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This thesis concerns the conditions for prison officer work in the Swedish prisons of today. Sweden has for many years been regarded as a welfare-oriented prison system. Through reforms in the last two decades, the rehabilitative parts as well as the security measures have been sharpened in the prisons. These policy changes are transformed within the prison organization into a growing specialization of prison officer tasks. The dilemma in prisons to keep prisoners in safe, secure custody but still also perform rehabilitative efforts is crucial in the daily work of prison officers. They manage this by the creation of different occupational subcultures in their wings and workgroups, where their thinking patterns and their acting in work is formed. One example is the important managing of different emotional states among prisoners. This emotional labour differs between the workgroups, as do the consequences for staff. Also their own identity as prison officers is differently formed around their managing of the dilemma of security and rehabilitation. Despite the development in prison officer work towards more advanced and specialized tasks, the development of their occupational role, training and knowledge is not controlled by the occupation itself, but entirely formed by the prison service authority. While the specialization of prison officer work is a technical means to manage the dilemma, the occupational culture and identities are collective, social and individual ways to manage it.