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Post-prison Re/integration? A Glasgow Case Study

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Abstract

In spite of a recent rise in interest about life after prison in academic, policy and research circles all around the globe, people often face acute, compounded and permanent adversities on release. This may be at least partly due to our limited knowledge on life after prison and to the lack of a thorough conceptualisation of it to guide policy and practice. Thus, the aspiration of this thesis, and of the research on which it is based, is to try to foster and contribute to an improvement of life after prison by building on and extending our current knowledge on this matter. Bearing this in mind, this thesis aims to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine post-prison re/integration by analysing my critically participative research findings and integrating this analysis with pre-existing literature.

To do so, I conducted a case study with the purpose of dialogically exploring men's post-prison re/integration in Glasgow, excluding people that have committed sexual offences. I created, facilitated and was a member of a dialogic inquiry group which met a total of 13 times over 13 months. The inquiry group was formed by a heterogeneous group of people who held different expertise on and/or were differently affected by this phenomenon. This, combined with the study's participative and dialogic approach, conferred on its findings a degree of intersubjective validity which should be kept in mind and valued.

In this thesis, by synthesising and bringing into dialogue my data with existing literature, a clear storyline is unveiled, exploring the reasons behind the multiple and severe adversities faced on release: I show that post-prison dis-integration is fostered through a process of cumulative dis-integration which often starts before the sentence and carries on well beyond release. In presenting a complex and nuanced picture of this process, I show the key role played by the structure/context; firstly, by outlining that people who were already dis-integrated are highly over-represented in prison and, secondly, by showing how our societal response to potentially imprisonable acts produces, reinforces and exacerbates dis-integration and inequalities.

My research data presented and analysed in this thesis not only supports already existing evidence both in Glasgow and beyond; it also complements it, enhancing our understanding of post-prison re/integration by giving fine-grained examples of dis-integration and the reasons behind it. Different key theoretical, research, societal, and policy and practice implications can be derived from this evidence.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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Definitions/Abbreviations

CEBR – Centre for Economics and Business Research

CJVSF – Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum

DWP – Department of Work and Pensions

HMP – Her Majesty's Prison

MoJ – Ministry of Justice

SCCJR – Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research

SHORE – Sustainable Housing on Release for Everybody Standards

SPS – Scottish Prison Service

1 Chapter 1 – Introduction

Background

From the last decades of the 20th century up until the 2000's we have witnessed a remarkable rise — to a greater or lesser extent and with different starting and peak moments — in the incarceration rate of a significant amount of Western countries (Travis et al. 2014; Andrews 2015; Dunkel et al. 2019). The most extreme case in the West is the US one, where incarceration rates rose dramatically from the early seventies until 2009 (Travis et al. 2014). In 2011, it was calculated that 1 in every 100 adults was or had been incarcerated (Cullen et al. 2011). In Scotland, the country in which I have conducted the case study on which this thesis relies, prison population rose 'steadily' during the first decade of the twenty-first century (McIvor et al. 2019, p.278). Although during the last few years there has been a 'slight decline' (Mc Ivor et al. 2019, p.292), in December 2020 Scotland had the highest Western Europe prison population rate: 136 per 10,000 of the national population (World Prison Brief 2021 online accessed 20th of January of 2021). 7,464 people were at that moment in Scottish prisons (World Prison Brief 2021). Despite a decrease in prison arrivals, during the last decade, of slightly over one fourth, the number of individual arrivals in the year 2019-20 was still high: 10,937 people (Scottish Government 2020b). The number of total arrivals[1] was slightly under 15,000 (Scottish Government 2020b).

As nearly everyone that enters prison returns to society (Travis 2005), these high rates of incarceration inevitably imply high numbers of releases (Dunkel et al. 2019). In Scotland, during the year 2019-20 there were nearly 15,000 total departures experienced by 11,457 individuals who were released (Scottish Government 2020b). An interesting matter to consider in order to better analyse this figure in context is the length of the prison stay: 94.9 percent of people who were released in 2019-20 had been in prison for a year and a half or less. That means, that if this trend continues, 94,9 percent of the 7,464 prison inmates in December 2020 will be released before June 2022; that is to say, there will be at least around 7,083 people in Scotland who will be experiencing life after prison during that year and a half. This constitutes a release rate of 129 per 10,000 of the national population.

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[1] The same individual can enter more than once in prison during that year

This peak of imprisonment rates in the 2000's has contributed to a rise of interest in life after prison in academic, policy and research circles all around the globe (Petersilia 2009; Maruna et al. 2004b; Visher & Courtney 2007; LeBel & Maruna 2012; Dunkel et al. 2019). In the Scottish context, this was triggered by the publication of *Scotland's Choice: The Report of the Scottish Prisons Commission* (The Scottish Prisons Commission 2008). Despite the absence of a clear definition and conceptualisation of what this means, the Scottish Government has been emphasising the importance of what happens after release adopting the concept of 'reintegration', for example, in the Ministerial Group on Offender Reintegration (2013-2015) and as one of the priorities of the Scottish Government's (2017a) *Justice Vision and Priorities Plan: Delivery Plan 2017-2018*. In terms of practice, the Scottish Prison Services has, for example, been providing throughcare services for short-termers from 2013 up until 2019. Since then, already existing public social partnerships led by the third sector organisation The Wise Group have expanded their services.

Within academia in Western countries, there has been an increase in the amount of literature published on life after prison. As I will show in Chapter 2, notions of rehabilitation, resettlement, reintegration, desistance or re-entry have explored various aspects of life after prison, in which several different actors and institutions play key roles. In spite of this increased interest, as I will be showing throughout this thesis, people when released face compounded, acute and permanent adversities. This may be — at least — partly due to our limited knowledge on life after prison and of a lack of a thorough conceptualisation. The aspiration of this thesis, and of the research on which it is based, is to try to foster and contribute to an improvement of life after prison by building on and extending our current knowledge on this matter.

Aim of the thesis

Thus, the aim of this thesis is to conceptualise, understand, interrogate, and reimagine post-prison re/integration. Loader and Sparks (2011), in their book *Public Criminology?*, argue that criminology has three — interrelated — moments: the moment of discovery, the institutional/critical moment and the normative moment. The first-dimension studies crime and its control. The second dimension generates knowledge in order to understand 'how prevailing ways of understanding and acting on crime are produced and reinforced' (Simon 2010, p.1).

The third dimension revises the ideals and values that are behind the politics that govern crime and tries to imagine new politics. This thesis aims to contribute to each of these three moments relating to life after prison. The discovery moment is going to be achieved by understanding life after prison, the second dimension by interrogating it. Finally, the normative moment is going to be attained by reimagining life after prison. During this thesis, I focus on the first two aims: understanding and interrogating life after prison. This is because, as I am going to argue, the reimaginative moment relies on the first two steps (understanding and interrogating). In the literature review chapters (Chapters 2 and 3), I show that there is a lack of a sufficiently developed and coherent body of literature with respect to the conceptualisation, understanding and interrogation of post-prison re/integration. Bearing this in mind and given that I have much more data than space, Chapter 9's reimagination of life after prison is going to rely on my own analysis in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of how we can understand, interrogate and reconceptualize life after prison; I will not introduce new group data on the reimagination of life after prison.

Before further exploring the reasons behind the choice of emphasising the conceptualisation, understanding and interrogation of life after prison, rather than to its reimagination, an issue needs to be mentioned. These three moments inescapably shape each other. For example, when you call something into question — interrogate — it is because you are comparing it — most of the time unconsciously and implicitly — with an ideal of that same phenomenon — reimagination — (Dawson 2016b). The same can be said for the relationship between understanding and, interrogating and reimagining: the focus of your understanding is shaped by our implicit and sometimes explicit interrogations and reimaginations of a phenomenon. Multiple examples of these interconnections will be seen in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 of this thesis, which are dedicated to presenting, analysing and discussing the research results and to exploring their implications on theory, practice, society, policy and practice.

In spite of this, it is useful and possible to differentiate between these three moments. The key in order to distinguish them is to evaluate where the emphasis lies. I consider it important to undertake the task of understanding, interrogating, and reimagining any phenomenon by sequencing this endeavour. As there are implicit and explicit links between them, when reflecting on each of these moments, we should continuously be open to reconsidering our — better or less informed and developed — positions and arguments with respect to the other two moments. I consider that this should be a fluid and open reasoning process in which the why's are more important that the what's.

Before fully engaging in an in-depth informed rigorous interrogation and a reimagination of a phenomenon, there is a need to develop an understanding of it. This is a matter of epistemological and political humility but also of academic rigour: how can we interrogate a nuanced and complex phenomenon without having a *minim*al understanding of its complex and nuanced character and without a *minimal* understanding of these complexities and nuances. This understanding pulsion is also important in axiological and politico-philosophical terms with respect to our research participants: shouldn´t we, before interrogating their role in the phenomenon subject to research, listen to and understand the accounts of people who are, in one way or another, experts on the phenomenon and/or who are affected by it (see Liebling 2001 for an interesting reflection on this issue). My position on the salience of understanding, and of political and epistemological humility, although permeating this whole thesis, will become even more apparent in Chapters 4 and 5, which will be dedicated to my research methodology.

After fully understanding a phenomenon, it is time to engage in its interrogation. At this moment, societal problems which may have emerged during our understanding are fully explored and developed. As Dawson (2016a) signals, the purpose of this phase is 'to see what is hidden and, in particular, to highlight the forms of power and inequality which exists' (p.21). While interrogating, some understanding gaps and nuances may also emerge. It is only after fully interrogating a phenomenon that we can fully develop an informed reimagination of how that phenomenon should be. Using Levitas' (2007) expressions, before 'looking for the green' — how things should be — we should look for the blue — understanding and finding problems with the current state of affairs. Not doing so, is 'to assume you can start with a blank slate' (Dawson 2016a, p.3).

The moment of reimagination is the one in which alternatives are suggested. Reimagining is also a way of thinking of the process that would be necessary in order to achieve the desired alternative. During this moment, understanding and interrogating nuances and gaps may become apparent. As this is the third moment — which as I have argued relies on the first two — during this thesis there is going to be an emphasis on the first two aims: understanding and interrogating life after prison. Relying on the complementation of my research discussions and literature on these two first moments, a sketch of an alternative phenomenon will be given in Chapter 9 as a way of concluding this thesis

Apart from understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison, this thesis also aims to conceptualise it. This conceptualisation will emanate from the three different moments and, as I will argue, it can be used as an 'evaluative mirror' (McNeill & Graham 2020, p.18) with respect to how life after prison currently is (Maruna 2006), and to establish comparisons between different locus (Crewe 2015). As I will argue, through this conceptualisation, our societal, collective and individual role in life after prison can be used by different actors, collectives and institutions in order to better understand their/our role, interrogate it and reimagine it. This of course, as I will show, has implications for society, policy and practice, as well as for theory and research.

Before engaging in the exploration of the research aim and approach, it is important to highlight two important questions about this thesis. The first issue is how the content of this thesis should be considered. In his book *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987) Bauman distinguishes between two types of sociologists: legislators and interpreters. While the former believes they have superior knowledge about the actors of the social world and about the phenomena, the latter believes that people are knowledgeable actors and subjects (Bauman 1987). The interpreter, despite not having authority to impose their views, aims to understand and explain social reality through engaging in conversation with other individuals in order to explore what is suitable or not (Bauman 2000a; Dawson 2013; Dawson 2016b). As my position regarding this issue resonates with that of an interpreter, the combination of this matter with my epistemological, ontological, axiological and political-philosophical stance (see Chapters 3 and 4), together with political and epistemological humility (Bottoms 2008; Loader & Sparks 2011), shapes how I believe this thesis should be considered. I would argue that this thesis should not be seen as a definitive and perfect account on life after prison, but rather as my way of contributing to academic and non-academic cumulative knowledge on this matter by building on current knowledge and extending it. This thesis which, as I will be reflecting throughout its chapters, has its limitations, should be envisioned as my contribution to our current societal conversation on life after prison.

The second and last issue is the synthetic and dialogic spirit of this thesis. In order to fulfil the aims of this thesis I am not going to take a confrontational strategy but a synthetic and dialogic one: one which critically and rigorously brings into conversation different parts in order to form a whole (see Garland 1990; Liebling 2001 and Bottoms 2008 on synthesis; see Chapter 4 on dialogue). Throughout this thesis I am going to bring into dialogue and synthesise (a) different findings and theoretical accounts present in literature (Chapters 2

and 3); (b) different ontological, epistemological, axiological, politico-philosophical, methodological positions and points of view (Chapters 4 and 5); (c) the inquiry group's account as well as different individual members' accounts (Chapters 6,7,8); (d) literature with my research evidence (Chapters 6,7,8,9). My own arguments will engage in conversations with all these elements (Chapters 1-9). In this thesis, there is going to be a continuous dialogue on and between these matters.

Research aims and approach

In order to extend, widen and nuance our current conceptualisation, understanding, interrogation and reimagination of life after prison, I decided to study this 'same old problem' in a new way: I used an innovative and sophisticated methodology which I have termed a 'dialogic group inquiry approach'. Inspired by political literature on dialogue (e.g., Escobar 2011), and methodological literature on participatory action research (Ferrie & Lachapelle 2021), participative research (Hughes 2008) and communities of inquiry (Shields 2003), I formed, facilitated, and participated in a heterogeneous dialogic inquiry group that met 13 times over a 13-month period with the purpose of collaboratively researching on men's post-prison re/integration in Glasgow.

During our dialogic research group endeavour there were three guiding questions:

a) What is post-prison re/integration?
b) How is it supported and experienced in Glasgow?
c) How can it be improved?

The choice of using the word re/integration in order to explore life after prison will be explored in Chapter 2, 4 and 5. During these group meetings dialogic dynamics were fostered in order to explore individual and collective forms of knowledge on different aspects of post-prison re/integration. Throughout this process new collective knowledge emerged. As I will argue, the collaborative character of this research and the heterogeneity of the group confers the group account — and consequently the research findings — an intersubjective validity.

Outline of thesis arguments

Chapter 1 is dedicated to introducing this thesis. To do so, after exploring its background, I have explored the aims of the thesis and argued for the importance of conceptualising, understanding, interrogating, and reimagining a phenomenon. Then, I have presented my research aims and approach. After outlining the thesis arguments, I will conclude this Chapter by signalling this thesis' key contributions.

The purpose of Chapter 2 and 3 is to critically engage and analyse the current state of knowledge on the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration through a conceptual and literature review respectively. In Chapter 2, after assessing in terms of acuteness and justice diverse concepts on life after prison (correctional re/habilitation, re/settlement, desistance, four-forms model, and reentry), I will identify the concept of re/integration as the best situated to understand, interrogate, and reimage how life after prison is and how it should be. In Chapter 3 by synthesising evidence from different bodies of literature on life after prison in Scotland, the UK and in other Western countries, a clear but disturbing picture will emerge: releasees often face a severe material, social, civic-political, personal, legal and moral dis-integration which is unique to them. When exploring the reasons, I will argue that post-prison re/integration is shaped and part of a cumulative process of disadvantages which often starts before imprisonment. I will show how its uniqueness emanates from the fact that our societal response to potentially imprisonable acts; produces, reinforces and exacerbates these disparities. In this same chapter we will also see that societal responses could have a penal, legal, civic-political, moral, cultural and social character.

In Chapter 4, after situating the research project and myself, I will explore every stage of my research project: the establishment of its aim/s, its design, its preparation, its conduction, the data working period and the thesis writing stage. Through this process, I will explain how and why creating, being part and facilitating a dialogic inquiry group was deemed as one of the most appropriate ways in order to enrich our current knowledge of life after prison. This appropriateness will be assessed in terms of political, epistemic, axiological and politico-philosophical criteria. Limitations during these steps will be explored. Chapter 5, through an in-depth-reflection on some complex and key aspects of the research process, will complement Chapter 4 by enriching its portrayal on how the data presented, analysed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters was generated.

In Chapters 6,7 and 8, the analysis and discussion of the group's account will resonate and further elaborate the picture portrayed in Chapter 3. My research evidence suggests that in Glasgow releasees suffer, acute and often permanent severe material, social, civic-political, judicial-legal and personal adversities. The societal response role in producing, reproducing and exacerbating them will be found to be key during my analysis and discussion of the group account. However, the research data presented and analysed in the last three chapters will not only support pre-existing evidence with respect to life after prison in Glasgow and beyond, but will also complement it, enhancing our understanding of post-prison re/integration in different ways.

Chapter 9 will conclude this thesis by exploring the theoretical, research, societal, policy and practice implications of the content of this thesis. One of the key implications for theory, is the comprehensive and nuanced conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration which emanates from the previous chapters. As part of this conceptualisation, I will present and explore the six-form model of post-prison re/integration making an emphasis — by relying on my research data — on two of its key characteristics: its interactivity and its temporality. I will show how this conceptualisation can be used as a tool in order to guide any process of understanding, interrogation and reimagining post-prison re/integration in terms of research, society, policy and practice. After arguing the importance of situating post-prison re/integration in its societal context through combining micro, meso and macro accounts and through bringing evidence on different types of societal inequalities into conversation, I will provide a sketch of how a just post-prison re/integration phenomenon may look like.

Contributions of the thesis

This thesis aims to contribute to a growing body of knowledge around life after prison. It does so throughout the thesis in a number of ways. Firstly, Chapter 2 will challenge current literature concepts which are commonly used in order to study — sometimes different aspects of — life after prison. This will be done based on their acuteness and on their just character. Secondly, in Chapter 3, through a synthesising exercise a uniquely nuanced and comprehensive picture on post-prison re/integration will arise. In Chapter 4 and 5 I will present, reflect on and assess an innovative and sophisticated methodology which, as far as I am aware, has never been used in order to study post-prison re/integration.

There are three main interconnected arguments that can be extracted from Chapters 6, 7 and 8. Firstly, I will show how people, when released, face multiple and severe adversities. An in-depth exploration of the reasons behind this will reveal the remaining two arguments. The first one is that many people who end up in prison for the first time are already multiply and severely disadvantaged — and thus dis-integrated — prior to their sentence. The second one is that our societal response — penal, cultural, social, judicial-legal, material, moral, civic-political — to a potentially imprisonable act produces, reinforces and exacerbates dis-integration and inequalities.

The research evidence presented and discussed in these three chapters enhances Chapter 3's picture, by giving fine-grained examples of dis-integration and the reasons behind them. The best example of this will be given in Chapter 6's section on the stigmatising, degrading and inefficient process of seeking the Community Homeless Service support. Another example is the civic-political dis-integration section which will help us to map out and begin to explore in depth a topic which is underdeveloped in literature. The frequency of apparition and salience that the digital exclusion topic had in our group conversations seems to highlight a big gap in literature, which if not tackled is likely to become bigger bearing in mind the increasing salience of technology in our society. This topic has received, up until now, little attention with respect (a) to other more common post-prison re/integration aspects, (b) to the increasing impact that it has on life after prison, and (c) to the salience of the digital world nowadays. This topic seems even more important in the current COVID situation, in which evidence suggests that digital inclusion and exclusion is becoming even more salient for marginalised groups in many different ways (see Armstrong et al. 2020). These and other matters will be further explored in the subsequent two sections, which will be fully dedicated to exploring the theoretical, research, societal, and policy and practice implications of my findings.

These findings seem to be especially important when considering my methodology in context. As I will explain, most evidence on post-prison re/integration is obtained through ethnographies and/or interviews that focus on the experience of releasees. In my research, because of aiming to study the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration — and not merely the experience of releasees — the inquiry group was formed by a heterogeneous group of people who held different expertise on and/or are differently affected by this phenomenon. This combined with its collaborative and dialogic approach confer to these findings a degree of intersubjective validity which should be kept in mind and valued. Bearing in mind my constructivist epistemology — which is nowadays widely shared in the social

sciences — previous qualitative research findings could merely be considered as a portrayal of the — important but insufficient — view of releasees and researchers.

The process of intersubjective checking which occurred in the dialogic inquiry group, although it still cannot guarantee a perfect portrayal of the phenomenon — which is impossible to achieve — has the potential to get closer to it. The interactive individual and collective account of different people, with different experiences and expertise, coming from different standpoints and from different backgrounds in a dialogic process point in this direction.

Finally, Chapter 9 will explore the implications of this thesis for theory, research, society, policy and practice. While doing that, I will present one of the main contributions of this thesis: my conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration that is the result of complementing my research evidence with literature. As part of it, I will highlight another key contribution of this thesis: the six-forms model of re/integration with its two key characteristics: its intersectionality and its temporality. As I will argue, my research evidence reviewed in Chapters 6-9 gives fine-grained examples of both characteristics, which have societal, policy and practice implications: if we want to be re/integrative there is a need to foster every form of re/integration in a synchronous way; if leaving one domain unattended, due to its intersectionality, it is highly likely that the other domains will be hindered too.

The final contribution of this thesis emanates from the finding that life after prison is the back end of a cumulative process of disadvantages which often start before imprisonment, and which are often exacerbated and reinforced by our societal response to a potentially imprisonable act. There is a need to consider post-prison re/integration in its context and study our societal response — both formal and informal; both while sentencing and imprisonment, and after prison — not only in terms of height (macro, micro, meso) and of depth, but also of width (interaction, similarities, and differences to other similar phenomena).

Now it is time to explore the current state of affairs with respect to our knowledge on post-prison re/integration by engaging in a conceptual review on life after prison.

2 Chapter 2 – Life After Prison: A Conceptual Review

Introduction

In criminological literature, terms such as rehabilitation, resettlement, desistance, reentry and reintegration are used in order to study different aspects of life after prison (McIvor et al. 2019). The aim of this chapter is to assess these concepts in terms of their adequacy as framing mechanisms for understanding, interrogating and reimagining how life after prison is and how it should be.

To achieve this, I am going to attend to two criteria: Comprehensiveness and justice. As life after prison is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon in which multiple actors participate, the chosen concept needs to be comprehensive enough in order not to leave any of these aspects or actors outside its scope. It is important to note that all the concepts referred to above can be used in order to refer to both processes and their outcomes (Rotman 1990). Furthermore, they can be utilised descriptively in order to understand what happens, and also normatively in order to prescribe what should happen. Bearing this in mind I will also interrogate the normative framings of life after prison whether implicit or explicit in relevant literatures.

In order to fulfil the purpose of this chapter, I will explore six concepts (see table 1) considering their origins and their intelligibility. By following a disqualifying process, I will develop a clearer articulation of the characteristics required for a thorough conceptualisation of life after prison. As each of these terms are used in different ways by different authors, I will rely on the meanings most commonly attributed to the concepts. In this exploratory process, this chapter will also assess the main contributions that each concept — and its associated body of literature — has made to better understand life after prison. The limitations and potential criticisms of the best suited framing concept will also be explored.

CONCEPT	NATURE OF THE PROCESS	EMPHASIS	MAIN PARTICIPANTS	MAIN AIM OF THE PROCESS
Correctional Re/habilitation	Official Intervention towards avoiding further offending behaviour	Endogenous model of intervention	CJS Professionals & people released	Public Safety
Re/settlement	Official Intervention in material context towards avoiding further offending behaviour	Endogenous model of intervention + criminogenic material needs context (physical journey)	CJS professionals & people released	Public Safety
Desistance	Individual process of human development in full context in which persons move away from offending	Mixed model of change	Community and people released	Traditionally: Cessation of offending behaviour and its maintenance Recently refined: Re/integration
Four forms notion of re/habilitation	Individual process in full context	Physical & Symbolic journey	Civil society, individual and state	Re/integration
Reentry	Individual process in full context	Physical journey	State & people released	Re/integration
Re/integration	Individual process in full context	Physical & Symbolic journey	Community and people released	Re/integration as full membership

Table 1. Six concepts relevant to life after prison

Before proceeding, I would like to highlight two potential criticisms that can be applied to these concepts: The descriptive inaccuracy of the prefix 're-' and the potential reproduction of domination through the use of these words.

As the prefix 're-' implies the return to a previous condition, its use has been considered as problematic for two main reasons. Firstly, as many scholars point out, it may be the case, that the individual has never been in a desirable previous condition (Raynor & Robinson 2009). Secondly, by referring to a return to the exact same condition, the term fails to recognise any positive improvements that may have been achieved since then (Rotman 1990). Therefore, in order to acknowledge these two arguments, and following Graham & McNeill's (2017) example, from now on I will use the prefix 're' followed by a slash to acknowledge the problem of assuming a prior condition.

A second critique that may be applied to the five concepts is that of symbolic domination.

> '[Another] critique (…) concerns the ways in which these terms themselves represent a form of symbolic domination through language; one which has material consequences for those who are its objects. This is not their language or the language of their experiences; it is the self-justifying rhetoric of the system that ensnares them.' (McNeill 2017)

As McNeill and Graham (2019) note, there are two ways of reacting to this critique: to abandon these 're' terms or to interrogate and redefine them. Like them, *in this particular case*, I advocate the second response. Abandoning these terms would probably imply not only handing over this task to other criminal justice actors but also 'marginalizing' (p.366) ourselves in the public arena. I would argue that as academics it is our duty to justly and rigorously exercise our sometimes-limited power by contributing with our expertise in public conversations to the conceptualisation and definition of key concepts. By surrendering the concept, we are undermining our capacity of contestation. In addition to this argument, I would add another: Even if a new concept emerged through a just and rigorous process, other criminal justice actors and institutions may also try to change its meaning, sending us back to square one. This thesis and the collaborative research on which it relies, can be seen as a way of contesting current meanings and conceptualisations of life after prison. That said, as I will argue, the flexibility of words is constrained by their intelligible meanings. This should be kept in mind.

Correctional Re/habilitation

Many scholars have noted the ambiguity, ubiquity, elasticity, complexity, and contentious character of the concept of *re/habilitation* (McNeill 2012; Burke et al. 2019; Vanstone 2020). Its meanings have changed throughout the years, shaped by different historical, cultural and jurisdictional moments (see Robinson & Crow 2009 for an extensive historical evolution review of the concept and its practice).

Depending on their focus, we can distinguish two main conceptions of re/habilitation: deontological and correctional (McNeill 2012). The former focuses on the restoration of rights and duties to persons who have been punished. By contrast, correctional re/habilitation uses interventions in order to change how 'offenders think, feel or behave' (Crow 2001, p.5) so that problems can be solved and addressed without resorting to behaviour deemed criminal (Raynor & Robinson 2009). After being the dominant aim of policy and practice through its penitentiary, therapeutic and social learning variants (Rotman 1990), rehabilitation went through a crisis (see Raynor & Robinson 2009) due to a number of flaws: it was considered theoretically faulty, research began to show that its practices were discriminatory, it was criticised for relying on dubious expertise, and was considered as holding a coercive character (see Bottoms 1980). Despite these flaws, Robinson (2008) shows that, at least in England and Wales, correctional re/habilitation has once again become the prevailing model, thanks to its adaptation to 'the three dominant 'late modern' penal narratives — utilitarian, managerial and expressive' (p.429).

Current correctional re/habilitation policy and practices can be characterised as utilitarian for the following reasons: Firstly, they assume that *the person with convictions should change* existent 'antisocial thinking and attitudes' in *order not to commit more crimes* (Maguire & Raynor 2020, p.521). Other needs that may not be 'criminogenic' are not considered deserving of attention under the current meaning of correctional re/habilitation (Burke et al. 2019). The purpose of all this, is to *make society a safer place* (Hayes 2020); to give to the greatest number of people the greatest safety (Robinson 2008). In addition to being utilitarian, correctional re/habilitation is managerial in the sense that the individual is a 'risk-bearing subject: One whose risks must be assessed and then managed and, where possible, reduced' (Robinson 2008, p.440). Yet correctional re/habilitation is also expressive in the sense that *it communicates* the wrongness of the criminal act and it gives guidelines for future behaviour (Robinson 2008).

Robinson's (2008) characterisation of late-modern correctional re/habilitation, however, does not address the question, what theory of crime is presented? It has been argued that the crime theory underpinning current offending behaviour programs falls under the social-developmental paradigm (Burke et al. 2019). Crime is seen as being due to social-developmental problems, and therefore interventions should focus on encouraging development, socialisation or education where these processes have failed whether due to environmental, structural, familiar or institutional factors (Burke et al. 2019). Skills, values and attitudes which are considered to be key in avoiding reoffending should thus be acquired (Burke et al. 2019). But although current correctional re/habilitation does not hold an endogenous explanation of the origins of the criminal behaviour, it does focus on endogenous factors with respect to crime cessation. As Kendall (2004) rightly signals; 'the focus is on changing the individual rather than the social structure' (p.63).

Bearing in mind everything that has been outlined up until now, the main contribution that current correctional re/habilitation literature has made in order to understand and improve life after prison is in terms of intra-prison and post- release interventions on crime-related issues aimed at fostering personal development. One of the most — if not *the* most — developed evidence based on correctional re/habilitation is the 'Risks-Needs-Responsivity' model (see Ziv 2020 for the current status of this model). The name of this model is based on its three core principles for best practice (see Andrews et al. 1990). The 'risk' principle signals that the extent, duration and the level of the correctional intervention should be delivered depending on the reoffending risk level of the individual. The 'Needs' one argues that the correctional intervention should focus on the criminogenic needs of the individual, and specifically on the dynamic ones. Finally, the 'responsivity' principle indicates that the interventions should be designed and delivered in a way that matches with the individual learning styles and abilities. Various reviews of evidence seem to suggest that correctional rehabilitation programs that follow these principles are able to reduce reconviction of the people that undergo them by about 10-15 percent (McNeill 2020a).

As I have shown above, even though its way of explaining the origin of the criminal act incorporates exogenous rationales, its means of reducing recidivism is an individualised one: it focuses on intrinsic aspects of the personality of the individual without considering or addressing the wider context. As Graham and McNeill (2017) argue: 'These sorts of interventions aim to feed and prune the plant perhaps, but they don't tend the soil, or build structures to protect it from the weather' (p.441). As such, correctional rehabilitation does nothing in order to change the social and structural causes that may contribute to the

generation of crime (Burke et al. 2019). As we will see, the re/settlement literature points towards the need for support in the process of crime cessation going beyond personal change:

> 'Key elements of successful resettlement, such as stable housing and employment, are also associated with reduced reoffending. Vice versa, ex-prisoners are more likely to keep a job and sustain a more settled lifestyle if they have internalized the necessary determination and resilience to overcome setbacks and avoid crime' (Maguire & Raynor 2020, p.521)

Once that I have shown how the concept of correctional re/habilitation — and its evidence — although being useful for thinking of ways to support the crime-related personal development of releasees, is insufficient because it solely focuses on personal development, it is now time to assess the next concept: re/settlement.

Re/settlement

The term re/settlement, which is deeply rooted in policy and practice, has been used in England and Wales to refer to 'a variety of interventions' (Raynor & Robinson 2009, p.8) whose main purpose is to reduce reoffending of people released from prison, with the aim of protecting the community (Lewis et al. 2003). Like correctional re/habilitation then, re/settlement is most often also crime-centric and justified in utilitarian terms — see previous section for the meaning given in criminological literature to the 'utilitarian' — (Robinson 2008).

The word 're/settlement' has its origins in official (i.e. policy) language (Maguire 2007) substituting previous terms such as 'aftercare' or 'throughcare' (see Raynor 2007a for more information on this matter). It was first used in a Home Office (1998) report (Raynor 2004a). Although a proper definition was not given (Maguire 2007), its utilitarian approach is captured in the title: *Joining Forces to Protect the Public: Prisons-Probation.* This utilitarian character was also made clear both in 1999, with the funding of the seven Resettlement Pathfinder pilots under the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme, and in 2001 in the first definition provided in an official document (Home Office 2001, p.12). Its main aim was to reduce offending and protect the public through an— exclusive — focus

on criminogenic factors (Raynor 2007a; Lewis et al. 2007, p.34, Maguire 2007). As Robinson (2008) puts it:

> 'Investment in re/settlement does not tend to be justified with reference to the social problems that play a role in crime causation, nor the harms inflicted on offenders by incarceration, nor indeed the social exclusion they face on release. (p.432, 433)'

Due to its official origins, the word 're/settlement' is, most of the time, used when referring to interventions provided by prison and probation services (Raynor & Robinson 2009; Maguire 2007; Durnescu 2011a). Re/settlement intervention starts while someone is in prison and continues until after release (Maguire & Raynor 2016). The 'end to end intervention' model — which intended that the same professional support remained the lynchpin during the whole intervention process — was substituted after a Ministry of Justice and HM Prison & Probation Service (2018) report. The new model relied on a 'handover' model in which prison staff hand the support responsibility on to probation officers (Maguire & Raynor 2016, p.150).

In re/settlement there is a focus on the individual transition towards being settled. Thus, the support given tends to focus on practical — criminogenic — re/settlement issues (Crow 2006) such as housing, health, employment, education and training, benefits or motivation and thinking skills (Lewis et al. 2007; Robinson & Crow 2009). If necessary, during re/settlement interventions, the professional makes referrals to community-based service providers or to specialist agencies which may further support re/settlement in these already mentioned practical issues (Lewis et al. 2007; Robinson & Crow 2009). Although sometimes support is given to and via close social connections such as family or friends (Robinson & Crow 2009), re/settlement has been criticised for only focusing on the practical material elements, neglecting the more social (Maguire 2007) and symbolic part of life after prison — i.e. how someone is received by their close social connections and by their community more widely.

An obstacle to re/settlement being considered the most suitable term to conceptualise life after prison is its exclusive focus on intervention. This can also be said of correctional re/habilitation. Firstly, life after prison experience is much more expansive than any state intervention. Secondly, desistance research, by studying the success stories of people that are ceasing or have ceased offending (Maruna 2000), is consistent with the fact that

'change exists before, behind and beyond intervention' (McNeill et al. 2012, p.13) and that 'most people stop offending sometimes with or without interventions, and sometimes even in spite of them' (p.10). It has been found that in some cases informal resources and social networks are often more useful than professional ones (Hill 1999). Even in those cases in which an ideal official intervention could be of help, the intervention could not be said to be the unique contributor to that success (McNeill et al. 2012). This leads us to consider whether the concept of desistance is better suited for understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison. However, before exploring this point, I would like to share the following quote that sums up the reasons that have led me to reject the concepts of correctional re/habilitation and re/settlement as best suited for my purposes:

> 'Ultimately, individual behaviour change [to stop offending] is unlikely to occur if the social context that residents inhabit is not taken into account [correctional re/habilitation's disqualifying aspect] and if it fails to engage communities in that process [re/settlement's disqualifying aspect]. This is because, regardless of the intrinsic qualities of (…) agencies, they can never replace the informal supports and social controls provided by families, neighbours and wider community organisations.' (Burke et al. 2019, p.149)

There is thus a need of a concept (a) which takes into account the context in which life after prison takes place and (b) which is not intervention focused.

Desistance

Unlike correctional re/habilitation and re/settlement, desistance is not generally used in order to refer to a set of interventions but to a process through which people move away from offending (Maruna et al. 2004). Since the origins of desistance research (see Farrall and Maruna 2004), there has been a tendency in desistance literature to have an interest in people's stories (Johnson & Maruna 2020), with the participants in their studies considered experts in their own processes of change, and in the factors that fostered and hindered them (Graham & McNeill 2020).

A commonly shared definition of desistance is the following one:

'We see desistance as a process of human development in social context; one that involves moving *away* from offending and *into* compliance with law and social norms' (McNeill & Graham 2019, p.371 original emphasis)

This definition captures one of the main contributions that desistance literature and research makes to correctional re/habilitation, to re/settlement and to the general understanding of life after prison; it deeply contextualises the process by unveiling the structural social, policy and cultural conditions in which change occurs (Farrall et al. 2014). This can be seen in research results and also in how desistance is conceptualised. Graham and McNeill (2017), for example, identify in literature four explanatory theories of desistance; maturational reform (ontogenic theories), social bonds and ties (sociogenic theories), shifts in narratives, and personal and social identities (narrative and identity theories), and social environments and situated routines (situational theories). Literature has also identified and refined different aspects of desistance distinguishing between 'act-desistance', 'identity desistance' and 'relational desistance (Nugent & Schinkel 2016, p.570). While the first one refers to behaviour, the second one to how the individuals see themselves, and the third one to their relationship with others. In addition to this, Bottoms and Shapland's (2011) comprehensive elaboration of the 'Heuristic and Interactive Model of the Early Stages of Desistance' gives a central role to social capital. All this, added to the already mentioned desistance findings on the possibility and likelihood of change without professional support, suggest that contrary to the processes of correctional re/habilitation and re/settlement, the key actors in desistance journeys are the individuals involved and their communities, rather than professionals.

In addition, literature shows that desistance is not a static but a dynamic process (Bottoms & Shapland 2011) focused on the interactions between individuals (Maruna & Farrall 2004), their contexts (Laub & Sampson 2001), and the interactions between them (McNeill 2016). Another main contribution of desistance research to life after prison is with respect to policy and practice. McNeill et al. (2012), by exploring desistance research implications, helped articulate seven principles to guide intervention. Intervention should consider issues of identity and diversity, it should foster the development and maintenance of hope and motivation, it should take into consideration human relationships in context, it should consider and foster the developments of the strengths and resources of the individual and their relationships, it should encourage self-determination, it should work both human and social capital, and it should have ways of certifying the progress and change and use language that captures and recognises the existence of possibilities of redemption.

When unravelling desistance and making certain distinctions between different uses of the word desistance, I argue that you reach the conclusion that desistance is a crime-centric concept. Firstly, the most commonly shared *desistance definitions* do not go beyond a crime-centric definition by describing a process of crime cessation and its maintenance (e.g., Johnson & Maruna 2020). Secondly, as I have just argued, *desistance research results* have taken theoretical explanations beyond crime factors. Even so, I would argue that these factors could still be considered as crime-centric: they are relevant as long as they affect desistance from crime. In addition, the *main focus of desistance research is crime-* centric: crime cessation and its maintenance. Thirdly, the *meaning of the word 'desistance'* should also be taken into account. In the following quote Shapland et al. (2016) explore the meaning of the general concept, and how it is extrapolated to the criminological endeavour:

> 'Desistance is the name given to the process (or event) whereby someone who has been engaged in some act (or series of acts) ceases to undertake these acts. In criminology, 'desistance' has become the shorthand term to describe the process by which someone who was committing crimes on a frequent basis ceases to offend.' (p.1)

Thus, desistance is negatively defined. As McNeill (2012) rightly argues, even though desistance is not considered the 'ultimate concern (…) the concept is, after all, still defined by (the absence of offending)' (p.13). This binds the word 'desistance' to the word 'crime'.

This relatively crime-centric character, I argue, limits desistance from being the best concept for understanding, interrogating and reimagining how life after prison is and should be. As correctional re/habilitation and re/settlement are also crime-centred, the arguments and implications below can also be applied to them. In elaborating my argument, I will rely on desistance literature itself. Desistance research has found that, in order to avoid reoffending (and re-imprisonment) and to sustain desistance, some people socially isolate themselves after release (Calverley 2013; Shapland & Bottoms 2011; Bottoms 2013; Schinkel 2014a; Nugent & Schinkel 2016). This type of 'diachronic self-control' strategy (Shapland & Bottoms 2011, p.274) has also been named 'situational self-binding' (Bottoms 2013, p.70).

Graham and McNeill (2017), two scholars who have frequently advocated the need to continue developing a critical and reflexive approach to studying desistance, analyse these results and their implications in the following way:

> 'These findings paint a dystopian picture of life after desistance, at least for some people. In a sense, they expose the taken-for-grantedness of the assumption that ending offending is a 'good' outcome. (…) More importantly, for us at least, this sort of post-desistance existence cannot be a 'good enough' outcome of a justice process. We would argue that criminal justice must aim for more ambitious goals than crime reduction through self-incapacitation. Those in whose name punishment is delivered have an obligation to restore those whose debts are settled. And those whose offending flows from those social injustices and inequalities that the state permits, perpetuates and exacerbates, are owed additional duties of support.' (p.14)

Little can be added to this. Conceptualising desistance as the ultimate outcome of life after prison is not desirable. Life after prison should be much more than self-isolating oneself at home in order to desist: Society should aim for more than this. In normative terms, a crime-free life after prison is an insufficient outcome, not only for releasees but for all of us as citizens. As Graham and McNeill (2017) rightly indicate, in prison there is over-representation of individuals with multiple deprivations and disadvantages (SEU 2002; Houchin 2005). Therefore, it can be argued that as a society we owe them something. Some point out that this can be extended to those living in a disadvantaged situation and that have not committed a crime. I agree with them. A further issue that needs to be taken into account when considering this is that, as will be evidenced later in this thesis, the way in which we as a society respond to a potentially punishable act produces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way. The punishing extends beyond prison.

The question that desistance scholars may have asked themselves is: And now what? A small group of critical Scottish scholars (McNeill & Weaver 2010; Graham & McNeill 2020; Anderson & McNeill 2019a) have redefined desistance as a process in which the individual moves (a) away from crime offending and (b) towards social re/integration (see specially McNeill & Graham's 2017 rich definition).

Although this seems a reasonable decision, it still does not requalify desistance as being an appropriate term for understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison. This is

because of its narrowness. As one of the above-mentioned authors points out in a co-authored book: Desistance is 'only a staging post (even if an important one) in the journey towards social integration' (Burke et al. 2019, p.72). Thus, desistance as a process is too narrow in order to comprehensively encompass the wide and complex journey towards re/integration as an outcome. Desistance, under this refined definition is just one of many processes towards that aim. This narrowness is due to the fact that, as I have previously argued, even under these terms desistance as a process still has the notion of lack of crime in its core. By disqualifying desistance as a concept then, I mean to imply that neither desistance and other crime-centric concepts contribute to our way of understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison, nor that research on desistance is not needed. As I have shown in this section, desistance literature has a lot to contribute to better understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison. In spite of this, I have shown that desistance alone is an insufficient way of conceptualising life after prison. More about the importance of desistance for society will be mentioned in the last section of this chapter. The rejection of desistance as a framing concept in order to understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison due to its crime-centric character, leads us to consider non-crime-centric terms.

Four-forms of Re/habilitation

The first of three non-crime-centric concepts which I will assess for suitability is the four-forms model of re/habilitation. Although, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, correctional re/habilitation is the most common meaning of re/habilitation in policy and practice, within academia there has been one specific effort to redefine this term both as an individual process and as an outcome which, considering the purpose of this task, deserves our attention. In 2012 and 2014, relying on theoretical work as well as on findings drawn from desistance literature, and bearing questions of justice in mind, McNeill laid the foundations of the four-forms of re/habilitation model which has been further refined and elaborated on in collaboration with other academics (Kirkwood & McNeill 2015; Burke et al. 2019; McNeill and Graham 2020). As the four-forms of re/habilitation model has been developed through time, I am going to give preference to its latest versions.

At a time when there was a paradigm conflict in the penal field, the four-forms model developed an interdisciplinary account of rehabilitation with the aim of addressing the different types of barriers to re/habilitation that releasees face (McNeill 2012). Although

the purpose of the model was to disentangle the elements of re/habilitation in order to understand it better (McNeill 2012), it not only recognised but highlighted the importance of exploring the existing interdependencies between the four forms (Burke et al. 2019). Originally, both processes and outcomes of rehabilitation were implied (McNeill 2012). But, in the latest update, in order to avoid confusion and in order to capture the salience of 'reintegrative momentum' with respect to punishment, it is argued that there are 'four forms of rehabilitative processes that aim at four forms of reintegration' (McNeill & Graham 2020, p.12). This model is composed of (a) *personal re/habilitation* — which refers 'to any effort that seeks to somehow change, develop or restore the person; to develop new skills or abilities, to address and resolve personal limitations or problems.' (Burke et al. 2019, p.13)— ; (b) *legal or judicial re/habilitation* — which reflecting on Beccaria's concern about the requalification of citizens (McNeill 2012, 2014) is a process that restores, through legal and formal procedures, citizenship status (Burke et al. 2019) — ; (c) *moral re/habilitation* – which is concerned with reconciliation between the individuals involved, the civil society and the state (McNeill & Graham 2020); and *social re/habilition* — which is concerned with the rehabilitated person's recognition and acceptance by civil society as a full member (McNeill 2014).

I would argue that this conceptualisation is by far the most comprehensive of the six reviewed in this chapter. Through the inclusion and development of moral, social and legal spheres, and the use and exploration of terms such as 'restoration' or 'citizenship', this account is especially detailed in describing and reimagining the symbolic journey. In addition, although its foundational account could be criticised for not taking into consideration more structural factors, its subsequent revisions have started filling this gap (see Burke et al 2019). But in spite of its comprehensiveness, I would argue that it misses one form of re/habilitation: the material one which relates to housing and finances. In addition, it does not directly mention health and wellbeing matters.

In spite of being the most comprehensive notion explored here, I would argue that this notion of re/habilitation is still not the best-suited concept in order to understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison. This is firstly because the word re/habilitation has been 'borrowed (…) from the wider medical literature' (Ward & Maruna 2007, p.2). Neither personal flourishing nor life after prison can be considered as concepts which fall into the medical field and its traditional ontology and theory of crime. In addition to that, the word re/habilitation is often associated with other terms, forming expressions such as 'offender re/habilitation' or 're/habilitating someone'. These expressions, firstly, construct

an image of a passive individual who is the recipient of something. Secondly, these expressions seem to suggest that the individual is the main and perhaps sole participant, failing to capture the importance of the context of life after prison. It gives the impression that if the individual flourishes, then their life after prison would be as if they had never been imprisoned. As I will show, this is often not the case. It is now time to assess a term that has fewer such connotations and, which is also non-crime-centred: 'Reentry'.

Reentry

In 1970, in his classic book *The Felon*, John Irwin (1987) dedicates one of the main four sections of the book to 'reentry'. Since the first introduction of this term in a contemporary criminology paper (Travis 2000), the body of literature on reentry has become one of the most salient in US criminology. Travis (2005) later on recognised that the choice of using the word reentry was made for its neutral meaning, with the purpose that, no matter the political beliefs or standpoints on prison's existence, everyone would want to contribute to studying how life after prison is.

Reentry has been defined as 'the interactive process' (Miller 2014, p. 306) 'of leaving prison and returning to society' (Travis et al. 2001, p.1). Nearly everyone that goes to prison leaves it, and thus goes through reentry; for them, 'reentry is not an option' (Travis 2005, p.xxi). Reentry literature tends to focus on the experiences and barriers that people face on release and/or on evaluating and theorising on reentry policy and interventions (e.g., Halushka 2019; Taxman 2004; Western 2018;). The fact that in reentry literature the state, its practices and its policies receive much more attention than the role of the community in life after prison (Uggen et al. 2005) has led some commentators (e.g., Andrews 2015) to argue that reentry is understood as a state-led process. Although I would not share this view, it is true that in this literature there is an emphasis on the role of the state, policy and practice, in life after prison (see for example the key role that policy domains have in structuring Travis's [2005] book and in its focus (p.85)). This emphasis on the role of the state, its policies and practices makes reentry a less attractive term in the context of this study. As reviewed in the previous subsections, life after prison is not only shaped by the individual and the state.

Throughout the years, reentry literature has also tended to focus on aspects of the physical journey of releasees, that is to say from the material journey of transitioning from prison to

outside prison (Maruna 2006; Miller 2017). Although very important, these are not the only type of challenges that people released face (Miller 2017). It is here where two divergent lines of study inside reentry literature may help us better understand the symbolic and political journey of life after prison. On one side, Miller (2017) in collaboration with Stuart (Miller & Stuart 2017) and with Alexander (Miller & Alexander 2016) has developed the concept of carceral citizenship to capture how the released individual:

> 'experiences social, political, and economic life in ways that are unique to members of his or her class, and are not typically shared by even the most marginalized people who have traditionally been marked by their race, religion, ethnicity, or gender,' (Miller & Alexander 2016, p. 297).

In some papers Uggen, in collaboration with others (Uggen et al. 2004; 2006; & Manza 2004; Manza & Uggen 2006; Wheelock & Uggen 2005) has explored the somewhat related concept of 'civic reintegration' with a particular focus on dis- and re-enfranchisement. These two concepts will be unpacked in the next chapter, when exploring the experiences of releasees. As it will be illustrated throughout this thesis, we cannot understand the practical journey by itself, because it is inevitably interwoven with symbolic social and political journeys.

Reentry literature has used a longitudinal life-course framework in order to understand or explain reentry (e.g., Visher & Travis 2003). Because of that, reentry literature has shown that life after prison is not only shaped by post-prison aspects but also by pre- and during-prison experiences (Travis et al. 2015). In fact, in many of their most important overviews of knowledge on reentry (e.g., Travis 2005; et al. 2015), full chapters are dedicated to exploring who goes to prison and how prison influences post-prison success. Another prime example of this is Pager's (2007) exploration of mechanisms for poor employment outcomes. Pager clusters the possible explanations into three groups; *selection* — which refers to the individuals' work experience and skills prior to prison, *transformation* — which refers to how the experience of imprisonment has shaped these skills, and *credentialising* — which refers to how serving a sentence has marked and stigmatised those people.

Another key contribution of reentry research is related to temporality with respect to an individuals' processes of change. Taxman (2004), relying on Prochaska et al's (1992) work

on how people change, developed the intervention-oriented Five-Step Offender Active Participation Model. The main contribution of this model for life after prison is that it acknowledges that at different times in their journey people may have to face different types of hurdles and therefore may benefit from different kinds of support. In addition, it points out that support may be needed from the moment someone enters prison until well-beyond that person's release.

The last of the reentry research contributions to understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison comes from recent qualitative research by Western (2018) and by Durnescu (2017). These studies confirm Irwin's argument in *The Felon* (1987) about the existence of different phases of release. Durnescu (2019) has incorporated this temporal dimension into his conceptualisation of the 'pains of reentry', finding that there are some pains that are more salient in certain stages of release. These studies and their implications will be fully explored in the next chapter.

Although the word's vagueness and neutrality were chosen on purpose, in order to be attractive to multiple actors, I would argue that it is precisely this quality that disqualifies reentry from being the best-suited concept for the purposes of understanding, interrogating and reimagining life after prison. Perhaps this is why this literature does not establish reentry as an outcome but only as a process, which opposes the sometimes-used concept of re/integration in this same literature as a desirable end of the reentry process (e.g., Petersilia 2009; Taxman 2004; Travis et al. 2014).

Nevertheless, I would argue that, even if the only purpose of this chapter was to assess the adequacy of the word reentry in order to explore how the process of life after prison *should be*, reentry would still not be the chosen concept. As the word reentry 'conjures no particular images' (Maruna 2006, p.25), I advocate for the use of a (more) evocative concept whose meaning suggests how the desired process and its outcome might appear. In spite of that, I have shown how this concept and the literature that develops it, has a lot to contribute allowing us to better understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison.

Two reentry researchers, by incorporating notions of *membership* and *social justice* respectively, lead us towards the question of how life after prison should be. As I will argue, these two notions are imbricated in the concept of re/integration.

'Studying how community *membership* is regained after release *broadens the definition of "success" after incarceration*. Policy researchers and policymakers often reduce "success" to the avoidance of a new arrest. The focus on recidivism highlights the burden that reentry might impose on the rest of us. Instead of emphasizing recidivism, I view a successful transition from prison as the attainment of a basic level of well-being consistent with community membership.' (Western 2018, p.35)

'An important first step in sustaining reform is *reframing re-entry as a project of social justice*. Justifying reform in the name of cost savings and risk management prevents public discussion of the human rights costs of mass incarceration. Rather than confront the rampant civil and human rights violations occurring in America's prison or acknowledge that former prisoners are a deeply vulnerable population who struggle for basic survival after release, the smart-on-crime movement reframes the deep moral problems of the American penal state as technical problems of systems inefficiency. (…) Shifting this conversation can begin by *redefining what we mean by re-entry 'success'*.' (Halushka 2020, p.542)

It is now time to consider the adequacy of one last concept: re/integration

Re/integration

Up until now I have argued that in order to understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison we need a context-situated non-crime-centric concept which encompasses experiences beyond intervention. In addition, I have argued that the connotation and meaning of the concept should not be empty and neutral but symbolically rich and evocative. In this last subsection of the chapter, I am going to explore the concept of re/integration and to select it as the most-suitable framing concept in order to understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison.

In spite of a rising interest in re/integration (Bazemore & Erbe 2004), 'understandings [of it] … remain seriously underdeveloped both in criminological theory and in criminal justice policy and practice' (Urie et al. 2019, p.78). In fact, re/integration as a concept 'is not always particularly well defined' (Raynor & Robinson 2009, p.140). An example of

this, is the fact that in the book which introduced this concept to criminological conversation about life after punishment (Braithwaite 1989), there is no explicit definition of the term. In spite of that, there are some exceptions such as the following one:

> 'When we speak of reintegration, we mean re-entry into community life as whole, contributing, productive persons. This means more than being tolerant of the person's presence; *it means acceptance of the person as a member*.' (Van Ness & Strong 2015, p.119, emphasis added)

The notion of membership as mentioned in the definition is one that is entrenched in the meaning of re/integration. As Hardcastle et al. (2011) point out, to be re/integrated 'denotes' an achievement of 'productive membership of the community' (p.113). Thus, re/integration is a process towards having the 'relationship with and status in society' (McNeill 2014, p.4,196) of a full member. Re/integration, in literature, is conceptualised both in a practical (Raynor & Robinson 2009) and symbolic way (Maruna 2004): Re/integration as a concept is not only about 'living within' a society but also about 'living as part' of a society (Andrews 2014, p.72).

> 'Of course, having a job, a roof over one's head, and enough gate money to get by until the first pay cheque is fundamentally crucial to reintegration as well, and these things should never be ignored in favour of the more abstract elements of moral inclusion. Yet, including ex-prisoners in the physical community without re-integrating them into the moral or social community hardly seems a recipe for success.' (Maruna 2004, p.13)

It is precisely this symbolic realm which has been traditionally neglected by re/settlement and reentry literature, practices and policies; in which re/integration is especially rich (Maruna 2004). This symbolic richness is present even in the first principle account in criminological literature on re/integration which was given by Braithwaite (1989). Although not explicitly defining re/integration, he explores and advocates for processes that 'reintegrate the offender back into the community of responsible citizens' (p.4), 'maintaining bonds of respect or love' (p. 12), processes that enable 'attachments and commitments' (p.29), respect 'interdependency' (p.29), and offer 'gestures of reacceptance' or 'decertify the offender as deviant' (p.55).

In Braithwaite's (1989) book, we find certain symbolic notions that are present in McNeill's (2012) four-forms of re/habilitation model. Firstly, the notion of de-certifying directly relates to that of the requalification of the citizen. Braithwaite suggests that in order to achieve de-certification, a ceremony or ritual may be needed. Maruna (2011) further develops the idea of 'reentry rituals' by signalling (a) the salience that rituals have in our daily lives and (b) especially in the criminal justice system, which is more often productive of degradation (Maruna 2004). But it is not only notions from the legal realm that are present in Braithwaite's account, but also moral and social ones. The community also has to decertify and accept the individual. In fact, Braithwaite (1989) makes it clear that re/integration occurs when there is reciprocity between the community and the individual. In his view, and in re/integration literature more widely, there is a great emphasis on the social environment in which the individual lives (Fox 2014). Braithwaite's notion of re/integration encompasses both the reacceptance of the offender by the wider community as a law-abiding citizen (Raynor & Crow 2009) and also the opportunities that the individual needs for access to interpersonal relationships and social ties (Braithwaite & Munford 1994).

In terms of its moral aspect, it is especially significant that his book 'has become something of a biblical text for the restorative justice movement' (Maruna 2006, p.27) which is so interested in symbolic — and especially moral — theories and practices. Concepts such as forgiveness, acceptance, redemption, reconciliation or atonement are key parts of Braithwaite's account (Maruna 2006; 2011). It is worth mentioning that Braithwaite's (1989) symbolic notion of re/integration does not only include matters of social connections but also of 'shared values' (Raynor 2004a, p.220). Communitarianism is one of the concepts on which his theory of crime is based. Braithwaite defines a communitarian society as one that 'combines a dense network of individual interdependencies with strong cultural commitment to mutuality of obligation' (Braithwaite 1989, p. 86).

During the last 15 years, a group of Australian scholars (e.g., Graffam et al. 2004a, Shinkfield 2006, Doroc 2003; Andrews 2015), relying on literature reviews, theoretical work and their own research, have developed the three-part ecological model of community re/integration of ex-prisoners — known from now on as the 3-part model — (see Figure 1 below). This group of researchers has been conducting longitudinal studies on the experiences of people released or soon to be released. In some studies (e.g., Graffam et al. 2005) key professionals have also been interviewed. As Shinkfield (2006) explains,

their model draws on ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979) in order to better understand the interrelations between the different domains or forms of re/integration (see Shinkfield 2006 for their understanding of this theory).

After diverse refinements derived from theoretical and research work, these scholars have clustered the different barriers and opportunities that people face when released into three different interdependent domains; inter-personal, subsistence and support (see figure 1 below). In this model, as in McNeill's (2012) four forms of re/habilitation, these domains are interdependent, and in order to be able to achieve full re/integration, the individual needs to be successful in each of the subdomains of the three domains (Andrews 2015). In addition, each subdomain, and thus the domains and the full model are seen to be situated in a continuum that goes from no integration at all to full integration (Andrews 2015).

Intra-personal Conditions
- Physical health
- Psychological health
- Substance use
- Emotional state
-Age
- Education and skills
-Marital status
- Gender

Subsistence Conditions
- Housing
- Employment
- Finance

Support Conditions
- Social support
- Support services
- Criminal justice support
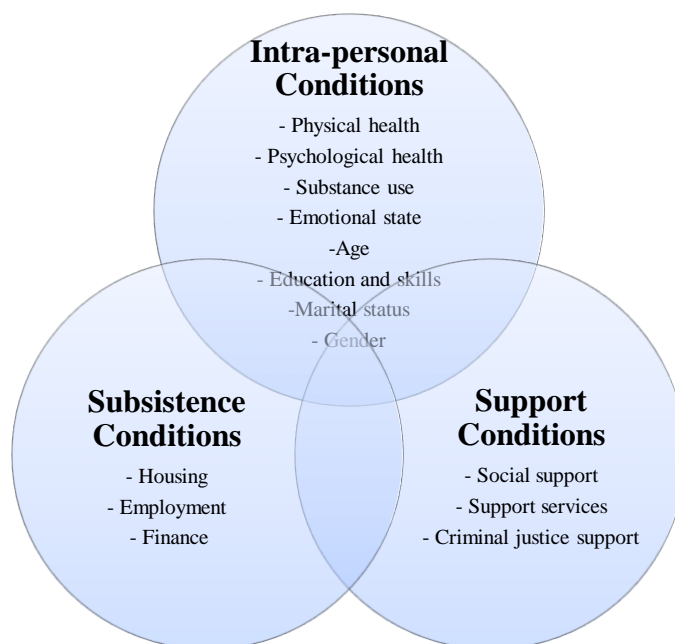
Figure 1. The 3-Part Ecological Model of Community Re/integration of Ex-Prisoners. Source: Andrews 2015, p. 122

Even though the 3-part model is fairly comprehensive and is very developed in terms of subdomains, it clearly misses important parts of re/integration which were included by Braithwaite (1989) in his understanding of re/integration; specifically, those named by McNeill (2012; 2014) as moral, and legal and judicial re/habilitation. However, this 3-part ecological model can enrich the four forms model through its subsistence domain and subdomains, about which the four forms model is silent. In wider literature, the 3-part

ecological model has been considered as limited because it fails to consider the experience of the communities in which re/integration — or the lack of it — occurs (Andrews 2015).

In order to fill this gap, Bartholomew, et al. (2011 cited in Doroc 2013) have theorised the 'Model of Interactive Reintegration and Desistance' (see Doroc 2013 and Andrews 2015 for an in-depth description of this model). This model highlights the role of the community by including and situating in a preferential place two concepts which I argue are highly relevant and that were not included in such depth in any of the other bodies of literature: community readiness and community ability to reintegrate. While community ability refers to the capacity of the community to foster re/integration — resources in terms of support, employment opportunities, housing —, community readiness refers to the volition of support to and acceptance of the offender. What is interesting in these concepts is that there is a flip-side of re/integration: instead of focusing on the individual's readiness or abilities, this model interrogates how ready and able the community is in order to foster this process. I will be using these notions throughout this thesis. Doroc (2013) highlights one further important point: In order for re/integration to be successful both the community and the individual released should be ready and be able. This need for synchrony, which is rarely noted in literature, will also be appearing in subsequent chapters.

Contrary to re/habilitation, re/integration is usually followed by the word 'within' or 'into', which indicate a belonging to something bigger and more structural than the individual, indicating membership. Re/settlement 'has always been as much about the community as the offender' (Bazemore & Erbe 2004, p.28). Subsequently, scholars have argued that re/integration is something that ultimately happens between the individual and the community (Maruna 2011). They argue that the role of the state in re/integration, contrary to the previously considered terms is not the main one (Andrews 2015). The state and its professionals cannot by themselves re/integrate the individual (Maruna 2006) or force the community to re/integrate someone. They can foster or support re/integration through their laws, policies and practices, but they are not the ones who have the last word on re/integration (Maruna 2006).

In this respect, I do not entirely agree with this notion of re/integration. I would argue that a distinction needs to be made: social re/integration is not the same as societal re/integration. The above understanding corresponds more to a *social* than to a *societal* notion of re/integration. The social sphere is not the only one in which people have to re/integrate (McNeill 2012), and in the other spheres there are other vital actors beyond the

individual and the community (McNeill 2017). The notion of legal and judicial re/integration clearly illustrates my argument. The *formal* requalification of the citizen is something that only the punishing state can do. It is the state and its legislators that directly select the policies that then shape life after prison for releasees; witness the case of disfranchisement. As will be seen in the next chapter, in the US there are some states in which some people remain disfranchised even after their release from prison (Petersilia 2009). The fact that they are legally excluded does not *directly* depend on the community. No matter how re/integrative their neighbourhoods are, such people are not able to vote in state and federal elections. Another example that will clarify this distinction even further is the following. By law, in Scotland releasees are sometimes barred from certain types of employment. No matter how re/integrative a neighbourhood in Glasgow is, an individual facing such a prohibition will be excluded from such work. In democracies, the community may *indirectly* change or sustain that state of affairs.

In distinguishing the societal from the social therefore, I mean by the former something much broader and wider. Going back to the four-forms model, societal re/integration in my view would encompass all four forms: the moral, the social, the personal, and the legal and judicial, as well as all the structural factors that shape them: issues such as culture, politics, legislation, institutions or shared values that shape how we all live together. It is this societal notion of re/integration that this thesis will be exploring. Therefore, from now on, each time that the word 're/integration' is used, it refers to 'societal re/integration'.

Bearing in mind issues of comprehensiveness and justice and this exploration of the concept of re/integration, I argue this is the most adequate framing concept in order to understand, interrogate and reimagine how life after prison is and how it should be: it is a rich and evocative context-situated non-crime-centric concept which encompasses experiences beyond intervention. In addition, re/integration is a membership-centric notion that encompasses all the other five assessed concepts.

Conclusion

Once having identified re/integration as the most-suited framing concept to understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison, I would like to conclude this chapter by engaging in three endeavours: developing the relationship between desistance and re/integration, exploring potential criticisms to my approach of conceptualising life after

prison, and further discussing the link between the concepts of re/integration and social justice.

Although not sufficient, I argue that desistance is necessary for full re/integration. Committing a crime involves a violation of our social contract (Behrens 2004), of our 'negotiated and shared values' (Burke et al. 2019, p.185) which, in theory, help us live in harmony. When living in a community we are attached by our 'social bond(s) and mutual obligations' (Raynor 2004b. p. 196), thus crime implies a relational breach of the mutual obligations and rules of conduct (Duff 2001). Hence, desistance is necessary to achieve and sustain re/integration, because the commission of an act that goes against our rules is itself dis-integrative. The notion of re/integration, thus, encompasses desistance.

In terms of potential criticisms, I have identified two main ones. The first one is that the word re/integration may not be the most accurate to reflect the current experience of people released (Visher & Travis 2003). Although this criticism may have weight, I must clarify that when referring to 'post-prison re/integration' I am also referring to the lack of it. As will be seen, when exploring the experience of post-prison re/integration, following the example of McNeill & Weaver (2010), I will be using the word 'dis-integration'.

The second possible criticism is that as we currently live in an unjust society perhaps re/integration is undesirable (Burke et al. 2019). This matter needs a more developed answer. As I have made clear, this thesis' notion of re/integration does not consider that the individual is the only one that needs to change in order to be re/integrated. Re/integration as considered in this thesis is a mechanism in order to — among other things — interrogate how life after prison is and should be. Structural changes might be suggested from this interrogation. In fact, I argue that the 3-part model or re/integration or the four forms of re/habilitation model should not only be seen as ways of evaluating if someone is re/integrated and not only as a guideline on how individuals should be supported in order to achieve re/integration. As I will show in the last chapter of this thesis, if flipped, the models can also be used in order to interrogate if a society is re/integrative in each of those domains. I argue that while doing this, we are striving to make society more just.

In addition, as reentry literature demonstrates, because of their influence after release, when studying life after prison, pre-existing disadvantages are unveiled. As will be seen in the next chapter, in prison there is an overrepresentation of people who faced multiple disadvantages even before entering prison. In addition to unveiling pre-prison

disadvantages, studying life after prison also shows that our way of punishing and reacting to the person punished extends harms beyond the end of the sentence, thus producing and exacerbating disadvantages.

Previously, I have argued re/integration is membership-centric. But here, I would like to extend this a little further. I argue that the membership-centric character of re/integration takes us to the heart of social justice. One of the latest additions made by Nancy Fraser to her trivalent framework of social justice is the notion of meta-political representation. She defines this in the following way:

> 'Meta-political representation concerns the prior establishment of who counts as a member in the first place. It tells us who is included in, and who excluded from, the circle of those entitled to just distribution, reciprocal recognition, and fair terms of ordinary-political representation.' (Fraser 2010, p.286)

Re/integration and social justice are linked by this notion of membership, which is fundamental in both cases. A re/integrative approach thus makes us consider matters of social justice. To what extent are releasees considered full members of society? Should they be considered as full members of society? And we can go even further and ask: Do they experience any adversities that constitute any type of injustices? Because of this, and the above arguments, as a concept re/integration is well-placed to interrogate social justice matters on release. As will be seen, during the course of this thesis, I will inescapably have to face these questions. For the moment, I am going to explore our current state of knowledge on post-prison re/integration.

3 Chapter 3 – Post-prison Re/integration: A Literature Review

Introduction

Now that a conceptual review of life after prison has been offered, the purpose of this chapter will be to discuss the current state of knowledge on the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration. In doing so, I will firstly explore *how is post-prison re/integration experienced*. Afterwards I will examine *how these experiences can be best explained*.

In this chapter, I will show that, when released, due to a unique cumulative process that produces and exacerbates an often already existent pre-prison dis-integration, releasees are acutely and persistently disadvantaged in a compounding way. While the word 'acute' captures the depth of the disadvantage, the term 'compounding' refers to its width, height and intersectionality. The word 'persistent' situates these deprivations in their temporal axis (see Desmond 2015; Perkins & Sampson 2015).

The aim of this chapter is going to be achieved by synthesising evidence from different bodies on life after prison in different Western countries. As distal penal influences are filtered through local institutions and actors (Lacey 2008; 2010; McNeill 2019a) and the case study on which this thesis relies is with respect to Glasgow, I am going to start each section and subsection of this chapter by making reference to findings drawn from Scottish research where possible. Then, due to matters of cultural and legal proximity I will make reference to UK research findings. Evidence on life after prison in other European countries and in the US will also be reviewed in order to complement the picture. This last body of literature will have a special weight due to its richness, criticality and comprehensiveness.

In order to synthesise these findings, I will rely on their analytical generalisability, that is to say, on the theoretical generalisations which are 'at a conceptual level higher than that of the specific case' which be inferred from each of them (Yin 2018, p. 73). More about analytical generalisability will be explored during Chapters 4 and 9. As I will show in this chapter, there are many similarities between the different contexts. This may be because these studies were all conducted in neoliberal states during the same period of history

which is characterised by a decline of welfarism and a rise of neoliberalism under the dynamics of late modernity (see Garland 2001; Simon 2007, Lacey 2008; Wacquant 2009; and Alexander 2010 for recent accounts of contemporary punishment).

When thinking about *how post-prison re/integration is experienced*, we should bear in mind the growing evidence on the existence of different phases in life after prison in which different challenges, problems and issues 'tend to be more active' (Durnescu 2019, p.1945). Following Irwin (1987), Visher and Travis (2003) and Western (2018) on life after prison, two post-prison phases are going to vertebrate this section. I have decided to name these two stages as *life immediately on release*, and *life beyond the first weeks of release*. Evidence and statistics from different studies and sources will be situated accordingly.

Experiencing Dis-integration Immediately on Release

In this section, I am going to show how people when returning to their extremely deprived neighbourhoods *immediately on release* try to (a) satisfy their basic material needs, (b) rekindle their close social connections if they still exist, or deal with social isolation, (c) adapt and adjust to material and social life after prison, and (d) try to meet their multiple appointments. I will argue that, in so doing, releasees *commonly experience acute, compounded and persistent material, personal and social dis-integration*.

A way of beginning to better understand *life immediately after prison* is in considering the neighbourhoods to which people go on release. There are no statistics on the specific neighbourhoods to which Scottish people return. Schinkel's (2014a,b) interviews with nine long-termers who were serving their licence in Glasgow seem to suggest that Scottish releasees reside in the *most multiply and severely deprived neighbourhoods*. Her interviews took place in communities that are amongst the 15 percent most deprived areas in Scotland:

> 'with income deprivation levels of almost 25 percent (compared to 16 percent nationally) and employment deprivation levels amongst those of working age of almost 20 percent (compared to 13 percent nationally).' (Schinkel 2014a, p. 12)

Although large-scale quantitative data on this matter is needed in order to confirm this, it resonates with US statistics. US research has found that most *prisoners return to their multiply and severely deprived neighbourhoods of origin* (Clear 2007) *or to similarly poor neighbourhoods* (Miller 2017). If in Scotland, releasees return to their neighbourhoods of origin or to similar areas, the picture is extremely worrying: As I will show afterwards, recent Scottish Government analyses suggest a high geographic concentration of incarceration of people coming from the most deprived and disadvantaged neighbourhoods (cited in McNeill 2019a). Similarly, the neighbourhoods of origin of English and Welsh releasees (SEU 2002) and of US releases (Lynch and Sabol 2001; Sampson & Loeffler 2010) are also the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in terms of material poverty, unemployment, health and wellbeing issues, racial segregation, low education and literacy skills, crime, victimisation and familial instability.

Research on life after prison is consistent with the fact that being released is a journey from prison to *extreme material deprivation.* This extreme and multiple material hardship, although starting immediately on release seems to last for years (see Reid Howie Associates 2015 on Scotland; Western 2018; Halushka 2019 on US). In the US, this post-prison material deprivation has been characterised as being beyond 'the usual boundaries of American poverty' (Western 2018, p.98). Over two thirds of releasees live at or below the poverty line (Wacquant 2009) and about 80 percent are considered as indigent in terms of applying for legal representation (Smith & DeFrances 1996).

Qualitative US research findings support and enrich this picture by outlining that during the first post-prison year 'the median annual income' was 'about half of the federal poverty line for individuals living alone' (Western 2018, p.83) or that people face 'considerable struggle' in order to fulfil their basic food needs (Harding et al. 2014, p.400). Similarly, Durnescu's ethnographic research on life after prison in Romania found that that releasees' 'level of poverty was sometimes beyond imagination in the 21st century' (Durnescu 2019, p.1492)'.

Both in Australia and in Romania, research has shown that during the first weeks out of prison, people are often not able and/or do not consider finding a job because they struggle so much in adapting and adjusting to life outside prison (Graffam et al. 2004; Durnescu 2019). This leaves them with only two other income sources immediately on release: benefits and familial support. In Scotland there is a worrying situation in terms of access to benefits on release: most people have to wait for a *minimum* of five weeks for the first

payment (CAS 2019a,b; 2020). The reasons for this will be explored at the end of this chapter. Scottish research findings on housing after prison resonate with this matter (Loucks 2007; Reid Howie Associates 2015). In the UK, there seems to be a similar picture: 'ensuring that benefit claims are in place and that prisoners have enough money for the first few weeks after release is often equally problematic' (SEU 2002, p.106).

Internationally, one of the few criminological studies that explores in depth the neglected topic of post-prison benefits and other public assistance found that around 80 percent of the participants had received some kind of US welfare assistance during the first six months outside prison (Western 2018). When further exploring this matter thanks to ethnographic findings, the picture that arises is disheartening receiving public financial support does not let them escape from poverty (Western 2018; Halushka 2019).

Insecure housing is another aspect of the material deprivation of releasees. Following Western's (2018) example, I consider every type of temporary and/or marginal accommodation as insecure housing. Releasees have been found to be over-represented in the Scottish (Homelessness Task Force 2002; Dore 2015), the UK (Lemos & Goodby 1999) and in the US (Burt et al. 1999) homeless populations. Scottish studies point out that insecure housing and homelessness is a common experience for many releasees (Dore 2015). The problem of housing in general and of post-prison housing in particular is especially serious in Glasgow (Loucks 2007). In this city, for example, 44 percent of those either sleeping in hostels or sleeping on the streets in 1999 had been in prison at least once (Homelessness Task Force 2002). The enormous difficulties in finding and maintaining housing on release in Scotland has been highlighted by the Scottish Government (Scottish Parliament 2018), by releasees themselves and by support practitioners (Loucks 2007). In Schinkel's (2014a) interviews with Scottish people on licence, for example, 'worries about accommodation were the most common, especially for those who were returning to Glasgow' (p.45).

The current Scottish legal framework surrounding homelessness has been qualified as 'possibly the strongest (…) in the world in relation to protecting people from homelessness' (Anderson & Serpa 2013, p.14). But even after the implementation of this legal framework, releasees are still struggling with post-prison accommodation (Reid Howie Associates 2015; Dore 2015; McIvor et al. 2019). In Scotland, releasees usually end up in hostels and B&B accommodation (Loucks 2007; Schinkel 2014a). As the conditions in Glaswegian hostels are so extreme, many of Loucks' (2007) respondents preferred to

live on the streets than in a hostel in order to avoid the drugs and violence that characterise them (see Schinkel 2014a too on Scottish hostels).

In the US Harding et al.'s (2014) found that the extent of mobility in their sample of former prisoners was around 2.6 times higher than 'the conventional threshold for residential instability in housing research' (Herbert et al. 2015, p. 72). Herbert et al.'s (2015) analysis of administrative data on parolees released in Michigan reports that half of the moves occurred during the first eight weeks. They argue that the key role of post-prison community supervision in the instability of post-prison accommodation confers to the post-prison mobility of releasees a unique character.

Post-prison material deprivation is both a cause and a consequence of *poor health* (Desmond 2015). Chronic pain and diseases, depression, post-traumatic stress and problematic substance use were common in Western's (2018) sample. Similarly, in Durnescu's (2017) ethnographic study in Romania, one in four participants reported and complained of poor health. Some key reasons for this situation will be explored in subsequent parts of this chapter.

Post-prison social isolation immediately on release is frequently documented in Scottish (Loucks 2007; Schinkel 2014a) and international literature (Baldry et al. 2003; Graffam et al. 2004; Western 2018; Durnescu 2019). In Schinkel's (2014a) research on long-termers on licence in Scotland, six out of nine men described experiencing loneliness and isolation in post-prison life. Similarly, Western's (2018), relying on the Boston study reports that 'many (…) were socially isolated' (p.54) and experienced loneliness frequently during the first few weeks out of prison. In Scotland, those who are not isolated during the first weeks outside prison seem to tend to spend their time with social networks (Schinkel 2014a) composed of small but loyal groups of social connections: usually family (Nugent & Schinkel 2016). International research supports this matter (Shinkfield & Graffam 2009; La Vigne et al. 2004; Durnescu 2019).

Studies are consistent with the vital importance of the support of close social connections on release. International evidence shows how 'family and friendship networks are the resource of first and last resort in their transition from prison back home' (Miller & Alexander 2016, p.297). Loucks' (2007) Scottish study reports that in terms of material support, immediately on release, family help with accommodation is often crucial in order to avoid homelessness. This is also supported by US studies which show that family is the

main source of material support (La Vigne et al. 2004), exceeding public assistance (Western 2018), and that people who receive benefits or secure employment still need familial support in order to achieve material stability (Harding et al. 2014). Similarly, around half of Western's (2018) sample were staying with their family. These findings not only show the key material role of family but also that (a) post-prison employment wages are extremely low, and (b) public assistance – both in terms of welfare and accommodation — is insufficient and ineffective. However, the familial support goes beyond the material realm: in Schinkel's (2014a) Scottish sample, family was key in providing wellbeing support and in Nelson et al.'s (1999) and in Shapiro & di Zerega's (2010) US samples, this high importance was with respect to emotional support. This reliance on close connections' support for material, wellbeing and emotional support places released people in an especially vulnerable situation.

It is well documented in international literature that in the first weeks out of prison many releasees *struggle in order to adapt and readjust to outside-prison life* and environment causing them stress, anxiety and nervousness (Irwin 1987; Crewe 2015; Western 2018; Durnescu 2019). Examples of this include having difficulty dealing with crowds, taking public transport, adapting to the pace of life outside prison, connecting emotionally with their families or using digital devices (see especially Deacon's 2019 Scottish study but also Jamieson & Grounds 2005; Reisdorf & Rickard 2018; Western 2018). As I will show when exploring life inside prison, these struggles to adapt are to a great extent due to prisonisation (Deacon 2019); meaning the adaptation to the habits, rules and dynamics of life inside prison (Travis et al. 2014; Western 2018).

Immediately on release, Scottish releasees have been found to have to navigate multiple appointments (Loucks 2007). This resonates with US studies' findings (Western 2018; Halushka 2019). Of special significance is Halushka's (2019) 17-month ethnographic fieldwork conducted in two New York re-entry agencies. He (2019, p.2) uses the term *runaround* in order to capture the 'multiple, overlapping bureaucratic entanglements across a network of criminal justice' and public assistance 'bureaucracies', as well as 'the subjective experiences' of those 'structural conditions'. He argues that the experience of runaround, can be characterised by certain interrelated elements. The first is waiting. Research shows how people in contact with the criminal justice experience wasted, suspended or lost time when traveling to different welfare and criminal justice appointments and when waiting for them (Durnescu 2011b; Fitzgibbon et al. 2017; Halushka 2019). In some studies, this was one of the main recurring themes (e.g., McNeill

2018b, 2019; Fitzgibbon et al. 2017). This resonates with non-criminological studies on public assistance offices (Auyero 2011). Waiting often provokes confusion and uncertainty both about its duration and its final outcome which, combined with boredom (Schwartz 1974), can discourage and frustrate those waiting (Auyero 2011; Halushka 2019). Waiting has also been found to carry opportunity costs (Halushka 2019) which, taking into account the existing stress of other obligations (Halushka 2019), can be a source of irritation (Schwartz 1974), especially in those cases in which very basic material needs are at stake (Halushka 2019).

The second element is that of coordinating conflicting obligations. Some of Halushka's (2019) participants had several appointments — welfare and parole, job training, substance use treatment and anger management courses — from so many different organisations that sometimes appointments overlapped and thus participants were unable to attend to them. This non-compliance and/or non-attendance can invoke punitive response from both the welfare and the penal state (Halushka 2019; McNeill 2020b). In Halushka's (2019) study, bureaucracy was a third element of the runaround. Durnescu's (2019) Romanian participants also struggled with bureaucracy when trying to obtain social benefits. The last element of 'runaround' identified by Halushka (2019) was negative dispositions and behaviour from the different frontline workers that releasees reported. As will be seen in the correspondent section, there are similar worrying findings from Scottish studies in this respect (Loucks 2007; Reid Howie Associates 2015).

Overall, this section paints a disheartening consistent picture of the experiences of people immediately after release both in Scotland and in other Western countries. During this first post-prison stage, people are multiply and severely disadvantaged in a unique way: (a) they return to the most severely deprived neighbourhoods; (b) their multiple and extreme material deprivation is well beyond the usual boundaries of poverty; (c) they are overrepresented in the homeless population and experience more instability and mobility than other homeless people, (d) they struggle to adapt and to adjust to the habits, rules and dynamics of freedom in a way to which only other institutionalised subpopulations may also experience, and (e) they suddenly have to face a unique combination of multiple public assistance and criminal justice appointments in a short period of time. Unfortunately, this seems to be only the beginning.

Experiencing Dis-integration Beyond the First Weeks of Release

Facing Post-carceral Denizenship When Looking for Employment

International research shows that it is not until, with material needs met and social relations resumed — where possible —, people start to adapt to life after prison (Durnescu 2019), and to engage in becoming a full 'citizen, and a worker' (Western 2018, p.35). People's post-release employment situation has been characterised by academics as one of 'pervasive joblessness' (Western 2018, p.84). In Schinkel's (2014a) Scottish research, all but one of the releasees was able to find 'long-term steady employment' (p. 106). This person had set up his own business. In England and Wales, an analysis of 4.3 million cases reached the conclusion that only 23 percent of the sample was working one year after release (MoJ & DWP 2014). US estimates indicate that in 2008 the unemployment rate of releasees was nearly five times higher than that of the general population, being 'substantially higher than even the worst years of the Great Depression' (Couloute & Kopf 2018). The main reasons for this will be further explored below.

Merely focusing on employment rates gives us an incomplete picture of post-prison employment (Travis 2005). International non-Scottish research suggests, that employed releasees:

a) Earn from 10 to 30 percent less than individuals with the same characteristics with no criminal record (Waldfogel 1994; Grogger 1995), being 'a poverty level income in a minimum wage job (…) often a best-case scenario' (Western 2018, p.84; Kling 2006; Durnenscu 2019)
b) Lose their jobs easily (Western 2018)
c) Rarely hold down full-time jobs (Western 2018)
d) And usually work in manual labour (Travis et al. 2014)

This same literature suggests that this employment situation does not change much with time (Travis et al. 2014).

Schinkel's (2014a) Scottish findings show that it is often in trying to find employment that people experience the struggles of releasees' unique citizenship status 'more keenly' (p.107; see Durnescu 2019 too on Romania). During these last decades, citizenship theory

has tended to distinguish between two types of citizenship: 'De jure' and 'de facto' (Somers 2008; Glenn 2011; Faist 2000). While the former is shaped by rights, responsibilities and restrictions (Miller 2017) recognised by the state through regulations and laws; the latter relates to formal and informal opportunities given to an individual to exercise those rights and responsibilities (Miller & Stuart 2017). In this thesis, I am going to refer to the former as *legal status*, and to the latter as *social status*. As I will show, each status is constituted and reinforced by legal and social mechanisms which are unique to people released (Miller & Alexander 2016).

Although 'crime itself is explicitly defined in relation to the state and its citizens', the citizenship status of people released from prison is an underdeveloped topic (Uggen et al. 2006, p.303). It is here that the already mentioned concept of carceral citizenship, developed by Miller in collaboration with Stuart (2017) and with Alexander (2016), can help us better understand this matter. These authors use this concept to refer to both intra-prison citizenship status and post-prison citizenship status. 'Carceral' might mean caged, constrained or contained, but it can also mean 'of or belonging to a prison' (OED 2021). In order to recognise the important distinction between intra-prison and post-prison citizenship status — at least in terms of the legal sphere — I prefer to use the term 'post-carceral' in order to refer to the latter, and carceral to refer to the former. In addition to this, departing from the concept of 'denizen', which is used to refer to some sub-populations who have 'a more limited range of rights than citizens do' (Standing 2011, p.12; Lea 2013; McNeill 2019b), I argue that the term 'post-carceral denizenship' more accurately captures the status of releasees. One of the key arguments of Miller, Stuart and Alexander's conceptualisation is the uniqueness of this status, both in terms of the mechanisms that produce and reinforce it and its consequences (Miller 2017). These last two matters will be present throughout the whole exploration of the legal and social status of releasees.

The Legal Mechanisms for Denizenship

As US authors Miller, Stuart and Alexander argue, releasees' unique legal status is conferred by the 'alternate set of rights, restrictions and responsibilities' applied to released people (Miller 2017, p.102) which are different from those that affect incarcerated people as well as from those that affect other disfranchised groups (Miller & Alexander 2016). It is precisely this that disqualifies post-carceral denizenship from being considered as a type

of second-class citizenship as traditionally understood (Miller & Stuart 2017): the legal exclusion of post-carceral denizens is legally justified (Miller & Alexander 2016) — and fostered — and therefore released people cannot 'invoke protections from the state based on their right to full social, civic and economic participation' (Miller & Alexander 2016, p.296).

In these legal restrictions, there is a key mechanism that needs exploration which again is unique to people with convictions: the criminal record. This mechanism holds a double function: it is at the same time a translating credential (Pager 2007; Maruna 2012) that 'activates' carceral and post-carceral denizenship (Miller & Stuart 2017, p.534), and it is the vehicle of that translation. It translates 'the presumed "essence" of the "offender" making this 'legible to' to anyone that is able to access that record' (Miller & Stuart 2017, p.534). This translation is especially powerful because it is attendant upon the decision of a figure of authority (Becker 1966), who is the judge, turning someone who is 'discreditable' (p.160) into someone who is also 'discredited' (p.155) (Goffman, 1961). This empowers different actors to react 'within and outside the (limits of the) formal criminal legal system' (Miller & Stuart 2017, p. 537). Bearing in mind that statistics suggest that over 38 percent of men in Scotland have at least one criminal conviction (McGuinness et al. 2013), matters around criminal record checking and disclosure legislation are also highly relevant in the Scottish context. As legislation on disclosure is so specific to each jurisdiction, where possible, I am going to focus on the Scottish context.

Any serious attempt to analyse the criminal record issue in depth — its regulations and its effects — should explore multiple issues. Scotland, as I write this thesis, is undergoing important changes with respect to criminal disclosure. Two highly relevant acts — The Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019 and the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 have been approved during the last two years. While at the time of writing this thesis there is no date known with respect to when the latter will come into force, the former did so on the 30th of November 2020 (Scottish Government 2020a).

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which is the legislation amended by these new acts, was heavily criticised because of the (a) excessive lengths of the periods within which people had to disclose their offending history (McGuinness et al. 2013) and because of (b) its lack of clarity (Weaver 2018). The aims of the 2019 and 2020 Acts are precisely to tackle these two criticisms by simplifying and clarifying the disclosure procedure and by reducing 'the length of time most people with convictions have to disclose their offending

history' (McCallum 2018, p.14; Sharratt 2019). An example of this is that from the 30th of November 2020 onwards those that have been incarcerated for a period of time between two and a half years and five years will not have to disclose their record for their lifetime but only for six years.

In spite of this, those sentenced to more than four years, which in 2019 represented four percent of the prison Scottish prison population (National Statistics 2020), will still be obliged to disclose their criminal records for their whole life. There is encouraging news that 'the Scottish government have committed to creating a review process to determine when, or if, they can become spent.' (Davies 2020). Although these changes are promising, lifetime disclosure for long-termers in Scotland still places Scottish legislation far behind legislation in other European countries such as Spain, Germany, Belgium or Luxembourg, in which every type of conviction has an expungement period (Jacobs and Larrauri 2015; Morgenstern 2019; Meijer 2019; Herzog-Evans 2019). These differences reflect distinctive traditions which place most European Union countries in contrast with Anglophone jurisdictions such as Australia, the US and the UK (see Herzog-Evans 2011 and Jacobs 2015 cited in Larrauri & Rovira 2019).

Internationally, the content of the criminal record has also been criticised because of not giving an accurate picture of the individual: while negative issues are included, positive actions and efforts that the individual may have undertaken since their sentence have no place on the criminal record sheet (Miller & Stuart 2017). In addition, when criminal records are disclosed for a lifetime, it can be argued that the information included can be outdated: existent research has estimated that 'after an average of seven-ten years without a new arrest or conviction, a person's criminal record essentially loses its predictive value' (Weaver 2018, p.4).

Another interesting question concerns how frequently criminal records checks are conducted. In Europe although precise figures are unknown, research suggests that the figures are increasing — especially in childcare (Thomas 2007) — and are 'not negligible' (Larrauri & Rovira 2019, p.32). This practice may be most common in the UK (Weaver 2018), where 'most employers seek criminal-record information from job applicants' being the figure between a 63-85 percent depending on the study (Fletcher 2002, p,770; Fletcher et al. 2001). Fletcher et al. (2001) for example undertook a postal survey of 400 UK employers: they found that 98 percent of the public sector employers asked applicants if they had criminal record. 63 percent of private sector employers indicated doing so too.

Criminal record checks were conducted by 90 percent of the public sector respondents and by 19 percent of the private sector employers. In the US, criminal record checks are becoming increasingly pervasive (Travis et al. 2014) varying depending on the size of companies and on the type of job (Holzer et al. 2004). This is also shaped by a rising trend of checking criminal records due to legislation that makes them public, and their increasing availability online (Petersilia 2009; Lageson & Maruna 2018).

Literature has tended to neglect considering the key role of the interpretation of background checks, forgetting that the criminal record, like any text, must be interpreted by the reader (Miller & Stuart 2017). As communication scholars now argue, in any communication process we need to consider not only the message but also the means of transmission, the reception and the context in which these processes take place (Escobar 2011; Rosenthal & Flacks 2012; DeNora 1999). Most research has focused on studying whether employers are reluctant or not to hire people with convictions, but most of these studies have left an enormous and important gap unfulfilled: why might they be reluctant? The reluctance to hire someone with convictions does not automatically mean that they are discriminating against them because they have offended. Evidence on this aspect will be explored during the subsequent section.

However, an in-depth exploration of the legal mechanisms of denizenship, needs to go beyond the criminal record topic, into the much more neglected topic of legal restrictions. An important characteristic of these is that, despite 'extend(ing) and intensify(ing) the sanction in multiple ways' (Garland 2013, p. 479), (a) they take 'effect outside of the traditional sentencing framework', (b) they are not taken into account when sentencing (Travis 2002, p. 16; Ewan & Uggen 2012), and (c) they take place beyond the end of the sentence (Larrauri & Rovira 2019).

Despite the adverse consequences that legal restrictions may have, this is an under-researched topic in Europe (Meijer et al. 2019). In addition, when studied, European literature often only focuses on the criminal record and its consequences (Thomas 2007). The conclusions of one of the most comprehensive European accounts on legal post-prison restrictions (Larrauri and Rovira's 2019) are worrying bearing in mind that, in theory, Spain is considered as a 'relatively lenient' country inside Europe: even here, albeit in a less extreme way, 'we begin to see that the 'piling on' of collateral consequences detected by Uggen and Steward (2015) in the US is also the case in Spain' (p. 40). US literature is much richer in this topic and is consistent with the expansion of formal 'disqualifications

and disabilities' (Garland 2013, p.478) directed specifically towards releasees with more than 48,000 regulations, laws, and administrative penalties of this type (Heck 2014). Demleitner's (1999; 2018) distinction between three restriction categories will be at the heart of my evaluation of this issue: job restrictions, denial of public assistance rights, and denial of civic-political rights. This latter one, will be explored at the end of the section.

In terms of job restrictions, in Scotland, under the Protection of Vulnerable Group legislation some releasees are barred from doing 'regulated work'. There are two types of regulated work: those with children and those with protected adults. A protected adult is someone who is receiving either a health, community care or welfare service. The decision on whether someone should be barred or not from regulated work is taken by Disclosure Scotland during a consideration assessment. In the US, scholars have observed a rising trend of federal and state legal restrictions that limit either in direct or indirect ways the jobs in which releasees with a criminal record can do (Wheelock & Uggen 2005; Uggen et al. 2006; Travis et al. 2014). In six US states, these restrictions can be for life (Petersilia 2009).

In addition to these direct job restrictions, there are other legal mechanisms that hinder US releasees post-prison prospects, such as the interpretation by potential employers and judges of liability law[2] (Petersilia 2009; Miller & Stuart 2017). One of the main reasons given by potential US employers for not hiring releasees is the fear of facing legal liabilities for any harms caused by the released person (Holzer et al. 2002a; 2004). In addition to this, some bonding companies deny theft bonds to released people (Petersilia 2009), further hindering their employment prospects.

In the US, legal restrictions also directly (Wheelock 2005; Petersilia 2009; Ewan & Uggen 2012; Heck 2014; Travis et al. 2014) and indirectly — through the people that support them — (May 1995; Dolnick 2012) hinder access to public material assistance such as access to public housing, welfare, food stamps, clothing, medical care, disability pay, scholarships, or college grants. Legal restrictions may have even more serious consequences than the sentence itself: under current US legislation having a criminal record on release (a) is considered and sometimes automatically disqualifies persons from naturalisation (Larrauri & Rovira 2019), adoption and fostering (Uggen et al. 2006); and

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[2] See Weaver (2018) for an in-depth explanation of liability law.

(b) speeds the process of deportation if the individual is undocumented (Larrauri & Rovira 2019).

Thus far, I have shown how people released are conferred a legal status which is distinct from any other sub-population. These legal mechanisms produce and reinforce extreme material deprivation of people released by 'removing the only existing safety net for poor people' (Petersilia 2009, p.136) and putting at risk their main source of material support; informal social connections (Miller 2017). In addition, it places releasees in a very weak position during everyday interactions, being at the mercy of both formal and informal actors which are fundamental in terms of material support (Miller & Alexander 2016): someone can end up sleeping in the street because of an argument or misunderstanding with the person that is hosting them (Miller & Stuart 2017). Research on the consequences that these legal restrictions have for families, for communities and for society is needed (Travis 2004).

The Social Mechanisms for Denizenship

Post-carceral social status is the second component of the denizenship status of releasees. Kessler et al. (1999), analysing a large-scale US national survey, found that over one-third of the general population sample reported 'exposure to major lifetime discrimination' and nearly two-thirds reported 'exposure to day-to-day discrimination' (p.208). Scholars from all around the globe agree about the formal and informal 'hostile reception' that people face when released (Uggen et al. 2004, p.274). Communities are not prepared to receive ex-offenders (Travis & Petersilia 2001). If someone is imprisoned once, that is enough for society to consider them as an 'outcast' (Braithwaite 1989); their status as former prisoners is 'a scarlet letter' (Uggen et al. 2004, p.283) which marks or 'scars for life' (Petersilia 2009, p.19). Therefore, the status of being an offender is the only one that exists; the status of the ex-offender is never considered (Garland 2001; Travis 2002), as Burnett and Maruna (2006) state: 'Once a con always a con' (p. 101).

International quantitative and qualitative research on the experience of released people is consistent with the fact that they feel stigmatised and discriminated against. In LeBel's (2012b) quantitative US research, two-thirds of the total sample of 204 releasees reported feeling discriminated against due to their post-prison social status. This same study is especially enlightening with respect to an issue rarely explored in literature: releasees

suffering multiple discrimination. When asking releasees to answer a questionnaire with questions about ten different reasons for discrimination, results not only show that nearly 80 percent of the sample felt discriminated against, but that 80 percent of them attributed this to having been in prison. This was the most frequently mentioned reason for experiencing discrimination, (66.3 percent of the total sample) followed by race (47.9 percent) and problematic substance use (47.3 percent). In addition to this, nearly 65 percent of the sample reported feeling multiply discriminated against, and nearly half of them reported three reasons or more. Although more research is needed on this important matter, this study supports previous research findings on double and triple stigma and discrimination reported by people with convictions (Pager 2007; van Olphen et al. 2009; Hartwell 2004) and enhances our understanding on this matter. Firstly, it shows that released people have to face a unique combination of multiple discriminations and stigmas. Secondly, it also situates the stigma of having been in prison in the context of other potential stigmas: it seems to be the most pervasive.

Schinkel's Scottish qualitative research shows that the principal situation in which released people experience stigmatisation and discrimination is when trying to access employment (Schinkel 2014a). Her participants on licence argued that disclosing being a releasee blocked them from obtaining a job. Nugent & Schinkel (2016, p.574) argue that this was because 'society at large saw them as (potential) offenders rather than desisters and rejected them as such'. US qualitative research is consistent with the fact that released people feel stigmatisation and discrimination as a huge hurdle to successfully gaining a job (Travis et al. 2014).

A combination of different types of international studies, such as surveys on employer attitudes and controlled experiments, paint a consistent picture that stigmatisation and discrimination are real (see Travis et al. 2014 for a comprehensive US overview; see Fletcher 2002 for a UK review). In the UK (Marshall & Thomas 2015) and more widely in Europe (Weaver 2018) there is a scarcity of studies that explore employers' attitudes and behaviour in depth. Fletcher (1999; 2001; 2002) in his review of some of the scarce UK research on these matters reaches the conclusion that 'previous (survey to employers) research has identified a general reluctance amongst employers to recruit offenders' (Fletcher 2002, p. 760). Of special significance to this thesis is the Apex Scotland (1992) research, which reached the conclusion that (a) only four percent of employers of the sample had recruited during the previous year a person with a criminal record, and that (b) most employers of the sample had the following attitude towards hiring people with

convictions: 'why take the risk' (Fletcher 2002). Fletcher (1999; 2001) also reviews English studies which uncovered findings that similarly indicate the existence of stigmatisation and discrimination towards people with convictions: 40 percent of the employers of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce sample thought that they had no job to offer a person with a criminal record (quoted in Le-Wilson 1992) and 17 percent and 12 percent of the public sector and private sector respondents indicated in the Apex Trust (1991) study to have hired someone with a criminal record during the previous year. This UK picture is enriched by Fletcher et al. (2001) findings: 56 percent of the 400 employers who completed a postal survey 'reported having anxieties about recruiting offenders' (p. 25). The percentage was 81 percent when only considering private sector employers.

Our understanding on this matter can be enhanced by considering US surveys on employers and audit studies, which indicate that the reluctance to hire people with criminal records is especially strong: 'employers are much more reluctant to hire ex-offenders than any other group of disadvantaged workers' (Petersilia 2009, p.117; Holzer et al. 2002a; Pager 2003, et al. 2009). Holzer et al. (2002a;1996), for example, after conducting a survey of 3,200 employers from four different US cities, found that 62 percent of them indicated that they would probably or would definitely not hire someone with a criminal record. Employers were nearly eight times more likely to give this answer in relation to someone with a criminal record than in relation to someone on welfare, 3.4 times more likely than in relation to someone that has been unemployed for a year, and 1.5 times more likely than with respect to someone with a spotty work history. There is a need for this type of large-scale data in Scotland and UK.

Pager (2003, 2007) and Pager et al. (2009) conducted in-person audit studies in Milwaukee and New York. In order to explore the impact of reporting an 18-month prison sentence for drug felony, they sent two people (in pairs) to apply for real jobs. Testers were matched according to age, race, physical appearance and general style of self-presentation. Each member of the pair fictionalised having equivalent levels of work experience and education, and each week one of the two indicated that they had been in prison. Results in these studies were very similar: 'as in earlier research, a criminal record (…) reduces the likelihood of a call-back or job offer by nearly 50 percent (28 vs. 15 percent).' (Pager 2009, p. 199). In addition, they found that those who said they would hire someone with a criminal record, often failed to do so. What Pager et al.'s audit studies show is that even when evaluating skills and education issues, employers are still very reluctant to hire someone who has been in prison. Research has also shown that the reluctance varies

depending on the perceived gravity of the crime and the type of job (Holzer 2007; Pager 2007). Evidence suggests that being sentenced to imprisonment — vs having a criminal record with no prison sentences — provokes an extra layer of reluctance from employers (Wirthlin Worldwide 2000, cited in Petersilia 2009). There is a need for Scottish and British in-person audit studies.

Although there is consistent evidence on the reluctance of potential employers to hire people with convictions, few studies have explored the reasons for this reluctance. The limited evidence suggests potential employers are reluctant because they think people with a criminal record are untrustworthy and unreliable (Holzer et al. 2002a; Petersilia 2009). The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007 cited in Durnescu 2011a) conducted a survey in which the majority of the potential employers' worries were in relation to the lack of honesty (92 percent) and reliability (89 percent) of the person with convictions. In addition, literature suggests that, when asking for the criminal record, employers have different reasons, with distrust or a negative judgement of the character as some of the most common (Weaver 2018).

Frontline public assistance workers, as with potential employers, have also been found to stigmatise and discriminate against released people. Reid Howie Associates (2015) Scottish study on accommodation on liberation found that short term releasees felt judged: they perceived a lack of respect, empathy and courtesy from staff; they did not feel listened to and considered that staff made negative 'unfounded assumptions about individuals because of having been in prison (e.g. that past behaviour would be repeated, or that someone else would take responsibility for providing support).' (p. 34). This was supported by specialist and re/integration support staff. Loucks' (2007) findings on people who are homeless after release in Glasgow are also in line with these results: 'a number (of participants) believed they were treated as "the lowest of the low"'; they felt that workers treated them with a lack of value and as if their homeless situation was their 'fault' (p.31). As one of her participants stated:

> 'I'm not a dog; I'm a human being. I deserve to be treated like a human being.'
> (p.44)

In Halushka's (2019) US-based ethnography of people released from custody, he observed that 'frontline workers from welfare agencies are constantly evaluating the "deservingness" of aid recipients' (p.12). Research suggests that this evaluation underpins 'the stigmatized

expectations that the recipients of social provision are morally deficient, lazy, lead mismanaged lives, and hail from dysfunctional households' (Lara-Millan & Gonzalez van Cleve 2017, p. 62).

International literature suggests that there is also discrimination towards people with convictions related to post-prison housing. In Reid Howie Associates' (2015) Scottish research, some staff and individuals were worried about being discriminated by their neighbours. In Helfgott's US survey a majority of the 306 members of the general public that were part of the sample reported not wanting to have anybody with convictions as a neighbour, no matter the type of crime committed. Most of them indicated that, if that happened, they would neither welcome nor socialise with that person. There is international evidence that people experience stigmatisation not only when trying to improve their deprived material situation but also when trying to engage in current or potential social connections (Helfgott 1997; Clear et al. 2001; Western et al. 2001; Uggen et al. 2004; Holzer et al. 2006) either directly or indirectly — through limiting access to sites in which people socialise — (Wright and Cullen 2004; Maruna & Farrall 2004; Lageson & Uggen 2013; Durnescu 2019).

This discrimination and stigmatisation, experienced in these different situations, has consequences for released people. Firstly, materially, released people who did find a job earned between 10 to 30 percent less than individuals with the same characteristics but with no criminal record (Waldfogel 1994; Grogger 1995). This is very likely to be because stigmatisation places people with convictions in a vulnerable position in the labour market, meaning they sometimes accept any working opportunity, such as working in the informal economy or working in jobs with low income, poor conditions and precarity (Durnescu 2019). In addition, even when a job is found, the employer may see it as a favour, which may have consequences on the social and employment relations between them (Durnescu 2019). The consequence of this may be that people may end up working more hours for less money. This is an example of Miller's (2021) theory of 'economy of favors' (p.123).

Secondly, as Nugent & Schinkel (2016) have found in their Scottish studies, releasees feel hopeless due to this stigmatisation. They may feel that no matter what they do they will never be hired. Durnescu's (2019) ethnographic Romanian research found that they may thus decide to stop applying for support. In relation to desistance, former prisoners themselves have reported in research that they see stigma as an enormous hurdle (LeBel 2012a; Maruna 2014). In 2007, Chiricos and colleagues, taking advantage of a particular

law in Florida, conducted a study about how the label of 'ex-con' affected recidivism for 95,919 former prisoners who were guilty of a felony. They found that those to whom judges gave permission to hide their criminal past and the opportunity of not losing their civil rights were significantly less likely to recidivate than those who were adjudicated as guilty: 17 percent.

The Civic - Political Mechanisms of Denizenship

On their journey to membership, released people also experience unique civic-political disabilities (Meijer et al. 2019). I use the concept of the 'civic-political' in a broad way in order to include civic knowledge and attitudes and engagement of both formal and informal kinds. In relation to (a) elections, political parties or community or neighbourhood councils; to (b) participating in online forums on politics, debates on social networks about politics or communities; and even in relation to (c) volunteering (Morris 2001; Jennings & Zeitner 2003; Doolittle & Fail 2013; Van Derne & Helsper 2015). Uggen, in collaboration with others (Uggen et al. 2004; 2006; & Manza 2004; Wheelock & Uggen 2005), through exploration of the concept of 'civic reintegration', provides a good starting point for beginning to better understand this most understudied aspect of life after prison (Uggen et al. 2004). This US body of literature explores civic and political disabilities both inside and outside prison.

The focus of civic reintegration literature on dis- and re-enfranchisement is, up to a certain point, normal since the right to vote is 'a cornerstone of democratic governance and a fundamental element of citizenship in democratic societies' (Uggen & Manza 2002, p.777). Electoral rights are part of the core of a citizen's status 'since participation and membership are inextricably linked (Tripkovic 2019, p.4). Voting has implications not only for individuals but also for societies (Manza & Uggen 2006). Voting is a way (a) of having the chance to express yourself politically, (b) of shaping the future of your country, (c) and of collectively shaping the state of affairs (Wheelock 2005; Manza & Uggen 2006). That people are able to vote also speaks of the character of a society, giving legitimacy to its democracy (Manza & Uggen 2006). It also gives disadvantaged populations the opportunity to change their current situation (Manza & Uggen 2006). The disfranchisement of people released from prison may be considered as one more way in which released people are silenced, hindering them from changing their acute, compounded and persistent disadvantage (Wheelock & Uggen 2005).

In UK academia, during the last decade there has been increased attention paid to dis- re-enfranchisement (see Behan 2014; Tripkovic 2019). In Scotland, people released from prison, on parole or on remand are able to vote. The US goes beyond any other Western democracy in terms of dis-enfranchising people after the end of their sentences (Travis et al 2014; see Behrens 2004 for its historical evolution): people that no longer sleep in prison constitute 73 percent of the total of disfranchised people. Ten US states ban releasees from voting *permanently,* unless a pardon or executive clemency is given, which very rarely occurs in practice (Mauer 2002). Although, during the last two decades, a trend towards limiting these restrictions has been observed (Jacobs 2015 cited in Larrauri and Marti 2019), some of these measures have been reversed (Travis et al. 2014). For some of Uggen et al.'s (2004) probationers and parolees, being disfranchised 'meant a lot' (p. 274). They felt that being disfranchised was one of the many ways in which their membership to society was limited. Due to being disfranchised, they continued to feel punished and under constraints. Much more research is needed on this matter.

On release, people often experience civic-political disablement from one of the four main features of citizenship: serving jury duty (Miller & Stuart 2017). Jury participation can also be considered as a political act (see Kalt 2003 for an in-depth exploration on jury rationale and people with convictions): excluding sub-populations from juries decreases the power of people with convictions (Wheelock & Uggen 2005), reinforcing current criminal justice discriminatory practices. In Scotland, releasees also face limitations with respect to being part of a jury (Scottish Court Service 2020). For example, people sentenced to imprisonment for five or more years are disqualified for life from jury service (Scottish Court Service 2020). In the US, lifetime jury exclusion for those with convictions is the most common rule (Kalt 2003).

Legal restrictions may also affect the possibility of running for election. In Scotland, there are these types of restrictions with respect to local Councils, the Scottish Parliament, and the UK House of Commons (The Electoral Commission 2017; The Electoral Commission 2016; Representation of the People Act 1981). In the US, in most states people with convictions are able to run for election but cannot be a member of the Cabinet (Larrauri & Rovira 2019). Another post prison civic-political disability is that of legal restrictions to volunteering. In Scotland, a releasee that wants to volunteer needs to follow the same criminal record disclosure process as if they wanted to be employed. Scottish research has found that this, apart from hindering the opportunities of people released in engaging in

these types of civic-political activities. also makes the process of obtaining permission very slow and laborious even when eventually successful (see McGuinness et al. 2013). However, in addition to legal restrictions, Scottish released people are sometimes also subject to informal social restrictions from civic-political participation after release: some charities reject releasees from volunteering due to being afraid of the media reaction (McGuinness et al. 2013). Similarly, US research (Uggen et al. 2004) reports that although many people in prison were thinking of volunteering on release, they are not able to due to legislation in terms of criminal records. Exclusion from neighbourhood and other civic participation was also observed (Uggen et al. 2014, p.274).

In this second section, I have shown how, beyond the first few weeks, releasees begin to experience more keenly the consequences of their post-carceral denizenship, having to face unique legal and civic-political restrictions, as well as a unique social stigmatisation and discrimination — which is sometimes multiple — due to their contact with the criminal justice system. To this the multiple and extreme material deprivation that releasees continue experiencing during this phase should be added. In these first two sections I have shown that many released people experience acute, compounded and persistent dis-integration, having to face unique material, social, legal, civic-political and personal disadvantages. But, what are the reasons behind their unique post-prison situation? The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to answering this question.

A Unique Process of Cumulative Dis-integration

Dis-integration Before Imprisonment

Having explored various dimensions of post-prison dis-integration, the purpose of this second section will be to explore *the reasons behind this situation*. To do so, I advocate the use of a temporal framework that considers the impact of experiences before, during and after imprisonment (see Visher & Travis 2003; Pager 2007; Travis et al. 2014). However, given my interest in post-prison re/integration, I will only be focusing on those pre-prison life aspects which directly relate to life after prison. Before engaging in the exploration of the earlier lives of released people, we should keep in mind that as most reliance on self-reporting estimates of multiple and severe disadvantage are probably under-estimations (James & Glaze 2006).

The first task is to explore *life before custody*. In this section I am going to show how most people that end up in prison were dis-integrated in the first place in an acute and compounded way. Data from different jurisdictions is consistent with the 'spatial' (Ewan & Uggen 2012, p.63) or 'geographic' (Lynch & Sabol 2001, p.15) concentration of incarceration of people coming from the most multiply and severely deprived and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In Scotland, recent Scottish Government analyses suggest this pattern. The five percent areas of the country with more deprivation have an incarceration rate four point nine times higher than the rest of Scotland (cited in McNeill 2019a). Similarly, 43 percent of those that are in Scottish prisons prior to their incarceration lived in the 15 percent most deprived zones of Scotland (cited in McNeill 2019a). This data resonates with Houchin's report (2005) which found that in the most deprived communities one in nine young men had spent time in prison by the time they were 23. Houchin (2005) reports that the incarceration rates of those living in the most deprived areas of Glasgow were 6 times higher than the general population in Scotland and two point five higher than the incarceration rate of those living in that same type of housing in the rest of Scotland. Over the last decade 'this relationship (between multiple deprivation and imprisonment) has been more or less static' (Scottish Government 2020b, p.19).

An illustrative example of this spatial concentration in the US is the case of New York: 52 percent of those in prison come from the fifteen most deprived neighbourhoods — of a total of 65 — which represent 19 percent of the residents of New York (Travis et al. 2014). In these neighbourhoods, poverty is three times greater than the national trend (Miller & Alexander 2016). It is in these multiply and severely deprived neighbourhoods where 'coercive mobility' (Clear 2007, p.73) occurs: a process in which a '15 percent of adult males are cycling back and forth to prison' (Ewan & Uggen 2012, p.93). This can be considered a case of repeated reentry, which has also been found in Scottish research (Armstrong & Weaver 2010; Weaver & Armstrong 2011).

The *overrepresentation of materially deprived people inside prison* is also supported by research on data about the characteristics and backgrounds of people in prison. Large scale research has found that, in England and Wales, people in prison are thirteen times more likely to be unemployed prior to prison than the general population (SEU 2002; Ministry of Justice & Department of Work and Pensions 2013). In addition, people that end up in prison are seven times less likely to be working in a managerial and professional job (Hopkins 2012). In the US, in terms of income, two-thirds of those in prisons come from

households living below half of the poverty line (Wacquant 2010). This poverty is partly produced and reinforced by the fact that incarcerated people are a subpopulation which, prior to imprisonment, had 'high levels of unemployment, little continuity of work experiences and a high level of job dismissals' (Travis 2005, p.158). In addition to this, large scale statistics show that pre-prison job instability is common (Visher et al. 2004).

People in a pre-prison situation of insecure housing — either being homeless or in temporary accommodation — are also overrepresented in prison. In Scotland, 62 percent of the Scottish Prisoner Survey (Carnie et al. 2017) sample indicated that they were living in either public housing, housing association tenancies or in private rented accommodation. Over one fifth of those surveyed reported to be living in a homeless situation or in temporary accommodation. In England and Wales people who end up in prison are nearly four times more likely to be either homeless or in temporary accommodation than the general population (Prison Reform Trust 2018). In the US, this overrepresentation has also been observed (Travis et al. 2014). US ethnographies on life after prison are consistent with this situation (e.g., Western 2018).

In addition to material deprivation, *pre-prison poor health* is also common in people who end up incarcerated (Petersilia 2009; Travis et al. 2014) making them much more likely to have health and wellbeing issues than the general population 'by any indicator' (Petersilia 2009, p.34). In Scotland, the last SPS Prison Survey (Carnie et al. 2017) reported that one in every three inmates have a long term-illness — which is thus very likely to have started prior to imprisonment. In the US, for example, half of those entering prison needed treatment in terms of health or wellbeing on their entry (Wacquant 2009). Histories of poor health of people incarcerated is also supported by many ethnographic studies (see Harding et al. 2014, Herbert et al. 2015, and Western 2018 in US; Durnescu 2019 in Romania).

Problematic substance use is also very frequent before entering prison. In Scotland, 36 percent of the SPS prisoner survey (Carnie et al. 2017) sample recognised having a pre-prison *problem* with substances. The same Scottish Prison Survey showed that 38 percent of the sample was under the influence when committing the offence/s which led to imprisonment, 18 percent of the sample considered that drinking affected their ability to maintain a job, and 32 percent of the sample reported that their drinking affected their relationships with their social connections. In England and Wales, a vast majority of those in prisons consumed drugs prior to imprisonment (SEU 2002; Prison Reform Trust 2018). In the US (Petersilia 2009; Bronson et al. 2017) around a 60 percent of those imprisoned

had taken drugs immediately before incarceration. This made them 12.6 and 11.6 times more likely to be drug users than the general population.

In addition, people that end up in prison seem to be more likely to have a *disability*. In Scotland between eigth percent and ten percent of people sent to custody over the last 10 years identified on their entry day as having a disability (Scottish Government 2020b). People with previously *fragile, inexistent and/or negative social connections* are also overrepresented in the prison population (Wildeman & Western 2010). Bramley et al. (2019a) show that 30 percent of Scottish prisoners have been in care. This makes them 10-15 times more likely to have been in care than the general population (Bramley et al. 2019b). In addition to this, Scottish studies show that social connections may also have been eroded when the individual had committed the crime (Nugent & Schinkel 2016) either because of being the direct victims of it or because of giving up on them. In England and Wales, those in prison are less than twice as likely to be married prior to prison than the general population and over four times more likely to have run away from home when they were children (SEU 2002).

Finally, there is an *overrepresentation in prison of people with lower levels of educational achievement and lower skills* (Petersilia 2009). In England and Wales, SEU's (2002) report indicates that 30 percent of those in prison regularly truanted from school, 49 percent of males were excluded from it and 89 percent of men left school at 16 or younger. That makes people imprisoned 10 times more likely to have truanted than the general population, and around 20 and over two times to have been excluded from school and to have left school at 16 or younger. In the US, research indicates that 87 percent of people in prisons have received no post-secondary education (Wacquant 2010) and it has been found that those in prison are over twice as likely to have dropped out of high school than other low wage workers of similar ages (Wacquant 2010).

In addition to this, people with low basic skills are over-represented in the prison population. Scottish (Reid Howie Associates 2015) and US (Visher & Travis 2004) studies have shown that in most cases, the situation in terms of education and basic skills does not improve during imprisonment (Visher & Travis 2004; Reid Howie Associates 2015). This matter makes one of the SEU (2002) report conclusions very worrying: around two thirds of those in prison have numeracy at or below the level expected of an 11-year-old, 64 percent of them had the reading ability level at or below that expected of an 11 year old

and 82 percent had a maximum writing ability level expected from an 11 year old person. In US a similar picture arises (Petersilia 2009).

Up until now I have shown how there is an overrepresentation in prison of individuals who come from the most severely and multiply deprived neighbourhoods who, prior to entering prison, were materially and socially deprived, humanly fragile and problematic substance users, low-educated and low-skilled. This makes people that end up incarcerated much more likely than the general population to be multiply and severely dis-integrated in the first place, raising questions about social and criminal injustice. This, which develops Chapter 2's argument on the use of the prefix 're' (as in 'reintegration'), has further implications for post-prison re/integration: international research is consistent with these pre-prison circumstances foster post-prison material and social dis-integration as well as post-prison poor-health and problematic substance use (Sampson & Laub 1997; SEU 2002; Niven & Stewart 2005; Metraux & Culhane 2004; Loucks 2007; Sabol 2007; Brunton-Smith & Hopkins 2014; Travis et al. 2014; Western 2018).

Imprisonment as a Dis-integrative Experience

Having established that there is an overrepresentation in the prison population of people who were acutely and compoundly dis-integrated in the first place, we move on to explore the dis-integrative effects of *life inside prison*. This experience is one that is specific to incarcerated people. Although some aspects of imprisonment may resonate with the experiences of people who are living under the regimes of other coercive institutions (e.g., mental hospitals), no other subpopulation goes through this exact same process. In this subsection, I aim to show how the experience of imprisonment not only frequently fails to improve the pre-prison situation but that it fosters the production and exacerbation of multiple and severe post-prison disparities and disadvantages. When understanding the US data, it is important to notice that there are three different types of imprisonment: county jails, federal prisons and state prisons. In this subsection, unless a specification is given, the word 'prison' and its derivate words will be used referring to the joint data collected from all three of them.

Entering prison usually entails *material losses* (Carnie et al. 2017). On entering prison, it is common that people lose their pre-prison employment (SEU 2002; Clancy et al. 2006). In the Scottish context, loss of employment was considered by short-termers as one of the

'destructive unintended effect(s)' of incarceration which had more negative consequences than the 'experience of incarceration' itself (Weaver & Armstrong 2011, p.11). A resultant gap in a person's work history is difficult to explain when released, hindering employment prospects (Andrews 2015). In fact, in the US, length of incarceration has been found to be associated with lesser job prospects when released 'regardless of prior crime, excessive adolescent drinking and exclusion risk' (Sampson & Laub 1997, p.17).

Scottish research has shown that people when entering prison commonly also lose their accommodation (Homelessness Task Force 2012; Reid Howie Associates 2015; Bramley et al. 2019a). These findings resonate with evidence from England and Wales (Carlisle 1996; Lemos & Goodby 1999). As rented accommodation is the most frequent type of housing for people that end up in prison, most lose their tenancies, being unable to pay rent. In Scotland, for example, those that are expected to stay in prison for more than 13 weeks stop receiving housing benefits when entering prison (Loucks 2007). The most recent Scottish Prison Service Survey (Carnie et al. 2017) found that 49 percent of people report losing their pre-prison housing when entering prison, while the England and Wales SEU (SEU 2002) suggest the proportion is two-thirds. Scottish research (Loucks 2007; Reid Howie Associates 2015) and English and Welsh (SEU 2002) research also show that losing accommodation also often entails a loss of personal belongings such as identification cards, photos, clothes or mementos which are materially key to receiving public assistance on release. As my data will show, this also has a huge emotional impact on the individual. In addition to this, Scottish literature criticises a lack of support at two critical moments; when someone enters prison (Reid Howie Associates 2015), further hindering the maintenance of the pre-prison accommodation; and in advance of release (Loucks 2007; Reid Howie Associates 2015), which decreases the chances of having accommodation ready for the release date.

Poor health is more common inside prison than in the general population (Petersilia 2009) with 'co-occurring disorders' being highly prevalent (Western 2018, p.191). In Scotland, the last SPS Prison Survey (Carnie et al. 2017) reported that one in every three inmates have a long term-illness. In the US, Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that around 40 percent of those in prison have a *serious problem of health or wellbeing* (Maruschack 2008). Inside prison, health issues are very common (James & Glaze 2006) and so serious for 37 percent of those in US prisons that it 'curtail(s) their ability to work' (Wacquant 2009, p.72); this is three times more likely than in the general population (Petersilia 2009).

Research has shown that not only many, when released, still carry their pre-prison health and wellbeing issues with them (Rich et al. 2011), but that incarceration is strongly and directly related to post-prison ill-health even when other variables are controlled (Schnittker & John 2007; Massoglia 2008a). Marushchack's (2008) report signalled that one every six state prison inmates and one every 12 Federal prison inmates reported being injured during a fight inside prison. In addition to this, intra-prison poor dental treatment, infectious diseases, the stress of intra-prison life, prison food, poor ventilation, overcrowding and other prison conditions have been found to seriously hinder intra- and post-prison health and wellbeing in different ways (Massoglia 2008b; Moran 2012; Durnescu 2019). In addition, people, on release are stigmatised because of some of these marks left by prison on their bodies (see Moran 2012).

Substance use inside Scottish prisons is considered a big issue (Carnie et al. 2017). The last available Scottish official data shows that 39 percent of the sample reported having never used illegal drugs inside prison (SPS 2017). Of these, 31 percent signalled that since their prison arrival their use had stopped, and 30 percent said that it had decreased. On the contrary 12 percent indicated that their use had increased. The situation in England and Wales is similar (HM Inspectorate of Prisons 2015; The Centre for Social Justice 2020). UK research has found that prison sometimes introduces some inmates to drug use (SEU 2002): in England and Wales, this is the case for 15 percent of the prison population (Shilson-Thomas 2020) and in Scotland five percent 'stated they only started using drugs in prison' (SPS 2017, p. 12). A related intra-prison aspect that has been criticised is the scarcity of support inside prisons. In Scotland, an analysis of the last SPS (2017) survey suggests that (a) less than 40 percent of prisoners are assessed on entrance; (b) the vast majority of those that were given the chance to receive support accepted, (c) the desire to receive support is not met by the 15 percent of the total prison population; and (d) over 80 percent of those who received support considered it 'useful' (p.15).

Although much more research is needed, current findings signal that imprisonment often provokes the *erosion of social ties* (Liebling & Maruna 2005) which have been found to be key in order not to damage post-release accommodation prospects both in the Scottish (Loucks 2007) and in the US (Western 2018) context. In addition, in the US, post-prison close social connections have been found to be key for finding a job after prison (Nelson et al. 1999; Visher et al. 2004). Yet it has been found that over 40 percent of people in English and Welsh prisons lose contact with their close social families. A piece of US research has found that the length of imprisonment is 'negatively related to maintaining

attachments to family members' (Lynch & Sabol 2001, p.17) and positively related to getting divorced. In relation to spect of divorce, one in every four inmates that enter prison married get divorced while being inside (Travis et al. 2014). Apel et al.'s (2010) US results highlight the concrete negative effect of prison when finding that people incarcerated are three times more likely to divorce than convicted non-incarcerated people (Travis et al. 2014).

Deacon's (2019) Scottish study of research on young people's experiences of having a family member in prison enhances our understanding of how prison may influence familial relationships with people outside prison. Deacon, (2019), relying on her data and on literature, develops a framework in which she distinguishes between three types of distance that incarcerated people and their families may experience during imprisonment: spatial, temporal and emotional. Firstly, as the individual does not have freedom of mobility beyond the prison walls, imprisonment *imposes* a physical distance between the individual and the people outside. Bearing in mind Deacon's in-depth exploration of the many and distinct hurdles and limitations posed by spatial distance, prison visits and other non-face-to-face forms of interaction such as letters and telephone calls, it is not strange that an erosion of social ties during imprisonment is common. The temporal dimension is also closely related to the spatial one. Deacon (2019) argues that a 'desynchrony' may occur as a consequence of a distinct experience of time inside prison and outside prison: while time in prison freezes, time outside prison goes much faster. This is, in part, because of the contrast between a 'highly routinized' (p.201) monotonous scheduled life inside prison and an autonomous, less structured and more diverse life outside prison; and the contrast between the usually slower analogic communication inside prison and the speedy digital communication on the outside. This temporal gap between life inside prison and life beyond the prison walls, may not only erode intra-prison social ties, but has consequences on release.

Jamieson and Grounds (2005) found that due to this intra-prison desynchrony, released people 'were dislocated in time'. As time had frozen for them while being in prison, they suddenly had to face a completely distinct social situation on release (Deacon 2019): while their life had been frozen; their friends were in a different phase of their lives; their partners may have new jobs, friends and interests; and their children were now grown-ups (Jamieson & Grounds 2005; Deacon 2019). Due to the intra-prison physical and temporal distance, when released, an emotional distance between close social connections and the released person is common: both sides may have learned to cope and deal with life without

sharing their feelings with each other (Deacon 2019). During her exploration of these three dimensions, Deacon, by sharing examples, shows that although most of the time prison produces a physical, temporal and emotional distancing, there are some rare cases in which it implies a closeness. It is important to stress that there is some literature which also demonstrates that in some cases imprisonment is not harmful to social connections but an opportunity to begin to build a better relationship (Travis et al. 2014; Deacon 2019). In addition, there are some people in custody who decide to self-isolate themselves from people on the outside in order to decrease 'secondary prisonisation' (Maruna & Roy 2007;), that is to say, to decrease the consequences of their imprisonment for their social connections (Deacon 2019).

A highly related aspect of prison life is that of *prisonisation*. Prisonisation is a clear example of how integrating into prison is dis-integrative for life after release. Western's (2018) exploration of the challenges of adaptation to life after prison, illustrates how Clemmer's (1940) concept of prisonisation remains 'relevant (…) seventy years later' (p.190). Prisonisation, which 'has been well documented by extant research' (Gillespie 2002, p.59), is a particular type of institutionalisation exclusive to those inside a prison institution. Institutionalisation is 'the process by which inmates are shaped and transformed by the institutional environment in which they live' (Haney 2003, p.38). Relying on prisonisation literature, we can distinguish two types of transformations; one relates to internal and behavioural adaptation to the new prison medium and its socio-culture (Clemmer 1940), and one to the 'untraining' and unlearning of skills that are key to post-prison life (Goffman 1961, p.13). These adjustments to the prison environment are strongly dysfunctional for life after prison (Bauman 2000b; Wright et al. 2017).

'The abnormal practices and conditions that incarceration entails' (Travis et al. 2014, p.176) are such that, when entering, people need to adapt to them. There are different elements that constitute to the existent 'chasm' between life inside prison and life outside prison (Western 2018, p.33). The first one is *differences in the structure and routine between incarceration and freedom*. When successfully adapting to this highly structured, routinised and restricted prison environment, people suffer a 'loss of autonomy' (Sykes 1965, p. 73) and develop habits (Gillespie 2002, Travis et al. 2014) which are strongly dysfunctional for life after prison (Bauman 2000b; Wright et al. 2017; Carnie et al. 2017; Western 2018). For example, these include being unable to sleep in silence (Moran 2012), asking permission to switch off the light or the TV (Durnescu 2017), or not being used to the different pace of life outside prison, or to being in crowds, or to having to find an

address or taking public transport (Irwin 1987; Jamieson & Grounds 2005; Western 2018; Durnescu 2019). On release this provokes stress, nerves, anxiety and discomfort (Western 2018; Durnescu 2019). Fortunately, for Western's (2018) participants, as time passed, this struggle gradually lessened. In addition to this, Scottish (Reid Howie Associates 2015) and English and Welsh (SEU 2002) studies have found that prisonisation also produces an erosion of certain skills that are key for the social and material post-prison spheres such as independent living skills. In Scotland, this is one of the main reasons (Scottish Prisons Commission 2008) that increases the risk of homelessness for released people (The Homeless Task Force 2002).

A second intra-prison element is the *impermeability of the prison regime with respect to certain changes in the external world* (Western 2018). This especially affects long-term prisoners after release (Durnescu 2019). An example of this is technological development. Jamieson and Grounds (2005) report in their English study, how people had difficulties adapting to technological changes. In spite of the rising presence and importance of the digital world in our cultural, social, personal and economic lives (Helsper 2012), there is little criminological work on the digital lives and inclusion of those in prison and released people. Deacon (2019), in her paper on families of people imprisoned, proposes for the first time in prison literature to include intra-prison digital exclusion as one of the pains of imprisonment both for the individual and their families. With respect to life after prison studies, it is instructive in this respect that in Western's (2018) recent book the issue of digital inclusion and technology is only briefly mentioned without further exploration.

The only research that sheds a certain light on this aspect is a particular part of Reisdorf and Jewkes (2016) results, in which the first writer focuses on a subsequent article (Reisdorf & Rickard 2018). Reisdorf and Jewkes (2016) talked to a group of six English men who were between 40-60 years old and were currently serving sentences between 15 and 20 years in which, even though they had to sleep at the facility each night, during the day they could go to work in the nearby communities and during the weekends they could visit their families. As they had been in prison since before the technological boom began, they felt alienation and confusion when having to engage with daily interactions with technologies such as using a phone or using the touchscreens in the gas station and grocery store. This added 'a layer of complication and confusion to the already overwhelming re-entry experience' (Reisdorf & Rikard 2018, p.1279) and made them feel stupid, different and marginalised from their families and their outside world (Reisdorf & Jewkes 2016). The increasing presence and importance of the digital world and Reisdorf and Jewkes'

findings show an important and interesting gap in criminological literature and research. As it will be seen, my collaborative research data will enhance our current scarce understanding of this matter.

A third intra-prison element that shapes life after prison is the *fear of intra-prison victimisation*. In order to avoid victimisation, people in prison may also begin to develop certain ways of thinking about and interacting with others as well as of conceiving social relations: inmates begin to wear an inexpressive and cold 'prison mask', sometimes overreacting to minor issues and/or coping with emotions by stopping engaging in social relations (Travis et al. 2014, p.177; Wright et al. 2017). Jamieson and Grounds (2005) in their paper on an English study show how, as a consequence of prisonisation, inmates may suffer a loss of social skills and may develop dysfunctional social behaviour and identity for life outside prison: they continue to use the adaptive intra-prison strategies of self-isolation and lack of communication in order to deal with emotional stress and pressure outside prison.

Apart from the already mentioned factors, there are other intra-prison aspects that foster the frequent lack of improvement (SEU 2002; Reid Howie Associates 2015), erosion (Hagan & Dinovitzer 1999; Western et al. 2001) and obsolescence (SEU 2002) of their already shaky job skills (Visher & Travis 2003). These include the types of jobs[3] and the high rates of intra-prison unemployment (Piacentini et al. 2018; SEU 2002; Travis 2005); the low number of available places in employment workshops (SEU 2002; Travis 2005); disruption due to the length of sentence and prison regime (SEU 2002); and the unsuitable content of the courses (SEU 2002; Piacentini et al. 2018). In terms of education, it has been found that, in nine out of ten cases, their education level while in prison remains at their pre-prison level (Visher et al. 2004). In the SPS (2017) prisoner survey, 68 percent said they would like help with reading, 73 percent with writing and 75 percent with numeracy. This not only suggests that the vast majority of people in prison may be poorly educated but that they are willing to learn.

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[3] Intra-prison jobs (a) are usually low-skilled ones (SEU 2002; Visher et al. 2004; Piacentini et al. 2018), (b) do not help the development of working and social skills needed outside prison (SEU 2002; Piacentini et al. 2018) and, c) are little relevant to the outside labour market (Piacentini et al. 2018).

The commission of an act which is then considered by a judge as a crime infringes one of the main obligations of an individual as a citizen — obeying the law (Miller & Stuart 2017). When someone is given a custodial sentence, the individual is formally considered as a *carceral citizen* having a unique set of rights and obligations. One of the main rights from which the individual is strongly restricted is the right to freedom. But while in prison, incarcerated people are the only subpopulation that can claim for certain fundamental rights: 'basic human needs-food, clothing, and shelter' (Miller & Alexander 2016, 310).

While in prison, people are also disabled in a civic-political way (Manza & Uggen 2006). One of the ways is through disfranchisement. The European Courts of Human Rights in 2005 established that the UK blanket voting ban on people inside prison constitutes as a breach of Article 3 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Scottish Government 2019b). As a reaction to this, the Scottish Elections (Franchise and Representation) Act 2020 was approved in Scotland which does not restrict voting rights to people who are serving a prison sentence of less than 12 months. This means that around one fifth of the Scottish prison population (National Statistics 2020) will still be disfranchised under this act. In the US, although disfranchisement laws vary from state to state (Behrens 2004) all except two disfranchise each person for the whole custodial sentence (Petersilia 2009). In most countries in the Global North, legislation is much less punitive (see Uggen & Manza 2004).

Although there is a scarcity of studies on the consequences of intra-prison civic-political exclusion on life after prison, Uggen et al.'s (2004) US one can help us better understand the effects of intra-prison civic-political disabilities for post-prison re/integration. After interviewing 33 Minnesota participants that were either inside prison, on parole or on probation, they found that intra-prison disfranchisement (a) exacerbated incarcerated people's feeling as outsiders; and (b) fostered prison civic-political disengagement and alienation while in prison which in turn seemed to hinder their intention to participate in civic-political activities on release (Uggen et al. 2004). This resonates with multiple studies (see Travis et al. 2014 for a list of them) that support this, even after controlling different variables, having contact with the criminal justice system fosters civic-political disengagement not only in terms of voting but also in participating in civic groups and in trusting the government (Lerman & Weaver 2010). The longer this contact is, the more it seems to hinder civic-political participation (Lerman & Weaver 2010).

In this subsection, I have shown how imprisonment often entails material, social, civic-political, poor health and skill losses and restrictions; not only hindering the improvement of the pre-prison situation but producing, entrenching and exacerbating acute and compounded disparities and disadvantages.

Life After Prison: A Dis-integrative Experience

In the previous two subsections, I have shown how most people who are incarcerated were deprived prior to incarceration in a compounded and acute way, and how the experience of imprisonment commonly produces and aggravates multiple and severe disparities. This cumulative process is further compounded by different post-prison mechanisms that also foster post-prison dis-integration. Some of them are specific to released people, and others, although not specific, interact with some specific aspects in ways that are especially grave for released people. In this last subsection, in order to avoid repetition in discussing these cumulating and interacting forms of dis-integration, I am going to focus on the main post-prison aspects which have not yet been explored in depth. I will cluster them depending on which domain of post-prison re/integration they hinder.

Internationally, criminological literature has criticised the benefits system for its complexity with respect of applying (Durnescu 2019) and for increasing limitations in the eligibility criteria which, more and more, leave aside single males without children (Western 2018). Scottish literature has focused on a worrying situation in terms of access to benefits on release. While Universal Credit – the new UK benefits system—was still being introduced, Reid Howie Associates (2015) reported that a variety of post-prison accommodation-related actors signalled 'delays in benefit payments following liberation' (p. 35). These were due to the conjunction of two issues. The first was that as Citizens Advice Scotland[4] (CAS 2019a,b; CAS 2020) pointed out, under the implementation of the Universal Credit system, there is a *minimum* of a five-week wait for the first payment. This, added to the fact that most people cannot apply while being in prison (Loucks 2007; Reid Howie Associates 2015), meant that releasees were without this main source of income during at least the first five weeks outside prison.

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[4] Citizens Advice Scotland is a charity that gives advice on benefits, among other issues.

On the 27th June 2019, the DWP (2019) launched a pilot scheme in HMP Perth (a short-term men's prison) and in HMP Cornton Vale (Scotland's only prison for women) with the intention that releasees would be able to have an interview on the day of their release where the first payment would be arranged (DWP 2019). In January 2020, an improved trial was extended to HMP Barlinnie: through the use of a phone line inside prison, 'those eligible will be able to arrange a payment on the day of their release' (DWP 2020). Although these measures seem to be going in the right direction, the effectiveness of this service is still unknown. As at the time of writing this scheme is only available in two of the fourteen Scottish prisons, its scope is limited.

As previously explored, international research is consistent with the fact that when released, people face many and various obstacles that affect post-prison employment. One of them is the *neighbourhoods they return to;* the most deprived neighbourhoods which have higher rates of unemployment (Visher et al. 2004; Travis 2005; Schinkel 2014a; Andrews 2015); around three times the national average (Miller & Alexander 2016). In addition to this in these neighbourhoods employment grows slower (Lynch & Sabol 2001), the types of jobs in which most people are employed post-release are declining (Lynch & Sabol 2001), and most social connections that have the potential to facilitate finding a job are 'disrupted or non-existent' (Travis et al. 2014, p.235). Although under-studied, current *macro-economic aspects* seem to undermine post-release employment prospects of releasees in the UK and in the US (Fletcher 2008; Travis et al. 2014). There is a tendency towards a decrease of available manual jobs (Travis 2005; Farall et al. 2010) and an increase availability of highly competitive and high-skilled educated jobs (Farrall et al. 2010) and in contact with vulnerable collectives (Rubenstein 2001 cited in Travis 2005). However, there seems to be a potential future trend which may enhance their prospects: when baby boomers retire, there may be more jobs available (Travis 2005).

Another common reason for the poor employment prospects of released people is their *low levels of education and the lack of working related skills* (Durnescu & Descarpes 2012; Western 2018). Research carried out on the English and Welsh general population shows that those with no qualifications are twice less likely to be employed than those with qualifications (Office for National Statistics 2008 cited in Hopkins 2012). But evidence from the already explored US audit studies (Pager 2003, 2007; et al. 2009) and on the efficacy of support for post-prison employment (see Schinkel 2014a for Scottish context; Miller 2014 and Halushka 2020 for US context) signals that solely improving prisoners' skills is insufficient. This is because, using Hasenfeld's (1972) categorisation, these

institutions are 'people-changing' institutions, and not 'people-processing' ones. While the former focuses on the human flourishing, the latter tries to change the status of the individuals (Miller 2014). More about this will be explored when dealing with the analysis and implications of my data.

In Chapter two, I mentioned *situational self-binding*, a particular form of 'diachronic self-control', when arguing that desistance from crime is a necessary but not sufficient aim for life after prison. Shapland and Bottoms (2011), relying on the Sheffield Desistance Study, reported for the first time the fact that some people use strategies of 'diachronic self-control' (p.274) in order to avoid trouble and temptation. In a subsequent paper, Bottoms (2013), describing the experiences of the participants of the same study, distinguishes three types of deliberate situational self-binding strategies: social avoidance, venue avoidance, and self-displacement[5]. Since then, more studies have unveiled that these existent strategies are adopted by released people in different ways (Calverley 2013; Schinkel 2014a; Nugent & Schinkel 2016; Durnescu 2019). Although each of the types of situational self-binding is quite distinct, each of them fosters post-prison social isolation to a greater or lesser extent.

Finally, a further matter that requires our attention is the degraded social status of people released. In order to better understand the reasons for this, it is useful to explore existent research on public dispositions. Despite the fact that during recent decades research into dispositions towards crime related issues has increased exponentially, as far as I am aware Hirschfield and Piquero's (2010) US study is the only multivariate analysis on this topic that helps us understand the reasons for the negative dispositions towards releasees (Hirschfield & Piquero 2010). In their study, exposure to people with convictions, and legitimation or belief in the fairness of the Criminal Justice System were the two aspects with the strongest influence in dispositions towards people released. The former finding resonates with other research on stigma towards other collectives (e.g., Angermeyer et al. 2004; Corrigan et al. 2011) and with post-prison employment findings (Niven & Olagundaye 2002; Visher et al. 2011). When people feel that the C.J.S is being unfair, the C.J.S loses its authority to label (Garfinkel 1956; Tyler 2006). Considering research on dispositions towards somehow related criminal justice topics and subpopulations such as people on parole (Demski & McGlynn 1999); public punitiveness (Maruna & King 2004;

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[5] Self-displacement consists of deliberately frequently visiting a place which is seen as positive for their lives out from crime. E.g., gym. (Bottoms 2014).

Posick et al. 2014), the death penalty (Unnever et al. 2005); and people inside prison (Kjerlsberg et al. 2007): (a) holding a situational attribution (i.e. that people commit crimes because of their context), (b) belief in redeemability, and (c) being empathetic as an ability and as an emotional response (see Batson et al. 1997), all may be linked to holding positive dispositions towards releasees. In addition to this, some authors such as Braithwaite (1989, & Mugford 1994) or Maruna (2012) argue that, as a criminal conviction is ritualised throughout a 'degradation ceremony' (Garfinkel 1956), we should also consider the role of ritual when exploring stigma (see Collins 2004 on rituals).

Conclusion

Throughout these two last chapters, I have explored the current state of knowledge on life after prison. In this chapter, a review of evidence about how post-prison re/integration is experienced has been presented. When released, due to a unique process of cumulative dis-integration, people experience acute, compounded and persistent deprivation in the material, social, civic-political, legal and personal realms. As I have shown, this process of cumulative deprivation often starts even before imprisonment: there is an overrepresentation of people multiply and severely disadvantaged in the prison population. In addition, I have illustrated how the way in which, as a society, we penally react to a potentially imprisonable act, severely and multiply reproduces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way. After prison, people are released into an environment which is highly hostile in the legal, social, civic-political and material spheres.

While arguing this, I have not only shown that knowledge on post-prison re/integration in Scotland and specifically in Glasgow is limited, but that international literature also has considerable knowledge gaps. Despite the acute, compounded and persistent adversities experienced by releasees, in Chapter 2 when reviewing different bodies of literature that used different concepts in order to explore life after prison, I unveiled a huge conceptual gap in criminological literature: currently, there is not one single account that is comprehensive and just enough in order to help us to properly understand, interrogate and reimagine life after prison. Due to different reasons — i.e., being membership-centric and not crime-centric; being context-situated; being symbolically rich and evocative — re/integration was identified using six different terms and as having the highest potential. It is precisely this conceptual gap that pushed me to conduct a collaborative research on post-prison re/integration.

4   Chapter 4 – The Research Process

Introduction

In Chapters 2 and 3, I have highlighted the substantive and conceptual gaps that exist in research and literature on post-prison re/integration. The purpose of the next two chapters will be to outline and reflect on the research project conducted in order to fill some of these gaps. This first chapter will focus on the exploration of certain features of my research project: my initial positionality and underpinnings, the research aims, the participant selection and recruitment, the obtainment of the ethics approval, the research approach, conducting the research, and working with the data and writing this thesis. While doing so I will identify research and methodological gaps in existing research and explain how my research methodology may complement these approaches. Chapter 5 will enrich the portrayal on how the data presented, analysed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters was generated. Throughout these two chapters I will indicate possible limitations of my research.

Before starting this chapter's endeavour, it is important to highlight an issue: as I will show, research — whether explicitly or implicitly, consciously or unconsciously — is unescapably a political (Marshall 2001), social (Connell 2015), epistemic (Reason 1999a), axiological (Guillemin & Gillam 2004) and politico-philosophical process (Heron 1981). Having clarified this, and before engaging in the exploration of the different research process stages, I would like to make my position clear, and to situate myself in the moment prior to conducting the research.

Positionality

The purpose of this section is to explore my positionality (see Lincoln 1995 on this matter) and orientation prior to engaging in the research process. Feminist and post-modernist methodologists have argued that research is inevitably shaped by the researcher's gender, sexual orientation, race, class, culture, politics and biography as well as by external social, political, cultural, local and historical influences (Richardson 1992; Denzin & Lincoln

1994; Guillermin & Guillam 2004; Taylor et al. 2016). To explore my positionality prior to the research, I am going to critically examine my positionality underpinnings prior to data collection. This reflexive exercise was performed at the start, and again towards the end as my research proposal had evolved via engagement with the literature and the field (see Brydon-Miller 2008 on the benefits of doing this critical evaluation prior to the research design). I will, where possible, rely on different accounts of my pre-fieldwork positionality written prior to data collection. The experiences outlined are central to the formulation of this thesis.

Firstly, I am a Spanish cis heterosexual male who has been brought up in a middle-class family. I started my Ph.D. when I was 24 years old. From the age of three, I attended a private school because my parents wanted me to be bilingual in Spanish and English. When I was 18 years old, and thanks to my parents' savings, I left my hometown in order to go to Barcelona to study an undergraduate degree in Criminology at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. It was the only place in Spain in which during that year an undergraduate degree in Criminology was going to be taught. Attracted by Agatha Christie's detective novels and by different TV series, I wanted to be a police inspector detective, and I thought that a Bachelor's degree in criminology was the undergraduate studies that would bring me closest to this. Here I had not humanised people who are punished and I was not yet aware of how structure and context shape life before, during and after punishment.

At that moment I started my criminological formation. Since then, I have engaged in different topics and bodies of literature from which I have extracted certain ideas. Other times, although not explicitly present, certain ideas were fostered while engaging in them. See Tables 2 and 3 below for the relationship between the underpinnings of this research project and the topics and literature which I encountered.

FORMATION	TOPIC/LITERATURE	KEY IDEA/S EXTRACTED/FOSTERED
Internship at the Spanish Prosecution Office + Bachelor's dissertation	Drug-related article of the Spanish Penal Code	Thinking theoretically and abstractly is different from having to deal with it in practice
		Gap between academic and practitioner knowledge
		Practitioners often hold different ideas than academics, but this does not say anything about intentions, morality or the quality of knowledge
		When studying a multifaceted phenomenon in which different people intervene or participate, differently situated people may have specific expertise about specific aspects of that phenomenon
MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice	Public Criminology (e.g., Loader & Sparks 2010; Rock 2010; Wacquant 2011)	Necessary for academia to go into the public sphere. Perils and responsibilities (ie. Your arguments may be used)
	4-forms of rehabilitation model (e.g., McNeill 2012)	Key importance of conceptualising a phenomenon
	Bottoms (2008) philosophical standpoint + postmodernist accounts (Adler et al. 1992; Richardson 1992; Denzin 1996; Denzin & Lincoln 1994) + subtle realism (Hammersley 1992, 1998 + critical realism (Bhaskar 2008)	Ontological realism: a) 'There is a real world available for observation' that 'exists independently of the knower' (Bottoms, 2008p.77). b) Rejection of the idealist ontology: its extreme relativism could justify and foster injustices
		Epistemological constructivism: a) We can only see the world through interpretations and constructions b) Intellectual humility (Hammersley 1992) c) Not all constructions are equally accurate (Bottoms 2008)
	Notion of reflexivity (Guillermin & Gillam 2004)	Reflexivity as an ongoing process in order to analyse my whole academic endeavour
MRes Criminology	Bauman's conceptualisation of utopia + role of sociologists (e.g., Bauman 1987, 2000a; Dawson 2013, 2016b)	Aim of contributing to an alternative and more just future through a rigorous reimagination of the present
		People as knowledgeable actors
	Dialogue literature (e.g., Escobar 2011)	Importance of communication dynamics in terms of politics, social justice and for research
		Implicit principles in dialogue: a) People as knowledgeable and active actors who hold constructions which are worth sharing with others. b) Be actively inclusive and respectful in communication processes c) Preserve humility of your own current knowledge d) Be open to considering other accounts and to revising your own standpoints e) Accord value to the collective
1st Ph.D. year	Emancipatory research, constructivism and Participatory Action Research	I reflected on the social relations of research production (Oliver 1992; Stone & Priestley 1996; Richardson 1996; Bishop 1998; Lincoln 2001; Heron & Reason 2008)
		Multidimensional accounts of knowledge (Reason & Bradbury 2001)
	Initial conceptual review and literature review on life after prison (see Chapter 2 and 3)	Research gap in life after prison literature: a) Lack of research on re/integration as a phenomenon. Usual focus is on the experience of being released b) Lack of holistic research on post-prison re/integration. Each study only focuses on a limited number of domains
		Methodological gap in life after prison literature: a) Studies participants are usually people with convictions. b) Those studies that have a diverse set of participants gather the data in one-to-one meetings. The researcher is the one that after fieldwork puts their accounts into conversation.

Table 2. Ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings

FORMATION	TOPIC/LITERATURE	KEY IDEA/S EXTRACTED/FOSTERED
MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice	Rehabilitation and desistance literatures (e.g., McNeill 2012; Maruna 2000)	4-forms of rehabilitation model
		Multiple and several hurdles after punishment
		Desistance as an insufficient concept for normatively thinking about what should happen after punishment
	Dissertation on public attitudes towards people with convictions (Hirschfield & Piquero 2010)	In depth- exploration of the intersection between domains
		Hostility faced by releasees
		High number of people processed through the system
		Increasing academic, policy, practice and public interest on life after prison
MRes Criminology	Australian community dispositions on reintegration (Andrews 2015)	Classic and contemporary conceptualisations of reintegration
		3-part ecological model of community reintegration and how it may complement the 4-forms model of rehabilitation (realisation of conceptual gap)
		Continued exploration in depth of the hurdles after release
1st Ph.D. year	Initial conceptual and literature review on life after prison (see Chapter 2 and 3)	Exploration of the concepts of rehabilitation, resettlement, reintegration, desistance and reentry
		Enormous hurdles on release
		Conceptual and substantive gaps: (a) Lack of existence of a framing comprehensive concept. b) Gaps in knowledge on different matters with respect to life after prison.
	Review on the Scottish policy and practice context (see Chapter 1 and 9)	Reintegrative discourse and some reintegrative practices
		Glasgow as an extreme case

Table 3. Conceptual, contextual, and substantive underpinnings

The experiences and intellectual arguments contained in these tables are impregnating this thesis and my approach to academic endeavour and are thus key to them.

Research Aims

Bearing in mind the key ideas present in the above tables, prior to engaging in the research design, I decided that my initial main research aim was to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine post-prison re/integration — see Chapter 1 on the reasons for this. I say initial because, while engaging in the research design, the initial aim was refined and narrowed in three different ways:

a) As research is consistent on the highly distinct re/integration process of women and men (see Western 2018 on this), I had to take a decision on whether to focus on one or the other. As I had already decided that the best way of fulfilling my aim was to conduct collaborative research. I considered that, bearing in mind the low percentage of women in prison (e.g., in 2019-2020 women represented only 7.3 percent of the prison population [Scottish Government 2020b]), (a) it would be easier to find people with knowledge on male post-prison re/integration and (b) individuals would have more knowledge on this matter than on women's lives after prison. As I believed that a collaborative approach could pose more challenges than traditional research, I decided not to complicate my task further.

b) Another matter which could complicate issues further was to include in the exploration the life after prison for people who have committed a sexual offence. This is such a sensitive and complicated topic that it could eclipse the exploration of the other type of behaviours — which constituted 95percent of the offences recorded in 2019-20 (National Statistics 2020) — and smear our conversations. Group members strongly agreed with these two decisions, and looking retrospectively, I believe that it was a good decision: as I will show in this chapter and in the next, and as is consistent with the literature, during my research I had to face multiple challenges deriving from the collaborative character of my research. During the recruitment and the fieldwork phase, group members expressed their agreement with these decisions on multiple occasions.

c) Lastly, I decided to focus on Glasgow. When dealing with the social institution of punishment, Lacey (2008; 2010) consistently argues in her criminological work that distal penal influences are filtered through local cultural, social, political and economic institutions and actors (see also McNeill 2019a). This can be applied to re/integration too. Therefore, I decided to select a locality as a unit. As McNeill (2019a, p.140) signals 'it is through the analysis of highly localised experiences (…) that perhaps we can see and confront most clearly the impacts and effects of distal' influences. I selected Glasgow as the case because it is an extreme case (see George & Bennett 2005 on extreme cases) with respect to my research problem both with respect to incidence and in terms of prevalence. In terms of the former matter, 18percent of people entering Scottish prisons in 2019-20 came from Glasgow; this is nearly six times more than the proportion entering prison from the second most common locality of origin: Edinburgh (Scottish Government 2020c).

This means that Glasgow is the place in Scotland in which the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration (or dis-integration) is most extensive. In terms of prevalence, Glasgow is the sixth most over-represented locality of origin in prison (Scottish Government 2020c).

By way of context, Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland (McNeill 2019a) and has a population of just under 600,000 city inhabitants and just over 1.2 million in the metropolitan area (Fraser 2017). Glasgow was considered during the industrial era as the 'Second City of the British Empire (Fraser 2015). Due to this industrial-centred form of economy based in manufacture, trade and shipping (Fraser 2017) Glasgow, like similar industrial cities of the north of England suffered a big decline during the 1920s and 1930s (Fraser 2015). Since then, Glasgow has turned into a post-industrial city based on a service economy which gives an emphasis to tourism, leisure and retail (Fraser et al. 2017).

With a historical tradition of persistent inequalities this move has not improved the situation (Fraser 2015). In terms of poverty, 40 percent of Glaswegians live below the poverty line (Dorling & Pritchard 2010). In his 2005 report, Houchin highlighted the fact that 'the relationship between (…) deprivation and imprisonment in Scotland is at its most pronounced in Glasgow' (p.43). The picture left by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2016 (Scottish Government 2016) is equally worrying: Glasgow is the most deprived local authority according to the local shares of the 20 percent most deprived data zones for all council areas in Scotland. In 2012, over one-third of the 10 percent of the areas with most deprivation is in Glasgow (Fraser 2015).

In terms of employment, with the introduction of a service economy, Glasgow has experienced a decline in the availability of fulltime and good quality jobs. Glasgow's rate on people who are neither in education, training nor employment is the highest in Scotland and one of the highest in the UK (Fraser et al 2019). In terms of health and wellbeing, it is common to talk about the 'Glasgow Effect'. 'Glasgow has exceptionally high rates of morbidity and mortality' even compared to other post-industrial cities such as Manchester or Liverpool (Fraser 2015, p.215). The same can be said with respect to drug-related deaths, smoking-related disease and alcoholism rates (Fraser 2015). Although this effect has not found a clear

explanation it is believed that it is due to habits transmitted between generations (Fraser 2015).

Glasgow, has got a reputation for being a city of violent masculinities, being the 'hardman' (Fraser 2015). In terms of offences, in 2019-2020 Glasgow is the Scottish city with more total recorded crimes per 10,000 population: the population of Glasgow includes the 12 percent of Glasgow population, and it constitutes 17 percent of all recorded crime in Scotland (National Statistics 2020). In terms of type of offences, despite the gradual decline of violent offences (Fraser 2015) Glasgow, in 2003-05 had 'according to the World Health Organisation, Glasgow has the highest rate of murder of any city in Europe per head of population' (Squires et al. 2008, p.86). Most people that are inside prison are short termers. According to official statistics 98.7percent of people released in 2019-2020 had been in prison for less than four years (Scottish Government 2020c). 94.9percent of the total people released in that period had been in prison for 18 months or less (Scottish Government 2020c).

More statistics on Glasgow will be given throughout this thesis. There are two more key issues that may help us to better understand Glasgow. Firstly, the already explored deprivation seems to have an influence on the characteristics of the prison population. 66 percent of the most represented wards in prison population were Glaswegian wards and of those living prior to prison in Glasgow, 57.72 percent of them lived in the most deprived types of housing (Houchin 2005). In addition, according to statistics published by Glasgow Community Justice, there seems to be a cycle between offending, being punished and reoffending: 'in Glasgow, only 30 percent of court convictions are for individuals with no previous convictions' (Glasgow Community Justice 2018, p.5).

Using Glasgow as a case study permits a 'detailed' (George & Bennet 2005, p.26) 'in depth' (Orum 2015, p.202; Lincoln & Guba 1985) examination of the phenomenon under research. By deep, I refer to 'the detail, richness, completeness, wholeness, or the degree of variance' of the data collected (Gerring 2007, p.49). This in-depth examination permits case studies not only to situate the phenomenon in its context but also to understand that context in depth (George & Bennet 2005; Orum 2015; Yin 2015; 2018). In literature, the depth, extensiveness, contextuality and situatedness (Orum 2016; Escobar 2014b) which is so characteristic of the case

study approach have been signalled as improving internal validity (George & Bennet 2005; Gerring 2007), internal consistency, trustworthiness, transferability (Lincoln & Guba 1985) and analytic generalisation (Yin 2015). These matters will be explored throughout these two chapters.

But choosing this mode of inquiry also potentially carries some limitations (see George & Bennet 2005 on an overview of them). The main one, and the one on which I am going to focus here is that case studies with such a small sample are not generalisable in a statistical way (Yin 2015). I would argue that despite that, they can provide another type of generalisability: an analytical one. My research has the capacity to generate theoretical generalisations which are 'at a conceptual level higher than that of the specific case' (Yin 2018, p.73; Yin 2015). In order to assess the transferability of findings, it is necessary to consider their 'fittingness', that is to say, 'the degree of congruence between sending and receiving contexts' (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p.124). Bearing these issues in mind, I argue that the findings of this thesis have an intrinsic value in the Glaswegian and Scottish context, but are also valuable beyond it, if these contextual factors can be taken into account. For this reason, I have tried, throughout this thesis, to deal with the 'the contextuality and situatedness' (Escobar 2014b, p.57) of the data and to give 'thick description' of the phenomenon under research (Geertz 1973, p.6; see Lincoln & Guba 1985 on this matter).

There was a choice to be made between breadth and depth, and due to the aim of the research, I chose the second one. Case studies above explored qualities make them a useful way to conduct exploratory inquiry (Gerring 2007), to generate new ideas and develop new theories (George & Bennett 2005; Schwandt & Gates 2017; Orum 2018), to achieve an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Schwandt & Gates 2017; Yin 2018) and to develop normative accounts (Schwandt & Gates 2017). These are precisely the activities needed in order to fulfil my main research aim: to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine men's post-prison re/integration. In addition to this, as Ragin (1992) argues, a case study serves as a bridge between theory and empirical observations. This resonates with the adaptive approach (Layder 1998) that I decided to take when elaborating the research design, which implies a continuous communication between theory and data throughout all of the research process. In my research, dichotomy is going to be transformed in a trichotomy: the case study is going to serve as a way of

continuously bringing into discussion practical or lived experience obtained during my research method, academic theory and research evidence.

Bearing these three narrowing decisions in mind, the main research aim, once having finalised the research design, was to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine men's post-prison re/integration in Glasgow — excluding people that have committed sexual offences. To do so, I established three guiding questions:

a) What is post-prison re/integration?
b) How is it supported and experienced?
c) How can it be improved?

While the first question was posed in order to conceptualise life after prison, the second one was aimed to better understand and interrogate post-prison re/integration as a phenomenon. The last one had a reimagination purpose.

Due to the fact that as researchers we should not only be interested in the outcomes but also in the process (Stone & Priestley 1996; Cornwall 2008; Platteel et al. 2010), a further but secondary aim of the research was to learn to what extent, why and how this collaborative research process helped to develop our a) individual, b) collective, and c) academic understandings of re/integration. Although this second set of questions will be answered throughout this thesis, the thesis is focused mainly on the substantive aims of the research.

Participants' Selection and Recruitment

In order to explore *participants' selection* and the reasons behind it, I turn now to reflect on three issues: one is ontological, the other one is epistemological, and the last one is axiological and politico-philosophical (see Table 2).

The first matter in order to explore my decision, is to discuss the nature of the phenomenon under study. To do so, it is necessary to situate yourself within ontological debates. Ontology is the 'branch of philosophy that is concerned with the nature of what exists' (Blaikie 2007, p.13). Since a conversation about philosophy of social sciences is beyond the scope of this thesis (see Hollis 2002 for a comprehensive and critical account on these

matters and Guba & Lincoln 1994 for competing paradigms), it suffices to say that, as indicated in the first section of this chapter, I hold a realist ontological position; that is to say, I argue that there is a real world which exists independently of the human knower (see Putman 1987; Outhwaite 1987; Bhaskar 2008; Hammersley 1992; Bottoms 2008 for different ontologically realist variants). Bearing this in mind, I consider that post-prison re/integration, even though it is socially, culturally, penally, politically and legally constructed, is nonetheless a phenomenon which is there to be studied and which exists 'independently of our knowledge of it' (Sayer 2000, p.2).

That said and relying on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and 3, I also argue that post-prison re/integration is a multifaceted and multilateral phenomenon which is shaped by both proximate and distal influences. Post-prison re/integration is a multifaceted phenomenon because, as explored in Chapter 2 and 3, it comprises of different domains such as the material, the social, the moral, the personal, the legal, and the civic-political. Chapters 2 and 3 mentioned many parties such as support workers, the releasee, formal and informal social connections, the community, policymakers, the state or practitioners. This means that re/integration is a multilateral phenomenon. Finally, re/integration is contextually embedded and shaped by both proximate and distal influences. An example of a proximate influence is the already-explored — in previous chapters — (a) The UK Universal Credit system, and Scottish (b) disclosure legislation and (c) homelessness legislation, which are unique with respect to other jurisdictions. An even more local influence may be the already-explored hostel situation in Glasgow. A distal influence would be the common use in the Western countries of prison as a way of punishing. In addition to this, post-prison re/integration can potentially be considered as a sensitive topic: as stated in Chapter 2, a crime implies a relational breach of the mutual obligations and rules of social conduct (Duff 2001) which may not only affect the victim/s but also the state and the society as a whole. In addition, crime sometimes involves physical harm. As I will show, all four of these aspects of re/integration have an influence on my research design.

As one of the main aims of research is to generate knowledge, the next proposed criteria for deciding who participated in the inquiry was an epistemological one. However, before fully engaging in that endeavour, it is necessary to explore some epistemological key matters. The first one is that postmodernism and social constructivism, with its critical, linguistic and social turns (see Gergen & Gergen 2008), have shown that no individual is able to see, interact with, interpret and communicate about the world in a neutral way. This

implies that the researcher is inescapably not objective and neutral towards the studied phenomena, but is an observer who is politically, locally, historically (Denzin & Lincoln 1994) and biographically (Richardson 1992) situated. This leads us to recognise that knowledge may be fallible and thus shapes how truth claims may be considered (Kemmis 2008). In addition to this constructivist epistemology, I also advocate for an extended epistemology (Reason 1994e, p.42) which holds a 'multidimensional account' of it (Heron 1996b, p.33; see Reason & Bradbury 2001 for diverse classification frameworks). One of the best developed accounts is that of Human Inquiry literature (Heron 1981; Heron 1996a; Reason 1999) which distinguishes between propositional, experiential, practical and presentational knowledge, depending on whether they are acquired by engaging in statements, theories and ideas; by a direct experience with what or who you are encountering; by practicing, or 'by ordering our tacit experiential knowledge into patterns' (Ladkin 2007, p.480). These four ways of knowing are 'interdependent' (Reason & Bradbury 2001, p.9; see Reason 1999 for an exploration of that interconnection).

Bearing this extended epistemology in mind, and due to the multilateral and multifaceted character of post-prison re/integration, it can be argued that beyond academia, there are many social actors who hold different types of knowledge about different aspects of post-prison re/integration. In initial research design drafts, I identified the following subpopulations or collectives as having knowledge about men's post-prison re/integration in Glasgow; releasees – both under official supervision at that time and not, Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and third sector throughcare support workers, sheriffs (Scottish judges), social workers, people working in third sector organisations, criminal justice policy officers, and criminologists. Between formulating this initial list and finalising member recruitment, I shared my plans during presentations in Scottish, British and European conferences; and I asked those present if they could think of any other relevant subpopulation. These interactions suggested that the close social connections of releasees also hold knowledge on these matters.

The third relevant issue that needs to be explored is an axiological and politico-philosophical one: who is affected by the inquired phenomenon? It can be argued that so the process of knowledge production is just, the voice of certain groups, no matter if they hold specific knowledge on that particular topic or not, should be heard (Gaventa & Cornwall 2001). This position which 'draw(s) direct parallels between the legitimacy of government and the legitimacy of research' (Reason & Bradbury 2001, p.10), becomes even stronger when bearing in mind that, as they are affected by that phenomenon, the

application of knowledge about it may also have an impact on their lives (Heron 1981). In addition to the knowledgeable already identified collectives, I considered members of the community and victims are two subpopulations that are affected by post-prison re/integration.

Having answered these three questions, it is time to return to the original question: who was selected to participate in the inquiry? As it is impossible that every person who has knowledge on and/or is affected by men post-prison re/integration participated in the research, I aimed to achieve discursive representation (Escobar 2014a), that is to say, to intend that each of the subpopulations who have been identified as having knowledge or being affected by re/integration is represented in this research. Thus, this 'multivocality' and 'polyphony' (Escobar 2014b, p.56) is not only important in terms of epistemology but also in terms of axiology (Escobar 2014a).

Official recruitment began in the pre-fieldwork phase, immediately after receiving ethics clearance, and lasted until group meeting 3 (see Table 4 in p.106 for a list of the meetings). As I wanted to achieve discursive representation, the recruitment process was done through different stakeholders from different organisations. Although it was not necessary to make any decision in this respect, while recruiting I kept an eye on the male and female ratio. My first intention was to recruit a person completing a long-term sentence in an open prison, two supervised releasees, two releasees who were not under supervision, one SPS throughcare support officer, two criminal justice social workers, one paid professional third sector throughcare support worker and one third-sector paid mentor, two community councillors, one criminologist, one member of a policy charity, someone representing the victims perspective, one person representing the family perspective, and a retired sheriff.

The recruitment process was quite successful. An expertise that we — as a group — were not able to incorporate was that of a person completing a long-term sentence in an open prison. The SPS thought this impracticable, given the combination of the long commitment required and regime and other requirements. We were also unable to complete the recruitment of a retired Sheriff and of two Community Councillors — both of which agreed to be part of the project during the preparation stage but never participated in it. The absence of a participant which could have brought a sheriff's expertise on life after prison and on the sentencing process can be considered as a limitation of this research. With respect to having someone who could bring a community perspective, I would argue that Sarah — (see next page on an introduction to participants) can also be considered as to

have provided this: Faith in Throughcare is a community in itself and is embedded in North Glasgow communities. In addition, when fieldwork began, another member who could bring this expertise was recruited. Reflecting on our three first group meetings and from individual ones, the group agreed that we were missing people with expertise on (a) mental health and addictions, (b) persistent offending, (c) the community side of post-prison re/integration, and (d) housing. This task resulted in the inclusion of Leanne, Kenny and Vicky in the group thereafter.

In what follows I am going to introduce those group members who participated in at least two of our substantive group meetings. In addition to these group members, there were two more people who participated in our group meetings; someone on licence who after participating in two group meetings and two individual ones left the group because his job became incompatible with his involvement; and a social worker who left the group because he was too busy. The way in which participants are going to be named during this section was chosen by each group member. In the rest of the thesis, I will use first names only. In order to be as accurate as possible, I am going to refer to their position while the group meetings happened. Therefore, I will use the past tense with respect to this matter. It is important to note that the accounts given by each member should be attributed to that individual, and not to the institutions/organisation in which they work. There are personal arguments, opinions and experiences.

Alan Smith

Alan, after 28-years' experience as a Prison Officer, had been, at the time of our group meetings, working for three years as a Scottish Prison Service (SPS) Throughcare Support Officer at Her Majesty Young Offenders Institution Polmont. SPS Throughcare Support is a service that provided[6] support to short-termers from six weeks prior to liberation until six weeks after liberation. Alan was recruited through the SPS ethics application and was one of the two group members who participated in all of the 13 group meetings.

Nancy Loucks

Nancy Loucks was the Chief Executive of Families Outside, a charity that supports the families of people affected by imprisonment. She was also a Visiting Professor at the University of Strathclyde's Centre for Law, Crime & Justice. She was recruited in order to

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[6] I use the past tense because SPS Throughcare Support Service Scheme was temporally suspended in July 2019

bring the families' perspectives into our inquiry. After group meeting 1, she made the first contact with Reverend Kenny McGeachie. She participated in all of the 13 group meetings.

Karen Baxter

Karen Baxter was a Policy Officer for Community Justice at Community Justice Glasgow with experience in NHS Health Planning, in two Social Work Services and in addiction and homelessness services. Community Justice Glasgow is a partnership which brings together the third sector, the private sector and public agencies whose aim is to support people so that the likelihood of reoffending when someone gets in contact with the Criminal Justice System is reduced. She identified Leanne as a potential member of the group. She participated in all but one of our group meetings.

Pete White

Pete White was the founder and Chief Executive of 'Positive Prisons? Positive Futures…', a charity which by drawing on people with convictions' experiences, lobbied with and for them through engaging with Scottish Government, Parliament, local authorities and other third sector organisations with the purpose of making society fairer. After serving a short-term sentence, he had founded 'Positive Prison? Positive Futures...' Pete was a key stakeholder since the beginning of the planning stage, offering support and counsel at different times. He helped recruit someone from the Wheatley Group. He participated in all but two group meetings.

Sarah Gerity

Sarah Gerity was the Local Coordinator of Faith in Throughcare in North Glasgow, a third sector organisation which provided throughcare support to short-termers and worked with local communities in some of the most challenged areas of Scotland. She recruited Charlie and Pat. She participated in all but two group meetings.

Charlie

Charlie was a volunteer in Faith in Throughcare who supported people with convictions. He had experience of going in and out of prison more than once. Charlie was not yet a member of the group during our foundational meeting. He participated in nine group meetings.

Heather Hunter

Heather worked for Turning Point Scotland as a Service Coordinator of Low Moss Public Social Partnership, a collaboration led by Turning Point Scotland along with SPS and community justice partnerships which provided throughcare support to short-termers who were not eligible for statutory throughcare. Heather participated in 9 group meetings.

Pat

Pat was a volunteer in Faith in Throughcare who supports people with convictions. He was in his sixties and had experience of going in and out of prison more than once. Pat was not yet a member of the group during our foundational meeting. He participated in nine group meetings. He did not come to the last two group meetings and we could not catch up with the content discussed during them due to personal reasons not related to our group.

Reverend Kenny McGeachie

Reverend Kenny McGeachie was a Deacon with the Archdiocese of Glasgow, a Prison Chaplain at HMP Low Moss and a Trustee of Faith in Throughcare. In the past, he had been an SPS Mental Health Strategy Co-ordinator and the Faith in Throughcare manager. He was recruited after our first group meeting in order to fill two knowledge gaps: the community perspective and that of a clergy person[7] having regular contact with people with convictions. Kenny participated in eight group meetings.

Marguerite

Marguerite was a lecturer working at the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow. Her research had focused on the experiences of people who have been sentenced and the meaning that people attached to them, including multiple short-termers and long-termers. She participated in eight group meetings.

Alex Holligan

Alex Holligan was at that time a Scottish Prison Service Throughcare Support officer at HMP Barlinnie. Before being a Throughcare worker he was a Prison Officer. Alex was recruited through the SPS ethics application. Despite participating in only six of the 13 group meetings –due to personal reasons—, he demonstrated great engagement in the project. An example of this is the three-and-a-half-hour duration of our last individual

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[7] In Scotland Faith organisations have been traditionally providing throughcare support

meeting. He was able to read and contribute to the content of the two remaining group meetings that he missed.

Leanne Young

Leanne is a social worker in a community safety scheme which supports people who have offended persistently and who experience problematic substance use. She was recruited after group meeting 2 in order to fill three expertise gaps: repeated offending, problematic substance use and wellbeing. It was Karen who first mentioned her as a potential participant, and Alex who made the first contact. Leanne took part in five group sessions (missing some due to other commitments) and 5 individual meetings.

Vicky

Vicky was a housing advice, homelessness and customer support manager at the Wheatley Group, which is the leading housing, care and property-management group in Scotland. She was recruited in order to fill the housing knowledge gap identified by the group. Pete made the first contact with the Wheatley Group. She left the group after our 7th meeting due to personal reasons but participated in every group meeting but one until her departure.

Terry

Terry was an Assistant Service Delivery Officer in Victim Support Scotland Glasgow who had studied a master's degree in Criminology. He joined us after group meeting 2. During the initial recruitment process, another person from Victim Support Scotland had agreed to be part of the group, but due to major changes in her organisation she missed the first group meeting. In spite of that, she was able to recruit Terry. He participated in three group sessions and caught-up on another five of them through individual meetings.

John Riley

John was a person who had experience of repeated short-term sentences and, at the time of the group, was serving a Community Payback order. He had faced significant struggles since his most recent release. He was very active in people with convictions' related activities and organisations. John Riley first heard about our collaborative project thanks to his CPO social worker who had read an email sent by Glasgow Social Services. Since his recruitment just before group meeting 1, he participated in three group meetings and caught-up on two group meetings that he missed. After group meeting five he stopped answering my emails. I learned later that he had returned to prison.

Ethics Approval

The first approval was needed from the College of Social Sciences Ethics Board at the University of Glasgow. After responding to the reviewers' recommendations, the approval was granted. Next, I was able to apply to two other bodies from which, bearing in mind the role and/or status of certain people that I wanted to recruit, ethics approval was needed: the Scottish Prison Service Research Access and Ethics Committee and Glasgow Social Work Services. Both applications were successful. While writing the ethics application, there was one main ethical consideration that deserves our attention: anonymity and confidentiality. When elaborating the ethics application, I identified a tension between (a) anonymity and confidentiality and (b) ownership and attribution of knowledge, which derived from my research approach (see Baez 2002 or Deacon 2019 for reflections on this issue). More about this tension will be explored in the next chapter. For now, it is sufficient to say that in this first approved application I signalled that participants would choose if they wanted to follow a soft interpretation of the Chatham House rule or not. Outside our group, we could say the name of the people that were part of it, we could share arguments that were raised during our group conversation, but we could not say who said what (Chatham House 2021 see FAQ). Every member of the group decided to proceed in this way.

In meeting 4, time was taken to discuss how anonymity and confidentiality was going to be handled and informed decisions were taken: every member present decided that they wanted their real name — preceded and/or followed in some cases by their title and surname — to be used and that they wanted the comments to be attributed to them. As a consequence of the participants decision, I submitted an amendment to the three ethics committees. The three of them approved it.

The heterogeneity of the group posed complications in terms of developing and applying a common ethics: I was aware that it would be necessary and complex to obtain ~~the~~ permission from the University and other Ethics Committees and that this was going to delay the planning process. In addition, the combination of collaboration and heterogeneity — see following sections on these three matters — raised two particular worries: firstly, speaking about potentially sensitive topics with people that come from different backgrounds than yours can turn stressful (see Dickson-Swift et al. 2009 on sensitive topics and emotions). Secondly, different power relations may arise in this heterogeneous group of inquiry. Making sure that our group was a dialogic one (in line with the principles

outlined above) was one way in which I intended to address these issues. More about this matter will be explored in the next chapter.

Research Approach

During the last few decades, there has been an increased interest in the nature of the processes that generate knowledge (Platteel et al. 2011). Bearing in mind the arguments developed thus far, I argue in this section that the best way to fulfil my research aim is through what I have termed a dialogic group inquiry approach. Most research on life after prison has focused on the experience of releasees — rather than focusing on re/integration as a phenomenon. It is perhaps due to this that most such research had either interviewed people released (e.g., Schinkel 2014a; Western 2018) or has conducted an ethnography on the experience of people released (e.g., Halushka 2019; Durnescu 2019). Although these approaches have got their merits and as shown in Chapter 2 and 3 have enormously enhanced our understanding on life after prison, I would argue that they are insufficient in order to fulfil my aims with respect to my unit of analysis: post-prison re/integration as a phenomenon. Firstly, because as I have indicated in the previous sections, releasees are not the only ones that hold knowledge and/or are affected by the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration. The second one, is related to validity and can be derived from my ontological and epistemological position: that releasees — or anyone — interprets their experiences in a way does not mean that the matter is like its perceived. The way in which the group dialogic inquiry approach solves this matter can be found in subsequent paragraphs.

I will now explore the three key features of my approach. Firstly, as the name says, the ultimate aim of this type of approach is to *generate knowledge* about an issue or phenomenon which is considered problematic (Shields 2003). In this case, the group was formed around a shared concern about post-prison *dis*-integration in Glasgow. Due to the fact that small groups are better in order to (a) build trust and understanding, (b) encourage people who are less confident to contribute, (c) achieve in-depth discussion, and (d) for everyone to have a say (Faulkner 2011) I decided that the group would be formed of eight to 16 regular members.

I argue that the form of group inquiry that can best answer the research question is a *dialogic one*. Dialogue can be conceptualised and analysed from a micro or a macro

perspective (Parkinson, 2004). Bearing in mind the size of the inquiry group in question and that dialogue is being approached in this research project from a methodological point of view, I have adopted a micro perspective (see Parkinson 2004 on the distinction; see Escobar 2014b; Kemmis 2001, 2008 for comprehensive overviews of Habermas' notion of dialogue from a macro perspective). The concept of dialogue — from a micro perspective — has evolved during the last century (see Anderson et al. 2004), and even nowadays there are different positions on its definition (see Pearce & Pearce 2000; Escobar 2011). Dialogue is seen as a form of communication, as a process (Escobar 2011) and as a quality of communication (Pearce & Pearce 2004). In addition to these ways of understanding dialogue, I would add another: dialogue is a way of being with and of relating to each other. Methodologically, dialogue has been considered by participatory action researchers as occupying a central position (…) in pursuing the (…) objectives of participatory research' (Park 2001, p.81) because of its capacity to be 'a potent method to integrate inquiry and intervention' (Tandom 1981, p.299).

Literature on dialogue is consistent around three matters. Firstly, the main aim of dialogue is mutual understanding. Secondly, dialogue is collaborative in nature. Thirdly, dialogue has a dimension that is temporal (Cisna & Anderson 1998) because it is achieved in 'moments' (Escobar 2011) and in episodes (Pearce & Pearce 2000). There is another issue on which most scholars agree: in order for dialogue to happen, the communication process should be characterised by certain dynamics that are interconnected. Escobar (2011) argues that these include the following:

- The process should 'be open to multiple voices, styles of communication and perspectives (p.22).
- There should be respect towards other people's accounts not only in the sense of politeness, but also in the way you consider, and you engage with their contributions.
- Narratives and storytelling are basic in that process of communication as a way of expressing 'values, views and feelings' based on 'personal experience'.
- Listening is as important, or even more important, than talking (Littlejohn & Domenici 2001).
- In order to listen, the 'co-inquiry' aspect of dialogue is very important; this refers to the collaborative exploration of opinions and values though the act of posing questions.

- Automatic response, judgement and certainty need to be controlled during the process.

- It is also important to balance the activity of finding common ground with that of exploring differences.

- Although inquiry is extremely important, advocacy is too, in order to be able to be understood, thus a balance between the two is needed.

- Finally, a safe space needs to be created (Pieczka & Wood 2013).

But dialogue is not exempt from perils (Escobar 2011). Wierzbicka (2006), by relying on de Oliveira's (1970) idea of dialogue as a 'talismanic word' (p.32), points out the risk of dialogue of becoming a 'tool of manipulation, propaganda or pseudo-communication' (p. 691). This is already happening in some 'organizational settings' (Escobar 2011, p.58) where the word dialogue has become a 'management fashion' (Pieczka & Escobar 2010, p.16) that can be used in order to hide and/or give rationale to 'collective forums for manufactured consent (…) concertive control (…) , or team tyranny' (Bokeno & Gantt 2000, p. 249). The second peril is about dialogue pursuit of the common ground (Escobar 2011). When doing so, dialogue can 'reproduce the status quo because the ground that is common between participants is that of the dominant culture' (Deetz & Simpson 2004, p. 7). This can be avoided by balancing this activity with the one of exploring differences (Escobar 2011).

Some people may be tempted to state that the best way in order to challenge the status quo is through advocacy. I have some concerns about this argument: some pragmatic and others philosophical. Pragmatically we should be taking into account that people who are more effective in these confrontational dynamics are usually the ones that already have a say and are already heard. Secondly, I consider that it is difficult to challenge the status quo without understanding each other and the context in which we live.

In addition to this, epistemologically, when engaging in advocation we are not open to other ideas and reasons behind them, which limits our inquiry and understanding potential. There is no epistemic humility in believing that everything that you state on a topic is a hundred percent accurate and without being open to reconsidering it. In axiological and political terms: can we legitimately replace the current status quo with a new one without understanding each other and the current context in which we live?

However, in addition to focusing on the process of communication, I also had to pay attention to the substantive issues on post-prison re/integration which we talked about. This was done, when needed, in two main ways; by bringing academic literature to the group and by raising questions in order to foster a more in-depth understanding of certain issues and arguments.

The last feature of a dialogic inquiry group relates to its *communitarian dimension*. This type of group is 'anchored in the desire to address a common problem' (Shields 2003). A core and strongly related notion is that of a group, engaging in joint activities and tasks. Group and collective engagement, then, is a key issue in this research project.

Another way of researching post-prison re/integration in Glasgow which may be congruent with the aims and questions that guide this research might be to interview members of the different sub-populations mentioned above separately (see Loucks 2007 on an approach of this kind with respect to housing). In that case then, I would be the one combining the different accounts and bringing them into conversation. What were the reasons that made me favour an inquiry dialogic group?

Seller (1988)'s contribution to *Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy* (1988), in which she tries to bring into conversation — extreme types of — realism and relativism, can help me illustrate the first reason for my choice. In her chapter, she gives two examples why she thinks that an extreme relativist standpoint is flawed; it may end up justifying oppression and, when introducing temporality, it can result in contradictions. Bearing this in mind she argues for the value of collaborative 'intersubjective checking' (p.179):

> '(…) it is only through examining and discussing individuals' experiences that we can do what the realist calls finding truth, what the relativist calls contributing to the construction of reality, as opposed to simply being the victims of other people's constructions.' (p.182)

As Seller argues, it is thus only through collaborative intersubjective checking that we can overcome the epistemological fallibility associated with any one position or standpoint (Schwandt 1996; see Shields 2003 illustrative example on the classic Buddhist story).

> 'Each individual's experience, as an unconsidered given, cannot show what is going on. As an isolated individual, I often do not know what my experiences

are. There can be no argument for subjectivism here, but rather for an inter-subjectivism which begins in individual experiences, but instead of multiplying them (we all saw flashes in the sky) seeks to understand them through conversation.' (Seller 1998, p.180)

I would argue that, even through inter-subjectivism, the complete infallibility of the knowledge produced cannot be guaranteed (Shields 2003). What can be said, is that through inter-subjectivism we can achieve a fuller picture of the phenomenon in question (Shields 2003; Bottoms 2008). The last point that Seller makes in the above quote is also a key one: dialogic inquiry is not only about sharing and summing up individual stories, it is about collaboratively making sense of them and understanding them. It is exactly this that makes dialogic inquiry groups a unique approach to research.

A second argument for choosing a group approach of inquiry is commonly shared in participatory action research literature: as both theory and practice are socially constructed and embedded, the process of knowledge production — and of related action — should also be a social one (Gaventa & Cornwall 2001; Maguire 2002; Kemmis 2008).

Due (a) to the fallibility and social construction and embeddedness of knowledge; (b) to an extended approach to epistemology; (c) to the multifaceted and multilateral character of re/integration; (d) to the understanding nature of dialogue; and to the (e) notion of inter-subjective checking, I therefore argue that it is important that the dialogic group conducting the inquiry should, in this case, be heterogeneous. This allowed us to better understand the full range of experiences surrounding re/integration. In addition, heterogeneity takes into account the 'law of group polarisation' which sustains that when a group is homogenous 'members of a deliberating group predictably move toward a more extreme point in the direction indicated by the members' pre-deliberation tendencies' (Sustein 2002, p.176).

There are two more issues about the research approach which deserve exploration here: the role of the group members and my role during data collection; and the flexibility of fieldwork. The first one will be explored more in depth during the next chapter. With respect to the second one, at the research design stage, a flexible approach was taken towards the number of meetings and the duration of the research process. On the various ethics applications, it was suggested that there would be approximately eight or nine group meetings which would take place over approximately 12 months. The length of the

research process was selected bearing in mind not only the time needed to explore the issues but also the time needed in order to get to know each well enough, to know our expectations for the project and to explore how to approach collaborative inquiry. Hence, the number of meetings and the duration of the fieldwork was left open so the group could decide about the time needed to develop a comprehensive response to our research problem. I also decided that I would suggest to members that each meeting had a duration of approximately two hours. In line with my position that academic knowledge is not the only or 'best' kind, I decided to avoid meeting at the University of Glasgow and held the meeting at a public venue.

Conducting the Research

The purpose of this section will be to explore the conduct of the research. The inquiry research group met a total of 13 times over 13 months between the 2nd of November 2017 and the 18th of December 2018. Group meetings lasted for around two hours and a half. I also convened individual catch-up meetings with those who missed a group meeting. How this combination between group and individual meetings worked and the influence that it had on the inquiry group exploration and on the research data will be one of the focuses of the next chapter. I will now explore the content of each of the 13 group meetings by clustering them into three groups: introductory, substantive and concluding. I have made a table (see Table 4 below) with each of the group meetings, the general aims and the specific tasks in which we engaged — including the specific topics explored during each meeting. More information with respect to different contents of the table will be developed in the following chapter. This table is an important tool for readers to keep at hand during this thesis.

TYPE OF MEETING		GENERAL AIMS	MEETING	TASKS/TOPIC
Introductory		a) Group building b) Reflect on our individual and collective hopes and expectations, interests in, and knowledge c) Elaborate an action plan d) Recruit more members (if necessary)	Foundational	Make a dialogic exercise in order to start to explore hopes/expectations; interests, and knowledge
				Discuss ethics matters
			1	Build on previous meeting exercise answers in order to: a) Identify knowledge gaps in order to recruit new members b) Choose that during the 13 months we were going to focus on intra-group dialogue
			2	Elaborate an action plan: begin exploring re/integration through an activity and departing from it, having subject focused group meetings
				First overall evaluation form
Substantive	Exploratory	Start to conceptualise post-prison re/integration (looking for width)	3	Exploratory activity: five stages (from pre-prison to beyond the first month of release)
			4	Reflect on and complement my cluster of the activity answers into five groups (four domains and structural elements)
				Collective reflection on confidentiality and anonymity + individual ethical decision
	Developmental	Explore each of the five clusters (looking for depth)	5	Social connections
			6	Citizenship status
			7	Personal development Second overall evaluation form
			8	Material needs First dialogic evaluation form
			9	Structural elements
Concluding		Wrap up, reflect on our endeavour, think about the future, and celebrate the end of this phase	10	Go through our group account and suggest changes/shifts/clarifications
			11	Extend the exploration of the two most-voted topics: digital inclusion and community dispositions
				Reflect out loud if being part of the group had enhanced our individual knowledge
			12	a) Reflect on consecution of hopes/expectations b) Take decisions on the future of the project c) Third overall evaluation form d) Second dialogic evaluation form

Table 4. List of Meetings

Working with the Data and Writing this Thesis

This section will firstly outline the way in which I worked with the data by exploring my interwoven process of data coding, transcription, analysis, and writing. During this project, I spent a total of approximately 54 hours on conducting research — summing up the 13 group meetings and 41 individual meetings. After each group session, I listened to the audio recordings and took notes in order to prepare the individual catch-up meetings and the subsequent group meetings. Those notes were initially coded following a domain summary thematic analysis, that is to say, themes were created by clustering members' accounts with respect to the guiding questions (see Braun et al. 2019 on this matter). When needed, I also listened to the individual meeting audiotapes in order to include that content in the following group meeting and in the analysis.

I did not engage in verbatim transcription until after group meeting 9, when I gave an overview of the content to group members. There was usually less than a month between one group meeting and the other. During that time, I had to listen to the three audios from the previous group meeting (I situated three recording devices to capture every member's contribution) in order to prepare the individual meetings, conduct the individual meetings, incorporate the individual meeting accounts, conduct a literature review on the following group meeting topic, and reflect on and design the following group session. As each substantive meeting was on a different subject, I considered that it was preferable to spend more time on these tasks rather than on transcribing in verbatim the previous group meeting.

During the whole transcription stage, I listened to approximately 80 hours of recording — 28 hours of individual and 52 hours of group meetings — which corresponded to the 54 hours of fieldwork. This is because for each group session, as we were a group, I situated three recording devices in order to be able to capture every member's contribution. That meant that afterwards when transcribing I needed to combine the audios of the three different recordings. This greatly increased the number of hours of recording that I needed to listen to and made the transcription process more laborious. I fully transcribed in verbatim from meeting three to 11. From the remaining group meetings, when needed, certain parts were transcribed verbatim and others by taking notes on the main points. This decision was taken in order to make transcription manageable. Audiotaped individual meetings were fully transcribed in verbatim.

When starting to transcribe the group and individual meetings which were relevant to the overview presented in meeting 10, I realised that I was not able to understand certain words and expressions. This is because English is my second language. In addition, although I have been studying English since I was three years old, during these years I had no teachers with strong Scottish accents. When engaging in meeting 10, I realised that I had also made some typos and decided to seek help from a Scottish person. Once I had partially transcribed every group and individual meeting, I sent it then to the transcriber, so the gaps were filled.

The transcribed data was analysed following a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis entails the identification, analysis and report of patterns (themes) (Braun & Clark 2006) allowing 'for rich and flexible analysis' (Wiseman & Ferrie 2020, p.321). Thematic analyses consist of six recursive phases: familiarisation — which entails getting immersed in the data through listening to it and/or reading the transcriptions —, code generation — the creation of labels around which data is organised —, constructing themes — reviewing codes and collated data in order to find potential broader patterns —, and revising, and defining and naming themes — going again through the themes, the codes and the collated data in order to refine the process and choosing a name for each theme — , and writing up (Braun & Clarke 2006; Braun et al. 2019). Coding occurred during all this process.

I decided to use manual coding because I felt it would keep me closer to the data. The way in which I initiated my analysis was more of a domain summary thematic one: I relied on the different guiding questions that were posed during fieldwork or on the different themes that members identified and clustered during certain meetings. An example of this latter case was in group meeting 6 on citizenship status in which a 'metaplan' technique was used. This technique is ideal for building understanding; pooling knowledge, perspectives and views; and future visioning. The first stage of this technique ensured that everyone contributed to this endeavour and everyone's views were taken into account. The second stage gave us the chance to collectively reflect on individual answers in order to get to know us better as a group, while giving the members the possibility to cluster the individual answers themselves one by one and choosing the category name. New ideas could also arise (see Faulkner 2011 on the exact details of this technique).

While getting further immersed in the data and in the process of writing my analyses began to become more detailed and deeper, I began to identify different crosscutting themes and

my thematic analysis began to develop towards being a more 'share meaning based-patters' type (Braun et al. 2019, p.845) by focusing on the underlying ideas and conceptualisations (Braun & Clark 2006). As data presentation and analysis chapters suffered many alterations in its structure as well as in its focus, the above thematic analysis phases occurred many times. This allowed me to be very familiar and very immersed in the data.

After a long process of drafting different chapters of the thesis using diverse infrequent structures, I came up with the current one. I firstly wrote the data analysis draft in order to give primacy to my evidence and to not be reliant on literature. Afterwards I drafted the literature review and the methodological chapters. I finished drafting the conclusion and the introduction chapters. Afterwards I read everything together and redrafted everything in order to refine it and to work on the links between the different chapters.

Conclusion

This is the first chapter dedicated to exploring how the data presented, analysed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters was generated. I have started it by sharing my positionality and my methodological, epistemological, ontological, conceptual, contextual and substantive underpinnings prior to fieldwork. I have shown how, prior to conducting research I was already aware of the existent research and methodological gaps in life after prison literature. In terms of research gap, there is a lack (a) of research on re/integration as a phenomenon, and (b) of holistic research on post-prison re/integration. In addition, I have also highlighted two methodological gaps: studies in which participants are usually people with convictions and even those studies that have a diverse set of participants (see Loucks 2007) gather the data in one-to-one meetings and then the researcher is the one that brings their accounts into conversation. Throughout this chapter I have argued that although these research approaches have greatly contributed to our understanding on life after prison, my research inquiry approach could enhance it thanks to its holistic approach and the inter-subjective checking deriving from its dialogic, collective and heterogeneous character.

In this chapter I have also outlined that the main research aim was to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine men's post-prison re/integration in Glasgow — excluding people who have committed sexual offences —. As re/integration is a localised phenomenon, I have argued for conducting a case study which may not only have an

inherent value for its locus but also beyond it thanks to analytic generalisability. I have chosen Glasgow as the locus of the case study because of it being an extreme case: it is the largest city in Scotland and the one in which the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration (or dis-integration) is most extensive.

Afterwards, I have explored the participants' selection and recruitment process and signalled some limitations deriving from it. A presentation of group members has been given. The complicated process of ethics approval discussion has been followed by an exploration of my research approach. I have argued for the use of a dialogic group inquiry in order to fulfil the aims of this study and have explored its three components: its inquiry aim, its dialogic character, and the notion of a group. During the section about conducting the research I have explored the different meetings and its different focus and tasks. Afterwards I have discussed how after transcribing both the group and the individual catch-up meetings I have conducted a thematic analysis and I have written this thesis. During different moments of this chapter, I have been encouraging the readers to the next chapter, which will be the second and last one dedicated to my research process. It is now time to engage in this task.

5 Chapter 5 – Reflections on the Research Process

This chapter discusses and reflects on the research project which forms the basis of this thesis. Social research is a messy endeavour (Naveed et al. 2017) which is often portrayed in a neat and tidy way in academic articles and theses (Deacon 2019). Through the in depth-reflection on some complex and key aspects of the research process, this chapter will complement Chapter 4 by enriching its portrayal on how the data presented, analysed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters was generated.

In this chapter, I will firstly explore different ways in which my background and positionality have shaped the research process. Then, I will highlight the salience of gathering group feedback for our group endeavour and thus for the data produced.

Shaping of My Background and Positionality in the Research Process

During the *design stage*, there were different features of my background and positionality that may have been influential to the research process. The first feature is my cultural and familiar background. I come from a country in which people like to talk and tend to express their feelings more than in other countries such as Scotland. I come from a country which (a) after nearly three years of civil war between the two Spains –in which atrocities were committed; killings occurred between parents, sons and neighbours; and during which interpersonal old scores were settled, and (b) over 35 years of dictatorship and of exiled people; was able to create a democracy through fostering conversations in which people who were part of the two Spanish sides participated. In addition, I was brought up in a family in which conversations and dialogue is fostered. An example of this is that while having lunch or dinner together, we hardly ever watch TV. We consider that communicating what we think and how we feel is very important. When one of us has a problem or a doubt with respect to how to proceed, we usually have a conversation in order to try to collaboratively find the best way of dealing with the matter trying to understand each other's points of view and building on them. We give huge importance to how that process is carried out and to the reasoning and arguments that lead us to our conclusions. In addition, the sense of collective is combined with a sense of individuality. These matters, on interaction with my academic background explored at the start of the previous chapters, are very likely to have shaped my research design.

Another matter that may have influenced my research design is the fact of planning to conduct a research in another country, with another culture and in another language. Firstly, writing, talking and having criminological conversations in a second language, may partly explain the great attention and thought that I give to the meaning and conceptualisation of the terms — such as re/integration. Secondly, the fact of coming from another country in which political and practice circles' attention to re/integration is scarce or non-existent (see Chapter 9 on this matter) may have made me more hopeful and faithful to my research project's prospects, not only in terms of its realisations but in terms of its influence on contributing to an improvement of life after prison. Being a young academic and not being embedded in the set of concrete actors and institutions that form the Scottish crime related arena, may have also been beneficial in terms of designing this project: if I had been living in Scotland for 20 years and I already knew everyone who works and is interested in this phenomenon, I may have been very sceptical about conducting a project like mine. As I did not have any prejudice towards any actor or institution it was easier for me to try to include them in the group in order to hear their account. In addition, I may have thought that this research would be useless in terms of influence on life after prison and may have discarded conducting it.

My background is also likely to have shaped recruitment. Once a potential group member had expressed their interest, we had a recruitment meeting for which I prepared carefully. I was aware that the perceived appeal of the project could be reduced because of me being a young researcher at the bottom end of the academic researching hierarchy; who had moved to Glasgow three years before and therefore lacked knowledge of Scottish culture and the criminal justice context; and was planning a communication-focused project with his first language not being English. Although I was also aware that these same factors could stir curiosity, I needed to present the project in a rigorous and detailed way but without hiding that I strongly believed in this project and was highly motivated. This enthusiasm seemed to be key because in a feedback form a group member — without being asked — wrote: 'enthusiasm showed by you made me buy in'.

Another aspect that may have been influenced by my background is that of cooking for the group. During the design process, it was decided that due to the moment of the day in which the meeting happened, refreshment needed to be provided. In this respect, the concept of commensality was raised by one of my supervisors. Before engaging in commensality literature (e.g., Mennell et al. 1992; Fieldhouse 1995; Sobal & Nelson 2003; Fischler 2011; Crowther 2013), I already thought it was an excellent idea because it

perfectly resonated with my cultural background: in Spain people usually relate, communicate and organise their activities around the social act of eating and drinking with other people. Cooking also has a special place in Spanish culture: it is a very special way of expressing gratitude, friendship and/or love.

Thus, I considered that cooking was a great way of expressing gratitude to group members for spending so much time and effort on this task. I usually cooked two tortillas –one vegetarian and one with chorizo —and a dessert — either apple tart or chocolate cake. In addition to this, drinks, wraps, fruit and chocolate bars were also provided. Group participants showed in the evaluation forms that they appreciated this hospitality: it was the aspect that was rated highest, with a 4.95 out of 5 — see section on salience of feedback for information on how that feedback was collected and on the scale that it was used. In addition, group members also expressed their appreciation when answering the open questions of the forms. For example, someone wrote: 'Hospitality is particularly appreciated - makes us feel valued'. In turn, I believe that commensality was also key in terms of group bonding. It was the moment in which people chatted on more informal issues and lots of jokes were made. I consider that having the refreshments in another room from that of the formal part of our meeting played its role too. In addition, as people sat to eat on their arrival members had the chance to talk with different members each week.

My background might also have shaped fieldwork in other ways. Firstly, while the fact that English is not my first language hindered a full understanding of certain Glaswegian expressions, that made me be more attentive and focused on what was said, on how it was said and on the context in which it was said. Being a foreigner is also likely to have influenced the group task. I felt that because of being a foreigner, group members tended to explain matters in a more comprehensive and deeper way, without taking for granted any previous knowledge from my part. They were explaining to someone who is not Scottish how re/integration in Glasgow is. This meant that nearly everything was open to discussion. My status as a student also contributed to this. During fieldwork I tended to make clear that they were the experts in these matters, and that I was there learning from them. Once I have reflected on different ways in which my background and positionality have shaped the research process and thus the data generation, I am going to proceed in exploring in depth the key salience that members' feedback had during our dialogic group inquiry.

Key Importance of Feedback

As it can be seen in Table 4 (p.106), I asked for feedback during different moments of the fieldwork. There were two types of feedback which I asked for: oral feedback and written feedback. This was done in order to give everyone an equal opportunity to share their feedback: there may be people who feel more comfortable when writing and other people who prefer to give it orally. Oral feedback was requested after each individual session and during certain group meetings. After each individual session, I usually asked them if they were happy with how things were going and if they would like to share anything with me. After each group meeting, I usually asked the group if anyone had something to say or some feedback to give. Focused oral feedback was requested once — meeting 11 — and it was much more focused: I asked members to reflect on whether and how the process had enhanced their knowledge on life after prison.

With respect to written feedback there were two types of feedback forms: a general 'evaluation form' and a 'group dynamics form' (see Appendices 1 and 2). They both had a combination of open-ended questions and a question in which they were asked to rate different statements from 1 to 5, with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'excellent'. I was the one who elaborated the latter form's statements which were intended to fully capture and assess the dialogic dynamics which have been identified in literature (see Appendices). In the following section after feedback, when needed, matters included on it were discussed. I would argue that this feedback was key for different purposes. Firstly, I would argue that it generated a sense of collective and a sense of rapport. People felt listened to, and that their feedback was welcomed and had been considered. They felt that they were part of a collective project which they could individually contribute to and on which decisions were taken collectively.

Secondly, it helped me to refine my facilitation and to know what members believed was best for our group task. An example of this is when after meeting five I received feedback on the way in which I had introduced research in our group conversations and how it could be improved. More detail on this will be given in the next section. Another example of the usefulness of the feedback in order to refine my facilitation is with respect to the extent of structure that the dialogic activities had. As a response to some feedback, as sessions passed — and the group became more familiar with dialogic dynamics — the activities became looser. Due to this, during these meetings my role as a facilitator had to focus more on timing and on keeping the group on track. Due to these two shifts, our conversations

became deeper and richer. These two responses to group feedback on my facilitation were positively valued in subsequent feedback both in terms of the meeting in question, my facilitation and the dialogic activity. Members stated for example: 'enjoyed the open discussion felt more in-depth', 'the fact that we abandoned the structure plus had a more free-flowing conversation was helpful', 'much broader conversations following its natural course not the predetermined agenda'.

Group feedback also helped in terms of shaping our exploration approach during some of the meetings. That is the case of meeting 7, in which at the beginning when asking the group if they agreed with exploring personal development in a certain way, a member suggested would it not be better to start by exploring the concept of personal development before engaging in the exploration of the different subdomains. As a group we agreed with that, and as a facilitator I took the decision to continue with the answering of this question for the whole meeting: the group conversation was rich and comprehensive. Another example of this occurred when on a feedback form it was suggested by two different people that we were not engaging enough in aspirational thought. One of them suggested a way of doing so. In the following meeting (9) an adaptation of this idea was used in order to explore the contextual elements. More about this matter will be explored when discussing the power relationships between myself and members.

Feedback was also important in order to hear organisational issues which in turn have an impact on substantive issues and thus on data generated. An example of this is how during the meeting after the first written feedback, it was decided that when possible, we would extend the time of the formal meeting — from one hour and a half to two hours — and to decrease the time for refreshments — from half an hour to fifteen minutes —.

Last but certainly not any less important, as I will show in subsequent sections, they helped us to assess (a) our group success in creating a dialogic space and (b) if and how members' hopes, and expectations were fulfilled.

The Role of Individual Catch-up Meetings

In this section I am going to highlight the vital value that individual catch-up meetings had in our group endeavour. During these individual meetings, I provided the member with an overview of the previous group meeting conversation and encouraged them to engage with

it. If, during these individual meetings, a proposal came up, it was explored in the following group meeting. Individual meetings were also audiotaped. Although I am aware — and was aware during the research design — that given the importance of the group notion in the research approach the conducting of individual meetings could seem contradictory, I argue that this is not the case.

Firstly, individual meetings made sure that no-one was left behind both in terms of substantive content and group engagement. Given the length of the fieldwork and its time and effort consuming character, I consider that this is especially important. Individual meetings were especially key in the case of members who were recruited after the foundational meeting. It guaranteed that they caught up with members who had participated in previous sessions. In addition, it gave me the chance to catch up with them in terms of evaluation forms and/or ethics key decisions.

Secondly, individual meetings gave everyone the chance to contribute to the group account. Like that, people's knowledge on matters discussed in meetings to which they were absent was not lost. Although it cannot be considered as a direct dialogic way, it may be considered as an indirect one. A third value that individual meetings had was that of depth. I observed that certain people felt more comfortable providing a more extended account during individual meetings than during group ones. An example of this can be found in Chapter 7, when exploring Pat's and Charlie's experiences. Some of their accounts were given in individual meetings. In addition, I found that in individual meetings people were more sincere in terms of procedural feedback. One member felt that he could share things that they would not share in a group meeting in order not to be disrespectful.

Those who participated in these meetings valued them positively: in the open-ended questions people often qualified them as being informative and helpful. They were considered as key. A group member captured this in the following way:

> 'Sometimes I find it hard to come to every meeting. But Alejandro has been excellent at bringing me up to speed again.'

Individual meetings were rated highly with an average of 4.5/5.

Involvement and Power during the Research Process

As signalled during Chapter 4, degrees of involvement, ownership and power-sharing during the research process is a complex matter (Cornwall 2008). The fact that a participatory approach is taken does not necessarily mean that the contribution of each one of the group members should be exactly the same (Reason 1988). The purpose of this first section will be to explore in depth these and other matters. To do so, I will firstly reflect on my role during the different stages of the research project; then I will explore the participants roles; I will finalise this section by discussing the power balance between group members and myself.

Reflections on My Role

My role during this project was that of a research designer, group inquiry creator, meeting designer and organiser, facilitator, analyst and writer. As my role as analyst and writer can be extracted from the previous chapter I am going to focus here on the roles of designer, group inquiry creator, meeting designer and organiser, and facilitator.

When designing the project, a matter which I considered key was the length of the fieldwork: this was intended firstly in order to be able to gain a thorough and deep understanding of the wider phenomenon, but secondly in order to foster rapport, relationships and group identity. I did not want our exploration to be a collection of different individual accounts, but rather I wanted to foster synergy so we could collectively build on each other's knowledge in order to enhance our understanding of this matter. This implied that members had to dedicate a lot of time, effort, and sometimes money to the project. This again may have excluded some people from being part of the group. There may be some people that, due to the length of the research conducted and the level of engagement needed, decided not to participate. Again, this self-selection effect was not necessarily negative for the project: one of the key issues for a dialogic inquiry group to work is that there is a high level of engagement of its members. One of the few negative consequences, is that people who are struggling with re/integration may be especially likely to have refused to participate due to this issue. Despite this, we were lucky to have two members who had experienced severe adversities in the past, and one who was experiencing some adversities at that very moment.

Another role was that of the creator of the group inquiry. I created a group from zero with the purpose of fulfilling the aims of the research. Transparency and clarity regarding the main characteristics of the research approach were pursued from the first contact with each stakeholder and were maintained during the whole planning and research conduct periods. This may have had a self-selection effect since the start of the recruitment: people who may have been potentially interested in participating in research on this topic may have decided not to do so due to its collective and/or dialogic approach. Despite this, this was something intended: I considered that it was important that everyone who was part of the inquiry group was not only interested in life after prison but also shared its dialogic and collective approach.

During the conduct of the study phase, I also adopted different roles. The main one was that of dialogic facilitator. Although the idea of dialogue seems very attractive, in practice it is difficult to facilitate truly dialogic moments/episodes. Nowadays, we are immersed in what Tannen (1998) has named 'the argument culture'. Communication in public forums has turned confrontational (Escobar 2009, 49); it is seen as a fight in which only one side can win, and the winning side will be the one that attacks and criticizes more effectively (Tannen 1998). This way of communicating has become ritualised (Tannen 1998) and automated, becoming a vicious circle (Littlejohn & Domenici 2001), which is totally contrary to the concept of dialogue. In addition to this, argument deters participation by people and collectives that do not feel comfortable when engaging in these communication patterns (Escobar 2011). This confrontational way of communicating implies that the figure of the facilitator is often required in order to achieve successful dialogue.

Bearing the emphasis on dialogue in my methodology in mind, I attended two dialogic-approach workshops ─ one oriented towards enhancing my facilitation skills and another towards designing dialogic events ─given by two highly experienced Scotland-based scholars in theorising, designing and planning public engagement events: Wendy Faulkner and Oliver Escobar. Participating in these workshops had additional benefits for me especially with English not being my first language and coming from a country with a different communicative culture. The dialogic techniques that I used during our meetings were learnt in these workshops. This training was complemented by regular meetings with Escobar during the preparation and early fieldwork periods.

In order to foster dialogic communication, I had to plan in advance a set of activities for each group meeting and, during the meetings, I had to facilitate those activities. Making sure that dialogic dynamics were fostered was my principal aim. In our, group, as in every collective, there are people that tend to participate more, and others that tend to participate less. As a facilitator, I considered that my role was not to cut back people because they tended to speak more — unless they interrupted others — but to encourage those that were less talkative to participate. There were two ways in which I tried to do this: through the use of activities that as a group member stated: 'ensured that all participated' and through my own facilitation of the open conversations. It seems that the group considered that I did a good job. Phrases like, 'no-one is left out', 'everyone has a chance to have their say', 'Alejandro ensures all are given the chance to speak', the process 'seemed fairly equal overall', 'very inclusive', 'we are all equal' or 'everyone is given the same space' and 'everyone did contribute' were used in the sections of the dynamics form feedback in which open questions were given. My facilitation was rated by group members with an average of 4.7/5. Facilitation is key with respect to the richness of the data that was generated: the more people that participated and more comfortable and listened to they felt, the more nuances are explored and arguments taken into account.

However, in addition to focusing on the process of communication, I also had to pay attention to the substantive issues on post-prison re/integration which we talked about. This was done, when needed, in two main ways; by bringing academic literature to the group and by raising questions in order to foster a more in-depth understanding of certain issues and arguments. With respect to the first matter, my way of doing it changed after meeting 5. Meeting 5 was the first one in which we explored in-depth one of the post-prison domains which emerged from meetings 3 and 4: social connection. Even though I left the group to answer these three questions before engaging in literature's answer to these matters, when it was time to introduce literature, I did so using too dense and numerous slides with too many accounts and details. This stopped the group conversation flow and idea exchange: there I was reading the dense content of the slides from the board while members instead of talking and sharing their views were listening to my never-ending presentation based on literature. I realised this during the meeting, but it was too late.

> 'You have always been open to feedback and I hope you take this as a positive suggestion… I wish to suggest with some care that it might be worth NOT reading out everything on every PowerPoint slide unless, of course, you are aware that someone may have difficulty reading…

No worries if you do not change your presentation method.'

From this session I took away one learning point: giving a long presentation on what literature says about a topic was not the best way to bring into discussion the initial group encounter with literature as it was too laborious, disengaged members and too much time was needed. Instead, from then onwards, if necessary as that argument was not being taken into account, I would introduce literature ideas orally with brief comments as part of my facilitator role. In addition to that, I realised that I needed to relax on this matter because there were already three people in the group that could bring criminological knowledge. Thus, from then on, primacy to the group account was given and literature was chosen in order to foster or deepen conversation.

In addition to this substance role, I also raised questions in order to foster a more in-depth understanding of certain issues and arguments. Sometimes I was controversial on purpose in order to foster reflection. This role as a thought-provoker was acknowledged by group members. Terry for example, stated:

'Yeah. And again, that's one of Alejandro's unanswerable questions, there's always at least one in every session.' (Terry)

I feel that my skills and my role as a facilitator improved as meetings went on. This was thanks to self-reflection and practice but also thanks to the feedback which was given by group members.

With respect to my thesis as one outcome, at the research design stage, I decided that it was me who needed to write it. This was my responsibility as a doctoral researcher, and I was being paid and assessed to do so. In spite of that, I decided that, when finished, I wanted to have a group meeting in which I would share my findings and foster further dialogue with the group.

Reflections on the Group's Role

The epistemological position I have outlined in the previous chapter entails that reflection on participant's role is not only relevant during the process of data collection but throughout the whole research process (Reason 1988; Cornwall 2008; Harris et al 2018). One of my main preoccupations — both epistemologically and ethically — was the fear

that, by having control of every stage of the research process except for data collection, I might impose my way of understanding post-prison re/integration, resulting not only in a type of participant exploitation but also having substantive consequences. In spite of that, the fact that the research aim was wide and highly exploratory — to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine post-prison re/integration — prevented me from imposing my way of understanding post-prison re/integration; exploring and deciding how to conceptualise post-prison re/integration was a task for the whole group.

As shown in the previous chapter, since the research design, participants were considered as co-researchers, as experts, as 'knowledgeable social actors' (Rosaldo 2004, p.400) on post-prison re/integration. During the research design stage, I conceptualised the design as a flexible one; one that would be shared with, proposed by and reflected on the group members as co-researchers, and one that could, if necessary, be refined by the group.

I achieved this in different ways with respect to most stages of the research. With respect to the delimitations of the research aim — only men who have not committed sexual offences — during the recruitment meetings, I offered potential participants the opportunity to convince me otherwise. This focus was reinforced by the group members both during these recruitment gatherings and during our group meetings. Potential participants' views given at this pre-fieldwork stage on who should be part of the group was also kept in mind.

During fieldwork, the group took certain decisions by consensus. They were taken through dialogue: members shared their thoughts on them, people listened, and decisions were made. There were not any controversies about group decisions.

As indicated in the previous chapter, during our first meetings, the group took decisions not only with respect to adding new expertise to the group, but also suggesting potential new members and were actively engaged in their recruitment process. The use of the word 're/integration' as a framing concept in order to explore what happens after prison was also discussed during recruitment meetings.

The group also took decisions with respect to our group endeavour. An example of this was the action plan which was agreed during the introductory meetings. The group decided that, due to the complexity of the matter, the full fieldwork time was needed in order to engage in intra-group dialogue. It was also decided that during the last group meeting, the

group would consider if we wanted to engage in a second phase in which departing from our group account dialogue outside the group would be fostered. During, group meeting 2 decisions were also taken on the concrete procedure to fulfil our aim. The dialogic inquiry group was divided into three subgroups each of which would have to, during the last half of our group meeting, share their idea of a group action plan. At the end of the meeting, it was decided that, in order to begin exploring post-prison re/integration, we were going to combine two ideas shared by two subgroups. During our next meeting, we would play an adapted Criminal Justice System board game used by Families Outside with the families of people imprisoned (subgroup 2 idea). The main subjects identified during that activity would be the ones that would be explored in-depth in subsequent subject-focused group meetings (subgroup 3 idea). During this and the previous chapter I have shared different examples of decisions taken by the group on the ways in which the different themes were going to be explored. During the two concluding meetings— exercising my role as a facilitator — I was the one proposing the concrete meeting focus, but the group had to agree and/or reshape my proposal in order for it to occur.

A further and key example of the group's role occurred in meeting 12, which was the last group meeting of Phase 1 of this collaborative research project. During it, we engaged in three tasks, one of which was to make a future decision of the project. At the beginning of the meeting, I explained to the group that I needed some months in order to analyse and write one of the outcomes of our collaborative research: this thesis. Until then, I explained, I could not organise or facilitate any group meetings on the future of the project. I made it clear that some other group member could step in in the facilitator's role. The group decided that when I had finished the analysis of the data, we would have a group meeting in which, after the presentation of my results, we would explore if we wanted to explore the creation of other outcomes. Marguerite, who was very interested in a potential outcome that Kenny signalled during a group meeting, decided that she wanted to lead a strand. The purpose of which was to elaborate a guideline of responsible journalist reporting on people with convictions: Kenny and I joined her. After exchanging emails and having a couple of meetings this strand was on hiatus.

Another way of discussing participants role is through the exploration between the distinction of individual accounts versus group accounts. The following chapters will include quotes given by participants — either during a group meeting or during an individual one — which capture their individual personal view on these matters. In spite of being individual views, as it will be seen, they will often be used in order to illustrate the

general groups position regarding a certain topic. This is because, as captured in the feedback forms and as I will demonstrate during the following chapters, there was a lot of common ground between participants and consensus was usually achieved. Especially significant in this respect was meeting 9 in which the structural factors were explored. In this meeting, I designed and fostered a dialogic exercise in which we explored two matters: how would a re/integrative structure be and how it is. This particular approach derived from a suggestion from two members during our feedback. I explicitly indicated that in order for an answer to be included in the flipchart, unanimity on this matter would be needed. Therefore, it should be taken into account that every group answer which was written in meeting 9 flipchart, was agreed by every group member present at that group meeting.

Reflections on the Power Balance Between Myself and Participants

Up until now I have explored my role and the participants separately, but it is now time to discuss their interaction. Due to the participatory character of the research, there could have been a a tension between my research aims and procedures and those of the group. As the creator of the inquiry group and as a researcher who had to conduct fieldwork, I was aware of what my red lines were going to be: the dialogic character of the group. Apart from these two matters, I was open for the group to take informed decisions. Most of the decisions taken were done so through consensus and agreement between group members and me. Both group members and I paid attention to what is thought but most importantly to why is something thought or suggested.

During our group meetings there was only one moment in which I thought that there was tension between the group consensus and my role as a researcher. In group meeting 4, when sharing with the group my thoughts on what might be missing in our initial group meeting, I shared with them the domain of moral re/integration which is present in literature. After explaining what certain literature said on this matter — that there is a need to repair the relational breach between the individual, the victim and the community — (see Burke et al. 2019) the huge majority of the group members argued that for the moment we should not include this domain in our model. The main reasoning behind this decision was that the releasee had already paid off their moral duty by going to prison and that the best way they could demonstrate their repentance was to make an effort in order to achieve re/integration in the other domains. Due to that, the vast majority of the group argued that

for the moment we should not be considering that domain and that if during our exploration of the other domains it arose in a frequent way, then we could spend one full meeting in order to explore it. Although, in accordance with certain literature (see McNeill 2012, 2014; Burke et al. 2019), I did not agree with that decision and with the arguments given by the majority of the group, as I had already shared with them the literature arguments for the inclusion of this domain, I decided to accept that decision taken by the group. My research approach was that I was going to create a group that was going to collectively research this matter; I had to respect the group's autonomy, and therefore took the decision to accept it and no longer insist on it. The issue of moral re/integration was not explored by the group.

Another issue which is important to mention is that during the whole project, I made it very clear to the group the necessity of holding a shared responsibility for issues to ensure they went in the right direction. I argued that both facilitator and the group had to row together and stay focused on our endeavour. Both group members effort and mine were necessary but insufficient by themselves. I made it clear that I could plan and design group sessions and facilitate them but whether we did a good job in our inquiry endeavour also depended on them. There were no problems in this respect during our meetings.

Assessing the Quality of Dialogue

As stated during the previous chapter, one of the key features of my research approach was that of dialogic communication. In addition, during the hopes/expectations exercise in our foundational meeting, 'communication' constituted as one of the three main clusters seven out of thirteen group members when asked about their hopes/expectations mentioned the salience of communication. Bearing in mind that during group meeting 1 it was decided that the whole year was going to be dedicated to intra-group communication, the question that we need to ask here is: Were our hopes and expectations achieved in this respect? Did we engage in dialogic dynamics? The fact that there was a collective dialogic impulse and that dialogic techniques were used in order to explore post-prison reintegration does not guarantee anything. By assessing the dialogic quality of our group, this section may also be considered as the first of two which is going to explore if being part of the group fulfilled member's hopes and expectations.

The purpose of this section is to assess the dialogic quality of our group. To do so I am going to rely on feedback given by group members on this matter — both orally and written — and on my own observations. I will also refer to concrete conversational quotes that will be shared during the remainder of this thesis. Generally speaking, it can be argued that dialogue was achieved. In order to sustain so, I do not only rely on what I experienced during our group meetings but also on the group's evaluation on this matter: in the dialogic feedback form (see Appendices) every dialogic dynamic was rated by the group over 4/5. An example of a dialogic moment can be found on pages 153 and 154 of this thesis: It can be seen how group members respectfully interacted on situational self-binding by sharing their thoughts and building on other member's comments.

The group dynamic statement with which, according to the feedback rating, the group agreed most was that we were able to create a safe space. The group rated the sentence on feeling secure in expressing their views and hearing those from others with an average of 4.83/5. This resonates with John's comment during an individual meeting when asked how he felt as part of the group:

> 'I feel that it's a safe place to say what you are going to say and even if you get challenged what you say, it's still a safe place.' (John)

John here draws on a very important distinction: That a safe space was created does not mean that members did not engage in dissent. That this was the highest rated dynamic is especially positive bearing in mind that building a safe space is the base for the remaining dynamics (Escobar 2011). While facilitating, I also perceived that we were able to create a safe space, and that members also felt that.

In the rating exercise, members showed an average of 4.77/5 of agreement with respect to the statements related to listening and feeling listened to by the group. This is also fairly important because as in dialogue the main aim is to understand, listening is as important, or even more, than talking (Littlejohn & Domencini 2001). Members also mentioned feeling listened to in the oral feedback given in individual meetings. Two members went beyond listening to appreciation. One of them for example stated: 'group appreciative of all contributions'. In the following quote, during an individual meeting, Terry characterised the group's mutual listening as one of quality:

'When you're speaking (…) you can tell (when) someone's waiting for you to stop because it's their turn, and I don´t really think that happens (in the group), I've not felt that anyway.' (Terry)

Respect was also very highly rated with an average of 4.75/5. This word also appeared during the open questions of the dynamics form (which are situated before the questionnaire), and it was usually linked to listening. One person wrote: 'opinions are treated as worthy'. The following quote given by Charlie can be directly related to this:

'I've always felt like an outsider, you know what I mean? I think that's what most guys that have done rough sleeping, they've been in jail and all that, I think most of us all feel outsiders, you know what I mean? But when you come into things like this (our group inquiry), and people accept you, it gives you a wee boost, makes you feel normal, to be accepted by other people.' (Charlie)

This quote, and other comments made by different members, may be considered as a sign that we were successful in implementing my dialogic approach: it shows how during our group inquiry, a horizontalization between its members occurred, regardless of their professional or personal status. In this group, unlike in some of his other interactions, Charlie felt respected and therefore did not feel an outsider.

Having shown that our group inquiry was a dialogic one, I go on to explore if being part of the group fulfilled members' other initial hopes and expectations

Assessing Other Hopes and Expectations Fulfilment

During the last group meeting, members, when completing the last evaluation form, were asked to answer the following question: so far, has being part of this group fulfilled your initial hopes and expectations? According to their answers, seven out of 12 explicitly recognised that the project had fulfilled their initial aims and expectations; a further three out of 12 highlighted its value in terms of learning, and two out of 12 noted its worth in terms of other outcomes. To explore this matter further, I will use data from different sources to assess the realisation the remaining — having reflecting conversations has already been explored in the previous section ─ main hopes/expectations clusters: (1)

enhancing their understanding, and (2) having a good group outcome with proposals for improvement.

During the introductory meetings, 12 out of 13 members expected/hoped that by being part of the project their knowledge would increase. Throughout the whole project the idea that we all could collectively enhance our individual and collective knowledge was mentioned by different members at different moments. In fact, every member explicitly said so in one moment or another. In order to explore the enhancement of our understanding in more depth, we should consider which aspects of our understandings have been enhanced? Some people — Vicky, John and Charlie — specified that it was their overall understanding of post-prison re/integration. Other members such as Kenny, Pete and Alan said that being part of the group had made them realise the great extent to which post-prison re/integration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Some members directly pointed out how the dialogic inquiry had enhanced their understandings of certain concrete aspects that conform that complexity such as the family's (Alan) and victim's (Charlie and Sarah) sides of re/integration; how releasees are stigmatised and discriminated against by frontline workers (Karen); the experience of imprisonment (Terry); and the available support in prison (Sarah). In Alex's case, it brought forward the topic of intra-prison and post-prison digital inclusion and exclusion in a more complex way.

Another recurring point related to the examples of pre-existing good practice which were shared during our group meetings (Leanne, Kenny, Marguerite). For Leanne, the main learning aspect of her participation in the group was to be more aware of the multiple existing services and actors with respect to post-prison re/integration. In the case of Heather, it enhanced her understanding on how post-prison re/integration *should* be, and the steps needed in order to achieve it. Charlie shared a learning point that is not directly related to post-prison re/integration but that it is worth mentioning:

> 'I'm learning, you know what I mean? I'm learning that it's easy, I'm learning that you can relax, you can relax amongst your peers, you know what I mean?' (Charlie)

He explained that before the group inquiry he would have never imagined to be sat in the same place having a polite, respectful and trustful conversation with social workers and prison officers, but that as the meetings passed his relationships with them had been very good ones. This shows the value of the research approach.

The enhancement of individual understanding on post-prison re/integration that happened during our group inquiry was relevant and used by some group members during their occupational and voluntary endeavours. Four different members explicitly expressed in the forms — without been asked about it — that this enhancement had been useful for their jobs/volunteering or will be in the future. One for example, when reflecting on hopes and expectations, wrote: 'I had hoped that I would learn more which could help me in my job, and that has been fulfilled'. Similarly, Leanne signalled that it was part of her job to know about other available support services, knowledge that was enhanced by being part of the group. An even deeper exploration of knowledge enhancement can be achieved when exploring the reasons behind it. Sarah, during an individual meeting, without being asked about this, stated:

> 'I'm always working with people who are in prison or been in prison (…) and I think it's really good to sometimes get some insight from outside the bubble, like I think it's really important to have like different points of view (1st point), but in an environment where you can hear people's points of view and it's not like a big fight, (it needs to happen in) a discussive environment where (…) people's point of views are listened (2nd point).' (Sarah)

Sarah's first point was also separately made by five other members (Alex, Leanne, Alan, Terry and Charlie) at other times. They explained that it was through the collective exploration — and communication — that took place during our group inquiry that they were able to fill some specific knowledge gaps which derived from a lack of interaction with them during their post-prison re/integration-related occupational activities. Sarah's second point signalled the role of our group communication dynamics in enhancing our knowledge enhancement. Kenny shared another reason. When asked if the experience had enhanced his understanding of post-prison re/integration he stated:

> 'Yes, they have, sessions have enhanced my understanding. But I think that the reason why, is because of the conversations of the discussions, it's been really interesting the whole sort of journey, the way that's been mapped out, the kind of steps that we've taken (…). It's only been really in the last couple of months maybe that I've really understood the process better (…), in the sense of why we were talking about this today and not something else, but now it (…) feels to me as if it's all come together. So something about the process' (Kenny)

If Sarah in her previous quote referred to the communication dynamics, Kenny here refers to the whole process: to the way, the steps and the order in which post-prison re/integration was explored during our group inquiry.

During the introductory meetings, nine out of 13 members mentioned group outcome when exploring their hopes/expectations. These were very diverse in terms of ambition: some members had big hopes for the group endeavour in terms of time, resources, knowledge and power, such as: making 'a real change in the prison system'. Others held more middle range hopes such as 'that the findings of the group are acted upon' and others had more achievable expectations such as 'think & produce something completely original'. After group meeting 1, in which it was decided that this phase would focus on intra-group dialogue, the hopes and expectations seemed to become more modest:

> 'My initial hopes and expectations were to do with making real change, but they became more realistic as time passed. More about visioning and scooping what could and should be than rather than implement ideas.' (Written by a member in Evaluation Form 3)

It is these more modest expectations that, according to different comments made by members, were fulfilled. An example of this is that one member during the last group meeting stated that as a group we have developed 'clear ideas of how to make the system better'. In addition to this, as stated above, the group also felt we did an excellent job in bringing forward good practice together during our meetings. Similarly, when I sent the overview PowerPoints a member stated that there was 'a lot of good stuff' there.

Due to the COVID-19 situation and due to the fact that I still had not finished the analysis of the data, at the time of writing, the meeting at which we will decide on the future of this project has not yet taken place. Thus, it is difficult to assess the expectations on that. Some group members expressed faith in our collaborative inquiry and in my skills as a doctorate candidate when writing about their hopes for the future:

> 'The work has been very worthwhile, and I am sure the findings when written and presented to various bodies will be eye-opening.' (unknown member)

> 'I (…) think that when the thesis is completed, I will learn more from this.' (unknown member)

One group member was sceptical about us having energy left in order to take action after our year of group inquiry.

Around four weeks after our last meeting, an article about our collaborative inquiry was published in the Howard League for Penal Reform ECAN Bulletin (Rubio Arnal 2019). When published I shared the good news with the group and sent them the link. The four group members who answered my email, gave me very good reviews on this article, which can be considered an outcome of our collaborative research.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

When elaborating the ethics application, I identified a tension between (a) anonymity and confidentiality and (b) ownership and attribution of knowledge, which was derived from my research approach (see Baez 2002 or Deacon 2019 for reflections on this issue). If potential individuals were going to be considered as knowledgeable experts and co-researchers, should they not be able to take a free and informed decision on (a) how they wanted to be identified in any outcome of the collaborative project, and on (b) whether their ideas and contributions could be attributed to them or not?

In spite of that, during that first application a more cautious approach was taken, leaving the door open for certain amendments in this respect. During the first group meeting, we collectively reflected on the issue of anonymity and confidentiality, and it was decided that we would follow a soft interpretation of the Chatham House rule: outside our group, we could say the name of the people that were part of it, we could share arguments that were raised during our group conversation, but we could not say who said what (Chatham House 2021 see FAQ). This agreement was re-approved during each of the first four group meetings.

Although I was aware of the common use of anonymisation and confidentiality as a way of protecting individuals from harm, I decided that co-researchers should have the power to choose if they would like to be referred by a pseudonym, partially named or referred to by their real names, as well as if they wanted their comments to be attributed to them. Group meeting 4 seemed to be the correct moment in order to discuss that because group members had already had the chance to have a good notion of how the inquiry group was going to work. In order to enable more in-depth exploration of confidentiality and

anonymity issues, I designed a form which addressed two questions (all ethics documents available on request). One concerning how they wanted to be named, and the other the attribution of comments with respect to three situations: conversations with non-members, my Ph.D. thesis, and any other outcome of our collaborative research. In meeting four, after collectively reflecting on the perils and strengths of each of the decisions, each member completed the form being aware that until each of the required Ethics Committees had accepted this amendment, we had to continue dealing with these matters in the same way as before. As I was not the only person who had to act in accordance with these individual decisions, every group member was informed about each member's decision. During the following months, approval of this amendment was granted by all three ethics committees.

Reflecting on Dialogic Group Inquiry with Respect to Other Research Approaches

My research approach has got some clear similarities with that of participatory action research. Ferrie and Lachapelle (2021) characterise participatory action research as an approach which emphasises 'democratic involvement', 'challenges hierarchies and power imbalances', and critically addresses 'real-life community-level problems' (in production). In spite of that, it can be said that my research approach lacks the 'action' part as understood in some literature (e.g., Reason 1996a). Although it is true that through my research approach the re/integration of releasees will not be improved, neither does that mean that it is not action-oriented nor that there was no 'action' during our inquiry. Firstly, as I have argued during these last two chapters, both group members and I saw our endeavour as a step towards a bigger aim: to improve post-prison re/integration. In spite of that, it was felt that prior to trying to achieve that, knowledge generation was needed. In fact, as shown in the previous chapter, one of the guiding questions was about improvements in the current situation.

Secondly, I consider that my doctoral project can not only be considered in terms of knowledge generation, but also in political terms. Our inquiry group was not merely a group of people generating knowledge on post-prison re/integration, it was also a political forum in which people collectively discussed life after prison. It is in that political forum that Charlie felt included and part of, and in which John felt safe. The consideration of the dialogic inquiry group as a political forum cannot be underestimated. As Happer et al.

(2019) outline in their article on the role and limits of mainstream and social media in constructing attitudes towards community sanctions:

> 'Rather, our findings suggest the need for a much deeper deliberative dialogue about punishment which has the potential to better exercise and develop our penal tastes; dialogue that allows us to recognize when satiating our appetites and indulging our tastes might in fact harm us and others' (Happer et al. 2019, p.317)

In spite of these arguments, I must recognise that my doctoral project was more on the participative side of the continuum than on the action part of it. In this sense, it resonates with Hughes (2008) definition of participative research:

> 'Participative research is conducted by a coalition of researchers, community members, patients, (…) professionals or other stakeholders, and without a(n) (…) intervention as an explicit part of the same project' (p.385)

My research approach is extremely similar to that of a community of inquiry, which brings together professionals and people with experience in order to research a problem (see Escobar 2014). According to Shields (2003) a community of inquiry has got three key components: scientific attitude, participatory democracy, and problematic situation. My doctoral research had these three components too, but it added the notion of dialogue. In addition, I have preferred to use the word 'group' rather than 'community' because the latter may involve a too deep sense of bonding.

The main methodological innovation of my research approach derives from synthesising ideas from these two bodies of literature with the notion of dialogue, bringing forward the key importance of communication dynamics during research and political endeavours.

Conclusion

This chapter complements Chapter 4 in portraying how the data presented, analysed and discussed in the forthcoming chapters was generated. I have started it by exploring different ways in which my background and positionality have shaped the research process. Afterwards, I have shown the vital role of member's feedback — both in procedural and substantive terms — and of individual catchups. Involvement and power

during the research process have also been explored. After outlining my role and the group members' one I have been exploring the interaction of them. During the two following sections I have shown how, although more time may be needed in order to assess the outcomes, the initial group aims/hopes have been fulfilled to an extent. Part of that fulfilment has been shown when demonstrating that the group was successful in terms of achieving dialogue. I have finalised this chapter by reflecting on issues of confidentiality and anonymity and on comparing my research approach to others present in literature.

In these two chapters I have been exploring the way in which I intended to fill the conceptual and substantive gaps identified in Chapters 2 and 3, and the methodological and procedural gaps identified in Chapter 4. I created, was part of and facilitated a dialogic inquiry group whose purpose was to fulfil the research aim: to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine post-prison re/integration. To do so we met 13 times during 13 months for around two hours. The result of this endeavour is going to be presented during the following three chapters. The limitations and strengths outlined during these two chapters should be kept in mind when engaging in these subsequent chapters.

6 Chapter 6 – The Adversities of Material Dis-integration

The Adversities of Being a Releasee

At the start of this thesis, I highlighted the salience of theorising and researching post-prison re/integration both as an intellectual endeavour and as a step towards improving life after prison. After exploring different substantial, conceptual and methodological contributions and gaps present in literature, this chapter is the first of three dedicated to presenting and analysing the research findings and will be focused on the adversities of material dis-integration. By describing and analysing the main post-prison dis-integration adversities which were explored by the group, in these three chapters I am going to provide fine-grained and localised examples of the way in which, as a society, we respond — socially, penally, legally and politically — to certain crimes produces, reproduces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way. Crucially, these adversities far exceed the *intended* negative consequences of punishment. This idea will be taken further in the last chapter of this thesis.

The word *adversity* and its different derivations is going to be used during the remainder of this thesis in order to capture different challenging situations that releasees face. The reason for focusing my subsequent analysis and discussion on post-prison dis-integration is mainly data-driven but is also supported by literature. As discussed in the methodological chapters, during the research group's meetings, exploration in each of the meetings was designed to foster dialogue about both the challenges of and opportunities for post-prison re/integration. In spite of that, it was the challenges that emerged as being more numerous, they were discussed in more depth and fostered more consensus. These three quotes from Charlie and John, both of whom have experience of going in and out of prison more than once, are illustrative of the adversities that we discussed:

> 'See I think, I've done a few sentences and come out, but that last sentence was just, coming out was just a nightmare, I felt more punished outside than I did inside (…). The way things are now, there's just, it's as if, there's no hope for anybody coming out I think, there's no, it's, it's as if it's a waste of time coming out. That's why guys come out and that's their attitude: I'm going to go party, there's nothing out here, know what I mean? If I'd have known I was

coming out to *the system I was coming out* to, I would have done something to get kept there, know what I mean?' (Charlie, emphasis added)

'Because *when you come out of prison*, it's like going into another world. (…) *It's like waking up out of a nightmare and walking into another one* (…). There's a lot of things when you come out of prison. You go through a lot of different mental emotions.' (Charlie, emphasis added)

'Well, we are not talking about making a cake, we are (…) *talking about the nuts [and bolts] (…) the hard stuff that makes you depressed sometimes or makes you cry*. We are talking about the hard reality of life and it's hard to talk about it cause sometimes when I talk about things it makes me emotional because I've lived it.' (John, emphasis added)

The salience of the challenges identified in our group conversations resonated with existent literature on the experience of releasees (Western 2018; Durnescu 2019; Halushka 2019). But as I argue throughout this thesis, the fact that a diverse number of people with distinct knowledge and experiences of post-prison re/integration participated in my research confers a unique inter-subjective validity on these findings.

I have decided to cluster the different adversities according to the post-prison re/integration domain to which they pertain to: material, social, personal, judicial-legal, personal, and civic-political. By starting with the material type of dis-integration, I do not intend to imply that this is the most relevant domain of dis-integration, but rather that, as will be seen, according to the group, material needs are the most immediate on release.

In the above first quote, Charlie's words accurately capture the main focus of these four following chapters: *to understand, interrogate and reimagine 'the system' which forms part and shapes post-prison re/integration phenomenon*; system which is faced by releasees. To start doing so, I will explore their material situation after custody.

Releasees: A Multiply and Severely Deprived Sub-population

According to the group, a significant proportion of releasees in Glasgow are in a situation of material insecurity and instability. The purpose of this first section is to explore this

situation. As I will argue in the subsequent section — which will be one of the reasons for material dis-integration — releasees have to face certain situations which are unique to them and which produce and reinforce material deprivation.

During a group meeting in which we talked about structural elements of post-prison re/integration, every group member who participated considered that for releasees: 'housing, benefits and healthcare are all largely inaccessible' (written on the flipchart). The group argued that this situation was especially precarious during the first weeks and months after release, and that this deprivation could extend beyond the first weeks and months. Heather stated, when I raised the question on when these material needs might be met, that the needs might never be met. This account of the extent and duration of material deprivation in the Glaswegian context resonates with already reviewed ethnographic results in the US (Western 2018; Halushka 2019) and Romanian (Durnescu 2019) contexts

'Financial' (written on the flipchart) matters were considered by the group as a challenge for post-prison re/integration from the day someone is released until beyond the first month outside. Part of this was due to the existing gap between applying for the benefits and receiving your first payment:

> 'I still don't see how people are expected to live for I think it's an average of
> six weeks wage (until you receive for the first time your benefits money).'
> (Nancy)

This average resonates with Scottish research on this matter (CAS 2019a, 2019b; 2020).

Nancy's quote raises another interesting matter: how are people supposed to live during the first five or weeks after release? The group considered support from friends or family to be crucial in this period. However, the group pointed out that these relationships may be non-existent or weak and that sometimes they may not have enough money to help. In addition to that, the group considered that this was, at best, a temporary solution because after four weeks of draining family resources, the situation could begin to get tense and/or economically unsustainable.

With respect to securing income through employment, the group considered that people that are released do not usually try to find a job during the first month of being released and that even after this, it is very difficult for them to be successful. The group believed

that releasees in Glasgow are one of the groups with the least chance of finding a job. This resonates with international literature findings (Holzer 1996; Holzer et al., 2002b). Some reasons for this will be explored in a subsequent section of this chapter and in the next chapter.

With no employment and no benefits, many of releasees are, at least during the first five or six weeks, 'automatically (…) in some sort of debt or financial hardship' (Karen). As will be seen during this and the following chapters, this debt may end up fostering social and political dis-integration.

According to the group, the situation of releasees in terms of stable and secure housing is very worrying too. The group considered that this is a problem that begins when someone is released and goes beyond the first month. Heather's quote on housing captures the group's view on this matter:

> 'So probably, how do releasees experience that? They don't experience it
> because a lot of them don't get it.' (Heather)

Post-prison housing was considered as a 'big' issue by Alex and Leanne. Equally, Pete characterised the proportion of people who are homeless on release as a 'disgrace' and Kenny defined the housing situation of releasees in Glasgow as 'a total mess'. This is partly due to a public housing assistance system which is not only ineffective, but which also degrades and stigmatises releasees. This matter will be a major focus of this and the following chapter.

When released, being processed through a degrading and ineffectual housing assistance system, and without the opportunity to obtain immediate income through benefits or employment, many releasees in Glasgow end up homeless. Alex, (SPS Throughcare Support Officer) considered that 90 percent of those that engage with Throughcare do so because they need help in order not to be homeless on release. Two of the three group members who had been imprisoned had slept on the streets after being released from prison. One of them, Charlie, apart from having slept on the street pointed out the instability of his previous post-release housing situation:

> 'I'd just done that for years and years, drifting in and out of different places,
> bedsits in the West End' (Charlie)

When Charlie, finally had a place to live it was a highly insecure one. This is how Sarah, the local Co-ordinator of Faith in Throughcare in North Glasgow, described that flat:

> 'Your place was a death trap as well, dangerous, physically, it was dangerous, it's like a broken window (inaudible) if you were to trip down your stairs you would have been straight out of the window, no banister either, it was really bad.' (Sarah)

During one of our group meetings, there was a moment in which Vicky — a housing advice, homelessness and customer support manager — when developing a point on the neighbours' reaction to a releasee being housed near them, highlighted the overrepresentation of releasees from prison in the people who are homeless in Glasgow: she explained that it's 'often the case' that people who are homeless have experience of imprisonment.

This resonates with existing evidence on the strong and complex relationship between homelessness and offending (Dore 2019). In Glasgow's case in particular, the Homelessness Task Force (2002) reported that releasees in Glasgow are more vulnerable to being homeless than the general population: 44 percent of those either sleeping in hostels or sleeping on the streets in 1999 had been in prison at least once. It also resonates with already presented UK and US literature (Lemos & Goodby 1999; Burt et al. 1999). Some of the main reasons for this will be the focus of the following section.

Before exploring these reasons, it is important to recognise a gap in our group exploration of post-prison re/integration: due to time constraints during the relevant group meeting, there was no time to explore post-prison healthcare. During the rest of the group meetings, healthcare was raised, but not with sufficient frequency or depth to be able to give a solid account on this matter in Glasgow. This may be either because the group considered that the salience of this matter was lower than the other topics or because as Leanne said, in Glasgow 'healthcare has got a lot better'. In spite of that, Heather discussing this matter with Leanne, shared the following argument, which is similar to a previous one made by Alex:

> 'They don't have a doctor, most of them are getting deregistered now before they come out, so they don't have a doctor, you can't register them before they get out, you can get the paperwork, fill it out take it with you.' (Heather)

This quote not only signals that on the day of release people are not registered with any G.P, but it also connects neatly to the focus of the following section: what are the main reasons why releasees (a) are overrepresented amongst the homeless population, (b) are less likely to find employment; and (c) do not have any type of welfare income during the first weeks after release?

A Case of Material Cumulative Disadvantage

In this section, I am going to show how the multiple and severe deprivation of releasees is due to a process of cumulative disadvantage which starts before someone is imprisoned and goes beyond the liberation moment. I will do so by combining data with some of the previously explored literature. I am going to start by exploring the pre-prison and intra-prison moments of that process.

As discussed in Chapter 3, figures show that in Scottish prisons there is an *overrepresentation of people who come from backgrounds of multiple and severe deprivation*: 43 percent of those in Scottish prisons lived prior to their incarceration in the 15 percent most deprived zones of Scotland (McNeill 2019a). This overrepresentation seems to be especially severe in Glasgow (see Ch.3-4). During our group meetings, this deprived background was indirectly raised but was not developed in depth.

However, the group account shows that this deprivation was very likely to be reinforced and exacerbated by their stay in prison and by their experience after release. There were two main intra-prison aspects that were salient and came up frequently in our group conversations:

a) Material losses that occur when someone enters prison

b) Arrangements to meet basic material needs are rarely made while someone is still in prison

According to the group, this *process starts from the very moment that someone gets into prison*. As my evidence will show, these material losses also go into the symbolic realm. The 'loss of belongings/ home/ (…) /employment' was considered by each group member that participated in meeting 3 as one of the big challenges to post-prison re/integration that

arises during imprisonment. This experience of loss resonates with Durnescu's (2019) participants feeling of loss of material goods and work while they were in prison.

When exploring with the group the current situation in this respect, different cases of sustaining or losing tenancies when entering prison were discussed. However, before engaging in them, it is important to note, as I have explained in Chapter 3, that a majority of those that enter prison in Scotland (Carnie et al. 2017) England and Wales (SEU 2002; Brunton-Smith & Hopkins 2014) are either in unstable and insecure accommodation or live in a rented property paid for by housing benefits. According to official statistics, 49percent of the people surveyed in Scottish prisons report losing their accommodation while being inside (Carnie et al. 2017). The different situations described by the group during our conversations on this particular matter were:

a) If someone is in temporary accommodation, the person loses their place the day they go inside prison.

b) If someone is in rented accommodation and is likely to stay in prison for more than 13 or 14 weeks, they stop receiving housing benefits the moment they enter prison and thus are going to lose their pre-prison accommodation.

c) If someone is in rented accommodation and is likely to stay in prison for up to 13 weeks or so, they will be receiving housing benefit for those first 13 weeks that they are inside prison. Afterwards, they will either reach an agreement with the housing provider or they will accumulate rent arrears, or they will lose their accommodation. This means that, in the best-case scenario, those that stay in prison for over 13 weeks, and are receiving housing benefits during those 13 weeks, start to accumulate a debt long before being released. The group pointed out, that if this debt is not paid on release, then the individual will not be able to find accommodation with the same housing association or private landlord in the future until the debt is paid. This, the group argued, decreased the choice of post-prison housing.

d) For those on remand, the limit for receiving housing benefits is six months.

The group account extends current knowledge by signalling and developing these different ways in which Glaswegian pre-prison accommodation is lost while in prison. It also brings

forward a key matter: those who do not lose their tenancies may incur significant rent arrears.

During our conversations, the group focused on a collateral but important aspect of losing your accommodation while in prison: people often lose their belongings because of not being able to make storage arrangements with the landlord or housing association and not being able to arrange for someone to pick up their personal property. The group saw this consequence as being an extreme prejudice that is rarely mentioned or explored in literature.

> Marguerite: but it feels like that's not a punishment that we talk about, you know like we are taking away potentially, you know like very, very precious possessions.

> Nancy: we're taking people's identities, basically.

> Marguerite: yeah.

Avoiding this situation was considered a matter of 'protect[ing] the identity' (flipchart) of those that go to prison. Photographs, ID, driving licences or passports were some or the belongings that were often lost when someone going to prison loses their accommodation. The group argued that this loss of ID may delay and hinder the post-prison process of successfully applying for benefits, where an identification document is needed. This is an example of how a material loss does not only have an influence on the material realm, but also on the symbolic one: some people end up losing their most precious belongings when entering prison; including belongings that identify them both formally and informally.

Apart from the loss of pre-prison employment, benefits and accommodation, there was another intra-prison aspect that was salient and frequently came up in our group conversations: *arrangements to meet basic material needs are rarely made while someone was still in prison*. Alex argued:

> An easy way to do an analogy with this: at half past seven in the day of liberation he's got a doctor, and at half past nine on the day of liberation he no longer has a doctor. Because he's now out of prison, there's no registration anywhere else and that's exactly how they feel. They've had everything, that's

not a great service right, prisons we know that, but they've had everything
realistically on tap that they would require for a certain period of time, and then
liberation day they've got to start off again. (Alex)

The group argued that this lack of continuity of material needs provision between inside
and outside prison arose because most public assistance arrangements and processes
cannot be started until the day someone is released. That is the case with benefits,
healthcare and homeless accommodation. In addition, the group pointed out the existence
of a time-lag between the application and the receipt of support – such as with benefits —
or a gap between the application and the first meeting with the service — like the
Community Addictions Team. This lack of continuity in material needs provision —which
resonates with already reviewed Scottish literature (Reid Howie Associates 2015; CAS
2020) — brings forward a paradox: a highly bureaucratised public assistance system does
not have the necessary bureaucratic arrangements in place to keep a continuous provision
from inside to outside prison.

As will be discussed in the final chapter of the thesis, every member of the group believed
that in order to avoid that gap and have everything ready for the release date, material
needs arrangements should be started and finished while the individual is still in prison.
This, they argued, would considerably reduce the current worry (Pat), 'anxiety' (Heather),
'concern', 'panic' and fear (Alex) that people currently feel during the days prior to their
release. Apart from these two main factors, there were other ways in which the group
believed that prison contributed to post-prison material deprivation such as erosion of skills
(or the failure to obtain the skills) needed to access and maintain housing, benefits or
employment. More will be said on these matters when dealing with personal dis-
integration in Chapter 8.

Now, after having explored pre-prison and intra prison aspects which shape post-prison
material deprivation, I will begin identifying and exploring one of the main *post-prison*
factors that is part of and contributes to this cumulative multiple deprivation; the current
public housing assistance system which processes result in those released becoming
homeless. Other factors that also strongly contribute to this post-prison material
deprivation are the stigmatisation and degradation suffered from informal connections,
frontline workers, the welfare process, the public and the state; or the digital exclusion of
those released. While stigmatisation and degradation will be a key focus of the next
chapter, digital exclusion will be developed in Chapter 8.

Although the deprivation and the degradation are intertwined in the different pathways that someone released homeless might follow in order to seek secure and stable housing, here I will focus on the first part of that path, in which deprivation is more salient: hostels in Glasgow. As suggested in literature, in Scotland, releasees usually end up being sent to hostels and B&B accommodation (Loucks 2007; Schinkel 2014a), sleeping facilities with no further support.

> 'I think the housing system, like going into hostels coming out from prison…
> that's setting you up to fail.' (John)

This quote from John, who has experience of going in and out of prison, captured a view that was shared by several members of the group. Hostels were considered a challenge for post-prison re/integration by every group member who participated in group meeting 3. This resonates with Scottish literature on hostels in Glasgow. Loucks (2007) reports that hostels 'were heavily criticised as being detrimental rather than helpful, with many respondents saying they preferred to sleep rough' (p. 5). Similarly, Schinkel's (2014a) participants saw hostels as insecure places and thus 'a real obstacle to desistance' (p.46).

Sarah, the local Co-ordinator of Faith in Throughcare in North Glasgow, and Alex, who is a SPS TSO, had similar views on hostels to John:

> Sarah: sometimes I think hostels are like a gauntlet or a test, you know if you can stay in this hostel for four weeks without going back to prison, then you deserve to get moved on to something that's supported

> (…)

> Alex: That's quite an important point actually Sarah (…). The guys that go out with the right head on, right, can somehow get a strategy for any addiction vulnerabilities that they have, right, and can swim through the [crap] of the hostel system because it's usually a tiered approach, go in the hostel, we see how you do, right, set up to fail, well this guy's going behind his he's really making a go of it, ok, I progress him, right, he's done well, he's saying hello to the guy everyday he comes in, for his breakfast back, he's engaging, (…), now these guys can show they engage with service, right, they tick all the boxes the

outcomes reach for that hostel they'll say, right ok we'll move you up to maybe the next stage which could be supported accommodation. A high percentage of guys fail in the hostel come back to prison (…). But the hostel is a melting pot, and if they can survive the hostel, if they can survive the hostel they can progress through the system. That's pretty [crap] to be honest.

But Sarah and Alex add something more to John's contribution and to literature. It is not only that going to a hostel is a difficult experience; it is a difficult experience in which people are 'set up to fail'[8] in a deliberate strategy used to choose who should receive further support and who should not. One of the consequences of this approach is that hostels are 'knocking people back' to prison, or as it will be seen, to the streets.

Hostels were considered by group members as 'chaotic' (Alex; Alan), as an 'unsafe place' (Terry), 'full of people taking drugs' (Kenny), where people are 'beaten up' (Terry) and where there is 'no support' (Sarah). Heather shared her experience with supporting someone who ended up in a 'wet hostel'; that is, a facility which provides a place for sleeping and drinking without been given any support:

> 'Especially if it's a wet hostel, if it's somewhere where they're allowed, where people are allowed to drink or whatever, if you're working with somebody in prison and you've worked with him for two years or a year or even six months, and you're working for that person and you're saying to recovery, to abstinence, to stop them, triggers and cravings and then all of a sudden, you go out and the only place they get put to is a place where everybody can walk about [under the influence] , and they're actually gave drink over the counter. it's monitored how much drink they have, but the people at the counter will say: right there's your bottle of cider, or there's your two cans of lager, and somebody's going in there and you're trying to work with [them towards their] recovery.' (Heather)

The situation in hostels, which is one of the first post-prison stages of trying to find stable and safe accommodation, is so bleak that we heard examples from two people who

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[8] It is significant that both Alex and John use a term like 'set up to fail' in order to refer to the hostel system. Alex, when having that conversation with Sarah, had not heard John's comment about that matter. John's comment was made long before in an individual meeting.

preferred to sleep on the street rather than sleeping in a hostel. When exploring this matter, Kenny stated:

> 'I think, I think this is, I think that institutionalisation is a really important issue to really look at because I don´t know that, I think there might be a quite a big bit missing in the whole service provision around the first step after being in an institution for a long time, and it's almost too big a step for many to go from there straight into a community environment' (Kenny)

Someone may, rightly, assert that hostels are not a factor that fosters deprivation which is specific to releasees, but one that affects anyone that is homeless. Although that is a fair point, Kenny's answer to Heather's point signals an extra layer of difficulty for releasees from an institution into a situation of homelessness. In the case of releasees from prison, there is a huge shift from being under the regime of one of the most structured institutions, such as prison, to the very 'chaotic' (Alex; Alan) and unstructured hostel regime. I will return to this point when exploring the adversities of personal dis-integration in Chapter 8. This direct link between how institutionalisation may shape the experience of being in a hostel on release, extends understandings of this matter in previous literature.

In addition, as I will show in the next chapter, those that are released homeless after having been in prison face a unique stigma and degradation from frontline workers, neighbours, potential employers, landlords, the public and the state. This stigma and degradation places them in a more disadvantaged condition, making it harder to address their materially deprived situation.

In this section, I have shown how intra- and post-prison adversities — which in one way or another are unique to penal subjects who have been sentenced to prison — as well as pre-prison adversities produce, reinforce and exacerbate the material deprivation of those that have entered prison in such a way that it creates one of the most materially disadvantaged subpopulations in our society: releasees. This is not only relevant in itself – it also has grave consequences for post-prison re/integration and life beyond it.

Consequences for Post-prison Re/integration

During our group meetings, a theme that frequently arose was that of 'immediate' needs (Alex). It was argued that there were certain needs that should be a priority when someone is released because without them, re/integration is very unlikely. The group agreed that safe and stable accommodation, welfare, healthcare, health and wellbeing all constituted as needs that form part of that 'base' (Marguerite). There was disagreement on including 'something to do' during the day in this group of immediate needs. In this section, we focus on three material needs in immediate post-prison re/integration; safe and stable accommodation, welfare, and healthcare. This speaks of the consequences both for releasees and for their re/integration that the often-experienced cumulative process of material deprivation may have.

As the discussion above implies, the group gave great importance to the need for stable and safe accommodation. Charlie's hard first-hand experience after his last sentence is illustrative on the importance of having a safe place to go:

> 'My last sentence (…) (when) I got out I could put up one of the worst closes [i.e. shared entry ways into flats or apartments] in Possil(park)⁹, a shooting gallery for drug addicts and all sorts of things, young boys drinking alcohol and that, and every day I went like that. What am I scared of to come back to the jail for if this is all freedom has to offer? Stick your freedom, you know what I mean? I realised that I felt safer in the jail that I do outside' (Charlie)

> 'And every day I was out, I don't know how I managed to get through this day, how I managed to stay out, know what I mean. Because I was (…) in Possil, people coming (…), drinking and all sorts of. You were safer in the jail, even though there's drugs in the jail, you're still safe. *You had your own cell, you could get away from things know what I mean*. Feel more safe in the jail.' (Charlie, emphasis added)

Unstable or insecure accommodation, according to the group hinders making new connections and maintaining existent ones (Vicky); having access to medication (Alan);

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⁹ Possilpark is a deprived area in North Glasgow

having a structured routine (Alex); receiving support (John); or being able to register for a GP (Alex). The following quote from Pat, who is a volunteer and also someone who has been imprisoned, highlights the key role of stable and safe accommodation in order to prevent reconviction. Similar views were given by other group members:

> 'I've seen them coming in and out, they'll spend their 70 pounds and go out shoplifting to get caught again cos they're not going to sleep in the street in November, so… that's happened to me anaw [as well].' (Pat)

The proper location of the accommodation was also found by the group as being key in terms of not being socially isolated (Alan), finding employment (Vicky), not reverting to old habits (Vicky) or in order to receive support from certain services (John).

However, the salience of material needs, according to the group, goes beyond the material realm into the symbolic. Having a stable and safe accommodation and being financially stable were considered by the group as part of being a citizen and feeling as such. Here, Charlie offers another example of how material adversities sometimes transcend the material sphere and go into the symbolic one:

> 'I'd just done that for years and years, drifting in and out of different places, bedsits in the West End and all this carry out (…). I've always felt like an outsider, you know what I mean? I think that's what most guys that have done rough sleeping, they've been in jail and all that, I think most of us all feel outsiders.' (Charlie)

More examples of this will be seen throughout this thesis.

Summary

In this chapter I have explored the process of cumulative material disadvantage which is specific to releasees and which starts before someone is imprisoned, and goes on beyond the liberation moment; to sum up, releasees are more likely to experience multiple and severe deprivation than the general population. My research evidence has given three detailed specific reasons for this, which complement and build upon existing literature and show how our societal response to a potentially imprisonable act produces and reproduces

material deprivation. The first two reasons refer to intra-prison aspects at two different moments in the sentence: while entering prison people often experience material loss, and while in prison arrangements to meet material needs after release are rarely started. Hence, material deprivation on release is especially acute: people do not usually receive their first benefits until an average of five weeks after the release date and often do not have available suitable accommodation. The third factor is related to the last matter: when released, people if they do not end up on the streets are sent to hostels, which are places that, as the group argued, are chaotic, insecure and hinder desistance. In addition, during the exploration of post-prison material deprivation given in this chapter, I have suggested that this process has consequences not only for the material realm, but also for the symbolic one.

This chapter on the adversities of material dis-integration sets the scene for a better understanding of the two following chapters, which will explore the equally salient adversities of social, legal, personal, and civic and political dis-integration.

7   Chapter 7 – The Adversities of Social Dis-integration

During the previous chapter, I presented and analysed research findings on the adversities of post-prison *material* dis-integration. The purpose of this chapter is to do the same with another form of dis-integration: post-prison *social* dis-integration. I am going to show how the way in which, as a society, we socially and penally respond to potentially imprisonable acts, produces, reproduces and exacerbates multiple social dis-integration.

The first section will be dedicated to exploring the adversities of post-prison social isolation. In the second section I am going to show how, when materially deprived releasees try to get public assistance, they go through a stigmatising and degrading process which seems to be worse than that experienced by those who have not been imprisoned.

The Adversities of Social Isolation

According to the group account during meeting 5, social isolation seems to be a common experience of releasees. The three people who shared their personal experience in this all reported experiences of isolation. These experiences will be explored later, when discussing how we might best explain such isolation. In addition, every group member who was present in group meeting 3 considered that loneliness is a challenge immediately after release and that this issue continues noticeably for the first month at least. Similarly, during meeting 5, Sarah shared the following idea:

> 'I think if you work in this area (…) you are well aware of how easy it is for people to be isolated (…) because it's very common for people to be isolated.' (Sarah)

The group's account of post-prison social isolation resonates with the findings of other studies of the experiences of releasees in Glasgow (Schinkel 2015), US (Western 2018) and Romania (Durnescu 2019). Although the extent to which social isolation is common after prison still needs to be studied quantitatively, my evidence, along with these qualitative findings, suggests that it is fairly common to feel isolated at some point after release.

When exploring the reasons behind this social isolation, I am going to show how the social isolation of releasees is due to a unique process of cumulative isolation which may start before someone is imprisoned and may go well beyond liberation. I will do so by complementing my data with literature.

During our group conversations, examples of *pre-imprisonment* issues which have the potential to foster post-prison social isolation arose:

> 'sometimes the guys, through their offending behaviour, get ostracised or isolated from their family.' (Alex)

> 'I think another issue when going home or going somewhere after release is you may not be wanted at home, for whatever reason. Maybe domestic violence is your reason for imprisonment or something similar or worse, and I think that's something that is, my sense is that's a growing issue, I may be wrong.' (Pete)

Both quotes give examples of how being criminalised can put a strain on close connections. This resonates with Scottish findings (Nugent & Schinkel 2016) and with studies that show that people with previously fragile, inexistent and/or negative social connections are also overrepresented in the prison population (Wildeman & Western 2010). In the Scottish context, Bramley et al. (2019a) show that 30 percent of prisoners have been in care. This makes them 10-15 times more likely to have been in care than the general population (Bramley et al. 2019b). This indicates that people that end up in prison are more likely to have fragile social ties long before their custodial sentence.

The group account shows how people's *time in prison* may produce, reinforce and exacerbate social isolation. During the period between being imprisoned and the six months before release, 'loss of family' (flipchart) and 'isolation' (flipchart) were considered by every member of the group present in meeting 3 as challenges for post-prison re/integration. My data suggests that one of the main reasons for this is that prison often estranges people inside and their social connections outside. Charlie, who has experienced in going in and out of prison explained:

> 'Reintegrating is quite difficult for some people. It's not just reintegrating to
> your street and your community, it's even your own family. You feel estranged
> from your family.' (Charlie)

> 'That last sentence I done and I got out, I was sitting in my sister's house and
> all my nephews and nieces and all that were about, and I felt like a stranger
> amongst them all.' (Charlie)

Similarly, during meeting 5, one of the subgroups wrote 'feel estranged' (flipchart) as one
of the reasons for post-prison social isolation.

My research data shows that the three interrelated types of intra-prison distance —
physical, emotional and temporal — which are present in Deacon's (2019) framework (see
p.74 of this thesis) foster this estrangement and thus foster post-prison social isolation.

The first two types of intra-prison distance — physical and emotional — were mentioned
during meeting 5 by one subgroup: 'feel separate - loss of emotional contact' (flipchart).
This resonates with Deacon's (2019) findings which show how emotional separation also
occurs as a consequence of the physical separation experienced while in prison, the lack of
mobility while in prison, and prison regime limitations around contact and communication.

The last type of separation present in Deacon's framework and findings, the temporal one,
was also present during our group conversations. For some people, while in prison 'their
role in [their] family has become obsolete' (flipchart). Leanne explained:

> 'We said it can be difficult with the family because people's roles change,
> people's partners may move on (…) so we did think yes with the family, it is
> difficult.' (Leanne)

From this quote, it can be seen that while prison, in some respects, ordinary life is
suspended for those inside, but the lives of their social connections continue evolving and
adapting to circumstances. This resonates with English, Welsh and Scottish findings: due
to this desynchrony, released people become 'dislocated in time' (Jamieson and Grounds
2005; Deacon 2019). Time had frozen for them while being in prison, but they suddenly
had to face a completely distinct social situation on release (Deacon 2019): While their
lives had been frozen; their friends were in a different phase of their lives; their partners

may have new jobs, friends and interests; and their children were now grown-ups (Jamieson & Grounds 2005; Deacon 2019). I would argue that the physical and temporal separation and the prison regime fosters an emotional separation, as the absent body is also the absent father, son or colleague. Both my data and literature show that the spatial, temporal and emotional distance experienced by people in prison and their close relationships interact, and that these interactions foster estrangements both while the individual is in prison and when they are released.

The group pointed out that this estrangement may erode or end relationships while someone is in prison. Vicky, for example, stated that when someone is released, complex feelings may emerge both in the close connections and the releasee:

> 'That feeling of possibly of blame that they didn't stand by them or support
> them so it can be quite an estranged relationship to rebuild.' (Vicky)

What this quote and others from this subsection highlight, is that social isolation depends not only on releasees but also on their social connections and on imprisonment itself.

According to the group, prison may hinder and estrange not only existent relationships, it can also erode the social skills needed in order to maintain and/or develop new relationships. This issue will be addressed in Chapter 8, when exploring the adversities of personal dis-integration.

Up until now, I have presented arguments that people in prison may have already been socially isolated prior to their incarceration and, complementing my research data with literature, I have examined ways in which going to prison is likely to directly produce, reinforce and exacerbate that social isolation. Now, I go on to identify and explore the two main *post-prison aspects* that contribute to this cumulative isolation by dissolving existent connections and/or hindering the establishment of new ones: '*situational self-binding' as a strategy for sustaining desistance, and stigma and the fear of facing it*.

In chapter three, I mentioned how Bottoms (2013), describing the experiences of the participants of the Sheffield study, distinguishes three types of *deliberate situational self-binding strategies* in order to avoid offending (and re-imprisonment) — social avoidance,

venue avoidance, and self-displacement[10] — and that since then, more studies have suggested that these existent strategies are adopted by released people in different ways (Calverley 2013; Schinkel 2014a; Nugent & Schinkel 2016; Durnescu 2019). Especially relevant for this thesis are Schinkel's findings (2014a; 2015; McNeill & Schinkel 2016; Nugent & Schinkel 2016) on long-termers on licence: they decided to stay at home and limit their social interactions in order to avoid offending, reproducing some aspects of their imprisonment. In addition, as they were on licence, they felt under more surveillance and believed they were going to be treated with more severity.

The group findings resonate with these studies of life after prison. The three group members that spoke about their social re/integration shared a personal story of self-isolation and gave the same reason for it: they made that choice in order to avoid repeating habits from the past. For example:

> 'I was staying in the house. I wasn't coming out. (…) People [released] will just, people'll not contact other people if they're away from their families. They'll stay in isolate themselves.' (Pat)

The topic of post-prison situational self-binding appeared in the first group meeting in which we talked about post-prison re/integration. 'Loneliness because of not wanting to go with old friends' and 'avoiding further charges may lead to isolation' were mentioned as challenges of post-prison re/integration during group meeting 3. During another group meeting, the following conversation occurred:

> Heather: Even though you are wanting people to move on and stop maybe using substances or drinking or offending, then... and you're saying to them: you know, the acquaintances, you know they're not your friends they're acquaintances and everything. That's hard, they'll say aw I know he's my acquaintance but at the end of the day they've been friends with that, they individuals for a long time so…
>
> Alex: that's why you need services out there because…

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[10] Self-displacement consists of deliberately and frequently visiting a place which is seen as positive for sustaining a crime-free life; e.g., the gym. (Bottoms 2014)

Charlie: breaking away from people's hard, you know what I mean? [pause]

[…]

Charlie: No I just think that breaking away fae [from] people's hard, you know what I mean, whether they're are good for you or bad for you, they might think: "oh he thinks he's to good for us now". That can cause friction.

Pat: no, you have to break away (…) if you want to get yourself better you have to break away from you know, you need to change, you know what I mean. Habits

Charlie: but that can cause resentment…

Leanne: which then causes a lot of issues, aye

Charlie: aha. With people aye

Alan: takes a strong guy tell your friend he's still your friend but you don´t want to he's doing at that time

[…]

Alan: you're my mate but I'm no doing that just now

Pat: aye

Charlie: aham

Sarah: and if you're not moving into something else then you're basically making yourself lonely for your own good

There are several ideas in this conversation which deserve our attention. The *first one* is introduced by Pat: according to him, the aim of situational self-binding is not to directly avoid reoffending, but more broadly 'to change' and 'to get yourself better'. It is the desire for personal development and flourishing that makes him take that decision. This extends to the purpose of situational self-binding beyond desistance. The *second interesting point*

is made by Heather and Alan: it is a hard decision to end a relationship with someone who you consider a friend and who has been there for you in difficult moments; strength and emotional resilience are needed to do so. This seems especially difficult when someone returns to their community of origin.

Sarah's last point also deserves our attention; by itself, cutting bonds with negative connections does not, on its own, account for social isolation as it is the combination of that decision with the lack of other relationships that leads to isolation. Although it may be argued that deciding to cut ties with a group of close social connections is not something that is particular to releasees, due to the already explored pre- and intra- prison factors and from the post-prison factor that is to come, they are more likely to have a limited number of social connections. Thus, releasees are more likely to end up socially isolated as a result of cutting bonds with existent relationships.

Before focusing on the way in which stigma and fear of it fosters social isolation, I would like to draw attention to a comment made by Charlie in the above extract which adds an extra layer of hardship: it is not only that some releasees are forced to choose between continued engagement with their old relationships (and very likely ending up in prison) or ending up alone. When deciding to self-isolate, they also face 'resentment' and 'friction'. The individual not only ends up alone; they may experience conflict with former associates. In another group meeting, Charlie shared with us the consequence he had to face when he decided to stop frequenting his previous social connections:

> 'That caused resentment you know what I mean, and that became another
> problem you know what I mean, they would come up "who you think you are,
> you are too good for us, I remember you used to do this and this and this" (…).
> So that caused a lot of problems, know what I mean' (Charlie)

My research data presented here on situational self-binding gives us a more complex and nuanced picture not only of this phenomenon but of its consequences.

Stigma and the fear of having to face it according to my evidence also fosters social isolation. In spite of the fact that the topic of negative public dispositions and behaviour towards releasees recurred in our conversations and was considered one of the biggest challenges to re/integration, the group did not achieve an in-depth understanding of these matters. There are other methodologies that, depending on the particular elements of the

hostile environment, may be more suited (see Hirschfield & Piquero 2010; Holzer et al. 2002 or Pager 2003). If what we are interested in is the experience of stigmatisation that releasees have to face, quantitative studies, ethnographies or in-depth interviews may be considered as the most suitable methods.

In spite of that, the group account may provide us with an in-depth understanding not only of situations in which this occurs, but also the consequences of it. Two great examples of this are provided in this thesis: the first one can be found in the paragraphs to come on how stigma and fear produce and exacerbate social isolation. Another great example will be given in the last section of this chapter, in which its interactions with other domains will also become apparent. This interaction was also present in our conversation on how potential neighbours' stigma limits the opportunities of potential material improvement, which if true, would confirm and support the worry expressed by a few Scottish members of staff and people with convictions about neighbour stigmatisation discrimination (Reid Howie Associates 2015).

Once this is clarified, it is time to go back to how stigma and the fear of it fosters isolation. When the group explored whether it is difficult to have social connections on release and if so why, 'feel(ing) judged' (flipchart), the fact that people 'may avoid you' (flipchart) or 'not knowing if new connections know your history' (flipchart) were some of the answers given.

This may affect the process of making new acquaintances but also maintaining pre-prison relationships. In terms of the latter, as Leanne put it, 'when your circle of friends possibly have not been in prison, and you are the only one, that can make it quite difficult to maintain the friendship when you've been liberated.' The group did not have a direct and in-depth conversation about the experiential basis of this fear. In spite of that, during meeting 5, there were a couple of comments that seemed to indicate that releasees may have been stigmatised by their close social connections. Leanne said that 'people judge (releasees) as we know'. The second comment was made by Vicky and had previously been registered on the flipchart: 'people may avoid you'. In addition, as I will show in the next section the group was consistent in arguing that the public stigmatise and degrade people after release. More research is needed with respect to stigma and degradation by pre-prison social connections.

In terms of making new acquaintances, John shared his first-hand experience of this matter:

> 'I've done it [avoiding certain connections] and it leaves you in that, a room, you're lost, cos you want to make a relationship, how do you do that, you've not got the courage to go and do it. Are you frightened, oh they think that I've got a conviction, do they think I've got a conviction so you're then starting, the hell starts.' (John)

This quote perfectly captures how releasees may feel when thinking about forming new relationships. Even before meeting someone, releasees are already fearful of being stigmatised and this provokes in them suffering and stress. This, according to Leanne, 'makes it quite difficult for people (with convictions) wanting to engage with' new acquaintances. As John signals above, this tension and suffering seems to be experienced when beginning to engage in that new relationship.

The fact that releasees face stigmatisation from their pre-prison close connections and from potential new connections, resonates with existing research on the negative dispositions that the public and different stakeholders have towards releasees (see Chapter 4).

Isolation due to stigmatisation shows how sometimes the symbolic realm influences the material one. As Nancy puts it: 'I think (…) relationships, they're important because those who have the positive relationships will do better because they will be more likely to have access to those (basic) things'. Similarly, research is consistent with the importance of close connections in being less materially deprived (Loucks 2007; Harding et al. 2014). As I will demonstrate at the end of this chapter, social integration is not only important as an end in itself, but also as a key towards other domains of integration. Therefore, if releasees are stigmatised by their close social connections and by others because they have been in prison and, if they end up being socially isolated as a result, this will have a strong impact on their access to material resources.

Up until now, I have shown how the social isolation of releasees is due to a process of cumulative isolation shaped by aspects which a) occur at different times, from before someone is imprisoned until beyond release, and b) are unique to releasees. In addition, the group identified other post-prison aspects which are not unique to releasees. In spite of that, as has been explained in the previous chapter and will be explored in the subsequent

section of this chapter, releasees are more likely to have to face these adversities than those that have not been imprisoned. Here, I am going to focus on how material deprivation exacerbates social dis-integration. The impacts of being digitally excluded or having low self-esteem and self-worth will be explored later when dealing with personal dis-integration.

A post-prison aspect that, according to the group, may erode existent relationships is the material deprivation of the person released. The group argued that often 'families [are] feeling pressured to (…) take someone back, even if they don´t have space' (Nancy). This resonates with US research on re-entry which shows that families are the ones that end up needing to hold nearly the whole weight of supporting re/integration (Miller 2015, 2017; et al. 2015; & Alexander 2016; & Stuart 2017). Social connections are the main source of material, wellbeing and emotional support for releasees (see Ch. 4). However, providing support may have relational consequences:

> 'I wonder if like also lack of these things [material needs] can also put a strain on the relationships you do have. Do you know what I mean like if you have like it's a strain because you're having to live with your parents perhaps when you know you should really should be moved out or you are having to borrow money and stuff like that so like lack of these things can actually, can negatively impact on the support you do have.' (Sarah)

This is an example of what Miller's (2021) theory of 'economy of favors' (p.123) and of how, due to this, an argument can end up having grave consequences. The 'economy of favors theory' argues that the unique citizenship status of releasees places them in a delicate material and social situation, in which they have to rely on others' goodwill (see Miller 2021).

If close connections are not able or do not want to support releasees, this can cause resentment:

> 'If you look at the family, you could have bad feelings towards your family because they've made you go homeless because they are not offering you a bed. Circumstances could have changed at home where somebody, other family member's got your bed, or it's not the first time people have moved to smaller houses.' (Alan)

Here, we can see an intersection between the desynchrony between the life of those inside prison and the life of those on the outside, and how lack of support and material deprivation may erode existing connections. Alan shared with the group another situation in which material deprivation affects post-prison relationships, producing social isolation:

> 'Other side of that is you may have borrowed from these three groups of people [family, close friends and acquaintances] and you 'll be in debt to them, you've only got a finite amount of money and you may not be able to cover your debts, so you are staying away. So that's gonna make it difficult.'

This is another example of how the economy of favours shapes relationships. It is also a perfect example of how the consequences of material deprivation transcend into the symbolic realm.

Up until now, I have presented the first of two adversities of social dis-integration: the adversities of social isolation. I have argued that the social isolation of releasees is due to a unique process of cumulative isolation. This process may start before someone is imprisoned, when the individual is involved in recurrent problematic behaviour, including when the main close connection is the victim of these acts. The process continues in prison which, as I have argued, often not only hinders and estranges the already existent relationships but, as I will explore in depths, erodes the social skills needed in order to maintain and/or develop new relationships. After release, some releasees also engage in a kind of situational self-binding either because they want to leave behind old habits and flourish or because they are afraid of being stigmatised.

Being a Releasee Processed Through the Community Homeless Service: A Stigmatising, Degrading and Often Inefficient Process

In the following pages, I am going to show how *releasees who are processed by public assistance services are stigmatised and degraded through the application processes in what seems a unique way that further destabilises the especially vulnerable situation which they face*. To that end, I am going to focus on the different adversities faced by releasees undergoing a particular process; applying for emergency accommodation in a Community Homeless Service centre.

In Glasgow, the Community Homeless Service is the first service to which releasees can turn to in order to look for accommodation and support. Currently, there are a total of three different centres in Glasgow: in the South, in the North East and in the South West. When exploring some adversties of these application processes, links will be made between similar adversties present in other public assistance processes. However, before doing so, it is important to highlight that during our group conversations this process was characterised as 'degrading' (Kenny), 'soul-destroying' (Sarah), 'intimidating' (Alex), 'depressing' (Charlie), 'demoralising' (Sarah) and 'frustrating' (Sarah); resulting in 'stress' (Leanne), 'no hope' (Leanne) and 'anxiety' (Leanne).

Waiting *for* Nothing

The first adversity faced by those applying to these centres was a *day-long wait for nothing*. According to the group, those that were forced by their critical situation to go to a Community Homeless Service Centre had to spend their day waiting for a response to their application . After the long wait the usual response was that no help could be provided. Sarah's contribution below sums up this experience:

> 'We have some recent experience just with people coming out and for them, it usually means going down [to the Community Homeless Service centre] and (….). They're expected to wait there all day and being told: We'll know by half-four whether you have somewhere, but you can't go away, you can't give us a phone number and we'll phone you, you have wait here all day. And then at half-four inevitably they get told: We have nothing. That happens nine times out of ten and they have to go to what it used to be the Hamish Allan Centre [last resort Emergency Accommodation], but they present as homeless at night.' (Sarah)

Heather, who also goes there with those for whom she provides throughcare support, used exactly the same expression in order to define the duration of the waiting and Alex stated that when going there with those that he supports, he stays there 'for hours and hours and hours'.

This excessive waiting time combined with other issues aggravates the already difficult material deprivation of those trapped in these processes:

'The guys are looking for support, they're there for their bad decision making,

they're there because they don't have the patience, you know what I mean, so

if you're struggling with rational thought to stay in the housing for six hours,

you can see why people go in and leave after half an hour because they can´t

handle it, so there's already breaks in the system straight away, you know'

(Alex S08)

Leaving aside the accuracy and generalisability of the description that Alex gives of releasees, it seems obvious that waiting for a whole day is difficult to manage for many people released from prison. If impulsivity and impatience accounts in part for this, these issues may have been already present before imprisonment, but they are also often produced and exacerbated by prison and release experiences.

However, contrary to current criminological literature surrounding these matters (Desmond 2015; Halushka 2019), according to Sarah's account, widely supported by the group, there is little uncertainty around the duration of the waiting and the outcome of it. The lack of uncertainty does not however, make the experience less painful and emotional; rather, it increases the feeling that it is a 'waste of time' (see Ferrie & Wiseman 2016 on the concept of waiting for people with Motor Neurone Desease). That exact same expression was used by Charlie and by Pat who, as former prisoners and as volunteers in Faith in Throughcare, have both first and second-hand experience of going there to support someone released.

The waiting causes not only frustration but also, as Alan signals, it takes away time for looking for other solutions: 'we've got other things we could do that day' (Alan). Not only does waiting all day until 4:30 in those Homelessness Centres not provide any outcome but it aggravates an already extreme material deprivation situation by consuming time that could be dedicated to searching for and applying for other support and resources.

The following account resumes what happens when someone's application is rejected:

'You spend the time with them all day at Mansion Street [Community

Homeless Service Centre] and then you go to Hamish Allan (last resort

Emergency Accommodation), and (there they) say: we've not got anything.

And you try everything, take them to wherever (they can find accommodation),

and they will say: right, we'll get the street team to come round and give them a sleeping bag'. (Heather)

The group accounts of waiting at the Community Homeless Service centre resonates with and vividly illustrates findings on time that is lost or suspended (McNeill 2019a) either traveling to probation offices (Durnescu 2011b; Fitzgibbon et al. 2017) or waiting for appointments (Fitzgibbon et al. 2017; Halushka 2019). In the Supervisible Study, which used visual methods in order to enable those under supervision in Scotland, England and Germany to share how they felt and what they thought about supervision (McNeill 2018b), one of the main recurring themes was of time being wasted or suspended (Fitzgibbon et al. 2017). Halushka's (2019) ethnographic observations led him to similar conclusions; those under supervision of re-entry agencies experience prolonged waiting both in welfare support centres and in criminal justice agencies. This resonates with non-criminological studies on public assistance office centres (Auyero 2011).

The adversity and futility of the process also affected people supporting releasees. Charlie, for example, as a volunteer, has been there supporting other people. He captures the feelings of everyone involved in the following way:

> 'So I've been in twice and twice these two guys have been hit with a sleeping bag. (They end u telling you) there's nothing we can do for you, you know what I mean. So the volunteer, people are looking, however it takes you, they must be walking away going like that, feeling like a failure. I've failed I can't help this guy. I've failed this guy, know what I mean. So it must be quite depressing for everybody involved, you know what I mean.' (Charlie)

Heather's quote is as powerful as it is enlightening:

> 'We do all this learning and we get told that Maslow's hierarchy of needs, you know, safety, shelter, we go out and we have to leave somebody and say to them: I'm sorry but I don´t know what (more) to do (…); I can't get you housing or whatever, or you go with them and you spend the time with them all day at Mansion street and then you go to Hamish Allan (last resort Emergency Accommodation) , and (there they) say: we've not got anything. And you try everything, take them to wherever (they can find accommodation), and they will say: right, we'll get the street team to come round and give them a sleeping

bag, and you'(ll) have to leave that person there. It's really demoralising because, what type of job am I doing where I'm having to say this person: I can´t spend any more time with you, I don´t know what to do at half past six at night, I've tried all the different things (and I have to leave them)' (Heather)

Waiting *with* Nothing

The second adversity which was identified by the group, was the existence of what can be characterised a *disabling waiting environment*. During the group meetings, the topic of the Community Homeless Service Centre waiting rooms and its facilities came up when talking about looking for accommodation. The Twomax building[11] waiting room was described by Alan, who is a Throughcare Support Officer, as 'a cave'. The waiting room of current Northwest Community Homeless Service headquarters, Alan continues, has a TV which is not plugged into the electricity and has a stopped clock. Furthermore, Sarah explained that some venues do not have toilets. Although she was not sure if the Northwest headquarters in Mansion Street had toilets now, she remembered that 'during a long time it didn't'.

This picture can be related to Hann's (1983) concept of 'disabling environments'. This term is used by Comfort (2008) in order to characterise a waiting area at San Quentin State Prison in California as a place where structural barriers that 'impede participation in an activity' (Comfort 2008, p. 45), and which signal the low status that is given to those waiting, sending a 'message of inferiority'. The Community Homeless Centres meeting rooms described by group members can thus be considered as disabling environments: a place without access to toilets and with no light is not a place that is made for day-long waiting. In addition to that, the unplugged TV and the stopped clock communicate to those waiting, either on purpose or not, their very low status and inferiority. Of specific significance is the issue of the clock that has stopped at a certain time: it is metaphor for how time there is suspended and can be perceived as a reminder of that.

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[11] While our group meetings were taking place, Twomax building stopped been used as a Community Homeless Service headquarter after serving this purpose for years.

The atmosphere in the waiting room was also characterised as being 'volatile', 'with all different emotions flying about' (Alex). Alan's following quote can help those of us who have never been there, to better imagine this atmosphere:

> 'The housing offices I just describe as a pit of a misery, you mentioned Mansion Street, I mentioned Twomax (…) I was there on the 22nd of August with a girl (…). I watched people coming in and they were under the influence of something and they were using it as a bed, because they were coming in, with the Peruvian marching powder [cocaine] still on their nose and falling asleep in the seats, I mean when they were in a more agitated (…) state, they were going up to the desk and demanding to see somebody, and the poor housing lassie's sitting there, she knows (…) you cannot reason with an unreasonable person, she's trying to reason him, but the rest of people in the queue, they're embarrassed, they're (there to) try to find their niche and this is all happening.' (Alan)

It is during those day-long waiting moments in a disabling environment where Alan situates this scene, in which some deprived people under the influence are sleeping on the seats and sometimes being confrontational with the staff; and other materially deprived releasees are witnessing this uncomfortable and unpleasant situation.

Someone may argue that this last situation could be resolved by introducing security, but witness the following case, shared by Terry on another public assistance building:

> 'About a quarter of the staff that you see in the benefits agency are security guards now. Like, in Parkhead Job Centre, if you go to try and find a job you can't get in the door, there's three security guards: Who are you looking at? What are you here for? Somebody maybe trying to find a job you know!' (Terry)

In this other example of a disabling environment even before entering those without a job feel as they have done something wrong for not holding it down and are treated with suspicion.

Waiting on Bureaucracy

The group findings signal that the adversities of *bureaucracy* are also experienced during the process of applying for post-prison emergency accommodation in a Community Homeless Service centre,

> 'You're talking about bureaucracy as well for it because eh I took a guy there and he was … we sat there waited an hour and a half to get in the room with the girl and then she told us we are in the wrong office she wouldn't take the assessment so she sent us for there and we went to the Twomax and we did the assessment in the Twomax and they said Mansion Street can take the assessment (…) So if somebody was there himself and he's told that 12 o'clock in the day after waiting two hours he ain't staying, he's not going to the Twomax, he's, he's hitting the road. That's wrong.' (Alan)

There are multiple issues here. Firstly, that they had to wait in the first centre for one hour and a half before being told that they were in the wrong place. Secondly, there is the unnecessary loss of time and money in order to go to the second centre (and perhaps to go back to the previous area where the individual was staying nearby). Thirdly, and most importantly, there is the realisation that the assessment could in fact have been done in the first centre; a realisation which confirms the feeling that their time, money and effort is not valued or respected by the bureaucrats' responsible process, and perhaps by the process itself.

As Alan points out at the end of his quote, these adversities of bureaucracy may have consequences that go beyond the symbolic: after being in the first centre early in the day and waiting for 90 minutes to be told that they are in the wrong place, the individuals may feel that they have been treated without respect and as a fool, and they may decide not to go where they are told. If this happens, it reinforces their material deprivation.

These adversities of bureaucracy also seem to have been present in the past in the benefits application process. See the following conversation that occurred before the whole Glasgow was under Universal Credit about the previous Glasgow's benefits system:

> Sarah: The system's a mess, it's really complicated. We used to, in Faith in Throughcare, we used to help people fill out some of the forms, but now

they've become so complicated we usually get Citizens Advice or Welfare Rights for it, you need to have you know, so if we can´t do them and we do have experience, like how is somebody able to do it themselves.

Pat: Just go like that, I can't do that, you know

Sarah: yeah, so now you are having to rely on people like Citizen's Advice and Welfare Rights[12] because the system has become so complicated that you need to be an expert to fill in a form, that the person themselves are expected to fill it in.

Karen: so that's leading to additional time lags because

Sarah: yeah

Karen: Welfare Rights and Citizen's advice, are…it's a scarce resource

Pat: yeah

Karen: and there's built in time lags with benefits now anyway

Sarah: yeah, yeah

The form ended up being so complicated that even people whose job it is to support releasees needed specialised legal help from external bodies in order to help releasees to complete it. This raises the question of how many releasees may not be receiving benefits because of not being able to fill in the form. As Karen points out, this difficulty has a material impact even for those who seek help in order to fill out the form: as this support is a 'scarce resource', it lengthens the wait for the first payment beyond the average five or six weeks, as I explained in the previous chapter, have passed since the application.

Although the difficulty of the current Universal Credit form needs to be researched, Terry seemed to be sceptical about a change for the better:

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[12] Citizens' Advice and Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service are a charity and a Glasgow City Council service respectively that, among other things, offer specialised advice on benefits applications.

> 'The benefits system has been changed but I don't know if that's in order to
> make it easier.' (Terry)

Up until now, I have been reviewing different adversities which are not specific to releasees but are common to anyone in an equally deprived material situation. In addition, the experience of waiting has been considered in sociology as a feature of capitalism: those that have more power and money are able to wait less (Schwartz 1974). In spite of that, as releasees still experience these adversities, I would argue that these matters should still be studied and are salient to criminological research. The case for this becomes stronger when bearing in mind that research is consistent with the fact that releasees are overrepresented in the homeless population (see p.56). In addition to all this, as it has been previously explored in Chapter 3 and in the previous chapter, releasees have fewer opportunities to gain access to accommodation through other means due to stigma and debts respectively. As has been shown, the unique stigma that people suffer from having been in prison, seems to also uniquely limit the neighbourhoods in which releasees can find accommodation (p.64)

With this clarified, I am going to explore an adversity on which the group achieved certain consensus, and which is also supported by literature: *frontline workers visible stigmatising attitude and behaviour* towards releasees.

Waiting as (a) No-one

During meeting 8, while the group was exploring all the above adversities of applying for emergency accommodation in a Community Homeless Service centre, the following conversation took place:

> Kenny: I think (…) added to that is…. (…) , not always but, the attitude that
> (…) staff have towards the prisoner released, it can be really really degrading,
> you know (…) Apathy… and just a kind of a sneering almost: you're out of
> jail, you're a bad one you know, kind of judge…
>
> Nancy: Yeah
>
> Kenny: And I'm not saying it happens all the time but that happens

Karen: It does yeah

Here, Kenny signals two main elements that require our attention: the first is the negative attitude of the staff. This view was widely shared by group members and the word apathy appeared more times during our group explorations of these matters. Alex helps us to better understand this adversity:

'you sit in the housing and you're sitting there and waiting and the people that are working are not they cannot actually show you the apathy because the guy's in crisis, he's homeless, he's not got a place of safety and you look through the window and they see people chatting and talking and joking, you know they don't seem to be doing anything you know while you're sitting there frustrated, in general it is you wait for hours and hours and hours and see a lot of people moving about, cups of tea in the hand, it just doesn't portray a very…. the problem is they're not the person who's in crisis, they are going home to their beds at night, they are in that viewpoint and the apathy and all that, it's not a very pleasant experience for someone waiting.' (Alex)

This quote reveals a perception of extreme apathy which can even be considered as insensibility; feeling nothing for those waiting, or perhaps feeling that they are nothing. There is a dissonance between the attitudes of the staff and the extreme situation of homelessness of those applying while experiencing the different adversities explored above.

During meeting 10, when reading Kenny's quote, Pete, as seen in the following quote, went beyond that by considering the staff's attitude as one of antipathy. A couple of members expressed their agreement with this matter:

Pete: I think sometimes it's more than simple apathy shown by the staff but something almost antipathy…

Couple of members: Aham…[Murmurs of agreement]

Pete: …which is stronger. If somebody's that apathetic can't be arsed doing anything…

Alejandro: It's more passive apathy?

Pete: Yeah, yeah and (…) I'm (..) saying from my experience it's this it's almost aggressive this antipathy

Kenny considered that the apparent attitudes of frontline staff made interactions with them a 'degrading' experience.

All these accounts strongly resonate with research findings on people released in Glasgow and in Glasgow who are looking for accommodation (p.63). For example, Loucks' (2007) findings on people who are homeless in Glasgow after release are also in line with these results: 'a number (of participants) believed they were treated as 'the lowest of the low'; they felt that workers treated them with a lack of value and as though their homeless situation was their 'fault'' (p.31). As one of her participants put it:

'I'm not a dog; I'm a human being. I deserve to be treated like a human being' (Loucks, 2017, p.44)

However, in Pete's comments above, he was not only referring to Community Homeless Service staff but was extending his assessment to other frontline workers such as those in healthcare and welfare. Several group members made similar statements about how this attitude and behaviour is common in other frontline workers. In fact, this topic recurred during our group conversations: it appeared in four of the five group meetings in which we explored the different domains and elements of post-prison re/integration.

Examples of how frontline workers hold negative attitudes towards releasees can be found in the following quotes on benefits staff and problematic substance use support staff. They are made by someone who has experience as a volunteer and as a releasee, and someone who has experience as a SPS Throughcare Support Officer'.

'The benefits system's attitude towards prisoners, people just coming out. I think it could be a wee bit better.' (Charlie)

'I can give you an example of that this week, I took a girl to one of the addiction service teams in Glasgow and she had not taken her medication, she needed a new prescription, and when she went to the desk to speak to the

worker behind the desk, the girl, the obvious dirty look, like, you know: "What are you doing here?" You should be here last week to take your prescription. The lassie was upfront said she had a bender, but she doesn't have to get the: "What did you do last week?" She doesn't have to get that, she just has to get that: "Right you're here today, let's just get on with it".' (Alan)

Alan did not specify if he thought that this symbolic degradation was because of the problematic substance use too. He clarified afterwards that what he did not consider right about the attitude of the frontline worker was that she asked five or six questions reprimanding that woman rather than focusing on what she was there for — in order to get a new prescription from the doctor. Alex, the other Throughcare Support Officer in the group, considered that this was a great example. It may be that the frontline worker asked those questions in order to complete a form, that the person was just doing her job. If this was the case, it could be considered as an example of bureaucratic degradation. However, in addition to that, Alan perceived an 'obvious dirty look', in which case this would also be a degradation not only through bureaucratic processes but at an inter-personal level too.

Taking into account the heterogeneity of the group, I would argue that our group consensus about the existence of negative dispositions and behaviour of frontline workers suggests a degree of intersubjective validity. Indeed, as has been showing above, these findings resonate with other local research findings. In addition, one group member even pointed out that the issue of frontline negative attitudes was 'getting discussed at [the] Ministerial level just then'. Possible reasons for these negative attitudes and behaviour of frontline workers were given by the group, such as time constraints, bad working conditions, and rudeness or unreasonableness from people with convictions. I would like to highlight that in spite of that level of intersubjective validity there is a limitation that derives from the fact that there was not a frontline worker in the group. More research on their experiences is needed.

Although this negative attitude can be extended to other public assistance services, it seemed that it was especially severe in the case of Community Homeless Service staff:

'Especially housing (…). I think it's just individuals, ways of dealing with things, you know what I mean. It's just, you might be just, unlucky. And get somebody that thinks: no, they don´t deserve the same treatment as somebody's' (Charlie)

Charlie's last sentence perfectly links us with the second key element of Kenny's quote above. This concerns the question of whether people who have been in prison are stigmatised by frontline workers because of being homeless and/or poor or because of them being releasees. Unfortunately, this distinction was not explicitly developed by the group. From the following different excerpts on this issue what can be argued is that there was consensus that everyone processed through public assistance service is treated badly, but that some group members believed that there was an extra layer of stigma associated with being a releasee. This would be a case of double stigma (see p.60 on this thesis).

In the following quote, Heather and Alex agree that Community Homeless Service frontline workers also have a negative attitude and behaviour with other people who have not been in prison:

> Heather: Yeah. I don't actually. It's just towards prisoners, actually, I think in general.

> Alex: No, I would agree with that, their attitude's terrible.

> Heather: To people that show up homeless, I think their attitude.

There were no comments during any of our group meetings which dissent with Alex's and Heather's ideas. It is important to notice that here they are talking about the existence of a negative attitude without making any specific claim about the strength of or reasons for it.

In the following quote from Terry, during group meeting 8, although he expresses certain doubts about his own reasoning, he takes Heather's and Alex's ideas further. He suggests that everyone who accesses that service also has to suffer *negative attitudes to the same extent*:

> 'Just going over some of the things that have been said already. I think the frontline that the people at Mansion Street have got to deal way, I've been there supporting somebody who's been a victim of crime, so somebody who's domestic abuse, and the way that they were speaking to that individual was as if it was her own fault. So, I don´t know if it's the frontline and what they're dealing with every day or if they do particularly look down on people with

convictions. I would say that they kind of, they treat everybody the same, and it's could do better, much better' (Terry, meeting 8)

In an individual meeting with Marguerite, who was unable to attend group meeting 8, when exploring Terry's above account, she stated:

'Oh no, they're horrible towards everybody, but they're probably worse to people with convictions.' (Marguerite)

This idea that those that are released are treated *even worse* than other subpopulations that access that service, was also implicitly present in the second part of Kenny's rich quote. I am going to include it here again in order to refresh the reader's mind:

'(…) Just a kind of a sneering almost, you're out of jail, you're a bad one you know, kind of judge. And I'm not saying it happens all the time but that happens.' (Kenny)

This notion shared by Kenny and Marguerite in different moments of our group dialogue, resonates with the content of the following two quotes from Charlie:

'The person you are dealing with might treat you different because you're just out of prison, (…) different from somebody who's made theirself unemployed, you know what I mean, they might get a better treatment than you, cause you're just out of prison.' (Charlie)

'People that work in these organisations tend to take things personal. You know? Their attitude is: aye, how should I go out my way to help him or her? They're just out of jail, you know what I mean? Nobody asked them to get the jail.' (Charlie)

In all these last four quotes, Charlie, Kenny and Marguerite make a clear link between the suffering negative dispositions and behaviours and on being a releasee. This same link is also made in literature. Reid Howie Associates (2015) found that released people in Scotland felt judged: they perceived a lack of respect, empathy and courtesy from staff. They did not feel listened to and considered that staff made negative 'unfounded

assumptions about individuals (e.g., *that past behaviour would be repeated*, or that someone else would take responsibility for providing support).' (p. 34, emphasis added).

In an individual meeting, Sarah and Pat also discussed this issue:

> Sarah: And the thing is when you go to, when you go to report as homeless, when you've come out of prison, you know there's no way around of say like, you have to say to them I'm here to present as homeless because I've just been in prison, there's not really a way around that, because otherwise they're gonna be like: why don´t you have a house?
>
> Pat: In the employment centre …
>
> Sarah: Oh yeah, aye, in a lot of different situations but with housing there's kind of no way around that because you have to explain where you've been and why you don´t have a house.

This quote firstly leaves us with no doubt that the Community Homeless Service frontline workers are surely aware that the individual looking for their support is a releasee. Sarah's answer to Pat, considered jointly with Charlie's comment about the fact that housing staff attitudes towards releasees are especially negative in comparison to other frontline workers attitudes, supports the argument that releasees are specially stigmatised; with housing services, unlike with other services, 'there's kind of no way around that'. The knowledge of this information may explain why housing frontline workers' attitudes are worse than those of other frontline workers, who may not be aware of their previous stay in prison. This would support the unique stigmatisation that releasees suffer from those public assistance frontline workers who know about their stay in prison.

As I have explored in this section, group members believed that the general public, neighbours and different key stakeholders, such as potential employers, specifically stigmatise releasees in a much more extreme way than to other stigmatised subpopulations. Adding this to the evidence shared in this section seems to suggest that releasees are uniquely stigmatised and degraded by frontline workers in an extra way because of having been in prison.

The Consequences of a Stigmatising, Degrading and Often Inefficient process

These negative frontline attitudes and behaviours potentially have implications on damaging self-worth, and have material and symbolic consequences. Charlie argued that those that are released from prison are especially vulnerable when just released, and therefore may be especially affected by these negative attitudes.

> 'Some of them need to be reminded that this is a person that's just out the jail, they're vulnerable, they're just getting used to being back out again. You know what I mean?' (Charlie)

Charlie shared his first-hand experience, showing how these attitudes may worsen an already low self-esteem:

> 'I think it's a, I think it's a case of you tell yourself that you're not good enough. I tell myself that at times, I don't need somebody else to tell me I'm not good enough (…) I've got a lot of suffer from very low self-worth. I tell myself I'm not worth, I`m not good enough, I don´t need somebody to tell me that, I tell me that. I give myself a hard time I don´t need somebody else to do it for me, you know what I mean?' (Charlie)

According to Pete's account, this stigmatisation sometimes ends up in a discrimination when allocating resources:

> 'I think they've [frontline workers] got a big part to play and realising that they [frontline workers] are doing wrong by judging people and putting them to the back of the queue.' (Pete S05)

These quotes suggest that not only the attitudes and the behaviour towards releasees are stigmatising and degrading, but that this has consequences on the applications process. Because of stigma, frontline workers take the discretionary decision of situating releasees as the last ones to receive emergency housing. More research about these potentially discriminatory attitudes and practices is needed.

The consequences of these attitudes and behaviours extend to the symbolic realm. In an individual meeting with Charlie, when the topic of negative dispositions arose, he stated the following:

> Charlie: A lot of people feel like second class citizens.
>
> Alejandro: Why is that?
>
> Charlie: I think it's just the way they get treated
>
> Alejandro: Again, by services?
>
> Charlie: By services aye. A lot of people feel like second class citizens. And I feel like that, sometimes I still feel like that.

This resonates with research that signals that people when engaging with formal connections see this as a connection with a 'microcosm of government' affecting like that their civic-political stance (Lerman & Weaver 2014, p. 11).

I conclude this section by sharing a tough but important consequence that can be attributed to the *above explored cumulative aspects of the whole process* of being processed by the Community Homeless Service:

> 'So probably, how do releasees experience that? They don't experience it because a lot of them don't get it, you know, the housing (is at it's limits and you also know that in most cases you won't get somewhere appropriate), so it's just a struggle and a lot of them will put it off to the last minute because they know what they're gonna face to go there.' (Heather)

The process is such 'a struggle' that releasees wait until the last moment in order to go to apply. This of course, erodes their likelihood of being successful in their application. This application process surely hinders some of those who perceive it as a 'waste of time' to even try applying, a decision which reinforces and exacerbates their materially deprived situation.

In this last section, I have argued that *releasees who are processed by public assistance services are stigmatised and degraded through the application processes in what seems a unique way that further destabilises the especially vulnerable situation which they face*. To that end, I focused on the different adversities faced by releasees undergoing a particular process; applying for emergency accommodation in a Community Homeless Service centre. I considered this as an extended example of how the elements discussed above come together. After showing how releasees wait for nothing, with nothing, and on bureaucracy, I have suggested that they suffer – at least – double stigmatisation: one for being homeless and a more pervasive one because of being releasees. I have ended up exploring some material and political consequences of this social stigmatisation and degradation.

Summary

In this chapter I have shown how many releasees are socially dis-integrated on release due to a process of cumulative social exclusion. The discussion of different adversities has allowed us to explore different facets of and different reasons for that process. While developing the adversities of post-prison social isolation and its cumulative process, different pre-, intra- and post-prison aspects have been outlined. The discussion of the intra-prison aspects which shape social life after prison was especially rich: imprisonment fosters a physical, temporal and emotional separation between people in prisons and their close connections which hinders and erodes these relationships while in prison. This then fosters post-prison social isolation. In addition, the exploration of my research data on post-prison situational self-binding has extended and nuanced our understanding of this phenomenon and its consequences.

In the second part I have shown how releasees who are processed by public assistance services are stigmatised and degraded through the application processes in what it seems a unique way that further destabilises the especially vulnerable situation which they face. This can be considered as an extended example of how the elements discussed above come together. It is now time to explore the remaining types of adversities: judicial-legal, personal, and civic-political.

8 Chapter 8 – The Adversities of Personal, Civic-political, and Judicial-legal Dis-integration

So far, during the last two findings chapters, complementing my research evidence with literature findings, I have shown how our societal response to a potentially imprisonable act produces, reproduces and exacerbates multiple material and social dis-integration. I have done so by arguing that the material and social adversities faced by releasees are due to a unique process of cumulative (a) material disadvantage and/or (b) social exclusion which often starts before someone is imprisoned and goes on well beyond the liberation. While exploring this process, I have shown how the material and social realms overlap and that, as a consequence, adversities in one of them often produce, reinforce and exacerbate dis-integration in the other. However, apart from the adversities of material and social dis-integration, during these two chapters, other types of interacting adversities have arisen. At these times, I have pointed readers to this chapter, which will be the last one dedicated to presenting and analysing the research findings.

In the first section, which will be dedicated to the adversities of personal dis-integration, I will show how prison often hinders personal development. Prison does not only erode already existent skills, it also fails to foster new learning. In the second section, I will explore different ways in which releasees are likely to be excluded civically and politically. During the last section of this chapter, I will focus on judicial-legal dis-integration and particularly on the influence of over-incarceration in post-prison re/integration.

The Adversities of Personal Dis-integration

As will be seen in this chapter, during our group meetings, the group agreed that people released are often dis-integrated in different ways. This resonates with literature reviewed in Chapter 3. With respect to personal dis-integration, my research data is of most value in showing different examples of *one of the reasons* for personal dis-integration: *prison integration fosters post-prison dis-integration* in many ways.

Here, I focus mainly on the intra-prison aspect that shapes post-prison personal dis-integration: institutionalisation and life in prison. Although a pre-prison lack of personal development or a lack of intra- and post-prison motivation were also mentioned during our group dialogues, group conversations focused on how certain skills and behaviours that

people acquire – or lose — because of integrating *into* prison life are dis-integrative *after* prison.

The topic of how institutionalisation and life in prison shapes post-prison skills and behaviours arose during all but one of the meetings in which the group shared knowledge on post-prison re/integration. During group meeting 3, the stage that goes from incarceration until six weeks prior to release was focused on the flipchart, Marguerite specifically suggested including the word 'institutionalisation' in the challenges column. During the first two weeks outside prison, 'institutionalisation' (flipchart) was considered by every group member present as a challenge to post-prison re/integration.

In literature, the concept of institutionalisation has been developed in depth both in sociology and criminology. When first entering prison, people often find it very difficult to adapt to the prison rules, regime and dynamics. The adjustment to this new setting causes 'the process by which inmates are shaped and transformed by the institutional environment in which they live' (Haney 2003, p.38), which in the case of prison is subjected to strong regulation and control (Goffman 1961). Relying on the group account, we now explore the characteristics of the current prison environment, regime and dynamics; and discuss the way in which they foster post-prison personal dis-integration. I am going to argue that *prison denies autonomy*, *often erodes social skills* and *fosters post-prison digital exclusion*.

One of the keys to understanding institutionalisation and its effects on post-prison re/integration is the characterisation of prison as a 'fully structured environment' (Alex; see Chapter 3). Prison was seen by different members of the group as a place where autonomy is very limited.

> 'You [people in prison] don't have the means to action anything and you're heavily reliant on other people'. (Alex)

During our group meetings two main types of denial of autonomy were identified, the first one of which is presented explicitly in the following conversation:

> Heather: and to be honest they don't have to make these decisions, that you normally, that you dae in normal life.

> Charlie: aye everything's done for you in the jail, you've no worries at all

Heather: that's took away from you, you don't have that pressure.

(…)

Kenny: that pressure of making decisions that are healthy and wise

The *denial of choice-making,* which is shared by Heather in her first comment, was mentioned repeatedly in our group conversations. Under the current prison regime, people are presented with hardly any choices. As Charlie's comment implies, decision-making is done by other people, not by those imprisoned who seem to be passive subjects and whose role is merely to follow orders and obey. As a consequence of this, people do not have the chance to exercise responsibility. 'Lack of responsibility' was part of the group list of intra-prison challenges to post-prison re/integration. As Marguerite stated, in prison 'you don't have any'.

This denial of choice-making, has consequences:

'You have lived in a wee closed world where you go somewhere at a certain time with a certain person and all of a sudden all of your choice is in front of you.' (Alan)

It is precisely that huge gap in this respect between inside prison life and outside life that constitutes a hindering factor for post-prison integration. As a consequence of this gap and this pressure, using Leanne's words, when released, people 'don't have the skills or they don't want the responsibility' for taking those decisions.

The second type of denial of autonomy that appeared during our group conversations is the *denial of independent living*. Different independent living skills such as 'domestics' (flipchart), 'money management' (flipchart) and 'shopping and cooking' (flipchart) were considered by nearly each member of the group as a challenge for post-prison not only during the first two weeks outside prison, but throughout the first month.

Another set of independent living skills that emerged during our group conversations were the skills to control and manage access to one's property. When considering whether everyone should have their own flat on release, Leanne stated:

'Some people don´t know how to control the door, like they'll let anybody in.'

In this quote, Leanne did not identify prison as the cause of this lack of skills. In spite of that, the link between imprisonment and the lack of post-prison independent living skills was implicit in many of our conversations. In the following quote, Heather makes this link in an explicit way:

'A lot of the people are going in and out that much and getting used to the prison system (…) Skills (to help them live) are getting forgotten'

Under the current prison regime, as Charlie stated in the above quote, 'everything is done for you'. That means that those inside prison are not able to engage in certain daily life activities that are vital for being autonomous when being outside. Skills — if existent prior to imprisonment — thus, get eroded during imprisonment.

Therefore, the current extent of denial of autonomy while people are in Scottish prisons — under its variants of denial of choice-making and denial of independent living — erodes and does not foster the acquisition of certain skills that are needed for an autonomous life outside prison. This argument resonates with Scottish, UK and international research reviewed in Chapter 3 (p.75). This is the first example of how prison integration sometimes hinders post-prison dis-integration.

The *second way* in which prison often fosters post-prison personal dis-integration is through *eroding social skills*. During Chapter 7 (p.151), I shared an excerpt of a quote from Charlie when speaking about the post-prison effects that imprisonment had on him. I included this excerpt in order to argue that imprisonment estranges social connections:

'That last sentence I done and I got out, I was sitting in my sister's house and all my nephews and nieces and all that were about, and *I felt like a stranger amongst them all, and I didn´t know how connect with them*, you know what I mean?' (Charlie, emphasis added)

This quote — and the moment in which it was shared — illustrates that the lack of social skills and the lack of ability to engage that some people experience after release is due to the experience of imprisonment. It shows how, as a consequence of this, releasees are

sometimes unable to end up with that estrangement and re-familiarise themselves with their close social connections.

During our group meetings, other accounts were given of how institutionalisation erodes social skills. Witness the following comment made by Vicky:

> 'I think it [institutionalisation] also impacts on social skills because you don't necessarily, you don't know how to engage.' (Vicky)

A concrete way in which prison erodes social skills was given by the group; *emotional isolation* which those in prison may feel:

> 'If you are institutionalised and you are used to keeping yourself to yourself in prison then, are you ready to make new relationships with people and to let people in?' (Marguerite)

As a consequence of this emotional isolation experienced with respect to their social connections, Kenny argued that due to institutionalisation:

> 'Releasees need time to kind of remember, or rediscover, how it is to connect with people.'

One reason for this emotional isolation was explored in the chapter on social dis-integration: the physical and temporal separation triggered by the time spent in prison is replicated in emotional separation, as the absent body is also the absent father, son, or colleague. In addition to this emotional separation *with those outside prison*, there often exists an emotional isolation from other prisoners in order to protect themselves (Jamieson & Grounds 2011) The erosion of social skills combined with the already explored fear of stigma (Chapter 6), may be one of the reasons why people when released find 'social engagement overwhelming' (flipchart).

After illustrating how prison denies autonomy and often erodes social skills, it is time to explore the third way in which personal dis-integration is fostered: prison experience *fosters post-prison digital exclusion*.

The topic of digital inclusion was one of the most salient and recurrent topics during our group meetings. It arose in relation to each of the different domains of post-prison re/integration, as well as when exploring structural factors. In addition to this, during our second to last meeting, the group had the chance to choose which of the topics discussed they would like to develop during that group meeting. Digital inclusion and technology was a clear winner with 12 votes, three more votes than the second topic and six more than the third. One of the highly possible reasons for this will be explored when engaging with the consequences of digital exclusion.

According to the group, there are many people who, when released from prison, are digitally excluded. In this subsection, I will argue that one of the main reasons for being digitally excluded when released is that prison erodes and hinders the acquisition of digital personal development.

In spite of the rising presence and importance of the digital world in our cultural, social, personal and economic lives (Helsper 2012, cited in Reisdorf & Rikard 2018), there is little criminological work on the digital lives and inclusion of people who are released. The only exception to this is a particular part of Reisdorf and Jewkes's (2016) results, on which the first writer focuses on a subsequent article (Reisdorf & Rikard 2018). The findings were clear: after being locked up in prison, people face problems when engaging with the digital world

The increasing presence and importance of the digital world and Reisdorf and Jewkes' findings show an important and interesting gap in criminological literature and research. It is in this context that the inquiry group's examination of digital inclusion and its adversities can be of value by shedding a little more light on this obscure issue. The first matter on which the group account can enhance our understanding is the *special importance of digital inclusion* for releasees.

When dealing with digital inclusion, Alex made this comment with respect to releasees who are digitally excluded:

> 'They are gonna struggle out there because the way everything's moved on in the community everything is online-based.' (Alex)

During our group conversations, the group identified different areas of struggle. Of the five people who could not make it to the research group meeting and therefore were not able to vote, three of them gave the same reason for the prominence of this topic in the voting: the UK Government's rollout of Universal Credit at that time — as the main form of income support for people without employment — required that the application should be done online. As Alex, a Throughcare Support Officer, stated, digital inclusion was a 'hot topic', 'something that is here and now', and therefore had not been explored in depth yet and therefore felt 'fresh'. Alex thought that the importance and relevance of this matter in the following years was going to be 'massive'. The group account resonates with government literature. The internet has increased in importance with respect to accessing government health and social services both in UK and Scotland (Scottish Government 2011; UK Government 2014) and is likely to continue increasing in the forthcoming years (Scottish Government 2011).

The group considered that digital exclusion may produce, reproduce and exacerbate the material deprivation of releasees which was explored in Chapter 6. Beyond the adverse influence of digital exclusion in health and social support application processes, there were two other issues, mentioned by the group, that resonate with literature findings: (a) digital exclusion increasingly hinders finding a job and maintaining it (Centre for Economics and Business Research [from now on Cebr] 2015; Reisdorf & Jewkes 2016) and (b) by being digitally excluded, releasees lose the opportunity of ameliorating their material deprivation by reducing cost in matters such as choosing an electricity tariff or by taking advantage offers on online shopping (UK Government 2014; Cebr 2015).

According to the group and to literature, the material realm is not the only one in which the situation of releasees has worsened in the last few years due to digital exclusion. In addition to this, the group argued that if the support of services was available online, digital inclusion could reduce the already explored adversities of being a releasee processed through the Community Homeless Service (Chapter 7). By being able to submit the required documents online, people would stop waiting for nothing, with nothing, on bureaucracy and as no-one (see the second half of Chapter 7). As a consequence, the process would be more efficient and less degrading and stigmatising. In addition, during our group meetings, Vicky highlighted the current salience of the digital world in maintaining contact with social connections and making new ones. Research with the general population shows that digital inclusion reduces the feeling of social isolation (UK

Government 2014) and increases the frequency of contact with social connections (Cebr 2015).

Terry and Sarah argued that digital skills are important in order to feel part and be part of society. She explained:

> 'so much in life is online now, you know culture that changes really quickly, news, memes, YouTube… all this stuff that if you're not able to access (…) then you are missing out on quite a lot, (…) that's why I think it is important. It's just helps you to be part of your society.' (Sarah)

Sarah's quote signals the requirement of keeping constantly updated on the culture that is being created and communicated through the internet in order to be part of society. In the following quote, she goes beyond this level of engagement:

> 'It helps you to be part of the conversation that everybody's talking about the latest viral video or… you know.' (Sarah)

According to this quote, those that are not digitally included are not able to participate in these new cultural forms that are appearing on the internet.

Up until now, I have shown how digital exclusion can produce, reproduce and exacerbate some of the material and social adversities that have been explored in Chapters 6 and 7. In addition to that, and more generally, Alex and Vicky explained that being digitally included can help releasees be aware of all the different types and agencies of support that exist. Digital exclusion, along with other factors, can also produce, reproduce and exacerbate the existing civic-political dis-integration of releasees. This topic seems even more important in the current COVID-19 situation, in which evidence suggests that digital inclusion and exclusion is becoming even more salient for marginalised groups in many different ways (see Armstrong et al. 2020).

After stressing the importance of digital inclusion, I will now begin to unravel the main argument of this subsection: one of the main factors that fosters post-prison digital exclusion is people's lack of post-prison digital skills due — at least in part — to the fact that prison hinders and erodes digital personal development.

Although different post-prison limitations on different domains of digital inclusion such as access to technology, motivation and self-perception were mentioned, a lack of digital skills was considered by the group as the main reason for the digital exclusion of releasees.

Everyone in the group agreed that many releasees do not have sufficient digital skills. Alex, for example, when speaking about this topic, shared the following comment:

'I was at a (…) DWP [Department for Work and Pensions] meeting where they were asking for our feedback on the universal credit process relating to (…) prison liberations that are working with our team [SPS throughcare support officers], right (…) and one of the biggest issues is (…) IT literacy, you know, because guys are coming out and cannot use a computer' (Alex)

This resonates with Pat's and Charlie's first- hand experience.

'The thing that I found is computers, go and look for a job, no got a clue, that's the kind of stuff.' (Pat)

'When I came out, you couldn't just walk up to the benefits place and say, I'm just out of prison there, how do I go about signing on, it's all this online stuff, you know what I mean? And I'm computer illiterate, I can´t even text, you know what I mean? So, what chance have I got going on a computer, and understanding how to do that, and there's a lot of people like that, you know what I mean' (Charlie)

Their age may be an important factor in Pat and Charlie's lack of digital skills, but Alex's account, the experience of other Throughcare Support Officers experiences, and the group's views resonates with Pat's and Charlie's first-hand experience.

The main and most commonly mentioned reason given by the group for that lack of digital inclusion was the lack of interaction with the social world while in prison. During one group meeting, when I asked if releasees are digitally included, after a couple of group members argued that they were not, Karen stated the following:

'They have no access to any of the digital world while they are in prison so therefore…' (Karen)

Alan's comment is especially enlightening:

> 'To live in today's society you need the internet. There's no internet. So to
> (…) make a claim for anything (…) you might need when you get out, there's
> no link for it at all. And that's one of the things that's vital, we [society] take
> the computer away from them, we put them in prison, and there's new things
> are coming all the time about how you claim for certain things and they have
> no idea how to do it.' (Alan)

Marguerite, similarly, signalled that if we want people to be digitally included on release 'you need to not like exclude them first'. If we combine Alan and Marguerite's accounts, a very interesting reflection arises: when someone goes into prison they are automatically digitally excluded from something outside prison which, as has been shown, is vital to everyone, and especially for releasees. Two questions still need to be answered: to what extent do people have access to the digital world while being inside prison and, how does this shape digital skills?

It should be noted, that at the time of writing this thesis, digital access inside prison has increased as a response to the COVID-19 situation. Whether these arrangements will become permanent or are something temporal is currently unknown. The following group account portrayed the situation prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During our group conversations, different examples of the limited — nearly non-existent — intra-prison access to the digital world were shared. With respect to communication with the outside world, there were three currently available methods that involve the use of technology. The first one is the use of emails. This is how Sarah described how this service works:

> '(In Barlinnie and Low Moss) we use a service called the 'email a prisoner'
> where we will email and then the email gets printed and delivered to a person
> and they can reply and they can handwrite something and the prison will scan it
> and then email it back to us.' (Sarah)

Although it was signalled that it is quicker than sending a letter, it nonetheless reduces the immediacy of digital communication to a great extent. In terms of access to the digital world and to applying or learning digital skills she stated the following:

'There's no, there's no, there's no access to, to digital, there is no training,
they're not learning anything, they're not learning technology or anything.'
(Sarah)

Heather shared with the group, that HMP Addiewell[13] has a text service. This new service, she explained, permits those inside prison to communicate with their beloved ones even when the latter are not at home or cannot participate in a phone call. Karen, when speaking about this matter stated the following:

'You could imagine that what you were saying before even texting good night
if families could do that every night and just keep a bit of normality.' (Karen)

Text messages can thus alleviate the estrangement — which has been explored in Chapter 7 — that imprisonment fosters. Heather did not specify if the procedure is similar to that of the email service or not, that is to say, if it is staff and not those inside prisons that translate the analogic message into a digital one. At the moment of writing this, I have not been able to find any more detail on this scheme.

Nancy explained that, although she did not remember exactly in which prisons this service was available, a pilot of video visits was taking place. Pete added that he thought that in Inverness 'they have restricted tablets for use for teleconferencing visits'. Nancy pointed out the potential that this may have in terms of social connections not only for people with convictions but also for their close connections who cannot travel to prison either because of time or because of money. In terms of digital access and digital personal development it is very likely that people in prison are not the ones that will navigate the software in order to make the call, but that the technical part will be facilitated by staff.

Alan shared that in Addiewell prison there is a kiosk in which you can order meals or products from the prison shop. When Marguerite expressed her concern about those with no literacy skills, Nancy explained that there are visual images to order. In using these kiosks, touchscreen skills are learned and developed.

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[13] HMP Addiewell is an adult male prison which is operated by a private company.

Alex explained that, by using virtual learning in education, people have access to a secure computer terminals. These courses are not about learning digital skills, but the computer is a means towards learning different non-digital knowledge which has always been taught in prison. When exploring the digital tasks that are learnt and practiced while engaging in education. Alex stated the following:

> 'If you are going to Education and you get put on a computer, because they do things like typing out CVs in prison and staff like that, you know, but you could argue that's very low end.' (Alex)

According to the group, those inside prison that take their CSCS[14] test also have contact with the digital world. Alan explained that when being in prison, people practice by doing tests on a computer with no internet connection. Software is introduced through a disc in a computer, which repeatedly asks multiple sets of questions. The exam is done in a bus with computers with online access. Discs are also used inside prison in order to examine people for the computer 'driving licence'. Although certain digital skills are needed, it can be argued that being able to click the correct answers in a multiple-choice test requires quite a low level of digital skills.

As explained in Chapter 3, in the middle of 2019, the DWP (2019) announced the launch in HMP Perth (a short-term men's prison) and HMP Cornton Vale (Scotland's only prison for women) of a pilot scheme under which work coaches based in prison would support those soon to be released with their benefits claims process by using 'restricted and supervised access to computers'. Although as I have previously argued this may mean that on the release date people may already have their first benefits amount, as Marguerite argued when talking hypothetically about this matter before knowing that this would happen, does not alleviate the post-prison digital exclusion of releasees.

> 'So like sitting with them and doing that would be great but then once they get out and they have to make their way to the library then they have to figure out (how to use a computer)'… (Marguerite)

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[14] The Construction Skills Certification Certification Scheme test is needed by people working in the construction industry in order to learn the required knowledge on health, safety and environment.

As Marguerite signals, this is a temporal solution to a material issue. It could be considered another denial of autonomy. It momentarily solves the initial Universal Credit application but does not change the fact that the released person will be unable to develop skills for themselves. In addition, the digital exclusion of the individual would be to still foster the dis-integration in all the different realms that have been mentioned at the beginning of this subsection.

This very limited access to the digital world inside prison thus hinders and erodes the digital development of those who have been in prison. Those that did not have the skills before entering prison do not learn them inside, and the already existent digital skills of those inside prison get forgotten. The length of the sentence was considered by the group as important for this matter: if serving a long sentence, these skills not only get eroded but outdated. The erosion of skills while in prison resonates with what is argued in literature. Reisdorf & Jewkes (2016) argue that many of their participants did not have the skills previous to prison, and that even those who did have experienced erosion of such skills while in prison. This argument is based on studies on the general population in which it has been found that discontinued use of internet affects digital skills (Eynon & Geniets 2012 cited in Reisdorf & Jewkes 2016).

In spite of the rising salience of the digital in our lives, there is a lack of theoretical and research attention on post-prison digital exclusion. The collaborative research on which this thesis relies is one of the few studies along with the very recent Armstrong et al. (2020) one that I am aware of that analyses this digital reality in some depth. Through the complementation of my research data with digital exclusion literature, I have shown how being imprisoned hinders and erodes digital development, how many released are digitally excluded and the fatal consequences that this has on this already vulnerable subpopulation. In this section on post-prison personal dis-integration I have focused on intra-prison factors which were very salient and recurrent during our group conversations on this matter: institutionalisation and life in prison. Relying on my research data, I have explored different ways in which prison and its regime hinders post-prison personal integration: firstly, it denies autonomy, secondly it often erodes social skills, and thirdly it fosters post-prison digital exclusion. The topic of digital exclusion was particularly salient and relevant during our group conversations. This contrasts with the scarcity of knowledge on this matter.

The Adversities of Civic-Political Dis-integration

As stated in Chapter 3, within the concept of civic-political integration, I am including civic knowledge and attitudes and engagement of both formal and informal kinds; in relation to elections, political parties or community or neighbourhood councils; in relation to participating in online forums on politics, debates on social networks about politics or communities; and even in relation to volunteering (Jennings & Zeitner 2003; Doolittle & Faul 2013; Van Deursen & Helsper 2015). Relying on the group data and complementing it with literature, I show how the unique process of material deprivation, social stigmatisation and degradation, digital exclusion and personal dis-integration that releasees experience –which have been explored during the last three chapters — hinders their political and civic participation. I am going to explore three types of civic-political adversities: limited exercise of voting rights, exclusion from public conversations, the delicate situation for fighting for basic rights, and exclusion from civic engagement.

The purpose of this *first subsection* is to explore how the material deprivation of releasees limits them from exercising a basic *democratic right such as voting*. In different stages of the unique process of cumulative material deprivation which has been explored in Chapter 6, releasees face a situation in which many of them end up in debt. Due to the fear of being pursued for their debts, some releasees give up their right to vote.

The right to vote is a basic democratic right. During group meeting 7, when the group explored the concept of citizenship status, Pete stressed the special importance that voting has in a democracy:

> 'I think there is something between linking the voting and democratic participation, and equality of access and so on because these two things are related.' (Pete)

Voting can thus be a mechanism used by people released –and by the population in general—in order to change the state of affairs and ameliorate the different set of adversities that releasees have to face (see p.65 on this matter).

This is what makes the content and implications of the following conversation especially relevant:

John: You can vote, but the reason people that come out of prison I would say 80 percent of them don't vote for the simple reason that (…) they've got other debt (…) cause they have got caught with debt (…) like banks, all the money they owe.

Alejandro: Ah! They owe…

John: …they've probably been out and ran up people that have been into prison have took

Alejandro: OK, they owe money to people

John: …credit cards, Provident, whatever, getting money up to all sorts crazy

Alejandro: and then why don´t they vote? So they don't catch them?

John: …cause if they vote, cause if they vote they go on the voters' roll, and once you go on the voters' roll it gets you where you are and they draw in, once you go on that voters' roll they draw everything, every service and before you know you are getting chased for telly license, debt, things that you need, you've no paid a bank charge for years, you know that's how people no go on the voters' roll.

Alejandro: ok ok ok ok

John: …because of debt. It's a big thing

Alejandro: ok, ok

John: …or phone bills.

In this case, according to John, there is a (high) percentage of releasees who do not exercise their voting rights because they are in debt and are afraid of being pursued for that debt. More research is needed on this aspect but, if this is discovered to be true, it can be considered an example of how some releasees do not exercise their rights because of fear of having to pay their debts. Not exercising these rights then hinders their chances to

change the current state of affairs with respect to post-prison re/integration, and other issues.

But why do releasees incur debts? Are they more likely than the general population to incur them because of the way in which we as a society have responded to the potentially imprisonable act? I would argue that the answer to this matter is affirmative. In order to sustain this claim, I would like to refer back and develop some issues which were explored in Chapter 6, and to add a couple more.

In Chapter 6, by complementing my data with literature, I explored the unique process of cumulative disadvantage which starts before someone is imprisoned and goes beyond their release. It is through that process that releasees may incur debt.

In group meeting 10, Alex, during our exploration of post-prison accommodation, said:

> 'Another thing we've forgotten to mention is, obviously regarding people leaving prison as well, quite a lot of these people have had tenancies before, have had all these services before and have got debt arrears through going to prison.' (Alex S10)

Similarly, in another group meeting, Leanne argued:

> 'A lot of the times as well I would put welfare rights onto folk because a lot of the debt is because they've been in prison,'

During our group conversations about accommodation, there were a couple of examples that can help us better understand how people run up debts because of going to prison. The group argued that some people start accumulating debt immediately when entering prison because of not terminating their tenancy agreements. Some people do not inform their tenants' or housing associations of their imprisonment and, if they do not continue receiving benefits while being in prison, they begin to accumulate rent arrears. Most tenancy agreements include an obligation on the tenant behalf to inform the owner two months prior to leaving the flat. That may mean that people when entering prison, if not receiving benefits, automatically incur two months' rent debt. Heather argued that even when negotiating the termination of the agreement, they still cannot immediately stop paying rent: they need to inform the landlord in advance be able to stop paying rent.

Another way in which people may incur debt because of going to prison was mentioned in Chapter 6 by Leanne. If someone is likely to stay in prison for up to 13 weeks or so they can apply and receive 13 weeks housing benefit. If at the end, for any reason they stay more than 13 weeks, then they stop receiving benefits and go into rent arrears.

Immediately on release, people are also very likely to incur further debt. As explained in Chapter 6, for most releasees there is a gap of five or six weeks between application for and the receiving of benefits, so people go out 'automatically (…) in some sort of debt or financial hardship' (Karen). But even when beginning to receive benefits, people can still incur debts. Witness the following example experienced by Alan in his role as a SPS Throughcare Support Officer:

> 'You know, using the emergency accommodation for universal credit, I had a guy that accrued three grand in debt in the court in the space of three weeks (…). Universal credit has a cap of £398 a month. If you've got a B&B that's charging 300 pound a week, you can do the maths, and you're soon getting hounded for about 4 grand through no cost, no issue of his own, because he was placed there and he's given one offer and he's moved in there and (…) the homeless casework teams soon realised 'well we've got an issue here, this guy now owes about 4 grand', you know what I mean, so they then moved him back out but still this guy's liability, because the (…) (Bed & Breakfast) were chasing him for the money because they're private so, whatever his experience is, you can't flog a dead horse, he's no assets, you can't do anything with him (…) That's an extreme case, but the housing benefit's capped on universal credit; you have people in flats and tenants maybe in a slightly more upmarket area where their property is maybe 500 a month. Now, they'll have to find the 100 out of their disposable income, to supplement their rent costs as well. So, it's going to cause all kinds of grief all over the place' (Alan)

The universal credit maximum does not seem to be enough in order to cover many bed & breakfast prices. This is especially problematic for releasees due to three factors. Firstly, as explained in Chapter 6, due to the cumulative process of material deprivation that a high proportion of people experience from before prison until after release, they have little chance of refusing the offer of a roof over their heads. As explored in Chapter 7, the potential accommodation choices are also reduced by stigmatisation and degradation that

released people experience. Finally, taking into account that, as I have shown, at the beginning of this chapter, independent living skills get eroded during imprisonment, releasees are very likely to not be prepared to live alone. This also reduces their chance of finding alternatives to a bed and breakfast. The picture that arises is of someone that is forced by their situation to choose between sleeping on the street or accepting an offer of a place in a bed and breakfast and beginning to slip into debt.

The second matter is equally worrying: this individual has not found the Bed & Breakfast opportunity by himself but through the support of emergency accommodation services. How is it possible that accepting the support of professional services leads this person to accumulate debt?

Up until now, I have explored different ways in which releasees become indebted and how this may hinder them from exercising their democratic right to vote. As a consequence of this, they miss an opportunity to provide their input in one of the main democratic processes. They lose the chance to alleviate the multiple adversities that released people face.

It is now time to continue exploring the *second related adversity of political dis-integration: exclusion from public conversations*. There are several factors which may hinder the participation of releasees from prison in public forums and conversations on matters such as crime and justice. I am going to start this subsection by exploring self-exclusion.

As I pointed out during Chapter 4, our group meetings can be considered not only as a forum of collaborative knowledge production but also as a heterogeneous political space on crime and justice. During our continuous collective reflections on our group dynamics and dialogue, different matters arose which, if extrapolated to other public forums, can be considered as factors that may hinder the participation of releasees in public forums and conversations on matters about crime and justice.

The first one is feeling an outsider, as has been explored in Chapter 6. The two members of the group who have experience of being imprisoned shared their feelings on this matter. 'Sense of belonging' (written on coloured card) and 'feeling part of society' (written on coloured card) were considered by the group as being part of Citizenship. If people do not

feel part of society it is much more unlikely that they engage in it, including being part of their conversations.

In addition to this, different group members shared that, before joining the group, or before engaging in other activities in which they interacted with authority figures, they had a perception of 'them versus us'. Charlie's and John's first-hand experience reveals how that perception hinders them from engaging in conversation with figures of authority:

> 'When I first started, I was like, I'm not sure about this [being part of the group and sharing the space with authority figures], you know what I mean?' (Charlie)

> 'As I said, the people in the group before, like say, the prison officers, the social workers and… I've always been kind of a, I've regarded them as the enemy fae [from] I was a wee boy (…). They've (been) the enemy all my life (…).' (Charlie)

> 'I wouldn't have sat anyway near (…) prison officers, police officer I would have never been close to them, but now through education, theatre, arts and learning it's shown that they are just people, you know what I mean, so I wouldn't have sat there, because I've done my conflict resolution training, there was two police officers and two prisoners and the rest were charity. I wouldn't have sat in this room, two polis [police] and two prison officers, because back again it was us and them, so that's just the mentality, that attitude' (John)

In these two quotes, Charlie and John clearly share a big reluctance to be sitting in the same room as figures of authority. This would mean that, when considering whether to participate in public forums, releasees are likely to decide not to participate if there are any authority figures involved. Related to this matter of seeing authority figures as enemies, Charlie stated:

> Charlie: (…) I mean just sitting in a room with prison officers, you know sitting in a room and be civilised with prison officers that was that was a was like that…

Alejandro: yeah for you it was…

Charlie: sometimes I had to pinch myself like is this fucking happening, you know what I mean, is this real? They're being civil towards you and I'm being civil towards them, you know what I mean, and that's something I would never have thought I would be able to do, you know what I mean, and being treated equally to the prison officers and the system in general: probation officers, social workers… anybody you know what I mean? People I never thought I'd have had any right to be in their company, you know what I mean.

Charlie, before being part of the group, thought that in engaging with authority figures, confrontational dynamics would arise on both sides. In addition to that, in this quote, he seems surprised that he was treated equally to these authority figures. This fear of being stigmatised, which again can foster self-exclusion from public conversations, also appeared in another moment of the group conversation.

In addition to these matters, in the last part of the above quote Charlie expresses that before being part of the group he felt that he had a lack of entitlement to be in their company. It is obvious that if those that are released do not feel entitled to be in company of these authority figures, it is again very likely that they avoid participating in public conversation with these collectives present. Up until now, I have shared some factors that may hinder self-exclusion from public conversations on different issues.

I am going to end this subsection by exploring a case in which people released are not the ones that decide not to participate: exclusion from public conversations due to digital exclusion. In line with literature, during our group meetings, Charlie considered that being online facilitated access to more viewpoints about what is happening in the world. He argued that by accessing the internet, you can go beyond the official information and have access to a wider range of opinions and information that despite not always being true, can enrich and inform your positions.

Alejandro: What do you think Charlie?

Charlie: aye, as, aye as Sarah's saying there it's important to find things like eh… see the news for instance

Alejandro: sorry can you repeat?

Charlie: Sarah said the news

Alejandro: ah the news yeah

Charlie: the news and television news they might tell you a certain bit of a story, you know on the news but they they're only allowed to tell you so much

Sarah: *laughs* yeah completely

Alejandro: yeah

Charlie: but you can go in the computer and look up the thingmy and see the what the full story's about, you know what I mean?

(…)

Sarah: I really liked your idea about the the access to the news and…. and you know, you're sort of you are not at the mercy of what they decide to broadcast on tv, you've got a little bit of… I suppose it's quite useful and like political sort of situations

(…)

Charlie: and then newspapers only tells you so much and all but if you go on to the thingmy and you look it up you'll tell me things that you, you didn´t think you were, you didn´t think was possible to learn

Sarah: you've got access to a lot of different views like, and also

Charlie: aye, it's a good eye-opener, you know what I mean

Sarah: I suppose as well you've actually got… being on the internet you've got access to the wider world and different viewpoints rather than just your local

Charlie: aye aye

Sarah: It kind of opens up

Charlie: and around this discussing this kind of situation, you can but in, you can say your bit you know what I mean

Alejandro: yeah exactly you can also contribute to that

Sarah: yeah, yeah, you can, yeah yeah.

Alejandro: you can also contribute…

Sarah: it's like it kind of gives you a voice I suppose in a way, in the forums, on Facebook and you know, joining in on conversations about different things you know

Charlie: aye

During this conversation, Charlie and Sarah agree that being digitally included is important in order to be more informed about what's happening in the world. Sarah even gives politics as an example of the kind of extra information that can be found online. But, more importantly, firstly Charlie and then Sarah go beyond that, by stating that being digitally included is not only important to be informed but also to contribute to the conversation that happens online. If someone is digitally excluded, that person is also excluded from participating in those public conversations. As I have argued during the first section of this chapter, releasees due to their stay in prison are especially vulnerable as many are digitally excluded.

This idea resonates with current literature, which is consistent with the fact that those that are digitally excluded are excluded from certain parts of civic political participation that occur online (Scottish Government 2017b; Friemel 2016) and that can even have a continuation offline. The United Nation Nations General Assembly, for example considered that 'the Internet can be an important tool for fostering citizen and civil society participation' (United Nations 2016, p.4). Although more research is needed, it has been found that internet usage (Sylvester & McGlynn 2010) and multimodal Internet use (Wei 2012) implies higher civic political participation.

So far, I have explored two different ways in which people released are especially vulnerable to ending up being politically dis-integrated. Now I am going to concentrate on another example by exploring the *delicate situation for fighting for basic rights often faced by releasees*.

> 'There was a journalist…. but he did six months of work in really unstable jobs, zero hour contracts and worked as an Uber driver and worked for Amazon and stuff, and what he was finding is that people who were there were people who needed work but weren't in a position to complain if they weren't getting their rights respected so for example , he said they tended to come to him because he was a native English speaker, whereas a lot of the people he worked alongside at Amazon for example were Romanian, and there was a 19 year old girl who was being paid 62 pence an hour because they knew she probably wouldn't complain about it, and so… all this kind of stuff was coming up, and if the people are in a position that they want to keep the job, *if you're coming straight out of prison and you need to have some employment, you're not going to fight for you rights and big employers will exploit that.*'
> (Nancy emphasis added)

In this quote, Nancy uses a case which was investigated and shared by a journalist in order to extrapolate it to the experience of releasees. I argue that releasees are in an extremely vulnerable situation in this respect. Their materially deprived situation of post-carceral subjects added to their often-low skills and the negative dispositions and behaviour of potential employers leave releasees in a very delicate situation in order to fight for their basic rights, including in the labour market and in employment.

In addition to these three ways in which releasees are likely to be politically and civically dis-integrated, during an individual meeting, an example of an *exclusion from civic engagement* arose. John shared the following experience:

> 'John: I still don't seem to fit in, I try to volunteer in the Govan Hall hub and I tell them my previous convictions. I tell them being honest
>
> Alejandro: yeah

John: nut [no] and I did prison throughcare, going in and geeing [giving] a meeting and tell them who am I

Alejandro yeah, yeah, yeah

John: and also it wisnae [wasn't] just me saying it

Alejandro: and still didn't want to

John: and it still didnae [didn't] work and a lot of people

(…)

Alejandro: so was it a community council or what was it?

John: it's a community hub (…) See cause (…) it's a charity innit'

In this case, due to stigma, John suffered discrimination in a Community Hub. When he chose to voluntarily explain that he had been in prison, the Community Hub denies him the possibility of being a volunteer. John even tried to organise a meeting in which his Throughcare Support Officer also attended so they could explore that matter, but that didn't work either. This is an example of how the community not only stigmatises and discriminates but denies the opportunity of contributing to society. When exploring citizenship, the possibility to contribute was considered by the group as one of the main domains. The group argued that in order to be a full citizen it is important to be an *active* member of the community. Thus, releasees, according to the group have the right to have the chance to contribute. In this case, John is immediately denied that possibility when verbally being honest, and without even being asked for disclosure. Doing that, the Hub not only discriminated against John for having been in prison, but also damaged itself by rejecting the offered help.

In this section I have being exploring different ways in which releasees are likely to be civic-politically dis-integrated. Firstly, I have shown how my research data suggests the material deprivation of releasees, and particularly being in debt, may hinder them from exercising their voting rights. I have argued and explored how a combination of the pre-prison severe material deprivation and our societal response to a potentially criminal act makes releasees more likely to incur debts than the general population. When entering

prison, people sometimes do not terminate their tenancy agreement and even when trying to terminate they are not able to do so immediately: there is a need to inform the landlord at least one or two months in advance of the last rent payment. In addition, sometimes people who are receiving benefits while in prison, stay longer than expected, incurring debts after the maximum of 13 weeks benefits has passed. I have also explored how on release, people usually have to wait for an average of 5/6 weeks before the first payment, and that even when receiving benefits payment, the price of the rented accommodation that are given by public assistance services exceed the benefits payment: in these cases, they have to choose between sleeping on the streets or incurring in rent arears.

Afterwards I have explored two different ways in which releasees are likely to be excluded from public conversations. The first one is self-exclusion due to (a) feeling an outsider, (b) a perception of 'them vs us', (c) fear of being stigmatised and of facing confrontational dynamics, (d) a feeling of lack of entitlement. The second one is the digital exclusion suffered by many releasees.

I have concluded by showing how, especially-delicate material deprivation can limit releasees from fighting for basic rights and by giving an example on how labelling sometimes excludes releasees from civic engagement.

The Adversities of Judicial-Legal Dis-integration

At the beginning of Chapter 6, when outlining the aim of these three findings chapters, I signalled that I aimed to show fine-grained localised examples on the way in which, as a society, we socially, penally, legally and politically respond to a potentially imprisonable act produces, reproduces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way.

This section, which will discuss the last type of adversity surfacing from our group conversations, is going to be dedicated to exploring the penal and legal reaction to criminalised acts. Taking into account the content of the group conversations, I will be focusing on one particular salient formal factor that shapes post-prison re/integration: over-incarceration. During our group meetings, there was another formal factor that was salient and well-developed: the Scottish Disclosure and criminal record legislation. I have decided not to focus mainly on the group account of this second matter because, as explained in

Chapter 3, since the last group meeting two highly relevant acts have been approved (p.56). That said, it does require some discussion.

The new legislation will imply changes in practice for certain prison sub-populations, and it is uncertain the extent to which it will improve the situation of those who will be affected by it. Due to this, I believe that it is necessary to include a brief overview of the group account on this matter.

During meeting 9 every member that was there agreed that 'the disclosure process is overcomplicated' (flipchart) and argued for a need to 'clarify (how it works), simplify (disclosure) and restrict' (flipchart). Firstly, the group believed that the disclosure procedures are so difficult that they're 'not well understood' (Pete). This, according to the group, affected the level to which employers could take *informed* decisions. By simplify, the group meant to 'simplify the means by which, the process by which convictions are considered to be spent' (Pete). By restrict, the group referred to what is disclosed in the record, for how long it is disclosed, and in which situations it must be disclosed.

There was a general sense that, as long as someone had an active criminal record, they were never going to be hired:

> Karen: If your convictions are following you for lengthy periods or sometimes are never gonna be spent then that will restrict your employment options, especially if employers aren´t actually that well informed as to what would prevent them employing you

> Pete: I would suggest the word inhibit, it's more appropriate than restrict, because disclosure process itself doesn´t do the restriction, it's the way it's perceived

In this quote, apart from the already mentioned issue on the misinformation of potential employers, another matter is introduced: potential employers usually make hiring decisions. During this process in which people are not hired due to their releasee status, interpretation of the criminal record has its role. As I have highlighted in Chapter 3, in any communication process we should not just analyse the message but also the means of transmission, the reception and the context (p.58).

There is a need to study if the new legislation improves these issues. With this brief account of the group's position on disclosure having been shared, it is now time to explore the main argument of this section in depth: over-incarceration fosters dis-integration

During group meeting 9, when exploring the different structural factors that shape post-prison re/integration, the topic of over-incarceration arose:

> 'I realise the theme of this is to do with post-prison reintegration but in terms of post-punishment reintegration it's I think, it is a valid thing to consider that we don't (…) need to have as many people going through the system, and that would improve post-prison reintegration for everybody.' (Pete)

Every group member that was present during that meeting agreed that (a) 'too many people (are) going to prison' (flipchart) and that (b) this factor hinders post-prison re/integration. Two reasons were directly mentioned showing why over-incarceration fosters dis-integration. The first is that *being imprisoned is an often-difficult experience that has consequences beyond imprisonment*.

> '(Prison has) been more and more recognised as being a very dangerous place to put people, a difficult place for them to be in.' (Pete)

Similarly, Heather pointed out:

> '(…) what an individual faces when they come to custody, whether [it] be on remand or sentenced, and what happens to them or their benefits, housing (…) and how affects their lives and how will it affect their life when they get back out.'

To these comments, we need to add all the arguments which have been included in these three findings chapters, which signal how intra-prison factors hinder material, social, personal, and political and civic dis-integration.

The second reason why over-incarceration hinders dis-integration is related to the *allocation of current resources*. Everyone in the group present in meeting 9 agreed with the following statement: 'Less people going to prison in the first place: as a consequence, more support available for convicted' (Flipchart).

In exploring over-incarceration, the group discussed two types of inmates: short-termers and people on remand. With respect to the former, Alex, for example, relied on a statistical comparison:

> 'I think the demograph showed that we imprison more adult males serving four
> years and under than any other country in Western Europe, so obviously
> Scotland has got a problem with sending guys to prison.'

As explored in Chapter 1, in December 2020, Scotland had the highest Western Europe prison population rate: 136 per 10,000 of the national population (World Prison Brief 2021 online accessed 20th of January of 2021). In Scotland, 59percent of the custodial sentences given in 2018-19 to males were of less than six months (National Statistics 2020). Leaving aside life sentences, in 2018-19 the average length of custodial sentences in Scotland was only 326 days: less than a year.

Another line of reasoning was with respect to short-term imprisonment's effectiveness and its alternatives. Pete, for example argued:

> 'If you think about the number of people who've got short term prison
> sentences who straight back in again, ehm, their failure rate's very high.'

Kenny, gave a reason for that:

> 'If somebody's only in for a couple of weeks, there's nothing you can do
> really, realistically.' (Kenny)

Pete, argued that there were alternatives that are less damaging and more effective, and thus better for the individual and for the community:

> 'Short-term sentences are more damaging than the community-based sentences
> and (…) community-based sentences are far more effectively decreasing
> reoffending, which means you get fewer victims.' (Pete)

This is strongly supported by Scottish evidence (see Scottish Prison Commission 2008) Kenny, on the other hand, pointed out that there is already political aspiration to send less certain short-termers to prison:

> 'I think that's the argument that everybody knows, I think the aspiration is already there, politically, (…) that people don´t go to prison except for sentence more than 12 months. That's the aspiration, we're nowhere near that.'

Apart from short-termers, the group also mentioned another category of inmates that often spend little time in prison; those on remand. Alan, for example stated:

> 'We've got loads of guys in remand and they do two weeks and they get right back out again. Right? And they never ever appear (back) in prison. So, why did they do the two weeks in remand, so… he can lose his tenancy, he can lose everything just in two… for remand (the maximum is) 110 days just now and then extensions on it, so technically you do 3 months in prison, solid, without a sentence.' (Alan)

Those on remand may not have to face social stigmatisation and degradation, but they still have to face the material consequences of having been inside prison. In addition to that, it may also have consequences for their social connections:

> 'See that remand thing, if they've got partners, the partner cannot go to prison she's no money to go and see him, if it's a way out, wherever it is, you know what I mean.' (Pat)

In addition to hindering post-prison re/integration, reducing the numbers of those on remand would allow us to, according to Pat, to 'save the money' (Pat) and invest it in re/integration.

Arguing that there is over-incarceration and that it dis-integrates does not directly imply that the group believed that nobody should go to prison, nor that re/integration should be the main and/or only aim of criminal justice. The idea behind signalling that over-incarceration fosters dis-integration is a simple and obvious one but, nonetheless, it is important. As I have shown in this thesis, prison is dis-integrative in multiple ways. Therefore, the less we create dis-integration in the first place — by sending people to

prison—the less people will need to be re/integrated, meaning perhaps that fewer people would return to prison. Similarly, the less we exacerbate already existent, pre-prison dis-integration — by sending already excluded people to prison — the less re-integrative effort will be needed, and the less people will return to prison.

During this last section, I have argued that, in Scotland, the way of legally reacting to a potentially imprisonable act provokes an extreme over-incarceration phenomenon: Scotland has the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe. A combination of the group account and official statistics have shown that this is mainly due to the huge number of short-termers and people on remand. I have argued that, as prison is dis-integrative, sending more people to prison exacerbates social dis-integration.

Summary

This last section concludes a chapter in which I have also explored the adversities of penal and civic-political dis-integration. Revealing these adversities enriches and nuances our understanding of the cumulative process of social and material dis-integration portrayed in the two previous chapters. The adversities of personal dis-integration especially extend our understanding on the intra-prison aspects that foster post-prison re/integration: prison often personally dis-integrates in multiple ways. On the other side, the exploration of the adversities of civic-political dis-integration helps us to understand the complex and nuanced process of post-prison dis-integration. I have concluded by exploring how judicial-legal decisions foster dis-integration.

During these last three chapters I have presented and discussed the group's account of post-prison re/integration and its limits. The exploration of this research data has built on and enhanced the granularity of Chapter 3's two main arguments, which derived from a synthetic and dialogic analysis of literature:

a) That due to a unique cumulative process that produces and exacerbates an often already existent pre-prison dis-integration, releasees are acutely and persistently disadvantaged in compounding and multiple ways.

b) That as part of that process, the way in which, as a society, we socially, penally, legally and politically respond to a potentially imprisonable act produces, reproduces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way.

By developing this analysis, I have fulfilled the first aim of this thesis: to better understand post-prison re/integration. While understanding post-prison re/integration I have also partly achieved the second aim of this thesis: to interrogate post-prison re/integration. During the next chapter, I will complete this aim when presenting and analysing the implications for theory, research, society, policy and practice. While doing so, another aim will be achieved; to give a complex, nuanced and comprehensive conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration. The last purpose of this thesis will be achieved in its last section, in which I will share a sketch of an alternative re/integrative society.

9 Chapter 9 – Discussion and Conclusions

Overview of the Thesis so Far

This thesis aims, by critically complementing my collaborative research findings with literature theory and research; to conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine men's post-prison re/integration. It does so by exploring re/integration in Glasgow in depth and via dialogic methods. In this last chapter, I will explore the theoretical, research, societal, and policy and practice implications of the findings presented and the analysis offered above.

As explained in Chapter 5, during our meetings, the group also explored how re/integration should be understood and discussed and some of the steps needed in order to better support it. As indicated in Chapter 1, in this thesis, I give primacy to data with respect to the conceptualisation, understanding and interrogation of post-prison re/integration, rather than with respect to its reimagination because before engaging in an in-depth reimagination of any social phenomenon, there is a need for clear conceptualisation, understanding and interrogation. There is a lack of a sufficiently developed and coherent body of literature with respect to re/integration more generally, and to the conceptualisation, understanding and interrogation of post-prison re/integration more particularly. Bearing these issues in mind, and because I have much more data — on each of these different moments — than space, the group's prescriptive account of how reintegration can and should be better supported will not be discussed in this thesis but in future publications.

The implications explored in this chapter, then, will be drawn only from data which has already been analysed and discussed in the last three chapters; as such, this chapter represents my own view of these implications — not the views of the group. In spite of that, I will introduce new data in order to illustrate my own views. In addition, I would like to acknowledge that, obviously, I cannot un-hear comments and contributions offered during our group meetings. These will have influenced the content of this chapter.

Before I proceed to discuss the thesis's implications, I will offer a brief summary of each chapters' key arguments.

Chapter 1 was dedicated to introducing this thesis. After exploring increasing academic, political and social interest in post-prison re/integration, I highlighted the salience of theorising and researching post-prison re/integration both as an intellectual endeavour and as step towards improving life after prison.

The purpose of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 was to critically engage with and analyse the current state of knowledge on the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration, firstly by examining existing conceptualisations of it, and then by reviewing empirical evidence about it. In Chapter 2, after introducing and assessing various concepts related to life after prison (correctional re/habilitation, re/settlement, desistance, the four-forms model, and reentry), I identified the concept of re/integration as best-situated for understanding, interrogating and reimagining how life after prison is and how it should be.

In Chapter 3 by synthesising evidence from literature on life after prison in Scotland, the UK and other Western countries, a clear but disturbing picture emerged: releasees often face severe material, social, civic-political, personal, legal and moral dis-integration which is unique to them. When exploring the reasons for this, I argued that post-prison dis-integration is part of a cumulative process of disadvantages which often starts before imprisonment. I showed how the uniqueness of this process emanates from the fact that our societal response to potentially imprisonable acts produces, reinforces and exacerbates these pre-existing disparities. In this same chapter, we also saw that societal responses could have penal, legal, civic-political, moral, cultural and social natures.

In Chapter 4, after situating the research project and myself, I explored each stage of my research project: the establishment of its aim/s, its design, its preparation, its conduction, the data working period and the thesis writing stage. Through this process, I explained how and why creating, being part and facilitating a dialogic inquiry group was deemed as one of the most appropriate ways in order to enrich our current knowledge of life after prison. This appropriateness was assessed in terms of political, epistemic, axiological and politico-philosophical criteria. Limitations during these steps were explored. Chapter 5, through an in depth-reflection on some complex and key aspects of the research process, complemented Chapter 4 by enriching its portrayal of how the data presented, analysed and discussed in this thesis was generated.

In Chapters 6, 7 and 8, the analysis and discussion of the group's account of re/integration resonated with and further elaborated the picture portrayed by previous studies, reviewed

in Chapter 3. This study suggests that, in Glasgow, releasees suffer severe material, social, civic-political, judicial-legal and personal adversities. Societal responses to people who have been imprisoned produce, reproduce and exacerbate these adversities. These findings seem to be especially important in light of my methodology. As explained in Chapter 5, most evidence on post-prison re/integration is obtained through research that focuses on the experience of releasees. In my research, because it was designed as a study of the phenomenon of post-prison re/integration – and not merely of the experience of releasees—the inquiry group was formed by a heterogeneous group of people who held different expertise on and/or were differently affected by this phenomenon. This, combined with its collaborative and dialogic approach, conferred with these findings a degree of intersubjective validity which should be kept in mind and valued. Bearing in mind my constructivist epistemology – which is nowadays widely shared in the social sciences — previous qualitative research findings could be seen as only portraying the — very important but necessarily partial — views of releasees and researchers.

The process of inter-subjective checking which occurred in the dialogic inquiry group, although it still cannot guarantee a 'perfect' portrayal of the phenomenon, has the potential to provide a more detailed picture: the interactive individual and collective accounts of different people, with different experiences and expertise, coming from different standpoints and from different backgrounds in a dialogic process, produces this inter-subjective quality.

Up until now, while fulfilling the aims of this thesis by synthesising and bringing into dialogue my research data with literature, a clear storyline has been unveiled. People face multiple and severe adversities on release. When exploring the reasons behind these adversities, I have shown that post-prison dis-integration is fostered through a process of cumulative dis-integration which often starts before the sentence and goes on well beyond release. In presenting a complex and nuanced picture of this process, I have shown the key role played by the structure/context, firstly, by outlining that people who were already dis-integrated are highly over-represented in prison and, secondly, by showing how our societal response to potentially imprisonable acts produces, reinforces and exacerbates dis-integration and inequalities.

The research data presented and analysed in the last three chapters not only supports already existent evidence both in Glasgow and beyond; it also complements it, enhancing our understanding of post-prison re/integration by giving fine-grained examples of dis-

integration and the reasons behind it. Perhaps the best example of this was Chapter 6's section on the stigmatising, degrading and inefficient process of seeking the Community Homeless Service support. Another example is the civic-political dis-integration section which helps us to map and begin to explore in depth a topic which is underdeveloped in literature. The frequent appearance and salience of the topic of digital exclusion in our group conversations seems to highlight a big gap in literature, which, if not tackled, is likely to become only greater, bearing in mind the increasing importance of technology in our society. This topic has received up until now little attention with respect to (a) other more commonly discussed aspects of post-prison re/integration, (b) the increasing impact that the digital world has on life after prison, and (c) to the salience of the digital world nowadays. These and other matters will be further explored in the next three sections, which will be fully dedicated to exploring the theoretical, research, societal, and policy and practice implications of this thesis.

The Thesis' Main Implications

There are mainly four interlinked implications of the research presented in this thesis:

1. In theoretical terms, the main implication of this thesis is its refinement of the conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration. Re/integration is a multilevel and multilateral phenomenon which is shaped by personal, penal, economic, social, cultural, judicial-legal and civic-political elements. In re/integration, releasees undergo a dynamic and often painful process which involves movement towards different intertwined forms of inclusion and/or exclusion, and is shaped by pre-, intra- and post-prison elements. I will suggest below this new conceptualisation's implications for research, society, and policy and practice.

2. Secondly, the six-forms model of re/integration that I develop below has temporal and intersectional dimensions. We can distinguish between social, legal, civic-political, material, personal and moral re/integration. There is a strong interaction between each of these domains. This added to the dynamic character of post-prison re/integration has consequences on research, society, and policy and practice,

3. Thirdly, the existence of pre-prison, intra-prison and post-prison contextual factors which foster dis-integration raises profound questions about society and

social justice which, in turn, have implications for society, research, policy and practice.

4. Finally, in Scotland, at the time of conducting the research, there was a large dissonance between its policy and practice discourse and how post-prison re-integration in Scotland is experienced and observed. This again has consequences on research, and theory and practice.

Before engaging in the exploration of each of these implications, the issue of generalisability/transferability of my findings needs to be addressed. At the beginning of Chapter 3, I explained the double value of the literature review on which I relied in order to synthesise the state of knowledge on post-prison re/integration. Not only did that review directly address my research topic (Gomm et al. 2000); it also helped to assess the analytical generalisability of this study; that is to say, its capacity to generate theoretical generalisations which are 'at a conceptual level higher than that of the specific case' (Yin 2018, p. 73; Yin 2015). As I explained, in order to assess the transferability of findings, it is necessary to consider their 'fittingness', that is to say, 'the degree of congruence between sending and receiving contexts' (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p.124). When dealing with the social institution of punishment, Lacey (2008; 2010) consistently argues in her criminological work that distal penal influences are filtered through local cultural, social, political and economic institutions and actors (see also McNeill 2019a). This can be applied to re/integration too. Bearing these issues in mind, I argue that the findings of this thesis have an intrinsic value in the Glaswegian and Scottish context, but are also valuable beyond it, if these contextual factors can be taken into account. For this reason, I have tried throughout this thesis to deal with the 'the contextuality and situatedness' (Escobar 2014b, p.57) of the data and to give 'thick description' of the phenomenon under research (Geertz 1973, p. 6; see Lincoln & Guba 1985 on this matter).

During the last three chapters, in spite of some proximate Scottish and Glasgow-specific factors — e.g., the Universal Credit system, criminal record legislation, how homelessness provision is organised in the city — many more common features between my research data and wider literature have arisen. This may be because the research was also conducted in a city of a country (Scotland) which is part of a neoliberal state (UK), and during a period of history which is characterised by a decline of welfarism and a rise of neoliberalism under the dynamics of late modernity (see Garland 2001 for a recent account of contemporary punishment).

A New Conceptualisation of Post-prison Re/integration

The purpose of this section is to discuss the *main theoretical implication* of this thesis in its refinement of the conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration. As part of this discussion I am also going to outline the second implication of this thesis: the six-forms model of re/integration with its temporal and intersectional dimensions.

I argue that re/integration is a multilevel and multilateral phenomenon which is shaped by personal, penal, economic, social, cultural, judicial-legal and civic-political elements. In re/integration, releasees undergo a dynamic and often painful process which involves movement towards different intertwined forms of inclusion and/or exclusion, and is shaped by pre-, intra- and post-prison elements.

Although after reading the preceding chapters, this conceptualisation may seem quite self-explanatory, further elaboration of some of its aspects will be provided at certain points in this chapter. I will start by elaborating an aspect which is present in this conceptualisation and which, by itself, constitutes as another key theoretical implication of this thesis; the importance of understanding movement towards different intertwined forms of inclusion and/or exclusion. With this in mind, and relying on the three preceding chapters, I propose a model involving six interconnected forms of the individual process of re/integration. I will also develop its temporal dimensions.

My analysis and discussion of the research results suggest the existence of six different domains of post-prison re/integration: the material, the social, the personal, the judicial-legal, the moral, and the civic-political. While the material refers to issues such as accommodation, income and healthcare, the social refers to the set of social connections, both formal and informal, that the releasee may have. The personal domain refers to personal development or flourishing. The judicial-legal domain captures the legal status of the individual, which is shaped by legal and penal reactions to them. The moral domain concerns the reconciliation between the individuals involved, civil society and the state. The last domain refers to the political and civic participation of the individual.

DOMAINS	MODELS			
	Ecological model of reintegration (Shinkfield 2006, & Graffam 2009; Andrews 2015)	**Four forms of rehabilitation** (McNeill 2012, 2014; Burke et al. 2019)	**Model derived from the inquiry group account**	**This thesis' six-forms model of re/integration**
	Support conditions	Social rehabilitation (informal connections)	Social re/integration (and a subdomain of citizenship status)	Social re/integration
	Subsistence conditions		Material re/integration	Material re/integration
	Intrapersonal conditions	Personal rehabilitation	Personal re/integration	Personal re/integration
		Legal/judicial rehabilitation	A subdomain of citizenship status	Judicial-legal re/integration
		Moral rehabilitation		Moral re/integration
			A subdomain of citizenship status	Civic-political re/integration

Table 5. A comparison of models of re/integration

In this table, I compare two of the most comprehensive models of the individual journey of post-prison re/integration with two other models. I make a distinction between the model deriving from the inquiry group account and my own model of re/integration. One of the differences is that the latter includes the domain of moral re/integration. The reasons for this were outlined in Chapter 5. In addition, in order to avoid redundancy, when analysing and describing the group account, I decided to elevate two of the three subdomains of citizenship to the status of domain. At first sight, in terms of domains, the six-forms model seems more comprehensive than those offered previously in literature, and that of the group's model. All these models recognise that this individual journey is imbricated in a social context. As I will argue below, the six-forms model of re/integration also has distinct implications on society, policy and research. The more nuanced and comprehensive a conceptualisation is, the more research can be conducted in each of its parts. As Western (2018) argues 'the shortcomings of data' reflect 'shortcomings of theory' (p.2).

A *related theoretical implication* of this thesis lies in its recognition of the interactions between the six domains of re/integration. This is something that is mentioned in some

earlier models (e.g., Andrews 2015; McNeill 2014) but which has not previously been further elaborated and exemplified in detail. Western's (2018) qualitative analysis of the Boston Reentry Study interviews, and, Miller, Alexander and Stuart's (Miller & Alexander 2016; & Stuart 2017; Miller 2017) discussion of their ethnographic data can help us to build a richer and deeper understanding and interrogation of post-prison re/integration by shedding light on these interconnections. This latter's body elaboration of the concept of 'carceral citizenship' and of the theory of 'economy of favors' (Miller 2021, p.123) is of special importance, since it shows how the material, the judicial-legal and the social spheres are interwoven (see Chapters 3,6,7,8).

My own findings provide various fine-grained examples that enhance our understanding and interrogation of these interdependencies. During Chapters 6-8, when encountering an example of this I have emphasised this matter. The clearest example, which portrays in great detail the complex entanglement between the different domains of re/integration, is the group account of how Glasgow's Community Homeless Service processes releasees (p.159). It is worth highlighting that there was consensus in the group about this issue, and diverse group members had direct experience of it. This example shows the interpenetration between material, social, personal and civic-political domains. Releasees who are materially deprived (the material domain), when seeking emergency support, have to go through a process of stigmatisation and degradation due to their social status as a post-carceral denizen (the social domain). This stigmatisation and degradation process is not only enacted by frontline workers but also by having to wait for the whole day in a highly disabling waiting environment only to, most of the time, be told that they had to sleep on the streets. This stigmatising, degrading and inefficient bureaucratic process seems, according to the group, to reproduce the already existent material deprivation by hindering some individuals from even seeking that vital material support. It can even be considered that the waiting exacerbates an already extreme situation: having to be there waiting for the whole day, releasees are not able to look for alternative ways of finding a roof under which to sleep that night. In addition to this, the data showed how the stigmatising and degrading experiences hinder personal re/integration by damaging self-worth and self-esteem (p.174). In Chapter 7 (p.147), Charlie gave a first-hand account of how the outcome of this process (ending up on the streets) contributes to civic-political dis-integration: according to him, people that have been in prison and that end up on the streets feel that they are outsiders.

The interactional character of post-prison re/integration domains has implications for society, for policy and for practice. If we want the re/integration of releasees we should foster each of the six re/integration domains; if not, as they are interconnected, it is highly likely that we would not be successful in the endeavour. The intersectional character also has implications for theory and research: more theoretical and empirical work is needed in order to continue exploring this matter.

Another *theoretical implication* of my findings is the incorporation of a temporal dimension to the model of post-prison re/integration, suggesting the desirability of a synchrony between domains. This implication needs to be carefully elaborated. Firstly, in my conceptualisation above, I indicated that the *dynamic* character of the individual process of post-prison re/integration needs to be made explicit. During the previous chapters, we have seen different examples of this dynamism. Good examples of this are found in Charlie and Pat's accounts of post-prison re/integration: when sharing their experiences, they were talking of this as something in the past, that could not be applied to describe their present. The dynamic character of the individual process was also present when the group argued that releasees only start trying to find a job after the first few weeks have passed (p.137). The dynamism of this individual process is, in some cases, provoked by contextual factors. An example of this is how people do not receive their first benefits payment until an average of six weeks after release (p.136) Other times it is the individual that changes. This is precisely the idea implied in personal re/integration as a process of human flourishing. Diverse research findings and theoretical contributions consistently support this dynamism (e.g., Bottoms & Shapland 2011).

The desirability of a synchrony between each of the six domains again seems obvious but has previously not been explored in detail. For example, if someone is flourishing in the personal sense but they are still legally and socially considered as a prisoner, it is very likely that their flourishing will be undermined (see Nugent & Schinkel 2016) and thus their re/integration hindered. Similarly, if the social context holds a re/integrative disposition towards someone, but that person continues adopting certain types of behaviour which are socially and legally unacceptable, it is very likely that the social context will stop being re/integrative and will become hostile. Again, re/integration will be hindered.

However, this idea of synchrony between domains seems to contradict one of the group's priorities (p.146); i.e., the importance of prioritising the achievement of a base formed by

safe and stable accommodation, welfare, healthcare and stable health and wellbeing *before* engaging in other aspects of post-prison re/integration. Without this base, the group argued that it was very unlikely to advance in other forms of re/integration. Rather than seeing these two positions as contradictory, I would suggest that they can be considered as complementary. This again has implications for society, policy and practice. Once that minimum base is established, a synchronous re/integrative movement in the six domains should be fostered.

Societal Implications: Being Just

Many research papers, both on life after prison and on other social sciences topics, explore the implications that their findings have for policy and practice. However, the above conceptualisation, and the findings chapters suggest that if we really want to better understand – and thus better interrogate and reimagine post-prison — re/integration, we should widen the scope of this focus: we should engage with the implications for society. Part of the problem is that the way that post-prison re/integration has been conceptualised in different spheres by different societal actors and institutions — such as academics, policy makers, practitioners, communities, the state — has been too narrow, and simplistic. In terms of academic endeavour, this may be a consequence of the 'impact' culture in social science research and of a self-ghettoization of different bodies of literature. The comprehensive conceptualisation that has been given in this chapter, and its roots in the previous three chapters, suggest a need to go beyond criminal justice and even public assistance services in order focus on society and social change as a whole. This same point has been made by other academics (e.g., McNeill 2020a).

It may be inferred from these last four chapters, that if we want re/integration to happen, if we want releasees to be, as a matter of fact and matter of law, full members of society and not subject to multiple and severe disparities on the basis of their prior penalisation, we need to construct a society which is re/integrative. This becomes even clearer when combining the multilateral character of re/integration, with the six interdependent forms model of post-prison re/integration, and its synchrony dimension: if we have multiple actors and institutions which shape different interdependent domains, we need a synchronised and coordinated societal re/integrative effort in order to improve the current state of affairs.

As McNeill and Graham argue 'reintegrative momentum is exceptionally hard to generate and it is easily lost' (2019, p.11). Part of this difficulty may come from its multilaterality. My conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration suggests that it is a multilateral phenomenon, that is to say, it is shaped by different parties and is the responsibility of all of them (see Phipps 2017 on the concept of multilateral). During these three previous chapters, different societal parties and institutions have been named such as the releasee, the state, different criminal justice and non-criminal justice practitioners, the prison, victims, neighbourhoods, the community, or criminal justice and public assistance agencies. Each of the different domains correspond to different societal spheres, in which different actors hold different key roles. In addition to this, the recognition that re/integration is shaped by pre-, intra- and post-prison aspects widens the scope of the required responses and requires the involvement of many more actors and institutions.

An exploration of this second aspect of my conceptualisation directs us to exploring the societal implications of this thesis. A thesis such as this one, which has mainly relied on a study that was conceived in order to merely focus on studying life after prison in a nuanced way, has — by combining a collaborative, dialogic inquiry with a literature synthesis — presented, brought into conversation, supported, and illustrated three key arguments which raise key questions for us as a society. I would like to highlight, that these three arguments, despite having value themselves have been found to be strongly relevant for understanding re/integration as a phenomenon.

The first key argument is that there is an over-representation in prison of individuals who come from the most severely and multiply deprived neighbourhoods who, prior to entering prison, were materially and socially deprived, in poor health, often with problematic substance use, and often with low levels of educational achievement and skills. That is to say, many of the people that end up in prison were dis-integrated in the first place. This raises questions of social and criminal justice. Firstly, it raises questions about if, how and why we, as a society, are complicit in creating these disparities. Secondly, the acceptance of this argument may tempt us to suggest that the criminal justice system is over-punishing its most disadvantaged population because of discrimination — on the basis of being disadvantaged (see Wacquant 2009; Fassin 2018). Although this argument cannot be ruled out, caution is needed. In order to sustain this statement, rigorous research and theoretical reflection on the multiple aspects of the criminal justice process — from why some behaviours are punished and others not, to the stage of sentencing — is needed. As far as I am aware, we do not have consistent findings that track this whole process and therefore I

feel unable to rigorously sustain this argument. This is a complex matter; it may be that people are more likely to be sent to prison because of being disadvantaged; it may be that they are more severely punished because of their background; it may be both.

What seems to be much clearer is that the criminal justice process over-punishes people with disadvantages. This, in turn, does not automatically imply that we, as a society have been unjust with these pre-prison disadvantaged people. A further argument is needed, because, as political philosophers signal, not all disparities are unjust (Fraser 1996, p.36). It is here that the body of literature on social justice may help us by providing different ways of assessing the justice or injustice of different cases (see Bufacchi 2012 for an overview). Theoretical criminological work —beyond the scope of this thesis — is needed in order to suggest how to assess this matter and if an adaption of current social justice assessment tools is needed. As I will elaborate when reimagining a re/integrative society, if careful consideration of the pre-prison situation of a person leads us to the conclusion that the pre-prison disparities were unjust, this may have consequences when trying to give a just societal response. By suggesting this, I am not demeaning the influence of agency in the commission of the potentially punishable act, and thus not implying that people do not have to be held responsible and punished. I would suggest, that if the pre-prison inequalities are considered unjust, our 'debt' as a society can be included and kept in mind in our societal response to a potentially imprisonable act. This leads us, to the second and third societal implications of this thesis. However, before exploring them, I would like to highlight three important caveats.

The first one, although it seems obvious, requires to be stressed when considering these matters for reasons of clarity: as a society, we are also in debt to those who are suffering injustices and do not commit acts which are considered as crimes. The second is that even if certain inequalities are not unjust, they may still be undesirable. Third, a further implication of this thesis for theory and research is that the over-representation in prison of people who come from the most disadvantaged backgrounds may raise the question of whether crime should be treated and studied as a symptom of a society in which there are multiple and acute disparities rather that studying crime itself as a key problem of our society. The latter approach risks considering crime in a decontextualised way. However, considering crime as a symptom of social ills would not mean that crime cannot be also considered as a key problem which needs to be understood, studied and dealt with in a contextualised way.

Another key argument that this thesis has illustrated is that imprisonment has been shown throughout this thesis to be in itself dis-integrative. It produces, reinforces and exacerbates multiple adversities in a unique way. This matter again raises social and criminal justice questions about punishment, about when and how prison is used, and about the condition and regimes of contemporary prisons.

The following argument of Du Bois Pedain (2017) suggests that re/integration is 'nothing less than the central social function of punishment' (McNeill 2020a, p.1):

> 'As a general social practice, punishment does not merely mark out the punishee's actions as wrong and blames him for engaging in this wrongful act. It also defines how both punishee and punisher will move forward from here. The penal agent lays down the terms of his or her future co-existence with the offender in a shared social world. Because this is punishment's central social function, *there is reintegrative momentum inherent in punishment* that gives the offender himself an interest in being punished. Far from threatening or challenging an offender's membership in the community, punishment reasserts or reinforces it' (du Bois Pedain, 2017, p. 203, *emphasis added*).

If this line of philosophical argument is accepted, imprisonment must be seen to be failing in one of punishment's central functions. Even if we disagree with Du Bois Pedain, there are two strong reasons for considering that punishment should be as re/integrative as possible:

> 'Unless we intend to kill, disable, exile or permanently imprison people who have offended, we *must* be concerned with the question of their (…) reintegration. Whether as a *matter of self-interest* (linked to our future safety) or as a *matter of principle* (linked to a concern to ensure that we do not punish excessively and therefore unfairly), when we ask whether, how and how much we should punish, the impact of our answers on reintegrative momentum should be a central concern.' (McNeill & Graham 2020, p.11, *emphasis added*)

On the one hand, pragmatically, when punishing, the criminal justice system should keep in mind re/integration in order not to punish society too by fostering future crime through dis-integration. This thesis has shown how imprisonment – and the Criminal Justice System more widely — is instrumentally ineffective. One reason for this is that it is dis-

integrative. This thesis has outlined the complex and close relationship between re/integration and crime by showing that dis-integration fosters crime and that crime is a dis-integrative by itself.

McNeill and Graham, in the above quote, also argue that, as a matter of principle, criminal justice should keep in mind re/integration in order to be proportionate and parsimonious. McNeill (2019a) adds to these two principles 'productiveness': 'stressing that the form and focus of our approach should be on positive efforts to rehabilitate and reintegrate' (McNeill 2020, p.3). More about these three interrelated matters will be explored in the final section of this chapter.

At the very core of this matter is how we should judge punishment and criminal justice. Garland, illuminating as always, argues in this respect:

> 'Thinking of punishment as a social institution should change not only our mode of understanding penality but also our normative thinking about it. It should lead us to judge punishment according to a wider range of criteria and to bring to bear the kinds of demands and expectations which we customarily apply to social institutions (…) But, nevertheless, when we think of 'the family' or 'the law', 'the government' or 'the economy', and subject them to normative judgment, we do so in ways which are considerably more complex than our thinking about punishment tends to be (…). Perhaps the best example of this is the kind of thinking which emerges whenever a democratic society deliberately undertakes to reform its major social institutions by means of a written constitution. People do not ask of such a constitution merely that it should 'work' with some degree of efficiency—although that is itself crucial. They also demand that its moral, political, economic, and cultural significance be considered, and that these wider ramifications be made to conform, as far as is possible, to deeply held conceptions of what kind of people they are, how they wish to be governed, and what kind of society they wish to create. The implication of my arguments is that punishment should be considered in the same kind of way and in the same kind of depth as other social institutions. In other words, we need an enriched form of penological thinking which considers penality as an institution through which society defines and expresses itself at the same time and through the same means that it exercises power over deviants.' (Garland 1990, p.325).

It is precisely in Chapters 6-8 where, through an exploration of post-prison dis-integration, some of the moral, political, economic and cultural significance and consequences of imprisonment have emerged. Thus, Garland's argument of the necessity to assess punishment and criminal justice bearing these other issues in mind, supports Graham and McNeill's point on the incorporation of the productiveness principle. As I will argue in the last section of this chapter, this may have implications for punishment.

The third key argument is that the way in which we socially, culturally, civic-politically, and legally react to someone who has served a prison sentence produces, reproduces and exacerbates adversities in a unique way. As Garland (2013) argues with respect to the US, the 'de facto social consequences of conviction are exacerbated by a set of de jure legal consequences that *extend and intensify the sanction in multiple ways*' (p.479, *emphasis added*). Some authors have interestingly highlighted that this constitutes a friction with the principle of 'nullum crimen, nulla poena, sine lege', that signals the duty of not punishing beyond the law or the sentence (Rotman 1986; Kirkwood & McNeill 2015). Although this may be considered a duty of the state, it can be argued that this principle of justice should also be applied to us as a society: if the criminal justice system holds legitimacy to punish — via acts which would otherwise be considered as criminal — why are we as a society, through different mechanisms, fostering post-prison dis-integration on the basis of their prior convictions after the sentence has been served? In the case of legal dis-integration, it may be understandable that the existence of certain legislation disqualifies certain individuals from being hired for certain jobs. This is because public safety should also be taken into account. What literature and this thesis has contested is the *indiscriminate* use of these legal measures in order to disproportionately and often permanently (a) directly ban people from accessing certain jobs; and (b) reducing their employment and volunteering chances by having to disclose their criminal record.

These three key arguments paint a clear picture: life after prison is the back end of a cumulative process of disadvantages which often starts before imprisonment. For some people, this process over a certain time has the shape of a cycle. A key contributor in this cumulative process is the way in which we socially, penally, legally and politically react to a potentially imprisonable act, and for which someone ends up in prison. Fassin's (2018) anthropological critique of punishment can be used in order to further enrich the set of arguments that I have presented up until now, in order to stress the salience of changing our societal response to a potentially punishable act for which someone ends up in prison.

Fassin (2018), when concluding his Berkeley Tanner lectures, exposed a contradiction between ideals and realities: on the one hand 'the ultimate legitimacy of punishment is (…) the restoration of a fair social order', but on the other, punishment 'undermines' that same social order (p.125). This same contradiction can be argued when extrapolating this argument: we, as members of a society, handle the theoretical monopoly of official punishment to the state so through punishing in a proportional and parsimonious way a just social order is re-established (Hayes 2018). How is it that then because of our post-prison reaction a conviction has got disproportionate, non-parsimonious and dis-integrative negative consequences? McNeill (2019a), when talking about these matters with respect to penal supervision asserts that if these principles are applied:

> 'No one should be civically degraded, diminished or disqualified in any way
> more than or for one second longer than just punishment requires.' (p.171)

In this thesis, I have shown how, well beyond the sentence, and without bearing in mind matters of justice, releasees experience formal and informal degradation as well as disqualification and exclusion. This further undermines the already existent social dis/order.

The consequences of the picture painted in this section are detrimental not only for people released, but also for their families, communities, neighbourhoods, and for us as a society as a whole. We should ask ourselves: is this the society in which we want to live and which we want to leave to our future generations?

Implications for Scottish Policy and Practice

As this thesis is based on a localised case study, I have decided to dedicate a section to exploring the implications of my findings on Scottish policy and practice. I have chosen to focus on policy and practice because these aspects can be considered two of the main local influences which filter distal factors. Fassin's (2018) strategy of contrasting ideals and realities is going to be used in order to explore the implications of this thesis for Scottish policy and practice. I argue that my research evidence in these last four chapters suggests that in Scotland, at the time of conducting the research, there was a huge degree of dissonance between its policy and practice discourse and how post-prison re-integration in Scotland was experienced and observed. This argument resonates with McAra's (2017)

consideration of this same matter by relying on quantitative data from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime.

Scotland is a country which, at least rhetorically, has been traditionally committed to welfarism and egalitarian principles (Croall et al. 2010; Armstrong in Scottish Parliament 2019a) and has been politically considered as being a progressive society with progressive policies (Croall et al. 2010). This adherence to welfarist and progressive principles is often considered part of Scottish cultural distinctiveness (Tata 2013; Croall et al. 2010). Crime and justice matters have been used politically in Scotland in an instrumental way for rhetorically reinforcing this distinctiveness (Tata 2013; Croall et al. 2010). As a result, policies and practices have become 'a keystone of the (Scottish) democracy project' (McVie 2017, p.770). Crime and justice policies and practices, thus, rhetorically hold a 'welfare-based ethos and a strong commitment to non-custodialism' (McVie 2017, p.296) which has had an impact on the policy making (Croall et al. 2010). In this political rhetoric, the principle of parsimony — 'never intervening in more demanding and intrusive ways than we must' (McNeill 2020a, p.3) — also has a clear place (Tata 2013).

The SNP (Scottish National Party) governments has raised, during the last years, arguments which have been present in this thesis. They have expressed their commitment to improving life after prison (Scottish Government 2015; Scottish Government 2018; Ministry of Justice 2019a). In addition, the last two Cabinet Secretaries for Justice have expressed their desire to make 'progressive reforms' to the Scottish Criminal Justice system (Scottish Parliament 2019b, p.11; Matheson 2015a) in order to, according to the former Cabinet Secretary for Justice, 'set Scotland on the path to building the most progressive justice system in Europe' (Matheson 2015a).

The government has also recognised the need for a multilateral approach to life after prison (Scottish Government 2015; Scottish Parliament 2019b) and that penal policies and practices are insufficient for improving life after prison (Scottish Government 2015; Matheson 2015b). In addition, the former Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson, when referring to the aims of the Programme for Government argued that crime is often a consequence of inequalities and thus our main focus should be on the latter and its roots (Matheson 2015b, p.2).

More recently, the current Scottish Cabinet Secretary of Justice Huzma Yousaf has argued in a meeting of the Justice Committee for the need of a change in the societal mindset with respect to punitive policy.

> 'Every political party in the Parliament—with the exception of the Conservatives—has a genuine understanding of the progressive reforms that we have to make to our punitive policy. That involves *not just politicians; it involves the judiciary, the third sector, schools, early intervention, social work and many others* (…). There absolutely has to be a culture change, or a *mindset change, in how we approach punitive policy*. That high prison occupancy rate—the highest imprisonment rate in western Europe—is a stain on our conscience. (Scottish Parliament 2019b, p.11,12)'

The Scottish Prison Service and its representatives, similarly to the Government, have also shared some arguments which have been present in this thesis. In its report *Unlocking Potential, Transforming Lives* (SPS 2013) has recognised its responsibility in supporting 'reintegration' of those that are released from their prisons as well as the need to shift resources to it when possible. In addition to this SPS Chief Executive Colin McConnell has stated that 'evidence shows us that prisons are a product of social injustice and societal failure to deal with education, health and economic inequalities' (2019, p.9); during 2015 Scottish Annual Conference he gave a presentation on 'criminal justice as social justice' (2015, p.1) and has recently talked about 'the creation of socially just prisons' (2019, p.1). In terms of sentencing, the Scottish legal framework recognises two principles, that as I have shown in the previous sections are strongly related to the topic of post-prison re/integration: proportionality and parsimony. The first one is considered as a core principle of sentencing by the Scottish Sentencing Council (2018) and the second one, although it is not recognised by this body, is 'expressed in different ways in the adult and juvenile justice systems of most liberal democracies', being Scotland no exception (McNeill 2019a, p.169).

Yet the dissonance between the Scottish policy and practice discourse, and the collaborative research findings presented and analysed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 is extreme. The previous three chapters can help policy makers and practitioners realise this dissonance, the key role that they play in post-prison re/integration and the overall state of affairs that they must address. The conceptualisation presented in this chapter, may help them to better understand post-prison re/integration as a concept, relying on which they can

interrogate their own role in this matter. It is here where the six-forms model of re/integration which is included in the conceptualisation, as well as its temporal and interpersonal dimensions, can become especially useful: It can give them a way of exploring if and how they foster or hinder re/integration in each of the six domains. It provides them with a tool, which specifically relies on a case study localised in the most populated city of their country, in order to interrogate and reflect on the achievement or not of the re/integrative objectives that they express in their discourses. As I will argue in the last section of this thesis, the model can also help them in reimagining their role in order to better fulfil the aims that they have expressed.

Resituating Post-prison Re/integration in Society and in Academia

During this thesis, I have so far achieved all but one of its four aims; to reimagine post-prison re/integration. During this last chapter I have fulfilled the first aim by sharing a nuanced, complex and comprehensive conceptualisation of post-prison re/integration. In Chapters 6, 7 and 8 by presenting and analysing the dialogic inquiry group account, I have enhanced our previous understanding of post-prison re/integration and I have started to interrogate how post-prison re/integration is. During this last chapter, by dealing with the theoretical, societal, and policy and practice implications, I have interrogated post-prison re/integration in more depth and I have argued for the need to be a re/integrative society. There is still a remaining question which I promised to answer at the beginning of this thesis: what would a re/integrative society look like?

However, before engaging in this task I first need to solve an issue. I must confess that after reading all the content of this thesis before writing this last part, I am very hesitant. Firstly, I am hesitant about continuing to conduct research on post-prison re/integration when I finish writing my doctoral research. Wouldn't it make more sense to research and theorise one of its main roots, the existence of a society in which there are people who are acutely, severely and multiply disadvantaged? Secondly, and related to this second point, I ask myself if it is possible to foster a re/integrative society without changing the overall type of society in which we live. Can we create a justice in a vacuum around punishment without changing society in terms of other inequalities?

This makes me think about the different movements made by different stigmatised and discriminated subpopulations — such as women, people from ethnic minorities, people

from the working class, gay, bisexual and transgender people, people with disabilities — throughout history in order to try to end stigma and discrimination towards them. A focus on key examples of inequalities and injustices is more than desirable, but this would have to be done in a contextualised way. I would argue that this movement for social justice cannot occur in separate silos. Firstly, because of the fact that different inequalities are interconnected and have many points in common. There is an intersectionality. Secondly, because a matter of solidarity and social justice. And thirdly, and more pragmatically, because the process of improvement is likely to be much slower. It is under this coordinated and contextualised approach in which I still believe in the importance of researching and theorising on post-prison re/integration. However always by bearing in mind (a) its situation and context inside the social justice issue and (b) its interconnections with and common features with other injustices. And, even if a more or less just social order is achieved, punishment and re/integration would still need to be researched and theorised, because there will still be behaviour which would be considered so unjust, that a societal response to it would be needed.

The first step in order to achieve this aim with respect to post-prison re/integration would be either to develop a body of knowledge on post-prison re/integration that combines contributions and approaches on punishment from people coming from different disciplines — such as sociologists, historians, anthropologist, practitioners or lawyers—in order to better conceptualise, understand and reimagine punishment (see Simon & Sparks 2013a,b for similar approach with respect to 'Punishment and Society' phenomenon). Unlike 'Punishment and Society', as it can been seen in Chapters 2, and 3, post-prison re/integration does not have an established project of interpreting re/integration in terms of the 'social, political, cultural and historical conditions of the society in which these forms arise' (Simon & Sparks 2013b). As far as I am aware, the founding figures of sociology, although sometimes focused on punishment (see Garland 1990 or Simon & Sparks 2013a on an analysis of classic accounts), did not engage with the matter of re/integration. To the best of my knowledge, currently, there has been mainly three attempts that slightly pursue in certain depth — at least part of — this purpose: Wacquant's (2010) article on 'reentry as myth and ceremony' (p.605), Braithwaite's (1989) development of his notion re/integration, and the already mentioned Miller, Stuart and Alexander's work on reentry institutions and citizenship. A careful and purposeful reading of contemporary classics on punishment such as Garland's *Punishment and Modern Society'* (1990); *The Culture of Control* (2001), Simon's *Governing Through Crime* (2007), Wacquant's *Punishing the Poor* (2009) or Alexander's *New Jim Crow* (2010) may provide us with analytical tools in

order to develop this line of thought with respect to post-prison re/integration. The same can be said about the compilation of essays of the SAGE Handbook of Punishment and Society (2013) edited by Simon and Sparks (2013a). Sociological research on somehow related topics can be used in order to better understand these different domains. An example of this is Tyler's recent book on *Stigma* (2020).

However, as Lacey (2008) argues with respect to punishment, and McNeill (2019a) with respect to community punishment, and as indicated in this thesis with respect to post-prison re/integration; these macro theoretical approaches on post-sentence re/integration must be complemented and brought into conversation with localised research. This thesis has tried to begin to fill this gap. The six-forms model of re/integration which has been presented in this chapter can serve as a starting point analytical tool in order to develop our understanding of these two types of approaches to studying post-prison re/integration and society in particular, and perhaps post-sentence re/integration and society more widely.

As Chapter 3 has shown, there is a scarcity of research that sheds light on post-prison re/integration not only in the Scottish context but also in the UK and European one. Most of the Scottish research presented in Chapter 4, does not even have the aim of exploring life after prison, but does so in an ancillary way. This means that their contribution to understanding re/integration is much more limited than if the research was focused on this phenomenon. In addition, they only shed light on very concrete subdomains. A similar thing can be said about the UK and European one. It is surprising how little we know in these three contexts with respect to the legal disqualification of releasees which are not directly related to job applications, and on the dispositions towards releasees of different actors and institutions. More research is specially needed with respect to these two matters. European, UK and Scottish are rich in terms of literature on support after prison. This may be because of the development of a body of literature around resettlement. Desistance literature, which is especially strong in the UK, is the one that contributes mostly to understanding what happens after prison.

In Australia, although a little more is known due to the existence of the reintegration body of literature, there is still more research needed, especially with respect to legal and civic-political dis-integration. Ethnographic accounts on re/integration would enrich enormously our understanding of life after prison in Australia. Due to the strong reentry body of literature, much more is known with respect to life after prison in the US than in any other context. This body of literature has been enriched by recent Western's (2018) and Miller,

Stuart and Alexander's (Miller & Alexander 2016; & Stuart 2017; Miller 2017; 2021) analysis and discussion of qualitative data. In spite of this, there is scarce research on moral re/integration in US.

Bearing in mind the main knowledge gaps with respect to post-prison re/integration in Western countries which were outlined in Chapter 3, I suggest that the following aspects of post-prison re/integration are the ones that are in need of more research. The civic-political domain is by far the domain considered by the group about which we know the least. The collaborative group research has shed some light, but there are still too many questions to be answered: is John's comment on the high amount of people released who do not vote accurate? What other types of civic-political dis-integration do people released experience? Which are the hurdles that they have to face? Are there any examples of good practice? While the first of these four questions may be answered with administrative data, the other questions may be answered through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data.

A second major gap is with respect to moral re/integration. As explained in Chapter 5, a consequence of the participative research approach and of the group decision, the research on which this thesis relies has not been able to enhance our understanding of this matter. In spite of that, the group exploration has raised questions that may foster a refinement and consideration of moral re/integration issues.

The third major gap is with respect to stigmatisation and discrimination. We only have consistent data on employer's dispositions towards them in the US. My findings, as they relied on a collaborative inquiry, were unable to give light to this matter. In addition, more findings are needed with respect to key frontline workers' dispositions and behaviour, as well as the reasons behind it. The same methods used in order to assess employers' stigmatising dispositions can be used in order to understand other key stakeholders. More importantly, we require a more nuanced account of why people hold negative dispositions towards released people, and we need to further confirm that the stigmatisation is on the basis of them having been in prison, or because of another characteristic (like being homeless or poor) or because of both. A combination between quantitative methods and qualitative ones in which the key stakeholders and lay citizens are the participants, will surely enrich our understanding. Ethnographies on releasees' experiences will also shed light.

A huge gap on post-prison digital inclusion was revealed in Chapter 8. My research has helped us to start filling it by identifying prison as a place where digital inclusion was not fostered. I still have more data on digital inclusion which I have not been able to include in this thesis. There is further research needed in order to assess how many people on release are immediately digitally excluded and how it affects their post-prison re/integration process.

Finally, as stated at the start of this section, I would argue that post-prison re/integration literature should be brought into discussion with other bodies of literature beyond criminology in order to enrich its understanding by learning about phenomena which may hold similarities. Interdisciplinary studies driven by people from different departments which focus on subpopulations which hold some similarities would also be key in this endeavour. An example of this type of research is a University of Glasgow project which has investigated the impacts of Covid-19 on vulnerable groups (Armstrong et al. 2020).

Now that I have been able to calm — at least for the moment — my hesitancies, by situating post-prison re/integration in society and in academia, I am in the position in order to explore my reimagination of post-prison re/integration.

Looking for the Green: Envisioning an Alternative Societal Response to a Potentially Imprisonable Act

In the introductory chapter, I have stressed that only after conceptualising, understanding and interrogating any social phenomenon can we fully engage in a rigorous envisioning of alternatives. As our current knowledge on post-prison re/integration — both in Glasgow, Scotland and beyond — is limited, I have decided to dedicate most of the thesis to the task conceptualising, understanding and interrogating post-prison re/integration, rather that reimagining it. However, I would not like to end this thesis without, using the analysis I have developed to offer a rough outline of how a just society might support re/integration when responding to a potentially imprisonable act. I have decided to acquire a wider focus because as I have shown during this thesis, the penal response and the post-prison civic-political, cultural, social, legal and moral one are heavily intertwined, and they all shape life after prison. This does not mean that I am intending to reimagine the whole society and the whole Criminal Justice System. That would go beyond the scope and beyond the intended rigour of this thesis; for engaging in that endeavour its reintegrative character

should not be the only one that should be kept in mind. What I intend to do , in the light of this thesis content, is to try to explore how society, policy and practice could contribute to fostering re/integration.

In Chapter 1, I have outlined that although being social scientists does not give us any authority of imposing our alternatives, we can — and should — engage and contribute with our knowledge in dialogic conversation with other actors to the phenomena in question — and its alternatives. This view on our endeavour as social scientists, perfectly resonates with my epistemological, ontological, axiological and political-philosophical stance shared during Chapters 3 and 4. Due to this, I suggest that society, its actors and its institutions should engage in discussions on how we should react to potentially imprisonable acts, and that our role as criminologists is to contribute with our expertise, and perhaps in helping to organise and facilitate these conversations. Bearing this in mind, this last section of the thesis should not be seen as an authoritative prescriptive account on how our societal response to an offence should be reimagined. Rather, it should be seen as a stimulating sketch in which I will be exploring the implications that the content of this thesis may have for how a just societal response to a potentially imprisonable act may be like.

I would firstly argue that a society would react to a potentially punishable act in a just way if its response is proportionate, parsimonious and reintegrative. I would argue that in a just society the already explored principles of proportionate, parsimony and reintegration should also be desirable with respect to our societal response, and not only with respect to punishment itself. The first two principles when properly applied might guarantee that the individual is neither under-punished nor over-punished. The third one operates positively by addressing any injustice prior to, during or after punishment through 'rehabilitation and reintegration' (McNeill 2020a; see Travis et al. 2014 too). I also suggest, the need of synchronicity in a just societal response to a potentially imprisonable offence: every actor and institution would, at the same time, be parsimonious, proportionate and re/integrative. The argument for this, is the same one as in the one developed with respect to the domains.

With these overarching principles established, we need to explore the specific roles that different institutions/actors may hold in this just reaction to a potentially imprisonable act. I would argue that they should all, in a coordinated and synchronous way, and bearing in mind their duties and their competences, respond to offences bearing in mind the issue of re/integration in order to, as McNeill (2017a) argues:

'(…) offer responses that create and are constitutive of the conditions under which individual and collective human flourishing are made more possible, rather than constituting and exacerbating the conditions under which many people, families, groups, communities and societies suffer and decay.'

As we have seen, re/integration is dynamic. Thus, a re/integrative response from an actor/institution can suddenly turn dis-integrative due to a variety of reasons. Therefore, I would like to suggest, that it is vital that no matter what other institutions/actors do, each of them should be focused on being as re/integrative as they can, as well as supporting other actor/institutions to act in a similar fashion.

The conceptualisation of re/integration offered in this chapter with its six-forms model also constitutes as a good tool in order to suggest just alternatives to our current societal response. Here, I use the six-forms model in order to reflect on the role that some of the main institutions/actors may have. The obvious place to start is that of the state. The state is, in theory, the guarantor of justice and the one delivering it. I suggest that a re/integrative state should have a criminal justice system which not only punishes but also bears in mind re/integration when sentencing, both while the sentence occurs and when designing and implementing legislation and policies. As I have shown in this thesis, although the state holds the monopoly of punishment in theory, the reality is that punishment has consequences which are not directly intended by the judge and thus by the state (see Hayes 2018 on this matter). It follows that it can even be argued that those post-prison adversities which are due to our societal response to someone after release (without counting our penal reaction), and which are reasonably foreseeable at the moment of sentencing (Hayes 2018), should be taken into account at the moment of sentencing and in the implementation of the sentence. In this way, criminal justice should be a guarantor of justice; making the overall societal response to offending a more just one.

Although it is very difficult to assess the reasonably foreseeable consequences that punishment may have for each individual, I would argue that it is not impossible. Hayes' (2018) taxonomy, which distinguishes between direct, unrelated, oblique and contextual pains, is an interesting starting point for distinguishing between those consequences which are foreseeable at the moment of sentencing and those that are not. As he signals, the role of criminologists is key here in order to conduct research on these matters and in engaging in dialogue with judges.

In addition, if after careful consideration it is deemed that the pre-prison dis-integration of someone was itself unjust, then society must 'owe' them something for permitting social inequalities to go unaddressed (see McNeill & Graham 2019 for a similar argument with respect to the state). The case gets even stronger when considering that research is consistent on the criminogenic character of social inequalities: as we have situated some people in a disadvantaged situation in which they are more likely to commit a crime and to be criminalised, we own some accountability to them. The moments of sentencing and implementing a sentence can be used to start settling that debt. As it is the criminal justice system that formally punishes, it can also be the one that formally settles the debt owed to those that go through it. A way of doing that is that our penal reaction to their criminalised acts to be as re/integrative as possible. There would be no better way to pay off a debt for an injustice than to intend and do everything possible so the individual will not suffer future injustices deriving from societal factors. In addition to this, a just criminal system would not send to prison so many short-termers and people on remand. I suggest that a just system, and more widely a just society, would have to positively reflect on when prison is used: instead of claiming to see it as a last resort, it would need to define its exact limited purposes (Tata 2020).

In a just criminal justice system, prison would be as re/integrative as possible, bearing in mind the 'coercive nature of confinement' (Jewkes & Gooch 2020, p.154). This thesis has shown that prison is often dis-integrative in the personal, social, material and civic-political realms. A just prison, apart from holding people safely and maintaining order, would make an effort in minimizing and mitigating as much as possible its post-prison dis-integrative effects from the day of entry until the day of release. This may be done through the creation of certain conditions in which post-prison re/integration in the personal, moral, social, material and civic-political domains are fostered. Although some of these dis-integrative situations are inevitable, I would argue that there are others that could be easily improved. An example of this, is the matter (explored by the group and discussed in Chapter 6) that Scottish releasees receive the first benefits payment an average of six weeks after releases because of not being able to apply while being in prison. As one of the good-practice examples has illustrated, it is not so difficult to improve this matter. In this process of exploring which dis-integrative prison aspects may be either eradicated or improved, the role of academics is also key. The same could be applied to how issues of material needs are dealt with from the moment of imprisonment until and beyond release. Tackling these needs might require offering every person that enters prison the chance of

having a prison re/integration worker who would support them when needed from entry until weeks beyond release.

A just prison should be informed by conversations between policy makers, people in prison, academics and practitioners both from inside and outside prison. Victims and non-criminal justice related lay people should also be able to participate in this process. Recent academic papers have done a good job in reimagining different aspects of a rehabilitative prison (Jewkes & Gooch 2020), and of a prison that, among other things, fosters personal flourishing (see Liebling 2020 on this latter matter).

Another feature of a re/integrative state would be a criminal record legislative framework which bears in mind issues of parsimony, proportionality and re/integration in order to extend the consequences of punishment only in those cases in which it is absolutely necessary and as long as it is absolutely necessary. The academic evidence, explored in Chapter 3 and 8, with respect to the likelihood of reoffending as time passes, would be important when considering this matter. This argument works even when believing that the main and unique aim of disclosure and disqualification is to protect the public. In addition, if the purpose of the criminal record is that relevant actors take informed decisions, I would argue that, in a just criminal justice system, the criminal record would be one which contains up-to-date information which is not only related to the sentence. Bearing this in mind, it may not only contain information on the sentence, but also other information which is relevant to the purposes of the disclosure. An example of this may be information on volunteering or on personal flourishing.

I would argue that Scotland is in a very good position in order to become a more re-integrative state. As shown in a previous section, politicians, policy makers and high ranking practitioners are already aware and are (at least intellectually) committed to creating a just and re/integrative Scotland. In my country, Spain, it is unthinkable that politicians make these public statements with respect to crime and justice. Firstly, I would argue that they articulate a much more dis-integrative position, and even if they had re/integrative aspirations, they would never make them public because of being afraid of the citizens' reactions. I would argue that, as academics, we should make an effort in order to explore the reasons behind the dissonance between Scottish re/integrative policy discourse and the realities of post-prison dis-integration. I would argue that the re/integrative discourse is already a big step and a promising start.

Third sector organisations may also be key in a re/integrative society, as they are usually embedded in the community. Of the few examples of good-practice mentioned during our group meetings, one of them was that of 'A Place for Change'. A Place for Change is a community based throughcare project which is supported by Faith in Community Scotland (Martin 2019), a third sector organisation which, among other things, through Faith in Throughcare — one of its charities — supports people that have served a short sentence and return to some of the most challenged areas of Scotland: North Glasgow, Inverclyde, East Ayrshire and Clydebank (Faith in Community Scotland 2021). During our group conversations first-hand experiences on the key turning point role that social support may have in life after prison were shared. These experiences show how having a supportive community can foster post-prison re/integration in terms of material, civic-political and personal inclusion. They show how important it is that the individual when released, encounters a supportive community, rather than one that rejects them. In addition, third sector organisations can be a bridge between the individual and the community. Third sector organisations may also be oriented towards lobbying with and for people with convictions (as in the case of Positive Prisons? Positive Futures…) or may foster dialogue on different crime-related issues (see the case of Distant Voices described in Liebling et al. 2017) .

A re/integrative society would also require re/integrative communities and re/integrative citizens. As citizens and collectives, we should realise how our individual and collective reaction to people released produces and exacerbates certain adversities well beyond the sentence; consequences which, in some cases, are worse than the sentence itself. We need to realise that when stigmatising and discriminating against releasees, we are also hurting ourselves as individuals, as a community and as a society in two ways. Firstly, from a political-philosophical and axiological point, we are contributing to the creation of a dis-integrative environment in which people experience suffering. By creating a dis-integrative environment, we are constituting an unjust society. Secondly, from a more pragmatic view, citizens should understand that a hostile societal response to a potentially imprisonable act is criminogenic.

I would argue that it is here again that academics can play a key role. Instead of making assumptions about their epistemic and/or moral character, we should try to genuinely understand the reasons behind negative dispositions amongst the public. We should do so firstly due to an epistemic humility: there may be experiences and arguments that we are missing as academics. Secondly, and more pragmatically, how would we be able to

convince them to be more re/integrative if we do not know the reasons and arguments behind their position? As I have argued during Chapters 3 and 4, I consider that the best form of communication in order to gain understanding is dialogue. Different forms of knowledge about these matters should be brought into discussion with evidence on dispositions towards other sub-populations, as well as with macro accounts of our contemporary times. As argued at different moments of the thesis, and consistent with my adaptive approach, I believe that as academics we should bring into continuous and rigorous dialogue macro, meso and micro theories of and findings about different phenomenon which all have something in common: they are symptoms – and very often producers, reproducers and exacerbators — of diverse social, material, moral, civic-political, and judicial-legal disparities.

In my opinion this may be one of the main ideas that I take from this thesis, and the research on which it relies: if, as academics, we want to better conceptualise, understand, interrogate and reimagine a societal phenomenon, there is a need that we, as an academic collective, study that phenomenon in its context; not only in terms of height (macro, micro, meso) and of depth, but also of width (interaction, similarities and differences with other phenomena). I consider that this endeavour must be done with rigour and with collective and individual epistemic humility. This may require us to transcend the attachment that we have to different socially constructed disciplines, in order to put their distinct knowledges and analytical framings at the service of the conceptualisation, understanding, interrogation, and reimagination of the phenomenon in question. It may also require us to be firm but stop thinking confrontationally. The question I would argue is not 'whose side are we on' (Becker 1987) but 'what do we want to achieve?', as citizens, as academics, as collectives, and as a society; and even more importantly, how and why do we want to achieve it? I hope that this thesis has contributed to this complex endeavour.

As Bauman's last words in one of his last books indicate:

> 'More than at any other time, we – human inhabitants of the earth—are in the either/or situation: we face joining either hands, or common graves' (Bauman 2017).

I argue that it is time to join hands in order to explore how and why we can live together as humans — not only amongst ourselves but also with respect to other living beings, the earth, and the universe. This is a very hard and laborious endeavour, and we must

remember that as academics who are also citizens and human beings, we have an important role within it. As criminologists, we have our role within it.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Evaluation Form

1) Please rate how you experienced the following aspects so far:

RATING Please tick a box (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)	1 ☹	2	3	4	5 ☺	WHY?
Session 4 (conceptualising re/integration)						
Session 5 (social connections)						
Session 6 (citizenship status)						
Session 7 (today's session)						
One to one meetings						
Activites						
Alejandro's facilitation						
Venue						
Hospitality						

2) Do you have any proposal?

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3) Any other comments?

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Appendix 2. Group Dynamics Form

1) In your own words, how are you finding it being part of the group?

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2) How do you see the group dynamics?

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3) Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the group sessions so far:

RATING Please tick a box (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)	1 ☹	2	3	4	5 ☺
I have felt listened to by the group					
Storytelling has been present in our group conversations					
We have been exploring both common ground and differences					
I have felt genuine curiosity towards other members' contributions					
I have felt secure in expressing my views and hearing those of others					
I have been making an effort to understand other members' contributions					
I have been open to considering multiple voices, styles of communication and perspectives					
I have been open to reconsidering some of my views					
Some of the ideas that others have shared have challenged my previous views					
We have been collaboratively exploring and investigating our individual and collective knowledge					
I have been able to make myself understood					
I have been able to understand other members' contributions					

4) Any other comments?

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<u>Legislation</u>

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