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**TERRITORIALISATION AND INCARCERATION:  
THE NEXUS BETWEEN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT,  
RELIGIOUS PRAXIS AND IMPERIAL RULE  
IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY POLAND AND LITHUANIA**

**Abstract**

Modern prisons are viewed in this paper as highly specific configurations, providing a critical infrastructure for the forging of a new relationship between subjects and the imperial state. The comparison of three rather different temporal and spatial practices of territorial incorporation makes it possible to describe the introduction of modern statehood in nineteenth century Poland and Lithuania as a long-term process, including a radically changed legal framework. It was accompanied by the ongoing codification of penal law by all three partitioning powers, which is outlined in the first part of this paper. The article offers a deep analysis of the establishment of new practices of incarceration in remote places (*vis-à-vis* the imperial capitals) as an inherent part of a changing relationship between *centre* and *periphery* within the Prussian, Russian and Habsburg Empires. They were among a broad range of new bureaucratic practices fostering the territorialisation of statehood. By enlarging the presence of selected actors in remote parts of the Central European Empires, they established a direct and bidirectional relationship between the representatives of the state and its subjects. By analysing the way in which the partitioning powers re-used monasteries as infrastructures for the introduction of new penal practices in the early nineteenth century, this article offers a better understanding of the long-term structural changes. A two-step argumentation follows the functional logic of the relationship between religious spaces designed for introspection and spaces for solitary confinement. As a consequence of the reform discourse, new prison complexes were erected in the second half of the nineteenth century. They produced a highly institutionalized and structured space for the reconfiguration of the relationship between the subject and the state. An ideal version of this relationship was described in normative documents, such as prison instructions. In analysing them, this article focuses on the state-led implementation of religious practices, as they played a major role in the redesign of this relationship following the establishment of new prison complexes.

**Keywords:** incarceration, prisons, monasteries, territorialization, religious practices

## I INTRODUCTION

The threefold partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the late eighteenth century was the starting point for a long-term reconfiguration of statehood in the region. Throughout the entire nineteenth century Prussia, Russia, and the Habsburg Empire increasingly aimed at carrying out a monopoly on power over a strictly demarcated territory.<sup>1</sup> Prisons were among those public institutions which served as infrastructures for this process of territorialisation of statehood.<sup>2</sup>

The best-known text on solitary confinement, published by Michel Foucault, hinted already decades ago that the practice of solitary confinement was closely linked to the history of religious spaces.<sup>3</sup> In Central Europe this link became particularly visible over the course of a systematic liquidation of Catholic monasteries and convents starting in the late eighteenth century, while in the second half of the nineteenth century religious spaces were central to the plans of the partitioning powers to construct new prison complexes.

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<sup>1</sup> This notion refers to Max Weber's classic definition of 'legitimate physical power', arguing that monarchies provided a certain definition of legitimized power: 'das Monopol legitimen physischen Zwanges', Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen, 1921), 29.

<sup>2</sup> The prison is seen as an institutional part of a larger nexus between the state and its attempt to fight crime. Barry S. Godfrey and Graeme Dunstall (eds.), *Crime and empire, 1840–1940. Criminal justice in local and global context* (Cullompton, 2005). New overviews of the nineteenth century history of incarceration were published following the foundation of the Second Polish Republic in 1918: Emil S. Rappaport, *Więziennictwo* (Lwów, 1928). Under communist rule an overview of the first half of the nineteenth century was published: Monika Senkowska, *Kara więzienia w Królestwie Polskim w pierwszej połowie XIX wieku* (Wrocław, 1961). Other texts cover specific parts of the former Commonwealth: Jerzy Czołgoszewski, 'Więziennictwo Księstwa Warszawskiego (1807–1815)', *Przegląd Więziennictwa Polskiego* (1991), 129–42; *idem*, 'Organizacja więziennictwa i służba więzienna w Królestwie w latach 1815–1868', *Przegląd Więziennictwa Polskiego*, 85 (2014), 115–42. A recent legal history, written in German, includes an overview of the nineteenth century: Joanna Grzywa-Holten, *Strafvollzug in Polen – Historische, rechtliche, rechtstatsächliche, menschenrechtliche und international vergleichende Aspekte* (Mönchengladbach, 2015). Furthermore, we can find a broad range of empirical microstudies dedicated to single penitentiaries: Centralny Zarząd Zakładów Karnych, Wydział Szkolenia, *Prawo penitencjarne: Historia doktryn penitencjarnych i więziennictwa* (Warszawa, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York, 1977).

This article will compare two historical processes in the Polish and Lithuanian lands of Austria, Russia and Prussia: First, the takeover of monastic spaces, which historically were built to foster religious introspection, as a form of territorialisation of power; and secondly, the impact of Western European discourses on the reform of prisons and the transformation of practices of incarceration in Central and Eastern Europe. In England it was not only Jeremy Bentham – whose prison reform project became famous almost 200 years later even though it was never adopted in Great Britain – who pointed out the need for a general reform of prisons. A broad movement argued that there was both a need to modernize the infrastructure and a need to enforce a strict religious regime. While the former was about the assurance of basic health conditions, the latter intended to make use of solitary confinement in order to prevent the prisoners from bad influences and to expose them, without disruption, to evangelical texts.<sup>4</sup>

In the case of partitioned Poland-Lithuania, the analysis will focus on the transfer of ideas and practices among the partitioning powers as part of a trans-imperial exchange process. The aim is to include the Polish-Lithuanian lands into the global history of incarceration. This process is described as the search for new architectural forms which would represent the nexus between the state, its legally punished citizen, and the role of religious introspection as a way to reform the imprisoned criminals.<sup>5</sup>

The systematic dissolution of monasteries and convents started in the Habsburg realm even before the second and third partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, i.e. in 1782. In the Prussian partition this process was a direct outcome of the short period of Napoleonic rule in the region, and part of a broader attempt to introduce remodelled modern state structures after 1810. The article thus refers to the medieval Franciscan monastery at Rawicz in Greater Poland (*Wielkopolska*), where Prussian bureaucrats re-adapted

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<sup>4</sup> Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin Dahlem (Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, hereinafter: GSPK) HA, Rep. 89. Geheimes Zivilkabinett, sig. 18591, Straf-, Erziehungs- und Gefangenen-Anstalten, 15–16, Bericht von Ober-Leutnant Busse über englische Gefängnisse vom 30. Nov. 1841.

<sup>5</sup> Yanni Kotsonis, 'Introduction: A Modern Paradox – Subject and Citizen in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century', in David L. Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis (eds.), *Russia, Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices* (New York, 2000), 1–16.

the idea of solitary confinement as it was introduced in England by Quakers.

The Duchy of Warsaw was formally under Prussian rule between 1807 and 1815. It continued to have a special status among the three partitioned territories when it became the Kingdom of Poland (also referred to as 'Congress Poland'). While formally an independent Polish state, it was *de facto* part of a real union with Russia. On one hand, the Kingdom of Poland experienced the suppression of Catholic monasteries and convents as an outcome of Russian interference.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, *enlightened* bureaucrats such as Ksawery Potocki developed original and local ideas on how to reform the state, and Fryderyk Skarbek proposed his own program on how to modernize prison-building in the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>7</sup>

A large share of historical Lithuanian lands, including Vil'na and Hrodna, became fully a part of the Russian Empire already in the late eighteenth century. Until imperial Russia witnessed the first wave of anti-state violence, its bureaucrats kept a surprisingly low profile, and even the Jesuit order – abandoned in most European lands already in late eighteenth century after a decision issued by the Pope in 1773 – as well as other congregations were able to flourish in the first decades of the nineteenth century. It was only in the aftermath of the uprisings in 1830/1 and 1863/4 that the Russian Empire place major constraints on the leading brotherhoods, such as the Dominican order, and seized their properties. In places like Vil'na there was a direct link between the attempts to punish the participants of the insurrection and the need for new prison spaces. Thus, the Dominican monastery, located in the heart of Vil'na, was re-used precisely during the uprising to facilitate the establishment of a direct grip on the uprising participants by the Russian state.

The second part of this paper argues that the *longue durée* of reform discourse led to the erection of new prison complexes in the 1840s, which took the idea of solitary confinement even further. In order to relate Poland and Lithuania to the global spread of modern prison architecture, the text refers to new complexes built in Berlin Moabit in 1849 and right bank St. Petersburg in 1890. Both prisons became

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<sup>6</sup> Piotr Gmach, *Kasaty Zakonów na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i Śląska 1773–1914* (Lublin, 1984), 175–92.

<sup>7</sup> Czołgoszewski, 'Więziennictwo Księstwa Warszawskiego', 129–42.

model infrastructures for new projects implemented on Polish and Lithuanian lands.

Some of the core functions of the newly built prison complexes in Berlin, St. Petersburg, Wronki and Vil'na resembled the spatial structure of monasteries. In addition they provided new religious spaces in order to facilitate the re-education process of prisoners via a strict spatial isolation and a tight schedule of evangelical practices. One aim of this paper is to show the inner link and to explain the contradiction between the systematic liquidation of influential Catholic orders as separate religious institutions, and the re-usage of their seized facilities for the implementation of religious practices aimed at rehabilitation.

Inasmuch as this article covers a full century, it refers to the long-term impact of the reformist debate on the transfer of ideas between the Prussian to the Russian parts of the former *Rzeczpospolita*. By means of this transfer of ideas and architectural forms, both Poland and Lithuania were included in global processes. Evidence will be offered based on various cases in Lithuania and Greater Poland. This comparative approach creates the necessity to combine a synchronic comparison between the partitioning powers and to analyse these examples through diachronic lenses. The aim of this procedure is to look at Polish and Lithuanian history, focusing on the emergence of modern statehood as a phenomenon changing the partitioned territories.<sup>8</sup>

## II RELIGIOUS AND PENAL PRACTICES: PRISONS AS SPACES OF INTERSECTION BETWEEN THE STATE AND ITS CITIZENS

Throughout the nineteenth century, religious practices were at the core of new ideas of re-education. Long before the introduction of new prison complexes, the state used religious spaces as infrastructure for the implementation of new penal codices. In the eighteenth century

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<sup>8</sup> The research into other practices of territorial incorporation is well documented. Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, *Zwischen polnischer Ständegesellschaft und preußischem Obrigkeitsstaat vom Königlichen Preußen zu Westpreußen (1756–1806)* (München, 1995). Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on Russia's Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (DeKalb, 1996).

prisons used to be part of fractioned, local, and socially-bounded legal systems, which were not yet codified into a set of texts and rules binding upon all parts of the state. The long-term process of the codification of penal law can be read as attempt of active self-transformation of Empires towards *enlightened* forms of monarchical governance. The process began already in the mid-eighteenth century. Following the French revolution it was intensified by the impact of the Napoleonic order in early nineteenth century Central Europe.

Once the codification of existing legal documents started, prisons became crucial infrastructures for the central state. Previously, most prisons in Poland and Lithuania were run by regional, social, local and religious bodies. Therefore they did not create a direct link between a modern state and its citizens. However, with the ongoing codification of criminal law, prisons came to rather resemble the complex socio-political structure in which they were established.

In Austria a codex of civil law was already introduced in 1766. Parallel attempts to codify penal regulations took speed. In 1786 a unified body of penal law called *Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana* was also introduced in the Polish lands incorporated into Austria.<sup>9</sup> Internal debate over how to combine absolutism and enlightenment led to considerable changes, visible in the introduction of a codex called *Allgemeines Gesetzbuch über Verbrechen und deren Bestrafung* in 1787. The overarching codification works resulted finally in the codex *Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* (ABGB) as early as 1811.<sup>10</sup>

The peak of this process was paralleled by the Napoleonic wars, which had a long-term impact on the legal landscape throughout Central and even Eastern Europe, introducing the *code civil*. After short periods of Prussian and Napoleonic rule, central parts of Poland, including the former capital of Warsaw, in 1815 became part of a Kingdom of Poland. Until 1830 Kingdom of Poland was not an autonomous territory within the Empire, but an independent state in union with Russia. This legal status changed after the November Uprising, when the Kingdom retained only a very limited autonomy

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<sup>9</sup> Iwo Jaworski, *Zarys powszechnej historii państwa i prawa* (Warszawa, 1996), 239 ff.

<sup>10</sup> With some modifications it was, similarly to the BGB, legally binding until the very end of the Empire, and in Southern Poland some parts remained legally binding until 1946.

as *Carstvo Pol'skoe* within the Russian Empire. This formally Polish state was fully incorporated into Russia after the January Uprising and formally became an autonomous territory, but with an ever decreasing degree of autonomy. In those lands the *code civil* introduced under Napoleonic rule remained binding as a legal framework throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, the bulk of Lithuanian lands, including the historical core of the Grand Duchy – the territories around Vil'na and Hrodna – were fully incorporated into the Russian Empire and had no separate legal status. The *Svod Prav*, an earlier Russian attempt to unify existing regulations, did contain a volume on penal law and another volume on civil law. After 1832 it was also introduced in those provinces which today consist large parts of Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine and until the late eighteenth century were part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. As the codification process continued, in 1845 a *Kodeks osnovnyx i popravitel'nyx kar* followed. Further steps toward legal unification included a new regulation of civil and penal processes issued in 1864, and a new codex of penal law published in 1866. The legal Russian practice might have been different in Vil'na and Warsaw, but we can observe a parallel attempt to follow a general trend of codification in internal Russia as well. As has been noted, throughout the late nineteenth century the autonomy of the Polish Kingdom was nearly fully abolished and in the long run its full legal integration into the Russian Empire seemed inevitable. A last step in this direction was taken with the so-called 'Tagancev codex' on the eve of the First World War, which was also introduced in Warsaw in 1915.<sup>12</sup>

In all three partitioning powers the legal codification process was the outcome of a less visible long-term process.<sup>13</sup> As a result, public court prisons became part of what are described in this article as 'critical infrastructures', precisely because of their crucial relevance for the implementation of these new codices.<sup>14</sup> Dozens of new prisons were

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<sup>11</sup> Sue Farran, James Gallen, and Christa Rautenbach, *The Diffusion of Law: The Movement of Laws and Norms Around the World* (London, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Nikolaj Stepanovič Tagancev, *Uloženie o nazakazanijax ugovolnyx i ispravitel'nyx 1885 goda* (St. Peterburg, 1915).

<sup>13</sup> Michail Gernet, *Istorija carskoj tjur'my*, 6 vols. (Moskva, 1951).

<sup>14</sup> Their introduction was closely interlinked with the reform of the legal system in general. Thus new prisons were often erected next to new court buildings. From the existing literature it is clear that the reforms implemented by the Russian state



created following the takeover as part of the territorialisation process, with reoccurring phases of reconfiguration, enlargement, and reform throughout the nineteenth century. By interpreting the history of incarceration as the sum of practices adopted in those prisons, it is possible to depict to what extent *all* subjects of the monarch were treated *de iure* in an increasingly equal way, even if their civil rights *de facto* were still strictly bounded by religion, class, gender, age and locality.

In the partitioned territories of Poland and Lithuania, beyond this social and political dimension prisons also fulfilled the role of 'infrastructures of territorialisation'. Their establishment was part of the legal and practical incorporation of new territories in a similar way as was the introduction of new administrative structures, institutions of education such as schools or universities, and the adoption of new means of transportation such as roads or railways.<sup>15</sup> All of them together fostered the colonial project to incorporate Polish and Lithuanian territories into the respective Empires. In the long run a new relationship between the periphery and centre, the Monarchy and its subjects, also transformed the Empires themselves.

### III

#### MONASTERIES AND CONVENTS AS PRISONS

The high number of prisons in former monasteries in partitioned Poland and Lithuania was due to the parallel process of forced secularisation of the Catholic brotherhoods all across Central Europe. In an attempt to centralize their power, empires in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries increasingly seized strong institutional players of counter-reformation. Following the temporal liquidation of the Society of Jesus in 1773 by the Pope, Habsburgs liquidated a broad range of Catholic sisterhoods and brotherhoods. While Catherine II

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were a highly contradictory practice: Stephan Frank, *Crime, Cultural Conflict, and Justice in Rural Russia, 1856–1914* (Berkeley, 1999). Jörg Baberowski, *Autokratie und Justiz: Zum Verhältnis von Rechtsstaatlichkeit und Rückständigkeit im ausgehenden Zarenreich 1864–1914* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996).

<sup>15</sup> Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos argued similarly for Silesia, which became Prussian only in 1742 and was transformed after 1810 on large scale. The dissolution, seizure, and re-use of monastic property in Breslau (Wrocław) was at the core of the territorialization of Prussian power. Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos, *Zrozumieć miasto. Centrum Wrocławia na drodze ku nowoczesnemu city, 1807–1858* (Wrocław, 2006).



allowed the Jesuits to flourish on Russian territories, Prussia began to seize monasteries on a mass scale in the direct aftermath of the Vienna Congress. For both the Prussian and the Habsburg monarchs there was no contradiction between legitimising their power with a central reference to God and seizing religious property. In their perception, these actions were directed exclusively against religious congregations as internal power and business structures, as well as bodies carrying out a social function. In most cases the property of contemplative brotherhoods was seized, while the so-called 'productive' monasteries were left untouched. This latter term would usually refer to educational work and health care provided to the inhabitants of the region. Apart from the national, regional and local competition over power, the dissolution of monasteries and convents was shaped by a strong economic rationale. It allowed the redistribution of capital flows, the change of land-owning patterns, and the takeover of erected facilities in both rural areas and central urban locations.<sup>16</sup>

Religious spaces in city centres were perceived as ready-made infrastructures providing space and resources for the state, particularly in those peripheral provinces where the Empire had to establish its institutions and where some of the Catholic brotherhoods were in economic decline throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the Prussian case, various locations of the reformates monasteries – a reformist movement within the Franciscan brotherhood – were purposefully liquidated in order to create space for newly planned state institutions. As a result, a large number of liquidated Catholic monasteries became utilized by the state as modern prisons. In the Russian case this was often done at a much later stage, but with the same consequences.

In 1783 Austria seized the baroque ensemble of the Carmelite monastery of Nowy Wiśnicz. Three years later it was transformed into a Habsburg court building.<sup>17</sup> In the Polish lands incorporated by Prussia the premises of the medieval Franciscan monastery of Łęczycza were among the first to be transformed into a prison, already in 1799.

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<sup>16</sup> For an overview of all three partitioning powers, see Marek Derwich (ed.), *Kasaty klasztorów na obszarze dawnej Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów i na Śląsku na tle procesów sekularyzacyjnych w Europie* (Wrocław, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Michał Nowodworski (ed.), *Encyklopedia Kościelna podług teologicznej encyklopedji*, x (Warszawa, 1877), 45.

In the nearby town of Grudziądz, a monastery was conveyed as early as 1801 and from 1805 onwards transformed into a penal prison. The buildings of the reformatory monastery at Koronowo, also located in this area and named by Prussian authorities as *Westpreußen*, were turned into a prison in 1819.<sup>18</sup> In the same year the premises of the Franciscan order at Rawicz were formally nationalized and refurbished by the ministry of interior. They were located at the periphery of a small Polish town in the new East of Prussia and provided space for convicted inhabitants of the southern part of Greater Poland. The secularization of the Bernardine monastery in East Prussian Wartenburg (Barczewo) indicates that this practice was not just an act of inner colonisation in the newly acquired territories, as it was adopted in Prussian heartlands as well.

In the Duchy of Warsaw we find a continuity in the decisions taken by Prussian authorities and later upheld after its transformation into the Kingdom of Poland. During the short reign of Prussian rule in the Duchy of Warsaw<sup>19</sup> the Benedictine monastery in Radom was liquidated and its property seized.<sup>20</sup> The building erected in the earlier eighteenth century under the supervision of the architect Tylman von Gameren was turned into a military hospital in 1809 – while still under Prussian rule. In 1817 the Polish authorities transformed the building into a prison, including the adaptation of the Roman-Catholic church building to serve as a prison. It functioned as the prison chapel until 1873, when it was finally turned into a Russian-Orthodox church.<sup>21</sup>

If we look at the seizures of orders and the-state driven redistribution of their property by the bureaucracy as a form of Imperial pragmatism, the example of Piotrków Trybunalski shows that this was not a practice of the Prussian authorities alone. Liquidated already in

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<sup>18</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu (State Archives in Poznań, hereinafter: APP), zespół XVIII Oberpräsidium Posen / Naczelny Prezes Prowincji Poznańskiej w Poznaniu w. 1815 / 1962 ref. no. 0.28 914, Die Einrichtung eines Zivil- und Polizeigefängnisses zu Koronowo, 1821–1822.

<sup>19</sup> Sebastian Piątkowski, *Więzienie niemieckie w Radomiu 1933–1945* (Lublin, 2009), 9–11.

<sup>20</sup> Małgorzata Borkowska, 'Klasztor benedyktynek radomskich i jego rola w życiu kulturalnym Radomia i ziemi radomskiej', in Zenon Guldón and Stanisław Zieliński, *Radom i region radomski w dobie szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej. Historia społeczno-religijna okresu wczesnonowożytnego*, ii (Radom, 1996), 76.

<sup>21</sup> Sebastian Piątkowski, *Więzienie niemieckie w Radomiu 1933–1945* (Lublin, 2009), 12.

1793 by a written order of the Prussian king, the monastery of the Piarist order began in the early nineteenth century to serve as a remand prison for pre-trial detention within the Kingdom of Poland. From 1860 onwards the Russian imperial authorities used it as a regular prison.<sup>22</sup>

In the Habsburg district of Galicia, a former monastery at Nowy Sącz was turned into a prison in 1855. In Lwów, the historical building of the *Brygidki* convent, in English known as the Bridgettine order, was taken over by the Ministry of Justice already in 1784 following the formal dissolution of the convent in 1783.<sup>23</sup>

On the former territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania taken over by the Russian Empire, the bulk of monasteries were nationalized only after the uprising in 1863, as a direct response to the involvement of Catholic clergy in the insurrection. At the same time, there is an obvious functional continuity in those territories taken over from Prussia as a result of the Napoleonic wars. In the town of Chełmno a monastery became a court building in 1876. In Biała Podlaska the premises of the *Szarytki* convent, in English known as Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, served as grounds for the erection of a new prison after 1898.<sup>24</sup>

#### IV

#### THE FUNCTIONAL LOGIC OF MONASTERIES

Initially built as religious structures with cells and chapels for monks and nuns, the same buildings became during the nineteenth century cells and chapels for prisoners. A core reason for this continuity was the functionality of the monastic architecture itself. We can trace the long-term transition of these spaces in Europe, which initially had a strong social, economic and cultural function in a specific regional setting.<sup>25</sup> Michel Foucault specifically pointed, in his introduction to *Discipline and Punish*, to the *longue durée* of cells being used in

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<sup>22</sup> The facility's description, <http://sw.gov.pl/strona/opis-areszt-sledczy-w-piotrkowie-trybunalskim> [Accessed: 1 Nov. 2017].

<sup>23</sup> Spruda kolišnoi vjaznici Brigidki, <http://www.lvivcenter.org/uk/uid/picture/?pictureid=1344> [Accessed: 2 Nov. 2017].

<sup>24</sup> The facility's description, <http://www.sw.gov.pl/strona/opis-zaklad-karny-w-bialej-podlaskiej> [Accessed: 2 Nov. 2017].

<sup>25</sup> Clifford H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London, 1989), 288.

monasteries from medieval times to provide space for individual introspection.<sup>26</sup> Up to the nineteenth century, monasteries also provided cells for the incarceration of both monks and subjects from outside the monastery.<sup>27</sup> In continental Russia, Russian-Orthodox monasteries for centuries had been providing spaces for incarceration as a paid service for noblemen, their wives and children.

While the context of incarceration changed with the nationalization of monasteries, some basic patterns of the use of space continued. The monastery buildings remained a specifically constructed intersection between an inner and the outer world. This does not mean that monasteries – like prisons of today – were spaces of full-scale isolation, as imagined in popular visions of both monasteries and of modern prisons. They were rather specific configurations of the relationship between the order and the society, and after their dissolution remained specific spatial codifications of the relationship between the world of convicted criminals inside and the society outside the prison walls, providing a wall of separation which is referred to in this article as ‘solitude’.

Inasmuch as monasteries provided a space for religious introspection and joint work, prisons’ spaces continued to serve these functions. This was partly due to the spatial configuration of the monastic buildings and partly due to the impact of reformist activists, who already in the eighteenth century began to agitate in both Europe and the USA for new, humanist and *enlightened* approaches towards incarceration.<sup>28</sup> At the core of these ideas was the full solitary incarceration of prisoners via separate cells in order to facilitate a more efficient form of inner mission, further enhanced by Christian chapels and their compulsory service by a priest.<sup>29</sup> While in monastic spaces this was nothing new, in prisons of the time this was not a standard procedure. Therefore, what looks like a functional continuity because of the takeover of

<sup>26</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

<sup>27</sup> Nancy Kollmann, *Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Russia* (New York, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Nutz, *Strafanstalt als Besserungsmaschine. Reformdiskurs und Gefängniswissenschaft, 1775–1848* (München, 2001); Mathias Schmoedel, *Humanität und Staatsraison: die Abschaffung der Folter in Europa und die Entwicklung des gemeinen Strafprozeß- und Beweisrechts seit dem hohen Mittelalter* (Köln, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> Norman Johnston, *Forms of Constraint. A History of Prison Architecture* (Chicago, 2000), 42 ff.

buildings, in practice represented something quite new with regard to prisoners.

By nationalizing religious properties, the state not only increased its revenues but was able to avoid having to expend the vast sums needed for the erection of new buildings serving a similar purpose. Instead of investing into new infrastructures, it just needed to provide modest resources for the refurbishment and adaptation of existing buildings. While rural monastic structures were often sold or rented out for the production of agricultural goods, urban monastic complexes in most cases served a public function. Often they served as buildings for institutions representing the central authorities, such as court buildings, fiscal organisations, schools and universities. This paper argues that prisons served a similar function in representing the central imperial power.

## V

### RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN PRISONS

All the lands of Poland and Lithuania witnessed, during the 1830s, a number of printed internal instructions for the social, economic, bureaucratic and practical organisation of prisons – regardless if they were then located in the Kingdom of Poland or in the Russian, Prussian or Habsburg Empires. These documents were formal guidelines for the prison staff. They were also codifications of already existing practices and an effort to unify, tighten and clarify the attempts to introduce a new level of security, hygiene, health etc. As is the case with most normative documents, they did not represent an objective reality, but rather an ideal which did not exist. Because of this, these types of legal document hint at the real problems within prisons which were supposed to be overcome by the new regulations. Thus, the instructions for the prison of Rawicz, located in a former monastery, the proposals written by Potocki in Warsaw, and the printed instructions for the wooden premises of the Vil'na prison of Lukiški published in the mid-1830s can each be considered as documenting the attempt of the respective state to regulate the everyday life of prisoners in a general, binding, yet very concrete way. Naturally the everyday life at Rawicz and Vil'na did not fully echo these instructions, but they can be read as outlines of how the ministry of justice and the respective administrations in the districts located in former Greater Poland and

Lithuania anticipated the implementation of progress in the sphere of incarceration. In both cases incarceration was officially meant to be a *civilized, clean and enlightened* process.<sup>30</sup>

The instructions for the prison of Rawicz, introduced in November 1835, were based on the regulations introduced in Rhineland under the realm of French power and became a precursory document for broader Prussian prison reform.<sup>31</sup> The author was Nikolaus Julius, a Prussian prison reformer and the founder of *Gefängniskunde*, a first attempt to transform the discourse on prison reform into a scientific framework in German speaking lands. He was sent to Rawicz after cases of violence against prisoners became public knowledge, including an intense discussion among Prussian bureaucrats over the role of the prison director in the death of an inmate.

The instructions outlined by Julius fixed the ideal religious routine in no less than 23 out of its 110 paragraphs. The prison of Rawicz was located in the South of Greater Poland, where the majority of inhabitants were Roman-Catholic but there was also a considerable minority Lutheran-Protestants, thus the instructions focused a lot of attention on the handling of both confessions for compulsory Sunday morning services. In §88 it combined the religious split between the two Christian congregations with a further subdivision of the prisoners according to gender and class. It also addressed the language issue by stating that the Catholic mass must be held once per month in German, indicating that on the other Sundays the mass would usually be in Polish – the language spoken by a large majority of the inmates.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, every Sunday afternoon a full hour of catechism should be held “for both religious parties” (German: *für jede Religions-Parthei*). Only ill prisoners were permitted to be absent at the services, but according to the instructions there was to be a separate prayer held with them. While Protestants were supposed to receive the holy sacrament every three months, Catholics had the right to participate in the ceremony every Sunday – but by no means were any of the prisoners to be forced to participate. Those who wished to participate in the

<sup>30</sup> APP zespól XVIII Oberpräsidium Posen / Naczelný Prezes Prowincji Poznańskieý w Poznaniu w. 1815/1962, sig. 0.28 958, Das Zuchthaus in Rawitsch / Rawicz.

<sup>31</sup> GSPK I HA Rep. 89, sig. 18581 Geheimes Zivilkabinett 1. Abteilung, Wiedereinführung der körperlichen Züchtigung, 1853–1855, 61.

<sup>32</sup> GSPK I HA Rep. 84 a, sig. 17456, Rawicz. Einrichtung und Erweiterung der Strafanstalt für die Provinz Posen, 13.

ceremony had to be registered with the director. According to §93, the priest was obliged to talk to prisoners who had not been participating over a long period of time. The detailed regulation included the number of holidays (eight) during which prisoners of both congregations would be allowed to skip their forced labour regime. During ordinary days praying was compulsory at the beginning of work slots, during lunch, and in the evening in front of all working prisoners – “precisely once in Polish and once in the German language. In this prayer all prisoners, regardless their confession, have to participate”. The reading was to be conducted by a well-behaving prisoner, “if such is at hand”.<sup>33</sup>

While the interplay between the Catholic priest and the Protestant pastor is not fully specified in the instructions, from a close reading of the printed lines it is rather obvious that they were supposed to work in the prison in parallel and in close cooperation, particularly in terms of preparing prayers for high holidays.

The regular reading of the Bible by prisoners for their own religious needs was supposed to take place after working hours. The crucial link between prayer and work was due to the regular long working hours – the amount of available time in the prison was strictly limited, as during the night-time the usage of any artificial light was forbidden. On Sundays and Christian high holidays, prisoners were officially allowed to pray and read evangelical books, but were also free to do carry out work in order to earn additional money, which was to be paid to them upon leaving the prison. All reading of religious literature work had to be carried out silently in order to uphold the idea of solitary confinement.<sup>34</sup>

Among the strict obligations of the priests was the duty to get in touch with the individual prisoners of respective confession every once in a while in order to obtain a clear picture of the “state of his soul”. These visitations could take place at work, in the cells, or in the separate hospital part of the prison, in order to talk to the prisoners individually.

As if this was not sufficient, the Rawicz instructions regulate the hours of religious teaching, which were to be organized separately for woman and men according to their confession during the week. For weak students of those lessons, an additional slot was proposed for both

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, 14 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, 15.



priests. The preparation was ideally to be provided by an elementary school teacher. In this strictly-regulated framework, a Protestant prisoner without confirmation was theoretically ‘not possible’, but if (s)he would appear anyhow, immediately the pastor was supposed to prepare him or her for confirmation. The sheer amount of regulations, the broad variety of religious activities and the complex preconditions behind them suggest that the instructions need to be read with a great amount of care, as it represents more of an idealist vision of how the prison was supposed to function than an actual description of its everyday life. Still, looking back at them more than one-and-a-half centuries later we can see some basic distinctions made by its authors.

According to the 1835 Rawicz instructions, Jews were not allowed to self-organize a full religious program, including a regular *kiddush*, a full service, and various prayers on their own. A separate kosher kitchen was also not granted to them. The only food exception made for non-Christians was to prepare food for Jews especially without pork. While there were highly limited rights to follow Jewish religious practices inside the prison, they had to participate strictly in the Christian program of services and prayers. Jews were permitted to not work on Jewish holidays, such as the Passover, and were allowed to use a separate cell for a Passover prayer. Also, during Sabbath they were supposed to have one hour before the closure of all cells reserved for their own self-organized service. The director of the Rawicz prison had the right, in 1835, to allow the production of *kashrut* food within the prison on high holidays or to allow food brought by Jews from outside the prison walls to be taken in, but only “after taking all actions of caution and under the strict exclusion of intoxicating drinks.”<sup>35</sup> This is a fragment from a normative text, which allows one to make some assumptions about everyday practices – in this case the regular smuggling of alcohol and other forbidden substances and items into the prison. The mentioning of food provided by the Jewish community also hints at a close relationship between the prisoners and the society outside the prison walls. Thus, it makes little sense to assume that prisons – as previous monasteries before – were spaces of complete isolation. They were rather supposed to provide a space for religious introspection and at the same time serve as a space of communication – inside and outside the walls.

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem.*

Clearly, it was impossible to obey all the rules fixed in the instructions all the time. But they were referred to by the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Justice and in the Ministry of Interior as perfect example of modern prison instructions which should be incorporated in the plans for new facilities such as Moabit, Ratibor, Cöln and Halle.<sup>36</sup> They also show the high level of temporal and spatial organization according to confessions, class, and gender. And they hint at an important link between religion and work in the reformist agenda.

While Greater Poland became, both *de iure* and *de facto*, fully included into the Prussian Empire, other parts of the former *Rzeczpospolita* had a different status even after being formally divided. After the Duchy of Warsaw was legally transformed into the Kingdom of Poland, a reform discussion introduced the idea that changes in the public structures and practices of incarceration were needed. The *Kodeks karzący dla Królestwa Polskiego* was adopted as a legal framework codifying the existing regulations regarding the incarceration of both criminal suspects and sentenced prisoners.<sup>37</sup> Among those who set the reform agenda in Warsaw, the most active were Ksawery Potocki and Fryderyk Skarbek. Potocki laid out his vision already in an 1819 printed volume on the reform of incarceration practices in the Kingdom.<sup>38</sup>

The research of Jerzy Czołgoszewski into the Kingdom of Poland pointed out the multiple layers of normative documents introduced from 1819 onwards. He showed that a growing priority was given to the practices of separation. Thus guards were not supposed to be in touch with the prisoners in any way beyond organizing the strict everyday routine within the prison. As in Prussia, they were forbidden to exchange any items or messages.<sup>39</sup> As in the Habsburg prisons of the time, guards were actually supposed to live within the prison walls in order to minimize the risk of being used as intermediaries. What is put down as a set of very strict rules can easily be read as

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<sup>36</sup> GSPK I HA Rep 89, Nr. 18592 Strafgefangenensachen, 14.

<sup>37</sup> *Kodeks karzący dla Królestwa Polskiego* (Warszawa, 1830).

<sup>38</sup> Ksawery Potocki, *Projekt ogólnego i szczególnego polepszenia stanu i administracji więzień w Królestwie Polskim* (Warszawa 1819). (The references in this text refer to the broad sheet print, while there was an identical version in book format printed in the same year.)

<sup>39</sup> Jerzy Czołgoszewski, 'Służba więzienna w Kólestwie Polskim (1815–1868)', in Andrzej Purat and Wedeł-Domaradzka Agnieszka (eds.), *Przestępstwo, kara więzienia na przestrzeni dziejów* (Bydgoszcz, 2016), 15–37.

being a response to a list of practices actually common in prisons: the corruption of guards; regular drug trafficking and the misuse of, in particular, alcohol and tobacco; and a constant communication with the outside world supported by guards, who were allowed to leave the prison from time to time.

Similarly as in the part of Poland which became incorporated into the Prussian Empire in the late eighteenth century, the new Warsaw regulations prepared by Ksawery Potocki put particular emphasis on the combination of separation as a form of social isolation, and a constant contact with evangelical work directly addressing the prisoners' souls. The prison priest, as a state-paid bureaucrat, played a central function in this concept. Alongside with the prison doctor, he was the only person who entered and left the prison premises on a regular basis.<sup>40</sup> Among the duties of a prison priest were religious education, psychological support, and the regulation of mental health issues. The priest was asked to participate in official executions and had to teach children within the prison.<sup>41</sup>

In a very concise discussion of the role of religion, Potocki wrote that there had to be a church or a chapel in every single prison in the Kingdom of Poland. Religious practices structured the temporal framework of prison life as the day was supposed to start with a joint prayer and Sunday was the only day when there was no obligation to work. Potocki assumed that the prisoner should be taught in a "easy and straightforward way", in order to bring salvation to the prisoners, who potentially could reform".<sup>42</sup> The priest was supposed to combine moral and religious instruction with the teaching of practical skills such as reading and writing, which were not widespread among the prisoners.

In addition to the description of the everyday duties of a Catholic priest, Potocki pointed indirectly to religious rights for Protestants and Jews in the same institutions of detention: "Prisoners of any other denominations shall be allowed to celebrate religious holidays with a service in their cell according to the tradition of his denomination".<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ksawery Potocki, *Uwagi do projektu ogólnego i szczególnego ulepszenia administracji i stanu więzień publicznych w Królestwie Polskiem* (Warszawa, 1819), 20 ff.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, 25 ff.

<sup>42</sup> Ksawery Potocki, *Projekt ogólnego i szczególnego polepszenia stanu i administracji więzień w Królestwie Polskiem* (Warszawa, 1819), 12.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*.

In the introductory comment to his proposal, Potocki pointed to the special responsibility of Catholic prison priests, which went far beyond religious teaching. Even if not formulated in clinical terms, he indirectly referred to the psychological health of the prisoners and to the idea that with the mental and practical support of the priest prisoners would actually show some progress. The main dimension of this progress was attached to the moral sphere.<sup>44</sup>

In the introductory part of his 1819 proposal, Potocki discusses the available options for prison reform in Poland. With a direct reference to Jeremy Bentham's ideal prison, he argues that it is not possible to introduce the model in Poland: Humidity, cold and the "endurance of winter of almost half a year" made it utopian to build, maintain, and heat fully circular structures as proposed by the British reform thinker, who is known until today thanks to Michel Foucault's book *Discipline and Punish*.<sup>45</sup> In her history of Criminal Punishment in the Kingdom of Poland, Monika Senkowska summarized these Warsaw-based discussions and underlined their close relationship with the English reform discourse. This direct perception and lively discussion of ideas stemming from the United Kingdom shows that at this stage of the nineteenth century they were not perceived as Prussian reform activities or as a response to the introduction of new legal and practical concepts in Greater Poland, but rather as a direct outcome of internal Polish discussions.<sup>46</sup> As a result of Potocki's and Skarbek's activities a new criminal prison was erected in the north of Warsaw.<sup>47</sup> The so-called *Pawiak* is today better known for its later exploitation as an infrastructure of detention and torture by national-socialist Germany. But when it was opened it represented the introduction into the Kingdom of Poland of the idea of solitary confinement as the spatial core of inner reform, and it showed rather a barrack type of spatial organization along an inner corridor. The association with barracks was due to the idea of surrounding the complex with a brick fence and placing guards at the gate(s). In the 1830s this was also the usual architectural imagination of prisons in the Russian Empire, as will be shown in a project for the Vil'na prison discussed in a later

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, 30.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, VIII.

<sup>46</sup> Senkowska, *Kara więzienia*, 161.

<sup>47</sup> Czołgoszewski, 'Służba więzienna', 20–2.

part of this article. In the Kingdom of Poland, after Warsaw new large scale architectural solutions for the incarceration of criminals were erected in Kalisz, Płock, and Siedlce.<sup>48</sup>

In the Lithuanian lands under Tsarist rule in the 1830s, similar normative documents were supposed to regulate the everyday regime of prison spaces. At Lukiški, the document *Instrukcja więzienna*, printed in Polish in 1831 in Vil'na, regulated the relationship between religious practices and the handling of prisoners in a similarly strict fashion.<sup>49</sup> According to the document, the prisoners were supposed to have regular access to a priest, who was provided and paid by the state. On the other hand, as in the case of Prussia there was also little space for manoeuvre to *not* participate in religious services, ceremonies, and holidays, as they were part of the concept of ways to influence the convicts. The idea of placing prisoners in solitary isolation was adopted in Vil'na only as additional form of punishment for insubordination within the prison, not as a regular part of the rehabilitation concept.<sup>50</sup> One of the reasons was the poor physical appearance of the prison, which was a wooden structure with few cells in general and very limited possibilities to further enlarge the number of cells under the existing roof. In addition both the walls and the roof were in danger of collapse, leading to constant petitions and complaints from the district prison authorities to the centre in St. Petersburg.<sup>51</sup>

The functional division of some spaces within the Lukiški prison according to religion was stronger than in the then-Prussian part of the *Rzeczpospolita*. The Jews of Vil'na imprisoned at Lukiški were allowed to run their own kitchen and to handle a full-scale *kashrut*, not just during Shabbat and holidays. Thus the prison provided a separate kitchen for them and allowed food to be provided on a regular basis by Jewish charities and families of prisoners from outside the prison walls.

A comparison with the *Brygidki* prison of Lwów in the Habsburg Empire shows the echoes of partition power, both in the prison reform

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<sup>48</sup> Aleksander Moldenhawer, *O przeprowadzeniu odosobnienia w zakładach więziennych*, i (Warszawa, 1866), 203.

<sup>49</sup> Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas Vilnius (Lithuanian State Historical Archives, hereinafter: LVIA) f. 492, ap. 1, 1043, Kalejimu komitėto žurnalas.

<sup>50</sup> Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (Central Archives of Historical Records, hereinafter: AGAD), zespół 207 K. u. K. Justizministerium, sp. 35, 1925–49.

<sup>51</sup> Jogėla Vytautas, Meilus Elmantas, and Pugačiauskas Virgilijus, *Lukiškės: Nuo priemiesčio iki centro (XV a. – XX a. pradžią)* (Vilnius, 2008), 87–8.

proposals and in its dark sides, regardless of the territory and the religious configuration. Thus, in Lwów Austria provided resources for the work of a Roman-Catholic priest, a Greek-Orthodox priest and a rabbi within the prison, located in the former convent of the *Brygidki* order. Archival evidence points to various tensions between the different groups, which arose from the late nineteenth century onwards in the course of the nationalization of religious identities – in the case of Eastern Galicia between Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews respectively.<sup>52</sup>

## VI ARCHITECTURAL IMAGINATIONS OF RELIGIOUS CO-EXISTENCE WITHIN THE PRISON

In the former territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth new forms of popular political protest, including the Polish-Lithuanian uprisings of 1830 and 1863 and the uprising in Greater Poland of 1848, produced a dramatic increase in the number of political prisoners.<sup>53</sup> These waves put pressure on the bureaucratic search for new spatial concepts of incarceration. In the historical Lithuanian capital of Vil'na – now a governmental town within the North-Western lands in the Russian Empire – this search was further accelerated by the dramatically bad condition of the existing wooden criminal prison. An architectural project for a new prison in the Lukiški suburb of Vil'na dating back to 1838 projected a very concrete vision of religious co-existence within the newly built prison walls. The very principle is similar to army barracks of that period, organizing surveillance mainly from outside the prison core. Soldiers were supposed to guard the entrance. Additionally four towers provided a space for surveillance from outside. Commissioned by the main prison administration in St. Petersburg and drawn up by an architect in Vil'na, it contained the idea, among others, to implement a two-storey church with two floors: on the ground floor a Roman-Catholic chapel and on the second floor a Russian-Orthodox chapel.<sup>54</sup> They had the same size and were both

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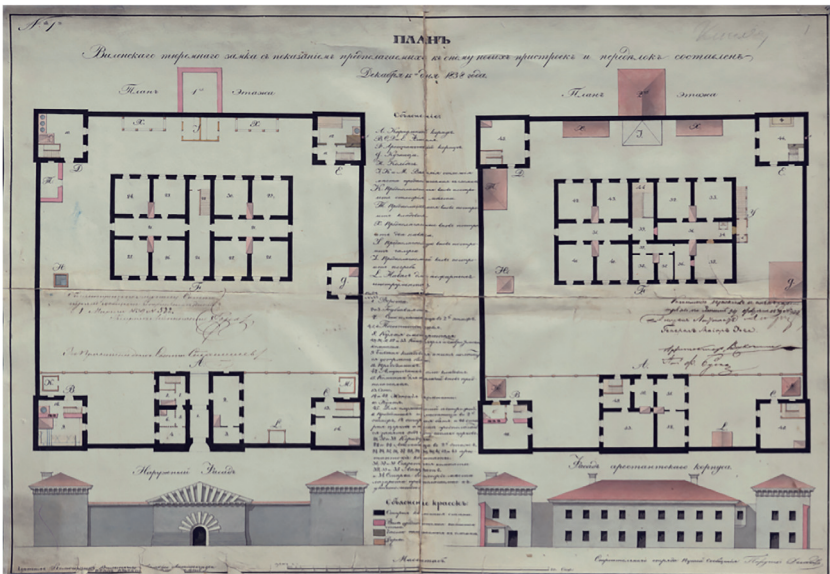
<sup>52</sup> AGAD, zespól 207 K. u. K. Justizministerium, sp. 35, 328 ff.

<sup>53</sup> Kazimierz Rakowski, *Powstanie Poznańskie w 1848 roku* (Lwów, 1914).

<sup>54</sup> Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Arxiv St. Peterburg (Russian State Historical Archives in St. Petersburg, hereinafter RGIA), f. 1488, op. 1, d. 281, p. 7/8, Plan Vilenskogo tjuremnogo zamka.



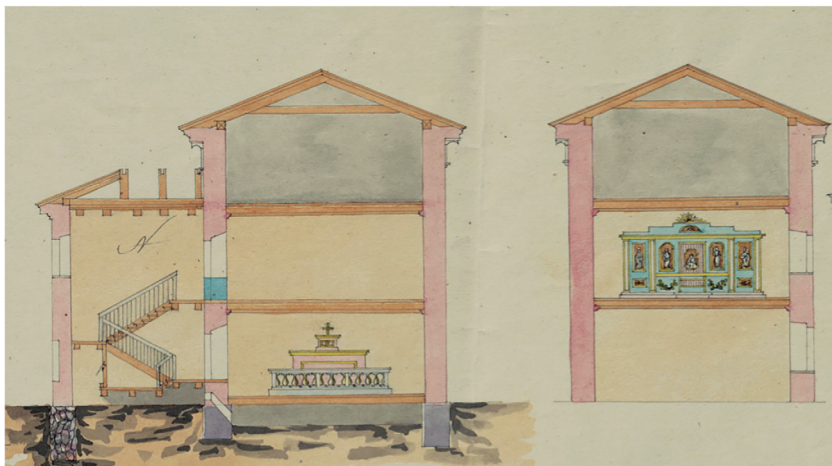
shaped by a rather low budget, but still had a fully designed interior including an altar for the Roman-Catholic chapel and an *iconostasis* for the Russian-Orthodox second floor. Both were supposed to be dedicated religious spaces linked by a joint staircase, provided by the Russian Imperial state for the introspection of its sentenced subjects in the Lithuanian province. Due to the very slow communication between the authorities in the periphery and the centre of the Russian Empire and a constant lack of resources, this project never materialized. But the specific way of thinking about the spatial organization of both the inter-Christian and Christian-Jewish religious co-existence continued to shape the design of prisons in the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century.



Source: RGIA f. 1488, op. 1, d. 281, 2; Plan Vilenskogo tjuremnogo zamka

When the number of political suspects immensely increased following the insurgence of 1863, the long-term idea of a new infrastructure for incarceration was immediately changed in favour of the immediate re-use of monastery buildings in the historical centre of Vil'na. While the Lithuanian branch of the Dominican order was not fully dissolved, the Russian authorities seized part of their premises





Source: RGIA f. 1488, op. 1, d. 281, 7; Plan Vilenskogo tjuremnnoho zamka

between *Dominikańska* and *Św. Ignacego* Street. In 1863 an emergency plan took advantage of the existing building structure, combining the isolation of suspects with some of the already-established practices of collective sharing of spaces for sleeping, working, and eating. The plan also continued the functional split between Christian and Jewish kitchens, which functioned separately and were run by the prisoners.<sup>55</sup>

Later in the nineteenth century the central prison administration in St. Petersburg began to conduct architectural research for ideal prisons fitting both the needs of the state and the inmates. As a result, so-called “typical projects” were produced for ideal types of prisons to be built for strictly limited numbers of inmates in smaller, mid-sized, and large towns. All of them contained some traces of the spatial thinking about the representation of religious practices within the prison known from the Vil’na project of 1838, but organized in a horizontal way.

One of the main differences in those projects created after 1863 was that religion became – in addition to satisfying the spiritual needs of the prisoner – a vehicle for expressing a strictly modern form of self-representation of the state in the prison architecture. Thus, Russian-Orthodox religious spaces in these prison projects

<sup>55</sup> LII biblioteka, f. 50, K 606, L. Žilevičiaus fondas, Lukiškių kalėjimas, 1838 m. fasadas.

become central architectural and symbolical elements. They marked the authorship and sponsorship of the state, which could afford the development of a new infrastructure. Beyond the central position of the Russian-Orthodox church, new prison projects contained everyday-life solutions not yet known to most of the subjects of the Tsar, including water closets (better known as WCs), ventilation, heating systems, and sometimes the adoption of new technologies for, e.g., cooking.<sup>56</sup>

## VII RELIGIOUS SPACES IN NEW PRISONS

Following the successful adaptation of former monasteries and the introduction of new legal practices in Prussia, the number of inmates constantly increased. In order to discuss the future shape of new prisons, Prussian bureaucrats, travelling scholars, and reformist activists in the 1830s were involved in an intensive debate about the future of prison architecture. Both in the US and in Great Britain new prisons at this stage had already been put into use.<sup>57</sup> In order to showcase its own model, Prussia planned the *Zellengefängnis Moabit*.<sup>58</sup> Nicolaus Julius, the main author of the Rawicz prison instructions, argued intensively in favour of the *Pennsylvania system*, while his opponent Louis Tellkampf convinced the Minister of Interior to stick to the *Auburn system*, which combined separation, work, and corporal punishment.<sup>59</sup> The main difference between them was the question of whether strict isolation should be ensured only during the night, or also during the daytime. Depending on which system was adopted, a different design of workspaces, religious facilities, and bed constructions

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<sup>56</sup> Glavnoe tjuremnoe upravlenie: *Tjuremno-Stroitel'nyje roboty v gorode Riga 1902–1910 g.g.* (St. Peterburg, 1910).

<sup>57</sup> Thomas Nutz argued that the Prussian decision-making processes were part of a global debate about reform architecture and took into consideration the earlier experiences in the USA and UK; Thomas Nutz, 'Global Networks and Local Prison Reforms: Monarchs, Bureaucrats and Penological Experts in Early Nineteenth-Century Prussia', *German History*, xxiii, 4 (2004), 431–58.

<sup>58</sup> GSPK I HA Rep. 89, sig. 18581 Geheimes Zivilkabinett 1. Abteilung, Wiedereinführung der körperlichen Züchtigung, 1853–5, 40, 66 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Albert Krebs, 'Julius, Nikolaus Heinrich', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, x (1974), 656–8. Hermann von Petersdorff, 'Tellkampf, Louis', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, liv (1908), 674–9.

was required. However, despite these differences it was taken for granted that an ongoing structural prison reform creates the need for a new architecture. Rehabilitation of those sentenced was supposed to be possible only through a high degree of isolation of the prisoners, and both religion and work were essential parts of the ideas among all discussants.<sup>60</sup>

The design of religious spaces in the Prussian model prison known as *Zellengefängnis Lehrter Straße*, established in the suburb of Moabit, was a central point of reference for partitioned Poland for three reasons.

1) The church building of the new Moabit prison became the site of the first public political process in Prussia. In 1846 more than 250 ethnic Poles were accused of plotting a conspiracy against the King. As the prison church provided enough space for all of them as well as a large number of observers, journalists, and representatives of the state, it was now used for a different purpose than that for which it was initially designed: a political show trial. As a result more than 150 Poles were sentenced to long-term incarceration, and Ludwik Mierosławski and other leaders of the conspiracy were sentenced to death. While the Prussian state was able to use its penal code to legally imprison political prisoners, the public reaction led to a rather different outcome than that anticipated. A wave of solidarity and admiration for Mierosławski and the other Poles of Moabit spread in Prussia. Only two years later, the Polish fight for self-determination became a precedent for the liberal German national movement and the Prussian King granted remissions to most of the sentenced Poles – partly in order to calm down public discontent among the German national movement active in Prussia.

2) After the first experiences in using the Moabit facility for such a purpose, the Pennsylvania system was finally adopted in all newly-planned Prussian prisons. Large-scale projects were developed and implemented in Silesia at Ratibor in 1851, and in Greater Poland at Wronki in 1894. Thus the prison design for the predominantly Catholic and Jewish inhabitants of the former territories of *Rzeczpospolita* was very similar to that of the showcase model prison in the capital of Prussia. Even if the number of cell corridors differed, the general concept and most engineering solutions, including water closets,

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<sup>60</sup> GSPK I HA Rep. 89, sig. 18591, Geheimes Zivilkabinett 1, Straf-, Erziehungs- und Gefangenen-Anstalten, 62 ff.

ventilation of both heat and fresh air, plus a multifunctional cell interior design, were modelled on Moabit. Among those features was the symbolical centre of the church as crucial part of the prison function and design.

3) When tsarist Russia began to adopt new forms of incarceration it closely reviewed the architecture and the religious practices at *Zellengefängnis Lehrter Straße*. Leading bureaucrats, such as the Baltic German high ranking officer Graf Konstantin von Pahlen, were in close touch with German reformers and tried to get an idea of the effectiveness of their organisations.<sup>61</sup> The Protestant organisation of *Rauhes Haus* played a particular role for the Russian perception of Prussia. Founded by Johann Heinrich Wichern in nearby Hamburg, they themselves echoed Anglo-Saxon ideas of introspection and evangelical work with prisoners. At that time, thirty years after the erection of the *Zellengefängnis Lehrter Straße* complex, some of those ideas travelled from Berlin to St. Petersburg and from Russia back to the West.<sup>62</sup> This was reflected in projects for the Riga penal prison erected 1902, the prison of Lukiški erected in 1904, and the new prison of Warsaw in the suburb Mokotów, better known today as the Rakowiecka prison, which 'opened' in 1904.<sup>63</sup>

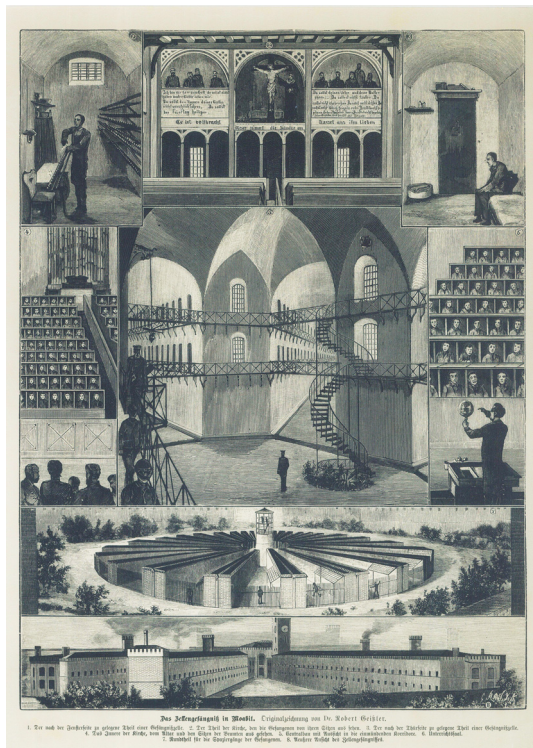
The core of all these new prisons was again the organizational principle of solitary confinement. Earlier found in the monastic structures described above, now it was implemented in newly-built prison complexes via long corridors with a maximum of cells and easy access to them by guards. Foucault related his argument to an ideal prison referred to by the English reform activist Jeremy Bentham, in which supervision would be carried out on a constant basis from a point central to all cells. In a new iconic prison type built in Pentonville opened already in 1842, this supervision was indeed organized centrally, which allowed one guard to oversee large parts

<sup>61</sup> Jonathan W. Daly, 'Criminal Punishment and Europeanization in Late Imperial Russia', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, xlvii (2000), 341–62.

<sup>62</sup> Erika Kriukelytė, The Creation of Modern Prisons in the Russian Empire. Research Report, IISH-Research Paper, 48 (2012), <http://www.iisg.nl/publications/respap48.pdf> [Accessed: 1 Aug. 2014].

<sup>63</sup> These cover the broad context of the Russian part of partitioned Poland, and particularly Lithuania, as well as the the prison reform in the heartland of Russia, all of which deeply affected Polish territories: Bruce Friend Adams, *The Politics of Punishment. Prison Reform in Russia, 1863–1917* (DeKalb, 1996).

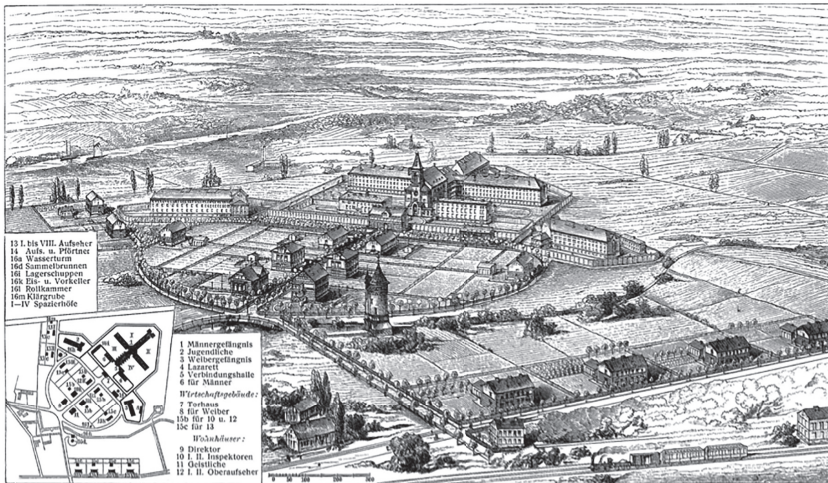
of the prison from one particular spatial point.<sup>64</sup> But as the cells were organized in long corridors, the guard oversaw the overall structure rather than the individual space. Instead of a central element enabling the constant supervision of all cells, the main centre of the architecture of Pentonville, and echoed in Moabit's Lehrer Straße, is a religious space. Resembling the outline of a church, it was actually a modern facility combining a broad range of functions: administrative, religious, and shared communal spaces. This type of centrally located religious building became the dominant part of the architectural ensembles at Lukiški in Vil'na as well in the Prussian Wronki.



Source: Das Zellengefängnis in Moabit, Originalzeichnung von Dr. Norbert Geißler; in: Hermann Schönlein (ed.), *Das Buch für Alle. Illustrierte Familien-Zeitung zur Unterhaltung und Belehrung. Chronik der Gegenwart*, 19. Jahrgang (Stuttgart, 1884), 63.

<sup>64</sup> Norman Johnston, *Forms of Constraint. A History of Prison Architecture* (Chicago, 2000), 101–4.





Source: Zentralgefängnis für die Provinz Posen in Wronke, Meyers Conversations-Lexikon, Leipzig 1904.

The newly designed religious spaces point to the modern character of the prison as a critical infrastructure reflecting a new form of statehood. On one hand they represent the religion of the given Emperor. In the Polish territories of Prussia this was a Protestant church with neo-gothic elements, which created the dominant axis of the *Zentralgefängnis für die Provinz Posen in Wronke*. In the Lithuanian lands of Russia it was a Russian-Orthodox church with neo-byzantine elements as part of the central entrance to the Lukiški prison. In both cases this should be read as a signature part of the formal representation of the state, because the majority of inmates in both prisons were Catholics and Jews. A second contradiction pointing to the modern character of these religious prison spaces is related to the modular character of the churches themselves. While from the outside their cubature resembled traditional representative church buildings erected in the nineteenth century, inside the prison the religious rooms are designed in a rather pragmatic, modular, and functional way. At Wronki, large parts of the prison resembling a church were not religious spaces at all. In fact three religious spaces were erected in the prison, but in various configurations with different functions for separate groups of prisoners in three different buildings: men, woman and children. From the outside only the church in the building for male prisoners



Source: Picture taken by the author on 25 May 2016 from a balloon.

is visible, while the chapels for woman and children were visually integrated into their separate buildings.<sup>65</sup>

At Lukiški, the right hand space of the Russian-Orthodox church (as seen in the photograph) was partially used by the prison administration, while the central parts of the cell blocks were designed to serve the religious needs of Roman-Catholic prisoners and Jews, respectively.<sup>66</sup> Ironically, both circular spaces for prayer on Saturday and Sunday, respectively, are located in the iconic place of the *panopticon*, putting both the priest and the rabbi, during the service, in the position of a prison guard.<sup>67</sup> Further, they create a symbolic order within the prison, starting with the visible Russian-Orthodox church at the entrance, followed by the Catholic chapel and in the more remote part a Jewish prayer house as the central part in the third building.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Gemeindelexikon für die Provinz Posen*. Auf Grund der Materialien der Volkzählung vom 1. Dezember 1885, bearbeitet vom Königlichen statistischen Bureau (Berlin, 1888), 63.

<sup>66</sup> LVIA f. 604, ap. 1, 6395, raštas vyskupijos valdytojui.

<sup>67</sup> Alessandro Stanziani, 'The travelling Panopticon: Labor institutions and Labor practices in Russia and Britain in 18th and 19th Centuries', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, li, 4 (2009), 715–41.

<sup>68</sup> Felix Ackermann, 'Lukiškių kalėjimas kaip XX a. Vilniaus istorijos mikrokosmosas', in Rasa Čepaitienė (ed.), *Vietos dvasios beiškant* (Vilnius, 2014), 188–233.



During the late nineteenth century, the Tsarist Russian state invested large amounts of resources to frame a symbolic and practical space for the religious practices of its subjects of other confessions in its Western peripheries. The Christian church of Wronki was built as *simultaneum* – it was used by both the Protestant Lutheran pastor and the Roman-Catholic priest on a complementary basis. This practice was earlier in place already in Rawicz and other Prussian prisons in the early nineteenth century, when after the dissolution of the monastic order a Catholic church was used by representatives of both confessions on an everyday basis. The level of symbolic (co)existence on equal terms within the prison at Wronki was even higher, because the complex included a house for the religious prison workers. In the architectural plans for the complex it is very clearly indicated that both the Roman-Catholic and the Lutheran-Protestant clerics had to share one house. But for their ecumenical convenience they were at least granted separate flats within this house.<sup>69</sup>

A further analysis of the architectural solutions adopted in the new religious spaces within the prisons shows that the interior spaces of the prison resembled to a large degree the neo-gothic and neo-byzantine aesthetics of the churches developed in late nineteenth century in public projects outside the prisons. The strong impact of the historic usage of eclectic elements in the creation of new Protestant churches in Prussia is particularly visible in the design of Wronki as the central prison for Greater Poland. An entry in the German encyclopaedia *Meyers Conversations-Lexikon* of 1904 shows the structure of the complex,<sup>70</sup> and it can be seen that minor architectural design solutions show strong references to the British Pentonville model erected more than half a century earlier. This embodied facilitation of solitary confinement principle during the religious services in the large Wronki prison church. The focus on religious issues was supported by dividing walls made from wood, which were supposed to prevent prisoners from direct communication during the services. They echoed the idea of

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<sup>69</sup> GSPK XI HA SKB A, sig. 120141, 18 Wronke im März 1895, der Königliche Regierungsbaumeister gez. Förster. Entworfen im Ministerium des öffentlichen Arbeiten, ausgeführt unter der Oberleitung des Geheimen Regierungsrathes Koch durch den Königlichen Regierungsbaumeister Förster in der Zeit vom Mai 1889 Bis December 1894. Haus für zwei Geistliche.

<sup>70</sup> 'Zentralgefängnis für die Provinz Posen in Wronke', *Meyers Conversations-Lexikon* (1904), Gefängnisbauten I. –II. Holzstich, Tafel 1, Figur 8.

isolation within the prison not only in the cells, but also in the interior of the church, which is visible in the Berlin Lehrter Straße project.

As a result of the complex prison architecture and the adoption of a broad range of new architectural solutions, the prison of Lukiški was perceived by contemporaries not just as a representation of the state, but of modernity as such. In a 1905 a guide book recommended a walk to the outskirts of Lukiški just in order to contemplate the beauty and modernity of the prison.<sup>71</sup>

## VIII CONCLUSIONS

The three partitioning powers of Poland and Lithuania re-used monasteries for the introduction of new penal practices in their peripheries in different stages of the nineteenth century. The dissolution of the monasteries and convents provides the background to the changing function of religious practices – now facilitated by the state. The Empires provided the spaces, paid the priests, and to some degree allowed Jewish religious practices in the prison to be organized by prisoners and the Jewish community outside the prison. While large parts of the former *Rzeczpospolita* were included in the global developments vis-à-vis the process of territorialisation of power, the Kingdom of Poland also developed a reform on its own, which referred directly to the reform discourse in the West. It was not dictated directly by the partitioning powers, as bureaucrats such as Ksawery Potocki and Fryderyk Skarbek were actively attempting to implement their own interpretation of incarceration.

As the outcome of a dual external and internal long-term transformation process, new prison complexes were planned and built from the 1840s onwards. The discussions regarding religious practices and the future shape of incarceration took place in a global network of specialists and bureaucrats. This setting explains why the new prison architecture in Berlin, Wronki, Vil'na, and St. Petersburg was so similar in function. The infrastructurization of religious spaces, both inside and outside the prison, on the Polish and Lithuanian lands was part of a global process. As a result of the model function of

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<sup>71</sup> Aleksandr A. Vinogradov, *Putevoditel' po gorodu Vil'ne i jego okrestnostjam* (Vil'na, 1905), 320.

facilities such as *Zellengefängnis Lehrter Straße*, new prison complexes were also erected in the Imperial peripheries during the very late nineteenth and early twentieth century. While they were symbolical representations of the Empire – including the denomination of the emperor – they also provided spaces for religious practices including subjects of a different faith than the confession legitimizing the concrete monarchical rule. They also facilitated to a certain extent subjects of other confessions, e.g. by establishing a functional mode of state-run *simultanaeum* – a church used by Catholics and Protestants at the same time. To a varying degree the coexistence of Christian and Jewish religious practices was conceptualized by state institutions throughout the nineteenth century. While in Prussia and the Kingdom of Poland Jews had just minor rights compared to Christians, in the first part of the nineteenth century Lithuanian Jews under Russian rule had a surprisingly large degree of religious autonomy within



A 1842 plan for the adoption of the Dominican monastery of Vil'na as prison differentiates a Jewish kitchen (No. 5) and the general kitchen behind the wall. The religious coexistence within Tsarist Russian prisons is visible in a plan dating back to the 1840s. In this case the refurbishment of the Dominican monastery in Vil'na projected the instalment of separate Christian and kosher kitchens next to each other.

Source: Plan Iago etaža Dominikanskago monastyrja v gorode Vil'no, RGIA f. 218, o. 4, d. 1367, 109.

the prison – including the self-organization of *kashrut* cuisine. It was also in Lithuania, i.e. in Vil'na, that a Jewish prayer house was included into the architectural complex of Lukiški in a similar way as a Roman-Catholic prayer house. This was a form of symbolic and practical acknowledgement of the existence of a Jewish minority in Vil'na, but also a sign of the self-representation of the Russian state, which erected Lukiški not just as an infrastructure for the punishment and reform of prisoners, but also as a particularly elaborated form of self-representation.

*proofreading James Hartzell*

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