inhabited by more than a dozen inmates insured the communal living. Such concentration of inmates warranted a constant mutual contact.

Currently, the model of correctional facilities that conform to the standards of the past Soviet system is prevalent in the Lithuanian penal system. Poor imprisonment conditions and dorm-type accommodations housing from 4 to 40 inmates in one room are characteristic of this model (Dobryninas, Sakalauskas 2011). Although the 2003 Criminal Code provides for a more rigorous supervision and control of imprisonment conditions, Lithuania still belongs to the countries that had done very little to improve imprisonment conditions particularly in comparison to other EU countries. For instance, more than 40 % of surveyed inmates shared their room with more than 16 other people and only 22.5 % said that they showered regularly (Sakalauskas 2014a, 135–137). The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) also noted unsatisfactory imprisonment conditions and lack of safety for inmates in Lithuania. In the report of its 2012 visit to Lithuania, CPT highlighted a flawed dorm system that did not guarantee inmates' safety and that needed to be revised and renovated.[58]

The Lithuanian imprisonment institutions also have a distinctive, strict and universal prison subculture based on specific communication norms that formed during the years of the Soviet occupation when inmates were moved from one prison to another all over the Soviet Union. It should also be mentioned that even before this migration of prisoners there existed certain norms of communication in Russian prisons that were adjusted in the process of migration when newcomers fought for power with their old inhabitants (Petkus 2004 and 2006).

[58] For more information, see: Report to the Lithuanian Government on the visit to Lithuania carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). 2014 (18), available at: http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/ltu/2014-18-inf-eng.pdf [Accessed 2 November 2014]

By consolidating the system of physical colonies (barracks) and mutual prisoner surveillance that grew into a whole structure of informal communication rules and hierarchical relationships, the Gulag system laid the foundation for the collective form of imprisonment (Piacentini, Slade 2015). The scale and extent of the Gulag system required prisoners' self-governance. Imprisoned recidivists or professional criminals would be chosen to serve as supervisors and controllers of other often political prisoners. Recidivists were valued for their ability to use power and cruelty towards others. An inmate with experience in maintaining the order could manage a group of the Gulag inhabitants and his management was approved by the official structures. This way the inmates became involved in the governance of colonies, they acquired power and authority (Applebaum 2003). The division and hostility among inmates were useful for prison administrations because they reduced the influence of thieves in law (or recidivists) and increased the administrative control. The division among inmates also contributed to the creation of a hierarchical system with clearly defined groups and behavioural rules (Vavokhine 2004).

The prison subculture as an organisational mechanism of the social world along with a strict inmate hierarchy reached its final form at the beginning of the 1950s (Vavokhine 2004). This hierarchical system that incorporated inmates from many other Soviet bloc countries has not significantly changed since then (Piacentini, Slade 2015). Thus, the similar system of serving custodial sentences and migration policies that made the Lithuanian prisoners encounter informal inmate rules in Russia enable us to talk of the Russian-style subculture characteristic of the Lithuanian imprisonment institutions (Petkus 2006). Currently, the Lithuanian prison subculture is based on a caste system with specific behavioural and communication rules and norms and the establishment of distinction

through jargon and tattoos. Inmates cannot escape this hierarchical system since everyone gets assigned a certain status (Kudirka 2014; Petkevičiute 2010 and 2014; Petkus 2006; Piskinaite-Kazlauskiene 2001). The main rules of this subculture, according to the inmates themselves, require not to inform on other inmates, return debts, not to collaborate with prison officers, defend one's honour and not get involved in surveillance of other prisoners (Petkus 2006, 41). The inmates are also required not to steal, avoid contacts with the lowest inmate caste, support other inmates in emergencies and be responsible for their words (Kudirka 2014, 186). Although the importance of the subculture diminished during the last decades, it still remains the common feature of the Lithuanian imprisonment institutions that impinges on everyday interactions of inmates and organizes their social world.

## 3.5. Methodology

To conduct an in-depth analysis of prison environment and inmates' adaptation to imprisonment, we have chosen qualitative methodology. It allowed us to reconstruct the daily prison life from the research participants' perspective. Besides the scholarly literature analysis, we used the following methods: semi-structured interviews (60 interviews with the prisoners) and document analysis (the data of the inmates' criminal records). The research was conducted in three Lithuanian correction houses: in Alytus (20 interviews), Vilnius (19 interviews) and Pravieniškes (21 interviews) from July 1, 2012, to February 1, 2013. The correctional houses of Alytus and Vilnius are inhabited by adult male prisoners serving their custodial sentences for repeated offences, meanwhile, Pravieniškes correctional house is an open colony for men serving their custodial sentences for the first time. By choosing these

correctional houses, we sought to highlight the diversity of research participants and prison environments. Both prisoners sentenced for the first time and serving their sentences for many times were included into our research.

The research participants were chosen randomly from the lists provided by the correctional houses. To ensure the greater diversity of prison experiences and to avoid the prison staff's control, we chose research participants ourselves. Each research participant was introduced to our research objectives and procedures. After agreeing to participate in the research, informants signed a consent form allowing us to record them and get acquainted with their criminal records. The participants were informed that their data would remain anonymous. We used the method of qualitative content analysis processing the data of semi-structured interviews with the help of the MAXQDA software.

## 3.6. Research findings

### 3.6.1 Social Life Inside Prisons: Living Conditions, Self-governance and Prison Subculture

Inmates' adaptation to imprisonment and their quality of life depend on living conditions in prisons. Although, according to the internal rules of correctional facilities, each inmate has to be provided with 3.1 square metres in a dorm-type living accommodations[59], the accommodations of shared use are also included in this space. Therefore, an inmate's living space covers not only his place in a bedroom but also rooms of shared use. This kind of spatial calculations do not accurately reflect either a big number of inmates

59 Internal Rules of the Procedure of Correctional Facilities approved by the Director of the Prisons Department under the Ministry of Justice, 2 July 2003, Nr. 194.

living in one section or an exact space assigned to each inmate. However, it is obvious that inmates are deprived of privacy and space since they have to share one room with 15 or 20 other prisoners. Their living conditions also depend on the financial and other resources that the inmates can invest into their living accommodations. The inmates have the right to renovate their living quarters and buy some appliances that are not prohibited. For this reason, the differences in living conditions in some prisons are particularly noticeable: in some quarters, inmates indulge in technical innovations while others do not have basic household appliances. When a new convict arrives in prison, it is very important to what living quarters he will be assigned. The internal rules of correctional facilities regulate the inmates' allocation: different specialists decide to what local sector (a building or its part), brigade (an administrative unit smaller than the local sector that has its assigned social worker or a warden) and section (dormitory) to assign a convict. In this process, inmates have the right to express their desires and share with officers their plans in a correctional facility. It appears, from the first glance, that the prison administration plays a crucial role in the inmates' distribution. However, prisoners always find ways to circumvent the established order. According to inmates themselves, there exist a several ways to outmanoeuvre the administration. In one case, an inmate is allowed to reside in a formally assigned space but during the day he has no right to spend time in the living quarters, thus, he mingles outside. In another case, an inmate sleeps in an allocated bed but during the day resides in a different room. The regional distribution according to the cities determines such spatial divisions. The inmates want to live together with those whom they know best and can rely on:

[...] There was this title, a local title – garage or little square which housed around 40 people, 35 or 20, all cramped in one

section. Well, these were men, how to say it better, whom nobody would call or stand up for... Perhaps there was something wrong with them... You know, prisoners avoid such people. You know, sometimes you want to get some prohibited thing and a new guy can call his family, well, he arrives to the prison and you won't get into his head, you won't know what kind of person he is. You don't harm him but tell him to live here or there, you accept him and say: "You will sleep here but [during the day] you will go to the quarters with 20 or 30 people. No one expels them and no one wrongs them but he sleeps in one room with his picture on the wall but during the day until 11 p. m. he will spend time in a [different space].

(inmate no. 3, Alytus correctional facility)

Thus, a convict does not always succeed in getting a living space that he desires. Inmates of the lower status with whom nobody wants to associate or prisoners who have so-called enemies most often encounter this issue of distribution. According to the inmates' statements, they are able to circumvent the established institutional order and regulate their everyday lives comfortably. The prisoners' participation in the distribution of living quarters is both formal (they can express their preferences) and informal (by correcting the administrative decisions and making them conducive to themselves).

The form of dorm-type imprisonment when rooms are not locked either during the day or at night because inmates have the right to use toilets located in the corridors does not limit inmates' movements and interactions. These conditions undoubtedly regulate the prisoners' everyday lives and relationships, and they create the mechanisms of self-governance that acquire the form of unwritten rules or a prison subculture. As we mentioned before, the policies of punishment and custodial sentences that fostered the

migration of convicts all over the territory of the Soviet Union determined the establishment of a criminal subculture characteristic of the Russian imprisonment institutions in Lithuanian correctional facilities (Kudirka 2014; Petkus 2004). The inmates themselves call unwritten prison rules *understandings* (in Russian понятия) although the term of subculture is also widely used. The foundation of this subculture is a hierarchical system, the division of convicts into castes, an inmate honour code comprised of many requirements such as non-cooperation with officers, avoidance of betrayal of accomplices and non-humiliation, and a set of rules that regulate everyday live and relationships in correctional facilities. According to inmates themselves, the *understandings* are a distinctive and universal phenomenon characteristic of all Lithuanian imprisonment institutions. Depending on the specificity of correctional facilities, some minor deviations from this subculture are also possible. The observance of informal inmate rules is not an autonomous decision to participate in a criminal world or become a member of a particular gang. It is a rather compulsory and unavoidable attempt to find one's own place in the criminal community and master its behavioural models. Every inmate whether he wants it or not is assigned some status that corresponds to his place in a caste. To simplify, three caste groups – the normal, goats and untouchables[60] – play a crucial role in the caste system. The *tough guys* (in Lithuanian *šustriakai* or *bachiurai*) take the highest position; they have the highest authority and are decision makers. The caste of the normal includes those who execute the *tough guys'* orders and tasks and become their assistants and helpers. Ordinary convicts who most frequently work in the correctional facilities are also considered the normal. However, they do not have a decisive voice or power.

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[60] We designed this system with regard to the data of our empirical research.

According to one of the main inmate rules, convicts should not cooperate with a prison administration, should not inform on other inmates or betray them. Therefore, it is particularly important to segregate inmates who cannot be trusted. It is for this reason that *goats* considered a lower caste live in separate local sectors in some prisons. Sometimes the caste of *elephants* that formed during the last decade and that consists of inmates refusing the subcultural rules is also assigned to *goats*. Finally, the untouchables or so-called *cocks* are regarded as the lowest caste whose contacts with the normal are limited. Convicts become untouchables for various reasons: their ignorance of the subcultural *understandings*, betrayal or debt; a smaller part of the convicts are turned into untouchables for their homosexuality or sexual favours to other inmates. Although the Lithuanian hierarchical system compared to that of the Russian imprisonment institutions preserved its structure (see Vavokhine 2004), it currently undergoes the processes of transformation because of the change in a number of inmates within each caste or the emergence of new castes. For instance, currently the caste of elephants consisting of inmates who do not observe informal rules and are not interested in the criminal subculture became more important in the Lithuanian correctional facilities. Although these changes make the caste of the *tough guys* less prominent, the exploitation of untouchables and a clear distinction between the normal and untouchables still comprise the essence of the subcultural hierarchy.

Other things are also important in becoming a member of different castes, first of all, inmates' connections in prison. If after his arrival in the correctional facility, other inmates who occupy an established authoritative place in the criminal subculture meet a new convict, he can avoid trials and uncertainties. Otherwise, new convict's knowledge of the subculture and his inner strength are tested. Currently, one of the most important changes in the

criminal subculture is the prevalence of an inmate's financial standing that allow him to take a higher position in the subculture: "Having money is the most important thing here, because money is most important; if a thief arrives here and he's a total jackass but he has money, the normal *tough guys* take him to themselves and he walks around proud and cocky" (inmate no. 37, Pravieniškės correctional facility).

The mentioned changes in the subculture determine changing and diverse attitudes of the inmates towards it. Our research allowed us to distinguish two groups of inmates according to their views of the subculture. Most research participants thought that the role of the subculture was to regulate inmates' everyday life and relationships. In other words, the subculture was necessary to maintain order and make the inmates' existence easier. According to other prisoners, the subculture served the interests of powerful; it contributed to the exploitation of the weakest representatives of the lower castes. These inmates argued that the exploitation and aggressive behaviour were often incorrectly justified as a means of sustaining communal good. Functioning as a guarantee of social order, the subculture restricted convicts and required them to sacrifice their individuality, beliefs and choices.

To conclude, it is possible to argue that the *understandings* (i. e. criminal subculture) survive in one or another form as a foundation of the inmates' everyday lives and relationships. However, the inmates evaluate changes in the subculture in two ways: the vision of prisons without the subculture can mean the freedom of choice and deconstruction of strict divisions that engender humiliation, exploitation, resignation and obedience. Yet the same vision can destroy the clear structure of the inmates' social world in which everyone has a clearly defined place and role.

### 3.6.2. Adaptation to Imprisonment: Coping Strategies and Typology of Adaptation

In analysing the types of adaptation we attempt to grasp what kinds of everyday behaviour help inmates survive and adapt to prison environment. The inmates were asked how they organized their lives in the correctional facility, in what activities they were involved, what their everyday looked like and how they had to act in order to cope with imprisonment. The question about a personally acceptable mode of behaviour was also asked. Based on the inductive content analysis, it is possible to distinguish 18 strategies of coping with the prison environment most frequently mentioned by the informants:

Table 3.2: Coping Strategies

| Coping strategy | Frequency (n = 60) | Coping strategy | Frequency (n = 60) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. To obey the rules of prison subculture. | 35 | 10. To keep in touch with the family | 10 |
| 2. To keep busy, go to school and to exercise | 35 | 11. To get released from the prison early | 10 |
| 3. To mind one's own business/ do not pay attention / do not see anything | 32 | 12. To avoid debts | 10 |
| 4. To select accomplices/ to create a group of friends | 29 | 13. To be responsible for one's words or actions | 8 |
| 5. To be prepared to fight/ to defend yourself | 20 | 14. To be oneself | 7 |
| 6. Do not use drugs | 13 | 15. To avoid undesirable people | 6 |
| 7. To work | 12 | 16. Do not lie/ Do not deceive | 6 |
| 8. Do not snitch | 12 | 17. To share with other prisoners | 6 |
| 9. To be strong psychologically and emotionally | 10 | 18. Do not trust | 5 |

It can be seen from the Table 3.2 that the observance of informal rules of the subculture is one of the most important strategies of coping with the prison environment. While speaking of the behaviour necessary to adapt to the correctional facility, the inmates not only emphasized the knowledge of unwritten inmate laws, but also distinguished certain rules closely related to the prison subculture. The convicts argued that one had to be able to hold one's own and defend oneself, not to complain, to be psychologically strong, not to borrow, to have one's say and be responsible for one's own words, not to lie and not to deceive others, to share with others but not to trust other inmates or to be open to them. Inmates' attention to the subculture shows its importance and relevance in the Lithuanian correctional facility.

However, having an occupation was also as important to the convicts as it was to observe the rules of the subculture. This need was best realized through work, sports and self-education. Daily schedule made the inmates use time wisely or, in their own words, to get through the time of their sentence. Among the most popular occupations, the convicts mentioned sports, self-education (reading of different literature) and educational programs organized by prisons. Besides these occupations, the inmates emphasized the creation of social relations and safe and comfortable living environment. Therefore, a half of the research participants thought that it was necessary to mind their own business, do not interfere in others' affairs and live their own lives as well as to have their own group of close people, friends and congenials. Some inmates' associated their survival in prisons not with their attempts of adaptation but with the maintenance of their relationships with people outside the prison walls. These inmates were interested in familial life and desired to be released on parole. They oriented their behaviour to the goals beyond the correctional facilities. For this reason, these research

participants did not want to meddle in others' affairs and strove to dissociate from other inmates because of their negative influence. In some inmates' opinion, the use of drugs related to conflicts due to the lack of money for drugs and desperate attempts to procure them was also a growing problem in the correctional facilities. Thus, to live quietly and comfortably one had to refuse drugs.

The analysis of the tactics of inmates' everyday adaptation demonstrates that it was important, on one hand, to observe the rules of the prison subculture and, on the other hand, to spend time usefully and comfortably. The prison subculture enabled the inmates to become a part of the community, yet they focused on their individuals needs and looked for the ways to spend their time usefully by getting involved in sports, work and self-education.

The comprehensive empirical data let us to create the typologies of adaptation; by grouping the tactics of adaptation, we were able to distinguish five categories that differentiated the informants: attitudes towards the subculture, relations with the prison staff, the resolution of conflicts, attitudes towards rehabilitation and views of work in prisons. The types of adaptation were created based on these categories and on the whole context, tone and content of the semi-structured interviews. The relation between the categories and types are shown in the Table 3.3:

| Types of adaptation (number of inmates) | Subculture[1] | Relation with staff[2] | Conflicts[3] | Rehabilitation[4] | Work in prison[5] |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Flexible (22) | +/- | +/- | +/- | +/- | +/- |
| Invisible (17) | - | + | - | - | + |
| Predominant (12) | + | - | + | +/- | - |
| Exemplary (6) | - | + | - | + | + |
| Non-adapted/isolated (3) | - | - | +/- | - | - |

Table 3.3. Formation of the Types of Adaptation

1   (+) complies with the subculture; (-) does not comply with the subculture; (+/-) complies with it only as much as it is necessary not to stand out against the others.

2   (+) a good relation with the prison stuff is considered a priority; (-) a negative attitude towards the prison stuff; (+/-) maintains the contact with the staff as much as it is necessary since the officers only carry out their duties.

3   (+) conflicts must be resolved by aggression and fighting for oneself; (-) avoids conflicts and do not meddle in them; (+/-) conflicts are rare and they can be resolved by talking to each other.

4   (+) regards rehabilitation as aspirational and believes that it is possible in the imprisonment institutions; (-) rehabilitation is impossible in the imprisonment institutions; (+/-) rehabilitation depends on a person and his desire to change.

5   (+) works and tries to get employed; (-) thinks of work in the imprisonment institutions negatively; (+/-) thinks of work with regard to its nature.

**Flexible adaptation (22).** The largest part of the research participants (22 from 60) belongs to the type of flexible adaptation. We call this type "flexible" because the inmates are capable of manoeuvring between the rules of the subculture and prison administration and paying their dues to both sides. This capability makes the inmates' lives in the correctional facilities more comfortable and secure. Although the inmates belonging to this type adhere to the rules of the subculture they do not regard it as an example worth following. Their compliance with its rules is more a strategic choice that makes their lives easier and less complicated: "I don't need them [the understandings of the subculture], but I live in a squad in which these understandings exist and we observe them. But they are not necessary for me [...] I observe them, but I don't give any importance to them" (inmate no. 25, Pravieniškes correctional facility). The analysis of the informants' criminal records demonstrates that most inmates belonging to this type serve their sentences for non-violent crimes.

**Invisible adaptation (17).** The inmates of this type are called "invisible" because they seek to remain unseen and unnoticed; some of them consciously limit their relationships and are reluctant to open up. These prisoners favour a quiet life that consists of

their preference to the formal rules of the imprisonment institution but not the rules of the subculture. For this reason, their attitudes towards the subculture are negative. Most are occupied with work that not only generates an income but also provides a separate space in the correctional facility and minimizes their contacts with other inmates. The inmate of Vilnius correctional facility (no. 56) confessed that to avoid other prisoners' exploitation he transferred to a work ward: "At best, I would have had to serve them like some kind of pawn – 'bring this, give me that, do something' – but I didn't want such life and transferred to a work ward." Because of their good behaviour and orientation towards the formal prison rules instead of the rules of the subculture the informants of this type remind of exemplary inmates, nonetheless, these types differ significantly. Differently from the type of exemplary adaptation, the inmates of the invisible adaptation do not emphasize individual transformations and rehabilitation or do it only in passing. On the contrary, most inmates of the invisible adaptation think that a bad behaviour is learned easily in prisons while examples of a good behaviour do not attract the inmates' attention.

**Adaptation based on predominance (12).** Twelve research participants belong to the type of the adaptation based on the adherence to the rules of the subculture, the use and justification of physical force and the ability to stand for themselves. The informants of this type of adaptation often occupy a high status in the subcultural hierarchy and are decision makers. These inmates consider the rules of the subculture just, indispensible and necessary to maintain order in prisons. The "predominant" informants extol their ability not to concede but to strike back as well as to have their own opinion and express it powerfully. According to them, to survive in the correctional facilities, one needs to fight for oneself. No fears and weaknesses are admissible here. Therefore, even in

the case of brawls, these informants are reluctant to compromise or retreat. They would rather defend themselves and their opinions: "[…] if someone hurts you, you hurt him back, that's it. When someone offends you, you have to respond the same way at once. If someone insulted you verbally you would have to insult him four times as strongly that he would never insult you again…" (inmate no. 35, Pravieniškės correctional facility).

Such views determine these inmates' occupations and activities in the correctional facility. Most of them cannot work or take up an activity that, in their own words, could threaten their status and self-confidence. The "predominant" type expresses negatives attitudes towards the officers and considers communication with them a kind of snitching. Most of these informants are younger and serve their sentences for violent crimes.

**Adaptation based on exemplary behaviour (6)**. The main feature of this type of adaptation is the inmates' focus on change and rehabilitation. The prisoners who not only emphasize personal transformations but also prove them in their behaviour belong to this type. These inmates point out to the importance of different education, rehabilitation and integration programs in the process of transformation. They experience individual change by graduating from a school or program, giving up addictions and changing their attitudes towards life in general. Exemplary prisoners look to the future optimistically; they speak enthusiastically about their future lives behind the prison walls. These informants tend to carefully observe the official prison rules, avoid disciplinary penalties and conflicts with the prison staff. Most men of this type are older and all of them serve their sentences for non-violent crimes.

**Non-adaptation or isolation (3)**. It is possible to describe the adaptation of the smallest part of the research participants (only 3 from 60) as rather complicated: experiencing difficulties in

adapting to the prison environment, these men isolate themselves and solve their problems in solitude: "I sit, walk or lie on the bed. Nothing else. I don't want to communicate with other convicts, it is difficult for me to do it and I don't want to do it… I don't want to borrow and owe anything to anyone differently from many others here" (inmate no. 46, Vilnius correctional facility).

The fact that only a small number of inmates are incapable of adapting to the prison environment can be explained by a hypothesis that this non-adaptation state might be temporary. At some stage of his imprisonment, an inmate can experience various difficulties and attempt to resolve them by isolation. Different factors including a low status in the informal caste system, recent conflicts with other prisoners and relative inexperience determine non-adaptation. These inmates fail to keep up the relations with both other convicts and prison staff. Therefore, their narratives are full of discontent, anger, helplessness and pain.

To conclude, the inmates' orientation to subculture, their relationships with the prison administration and attitudes to good behaviour should be held as starting points in the analysis of the different types of adaptation. It is possible to predict which type of adaptation an inmate would choose from his support of either the informal subcultural organisation or formal administrational order.

### 3.6.3. The Models of Adaptation: Imprisonment Environment, Imported Factors and the Adaptation Dynamic

In the chapter, we will analyse the process of adaptation by using the models of adaptation widely discussed in scholarly literature, namely, deprivation, importation and situational models and factors related to them. The inmates' narratives enable us to identify the main criteria that determine their adaptation choices.

**Factors of the deprivation model.** As the analysis of strategies and types of adaptation demonstrates, the environment of the Lithuanian correctional facilities along with the criminal subculture characteristic of them play a decisive role in convicts' subculture characteristic of them play a decisive role in convicts' choices of the modes of adaptation. The research participants distinguished three main factors of the prison environment that influenced their decisions to choose one or another mode of adaptation: the character of a correctional facility, specificity of local sectors and inmates' relationships with the prison staff. All three correctional facilities were described differently by the informants. In speaking about Pravieniškės correctional facility inhabited by inmates who serve their custodial sentences for the first time (thus, every research participant spent some time there), the informants emphasized that the adherence to the subcultural rules was more important in this correctional facility than in any other prison. Since Pravieniškės correctional facility is designed for men serving their first sentences, those who served a longer time exercised a strict control over these men in order for them to master and observe the subculture. This way the maintenance of the rules of the subculture was secured. Informally, Pravieniškės correctional facility is also called a *commercial camp* in which inmates' financial potential can be turned into a better and safer life for them. According to the research participants, even mere necessities must be paid for in this correctional facility. The inmates renovate and beautify their living quarters on their own financial means, therefore, they also expect financial contributions from newly arriving convicts:

One needs to pay three hundred [Litas] for renovations, in short... I am sorry for this "in short", but one also needs to pay one hundred [Litas] for a gym a year. And they invent many other payments and taxes. [...] As I say, the first and second

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local sectors simply are a commercial camp. It means that one has to pay for everything here.

(inmate no. 21, Pravieniškės correctional facility)

In describing Alytus correctional facility, the inmates raised the issue of drug use and ensuing problems. Almost all informants who emphasised this issue served their sentences in Alytus correctional facility. Because of a large number of drug users, the relationships between inmates are different here; users and non-users often choose different modes of adaptation to imprisonment. Drug users focus on obtaining money and drugs that frequently lead to conflicts and debts. Non-users attempt to avoid and do not notice them. Vilnius correctional facility is characterised by the power of the administration and inmates' obedience and submission: "in other camps convicts have their say, our opinion means something in them, but here the officers' word is the last one, this is the officers' camp" (inmate no. 55, Vilnius correctional facility). The inmates hold the opinion that Vilnius correctional facility is largely inhabited by convicts who have enemies and are afraid of revenge in other prisons. Men who had betrayed their accomplices and who tend to cooperate with the prison staff and to inform on others also live in this correctional facility.

However, not only three correctional facilities have different character; their local sectors also differ from each other. As we mentioned before, the living quarters of the correctional facilities are divided into local sectors that restrict inmates' physical interactions and relationships. Thus, the inmates' adaptation depend not only on a correctional facility but also on a local sector to which they are assigned: "Here we have four different local sectors: in some simple ordinary people lead difficult lives unless they have their patrons or Mafiosi outside the prison; other sectors are easier

to live in" (inmate no. 21, Pravieniškės correctional facility). Thus, the correctional facilities are divided into local sectors that separate inmates of the highest status from those of the lower one and those who work or participate in rehabilitation programs. This division between local sectors is reinforced by reducing the contact between them, i.e. they are assigned different courtyards and different time for the use of common accommodations such as a stadium and a shop. Moreover, convicts of the highest standing do not let other inmates into their space easily. The inmate from Alytus correctional facility (inmate no. 8) explained this arrangement: "Yes, they are more normal, there are a lot of them in the Oz [the name of a local sector] but they do not accept you into this Oz if you don't have supporters or something, if you don't have any useful connections."

The relationships between inmates and officers and attitudes of the latter towards inmates also contribute to a specific atmosphere in prisons. According to the research participants, the officers' respectful behaviour stimulates the convicts' positive responses. Moreover, officers' education, competence and communication skills can become an example for inmates. The informants emphasize that they often feel devalued and deplored by officers or, in other words, officers do not consider them human beings. To be sure, the relationship between the inmates and the prison staff depends on both sides. Some inmates acknowledge that the informal rules of the criminal subculture do not allow them to cooperate with officers. Therefore, mutual hostile attitudes are an obvious thing. The informants who were less hostile to the officers remarked that a positive relationship largely depended on the inmates themselves who had to put some effort in maintaining the normal communication with the prison staff. However, most research participants mentioned that they expected more empathy and understanding from the officers.

Doubtless not only the prison environment but also **inmates' imported features acquired before the imprisonment as well as situational factors** contribute to the choice of the mode of adaptation. The authors analysing adaptation in prisons emphasize the importance of imported features; most research confirms the influence of such factors as gang membership (DeLisi et al. 2011; Tasca et al. 2010; Tewksbury et al. 2014), age (Lahm 2008; Lucioni et al. 2012; Steiner, Wooldredge 2009; Tewksbury et al. 2014), imprisonment duration (Jiang, Fisher-Giorlando 2002; Steiner, Wooldredge 2009) to inmates' adaptation to the prison environment. One of the factors most frequently mentioned in our interviews was connections, friends or group membership. If an inmate has acquaintances in the correctional facility or friends outside the prison who ask more experienced convicts to assist and help a newcomer, the scenario of his prison life can change significantly. In the research participants' words, other convicts *meet* a newcomer:

My first impression in the living quarters: I don't remember exactly, there was a big room with more than 20 people, there was a table with food, there was tea boiling and, finally, there was a litre of strong liquor on the table. Well, such was my first impression: I came into the living sector, I had to climb to the second floor, other inmates took my bags and carried them to the second floor although if I lived behind the prison walls I would have never believed that people could live like this. You come [to the correctional facility] and others carry your bags.

(inmate no. 54, Vilnius correctional facility)

Connections between the inmates ensure a quick and smooth adaptation of newcomers to the prisoners' community. As we mentioned before, the convicts' financial capital serve as an important factor in adjusting the rules of the criminal subculture. Financial

capital not only secures a comfortable life but can also guarantees status, power and authority in prison. In the isolated and deprived prison space, the inmate's financial potential helps to determine his worth and influences other convicts' behaviour with him.

Besides the already discussed imported factors, the research participants mentioned some other factors, first of all, age. The informants associated young age with an impulsive and reckless behaviour and showing off and the older age, with personality changes: older inmates behaved in a calmer, more reflexive and even more submissive way compared to the younger convicts' adolescent, hostile and spontaneous behaviour. In the inmates' opinion, not only the age but also time spent in the correctional facilities influenced the transformations of behaviour and adaptation to the prison environment. According to the research participants, a long and exhausting prison career made men think about the wasted lifetime. Thus, it is possible to assume, from the informants' testimonies, that the young age related to the beginning of a criminal career prompts men to choose certain types of adaptation: young men idealise the prison life and do not hold the observance of official administrative rules their priority. Older age and longer time spent in prison make men reconsider the modes of adaptation, orient themselves to a more useful spending of time in the correctional facility and seek to leave it as soon as possible. In this regard, questions about which **situational factors** encourage the inmates to change the tactics of adaptation should also be raised. It is worth mentioning that the convicts' choices of adaptation are not a finite process; the inmates often drift from one type to another depending on circumstances, conditions and important changes in their lives. According to the research participants, these changes include the finding of a partner, starting of a family, birth of a child, formation or restoration of intimate relationships. Family frequently

becomes a moving force in the inmates' personal transformation and rehabilitation. But, as positive changes can push inmates towards rehabilitation, painful event can cause an aggressive and violent behaviour and self-isolation. Besides the significant life events, people also stimulate change. Their narratives reveal certain periods in informants' lives when such people stimulated their change and rehabilitation. These people include teachers and representatives of religious and non-governmental organisations. In other cases, the convicts' partners played an important role in preventing their criminal behaviour.

The inmates noted that certain favourable circumstances were crucial in the process of their person transformation. On the other hand, some circumstances provoked the convicts' anxiety and helplessness. For instance, the inmates were very sensitive not only to personal and local events but also to the change in the legal discourse and legal regulations, particularly the ones related to parole. The research participants' stories reveal the manifestation of bureaucratic power discussed by Liebling (2004) and Crewe (2011) in the Lithuanian imprisonment institutions. This power is unpredictable, unrecognizable and causing insecurity, vulnerability and tension. Parole is often used as a means of manipulation and control of the inmates. Our research demonstrates that convicts react to the issues related to parole very sensitively because they lack clarity about these issues: "Well, there are some people who do not have a single disciplinary penalty, they only have commendations, they behave well... But why don't you release them if they behave well, work and have commendations? [The officers say] that all these things don't mean that they should be released on parole! How could one interpret it? Why do we do all these things? Why do they treat us this way? Why do they deceive us?" (inmate no. 40, Pravieniškės correctional facility). Parole motivates the inmates

but it can also provoke their fears, loss of faith, frustration and even bad behaviour. Therefore, it is important that the laws on parole should be precise and transparent.

In summarizing the role of imported and situational factors, it should be said that certain stages in life course and turning points in the inmates' lives influence the process of adaptation. The convicts consider significant life events or people who inspired them as main incentives for change. However, some changes difficult for the inmates to comprehend scare, disappoint and anger them. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the discussed situational factors play an important role in the dynamic and unstable process of inmates' adaptation to the prison environment.

## 3.7. Conclusion

Like in other post-Soviet countries, the environment of the penal institutions in Lithuania is characterized by carceral collectivism: the prisoners' interactions are minimally controlled and convicts themselves are responsible for the maintenance of order. For this reason, the informal rules of the criminal subculture prevail in the Lithuanian correctional facilities. This subculture lays the foundations for the prisoners' everyday life and relationships. However, as our research shows, the importance of the subculture has been decreasing during recent years due to the growing significance accorded to the convicts' financial capital. By their heterogeneous approaches towards the subculture the research participants can be divided into two more or less equal groups: the first group devalues the benefits of the subculture by describing it as a motivating force behind violent and aggressive behaviour, and the second group believes that the criminal subculture guarantees security, order and harmony. On the one hand, in the informants' view, penal institutions without the subculture can weaken the strict hierarchical stratification that legitimizes the relationships of domination and subordination. On the other hand, the loss of the subculture can also leave convicts without a clear hierarchical and behavioural framework.

By choosing different modes of everyday adaptation, the inmates form a network of adaptive styles, which becomes the basis of certain types of adaptation to imprisonment. Our research identified five different types of adaptation (flexible, invisible, predominant, exemplary and non-adapted/isolated) partly related to the ones discussed in the scholarly literature. Since the specific context of the Lithuanian penal institutions is based on two worlds – the world of convicts and the world of law enforcement – with different goals and values, the types of adaptation inevitably depend on the inmates' awareness of both worlds.

We analysed the adaptation of convicts serving their custodial sentences by using the theoretical perspectives of deprivation and importation models. However, our research not only employed these models but also updated them with regard to the rich empirical data collected at three Lithuanian correctional facilities. The application of the deprivation model enabled us to identify three factors contributing to the choice of adaptive styles: the nature of correctional facilities, the type of local sectors, and the relationship between prisoners and officers. The research participants emphasized that different prisons had different features determining their specificity that affected the inmates' adaptation from the beginning of their sentence in prison. The prisoner community ascribed recognizable characteristics and established practices to each correctional facility. The Lithuanian penal institutions are divided into local sectors that automatically differentiate convicts. The local sectors function as separate structural units influencing

the differences in daily life and adaptation types. The relationships between the inmates and officers also play a very important role. In the research participants' opinion, the officers' attitudes and behaviour often provoke prisoners' particular behaviour. In this regard, the officers' positive attitudes towards prisoners can be considered as an incentive for their exemplary behaviour.

Differently from the deprivation model, the importation model views the inmates' adaptation to the prison environment as determined by external imported traits or experiences. The research participants distinguished four significant imported factors: acquaintances and friends in the penal institution, convicted persons' financial standing, age and the length of a sentence. Friends in the correctional facilities and the convict's financial standing directly affected the process of adaptation. These two imported factors also determined the way in which other inmates met a newcomer and the time necessary for him to integrate into the prisoners' community. Meanwhile, the criteria of age and time spent in prison point out to a particular dynamics of adaptation: younger convicts and those who spent less time in prison adapt to the correctional facilities differently than the old-timers. Our study demonstrates that dynamics of adaptation related to the above situational factors reflect the changes in the convicts' lives. The research participants highlighted three major components that influenced their personal change: significant life events, inspiring people and (un)favourable conditions.

To conclude, carceral collectivism and the prison subculture still remain the foundation of inmates' daily life in the Lithuanian correctional facilities. This organizational structure used to implement custodial sentences along with the informal rules of the prison subculture is the main factors that affect the typologies and choices of adaptation.

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