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ART BEHIND BARS

***Participation and reception of cultural activities in prisons
and correctional facilities in Serbia***

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1. Abstract

The aim of this paper is to research whether closed institutions, such as prisons, in Serbia could function better in regard of treatment of imprisoned people and future progress of those people. Prisons' analysis usually have their focus on facilities, rather than on people and their rights and needs. It is often accepted that people who are serving penalties are in prison as a punishment, but not for punishment. The purpose of serving penalty in prison is to rehabilitate the prisoner, creating awareness of the mistake made, alter the way of life and preparation for the continuation of different, outdoor life.

Art and creativity, as such, are making a big positive development, when they are included as a helpful tools in a work with people deprived of their liberty, and are important, as above mentioned, in preparation of former prisoners for their future life, in freedom. After all, many practices in the world show that prisoners can be very creative and that creativity is awakening positive spirit in people which is more than necessary at the institutions such as prisons.

In order to make a clear picture about art attempts in prison system in Serbia, this paper will present a system as a whole, with all its segments (prisons' management, best practices in the world, but also obstacles laying in laws, rules etc.).

This is why the main focus in this paper is on a wide range of possibilities for improvement of artistic expression within the prison system, but also with accent on maintenance of human dignity and respect of human rights during serving a penalty.

2. The Author's Word

Personal motivation for this research lays in the situation, which happened in the September 2013. While working for international NGO *Civil Rights Defenders*, which deals with human rights issues, we had organized institutional monitoring visit to Mental hospital in Shtime (Štimlje), Kosovo. One of the partner's organizations from Prishtina, Kosovo *Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims* (KRCT) works mainly with closed institutions – mostly with mental institutions, but prisons as well. During the visit we had a meeting with management, we visited rooms where people are accommodated, kitchen, bathrooms, garden etc. Since I wasn't experienced in that time, I thought that conditions of the living space are good. But, then, while we were looking at laundry room, with more than 20 washing machines, one of the experienced researchers came to me and asked: *What do you think? Do you see any mold traces? Do you see anything, which shows you they really use this room?* At that moment, I realized what was happening. In Kosovo (and it is same in Serbia) it is appointed in the Law that you, as a monitoring organization, have to set up your visit in advance in order to get approval to visit a closed institution. This brings us to the clear conclusion that what we have seen is not reality. They haven't used washing machines for over 2 years, at least! That is the moment when I started thinking about closed institutions and what really happens inside the walls, as well as what could be done in order to improve life standards, social inclusion and intercultural dialogue within prisons in the region.

3. Introduction

The master thesis deals with current issues of prisoners in Serbian prisons and correctional facilities, in relation to their right to culture and access to art. It will try to research and, subsequently, offer an answer to a possible cooperation between different stakeholders and beneficiaries with one aim – to make a sustainable strategy about the possibilities of artistic expression in prisons in Serbia.

Persons deprived of their freedom by being sentenced are obliged to live their lives (or a part of their lives) in the prisons. Despite the fact that life conditions in the prisons in Serbia have been changing in the last years for the better (according to the organized monitoring visits by both local and international NGOs)¹, when it comes to prisoners' social activities - there is a lack of information. What is familiar, is the information that there are around 11.000 people in 29 prisons in Serbia currently.² The official recordings from the institutional monitoring of the prisons show no social (cultural, artistic or any otherwise motivating) activities of prisoners³. On the other hand, society sees deprived persons as only obliged to spend years in imprisonment, without any contribution, responsibility or – further personal progress. Nowadays, it is accepted that people who are serving penalties are in prison as a punishment, but not for punishment. Therefore, the crucial work, inclusion of these persons into normal life, is also one of the points in this paper. When former prisoners are released, they are usually afraid, uncomfortable within a group of “normal people”, and their possibilities to become citizens, with all rights and obligations, only stay written on the paper.

This thesis has attempted to investigate the possibilities for cooperation between the State and Ministry of Justice (which is in charge of prison system in Serbia) and NGOs dealing with human rights and artistic movements. The idea was to find the best solution for all those involved – prisoners, State, NGOs, artists. Namely, the State is dealing with major problems in prisons – they are too crowded, with a constant lack of money and complicated procedures. The management and all the employees in this kind of institutions need to be trained and

¹In Serbia, this is usually done by Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Ombudsman office and OEBS Mission to Serbia

²http://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_izvršenju_krivicnih_sankcija.html

³Monitoring Prison Reform in Serbia 2012-2013, The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Serbia, 2014.

sensitized in order to observe needs of prisoners and establish possible cooperation with interested parties.

The State needs help in order to achieve better performing management results.

What art could do is its role in better psychological condition of prisoners. Psychotherapy is recognized as a good tool, where through art one could express feelings, all the fears, etc. After these uncomfortable emotions are realized, it is possible that prisoner could understand where he made mistake and how to become a new person. There are several methods: cinema therapy, psycho drama and art brut. All of those methods use art to get connected with prisoners, to help them express themselves and start a new way of thinking. After all, art is mainly used in order to normalize deprived people and to prepare them for the outside world, to world in which they will always be labelled as former prisoners. Consultants (social workers, artists and psychologists) working with these issues are usually people not hired by the State, but working for different organizations. They are the initiators of this kind of approach, but one of the main problems for them is the fact that State does not allow them to work with prisoners, which will be researched and discussed with them and presented in this paper.

The overall strategy for the thesis research will be focused on three main points:

1. What can be done in order to improve life standards of imprisoned people and what activities for prisoners and their development and rehabilitation would be realistic? (including social inclusion, cultural activities in daily life and consumption of art on weekly basis);
2. Is it possible to establish inter-sectorial collaboration between prisons in Serbia and a cultural institution? What should be done in order to have prisoners working for theatres, galleries, etc. (for instance, preparing technical equipment, making costumes, etc.);
3. As a part of inclusivity, suggestion is to establish a form which will help prisoners get used to outside world and vice versa – to fight against discrimination by establishing a new artistic form (for instance, Festival of Prison Art) which will decrease prejudices of the citizens about imprisoned people.

Main Hypothesis:

- Art is not being sufficiently used as a form of therapy in Serbian prisons and there is no art prison scene in Serbia;
- Cooperation between state decision-makers and those interested in building a strong cultural scene in prisons (artist and NGOs) is on a low level and should be enhanced;
- Establishing an annual festival of prison art would help to break barriers between persons deprived of their liberty and citizens.

Methodology of research

The research will consist of tracking both local and international laws and law adoption in regards to imprisonment, with a focus on Serbia. It also includes an analysis of prison management practices as well as the application of artistic practices in prisons and lack thereof.

International festivals and groups gathered around the idea of art therapy, idea of sharing experiences and establishing strong connection within society, will be presented as examples of best practices, which could be transferred to local ones.

For the thesis I had to conduct semi-structured interviews, specially designed for target group of people to whom I have spoken. The interviews are being based on qualitative approach, which means that the most important thing was to have in-depth interviews, which is the only way able to show present situation and obstacles for particular member of the dialogue. Therefore, I conducted the following interviews:

- Interview with NGOs dealing with human rights issues, but also with ones active in the field of applied art. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights was planned as a first organization to have interview with, but instead of face to face interview I had the opportunity to be part of their monitoring group, and had spontaneous in depth

conversation with 4 members of their team. It is mandatory to mention that methodology plan for this paper had its own genesis in order to collect at least some basic data. My former plans for focus groups and comparative data upon interviews had needed change because of specific area of my research.

- The meeting with the representative from Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions had the qualitative approach. Getting this interview was almost an impossible mission, but I have finally met a real person who is able to talk about social activities in prisons. This interview is crucial for this thesis, having in mind that the mentioned Institution have approved my visit to prison(s). I have tried to find out the main obstacles in state agencies to cooperate with parties interested in education and artistic work with prisoners, and to become more familiar with all the procedures in real life.
- I have been to prison in Sombor, which is a rare institution organizing Art Colony every year. Prisoners' art is officially recognized by this institution, so it was of great importance for this thesis to research approaches and steps made by this institution in order to be able to organize an event like this. Unfortunately, idea of having focus groups made of prisoners interested in art which should focus on current issues and possible cooperation was not realized. Instead, I had several short interviews with both staff and prisoners.
- Last, but not the least, representatives of two NGOs working with former prisoners are being interviewed – *Aps Art* and *Art Brut*, from Belgrade. Those interviews also had qualitative approach, since I consider people working within those institutions as crucial for further artistic education of prisoners and former prisoners. *Aps Art* currently works only with former prisoners because they are not allowed to go into prisons and work with inhabitants anymore. It is forbidden by Ministry because they are seen as the organization spreading too much knowledge and emotions of freedom within the prisoners. *Art Brut* currently works also with former prisoners. They went through very severe problems as well, because they have worked with one famous prisoner, and it was hard to explain their aims, both to public and to State. Conclusions from above mentioned organization will be used in order to find out their approaches, goals and measures taken within past years.

This research, based on both desk and field research explore, combine and propose future activities in regard of recognized citizens, which imprisoned people definitely are. The thesis should form a clear picture about the entire system, main obstacles and possibilities in achieving better results, and basic human rights, which culture definitely is.

4. Legal framework of correctional facilities in Serbia

The purpose of executing a custodial penalty is to influence offender not to commit criminal acts onwards, through the application of the appropriate programs.

In this chapter both Serbian and international laws and recommendations are presented. It is an overview of statistics, minimum of standards regarding prisoners' life during the time in prison, as well as the limiting facts and specificity of this environment.

Relevant Serbian and international Laws regarding prison system

A person who commits a criminal offense contrary to the law of a country incurs a penalty of serving in prison. The law imposes that persons serving a prison penalty must adhere to the prescribed rules at the state level (Law on the Execution of Criminal Sanctions is valid in Serbia), as well as those made at lower levels (e.g. correctional facility rules).

In addition to local laws, which are governed by every state, there are universal declarations and regulations formed with the aim to establish minimum conditions to be met when it comes to all prison units of the Declaration⁴ signatory states. In Serbia, within the Ministry of Justice there is a special body - the Department for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions⁵, which is the holder of all the protocol activities concerning custody, serving penalty, and the post penal treatment. Relevant documents and actors - institutions that served as the basis for this research, which relate to legislation by the Republic of Serbia has, the Law on the Execution of Criminal Sanctions⁶, Strategy for Development of the prison system in the

⁴ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), 1948; The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Council of Europe 1950; Convention on Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights, 2010.

⁵ <http://www.uiks.mpravde.gov.rs/>

⁶ http://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_izvršenju_krivicnih_sankcija.html

Republic of Serbia 2013-2020⁷, the Ombudsman, the OSCE Mission in Serbia and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, as well as international recommendations: Council of European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the universal UN Declaration of Human Rights.

In Serbia, the Law on the Execution of Criminal Sanctions has recently been amended. The new, revised version came into force on 1 January 2014. Unfortunately, all the shortcomings of the Law that existed in the previous version remain intact, while the changes mainly relate to the members in connection with the Law on Amnesty (2012), as well as to subtle changes in relation to the non-custodial penalty, i.e. serving a prison penalty with probation.

Taking into account the complexity of the topic, different levels of decision-making and implementation of legal norms, this paper addresses the relevant facts of the Law that will greatly present the current Law, as well as the opportunities it offers, along with the report of the *Helsinki Committee for Human Rights* in Serbia for 2013. This method should give us a clearer picture of the real problems of prisons in Serbia. It will also state recommendations of the Ombudsman (whose role is only advisory), as well as the plans regarding the Strategy.

The fact that prisons in Serbia have rudimental difficulties in its functioning (dilapidated buildings, non-functional heating, a lack of beds and the financial difficulties which greatly affect the basic functioning) must not be an excuse not to achieve progress in areas such as work with prisoners for their re-socialization and reintegration into society, which is probably the most important result of serving a prison penalty. What the topic of this thesis is precisely the task of art and culture, in general, to do more by its multidisciplinary approach and engagement, where it can be present in all spheres of everyday life.

It is important to note that the work of the *Helsinki Committee for Human Rights* in Serbia is recognized by the State, and that this NGO is absolutely enabled to monitor prisons annually. *Helsinki Committee* concluded a cooperation agreement with the Ombudsman, and became a team member of the *National Mechanism for Prevention of Torture* in early 2012.

⁷ <http://www.slglasnik.info/sr/114-23-12-2013/2471-strategija-razvoja-sistema-izvrenja-krivinih-sankcija-u-republici-srbiji-do-2020-godine.html>

Structure of Serbian prisons and current legislative issues

In Serbia, there are 29 prison units of different structure and purpose, namely:

- 2 prisons of closed type with special security units (Observation, Classification and Allocation ((OCA)) Požarevac - Zabela and OCA Beograd);
- 2 prisons of closed type (OCANiš and OCA Sremska Mitrovica);
- 17 prisons of semi-open type (regional ones);
- 4 prisons of open type;
- Special prison hospital;
- 1 women prison of semi-open type;
- 2 institutions for juveniles-Young Offender Institution (YOI)Valjevo and STC Kruševac);
- 1 Centre for Training and Professional Education

In November 2012 (after the application of the Amnesty Law), the number of persons serving a prison penalty was 10,228⁸. The overload of accommodation capacities has been a burning problem for years. The continuous increase in the number of prisoners, as well as the lack of accommodation facilities, led to the need for the Republic of Serbia in 2010 to adopt a strategy for reducing the overload of accommodation capacities in institutions for enforcement of criminal sanctions from 2010 to 2015. At the time of compiling the report, in January 2014, a team of the *Helsinki Committee* concluded: *At the beginning of 2014, four years after the adoption of the strategy, it could be concluded that Serbia might be halfway to achieving the targets set by the strategy. As the first activity, mainly short term cosmetic changes were made or those measures which at first give the best results were taken*⁹, such as the Law on Amnesty. This law was adopted in November 2012. Until April 2013 (i.e. in 5 months) about 2,000 people were dismissed from prison throughout Serbia, and state of account was reduced to 10,228 inmates. What HCS sees as problematic is the category of probation, which is rarely used in Serbia. According to the data of the Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions, the number probation has decreased in recent years, so in

⁹ Mirkov, Subić, J. (2014). Monitoring prison reform in Serbia 2012-2013 and state of human rights in prisons in 2011, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, Belgrade, p. 9

2005 it amounted to 38.59% of the total number of persons discharged from prison, and in 2009 it dropped to 19.83%¹⁰.

The possibility of reducing the number of convicts, concerning the probation, is the application of alternative sanctions. These sanctions have positive application in developed countries. In the Netherlands, for example, only a quarter of convicted persons are imprisoned, while the rest are under application of different forms of alternative sanctions. The Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions should primarily be made in Serbia (asa reminder, this law was adopted in January 2014 - i.e., the new, amended version at its best form has just become current), in order to define and elaborate the possibilities of implementing these sanctions. There are 10 offices for the enforcement of criminal sanctions in Serbia, but they do not have staff trained enough, as well as the validity of labour, given the still unregulated statute. Problems faced by employees within the system in the Republic of Serbia will be discussed further in the next section when we will deal with the management of prison staff.

From the alternative sanctions in Serbia, community service penalties are usually imposed, but the number of such penalties is very low (more than 10,000 convicts in Serbia and only 223 sanctions of working in the public interest). Otherwise, Ministry of Justice and local government has concluded agreements with 129 institutions so far, of which with several cultural institutions. According to Ms. Zorana Vučićević, the spokesperson of the Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions of the Ministry of Justice, one of the institutions is Cultural institution "Vuk Karadžić", but more significant progress in terms of the specific networking of prisoners and their cooperation with the institution has not been achieved, in spite of the signed agreement. Ms. Vučićević says the law itself is not bad at all, but amendments are necessary, to make clear levels of decision-making and implementation of decisions and that the possibility of implementing different levels of cooperation would be facilitated.

In addition to the primary objective of the alternative sanctions - reducing the number of prisoners and overcrowding in prisons, this type of treatment has a significant impact on reducing costs. Daily serving penalty of a prisoner is a cost from 1600 to 1800 dinars to the

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 10

State. In the arrangement of this type, where the prisoners are only the cost, and possibility of their earning is minimal, it is clear that the collapse must ensue - as it has. Systemic problem lies in the non-market relations of prison and a passive approach, which expects subsidies from the State or other international institutions. This issue is not only on the table of the prison management, but also the Ministry of Justice, and hence the Republic of Serbia. Prison management has virtually no power to impose specific programs self-initiatively which would be doubly useful - the current costs would be reduced, but the prisoners would be busier as well. It is absurd that people serving penaltyspend entire days in bed, not earninganything, while still having regular meals and a roof over their heads.

Table 1. The number of convicted persons in relation to penalty¹¹

Length of prison penalty	No. of convicts on 31.12.2012.	No. of convicts in %
to 3 months	139	1,99
3-6 months	370	5,32
6 months -1 year	676	9,71
1-2 years	1141	16,40
2-3 years	1051	15,10
3-5 years	1442	20,73
5-10 years	1266	18,19
10-15 years	569	8,18
15-20 years	155	2,23
20-40 years	79	1,14
40 years	70	1,01
TOTAL:	6.958	100

It is interesting that most of the prison population (over 80%) is persons able to work, who were sentenced at the age 21-50. When, in addition to the data, the findings from the table above are taken into account, it is clear that the smallest percentage (1.01%) convicted are with imprisonment up to 40 years, while the largest (20.73%) is of those with prison penalties of 3 to 5 years. Given these data, it is obvious that the greatest number of prisoners (up to

¹¹ Development Strategy of the prison system in Serbia 2013-2020, Ministry of Justice, Belgrade, 2013, page 7

20.73%) will be freed in a relatively short period of time, therefore their training and new working arrangement during their penalty, would be multi-useful –they would earn during the serving penalty, but would also possibly be trained in a new craft, which might increase their chances of employment after release.

The Law, in Article 97, says: *The work of the convicted is an integral part of the treatment program. The purpose of the work is that the convicted person gains, maintains and increases their work abilities, work habits and professional knowledge*¹², and even further states:

Article 110: *For work in the field of intellectual property created during penalty, a convicted person shall be entitled to rights pursuant to general regulations*¹³.

If the problem is watched from the existentially consequential angle of observation, the problem of the homeless is brought into question, from which it can often be heard that it is better to be in prison than on the street. This paradox further leads to the problem of young people, because they can often be witnesses of recounts of prison stories, where some of their relatives are allocated and who are resting in prison and "enjoying" it. This rating of the institutions demolishes society from various angles. Prison is rarely seen as an institution for serving penalty which should change the consciousness during the serving, and increasingly utopian moments like the one that alludes to some sort of accommodation, free food and leisure appear. Because of this widespread opinion, it is essential to work on the root cause of the problem and not on its consequences.

To summarize, in the Development Strategy of the prison system, the alternative sanctions are cited as one of the major challenges: Although the system of alternative sanctions was introduced in 2006, this form of sanctions is still not imposed to the extent that corresponds to the structure of offenders. The big problem is the underdeveloped network of trust offices which prevents the imposition of alternative sanctions and measures by the courts on whose territory the offices do not exist. An insufficient number of employees who are exclusively engaged in the execution of alternative measures and sanctions further complicates their effective implementation. Therefore, it is concluded: *It is necessary to provide the conditions*

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

*for Trust Service to be able to provide adequate support to the convicted after having served penalty, with the aim of their effective reintegration into the community*¹⁴.

The first chapter of the Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions, Article 6 states:

*Sanctions shall be executed in a manner guaranteeing the dignity of the persons against whom they are being executed. Actions subjecting persons subject to sanctions which subject them to any form of torture, ill-treatment, humiliation or experimentation shall be prohibited and punishable. Unless proportionate to the needs for its conduct, coercion against persons subject to sanctions is punishable*¹⁵. This article clearly indicates the prescribed minimum standards regarding the normal treatment without any use of force in order to educate a prisoner.

When it comes to basic respect for human beings, the law continues in Article 7:

*Persons subject to sanctions shall not be discriminated against on grounds of race, colour, gender, language, religious affiliation, political and other convictions, ethnic and social original, financial standing, education, social status or other personal property*¹⁶, while Article 8 states: *Persons subject to sanctions shall be entitled to the protection of fundamental rights prescribed by the Constitution, confirmed international agreements, generally accepted rules of international law and this Law*. It is clear, therefore, that the Law in this area, when it comes to basic rights of the residents of correctional facilities is clear, with no further objections.

What is new in this Act in relation to the previous from 2011 is the Article 17 from the Second chapter that states: *Institutes and Centres are established by an act of the Government of the Republic of Serbia*¹⁷. Due to this structure of the prison system, but also because of other aggravating circumstances (which will be discussed in part *Management of prison system*), prisons in Serbia face great difficulties. Their dependence on the government and the Ministry of Justice, which is the absolute bearer of all decisions with regard to penal institutions, creates an atmosphere in which there is no sovereignty of organizations, independence in their work, and accordingly - no initiative! The new Act deepens this relationship further, introducing the fore mentioned Article.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid

A large part of the report of the *Helsinki Committee* report is about the possibilities of employment of inmates. The law is clear, and the Article 23 states:

*Convicted persons shall be trained and work in the institutions or outside them... Institutions may sell products made and services performed during the training and work of convicted persons on the open market*¹⁸.

Unfortunately, the number of prisons that employ their capacity is extremely low. It is known that once the entire production facilities were formed in prisons (OCA Požarevac - Zabela, for example, annually produced 30,000 to 40,000 stoves for domestic use until the disintegration of Yugoslavia)¹⁹, and today the situation is different. *Helsinki Committee* states:

*We regretfully have to note that the state hasn't done much in this respect, demonstrating a lack of understanding of the importance of education, professional training and employment of prisoners for realizing the purpose of prison sanctions, that is, for their social resettlement. The treatment service is, also, wrongfully neglected and, in our view, its work largely depends on the initiative of a small number of employees... There is no good reason to account for the fact why the state has not put into function the production capacities located in penitentiary reformatories in Sremska Mitrovica, Zabela, Niš and, to a lesser degree in Požarevac. Even if the penitentiary-reformatories were not allowed to participate in the open market with their products, could not the state institutions have at least been equipped with these products, instead of vast amounts of money having been paid out to private companies? This money could have been used to procure new machines and raw materials, thousands of prisoners could have been trained and schools, kindergartens, social institutions, health institutions and others could have been equipped with water boilers, stoves, sheets and all other items that were once produced in these large penitentiary-reformatories*²⁰.

The Penitentiary-Reformatory for Women in Požarevac still engages a very small number of prisoners on a few different jobs. The tailoring workshop employs between 20 and 25 prisoners on sewing products for other penitentiary-reformatories in Serbia (pillow cases, night suits, towels, bedding, prison clothes, etc.). In addition, children's wardrobe is

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid, page 91

²⁰ Ibid, page 38, 39

being made and sold commercially... There is a work station for weaving baskets for commercial purposes, as well as the pottery station with 10 pottery wheels for working with clay... The bakery which was a donation of the European Union serves only for training prisoners, but cannot be used for production due to small capacities²¹.

This issue must be taken seriously. Derelict factories and production facilities are currently largely unusable. Workshops are empty, prisoners unemployed and it has been so for many years. It is clear that the only solution is in the donations which would put these resources into operation again, but we cannot but conclude that there is a large number of activities that do not require the entire manufacturing plants. Good examples of this are the small productions that do not require large investments. In that way Sombor prison started a handmade production of painting easels, and the inmates, initially from easels, forwarded to building of benches for parks. The problem is, however, the attitude of the State. Although it is clear that the products which originated from prisons are much cheaper in the market, and thus competitive (because of inexpensive working hours of prisoners), the State should guarantee a minimum purchase of these products in a certain way. Currently, the situation is that in most cases, participation in the tender for the prison unit already represents a losing battle, because it is a battle that is being waged against private corporations, in a manner known to the Republic of Serbia.

In addition to this, there is a problem in the procurement prices of raw materials. As the prisons, opposite to specialized companies, do not have large plants and are not specialized and focused on certain raw materials, their purchase price is much higher... I encountered a similar example during the visit of the prison unit in Požarevac, where the restaurant, owned by the state, and burned down in a fire in 2012, was renovated but still has not been open due to unregulated legal and technical documents. This prison has its own swimming pool and six apartments that have never had a commercial use. Apartments were used to accommodate senior officials during the visit in the Yugoslav era. As such visits are now rare, almost non-existent, these facilities could be commercialized for revenue and introducing the idea of sustainability. The problem is that all the facilities and their purpose are decided at the level of the Republic, and this case is just one in a series of paradoxes and evidence of unclear decision-making levels and the application of market trends. In the Netherlands, a country

²¹ Ibid, page 39

which has significantly reduced the number of prisoners and there is a large number of empty cell due to the application of the law, the State decided to commercialize these contents, and hence a number of cells now has the role of hotel accommodation.

It is unclear, however, why initiative of cultural institutions is absent. The cultural sector has been barely surviving for years, due to high costs. Is it really impossible to hire prisoners to sew costumes and prepare materials for scenery and props, be engaged in wig making, etc.? Although this would mean reducing the number of employees in the field of culture to some extent (which already is the situation), it is an option for some of the theatre to consider this kind of cooperation. However, what the State should do, as the initiator of such an inter-sectorial cooperation, is to make a kind of benefits for all who engage prisoners, regardless of the type of cooperation and engagement. In short, the prisoners are the cheapest possible labour, and this is valid in all countries. They should be employed, but should also have the ability to choose their job. If someone wishes to participate in making furniture for the show, for example, rather than making pastry for kindergartens – The State should enable that. In the system organized in this way, by inter-sectorial cooperation, the sustainability of the entire system lies in.

We come to the crucial part of the Act, and this thesis. The purpose of serving penalty in prison is to rehabilitate the prisoner, creating awareness of the mistake made, alter the way of life and preparation for the continuation of different, outdoor life. This would imply that the institution takes into account, prepares and implements a variety of inclusive programs, but this will also be discussed in later sections of this paper. Article 31, Section Two, of the Act states: *The purpose of imprisonment is for convicted persons to adopt socially-acceptable values, during the execution of their penalty and the application of appropriate treatment programmes, all with the aim of making possible their easier reintegration into society after the execution of the penalty to ensure that they do not commit criminal offences in the future.*²² Like any other, scant Act, this makes clear rules and objectives of a particular action in this sentence. Nowhere, however, is specified what means and what kind of approach should a convicted be affected with a goal of his future non-commission of criminal offenses.

²² Ibid

The following Article additionally confirms the idea of the Act: *The treatment of convicted persons shall correspond as much as possible to their personalities and the realisation of the action programmes.*²³ This article ends with the part of the law that speaks about the needs, inclusion and methods that may be applied. As in the other laws we suggest that this vagueness at the same time means a lot, but also a little, that it leaves room for different interpretations, but also for justification of institutions which almost have no programs.

The curiosity in Article 62 of the Act which states: *The regulation on house rules specifies the personal effects which may be retained by the convicted person*²⁴, where it remains unclear why this decision is at the level of special units, and not prescribed by law? We cannot help but ask the question, what are the specific types of received commodities that are allowed in a particular prison, while not in others. This leaves room for the question of a personal initiative of prisoners, for example, to be able to receive raw materials for producing fine handicrafts and hence achieve the ability to practice his hobby in addition to earning. Similar is noted by the *Helsinki Committee*, stating one of the situations: *As of 2012, at the Penitentiary-Reformatory in Niš the following items are forbidden in packages: cigarettes, personal hygiene items, sweet or savoury snacks, chocolates (all items that can be found at the canteen). Notifications about these changes are visible in all hallways of the dormitories, however, it is unclear why certain products cannot be received in packages since there was no such decision in any other institution in the same period*²⁵.

In addition to the Articles concerning the spaciousness of dormitories (8 and 4 square cubic meters per convict, as well as regulations related to personal hygiene, underwear), Article 68 states: *Convicted persons are entitled to spend at least two hours outdoors every day, in their free time*²⁶. Turning to the report HCS one should mention that in the Correctional Institution for Women in Požarevac prisoners wash things personally in concrete troughs, "in a cold, damp basement." The progress which HCS notes is that in comparison to their earlier visits, hot water was introduced!²⁷

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ibid

The *Helsinki Committee* also notes the positive facts, which are connected to the Article 110: The institution shall also organise other forms of education for convicted persons²⁸, and states: *In Zabela, as part of the EU-funded program of professional training and education in prison institutions, the training was completed by 185 prisoners for: welding, making furniture (47), working in the baking profession (59), pad printing skills (40) and vegetable production in a contained area (24). All prisoners that have undergone this training have received certificates. This institution also stresses that a vast number of prisoners is interested in working, but there are no jobs available and that the institution cannot provide conditions for employment on a significant scale*²⁹.

Finally, we will look back on the Development Strategy of the prison system in the Republic of Serbia from 2013 to 2020 as more than a relevant document, which explicitly lists all the elements to which we should be focusing on within that time frame. Production of this document was enabled by the OSCE Mission to Serbia. The mission indicates in this document as follows: Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions as a result of the strategy, sees the contemporary system of criminal sanctions as part of the developed and efficient judicial system that effectively responds to the crime and affects the individual to change behaviour during the enforcement of sanctions, acquire new skills and knowledge and successfully integrate into the community.

Among other things, the priority development areas there are:

- Legislation and Regulations
- Treatment of convicts
- Training, vocational training of prisoners and their work, as well as
- Training and professional development of employees in the execution

In parts relating to treatment of prisoners, training and vocational training, it is clearly stated that it is necessary to establish a wide range of therapeutic, educational and vocational training programs, to preserve the mental and physical health during serving penalties, as well as behavioural changes and reintegration of the convicts. It was also stated that it is necessary

²⁸ Ibid
²⁹ Ibid

to enable constructive engagement of inmates during imprisonment and successful reintegration upon release.

Chapter 1.4 clearly states the need for inter-sectorial cooperation which has already been discussed, in the form of unifying the activities of the Management, international organizations and NGOs to support priority areas. Expected result is reduction of the percentage of short prison penalties because of application of alternative sanctions, but in this document, unfortunately, we did not learn statistics. As the largest current progress DECS states established cooperation with the Ombudsman, the Provincial Ombudsman and the National mechanism for the prevention of torture.

Estimates made by the DECS, NGOs and international organizations suggest that treatment programs which now exist are inadequate and insufficient in most correctional institutions. The lack of opportunities to work, participate in educational materials and training and lack of activities aimed at socialization leads to having many prisoners spend most of their time insufficiently organized. Also, as a major challenge in this field, the insufficient number of effective specialized and individualized treatment programs and an insufficient number of educated staff trained to implement these programs is stated

Nevertheless, there are some initiatives which are aimed at improving the current state of affairs. Firstly, the training of a number of treatment officers in the application of cognitive-behavioural therapy in working with prisoners was enabled in cooperation with the OSCE Mission in RS. Secondly, in 2012, the implementation of the IPA project “Support to vocational education and training in prisons in Serbia” began, and it is planned that 500 convicts undergo the training and receive a certificate.

With all abovementioned, this paper comes to its next chapter which will focus on prison managements challenges, as one of the further important step which will lead us more closely in our attempts to go deeper in this topic.

5. Prison Management

*A good day is a day
when nothing happens*

There is a lack of understanding that a modern, professional prison service structure is different from a military structure but that it is also different from a civil service administrative bureaucracy³⁰.

Prisons are specifically established units in which there is a large set of rules. These rules apply to all who come into contact with any part of the prison system. Specifics relate to the organization of work in the institution, as well as to: employees, management, prisoners, and the visitors - whether in terms of relatives and friends of prisoners, or a particular visit of officials or some of the monitoring groups. Today, one of the most represented sciences is the

³⁰ Coyle, A. (2012) Managing prisons in a time of change, International centre for prison studies, London, page 52

one which studies management, and there are quite a few books, professional journals and publications which study the different types and approaches of management. It is interesting, however, that the ones that deal with management in a different environment from the business and under specific conditions, such as the prison environment, can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. It is impossible to implement some of the proven successful rules of good management in environments such as prisons. It is important to keep in mind exactly what the rules of corporate management may not be applied and cannot be recommended in the approach to the topic of the prison organization because it seems that, not only from country to country but also from city to city, the prison administration remains the one to find the best solution for a particular problem independently and find the best solution empirically. Support to the correctional institutions is lacking both in practice and in theory.

Politicians, the media and the public generally become aware of prisons only when something goes wrong; for example, when a high profile prisoner escapes or when there is a major incident such as a riot³¹. This is just one example that reminds us clearly that the responsible in prisons are more frequently focused on preventing a scandal, but to really devote themselves to the development of the strategy, specific plans in relation to improving the working conditions of its employees, as well as those serving the sentences. If we recall the fact that in Russia, for example, the number of prisoners is counted in millions, and that resources are below any minimum and that every month it is uncertain whether employees will receive salary and whether the prisoners will have something to eat, a vast need to urgently and strategically approach solving the above mentioned problems and find concrete solutions and recommendations regarding the functioning of the prison system is clearly obvious.

The first step towards the cultural and organizational change in any prison system is an understanding of the roots of that system. This often means that systems do not learn from past successes and failures. Instead there is often a continuous re-inventing of the wheel. This is frequently compounded by poor record keeping which means that those who wish to learn from the past are prevented from doing so. It is essential that anyone who wishes to begin a process of change must have an understanding of the historical baggage that each prison system carries. This is necessary for any new manager who comes from an outside system. It

³¹ Ibid, page 9

is also important to be aware that it is not safe to assume that every person who has worked inside a prison system, even over many years, has the necessary knowledge of its history³².

The Scottish Prison Service, for instance, has identified four key elements in prison management: administrative, financial, human resources (covering both staff and prisoners) and operational. The conclusion reached by the Scottish Prison Service Board has been that the first three of these elements are common to all forms of management and that the operational element is the only one that is unique to the prison setting³³. Good practice is seen in England and in Netherlands where results based management system has been implemented – a program that allows individual monitoring of the work and progress of prisoners, and systemic approach that allows the base for further upgrading and development of the system in full prison management.

Managing prisons: a difficult public profession

This is partly because the world of prisons itself remains relatively closed. It is also because, until quite recently, it was not acknowledged that there is a particular set of skills required to manage prisons properly³⁴.

In the majority of countries there is some concept of prison management as a profession or even a skill which requires specific training and development. A newly appointed prison director is either likely to have previous general legal, administrative or military training, or will be expected simply to possess the required skills intuitively³⁵.

In Serbia, which is often the case in countries of the former Soviet Union, prisons are often led by former, retired generals and members of army and police. This practice has its advantages - long-term experience in specifically structured systems, discipline and knowledge of the law may also provide thoughtful and considerate approach to the prison organization. However, it turned out that these professional profiles are often insensitive and

³²Managing prisons in a time of change, Andrew Coyle, International Centre for Prison Studies, London, UK, 2012. page 61

³³Ibid, page 69

³⁴ Ibid, page 17

³⁵ Ibid, page 18

without a lot of leadership skills, which include innovation and proactive work. The director of the prison facility, in addition to experience in working with this group, must have excellent managerial skills, the ability to anticipate things and that his private life is subordinate to the institution where he works. This even includes the recommendation of living near the institution they work in order to act quickly in case of unforeseen circumstances, but also to keep the employees and the prisoners accustomed to the unannounced visits.

Prison administration challenges

The prison administration faces a number of challenges which could be classified as:

- Constant overcrowding
- Staff conditions and issues related to staff
- The lack of tools to motivate employees
- Non-harmonized status of employees compared to others in the state administration (lack of benefits, which should perhaps be the highest in prisons)
- Everyday stress
- Lack of youth motivation at the beginning of their career, but also of those with more years of employment in the prison administration, to build a career and make professional progress significant in this area
- Absence of ministries' and media support for the events in prisons, except when incidents occur, and for consistently poor image of prisons

Overcrowding

The question is how a prison system copes with a 50% increase in the number of prisoners for which it is responsible when there has been no corresponding increase in resources.

Some countries, such as the US and Russia, have imprisonment rates, of almost 700 per 100,000 of their national population. Other countries have much lower rates, with Indonesia,

for example, at 25 per 100.000, Iceland at 30, India at 40 and Finland at 50. In some countries imprisonment is used only for those who have committed very serious crimes³⁶.

In most of the countries involved, this rise in the prison population has not been linked to any obvious increase in crime rates or detection rates. It has largely been a matter of judges, sending an increasing proportion of offenders to prison for longer periods. In other words, courts have been making greater use of imprisonment as a punishment³⁷.

USA

At a rate of 700 per 100.000 of the total population, this is the highest known rate of imprisonment in the world, with the exception of Rwanda, where there are unique circumstances. With just under five per cent of the world's total population, the United States has 23% of the world's prisoners³⁸.

Latin America

The one word which characterizes many of the prison systems in Latin America is violence: violence of prisoner against prisoner, prisoner against staff and staff against prisoners. It is quite common, particularly in large urban prisons, that staff do not enter the areas in which prisoners are accommodated, unless they have an armed escort.

In the worst prisons, prisoners have to pay to get food and even to be allocated a bed for sleeping. Prisoners who have no money or patronage from the stronger prisoners will be subject to physical and sexual abuse³⁹. It is not unusual that prisoners deliberately keep dirty so that they can hide guns and other weapons inside it.

Thus, overcrowding is one of the main problems of prisons all over the world. The problem has its roots already in the judiciary, and certainly the logical first step would be the harmonization of court judgments with the existing capacity of the prison in a particular country. This conclusion is easy to make but not to implement the decision that, for example, in the next 5 years in Serbia more than 500 convictions for serving a prison sentence shall not be made, to keep the overcrowding under control. Experiences from other countries suggest

³⁶Ibid, page 13

³⁷ Ibid, page 27

³⁸ Ibid, page 33

³⁹ Ibid, page 35

that it often happens that when an enlargement of prison capacity (making new buildings) is made, the rate of verdicts to prison sentences increased remarkably. As already mentioned what Serbia has done in 2010 was an adoption of a Strategy for reducing the overload of accommodation capacities from 2010 to 2015.

In addition to these decisions, there are those concerning alternative sanctions, and this is one of the possible means. However, the one to whom it is difficult to find a solution is a constant number of prisoners who spend decades in prison and often must, in accordance with international regulations, be alone in their cell. It is clear that there are not many options for such cases except enlargement of prisons. This is just one of the items in a series of challenges that the prison management copes with on a daily basis.

Staff working conditions

In a number of countries managers are appointed directly by the political head of the relevant ministry and their tenure of office is accordingly directly linked to that person's term of office⁴⁰. This is just one of the aspects of a fixed practice which, at the very beginning, represents the prison environment as one which is often impossible to change from the roots. In order to make the profession of a prison employee tempting for young people who choose their career, much is needed to be done. First of all, it is almost impossible to hear that there is an intention and desire of young people to pursue their careers in prison. This is understandable bearing in mind the image that exists in the public - prisons are isolated places, often away from the town, where the employed are exposed to constant stress or fear for their life, or are in different types of relationships with the prisoners, and often wallow in crime themselves, helping the prisoners in small offenses. The truth is, of course, different. The task of the guards is usually done by those who failed to get a job in the police or army. Jobs in top management are also carried out by former generals and senior ranks of the army and police. Professional services - medical staff, psychologists, educators - have lower salaries than their colleagues employed in public administration!

⁴⁰Ibid, page 37

In Serbia, only security officials have the accelerated retirement (16 working months for 12 real), which is unacceptable, given that the others in professional services are doing responsible jobs and are exposed to a high level of stress on a daily basis. There is a separate trade union of employees in the prison system, and the possibility of an authentic access to rights is almost completely disabled. Employees in these conditions should reap many benefits, not only personal, but also for their families: compulsory leave, at least once a year for rehabilitation in one of the mountain or spa complexes, free transportation (such as privileged categories), workshops which allow the reduction of stress, etc. Unfortunately, in our country, all of this is missing, and the disinterest in employment in this domain is not surprising. If we wanted to be direct, we could say that the employment in prison is one of the least enticing.

Change of the prison system can be initiated primarily by the prison employees, those who are at the origin of events and information. The change involves a fundamental reorganization and systematization of work. It is easy to conclude that if employed in prison units have working conditions similar to serving some kind of a sentence, their commitment to the productive system and faster rehabilitation and integration of prisoners will be absent.

Police have a public profile which ensures that the public is aware of their existence and often they are still regarded as custodians of the peace. Prosecutors are powerful figures in many countries, able to take what may well be life and death decisions about which crimes should be taken to court and which should be dealt with in their communities. The story is quite different in respect to prison staff. They carry out their duties away from the public view. In common with prisoners, they are hidden behind high prison walls. In a disturbing number of countries they are poorly trained, badly paid and are given little respect from their governments, other public officials or the rest of society⁴¹.

As a practical example of the improvement in staff working conditions, in Barlinnie Prison in Scotland the project steering group noted that many of the working conditions and leisure-time facilities such as the staff canteen and fitness-rooms are now as good as in the best private firms. We must not forget that the financial momentum is very important, especially when we talk about the Balkan countries where the single salary can barely cover the bills,

⁴¹Ibid, page 10

and that the salaries in the private sector are often significantly better, but even those who are trained and have been working in prisons for years often use first better opportunity to leave these positions.

In Serbia, according to the annual report of the Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions for 2013, the biggest drawback of employees is felt in the security services, given that the number of members is decreasing faster than the number of newly employed in that service, while the number of inmates is increasing.

When it comes to the total number of employees in the prison system in Serbia on 31.12.2013., the structure looked like this:

Table 2

Service	Permanent employment (number of employees)	Fixed-term contract (number of employees)	Total
Treatment Service	234	61	295
Security Service	2371	10	2381
Health Care Service	243	44	287
Training and Employment Service	482	61	543
General Affairs Service	548	88	636
Governor, Deputy, Secretary	32	9	41
Total	3910	273	4183

It is interesting that in 2013 the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration announced a competition for 70 Commander-trainees. Almost 3,000 candidates applied, of which almost a third of university-educated, and there were even a couple of masters. All were subjected to various tests, after which they received positive transitory results: a personality test, psycho-

physical abilities, and health condition and security checks. High rate of unemployment in the country motivates the unemployed to apply for a safe, government job, but they often quickly give up this kind of job because it was not their original choice.

The report also states that in 2013 a number of different programs for education was held, but for servants, not for employees of the prisons themselves. These trainings are not mentioned in the report. Over 850 employees attended the following programs:

- Professional training for obtaining the title of Commander
- Training for obtaining the title of Senior Commander
- Exam for obtaining the title of Supervisor
- Basic training for the Judicial Guard
- Employee Training for working in the Special Unit
- Training for monitoring of prisoners and detainees through the presentation of performed segments of company Prozone
- Additional training of staff for operating the system of electronic surveillance
- Testing the physical abilities of candidates for admission to the Security Service

Staff / Prisoner Relationship

Real change in any prison system cannot take root without the involvement of both staff and prisoners. On a day to day basis the thing which makes prison life either tolerable or unbearable for prisoners is their relationship with staff. If too much attention is paid to the needs of the prisoners it sometimes happens that staff become aggrieved, feeling that their needs are being overlooked. Similarly, prisoners may react in a negative fashion if they feel that the director or governor is continually siding with the staff. In these circumstances the head of the prison has an important role to play in brokering a balanced relationship between staff and prisoners⁴².

Many of them will have joined the prison system because they wish to work in a public service. Others will have joined because of the prospect of long term secure employment. A

⁴²Ibid, page 77

few may have joined because they expected to have the opportunity to wield power over other human beings.

Staff recruitment and training

In countries where young men have to spend a year or so undergoing national service, it may be that this time can be spent as a prison guard. An additional consequence of this arrangement is that there will be a very high staff turnover⁴³.

The issue of employment in the prison is how to look at it with pride, when public opinion is usually quite different, is there a real career? The reality is that when the time comes for students to leave high schools or universities the notion of working in a prison is rarely considered.

What constitutes good prison management?

These rights can be summarized under the following headings:

- Maintenance of human dignity: the rights to freedom from torture and inhuman, cruel or degrading treatment, to proper accommodation, hygiene facilities, clothing and bedding, to sufficient food and water, to sufficient exercise and fresh air.
- Proper health care.
- Personal safety: that the level of security should be sufficient to ensure the safety of the public but should not be oppressive; that no-one in prison should be at risk of physical, sexual or mental abuse; that internal procedures for discipline and punishment should observe the tenets of natural justice.
- Contact with families, friends and the outside world should be of a quantity and quality that allows the maintenance and development of proper relationships.
- Access to a range of activities: work, education, cultural activities, physical exercise, observance of religion.
- Access to necessary legal representation for those who are awaiting trial, sentence or appeal and also for those who have legitimate complaints about their treatment.
- Respecting the needs of special categories of prisoners, such as women, juveniles and other minority groups⁴⁴.

⁴³Ibid, page 82

It is famous prison cliché: *When I tell you to jump, you should not ask 'why', you should ask 'how high'*. According to this perspective, within the prison setting there are no lines of horizontal communication, only vertical ones; and even these go from the top downwards, never from the bottom upwards.

In many countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia members of the military have a number of important benefits. For example, they may be entitled to free travel, to receive free meals when they are on duty and to have excellent retirement schemes. They and their families are often entitled to free medical care and to have subsidized holidays.

Prison staff should be appropriately trained to manage disorders inside prisons, but they should be able to do this, using techniques which are significantly different to those used in wars or civil disturbances⁴⁵.

National, federal and local structures

After China, the largest one of these is in the Russian Federation, with almost one thousand prisons, stretching over eleven time zones and holding just under one million prisoners. It would clearly be impossible to organize every detail of prison management on a national level in most large countries, let alone in Russia. Two good examples of this style management are to be found in the Netherlands and in Sweden. Prisons have built up close links with local welfare, housing and employment agencies, as a means of enabling prisoners to settle back into their communities after release. The important feature of this style of management is that it implies a significant degree of trust between the administrators in the national system and local prison managers⁴⁶.

⁴⁴Ibid, page 87

⁴⁵Ibid, page 53

⁴⁶Ibid, page 56

Traditionally, many prison systems have operated in an isolated environment. They have failed to recognize the need to be associated with other government initiatives and they have seen little need to take into account of what happens in their local communities. This is no longer acceptable, nor it is a professional way to manage a prison system.

All of these examples underline the fact that prisons and prison system are affected by the wider social and political environment in which they exist. A prison system which understands its history, which is capable of recognizing its current situation and which acknowledges where it wants to get to, has already begun the process of change. The next step is to develop a strategy for implementing the change⁴⁷.

The Scottish Prison Service has identified four key elements in prison management: administrative, financial, human resources (covering both staff and prisoners) and operational. The conclusion reached by the Scottish Prison Service Board has been that the first three of these elements are common to all forms of management and that the operational element is the only one that is unique to the prison setting⁴⁸.

There is an example from Sweden where original intention had been to recruit highly qualified persons from outside the service to take on these roles, but this initiative has not been successful and so the alternative has been to train these managers inside the service.

The management of prisons is primarily about the management of human beings, both staff and prisoners. This means that there are issues that go beyond effectiveness and efficiency. Those responsible for the management of prisons and those who work in them need to avoid taking a purely technocratic approach to their work. It is not sufficient to measure success or failure merely in managerial terms, aloof from any consideration of what effect this has on the people involved, both staff and prisoners. Success, at least in the eyes of the public and often of politicians, is when there are no escape, no riots, no serious disturbances, and no suicides. It is clear then that the senior management is focused on non-existence of negative news about prisons, and that their forces are focus rather on preventing scandal, but the progress. To put it all together - *It is much more difficult to produce targets that measure humanity and*

⁴⁷Ibid, page 67

⁴⁸Ibid, page 69

*decency, and to enthuse staff with a commitment to carry out their work in a professional and dedicate manner*⁴⁹.

Last, but not the least is the importance of terminology used in the prison system. It is an important question if prisoners should have the name tags. It would be more personal in sense that they wouldn't see as number only, but as decent human being. On the contrary, for the safety reasons, name tags are mostly forbidden.

It is very important to identify main organizational problems and to try to solve it in the best possible way. I have just indicated the most common problems, but truth is that every prison has its own story "which has to be reformulated, so it could sound better."

6. The possibilities of creative processes implementation in the re-socialization of imprisoned people

What the prison system in Serbia still does today could be characterized as a cyclic circle which isolates inmates without any methodology and does not prepare them for the outside world, where in most cases, they commit a new criminal offense very quickly after leaving the system, and then become residents of one of the facilities or prisons once again. This is why the intention of this chapter is to give an insight of the possibilities creativity has in the work with specific categories of people, as well as a short overview of prison art movement,

The etymology of the term of creativity originates from the Greek word for Latin verb *creare*. Greek word *krainein* means fulfill, so that anyone who fulfills his potential, anyone who expresses an inner instinct or capacity can be described as creative⁵⁰.

„Psychology of Creativity”⁵¹ recognizes divergent production and convergent thinking. To the first concept Joy P. Guilford attributes four skills: fluency, flexibility, originality and

⁴⁹Ibid, page 75

⁵⁰Pope, R. (2005) *Creativity: Theory, History, Practice*. London & New York: Taylor & Francis Routledge

⁵¹Mandić, T. i Ristić, I. (2014) *Psihologija kreatiivnosti*, Fakultet dramskih umetnosti, Beograd

elaboration. Guilford interpreted fluency as the capacity of the individual to offer as many broad associations to the given topic. Tijana Mandić and Irena Ristić illustrate this notion with the example of bricks. The authors state: “When someone is asked what a brick can serve for, one could answer: ‘To build a house, for breaking a window, jamming the door, as a step, instead of the iron, etc’.”⁵²

To explain the concept of flexibility, they note the previous example. It is clear that all of these associations indicate a situation - construction! Therefore, flexibility of creativity in this example is extremely low, i.e. indicates a single action and is limited by that kind of thinking, which is usually a characteristic of people whose creativity is not satisfactory.

When it comes to originality, the third ability of importance for creativity according to Guilford, T. Mandić and I. Ristić define it the following way: “Originality is defined as the ability to find a unique solution, and can be estimated by comparing the response within the selected group. If, say, no one in the group pointed out that the brick can be used to jump into the river during a suicide, we get the original solution, even if this idea sounds somewhat bizarre.”⁵³

Furthermore, the elaboration is the ability of a person to clearly and minutely imagine and describe the particular situation. These four capabilities, therefore, represent a divergent production known in psychology as a branch of creativity and creative thinking. This theory could be simplified by defining creativity as an individual (not necessarily, and not always) process in which the individual, using their sensitive capacities, experiences and shows in a way, their ability to explain familiar thing or a concept, or establish a link in a different, unusual, more authentic way. Creativity, then, is a process of discovery and finding ways to display something already seen in a different way, from a new perspective or in different contexts.

On the other hand, convergent thinking is the recapitulation of all possible solutions in one, the best. However, over time, scientists from psychological circles have become followers Guilford’s idea of divergence, because they agree with the interpretation of creativity as

⁵²Ibid, page 12

⁵³Ibid, page 12

ability. Like any other, this ability may arise, develop and thrive, but only if it is being worked on.

Another important feature of creativity is interaction. Scientists agree that creativity arises in relation to the context and that creativity itself does not mean much. It must be assessed as useful, valuable, and important or what is none of the above.

When it comes to prisoners and creativity in these conditions, Ford gives a clear interpretation, applicable to creativity in specific terms, by introducing the concept of creativity of emotional arousal: *Spontaneous feelings such as, for example, excitement, frustration, confusion or joy play a key role, because they stimulate action which must be carried out during the required, and sometimes very hectic creative process*⁵⁴.

Thus, the ability of creative work is individual and has to be developed. The question remains, when it comes to the prison system, what the role of this capability is, in which direction and to what extent it can (and should) be developed. On one hand, individuals can work on their progress upon their own initiative, and develop a work of art from the initial idea, while on the other hand, with the help of experts developing these capabilities can be worked on, with the aim of developing mental images which can facilitate the convict's stay in prison, but that perhaps more importantly, can make the social integration into society much with a single purpose - to try to overcome his guilt, makes a decision about his future life and become prepared to integrate into the outside world.

If we bear in mind the Ford's concept of creativity of emotional arousal, as well as the mentioned the concept of interaction, it is clear that in the prison system and other closed institutions are the base of people with emotional ambiguity. This imbalance may develop in a non-structural manner with convicts - by omission and indifference for any changes, and later the continuance of the same behaviour. However, the misbalance can become a source of creativity, an inspiration and a motivating element to lead via the creative process through a phase of relief, awareness and different views. In addition, if the process leads to concrete and tangible results (in particular work of art, the product of labour ...) we could conclude that this type of therapeutic approach is doubly beneficial - therapeutic importance on one hand and the creation of art on the other hand.

⁵⁴ Ford, M. E. (1992) *Motivating humans: Goals, emotions and personal agency beliefs*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, page 178

The process of reintegration and resettlement will be discussed in more detail in later sections of thesis. Creativity and artistic creation in general will be viewed for now as one of the adjunct, we could say alternative approaches, in the process of serving penalty, and in order to approach the convicts to themselves, revive their traumas, fears and lack of hope and prepare for a new life. This is not the only, but is the inclusive method that can hold the best results and would be a systematic effort of the entire society on the issue of prisoners and their life after release from the institution.

Art in psychotherapy

The most common types of psychotherapy that use the art for the sake of the progress of the individual and his better psycho-mental state are:

- Cinema therapy
- Psychodrama and
- Art therapy

Cinema therapy, in short, is the treatment of watching movies of a specific content, and an interview with a psychologist. The choice of films is crucial because its contents must be directly or indirectly connected with the problem of the client, i.e. the person with whom the therapy is being done. Talk of the psychotherapist with a person at the beginning of the movie is based on the film, its plot, scenes, characters and music that appears in the film... Later, in time, the film events, problems and situations are transformed to the actual scenario of the person who wants to be helped. Therefore, it could be said that cinema therapy represents a form of fictitious overpass through the painful situations that were the trigger for existing mental health problems, with the aim of releasing negative emotions, finding solutions and overcoming inability. This form of therapy is common in prisons because it represents an easy, non-invasive method in which reaching clear events that were a kind of trigger for committing certain offenses is performed through the imaginary way. Within cinema therapy, there is a branch called *Make your own movie*, where through a creative expression a person is given the freedom to come up with a scenario, to direct and resolve his acute problem.

Psychodrama uses the best of Dramatic Arts for the sake of cathartic release of the person in need. With the help of acting, imitation, singing, dance movement, the presence of the audience leads to freeing and exonerating act that leads to a better health condition. In psychodrama, clients are encouraged to continue and complete their procedures through setting the scene, role playing and dramatic self-presentation. Both verbal and nonverbal communications are used. Memories of the previous events, unfinished life situations, internal dramas, fantasies, dreams, as well as preparation for future life situations take place at the scene. These activities are enacted on the scene here and now and are very close to real life experience or are externalization of internal mental processes. Psychodrama is a recognized method that is frequently encountered in working with specific groups of people, especially those who survived some form of trauma in the past, and those with all types of personality disorders.

Art therapy emerged in the mid-twentieth century. It is a technique whereby a person frees, facilitates and "cures" through artistic creation (usually painting or writing). The person in need, whom one wants to help with hands, transfuses his expression of what he sees, hears or feels in the way he feels, without any direction from mentors, in a particular work. The person reflects his inner state, writes songs or stories which can be dark, depressing, but which are often full of optimism, that speak of freedom and of the world as it actually is not currently present in the life of the person who creates it.

Artists are wondering whether the products created this way are art, experts whether this really is the right therapy, but no one can ignore the positive effects that the art therapy, as such, has on a person who applies it. Cardinal Roger calls artwork created in this process *outsider art*, while French artist Jacques Dubuffet uses the term *art brut*. Dubuffet was actually the creator of the artistic direction of art brut, which was created in 1947, and which will later get its further course - prison art, which will be mainly discussed in this thesis. Definition of Art Brut by Jean Dubuffet (initiator of the concept):

"By this [Art Brut] we mean pieces of work executed by people untouched by artistic culture, in which therefore mimicry, contrary to what happens in intellectuals, plays little or no part, so that their authors draw everything (subjects, choice of materials employed, means of transposition, rhythms, ways of writing, etc.) from their own depths and not from clichés of classical art or art that is fashionable. Here we are witnessing an artistic operation that is completely pure, raw, reinvented in all its phases by its author, based solely on his own

impulses. Art, therefore, in which is manifested the sole function of invention, and not those, constantly seen in cultural art, of the chameleon and the monkey”.⁵⁵

Prison art

Dubuffet introduced the art of marginalized groups into art - the chance that anyone who feels disharmony in themselves, who feels oppressed or uncomfortable, express his inner feeling and show the world their experience through an artistic expression. This expression does not necessarily have to have an audience; you can create it for yourself, because the basic idea is to get rid of the bad impulses and instincts, to transpose your pain into work.

Prison art, as the legacy of art brut, presents prison art, through which the prisoners, in accordance with the possibilities of the prison have the opportunity to convey themselves in a particular work in various forms of art, primarily with the aim of reducing aggression and tension. It should be noted that this movement is not only intended for prisoners who want to try the art and discover their talents for the first time. A few examples of artists who spent parts of their lives in institutions of this type will be stated later. So, we could say that art in prisons may involve:

- Prisoners who, due to the increased charge of aggression, have the desire or are aimed at channelling that energy into the work of art, or who want to channel their negative emotions through art, regardless of the final result in the form of a specific product;
- Artists who have committed an offense punishable by law, and continue to practice their profession or hobby throughout serving their penalty.

Simply said and translated, prison art is the art of prison, art created in the prison, art intended for prisoners.

What makes the whole story seem important and recognized from the side of psychology, is work with psychologists, social workers but also artists. Professional and trained mentors are

⁵⁵Dubuffet, J. (1949) L'art brut préféré aux arts culturels, Galerie René Drouin, Paris

crucial in order to monitor the personal, psychological, and artistic development. It could be concluded, from the side of correctional institutions, that the most important effect of making art is realizing the fault of the act, change of awareness and preparation (inclusion) to return to the real flow of life. Therefore, the presence of a psychologist and a social worker is required, with the aim of talking with the prisoner, the monitoring of the phases and changes in behaviour. On the other hand, art as such requires an artistic mentor as well, someone who would focus and assess the expression. Multiple evaluation of the work by the social worker, psychologist and artist-mentor is the only way to ensure proper operation of a system of prison art.

The commitment and initiative of the State and the prison management are necessary conditions for the system to function, whereas the openness and involvement of non-state cultural actors is another prerequisite for enabling a platform for artistic expression.

Prison facilities fall into the category of closed institutions, which denotes limited freedom of movement for persons serving penalty, but limited arrival and visits from the outside world as well. This should not be a limiting factor for the establishment of any system of psychotherapy, but unfortunately it often is the case. Countries like Serbia, do not define the precise work with these groups in outdated and inappropriate legislations, and management has the right to independently and autonomously organize the work of this kind. This will be much more detailed data in the later part of the thesis, especially in the area which will speak about the experiences of ApsArt organization, about the problems they face, banning of the work with prisoners... We must not forget that the work of this type is extremely sensitive, demands enormous empathy from the entire range of participants - from those responsible to those who implement the therapy. On the other hand, the prisoners themselves often do not want to be participants in any projects and see help from the outside world as a provocation, and not as a real opportunity for personal progress.

Educators and psychologists employed in prisons are often inadequately trained and not interested in any kind of systematic approach to this subject, while non-governmental organizations of this type (ApsArt, Art Brut) are usually banned from working with inmates, which will be discussed later. The message of the ban by the State of Republic of Serbia is more than clear – it is not suitable for the system that the prisoners are empowered, aware of

their rights to have any sense of purpose and belonging - for thus empowered they can become a threat to the system.

In Serbia and in the region, there are few examples of different forms of therapy, especially psycho-drama. The documentary "Što sa sobom preko dana" by the Croatian director Ivona Juka, showing the daily life of prisoners from Lepoglava, but also the entire art project in which they make a theatre play and perform in one of the theatres in Croatia, is just one example. Only when, in one of the final scenes of this documentary, one of the residents says: *I was applauded for the first time in my life* (referring to the applause which they received after the end of the show), it becomes evident how necessary it is to work with these people, how they are eager of the attention, integration into society and change on a personal level, just like any other minority group.

The need to leave a written trail, and to share with others cathartically, is also found on Facebook. As a global network, Facebook is a platform available to almost everyone. In agreement with his friend, an unknown prisoner writes and sends letters to his friend, from a prison in Serbia, who types them and publishes on Facebook in the group called: *Prison story*⁵⁶. Here, the disclosures which are updated on a basis of several weeks, a reader may get introduced to another side of the prison system. One can find quite subjective and questionable inquiries of respect for fundamental human rights of prisoners, when it comes to treatment, nutrition and medical care. However, this approach to the subject clearly demonstrates the need to tell a story, to "unburden the soul" and to, probably unknowingly, pass through a particular form of therapy.

Prison as a metaphor in art

Prison is a common, if not the most common, metaphor which is used in a negative context in art, but also in everyday life: the isolation, loneliness, punishment, injustice, confinement, sadness, and pain. In contrast to these concepts are concepts like freedom, happiness, and joy. These opposing emotions and states of consciousness are a common motif in all spheres of art. The fact that there is a large number of those who are in custody or during the serving penalty, due to a specific state of mind and turned towards their inner being, started, were

⁵⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/ZatvorskePriceISecanja/?fref=ts>

writing and completed their novels, de facto, is an indication that in these circumstances it is possible to create, to be creative and, often, leave a valuable written record. Cervantes started writing *Don Quixote* just while in prison for tax evasion, and therefore the whole first chapter was written in prison. Extensive letter *De Profundis* by Oscar Wilde was also written during captivity. List of literary creators does not end here. Ezra Pound, Solzhenitsyn, Dostoyevsky, Pushkin, Mayakovski, Paul Verlaine, Marquis de Sade, Ivo Andrić, Dragoslav Mihajlović, Šaban Bajramović, Branislav Nušić, started, build or continued their careers in prison, as well as Đura Jakšić, who remained indebted to the State to additional several months of serving penalty, because he died!

On the other hand, those who write about prison life (e.g. *The Damned Yard*, by I. Andrić) use prison metaphorically most often. The reason for this is in the appropriate style of expression of artists, but also in the fact that the state censorship has always been active and that artists, especially writers, and their words have been a harsh criticism of society and state, of what happens in prisons and needs to be hidden.

Captivity represents a specifically structured system reigned by harsh rules that must be respected. In such an arrangement, where life often comes down to sleep and an hour's walk, where time is plentiful, the boundary between the real and surreal is thin, and the mental illnesses of different kinds are frequent. To get rid of negative emotions, vanity and pain of emptiness, prisoners should have the freedom to express plenty of free time in their own way – through physical exercise, physical labour or intellectual expression. In these situations there is very often the need to write, paint or peer into the depths of one's soul through some artistic ways, to express their deepest, most painful, and hope which exists.

It is important to instruct the reader to the fact that this thesis has no intention of dealing with the reasons for serving a prison penalty, nor its connection with artistic expression. The goal is to show the needs of prisoners, but also the possibilities of the art scene in prison, in the so-called prison art movement.

7. Prison art scene in Serbia

We come to the part of the work which should present the results of my research, concerning the current situation in prisons in terms of their cooperation with cultural institutions, the results and the creative products, as well as possible plans. Bearing in mind the fact that there is a lot of information, and that there are plenty of individual cases concerning prisons, the structure of this chapter will be fragmented, i.e. it will review my knowledge, segment by segment.

While choosing this topic, the initial idea was that I carry out a visit to 10 prisons out of the existing 29, conduct interviews with executives, employees and prisoners. I wanted to visit 10 prisons for adults to try to cover territorially the entire Serbia. The idea was that in each

prison a focus group of at least seven prisoners is assembled, where I, in the presence of a psychologist, would try to find out more about their habits, opinions and ideas concerning their attitudes about art, missing, cultural events, etc. Unfortunately, these plans were not realized for many reasons, one of which is a crucial one that refers to a range of procedures that must be fulfilled so that I could pay a visit, especially to talk to the prisoners. Focus groups are completely absent from this work and only random, short, open interviews were allowed. At the end, I have visited prisons in Sombor and Požarevac, while instead visit to Valjevo I had an interview with their Manager, during my visit to Sombor colony.

The first, initial interview was held on 4 August 2014, at the premises of the Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions (DECS), in the Ministry of Justice. Conversation was with Ms. Zorana Vučićević, the spokesperson of DECS, and the only one, in her own words, responsible for all kinds of events organized in all prisons in Serbia. I learned that there are many initiatives that DECS is extremely open for new projects, ideas and work with young people. On this occasion, I got a couple of examples of institutional newspapers, whose contents will later be presented.

To my question about whether there is a general cooperation with cultural institutions and what it is like, Ms. Vučićević states that it exists, but that the prisons are accustomed to rely on themselves, because experience has shown that all cooperation was short-term, usually in the form of one-time projects, which could not be sustainable. She underlines the fact that vulnerable groups, such as this, quickly become accustomed to external initiatives and various activities, but at the same time, just because of this fact, it is constantly difficult when specific activities are completed, because of the project deadline. This can have negative effects as well, because the prisoners again feel rejected and forgotten. Everybody comes and goes, and they remain where they were. Most often it is about performing plays in which convicts participate, as well as various workshops that were held. She states a good example of cooperation with the ensemble "Kursadžije" which performs the homonymous play each year as a New Year event in Sremska Mitrovica prison. This initiative came as a proposal of the actors who act in the play. On the other hand, the somewhat less successful attempts are also stated, for example, the refusal by Rambo Ambadeus to sing a few songs during one of the events organized in the Central Prison in Belgrade, because of a non-existent payment.

Here we cannot not bring into question the established way of thinking about artists in Serbia, too often the case is that they are expected to participate in all events for free and without an adequate compensation, relying on their good will which, we know, is not the case during engagement of the associates from any other sphere.

A contract on cooperation with the Institution of Culture Vuk Karadžić was signed, for the alternative serving of criminal charges, i.e. working in the public interest, where the necessary tasks to be performed are most often of the physical type. The fact that Serbia Kennel Club organizes yoga for interested convicts and employees is also interesting.

Picture 1, Sombor Art Colony



As for the activities of the Board, Zorana said that 8 institutions participated in the Building Fair in 2013, where they presented what they produce in their manufactures: wooden houses, street lights, bins, flower pots, benches, icons...

In 2014 they participated in the Horticulture Fair, where they were awarded the prize for presented outdoor (park) furniture. It can be seen in the photographs that these were truly fantastic carvings that prisoners make completely on their own. And here is the main problem in terms of lack of competitiveness of imprisonment prices. Namely, unlike highly specialized factories, prisons try either to adapt to the market and produce ordered products, or purchase significantly less quantities than the large factories and, therefore, the purchase price is significantly higher as well as the price of the finished product. With the lack of state support (for example, exemption from VAT, and other tax benefits) prisons (those who are still trying

to preserve their small business) are clearly losing the battle for the particular tender almost at the very start.

Picture 2, Sombor Art Colony



Here I would mention the fact that penitentiary Požarevac - Zabela has serious machinery for screen printing, which is a donation of the OSCE Mission. These machines could serve to print all kinds of forms used in the state administration, but this is not the case. Complete acquisition of printed material in all public institutions is made by tender, and this prison institution does not participate. Paradoxically, the only thing they print are lists of requisitions used in this institution solely. Other prison units procure these and other forms independently. The same is the case with, for example, the women's prison in Požarevac, where women sew by order. When I asked why the Ministry of Health does not shift its requisitions in the form of coats for the medical staff to this prison, I still have not found an answer anywhere.

One of the more successful initiatives is the cooperation with the Belgrade City Museum and the Museum of Ivo Andrić. Namely, DECS had an apartment within the hotel 'Moravica' in

Soko Banja. In the era of the old Yugoslavia, the apartment was used for directors and high officials, but eventually it was turned into Andrić's apartment. It is now a museum exhibition of a reconstructed Andrić's room, and all the furniture was made by the convicts.

Picture 3, Ivo Andrić's room in Soko banja



Ms. Vučićević gave me detailed instructions in concerning a request which the University of Arts had to write, for the purpose of enabling the first visit to the prison in Sombor.

Prison Art Colony in Sombor and Literary Colony in Valjevo

Sombor was a great start, bearing in mind that the 12th Art Colony 'Elan' was held on 23 and 24 August 2014. Symbolically, this colony is always held during the religious holiday the Transfiguration of Christ (Preobraženje), which metaphorically represents an opportunity for transformation and return to the right path and the right values. Artist Hadži Senad instructed me that the motives that prisoners often depict are saints or something that is timeless. In this way, they channel their idea of salvation and that keeps them alive, it gives them hope, it is the path of their transformation.

Prison unit Elan is an open institution, with magnificent courtyard. My stay at this property, with acres of different plantations (several kinds of vegetables and fruits that are grown and used for feeding of prisoners) was more than interesting and proof that there can be a successful event connected with prisons in Serbia. The colony was created with the idea that artists from different domains of applied art gather in Sombor in a kind of a short residence, with the aim of creation of specific works of art, exchanging ideas, experiences and knowledge. Over time, prisoners from the prison in Sombor started joining the artists, and in the last few years, this idea turned into a colony of prisoners' creativity.

Picture 4, Sombor Art Colony



I found 30 people painting in the yard in Sombor, as well as an entire exhibition of paintings, prints, carvings incurred during the previous year in all prisons in Serbia. It is now a common practice that prisoners who have artistic tendencies spend their time in making a particular piece during the year, which is to be exposed in this colony in August. For logistical reasons it is impossible that all the creators come to Sombor, and among the 30 that I actually found there, in addition to artists in residence, there were only prisoners from Sombor. After two days of intensive work and completion of the started, a public exhibition that would be made out of more than 300 exhibits was planned in the city center. Due to bad weather conditions the opening ceremony did not take place, but what could have been seen in the pedestrian

zone in the center of town that weekend was the proof that by a multi-layered and thoughtful approach a lot can be done on the demystification of the stigma of the prisoners by the citizenry. Besides the fact that every piece was clearly marked with information on which prisoner created it and when, the prisoners from the penitentiary Elan Sombor, in distinctive T-shirts, distributed the refreshment to passers-by in the city that day and talked to them about their works and so on.

In a conversation with several people from Sombor, random passers-by, I learned that this event is something everybody really likes, because the city becomes an art colony. They are also aware that this event has an ambivalent effect - despite the fact that prisoners have the opportunity to express their creative potential and demonstrate that they are willing to work on it, the citizens get to know their neighbors "behind walls" in this way, becoming aware and thinking about what the prison is, meeting real people and their stories. In this way the prisoners are not just some people over there that committed horrific acts and are closed behind the walls, but the perception changes.

Governor of the Sombor prison, although obviously busy, paid me a few minutes of his time, which I tried to use the best possible way, so that I could find out how they manage to make this event sustainable, due to a number of aggravating circumstances. The first answer was that it came to a personal initiative, of which everything begins. Great support was obtained from DECS, but from their colleagues, other prison governors, as well. My assumption that the atmosphere in this prison is more artistic than in others, due to this event, and because of production of easels and other activities associated with carpentry, turned out to be true. The number of persons interested in artistic expression increases from year to year. Educators who work with artists, depending on their behavior and artistic progress, inform management on the progress of specific people, and after the evident interest of a particular person supplies are procured. It would be unsustainable, according to the manager, to immediately purchase real art supplies to anyone who wants to make a try a creative work.

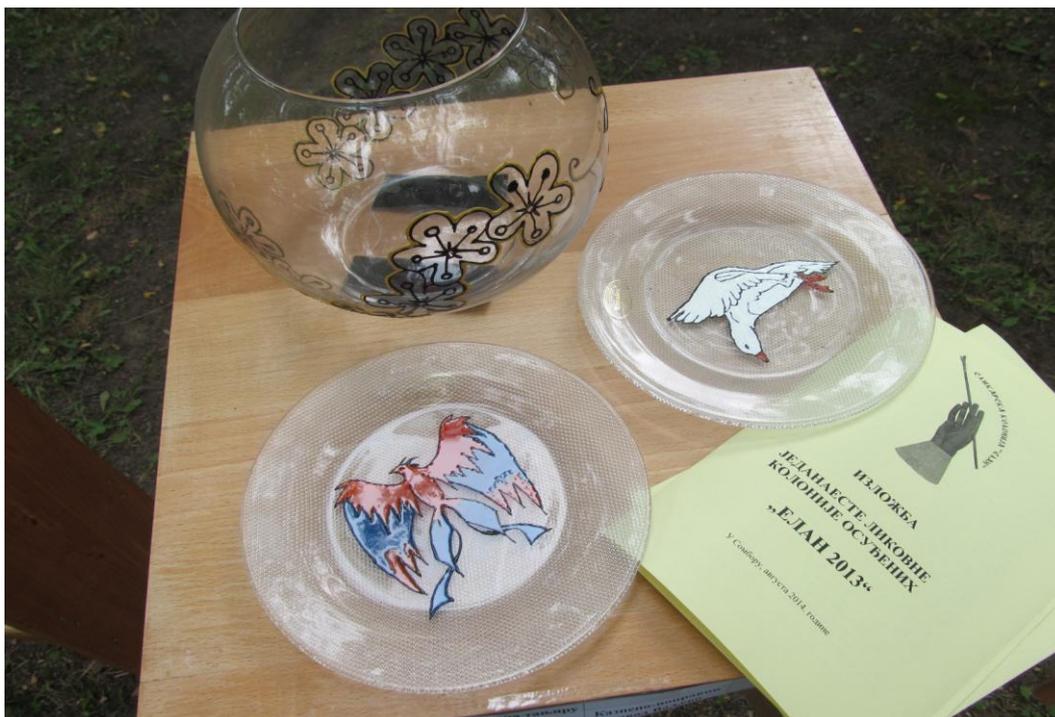
Picture 5, Sombor Art Colony



I am also interested in what happens to the collection of works created over the years - are they and is there an effort to establish a self-sustaining fund in this way. Unfortunately, this practice has not yet been implemented, and the oeuvre is donated to other prison facilities, as well as the Management Board.

Colony, among others, was also attended by Head of the prison Valjevo with whom I also conducted a brief interview about their practice, experience and knowledge. Namely, in Serbia there are two art colonies in prisons: Art Colony Elan in Sombor, as well as Literary colony in Valjevo. Literary colony was organized in a way of annual announcement of a competition for the prisoners, in the field of prose and poetry. Every person serving a prison sentence has a right of application. Topic of the 8th literary contest was "The Awakening", and the prizes for the first placed contestants were 15,000, 10,000 and 8,000 dinars, in the field of poetry and prose. The winning works are published in the Journal of the Valjevo prison "Roads".

Picture 6, Sombor Art Colony



Picture 7, Sombor Art Colony



The table below shows the number of participants in the prison unit at the 8th contest:

Name of the Institution	Number of authors	Poetry	Prose

OCA Valjevo	4	6	6
OCA Čuprija	11	14	9
DP Subotica	3	6	1
OCA Beograd - Padinska Skela	6	10	9
DP Beograd	3	3	1
OCA Sombor	5	7	3
DP Leskovac	3	2	5
OCA Šabac	2	-	3
OCA Požarevac (f)	13	20	7
OCA Požarevac (m)	10	15	6
Spec. prison hospital	8	14	5
OCA Niš	27	29	18
DP Pančevo	2	3	3
OCA Sremska Mitrovica	36	88	17
DP Zrenjanin	1	3	-
DP Kragujevac	2	2	1
BA Istočno Sarajevo	2	-	2
DP Novi Sad	6	12	2
STC dom Kruševac	3	-	3
TOTAL	147	234	101
Total works			335

*Table taken from the 'Guidelines', no. 75, 2013.

Library in Valjevo has a fund of 2,600 books, most of which are obtained during the write-off of the library holdings of the City Library of Valjevo, as well as through donations from the Church.

*I'd write a song about you,
but I haven't met you.*

*I'd write a story about myself,
but I don't know myself enough.*

*I'd write a novel about life,
but I haven't lived.*

Snezana Drobić,
3rd place, poetry, 2012, 8th literary competition

Keeping in mind such and big aggravating circumstances for the crucial part of my work, I decided to resort to other possible ways that would enable me to execute at least one more visit. I contacted the *Helsinki Committee for Human Rights*, which regularly monitors prison through pre-arranged visits. They supplemented their memo of their previously announced visit to the men's prison penitentiary Požarevac - Zabela by another staff member, i.e. with my name. Team of the monitoring group consisted of: two lawyers, a doctor, a professor of the *Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation*, and me, who was announced as a young colleague whose focus is exploring cultural tendencies in prison.

This visit was far more serious than previous ones, bearing in mind the long-term cooperation with the *Helsinki Committee* with the Board, as well as with individual prisons. Our team first met the Governor on 20 November 2014, and then we visited several blocks where we had short and random talks with the prisoners, and then with the officers, doctors and employees in the administration. The first thing I noticed in the office of the Governor is that he did not possess a computer. If you would like to go back to the previous head talking about Management and good practices, we would remember the part that mentions that Governors are usually former generals or police employees, which was the case here. At this point 1584 persons served penalty in Zabela and, according to the Governor, another 6 teachers and 70 guards are lacking. This prison also occupies a large area, and in addition to the prison blocks has a restaurant, 6 suites, a swimming pool, a cinema room. The restaurant was renovated after a fire in 2012, but is still waiting for all the necessary permits to begin operating.

To my question about the plans related to the work of the restaurant and apartments, i.e. whether prisoners will have the role of staff I learned that this building is actually leased and

that except the lease, prison has nothing to do with it. So, this separate building serves as a restaurant with a beautiful nature and no interaction with prisoners is possible. The former cinema hall, with a lovely stage, which was also destroyed in fire, now serves as the gym. Entering this room can only remind one of the darkest scenes from movies - damp and stifling room, full of brawny men who lift improvised weights... At this point the Governor turned to me and said: *Here, you asked for cultural activities. These are ours!*

Zabela has several manufacturing productions and manufactures beds and cabinets for all prisons in Serbia. And there are problems with the procurement of raw materials as well, with participating in tenders, etc. There are no government subsidies when it comes to the bills for electricity, water and other utilities.

An older prisoner, who also lives there, works in the prison library. Due to good behavior, his reward is that he can be completely alone and that behind the bookcases he has a bed and a kitchenette. He stated that the last library indexing was done on 13 April 2007, and that usually crime novels are read. 121 books were being read at the moment.

As a successful cooperation, the one with the company *Metalinex Leštane* is stated, for which they did a service production of metal cabinets for schools. The state provided a subsidy of 4 million dinars for training for 5 occupations: screen printing, furniture, bakery, welding and agriculture. What is interesting to note is the fact that there are no clearly defined criteria for the selection of prisoners who will get a chance to attend a particular course. Aside from the one regarding behavior, which is the only one that is applied, the time remaining until completion of serving the penalty would normally be taken into account. We have to agree to the fact that the training for screen printing, for example, will not have a special effect for someone to serve another 15 years - in addition to technological progress and the question what will be the way to do screen printing in 15 years, the problem is that by completion of training, there is no follow-up, i.e. acquiring practice in the very institutions

Here I would also like to point out another curiosity. A substantial number of job ads in the labor market are the ones in which it is stated that the potential candidate must submit a certificate of non-conviction. This discriminatory practice prevents the one who is serving his penalty to try to be socially rehabilitated, and several times mentioned vicious circle has got

another level - you have committed a crime, served your penalty, but will always be labeled as the former convict.

On a visit to the workshop for screen printing, I came across some interesting paradoxes. In the printing workshop, in addition to existing machines, there are also the new ones, donated by the European Union and which, at the time of our visit are not used. Around 50 copies of different styles of printing are glued to the walls of the room. Machines are currently not working because the prison has no money for the procurement of color. When I began to look more closely at the presented works, I realized that all of them were made in the period from 29 June to 26 July, which clearly indicates that the machines were practiced on for less than a month and, this was probably the only period in which the selected had the opportunity of trying to work on them. Of the 50 presented works, each is signed, but it is interesting that all of these were done by only 3 prisoners who are signed as: Darko, Laki and Exer. The question remains whether there were the only three who had the opportunity to work on the machine, or is it something else, intangible to me at this moment.

Prison journals

In addition to the previously described empirical research, I got a detailed data on capacities and practices in the prisons themselves by reading prison newspapers printed in the individual institutions. They are intended solely for internal use, and I got them in the Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions.

The common denominator of all publications is that there are always sections concerning the novelties in the Law on Execution of Criminal Sanctions, a text in the field of psychology (e.g. *How to explain to your child that the father is in prison*), as well as supporting activities that occur sporadically - events, religious ceremonies, etc. An interesting fact is that almost an essential part of any magazine is a text with religious motifs, as well as information on the number of those who have fasted, took communion, etc.

Below, I will summarize the most important information from magazines that were available to me:

- *Our Life* (Journal of OCA Niš), published December 2012. At the moment it existed for 18 years, and that was number 285

In this journal, an important donation to the prison is stated. Thanks to the funds of the European Commission, the economy of the penitentiary received a tractor with a trailer, a tiller and connecting machinery, but also the material from which greenhouse for crop production, with the necessary equipment, was made. Prisoners will be able to acquire knowledge and obtain internationally recognized certificates for occupations related to work on machines with numerical guidance, but also for the profession baker, farmer, carpenter, welder, through the process of training.

There is a great interest for the mentioned occupations. Only for the first cycle over 200 prisoners applied. The greatest interest of the prisoners was shown for welding machines, for production of furniture from sheet materials. The project is normally implemented in Sremska Mitrovica and Požarevac, with appropriate adaptations for these institutions. They do icon painting as well, and the patron saint of penitentiary Sveti Stefan Dečanski is celebrated with icons painted by the prisoners.

In the 2008-2012 convicts participated in the field work to assist archaeological excavations on Bubanj, and at the initiative of the Archaeological Institute in Belgrade and the National Museum in Niš. The aim of the research was to determine the stages of settlement, their age and socio-economic activities of the ancient inhabitants of Niš valley by modern scientific methods. The prisoners formed part of the team that did the field work.

Several prisoners have been participating and painting in an art colony in Sombor for years, achieving remarkable results.

On the occasion of World Book Day, 23 April, National Library Stevan Sremac and literary club Tekstura organized the poetic-musical program *Beyond the words* in OCA Niš. National Library donated 600 books to the OCA.

- *Journal OCA Čuprija* (yearly edition, 2nd edition, 2012)

Library of the OCA was enriched with a set of 8 books by Branislav Nušić on 31 August 2011. Mostly read books in 2011 were the works of Paolo Coelho, Agatha Christie, Dučić... 1,520 books were borrowed from the library in 2011.

In the institution's art studio almost all forms of artistic creation are represented: modeling, painting, graphic, production of artistic and everyday objects and so on.

On 29 November 2011, in the City Library in Čuprija, Homeland Fund of Dragoslav Mihailović, a prominent writer and academic originating from Čuprija, was opened. At the age of 20 he got arrested and sent to Goli Otok. The novel 'When Pumpkins Blossomed' was first published in 1968 and caused a significant response from the socialist regime at that time. The show, which was scheduled to be played by this novel was banned, and the author himself says it was personally banned by Josip Broz.

Matić's Days, held in Music school in Čuprija for the 29th time, were an opportunity for prisoners, who attended the concert of classical music "Breath of Passion," a play performed by the children "Our Children", Cabaret "Good Old Days", with Rade Marjanović, Tanja Bošković and Lola Novaković performing.

➤ *Roads*, journal OCA Sremska Mitrovica (2012), first published in 1964.

It was not until 20 September 2012, that a cultural program was held in this institution, in semi-ward 'Zelengora'. The audience was presented by convicts, members of music, journalism, painting and carving sections.

One of the most famous prison poets Hadži Senad, who is a multiple winner of the literary competitions in Valjevo, is serving penalty in OCA Sremska Mitrovica. The journal has a large number of practical texts for prisoners, and among others, the text of laziness, but also *How to explain to your children that the father is in prison* by Dr. Zoran Milivojević.

Among other things, the top 10 books on prisons are listed:

1. The Count of Monte Cristo, Alexandre Dumas
2. Mr. Blue: Memoirs of a Renegade, Edward Heward Bunker
3. The House of the Dead, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
4. The Damned Yard, Ivo Andrić
5. The Year the Locusts Have Devoured, Borislav Pekić
6. 7000 Days in Siberia, Karlo Steiner
7. The Gulag Archipelago, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
8. Vreme vlasti (A time of Government), Dobrica Ćosić
9. One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
10. The Kolyma Tales, Varlam Shalamov

➤ *Signposts*, Journal OCA Valjevo (numbers 74, 75 and 76 from 2012 and 2013)

This magazine is the most comprehensive, probably due to the fact that precisely OCA Valjevo organizes a literary festival and that in each journal there are some written works. Additionally, they have a section *Laureates*, in which, in each publication, the most successful prisoners are presented - the best athlete, the best in work on screen printing, and the best in cultural activities....

For illustration purposes, I quote a segment from a number in which the convict Antal Skendžić, the best in the field of culture, is presented:

"Present in all cultural events as a member of the literary section, he took part in the republic festival of convicts' literary creativity. He is a member of the art section 'Drawing on the glass' and took part in an art colony Obnica 2012. He is also of great help in organizing various cultural events, shows, academies ... Still, his greatest merit is in the field of library work, both in the maintenance and operation records of existing library fund, and on promoting and motivating other prisoners to read books. "

When it comes to the library, the OCA Valjevo has good cooperation with the Library of the city of Valjevo, which annually, during the write-off of fund, sends books to this prison unit. In 2012 it registered 174 new books of different authors and genres. Library book fund

includes more than 2,000 books. In a year 326 books were borrowed for reading, which is a monthly basis of up to 30 titles.

The Institute organizes the course of glass painting, and frequent visits of Valjevo's cultural association Abrašević beautify prisoners's days with their program.

When mentioning industry, i.e. business activities of prisoners of OCA Valjevo, we could say that the brand of the prison is a metal container. It was exhibited and awarded at the Construction Fair. Yearly, 35 containers are produced, which are then distributed to the city of Belgrade, Customs, road builders... In addition to containers and carpentry products, they also produce metal beds, chassis for transformer stations, furniture for children's playgrounds and a novelty - children's sleds. The bars for other prisons as well.

Before they reach the workshop, convicts first go through a testing department, to see who could perform which task, depending on the intellectual ability, emotional and social maturity and the level of education. After they are expected to go through training in school workshops, after which they are prepared to earn wages in the prison factory. A hardworking convict can earn a modest 5,000 dinars a month.

In the school carpentry workshop, a number of portable and tabletop art easels used for the purposes of the art section and art colony was made, and the biggest part of the job is making furniture from plywood. The total number of convicts who specializes in making furniture is 120.

Non-governmental organizations and associations dealing with prison policies

Earlier we mentioned the specificity of prisons and the necessity of the various activities carried out by the various institutions and through different approaches. Work of prisons and their good functioning would be impossible to imagine without external collaborators, initiatives and ideas. In Serbia there are several such groups, and now we will mention the most relevant for this work.

ApsArt – Centre for Theatre Research

ApsArt was founded in 2004 with the aim of creating new theater tendencies, where you do not play for an audience, but with the audience. This approach of experimental theater tries to establish a right to culture as one of fundamental human rights, which would mean that every citizen has the right to participate in the development of a work of art, as well as to participate in it in whatever role they want. Besides vulnerable groups, ApsArt works with children and young people. So far they have held a series of educational workshops, played performances in prisons, schools, hospitals, parks, streets...

For the thesis it is interesting to mention that several theater workshops in the only penitentiary for women in Požarevac were held in 2007 and 2008. Dramatic techniques that were used were intended for personal, and as well as for group empowerment of women.

One of the more sustainable projects of the Aps Art is drama workshops at the Special Prison Hospital, which are called the Wizards of O.Z. (O.Z. - District Prison) and were held during the period 2006-2012. During this period, more than 200 young inmates and convicts, mostly from D department (mandatory measure of addiction treatment) passed through the six months of workshops, from some of which three performances were later created:

- *Wizards of O.Z.* - a type of non-verbal physical theater. The play was performed in CI Vuk Karadžić and in the Belgrade Youth Center in 2007. The costumes were created by the convicts.
- *Whose are you, Peter?* - a forum play staged as a part of BITEF polyphony in 2008, as well as in YOI Valjevo. The play questions the way a convict and all the problems he encountered in attempting to transform, in an informal way.
- *Pinocchio 4-0-D* - based on the homonymous novel and performed in CI Vuk in 2009.

Interestingly, Aleksandra Jelić, director and founder of ApsArt, with whom I spoke, sees as the greatest success of this project the fact that the prisoners who participated in this program became volunteers and collaborators on future projects after the execution of their penalties.

Afterwards, ApsArt started a project of legislative theaters, i.e. theaters in the service of human rights under the name: *From violation to creation of law*. This project leads us to a conflict of opinion, i.e. different information that I have obtained. The idea was that prisoners independently create content of a play in which they are acting, through familiarizing the

audience with all the problems they have. As a result *Banja Robbie's* show was made, which was played in only two prisons. After that Aleksandra received information that the play is being put on hold for a certain time, because it sets out the false information, and that the adjustment of the script is required. ApsArt, as the first and only professional organization that has worked in this way with convicts, then ceased all further cooperation with DECS and individual prisons and oriented to work with former offenders.

On the other hand, DECS offered me information that the play could not continue being played due to high costs of security and transportation of participants. Although we are aware that prison is a closed and controlled circle, the rights and freedom of speech should not be questionable, but it is obvious that the atmosphere in Serbia is a little bit different.

After this experience, ApsArt started a project *From violation to creation of law*, in whose implementation, as a volunteer, I also participated. The project consisted of an exhibition of works of 13 former convicts from Europe, the conference: *Am I entitled to art?*, as well as the presentation of the manual: *Prison for Beginners - Illustrated Manual of Prison Slang*. The conference proved to be much needed, because a large part of the cultural workers took part in it and brought into question this right. Aleksandra stresses that the work of the organization in prisons is definitely terminated, and is of the opinion that no one would ever be able to do something serious there.

NEOSTART – Centre for Crime Prevention and post-penal help

Another one of active organizations is the Centre for Crime Prevention and post-penal help - NEOSTART, whose primary focus is post-penal treatment. NEOSTART actually largely deals with convicted persons who have served their prison sentence and offers them assistance to integrate into society.

Their assistance, in addition to assistance in active job search for former convicts (e.g. journal *Face of the Street*), consists of helpline, preparation for various administrative duties of citizens (prisoners often in isolation do not know much about the new documents, transportation tickets, etc.).

So far, this organization has had three projects:

1. Assessment of the needs of former convicts in postpenal period - The project was created with the aim of providing emotional support, providing information and legal advice, in order to avoid and mitigate the consequences of the closure felt by the persons immediately after leaving the institution. Contact with the users was accomplished through helplines, letters and emails.
2. Personal assistance in the field, carried out by the field volunteers from NEOSTART. Within this service, support was provided to the users in the field, in order to realize their rights in formal institutions (courts, police, centers for social work, health centers, municipalities ...).
3. Workshops "What could be better" in cooperation with NGO Veza. In the premises of the partner organization, weekly workshops with former prisoners were implemented, where they presented their experiences of residence in prison and after being released from prison, with the aim of obtaining information of importance for the improvement of post-penal assistance, but also the causes re-offending in order to combat it.

Publication '*Life after prison*' - this publication was created with the aim to answer all questions which an ex-convict may have, and during the last link of his integration into society.

The Association of Detainees and Prisoners of the Republic of Serbia

Since recently, the Association of Detainees and Prisoners of the Republic of Serbia, which aims at formal representation and legal counselling for all prisoners in front of public institutions, has been active. In the time to come we will be able to see if this organisation will function and in which manner.

ArtBrut Serbia

ArtBrut Serbia operated from 2001 to 2014 as an informal group of artists, art historians and all those interested in "healing artistic expression." In 2014 Goran Stojčević registered organization and since then has drawn attention to this kind of creative work through numerous performances, continuing the idea previously mentioned Dubbufet's. This

organization received the most public attention thanks to the work with Kristijan Golubović⁵⁷, especially as his artistic expression has been shown through several public exhibitions throughout Serbia entitled "See you in a Drawing."⁵⁸

Realized artistic projects in (and of) prisons

Facing the Day (2006) - a documentary, made in Croatia, directed by Ivona Juka. Feature-length documentary, directed by Ivona Juka, duration 72 minutes.

It is particularly interesting that this project has received the support of Croatian Ministry of Culture, and is one of the rare documentaries that was screened in Croatian theaters. Prisoners who are currently serving penalty, and who are preparing the show that will be performed before an audience, participate in the documentary. Here we see a sudden changes in mood, insecurity and all the emotions that govern them, stemming from the fear of the outside world, from condemnation and different views. The film shows labeling as such, and which convicts are always followed by, in a magnificent manner.

Legacy (2011) - a film, originated in Serbia, directed and screen played by Jelena Marković and Mirko Arlič. It was filmed in the prison hospital of District Prison and the premiere was at the Fest 2015. Although support for the realization of this film came from the Ministry of Justice, DECS and the District Prison, the financial support of the Ministry of Culture was absent, and the screening of the film, for now, is performed in small cultural centers in Serbia, at the invitation of the director.

Although ApsArt is not active any more in cooperation with the Management, prisons have had several performances in its own production. One of these is "*Notes from cell No. 12*," which had its premiere in the Belgrade Youth Centre in 2015. The performance was realized in cooperation with NGO "Centar za rehabilitaciju imaginacijom." Until now it has been played in 16 different prison units and, according to the media, reactions of the convicts are excellent. The idea is that prisoners through theater play, by concretizing the problem from

⁵⁷Kristijan Golubovic has has a prison record since the 90s and was sentenced for a number of offenses. He is currently at large.

⁵⁸The allusion to the documentary "See You in the Obituary," which, among other things, shows the life of Kristijan Golubović

the role that gives the opportunity to relocate to other, perceive the world easier from a distance, to try the different settings and to express their feelings.

Another new piece created in December 2014, was a play Alan Ford. In the District Prison in Belgrade, as a part of New Year celebrations, this play, which puts the cult comic book hero with Serbian characteristics into Serbian prison, was organized.

In the women's prison in Požarevac, in October 2014, an exhibition "*Šumadijska skirt 1860-1960*" was held with the support of the Ethnographic Museum. During one month duration of the exhibition, prisoners had the opportunity to visit a number of workshops which could be valuable, not only because of training techniques of sewing, but also for the sake of inspiration.

Finally, we should mention the Facebook community group *Zatvorska priča*. This group was created by a prisoner who began to send letters about his experience to his friend at large, and the latter published them online. The Group has seen a major growth in members, which is a clear indication that people are interested in the experiences, but also personal stories from this topic.

In the world there are a number of festivals that deal with this topic, and it appears a lot of work could be done in Serbia as well. More about the possibilities, as well as the sublimation of everything stated is the final chapter.

8. Prison art scene in the world

In the previous chapter we have seen the current creative activities in Serbia. In order to have better comparison, this, 8th chapter, will briefly show several good practices from the world, afterwards we will have a wider picture of the creative attempts within prison system, in general.

Many practices in the world show that prisoners can be very creative and that creativity is awakening positive spirit in people which is more than necessary in the institutions such as prisons. There are many examples of either prisoners being involved in artistic projects, or other artists outside the prison inspiring prisoners to raise their creativity.

ArtBrut

One of the most advanced practices of involving people from the margins of society in art can be evidenced in Lausanne, Switzerland. The concept is given a name “Art Brut”⁵⁹ initiated by French painter Jean Dubuffet who, from 1945, assembled a collection of objects created by the inmates of various psychiatric hospitals and prisons - solitary or outcast persons. In their creations, he saw "an entirely pure, raw artistic operation that the creator fully reinvents in all its phases, as spurred uniquely by his own impulses." The idea of Art Brut is, therefore, based on certain social characteristics and aesthetic peculiarities.

People involved in this concept are self-taught creators who produce Art Brut, people on the borders of society who bear a spirit of rebellion and tend to be impenetrable to collective standards and values. They create, with total disregard of public acclaim or other people's opinions. They seek neither recognition by others, nor public praise: any universe that they create is meant exclusively for themselves. Using generally unprecedented means and materials, they are not obliged, in any way, to any artistic traditions, preferring to utilize themselves in highly singular figurative means.

Apart from the artist exhibitions, the organization started architecture projects as well. One of the mixed art project happening right now is Art Brut Biennials. Launched in 2013, the Art

➤ ⁵⁹<http://www.artbrut.ch/fr/21070/collection-art-brut-lausanne>

Brut Biennials continues with the Architecture exhibition, presenting 250 drawings, paintings, sculptures and textile creations. By 51 different Art Brut authors, the works in the show accordingly testify to a very wide range of techniques, materials, dimensions and formal languages.

Movie festival in Russia

Another great example of prisoners inspired by art comes from Russia - Movie festival containing only movies produced by prisoners. The name of the festival is very symbolical and important for the people involved in its creation – “The Hope”. This unusual film festival is held in Sankt Petersburg, Russia. The initial idea for this Festival has been very rapidly accepted in the whole world, and it is now officially registered with the international movie festival organization. In only four months after starting, it has witnessed a great response coming from all around the world. At the moment 217 movies are participating. They come from the prisons from the entire world: Poland, Sweden, Denmark, France, Germany, Latvia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Indonesia. Furthermore, Russia and Ukraine started their own national festivals. In regards to the movies, there are many different types presented. What is common for them is that they are very sincere, full of touching emotions. Among amateur ones, some professional movies have been presented as well, as there are many cameramen, screen writers, producers etc. among prisoners. Movies mainly touch two important topics: the first one is a message to young people: “Watch out – Prison!” where they share a message to young audience not to repeat their mistakes. The other topic is based on a common question: how to get back to society after prison sentence is over.

One of the best movies was filmed by the man who is sentenced for murder and who was imprisoned for 7 years before he produced his movie. Nevertheless, a chance to be seen and awarded is given to all the participants of this Festival, with the probability of their sentences being shortened, as this is an additional positive factor in their imprisoned lives.

Picture 8, Bird perspective, Jurgen Chill⁶⁰

⁶⁰– German artist Jurgen Chill has found inspiration in prison cells, which he pictured from the bird perspective



Norwegian examples

Norway is known as a country where jails are very humane:

Halden prison is one of the best in the world. It is the highest-security prison, holding rapists, murderers and pedophiles. Since it was opened several years ago, it has received a reputation as the world's most humane prison. It is the flagship of the Norwegian justice system, where the focus is on rehabilitation, rather than the punishment. When Halden was opened, it attracted attention globally for its design and its relative magnificence. Set in a forest, the prison blocks are a model of minimalist elegance. At times, the environment feels more of a Scandinavian boutique hotel than a class A prison. Every Halden cell has a flat screen television, its own toilet and a shower.

Prisoners are unlocked at 7.30a.m. and locked up for the night at 8.30p.m. During the day they are encouraged to attend work and educational activities, with a daily wage of 53 kroner (£5.60), for those who leave their cell. The role of the prison guard is very different from the one in other countries. Norwegians have a completed two-year university course, with an emphasis on human rights, ethics and the law. At Halden there are 340 staff members (including teachers and healthcare workers) to the 245 male inmates. Staff is encouraged to mingle with inmates, talking to them, counselling them, and working with them to combat their criminality. A great deal of attention is given to making sure people have homes and jobs to go to when they leave prison, and that family ties are maintained.

Another great example are two Norwegian designers specializing in furniture and spatial design. They launched their first product called “Bake Me a Cake” last year. This is a creative lamp design made of oak wood and glass. Beyond its unique design, which makes the lamp especially interesting, is the fact that the inmates of a prison in Bergen, Norway are the manufacturers of this design. The Norwegian correctional services, Northern Lighting, and Morten & Jonas, have collaborated on this project plan with the vision to develop a new way of thinking in prisons.

Picture 9, lamp designed in Norwegian prisons



Norway has one of the most progressive prison systems in the world, placing a primary focus on rehabilitating the prisoner with a secondary aim of punishing him for the crime. Designers of these prisons believe that regressive prison systems do not work, and that the focus should be on treating prisoners as humanely as possible concerning their incarceration, in order to focus on their return to society. The prison design in Norway strives to look as natural as possible. For example, although there is often a huge wall surrounding the compound, to keep prisoners inside, this wall may be blocked by huge trees, so as to not look too rough. The things offered to these prisoners, besides brick walls instead of institutional concrete, seem shocking to anyone familiar with the American prison system. Inmates are offered cooking lessons, music studios, xbox, television sets, and mini refrigerators.

Picture 10, Halden Prison



Prison systems in Norway use creative designs to focus on rehabilitating prisoners. The natural architecture and use of funds of up to \$1m on paintings, photography, and light installations aim to ease the mental burdens of imprisonment, while programs like “Bake Me a Cake” offer prisoners the ability to exercise their own creative talents.

Another example of creative design in Norwegian prisons is the use of color on the prison walls, as opposed to the stark white in American prison systems. Interior designers specifically use colors to invoke different moods inside the prisoners. For example, orange is placed in areas such as the prison library, to create a feeling of energy, and green is painted on walls of the prison cells to create a calming feeling.

Picture 11, Use of color on prison walls



Although the rate of crime is drastically different in the United States than it is in Norway, prison systems in the US can gain a valuable lesson from the power of design to focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment – even in prison systems not as open as those of the

Norwegian prison systems. For example, architects in California have suggested that architects should be open to designing prisons without focusing on punishment, rather than having prisons designed by less-trained people that may create structures even less humane.

9. Recommendations and Conclusion

The prison system in Serbia is specifically structured system in which there is a great number of rules. This system, as well as those around the world, encounters a number of

problems and, as it seems, not so many concrete solutions and proposals.

There is not a 100% good example of functioning of a prison anywhere in the world. There is no manual on what and how to do concretely, how to manage a prison best, how to successfully implement the re-socialization of ex-convicts, etc. What does exist are recommendations and successful experiences in certain segments. Due to the complexity of the entire system, it remains clear that the sporadic successful experiences are what we should observe and try to implement.

In Serbia, regarding the conditions in prisons, there is some progress. Although the visible changes, mainly those which are referred to as "cosmetics", i.e. expanding the capacity, painting and better material conditions, major reforms have only just started. Although my field experience showed lack of understanding (or rather, focus on other segments) by top management, when it comes to the application of art in therapy, I consider the delay in the implementation of these actions unjustified. The problem has to be addressed from several levels and at all levels. It would be unreasonable to wait, for example, the reconstruction of all buildings in order to possibly seclude or make an art studio. Prisoners should already be creating now, at this moment, in the room where it can be done with the available material. And then, as a result of dedicated employee attitudes, some concrete pieces of art would be represented at the market. The same principle must be applied to all other areas where the change is necessary.

As the State and Management are busy with legislation, it is obvious that the area which is the subject of this thesis remains without great support and that a key role in the development of this sphere should be played by artists and cultural workers. Their initiatives through the work of various organizations and associations could make a significant progress. The problem, however, is due to not finding a mutual language between these two currents, and hence the initiatives are rare and often short-lived. In order to ensure and enable this cooperation, it would be good to provide a certain type of memorandum of cooperation between the prison administration and, for example, the Association of Artists of Serbia or the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, through concrete instruments, on the national level. Prisons are in need of young professionals from various fields, who would use their knowledge and ideas to revive the grim world of banishment.

We have seen that it is not easy, but it is possible to organize a Festival of convicts' art. The question is why this and these events are not covered by media, and why the newspaper and TV stories are full of nothing but bad news about the prisons, while the success stories are rarely promoted.

After all this, it is clear that prisons are a particular picture of the whole society, but that their work also depends on the entire system. Precisely because of that, the worst conditions and the biggest problems exist in prisons in developing countries and countries with poor (economic) policy.

We can conclude that there is no clearly defined prison art scene in Serbia, nor that art as psychotherapy is used to the extent that it could be used. Finally, I will try to show, through concrete proposals of launching the Festival of prison art, the realistic possibilities for the creation of such a platform, which exists in the world.

Establishing a Festival of prison art in Serbia

It is clear that there is a need for deprived people to be more involved in cultural activities. On the other hand, with good, artistic approach, people outside should (and could) be motivated to take part (as audience, authors...) in this festival. Both sides could benefit from this form of festival because it would open so many questions, and show that art is sometimes the only way to destroy barriers. Approach where prison treatment consists only of being imprisoned is not sustainable any more. Those people need to think about what they have done, to realize it and to be inspired to perform better in order to reintegrate into society, once when they are free. There are several ways of self-improvement, and one, for sure, is art.

In the planning of the possible Festival, there are several legislative obstacles, which cannot be misunderstood or put under question. First of all is the security. It is clear that the prisoners who would want to be a part of the artistic activities in the prisons, would have to be either from open or from semi-open parts. With this obstacle in mind, it is reasonable why the similar initiatives are lacking.

Furthermore, as initiator of this kind of program, you would have to be prepared for another obstacle – not all the people in prisons are ready, motivated or talented for being a part of your Festival. This obstacle could also be seen as a positive factor, because one would have an opportunity to work with a small team, with those who are really motivated to change something in their lives.

Another thing that needs to be considered is the need of an educated and experienced social worker who would have to be a part of the team. His or her presence is of the crucial importance for prisoners' behavior, progress and motivation. Depending on the circumstances in which one would want to organize the festival, one additional obstacle could be the impossibility of communication with audience – it is not allowed for audience to come to prisons, which means that this kind of Festival cannot be organized in a venue like this. (At the same time, it would cause a lot of challenges to transfer audience into the prisons, having in mind that they are usually outside the cities, plus the number of potentially interested would be decreased because they would be frightened by the fact they are going to prison, even if it was for a cultural activity, such as Festival).

Now, when I have stated all the possible obstacles, I can move on with the idea. It is important to underline that this approach (with mentioning the obstacles first, without any mission of Festival being discussed) was necessary, because working within these circumstances demands reflexion on the security of all the participants, all the legislative procedures, and only then, after all of this is put into consideration, one can proceed with artistic needs and ideas.

With the Festival of Prison Art, which is not a new form in world, we could maybe make some changes. We could all benefit from it, bearing in mind that thinking about others could make us more inspired, think more about what could be done, and finally – make some changes. With this proactive approach, our society would make one (big) step, as opposing to gaining nationalism and misunderstanding of different people. As Rolf Dennemann said it: *For individuals who see, hear, and feel something in a play, film, image, or word,*

*something may change in their lives – perhaps motivate decisions that would otherwise not be made.*⁶¹

*This is not changing the world, but it is a small, sometimes subtle intervention into the process of life.*⁶²

When it comes to the program of the Festival, establishing the play could be a first phase. The main item is the script of the play. It has to be inclusive, so the actors, directors and others, could benefit from it. We, as initiators, have to be aware that prisoners need to be motivated all the time, and the first step is to offer a good script, which could help them find themselves, realize what the next step in their lives could or would be, and help them proceed... The ones interested in paintings, handicrafts etc. could have their own exhibitions in the city center. It is the same for literary plays.

However, these steps are only the beginning. They need more visibility, and that is possible only through establishing the Festival, because nowadays it is not possible for all interested people to attend these events. Therefore, I propose establishing the Festival which could last for several days, with regular exhibition of paintings, literary workshops for prisoners and interested people, choir and orchestra plays, and at least one theatre play. It is noticeable, that current situation is absolutely opposite. Except mentioned colonies, none of other activities in prisons are active. The most important thing for all the activities is to have artists involved as mentors. They are the ones who could moderate the workshops, help the prisoners improve their art, and monitor the personal improvement and thoughts.

This would make a new atmosphere, where new possible cooperations could be made. People in prisons could be more involved in art scene in Serbia, at least as help when it comes to making costumes, design etc. The representatives of culture, who constantly lack money, could establish new partnerships with prisons, so all of the parties benefit.

I see this festival as the promotion of prison art and establishing of new partnerships. Those people need to be more involved in society, and with all the capacities they have (we

⁶¹Patsalidis, Savas: *Who's there? Theater Festivals in search of postmodern audience*, in: *Theatre Festival Forum*, 2011.

⁶²Dennemann, Rolf: *Audience: An Object of Desire*, in: *Theatre Festival Forum*, 2011.

cannot forget that almost all of the prisons have their own manufactures) they could be of great help to cultural institutions. With making a new visibility to them, new paths will be made. With all the mentioned above, I believe that obligatory part - bringing art closer to people - will have been achieved.

Establishing a retail chain for products made in prisons in Serbia

I propose the establishment of a new creative-production chain in which the interested prisoners will have the opportunity to learn how to produce concrete design products (magnets, souvenirs, pieces of clothing, fashion shopping bag, greeting cards, etc.) which will be distributed in shops in Belgrade. The money earned from the sale of the product would be used for procurement of new materials, wages for prisoners, as well as programs held in avenue in Belgrade. This venue would be an authentic place, marked clearly with manifest of its existence, and would have a triple task:

1. Integration of former offenders into society through employment (former convicts would work at the venue);
2. Employment and a kind of art therapy for inmates who would make products;
3. Integration, destroying stigma and a greater public understanding of the former offenders who have served their penalties and have equal opportunities to continue their careers.

Draft name of this venue would be RADiONiCa⁶³, where ONI i.e. they (the category of second, isolated, with a clear allusion to the prisoners), would by RAD i.e. work, get a chance to feel accepted, employed and useful - to be properly integrated into society and show different with their example. Workshops would be a sort of hub for factors from different spheres, which have connections with this vulnerable group: students of art faculties, the ones active in the field of human rights, as well as different individuals that offer a solution through art. The following activities necessary for the successful implementation of this project are:

1. Gathering of designers, artists, photographers and other artists who could perform training for the development of specific objects in specific prisons.

⁶³A word play: radionica = workshop, but when divided into partial root words: RAD = work; i = and; ONI = they

2. After creating, the products are sold in RADiONiCa (preliminary it could be Choomich Design District - central location, low retail venue rents, design hub ...) and through social networks.
3. Simultaneously with the sale of products, promotional activities of the objectives of this program are presented to the public, in order to increase the number of active participants in the whole process.
4. In communication with the Direction for Execution of Criminal Sanctions, if necessary, the number of workshops and possible partnerships, participation in tenders, as well as different events in the workshop space would be organized and expanded.

Money earned from sales of products would be used for the purchase of raw materials, as well as for convicts and ex-convicts' wages. This would establish the idea of sustainability and potentially open new opportunities for the further marketing of the goods (in the larger towns in Serbia).

These ideas are stated with the intention to demonstrate that it is possible to identify new ways of functioning. Prisons are in the need of systemic changes that require an active approach of factors from several spheres. Inter-sectorial cooperation should be the first task. What the State should do, as the initiator of inter-sectorial cooperation, is to create benefits for everyone who engages prisoners, regardless of the type of cooperation and engagement.

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11. Author's biography

Srđan Miljević (1985) was born and raised in Belgrade, Serbia. After graduating from the First Economic school in Belgrade he has decided to change his educational course and enrolled BA studies at Faculty of Philology. After completion of general literature and theory of literature course, he enrolled MA programme at the Belgrade University of Arts, within Unesco chair for Cultural Policy and Management.

Srđan has a wide scope of professional experience, with expertise in nongovernmental organisations. He has been active in the field of human rights as a Project Assistant in several international NGOs, as well as human rights activist. Srđan is currently working as a Financial Officer for German Ngo forumZFD.

In 2015. he was a part of Creative Mentorship programme in Serbia, with Jasminka Petrović as his mentor. What they were working on is the idea of Srđan's first book and his path of Serbian cultural scene as a future cultural worker. He is a permanent contributor to the several newspapers on different topics.