

have less to do with their mothers' conduct *per se* than with the unstable and volatile context in which they live (Cunha and Granja; Vereá). Reuniting with their children is generally at the top of most inmate mothers' aspirations and is an important hope even for those mothers who didn't live with their children prior to incarceration (Datesman and Cales; Kazura; Eigenberg and Berry; Ferraro and Moe).

As recent research has shown (Comfort; Shamai), rather than invariably damaging relationships, incarceration can in the short term have more complex effects. In some cases, it may open venues for strengthening or renewing mother-child bonds, away from pressures and problems outside. In some cases, incarceration may interrupt destructive cycles of substance abuse and domestic violence. Prison has a potential to be a turning point in some troubled parent-child relationships, inasmuch as incarceration sometimes functions, however inadequately, as the only social agency available for poor populations.

Women's carceral institutions may emphasize disparities along lines of gender through a formal or informal focus on reproduction and domesticity to the detriment of other aspects of women's lives (Cunha; Vereá 43). An inmate's own discursive construction of gender and the way motherhood is sometimes hyperbolized in identity management may contribute to further emphasis on gender disparities. Women separated from their children by incarceration sometimes try to overcome the contradiction between the discursive exaltation of maternal identity and the fact that the role of mother is dissociated from that of caregiver for most incarcerated mothers. More specifically, we have shown elsewhere how incarcerated mothers try to perform that identity by mothering *from* prison (Cunha and Granja).

In this chapter we will confine ourselves to aspects of motherhood and forms of relatedness as they emerge *within* prison in different situations. In recent decades, widespread phenomena of mass imprisonment in Euro-American societies (e.g. Comfort; Pattillo, Weiman and Western; Wacquant) have changed and complicated the social landscape of prison.

One of the effects of mass imprisonment has been the co-imprisonment of relatives of multiple generations (Cunha 2002).<sup>4</sup> In-prison relationships between mothers and their offspring now include children as well as adults—an aspect that has received little attention in the literature (but see Cunha 2002, Cunha forthcoming) and which raises additional issues regarding confined mothering and motherhood.

This paper draws on fieldwork, conducted at different periods over the course of three decades, in two Portuguese carceral settings located in the main metropolitan areas of the country: *Estabelecimento Prisional de Tires* (hereafter Tires) and *Estabelecimento Prisional de Santa Cruz do Bispo* (hereafter

## Care and Respect

### Mothering and Relatedness in Multigenerational Prison Settings

MANUELA P. DA CUNHA AND RAFAELA GRANJA

**I**N PORTUGAL, as in many other countries, prisons are gendered institutions. Men and women are incarcerated in different institutions and separate prison buildings. Further, prisons are shaped by gender ideologies and enhance gender asymmetries (Cunha 1994, 2007; Cunha and Granja). Parenting is one of the aspects in which such disparities become most salient. When the choice to allow infant children to stay with the imprisoned parent is afforded by prison institutions, it is typically available only in female prisons.<sup>1</sup>

Parenting is generally a more critical issue for female inmates than male inmates. While male and female prisoners may both be parents, it is more likely that mothers were the primary caregivers of children prior to their incarceration (e.g. Greene, Haney and Hurtado; La Vigne, Brooks and Shollenberger). This is especially true because, in many cases, fathers were already also imprisoned or were absentee parents (Henriques; Greene, Haney and Hurtado); parenting is a source of increased concern and responsibility for mothers upon their imprisonment.<sup>2</sup>

Incarcerated mothers face many challenges when seeking to maintain their relationships with their children. Besides trying to ensure their children's presence and maintain a sense of permanent connection with them,<sup>3</sup> mothers separated from their offspring by incarceration struggle to maintain parental authority and remain actively engaged in their children's lives. It is difficult to make decisions about their children's future, provide them with advice and stay informed of their whereabouts and progress in school (Celinska and Siegel; Enos). Incarcerated mothers may also retain some aspects of their role as financial providers for their children by sending money to children's caregivers.

Separation from their children is often a constant source of incarcerated mothers' stress. This separation can generate feelings of being a "bad mother" (Mahan; Morash and Schrum), even when children's traumatic experiences

Santa Cruz). The first was created in 1954 in the outskirts of Lisbon and is still today the major female penal institution in the country; the second opened in 2005 near the northern city of Oporto.

Although these two penitentiaries are intended to serve a similar type of penal population,<sup>5</sup> the contrast between their different historical origin and regional location allow for a more controlled grasp of regularities and variations between them and for an overall perspective regarding the aspects we set to approach in this paper.

Fieldwork in Tires was conducted in two periods separated by a decade, of two and one year respectively (1987–1989; 1997). This fieldwork achieved unrestricted access to all prison facilities. Besides conducting seventy in-depth interviews,<sup>6</sup> the fieldwork allowed for the observation and participation in most prison activities and daily life (which included those of mothers with children behind bars), as well as for engaging in informal individual and group conversations with prisoners on a regular basis and under varied circumstances. The six-month fieldwork in Santa Cruz during 2011 consisted of ethnographic observations centered mainly on prison visitors (especially family members) and in-depth interviews with 20 incarcerated women.

Tires' imprisoned population, which in 1997 reached 823 prisoners, had evolved towards a striking social and penal homogeneity in the span of only a decade. In 1997, 76 percent of women were imprisoned for drug trafficking compared to 37 percent ten years earlier, and property offenders represented no more than 13 percent. The majority of those convicted (69 percent) were serving sentences of more than five years. Prisoners increasingly came from segments of the working class and reflected the most deprived of economic and educational capital.

From 1987 to 1997, the proportion of women who held jobs in the bottom tier of the service economy rose from 4 percent to 33 percent, and the proportion who had never attended school or gone beyond the fourth grade rose from 47 percent to 59 percent. In Santa Cruz this proportion climbed to 67 percent today. This prison has an average population of 265 inmates between convicts and detainees. Most were imprisoned for drug trafficking (62 percent) and most of those convicted for more than 1 year (91 percent) were serving sentences of more than six years.

Santa Cruz thus approximately reproduces the pattern in Tires', albeit more mitigated in some respects, including the fact that an important proportion of prisoners have relatives imprisoned in the same institution or in other prison facilities.<sup>7</sup> Circles of co-confined kin in the same institution can be quite large (reaching up to more than a dozen people) and may extend to three or four generations (when a great-grandson is born in prison to a prisoner whose daughter and grand-daughter are also behind bars).

## CONTROLLING MOTHERHOOD, INSTITUTIONALIZED RELATEDNESS

When Tires opened in mid-twentieth century, during the Portuguese *Estado Novo* dictatorship (1933–1974), the program for the “moral regeneration” of delinquent women drew heavily on dominant gender ideologies (Cunha 1994). While they were considered “double deviants” in Portugal—both as members of society and of their gender—the purpose of rehabilitating them through domesticity and motherhood was perfectly aligned with a State ideology that presented women as the nation’s ultimate moral base. It emphasized women’s dedicated performance as wives and mothers as the only route for women’s participation in the collective destiny (see Beleza dos Santos; Salazar).<sup>8</sup> In prison, one of the treatment program’s ingredients consisted of an attempt to instill feelings of maternal responsibility in inmates and cultivate their mothering skills. Although granting permission to keep infant children in prison took the children’s interests into account, it was primarily justified by the program’s goal to educate the mothers. Aiming at the “social promotion of the delinquent woman,” it was determined that “offspring, in the case of infants, should remain with the mothers so as to maintain and promote their sense of natural responsibilities” (Pinto 56). Prison regulations also explicitly stipulated that prisoners should be taught to attend to their infant children inside the institution and children should spend time with their mothers daily, as well (Correia 279).

The focus on domesticity and reproduction would linger, albeit attenuated, long after the democratic revolution in 1974 and the geography of gender would continue to determine the prison regime. Explicit gendered moral considerations have long since been expunged from official regulations, and the focus of such arrangements has shifted from the moral regeneration of the prisoners (leading them into proper motherhood) to accommodating the child’s interest. Otherwise, they have remained stable over time in their general principles: namely, the age limit for children allowed to live in the institution with their mothers (three years-old, exceptionally five);<sup>9</sup> the provision of a day nursery, within the prison compound but physically separated from prison blocks, where children remain during mothers’ working hours, and where they are attended by trained personnel; and a prison wing that houses prisoners with children behind bars together. These elements are common to both prisons considered here.

Gender considerations involving parenting and the mother role nevertheless did not disappear from prison daily life. They remained infused in informal institutional practices and interactions. Mothers may, for example, be assigned to assist day care staff in an attempt to improve their mothering skills or by way of discouraging them to leave their children in the nursery too prematurely. A Tires prison warden said, reproachfully:

*There are some mothers who want to get rid of the children and be as little as possible with them. It's I who has to force them to stay with the children in their cells when they are still babies, otherwise they would put them in daycare.*

Besides criticizing mothers for being too impatient or not caring enough for their children, prison guards also intervene directly. Prisoners confined to the mothers wing feel that they are the object of constant additional control. Attempts to socialize with prisoners from other wings (e.g. by making up errands to the prison shop) may be immediately curtailed by warnings that they must go back to attending to their children. Guards are more rigorous over the hygiene and tidiness of these prisoners' cells ("*we have to check and warn them all the time because kids take everything within reach to their mouths and there are irresponsible mothers*"). Guards also admonish mothers if they deem a child's hygiene is being neglected or his feeding inadequate; they may punish prisoners for shouting too much at their infants.<sup>10</sup>

The inmates in question deeply resent these interventions as they arguably challenge their self-representation as mothers. They are especially adamant in repudiating them as intrusions in a domain perceived as indisputably their own. "*Guards should stay out of this, these are my children, not theirs!*" In their eyes, the role of mother supersedes that of inmate and should remain out of range of guards' authority. Paradoxically, it is precisely in the name idealized notions of motherhood (and of the importance of being a "good mother") that co-inmates approve guards' interference: "*The guards have every right to interfere; they have to educate them to be good mothers.*"

Prisoners are aware that their inmate and motherly conditions are somehow merged and some even suspect that their performance as mothers is assessed in the same way as their behaviour as prisoners—that is, with the potential to impact parole board deliberations. In any case, they sense all too well that the in-prison relationship with their offspring and the language of *care* itself are inescapably intertwined in the coercive management of the "total institution" (Goffman). They also realize that children themselves, as they become socialized in prison routines, internalize their mothers' subject position within the institution, in which mothers may also be *scolded* like children. Antônia, a 42-year-old inmate arrested for attempted murder, said: "*My son knew. If the door opened and I hadn't dressed [in the prison uniform] he reminded me right away: 'Mother, put it on, otherwise Mrs. Guard is going to scold you!'*"

In recent decades, with the co-imprisonment of mothers and adult daughters (and sometimes granddaughters), such encompassment by the institutional coercive framework has become more extensive. Notions of care are intertwined in a complex way with *respect*. There is a prevalent ideal regarding family con-

duct, the criteria that should regulate relationships between children, parents and grandparents, and appropriate levels of intimacy, responsibility, support, and moral obligation among family members (Cunha 2002; Cunha forthcoming). A 56-year-old prisoner and mother of six—who at the time shared her cell with her 25-year-old daughter and whose husband and another son were serving time in a male prison facility—expressed this close connection between care and respect:

*I brought up my children honourably. I always fed them, never abandoned them, never put them in an institution. I was always a good mother and I never had a man to help me. Respect was what I gave them. They all respected me ... [In the meantime, her adult daughter arrives in the cell]. Come on Rosa, say hello. Sorry, nowadays they just want to fool around, but they respect me. Just because I'm in prison, does that mean they shouldn't respect me?*

She then went on to complain about her sons' lack of reciprocity. They didn't respect their parents and neglected to visit and support them in prison. Failure to fulfil familial and supportive obligations elicits depreciative comments that denounce respectful behaviour. For example, a prisoner convicted for drug trafficking greeted an elderly woman passing by with:

*Her daughters were real cows to her ... They don't have any respect for her. No respect at all. It's not because someone is in jail that they should lose respect. She's also got her grandson here, poor thing. The grandmother's the only one of them worth anything because the mother is a bitch to that child. The grandmother comes between them, which is just as well.*

*Respect* implicitly demands a hierarchical aspect to it. Imprisonment destabilises this as daughters, mothers and grandmothers are reduced to a common condition—that of a prisoner. Tirades such as: "*You're as much a prisoner as I am, it's the guards who tell me what to do.*" were not uncommon from daughters exasperated by older relatives' control over their behaviour. The levelling effect of being imprisoned and the resulting equalization of once hierarchical familial positions dims that authority. *Respect* is nevertheless an ingredient of prison sociality between mothers and daughters, and guards sometimes use its language as a valuable tool in their work:

*The mothers do a lot of controlling and that makes the work of the guards much easier. There's a prisoner here who is completely unbearable when her mother is not around. When her mother comes, she shows respect and*

*behaves herself. She calms down straightaway. I myself have a word with other kin when I see things getting out of hand.*

These complex forms of institutional control coexist with others that reproduce forms of parental surveillance behind bars. For example, one inmate reconciled with her young adult co-inmate daughter (they were not on speaking terms before) and “chaperoned” her daughter’s boyfriend prison visits during the early stages of the romantic relationship.

In the face of the particular circumstances regarding penal confinement, moral obligations, notions of responsibility, dependency and emotional intimacy may vividly emerge in the prison scene. For example, one prisoner turned down parole because, on the day it was granted, she discovered that her imprisoned mother had a tumour. Co-imprisoned family members also support children, sharing food and providing several kinds of assistance. Relatives may be such close caregivers that they are deeply disturbed when children, to whom they have become emotionally attached, reach the age of leaving the institution. In order to avoid memories that had become too painful, Isabel, a 32-year-old woman imprisoned in Santa Cruz for drug trafficking and who was doing time together with her mother, two sisters, and a baby niece, asked to be relocated in another block when her niece left prison: “I couldn’t bear to see the children. I helped to raise my niece and it was as if I was seeing her. I felt bad, bad.”

But contemporary scenarios involving the co-existence of several relatives in the same prison may generate other kinds of painful experiences, such as the one reported by Fátima, a 27-year-old prisoner arrested for drug trafficking who was divorcing her husband and who was separated from her children by incarceration. Fátima’s sister-in-law usually came to visit her own mother who was imprisoned in the same institution. She was accompanied by Fátima’s children, yet never brought them to see her.

*I was a year without seeing my children.... She used to come to visit her mother, and didn’t bring my children. She brought them, but she didn’t call me. Once I had to shout because I couldn’t stand it, I knew they were here and I couldn’t go and see them in the parlor. Another time it was the chief guard who let me in and be with them for five minutes. Only five minutes! And they were my children....*

In the face of extended forms of relatedness (Carsten) involving children, which also exist in these women’s daily life outside of prison, “mothering” appears as a very narrow category. It obscures relatedness, bondedness, caregiving—and gatekeeping—which have a reality of their own, independent of motherhood and that cannot therefore be considered as its mere ersatz or extension.

Such forms of relatedness may also occur between non-relatives, especially in the mothers’ prison wing. Inmates’ sociality in this wing has a distinct quality. Children are put at its forefront. Besides the fact that mothers’ spare time is largely absorbed by childcare (feeding their children, bathing them, washing their clothes, playing with them, watching over them), all inmates have a more or less collective relationship with the kids in the wing. They give them affectionate nicknames, comment on their progress and achievements, protect them when the respective mothers snap at them (one even physically threatened the mother of a child to whom she had become particularly attached). They help feed them, take them to the playground or for a walk when the mother is remanded in the cell, and take charge of them when the child’s mother goes to court. Prisoners allowed to *go on* [home] *leave* sometimes collect children of imprisoned relatives or friends and look after them in their homes during those periods. They offer advice to co-inmates on their children’s health issues and sometimes urge them to take the children to the doctor without delay when a child appears ill or injured. They share food, clothing and children items. Inmate mothers who do not share are loathed more than informers.

Unlike in other wings, sociality is strongly mediated by the presence of children, both in instances of solidarity (*we help each other out because of the kids*) as well as of conflict. When a child is sick, all inmates may knock simultaneously on their door cells in order to alert the guards or to demand that the cell in question is opened.

### RESIGNIFYING AND REIFYING MOTHERHOOD

Some mothers express ambivalence about keeping their infant children with them behind bars. They express concern about the effects of prison limitations and the environment on children: the noise and the inmate fighting, the oppressive prison bars, locks and keys, cell confinement, and the lack of exposure to the outside world.

*I couldn’t bear the sight of her confined in a tiny space, asking me to open the door. Then I said no: it is me who is supposed to suffer, not the kid. I had to send her away. I regretted keeping him here when I went out with him on temporary leave. He had never seen a street before; he was scared of the cars.*

Out of guilt, some of these mothers renounce keeping their children in prison; others, usually middle-class prisoners, decide on principle not to bring them from the start, deeming it would be harmful to the child and selfish on their part.<sup>11</sup> However, this is not always an option, especially for less better-off inmates, who are the ones most affected by the consequences of mass

incarceration and by the co-imprisonment of relatives.<sup>12</sup> Like Ana, an inmate who has her baby daughter with her and left a one-year old child to the care of her mother, mothers may decide to keep children behind bars in order not to overburden relatives: "If I could, I would send her away" [but no else in the family could bear another burden].

Otherwise, as illustrated by the following short excerpts, mothers' narratives commonly emphasize a recurrent theme: their children's presence fulfils them, helps them cope and softens their prison experience (Cunha 1994: 156, Serra and Pires 420).

*The best thing here is that they let us keep our children with us. Time passes more quickly. There's no time to get depressed, it makes me react. / I don't take sleeping pills. My tranquilizers are my children. / Those who don't have their kids here are mentally upset. / The company they keep makes up for all the chores and all the trouble in the world. / I only feel lonely at night, when they go to sleep and I start thinking. / This would be heavy without the children. When my son is in daycare I don't know what to do, I'm longing for him to come back. / I'm always looking forward to the week-ends, so that I can be with my daughter all day long. / If I could have all my children with me, I wouldn't mind to be in prison. / They provide an escape, they give us strength to hold on.*

These narratives almost always express a highly idealized maternal self-image that does not necessarily match the actual interactions between mothers and their offspring. Likewise, there are claims by co-inmates who proudly suggest that it was under their influence that mothers actually started to enjoy their children and learned how to care for them: "Before she didn't care, now she even says 'Oh my Chico is so pretty, isn't he?'" Prisoners who admitted that at some point or another they had "no patience" for their children or that their presence in such an environment could also be overbearing ("the kids altogether, it's a racket. We can do nothing but run after them, stopping fights") were rare exceptions. Rosy narratives may be even more prevalent in inmates' recollections whose children have already left prison, insofar as only the gratifying moments are remembered. Separation itself, whether during the prison sentence or upon imprisonment, allows for re-imagining mother-child relationships in a positive light.

Yet, as Cristina Palomar Vereá (372) has also noted, by taking some of the burdens away from women's day-to-day lives the prison environment does allow for experiencing motherhood in new ways. Sheltered from the pressures of everyday survival, poverty and violence, with time available to dedicate to their children (who now also receive specialized medical and psychological attention), and with consistent exposure to expert educational and pedagogical discourses

and programs, mothers may experience an unprecedented and intense bond with their children. This creates new subjectivities in which motherhood takes centre stage, and through which mothers also resignify previous experiences of motherhood. In such a context, motherhood becomes hyperbolized in narratives of personal identity, including the way it is perceived in retrospect or projected into the future.

#### FINAL REMARKS

Children and a mother's separation from her children is at the top of the "pains of imprisonment." These are pervasive themes of prison discussion. Motherhood is recurrently invoked by inmates as a motive and justification for the offence that led them to prison (*I did it for my children; I had to feed my kids*). Reference to motherhood is thus often a gendered "technique of neutralization" (Sykes and Matza). Furthermore, the discursive importance of the "good mother" may be instrumental in refusing a "deviant" identity and may be invoked as a synonym of a "good citizen" (Cunha 1994).

However, contextual variations caution us against presuming that motherhood predefines women's whole identity in incarceration situations.<sup>13</sup> As a gendered anchor of a "non-deviant" social identity, motherhood was more central during the 1980s. Since the 1990s, a new sense of collective identity and shared destiny have emerged; these have been based on prisoners' common provenance from the same destitute and ill reputed urban areas, as well as on kin, friendship, and neighbourhood ties, and on a shared position at the bottom of the class structure—which included, for the first time, an endured sense of collective stigma (see Cunha 2002).

Overshadowed by new categories of agency and identity within which prisoners came to react to their common marginalization, identity dimensions such as gender receded to the backstage of the prison social scene. This was also complicated by mass incarceration and the co-imprisonment of relatives. The sociology of relatedness, as well as the "ethics of care," once identified with women *qua* mothers, are not limited to mother-child dyads anymore, but involve wider circles of relationships; furthermore, as it simultaneously involves more than two generations, the ethics of care is enmeshed in a more (even if not altogether) gender-neutral ethics of respect, reciprocity, and moral obligation.

The prison environments discussed here focused on reproduction and on the mother-child bond (a notion also formatted by expert discourses and popular psychology)<sup>14</sup> and this promotes a highly idealized and essentialized notion of motherhood. This ideal construct of motherhood is disconnected from the harsh realities and actual experiences of these women's lives. In many cases, it is behind bars that these mothers find the time, structure or the

resources necessary to focus on motherhood. By overstating the exclusivity of the mother-child relationship and by totally detaching it from the wider context of relatedness in which it is enmeshed both behind and beyond bars, this idealized construct of motherhood obscures the changing complexities of care and support in the age of mass incarceration; it veils how care and support are shared by a multitude of others.

*The support of the following institutions is gratefully acknowledged: FCT (Project, "Care as Sustainability in Crisis Situations": PTDC/CS-ANT/117259/2010; Gr. "Representações sobre os impactos sócio-familiares da reclusão: visões femininas e masculinas," SFRH/BD/73214/2010/15395389SQ03; Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (Gr. 6099).*

<sup>1</sup>Although such possibility is not necessarily barred to inmate fathers by prison regulations such as the Portuguese's (which today may not even specify gender), logistical and practical conditions hardly allow for its implementation (e.g. there are generally no daycare centres in male institutions).

<sup>2</sup>See Wall and Lobo for the growing importance of single parents' households in Portugal.

<sup>3</sup>For example, through tattoos, photographs, letters and stories (Ferraro and Moe; Clark).

<sup>4</sup>In Portugal the co-imprisonment of kin, as well as the presence of multiple neighbours and previous acquaintances doing time in the same prison facilities, has to do with the systematic provenance of prison populations from a handful of poverty-stricken urban territories in the two main Portuguese metropolitan areas (Lisbon and Oporto). Since the 1990s, these neighbourhoods were associated with a booming petty drug economy and drew an intense attention from law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system, which increased the probabilities of detention (for a more detailed explanation see Cunha 2005, 2008).

<sup>5</sup>The latter (Santa Cruz) even came to absorb, upon its opening, part of the prisoners of the former (Tires), which was overcrowded then.

<sup>6</sup>Women were selected by combining a snowball progression that followed 'natural' networks and a systematic sampling that diversified inmates along lines of penal and social profile, as well as length and experience of confinement (Cunha 1994, 2002).

<sup>7</sup>In the case of Tires, according to a conservative estimate based on data registered in social-educational files, between one-half and two-thirds of the inmates in Tires had family members inside the same institution (sisters, cousins, aunts, nieces, mothers, grandmothers). This estimate does not include male partners and kin serving their own sentences in other facilities. In Santa Cruz, on the

other hand, there are records on the proportion of prisoners (40 percent) who have applied for visits in male institutions (brothers, sons, husbands/partners), which leaves inmate women relatives unaccounted for. Fieldwork, however, confirmed their existence along a similar pattern.

<sup>8</sup>This State ideology was at odds with social realities in that it could only be fulfilled, or afforded, by the elites. With the exception of these groups, women in Portugal—and more so among the poor—have always massively resorted to work and wage labour as a survival strategy, without this being considered in their social milieu as a transgression of a gender cultural script (Cole; Ferreira; Pujadas).

<sup>9</sup>For recent general regulations, see Regulamento General dos Estabelecimentos Prisionais, Decreto-Lei n.º 51/2011 at <<http://dre.pt/pdfs-dip/2011/04/07100/0218002225.pdf>>.

For a comparison, in various countries, of modalities allowing children to stay with their mothers behind bars, as well as the effects of such measures, see e.g. Tomasevski; Vereá.

<sup>10</sup>Guards also bring presents and toys to children, and sometimes buy them sweets, tell stories and cajole them into entering the cells when they are reluctant to do so.

<sup>11</sup>This opinion is also expressed by male prison guards. Women guards tend to understand mothers' decision to keep the children with them.

<sup>12</sup>Before the 1990s, children of imprisoned mothers would typically be taken care of by relatives, friends or neighbors outside. However, phenomena of collective incarceration have caused the overload of these informal community networks of support. This is a combined effect of the increased length of prison sentences, which raises the amount of time children have to be looked after by others on the outside, and the imprisonment of many of those available to provide this temporary care (for a development of this point see Cunha, forthcoming). For example, a grandmother can thus find herself looking after several grandchildren, either simultaneously or consecutively, when sons and daughters-in-law are imprisoned. As a result, children enter an unpredictable circuit. Besides being separated and distributed among family and neighbors, brothers and sisters will move successively from uncles to grandparents, godparents and neighbors—and eventually into institutions when other children arrive or when expense becomes unbearable. State or charity institutions are a viable option. But support emanating from institutions is hardly conceptualized as "care" in prevailing cultural ideologies, however "caring" might be the concrete processes and interactions through which it takes place. Only support provided by persons is considered to be genuinely "caring," as institutions would, in this view have an impersonal, contract-oriented approach to human relationships (Cunha forthcoming).

<sup>13</sup>This point is developed in Cunha and Granja.  
<sup>14</sup>See also Young (148-158) for a related point.

## WORKS CITED

- Beleza dos Santos, José. *Nova Organização Prisional Portuguesa*. Coimbra: Coimbra Editora, 1947. Print.
- Carsten, Janet. *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Print.
- Celínska, K. and J. A. Siegel. "Mothers in Trouble: Coping With Actual or Pending Separation From Children Due to Incarceration." *The Prison Journal* 90.4 (2010): 447-474. Web. 15 October 2010.
- Clark, Judith. "Impact of the Prison Environment on Mothers." *The Prison Journal* 75 (1995): 29-35. Print.
- Cole, Sally. *Women of the Praia: Work and Lives in a Portuguese Coastal Community*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991. Print.
- Comfort, Megan. *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008. Print.
- Correia, A. Mafalda. *Tratamento Penitenciário*, Lisboa: Centro do Livro Brasileiro, 1981. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. "A reclusão segundo o género: Os estudos prisionais, a reclusão de mulheres e a variação dos contextos da identidade." *AAVV, Educar o Outro: As Questões de Género, dos Direitos Humanos e da Educação nas Prisões Portuguesas*. Coimbra: Publicações Humanas, 2007. 80-89. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. "Closed Circuits: Kinship, Neighborhood and Imprisonment in Urban Portugal." *Ethnography* 9.3 (2008): 325-350. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. *Entre o Bairro e a Prisão: Tráfico e Trajectos*. Lisbon: Fim de Século, 2002. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. "From Neighborhood to Prison. Women and the War on Drugs in Portugal." *Global Lockdown: Race, Gender, and Prison-Industrial Complex*. Ed. Julia Sudbury. New York: Routledge, 2005. 155-165. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. *Malhas que a Reclusão Tece. Questões de Identidade numa Prisão Feminina*. Lisbon: Cadernos do Centro de Estudos Judiciários, 1994. Print.
- Cunha, Manuela. "The Changing Scale of Imprisonment and the Transformation of Care: The Erosion of the "Welfare Society" by the "Penal State" in Contemporary Portugal." *Careful Encounters: Ethnographies of Support*. Ed. Marcus Fletcher and Frederika Fleischer. London: Palgrave MacMillan, forthcoming.
- Cunha, Manuela and Rafaela Granja. "Gender Asymmetries, Parenthood and Confinement in Two Portuguese Prisons." Ed. Stéphanie Latte Abdallah and Coline Cardi. *Revue Champ Pénal, Special Issue Detained Motherhoods*,

- Fatherhoods: Parenthood in Imprisonment and Conflict Situations* (2013): forthcoming.
- Datesman, S. K. and G. L. Cales. "I'm Still the Same Mommy": Maintaining the Mother/Child Relationship in Prison." *The Prison Journal* 63.2 (1983): 142-154. Web. 1 August 2011.
- Eigenberg, Helen M. and Phyllis E. Berry. "Role Strain and Incarcerated Mothers: Understanding the Process of Mothering." *Women & Criminal Justice* 15.1 (2003): 101-119. Print.
- Enos, Sandra. *Mothering From the Inside: Parenting in a Women's Prison*. New York: SUNY Press, 2001. Print.
- Ferraro, Kathleen J. and Angela M. Moe. "Mothering, Crime, And Incarceration." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 32.1 (2003): 9-40. Web. 14 February 2011.
- Ferreira, Virginia. "Padrões de Segregação das Mulheres no Emprego: Uma Análise do Caso Português no Quadro Europeu." *Portugal: Um Retrato Singular*. Ed. Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Porto: Afrontamento, 1993. 233-257. Print.
- Goffman, Erving. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental and Other Inmates*. New York: Garden Books, 1999 [1961]. Print.
- Greene, S., C. Haney and A. Hurtado. "Cycles of Pain: Risk Factors in the Lives of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children." *The Prison Journal* 80.1 (2000): 3-23. Web. 9 August 2011.
- Henriques, Zelma. "Imprisoned Mothers and Their Children." *Women & Criminal Justice* 8.1 (1996): 77-95. Print.
- Kazura, Kerry. "Family Programming for Incarcerated Parents." *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 32.4 (2000): 67-83. Print.
- La Vigne, Haley, Lisa E. Brooks and Tracey L. Shollenberger. "Women on the Outside: Understanding the Experiences of Female Prisoners Returning to Houston, Texas." *Justice Police Center Research Report*. Urban Institute Publications, 2009. Web. 10 January 2011.
- Mahan, Susan. *Unfit Mothers*. Palo Alto: R&E Research Associates, 1982. Print.
- Morash, Merry and Pamela Schram. *The Prison Experience: Special Issues of Women in Prison*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press Inc., 2002. Print.
- Pattillo, Mary, David Weiman and Bruce Western. *Imprisoning America: The Social Effects of Mass Incarceration*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 2004. Print.
- Pinto, J. Roberto. "O tratamento penitenciário de mulheres." *Boletim da Administração Penitenciária e dos Institutos de Criminologia* 25 (1969). Print.
- Pujadas, Joan. "Processos Sociais e Construção de Identidades nas Periferias Urbanas: Os Casos de Lisboa e Catalunha." *Mediterrâneo* 4 (1994): 11-19. Print.



- Salazar, António de Oliveira. *Como se Levanta um Estado*. Lisboa: Golden Books, 1977. Print.
- Serra, Dinora and António Pires. "Maternidade atrás das grades: comportamento parental em contexto prisional." *Análise Psicológica* 2.22 (2004) : 413-425. Print.
- Shamai, Michal. "Motherhood Starts in Prison: The Experience of Motherhood Among Women in Prison." *Family Process* 47.3 (2008): 323-340. Print.
- Sykes, Gresham and David Matza. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency." *American Sociological Review* 22.6 (1957): 664-670. Print.
- Tomasevski, Katarina. *Children in Adult Prisons: An International Perspective*. Londres: Frances Pinter, 1986. Print.
- Verea, Cristina Palomar. *Maternidad em Prisión*. Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2007. Print.
- Young, Jock. *The Exclusionary Society: Social Exclusion, Crime and Difference in Late Modernity*. London: Sage, 1999. Print.
- Wall, Karin and Cristina Lobo. "Famílias Monoparentais Em Portugal." *Análise Social* 34.150 (1999): 123-145. Print.
- Wacquant, Loïc. *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009. Print.

## Incarcerated Indigenous Australian Mothers

### Maintaining Patriarchal Colonization

RUTH MCCAUSLAND AND EILEEN BALDRY

INDIGENOUS WOMEN have been the fastest growing group of prisoners in Australia for the past decade. Indigenous women, making up only two percent of the Australian women's population now make up 30 percent of women in prison. Most Indigenous women prisoners have children and most of them have their children removed. Indigenous women have specific experiences based on the intersection of their race and gender (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner; Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre). For example, Indigenous women experience high levels of family and community violence but are under-represented in formal reporting of such abuse, arguably due to their experience of racism in the criminal justice system (Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre). Intersectional and institutional discrimination manifest in government policies and programs for women and for Indigenous peoples generally. These policies do not respond to the specific circumstances of Indigenous women who are, on the whole, invisible in the Australian political environment (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner).

In this chapter we argue that the contemporary over-representation of Indigenous women in prison cannot be understood in isolation from Australia's history of colonial, paternalistic control of them and their children, and the commensurate failure to allow them agency and participation in decision-making regarding matters affecting them, their families and communities. The historical characterisation and treatment of Aboriginal women has direct and real consequences today in the policy failure to support positive change in their lives. We also explore and reflect upon the views of and about incarcerated Indigenous mothers. Then, we analyze the policies and practices shaping their lives, choices and relationships. We argue that the over-representation of Indigenous women in prison is a contemporary manifestation of the two centuries old colonial patriarchal impetus to control Indigenous Australian women and their children.