



Insurgent Parenting: Political Implications of Childrearing and Caring Practices in Spain

Luciana Moreira

INTRODUCTION

In Spain, same-sex marriage and adoption were legalized in 2005, and in 2006 a new law of assisted reproduction stated for the first time that every woman could have access to those techniques regardless of their marital status and sexual orientation. This was not forbidden under previous legislation, although, in the case of lesbian couples, the non-biological mother could not register the child (Moreira, 2018; Pichardo, 2009; Trujillo & Burgaleta, 2014). While examples of queer family constellations involving parenting practices already occurred, the creation of a legal framework for these families further boosted their existence and growth. The existence of new family models has enhanced academic studies about the diversity of families and the importance of rethinking gender roles and childcare within the motherhood system (or parenting). As in other contexts, Spanish feminism has also questioned Western ideology about motherhood and conservative reactions to women's claims within and outside feminist movements for more equality within the family, the domestic

L. Moreira (✉)

Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra (CES-UC), Coimbra, Portugal

© The Author(s) 2023

127

A. C. Santos (ed.), *LGBTQ+ Intimacies in Southern Europe*,
Citizenship, Gender and Diversity,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13508-8_7

space, and the care of children (Blázquez Rodríguez & Montes Muñoz, 2010; Esteban, 2000).

Regarding same-sex parenting, according to research on the Spanish context, we can identify patterns of both transformation and sameness in lesbian motherhood concerning the role of the family (Pichardo, 2009; Platero, 2014; Santos, 2012; Trujillo & Burgaleta, 2014). People engaging in same-sex coupling and parenting tend to justify themselves as being “good” parents or living in “normal families” because of social levels of stigmatization and also implicitly created impediments, but on the other hand, the structure of these families’ daily life in itself challenges the normative system of kinship and the sex/gender system with respect to parental models (Moreira, 2018; Platero, 2014; Ryan-Flood, 2009), even if the link between marriage and filiation rights with the expansion of the neoliberal economy remains strong (Duggan, 2003; Richardson, 2005).

Thus, while both in Spain and abroad the link between family and neoliberal expansion is being reinforced, it is also true that many family projects offer alternatives to living in a globalized world through counterhegemonic practices of care and affections that, to different degrees, challenge patriarchal culture, neoliberalism, and conservatism (hooks, 1984, 2000; Chavkrin, 2010; Llopis, 2015; Rich, 1986). Parallel to significant alternatives that have already emerged from Black and lesbian feminist studies, current possibilities enabled by intimate citizenship rights also present interesting practices of care outside the traditional family norm (Moreira, 2018; Ryan-Flood, 2009; Taylor, 2009). In the current context of neoliberal globalization, the concept of “insurgent cosmopolitanism” (Santos, 2006) in this chapter serves as a tool to understand the practices of counterhegemonic parenting that might result from knowledge exchange within subaltern movements and identities, also propitiated by globalization.

Exchanges of knowledge and experience are a constant in contemporary societies, and parenting practices are not excluded from those exchanges. It is also interesting to see how many of these practices also aim to challenge the neoliberal system. Emancipatory practices of questioning and refusing the patriarchal parenting model can be found in different parts of the globe, and Spain is no exception. People seek to achieve greater equality between genders and between people in general while promoting respect for the free development of children and young people, particularly as regards their sexual orientation and gender identity.

My analysis draws, on the one hand, on interviews with lesbian and bisexual mothers and, on the other hand, on interviews with trans people whose parents were part of their networks of care within the project *Intimate – Citizenship, Care and Choice: The Micropolitics of Intimacy in Southern Europe*.¹ This empirical material collected in Madrid is constituted by two different studies: lesbian and bisexual mothers who talk about their experiences of motherhood and young trans people who reflect on the importance of their families, considering them part of their support networks. The chapter will contribute to studies on parenting and care, specifically showing how parenting practices may be a tool to (1) ascribe social visibility to sexual and gender-diverse identities and families; (2) educate children beyond a gender binary system; (3) subvert the neoliberal supremacy of work over motherhood; and (4) raise children in a larger network of care, beyond the couple/children norm.

DISSIDENT PARENTING AGAINST AND BEYOND FAMILIAL GENDERED RELATIONS

In her book, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, Judith Butler departs from the tragic figure of Antigone (one of the daughters of Oedipus and Jocasta's incestuous relationship), portrayed in the tragedy of Sophocles, to both dwell on the taboos governing kinship and question what is meant by family "in its normative sense" (2000, p. 22). According to Butler, "Antigone figures the limits of intelligibility exposed at the limits of kinship" (2000, p. 23), functioning as a metaphor that catches the possibilities behind the heterosexual and monogamous normative framework of families and kinship. This makes space to discuss incest, parenting shared by same-sex couples, nuclear and non-nuclear forms of families, blended models, absent figures, and the "dysfunctional" discourse about a wide range of possibilities that do not fit into the normative ideal of family.

Indeed, escaping or subverting the norm happened in many different ways throughout history, as the very subject of the classic tragedy of Oedipus (and his daughter/sister Antigone) illustrates, but the pressure of

¹"Intimate – Citizenship, Care and Choice: The Micropolitics of Intimacy in Southern Europe" was a five-year project involving qualitative studies on LGBT partnering, parenting, and friendship across Portugal, Spain, and Italy. It was coordinated by Ana Cristina Santos, at Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, Portugal, between 2014 and 2019. The interviews used in this chapter were collected in Madrid in 2016 and 2017.

the norm has also been great and continued, anchored in legislation, state norms, and religious and/or cultural norms. Nevertheless, to better understand the centrality of the family “in its normative sense”, it is necessary to follow a vast array of queer and feminist analyses of patriarchy or also the so-called sex/gender system (Rubin, 1996).

The family norm is largely anchored in the different (and binary) gender roles assigned to males and females, that is, to the management of relations between men and women (both cisgender), especially regarding sexuality and kinship. For instance, Preciado (2011) identifies the family as one of the institutions (along with others such as medical and legal institutions) that guarantees the binary sex assignment, ensuring the constancy of gendered bodies. Indeed, the sex/gender system is based on what Judith Butler, following the work of authors such as Gayle Rubin (1996), Adrienne Rich (1980), or Monique Wittig (1992), called the “heterosexual matrix” (1990). The sex/gender system not only subjugates women in general (through the implication of gender roles in the public and private domains) but also controls affect, sexuality, reproduction, kinship, possible experiences of fluidity, and transit that may exist beyond the heterosexual contract and gender experiences outside cisnormativity.

Several authors have attempted to draw the history of patriarchal rule as well as to discuss the concept. While its origins are unclear, it is generally agreed that patriarchy or heterocispatriarchy (to emphasize the dependence of this social system on the heterosexual matrix) is, above all, an imposed ideological cultural construct.² Several feminist authors, as well as authors of postcolonial studies, have pointed to the greater role of colonialism and capitalism in the expansion of patriarchal ideology. Oyèrónké Oyewúmi (1997), Rita Segato (2003), and Maria Lugones (2008), among others, denounced the fact that the hierarchical organization of genders is related to the modern colonial Western system, which imposed it on the spaces it was trying to colonize. Thus, the male/female dichotomy and the heterosexual norm underlying the patriarchal system also served to subjugate other people who did not follow the same norms.

Although a diversity of family organizations persists today, as well as an array of gender expressions that question the male/female binary system in some communities in different parts of the globe (Glenn et al., 1994; Herdt, 1994; O’Reilly, 2004), the colonial system and globalization spread and rooted patriarchal norms (which often already worked in

² See, for example, Lerner (1986), or Nicholson, L. (1997).

non-Western spaces as well). It is in this sense that gender roles and the nuclear family have become the cornerstones of many societies and are, therefore, at the root of women's oppression and sex-generic dissent.

Due to the binary division of genders, the institution of motherhood (part of the "heterosexual matrix") has had and still plays a fundamental role in maintaining the sex/gender system, as it legitimates and conveys its conservative values. If men take a leading role within the patriarchal culture, so does the representation of women through the creation of images such as "of the archetypal Mother which reinforce the conservatism of motherhood and convert it to an energy for the renewal of male power" (Rich, 1986, p. 61). Therefore, many feminist, mostly White, bourgeois-born authors attack motherhood as well as marriage as institutions that underlie women's oppression, which binds them to domestic spaces and care-related tasks, allegedly preventing women from gaining economic autonomy—understood as a fundamental form of emancipation (Collins, 1994; hooks, 1984, 2000); O'Reilly, 2004; Rich, 1986).

However, it was also within a feminist framework that alternative voices emerged to rescue motherhood, as if they were Antigones defying established rules. Adrienne Rich (1976/1986) pioneered advocating emancipatory practices of mothering to challenge what she called "patriarchal motherhood". bell hooks (1984, 2000) and Patricia Hill Collins (1994), among others, highlight the emancipatory and community role of motherhood and child-caring in African-American communities as a site of resistance rather than collusion with the normative system.

In addition to the different contexts from which each author comes, it is also interesting to reflect on the terminological differences that each one of them adopts. On the one side, Adrienne Rich (1986) denounces the link between patriarchal culture and motherhood as an institution and then proposes the term "mothering" (as opposed to "patriarchal motherhood") to speak of positive and emancipatory practices that break or mitigate a sexist education. On the other side, bell hooks also suggest that the term "motherhood" reinforces "central tenets of male supremacist ideology" (1984, p. 135) and goes further by proposing a more neutral term: parenting. Based on the experiences of African-American communities (even giving her personal example) and building on the promotion of gender equality, the author advocates for "revolutionary parenting" (hooks, 1984, p. 133) and "collective parenting" (p. 146) as models that go far beyond the nuclear traditional family, pillar of the heterosexual

matrix, and would therefore be a mechanism for valuing equality and diversity in childrearing. According to hooks:

Structured into the definitions and the very usage of the terms father and mother is the sense that these two words refer to two distinctly different experiences. Women and men must define the work of fathering and mothering in the same way males and females are to accept equal responsibility in parenting. (1984, p. 137)

Childrearing shared by fathers and mothers is a common practice in many families and groups of friends today. More than that, the demands and social changes experienced in recent years have made it possible not only for childcare to be shared by male and female figures, but it is also a task for people who identify outside the binary gender system. Trans and agender parenting are a reality. For example, Del LaGrace Volcano is an interesting case, since they³ is an intersex photographer and performer, raised as a girl but that later decided to live openly their intersexuality, performing both femininity and masculinity. They are from the USA, live now in Stockholm, and are the MaPa of two children that they and their partner are raising without gender rules. According to a published interview to María Llopis, MaPa is how Del LaGrace Volcano identifies, for being both mother and father, due to their intersexuality. Their children call them that, and Del is known in their oldest child's school as a MaPa, both by caregivers and by other children. Llopis (2015) attests that "through their artistic work and their life experience [Del] inspires us to escape from the narrow social conventions of heteronormativity" (p. 77).

Since the first calls made in the streets by gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans people in the 1960s and 1970s in the Western world (mostly in democratic countries), many discriminatory laws have been abolished, and anti-discriminatory laws have come into force, including those regarding marriage and parental rights (Evans, 1993; Ryan-Flood, 2009; Santos, 2013; Weeks et al., 2001). As Weeks et al. put it: "Non-heterosexual people have had to be the arch-inventors, because so few guidelines have existed for those living outside the conventional heterosexual patterns" (2001, p. 20). In a world where the rejection of queer lives may lead to the loss of family and (straight) friends' support, new networks of care and families of choice (Warner, 1991; Weston, 1991) have become

³I am using here gender-neutral language since Del uses neutral pronouns.

fundamental, mostly when biological families are homophobic and violent. Those practices, despite their specificities, may be compared to Black communities and the reliance on care and support from others beyond nuclear or biological families. Thus, new commitments among queer people, including the formation of parental emotional and legal bonds, looking for care, love, and support beyond the traditional family are also good examples of challenging social norms based on the masculine/feminine binary and the wide range of roles attached to it (Moreira, 2018; Ryan-Flood, 2009; Taylor, 2009). Equally important for the education of a fairer society through parenting practices are the families that have supported their gender-diverse and/or transgender children, fighting alongside them, allowing them to be who they are, respecting the free personal and emotional development of their children (Aramburu Alegría, 2018).

In this sense, Adrienne Rich already advocated for the destruction of the institution of motherhood. This author's proposal was not to abolish motherhood but "to release the creation and sustenance of life into the same realm of decision, struggle, surprise, imagination and conscious intelligence, as any difficult, but freely chosen work" (Rich, 1986, p. 280). Those emancipatory possibilities may arise from parenting when, like Antigones that no longer need to commit suicide, people destabilize sexual, racial, and gender norms (to quote just a few of contemporary social norms) embracing social justice through revolutionary parenting and care. As Ana Cristina Santos argued: "failing to be a particular kind of (heteronormative, cishnormative, mononormative) mother may offer a fruitful way for queering parental love through embracing reproductive misfits" (Santos, 2018, p. 211).

My suggestion is that the mentioned emancipatory possibilities constitute forms of what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls "insurgent cosmopolitanism" (2006, 2014). As cosmopolitanism goes side by side with globalization, in the next section, I will outline the connection between the heterosexual matrix and globalization, to situate insurgent cosmopolitanism within this specific constitution of the contemporary world.

RESISTING GLOBALIZATION: GLOBALIZING RESISTANCE THROUGH PARENTING AND CARE

Globalization is a process of transforming what belonged previously to a local context into the global. It may be understood as a contemporary concept to describe a vast array of phenomena, such as the elimination of borders (or simplification in travel processes), the centrality of the media, massive international trade, respect for the human diversity present in different parts of the globe, constant networks among societies, and the spread of knowledge (Berggren & Nilsson, 2015; Castells, 2004; Garber, 2006). In his analysis of societies and globalization processes, Castells (2004) stresses the importance of networks and denounces the relative lack of a historical representation of networked structures, even if they were (and are) subjected to vertical logics and power forces (p. 4).

But the three or four past decades show also how globalization maintained its relations to economic and social power, enabling new chains of procedures that allow the Western world, or its elites, to continue to take advantage of other geographies, but also subaltern and/or minority groups within it. In other terms, the politics of globalization seem to be grounded in uniform processes applied to a global scale, with the aim of achieving and exercising positions of power over the populations or communities (Santos, 2006). Thus, capitalism and neoliberalism are strongly connected to the phenomenon of globalization (Dasgupta & Pieterse, 2009; Santos, 2006, 2014; Santos & Rodríguez-Garavito, 2005). Samir Dasgupta (2009) suggests that “globalization is the latest hegemonic expression of capitalism. It can be explained in terms of economic, political, intellectual and cultural hegemony of the global players. We can argue that at present globalization has completely been merged with neocapitalism” (p. 8).

Furthermore, both political and military conflicts and demands issued by social movements that took place throughout the twentieth century (and even earlier), mainly in the Western world, led to a wide range of transnational legal documents and policy statements, according to which civil, political, and socio-economic rights of all human beings are to be respected and governments should be proactive in maintaining or fulfilling those rights. Nevertheless, despite being based on a transnational awareness of the need to defend human rights, those documents are prepared and negotiated based on dominant models of Western societies, such as Western feminism, liberalism, and capitalism (even patriarchy), in what

may be understood as an attempt to standardize (or universalize) social and economic systems that do not work at a local level (Merry, 2006; Santos, 2014). The hegemony of these documents and of specific social and economic models based on capitalism and patriarchal values lead to two different consequences: on the one hand, they cannot be implemented effectively in other communities or other parts of the world without caution and efforts of resignification of some cultural and political concepts at (other) local levels (Merry, 2006). On the other hand, those documents may be and are being used as oppressive strategies to claim Western superiority and as argument to invade and control nations and regions in the name of human rights when in fact economic and political powers are behind its usage (Douzinas, 2007; Moyn, 2014).

Therefore, in a globalized world, heir of a colonial system, the traditional and heterosexual nuclear family has been supportive of the hegemonic system, with clearly defined gender roles (Lugones, 2008; Oyewùmi, 1997). In that sense, concerning colonial power and coloniality, Maria Lugones (2008) argues that the gendered colonial system imposed through colonialism erodes previous perceptions of both gender and sexuality. She goes further in arguing that gender and race are Western concepts and indigenous women became defined according to such concepts, even if they were not before (Lugones, 2008, p. 2).

It may be argued that the absence or invisibility of other models of families beyond the rules of nuclear model (what hooks, 1984, calls revolutionary parenting), based on the heterosexual organization of relationships, or of practices of childcare more based on the community than on the nuclear family (what hooks, 1984, calls collective parenting) is also a part of the capitalist and globalizing project and its Western models. Gender and sexual diversity used to be also erased and combated in Western societies, and colonialism spread those prejudices. However, nowadays, with globalization, LGBT rights are sometimes used as a political strategy to claim Western supremacy and as an argument to control or deny help to non-Western states.⁴

Furthermore, while on the one hand the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity is the result of social struggles and extensive work within institutions and states, it is also certain that the rights achieved (sometimes marked by the absence or weakness of public policies that combat discrimination on a daily basis) are connected to neoliberalism, through the

⁴ See, for example, Puar (2013) and Tamale (2013).

role that the couple and the family assume in contemporary societies as focuses of consumption (Duggan, 2003; Richardson, 2005). It is possible to trace a link between relational rights⁵ with the need to maintain and enlarge the neoliberal economy (based also on the family as institution) accommodating those who claim their intimate and sexual rights.

But when thinking about family, it is very important to think also about parenting roles and parenting practices. They play an important role in this analysis of globalization for two reasons: on the one hand, the sex/gender system has defined different roles for men and women, from their traditional places in society, which made care and affection essentially women's tasks; on the other hand, feminist claims within the framework of the more bourgeois White, cut-out feminism demanded broad access for women to the working world, but without sufficient mechanisms in place to fulfil women's domestic tasks. Women have accessed autonomy, but this also means that the labour force is bigger now, and so are the possibilities of consumption. Therefore, families with both members working are part of the gear of neoliberalism and hegemonic globalization. Wendy Chavkrin (2010) draws attention to the problems of women's entry into the world of labour and the gap they left regarding childcare. Political response to that change was not enough, even more in a globalized world where parenting leave is short and where schools have schedules which are different to those of parents' work; as the latter are becoming more and more flexible, which also means working outside "nine to five" schedules, "women have turned to other working women to perform domestic 'care work'" (Chavkrin, 2010, p. 7). According to this author, some problems concerning motherhood and childcare that arose from globalization are:

(...) the exacerbation of inequities; the commodification of new aspects of the human experience; the reach of the market into realms of scientific exploration and wide spread use of technologies before enough is known about their long-term health implications; the conversion of social change into privatized individual problems; the questionable/changing ability of the nation state to protect, to provision, to exclude; and the philosophic and political meaning of self, of personhood, of identity. (Chavkrin, 2010, pp. 12–13)

⁵ Such as the right to officially marry and have children.

However, in a globalized world of constant transnational interactions, it is possible to find both grassroots movements and individuals adopting emancipatory practices and trying to resist or counteract the dimmer side of globalization, learning and exchanging knowledge with different groups from different parts of the globe. While resistance to savage capitalism and neoliberalism is very common among those who try to avoid the negative aspects of globalization, equal values and human respect also circulate, with many people trying to live and spread life models outside of sexist, racist, and homophobic patterns. It is in the street and in social movements that these ideas and ways of resisting take shape and spread, yet the private space of care and affection is also an important, though often neglected, place for changing mindsets. In this sense, the care of children is particularly important.

To describe the spread of knowledge and mobility allowed by globalization itself, Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006, 2014) proposed the concept of insurgent cosmopolitanism as a “transnationally organized resistance against the unequal exchanges produced or intensified by globalized localisms and localized globalisms” (Santos, 2006, p. 397), which would be a more egalitarian mode of production of globalization. In the same line of thought, Wendy Chavkrin pays attention to “the liberatory possibilities and inventive new forms of connection at play in the globalization of motherhood” (2010, p. 13). Thus, insurgent cosmopolitanism benefits from some of the characteristics of hegemonic globalization while providing other emancipatory ways of creating other possible, more egalitarian, and affective worlds in a counterhegemonic posture based on alternative cultural values.

Southern European societies may be analysed as very patriarchal and familistic. Nevertheless, at that point they are also strongly imprinted with legal and social changes due to feminism and sexual and/or gender-diverse people’s claims. In that sense, projects of family that go beyond the ideal of the Western traditional, nuclear, heteronormative family, as a consumerism vehicle, are a new approach to inhabiting a globalized world through insurgent models of living that reject the sex/gender system, but also neoliberalism and capitalism, in more or less intense ways. Queer movements or queer lives in the Spanish context may be analysed within the insurgent cosmopolitanism approach, as they embody a strategy to fight against the sex/gender system and hegemonic globalization, even more when it touches on caring practices, as a way of generating different futures.

INSURGENT PARENTING PRACTICES

Drawing on the research I carried out between 2016 and 2017 in Madrid within the project *Intimate – Citizenship, Care and Choice: The Micropolitics of Intimacy in Southern Europe*, about assisted conception (with lesbian and bisexual mothers) and with trans people whose parents or other family members were part of their networks of care, I will now analyse non-normative ways of experimenting and living childcare, beyond normative models in Spain. To do that, drawing from Santos' (2006) concept of “insurgent cosmopolitanism”, I propose the concept of insurgent parenting to describe practices of counterhegemonic parenting that might result from knowledge exchange within social movements and identities and that are also propitiated by globalization or internationalism (feminism, queer mobilization, anti-racism, etc.). Those practices—most of the time related to caring and rearing—are performed by persons who understand themselves, and the children they raise, beyond gender, race, or sexuality, and who try to reject neoliberalism and capitalism, in more or less intense ways. Insurgent parenting is agender; it may be lived by traditional family members, but it also characterizes the community that parents choose to be part of their caring journey. Insurgent parenting does not praise men because they took good care of the children. Insurgent parents rear children beyond traditional gender roles and embrace or try to embrace different ways of living intimate relationships, friendships, and childcare, as a way of generating more egalitarian futures.

I would like to start with an example of insurgent ways of experimenting and living childcare, beyond the heterocisnormative society based on the traditional family, analysing an interview with Mónica, a cisgender woman in her mid-thirties, mother of a child with her partner, whom she married just to avoid a process of co-adoption by the non-birth mother. Mónica and her partner are actively raising their children avoiding gendered toys and clothes, so that they can experience multiple possibilities of play, out of the imposed binary boy/girl model. The children were assigned a gender at birth, and they use gender marks in language but try to avoid socially performed markers such as clothes and toys:

We are feminists, it couldn't be otherwise, and we want our children to have all the options – we have bought all kinds of toys: soccer balls, etc. Well, I also like sports a lot, I like football and then, well, we have bought a little of the things that we like, we have bought cars, Legos, everything. Those

things that now have to be differentiated by sex, such as pink Legos for girls and such have never been very cool to us (...) We want them to play with everything: with dolls, with constructions, with cars... we understand that games have no gender and we want them to be whatever they want in the future. (Mónica)

Monica and her partner want the children to decide what they would like to be or not decide at all. The important thing for them is to empower them to be whatever they want without conservative gender restrictions and to accept their diverse family and understand that diversity is positive. Besides that, I would also like to highlight this couple's attention in relation to the childcare institution where their children are enrolled:

In day care there are all social strata, that is, there are people who have more money, people who have less, people who are there with the support of the social services, someone whose father has been in jail, I mean, I don't even know why—whatever—Muslim families, a little of everything. So, I like them to see all the realities. I mean, I didn't want to take them to a private school—apart from that we don't have money for a private school—nor do I want them to just hang out with that kind of people. (Mónica)

Another good example of insurgent parenting, this time mostly against the capitalist system, is Blanca's case. She is in her early thirties, and she and her partner are mothers of a two-year-old boy. For them, to put him into a school as soon as her maternity leave finished would be very neoliberal and patriarchal, because their son would be without them both the whole day, lacking their care and affection. Therefore, they both agree that Blanca would stay at home, as long as they could economically bear the situation. According to her, it was not a difficult decision:

That is, she prefers to go to work, even though she doesn't want to send her child to day care. For her, the ideal is that I'm with our son, and for me the ideal is to be with him, that is, it is by mutual agreement. But if we had the roles the other way round, the two of us would be uncomfortable: I would not want to go to work and leave our son here, and she would not want to be here all day with him, because she would go crazy. (Blanca)

As pointed out by Wendy Chavkrin (2010), female entry into the labour market, despite being a huge feminist achievement, was not accompanied by effective measures to provide childcare. Day care became an industry in

the globalized world, floating between public and private schools and the work of usually migrant women. In the case of Blanca and her partner, the non-biological mother is an autonomous worker, so, besides her own preferences, she is more likely to earn more than Blanca if she works more, so they decided also based in the fact that she would be the only economic provider, for a while. Blanca and her partner agree that to leave her son at an early age at school for the whole day would probably mean that he would not develop affectivity the same way he does at home. They also agree that in capitalist societies women are encouraged to go to work soon after they give birth, relegating care and affection to others, like nannies or schools.

Another interesting case is that of Juana, a cis woman in her early forties, and her partner. In the interview, Juana said that with their earning salaries, they had no choice but to return to work after maternity leave (as a biological mother, Juana took the longest). The couple went through some difficult times in their relationship with Juana's parents because of their sexuality and even more when they decided to get pregnant, but fortunately at the moment of the interview, they were part of their care network, concerning the child. But they were not the only ones:

We have two friends, who are sisters, and my relatives, who come to see [the children] practically every day (. . .) Once we had one of them sick and we had to go [to the hospital], and they were able to stay with the other one (. . .) My parents are the ones who take the children to school every day (. . .) The truth is that those two friends are the ones who have been closest to the entire treatment [to get pregnant]. Well, also when I had the miscarriage, they were with us... (...) and we went out a lot with them. Of course, when I say, "with them", the children come first, they go everywhere with us. (Juana)

Juana's words undoubtedly evoke African-American feminist references to Black communities and the support that different adult people provide to each other, regardless of biological kinship and family hierarchies. This kind of "community parenting", to use bell hooks' (1984) formulation, shows how larger communities of childcare are essential in times when most people cannot afford to avoid work to stay with children. African and African-American knowledge about childrearing in community are benefiting different kinds of people, with examples of extended families beyond nuclear formations and biological ties.

But emancipatory parenting practices did not only emerge from interviews on medically assisted reproduction in 2016. In 2017 I conducted a study on friendship (trans people and care networks) in Madrid, and it was quite interesting to see how biological families also played an important role in the lives of trans youth. Informants related remarkable caring and parenting practices outside the conservative and patriarchal model, and that happened in both nuclear and extended models of family.⁶ One case of supportive family members is that of Salvador, a non-binary, pansexual person in his early thirties, who chooses to be addressed and referred to in the masculine. His parents failed to support him economically and emotionally when he came out as a lesbian (ten years ago). But his grandparents, whose house were always a safe space for him, since childhood, were there for him:

I was running out of money and I had the alternative of going to an apartment that my grandparents had in Salamanca, which was an apartment where my mother and my cousins had studied (. . .) My grandparents had always told me: “When you need it, the floor is there, and that’s for you”. And I decided to ask them so that I could at least stop paying rent and could tackle the entrepreneurship project more thoroughly. And they kindly opened the doors for me. So it did not affect at all that I was whatever I was or that I liked who I liked. The truth is that the support I have had from them, even though they would not agree [with who I am], I find it admirable. Sure, compared to the experience I had with my parents, it was very different. Yes, yes, yes, in fact, I left my house with one hand in front and the other behind, literally. (Salvador)

The support and help that Salvador’s grandparents provide for him should be what any child or young person, trans or cisgender, feels from his parenting community. But this will only be possible in a future born from transformative models such as the ones I analyse, among others, regardless of parental figures’ gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnical belonging, and others.

Violeta is a rare case that shows how things could be different. She is a student in her late teens, identifies as a bisexual woman, and lives with her parents and brother and mentioned her parents as one of the pillars of her

⁶There were also reports of more conservative families who refused to deal with the gender identity of their children. These examples will not be covered in this chapter as they fall outside its scope.

life, during the interview. Violeta knows the difficulties that many trans people face with their families, and she was grateful for having a supportive context, where her parents allowed her to develop freely, caring for her even when it was difficult for them:

When I was five or six years old, my parents went to the LGTB pride of Madrid, they got into the pride march, with their child, in a space in which they would not feel completely comfortable either. On my mother's side it probably wasn't that complicated, but I bet it was a serious effort for my father. At that time, my mother was attending courses in relation to trans childhoods, well, I'm talking about ten years ago, twelve years. Now there have been associations for parents that do provide care, but at that time there was nothing (...) I was certain that I had the support of my parents and, well, also considering my character, I was more patient, maybe more submissive... whatever you want to call it. I do not know. I know I accept the time that my parents have taken and the time that my brother is taking, and I am happy with the simple fact that they try. (Violeta)

At the moment of the interview, Violeta had applied for university without ever missing one year at school. She knew this was possible because her parents never raised any problem about her gender identity and never caused her any stress or emotional pain. They both, even if mostly her mother, tried from an early age to understand what was happening, at a time where activist groups for parents of trans and other gender-diverse children did not exist in Spain.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Family has been well identified as a space of oppression. But it is also within multiple familial constellations—which may consist of, but also go much beyond, the nuclear family—that may occur, through care and parenting practices, important ways of destabilizing not only the sex/gender system but also the capitalist system itself. Through social mobilization within the contemporary world, insurgent parenting practices may become widespread through virtual or real networks. This has a great impact on civil society, even if it seems to happen in baby steps. The context of the pandemic that we went through in 2020 gives a clear idea of how essential it has become to engage in virtual contact with family, friends, or activism communities for care, fun, and political commitment, in order to overcome isolation and to cope with the oppression of the lived reality.

In this chapter, I analysed insurgent parenting and insurgent childcare as a combative possibility of struggle against normativity, which is rooted in patriarchal and capitalist understanding of societies, economy, and the world. Care matters as well as insurgent theories and practices of caring if one is committed to a more understanding and egalitarian society. Organized resistance from grassroots movements such as queer and/or feminist movements certainly has a significant impact on people's daily lives, as shown. Parenthood and childrearing may be strong tools against patriarchal culture and neoliberalism, through the prioritization of love and care. In bell hooks' words, "an overall cultural embrace of a love ethic would mean that we would all oppose much of the public policy conservatives condone and support" (2000, p. 91), and it is certainly a way of raising more diverse and sensitive citizens, who are more conscious about the self and the other, about acceptance, and about mutual help or/and respect for the globe.

REFERENCES

- Aramburu Alegría, C. (2018). Supporting families of transgender children/youth: Parents speak on their experiences, identity, and views. *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 19(2), 132–143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15532739.2018.1450798>
- Berggren, N., & Nilsson, T. (2015). Globalization and the transmission of social values: The case of tolerance. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 43, 371–389. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2015.02.005>
- Blázquez Rodríguez, M., & Montes Muñoz, M. J. (2010). Emociones ante la maternidad: de los modelos impuestos a las constataciones de las mujeres. *Ankulegi*, 14, 81–92.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble. Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2000). *Antigone's claim: Kinship between life and death*. Columbia University Press.
- Castells, M. (2004). *The network society: A cross-cultural perspective*. Edward Elgar.
- Chavkrin, W. (2010). The globalization of motherhood. In W. Chavkin & J. Maher (Eds.), *The globalization of motherhood: Deconstructions and reconstructions of biology and care* (pp. 1–15). Routledge.
- Collins, P. H. (1994). Shifting the center: Race, class, and feminist theorizing about motherhood. In E. N. Glenn, G. Chang, & L. R. Forcey (Eds.), *Mothering: Ideology, experience, and agency* (pp. 45–65). Routledge.

- Dasgupta, S. (2009). Introduction: A reflection on politics of globalization and textual entrails. In S. Dasgupta & J. N. Pieterse (Eds.), *Politics of globalization* (pp. 1–37). Sage Publications India.
- Dasgupta, S., & Pieterse, J. N. (Eds.). (2009). *Politics of globalization*. Sage Publications India.
- Douzinias, C. (2007). *Human rights and empire. The political philosophy of cosmopolitanism*. Routledge.
- Duggan, L. (2003). *The twilight of equality? Neoliberalism, cultural politics, and the attack on democracy*. Bacon Press.
- Esteban, M. L. (2000). La maternidad como cultura. Algunas cuestiones sobre lactancia materna y cuidado infantil. In E. Perdiguerro & J. M. Comelles (Eds.), *Medicina y cultura: estudios entre la antropología y la medicina* (pp. 207–226). Edicions Bellaterra.
- Evans, D. (1993). *Sexual citizenship: The material construction of sexuality*. Routledge.
- Garber, L. (2006). On the evolution of queer studies: Lesbian feminism, queer theory and globalization. In D. Richardson, J. McLaughlin, & M. E. Casey (Eds.), *Intersections between feminist and queer theory* (pp. 78–96). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Glenn, E. N., Chang, G., & Forcey, L. R. (Eds.). (1994). *Mothering: Ideology, experience, and agency*. Routledge.
- Herd, G. (Ed.). (1994). *Third sex, third gender: Beyond sexual dimorphism in culture and history*. Zone.
- hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory from margin to center*. South End Press.
- hooks, b. (2000). *All about love: New visions*. Harper Perennial.
- Lerner, G. (1986). *The creation of patriarchy*. Oxford University Press.
- Llopis, M. (2015). *Maternidades Subversivas*. Editorial Txalaparta.
- Lugones, M. (2008). The coloniality of gender. *Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise*, 1–17. Retrieved from https://globalstudies.trinity.duke.edu/wp-content/themes/cgsh/materials/WKO/v2d2_Lugones.pdf
- Merry, S. E. (2006). Transnational human rights and local activism: Mapping the middle. *American Anthropologist*, 108(1), 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2006.108.1.38>
- Moreira, L. (2018). Queer motherhood: Challenging heteronormative rules beyond the assimilationist/radical binary. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 19(2), 14–28.
- Moyn, S. (2014). A powerless companion: Human rights in the age of neoliberalism. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 77(4), 147–169.
- Nicholson, L. (1997). The myth of the traditional family. In H. L. Nelson (Ed.), *Feminism and Families* (pp. 27–42). Routledge.
- O'Reilly, A. (Eds.). (2004). *From Motherhood to mothering: the legacy of Adrienne Rich's of Woman Born*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Oyewúmi, O. (1997). *The invention of women: Making an African sense of Western gender discourses*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Pichardo, J. I. (2009). *Entender la diversidad familiar: Relaciones homosexuales y nuevos modelos de familia*. Ediciones Bellaterra.
- Platero, L. (R.) (2014). Aplicaciones prácticas queer y feministas: maternidades lésbicas en Resistencia. In B. S. Briones (Ed.), *Feminismos Lesbianos y queer: representación visibilidad y políticas* (pp. 105–113). Plaza y Valdes Editores.
- Preciado, P. (2011). *Manifiesto Contrasexual*. Editorial Anagrama. (Original work published 2000).
- Puar, J. (2013). Rethinking homonationalism. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 45, 333–339. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002074381300007X>
- Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs*, 5(4), 631–660.
- Rich, A. (1986). *Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and as institution*. W. W. Norton and Company (Original work published 1976).
- Richardson, D. (2005). Desiring sameness? The rise of a neoliberal politics of normalization. *Antipode*, 37, 515–535. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0066-4812.2005.00509.x>
- Rubin, G. (1996). The traffic in women: Notes on the ‘political economy’ of sex. In J. W. Scott (Ed.), *Feminism and history* (pp. 105–151). Oxford University Press.
- Ryan-Flood, R. (2009). *Lesbian motherhood: Gender, families and sexual citizenship*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Santos, B. S. (2006). Globalizations. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23(2–3), 393–399. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026327640602300268>
- Santos, A. C. (2012). The politics of sexuality in Portugal: Confronting tradition, enacting change. In S. Hines & I. Taylor (Eds.), *Sexualities: Past reflexions, future directions* (pp. 168–185). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Santos, A. C. (2013). *Social movements and sexual citizenship in southern Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Santos, B. S. (2014). *Epistemologies of the south justice against Epistemicide*. Routledge.
- Santos, A. C. (2018). Repronormativity and its others: Queering parental love in times of culturally compulsory reproduction. *Analyze - Journal of Gender and Feminist Studies*, 11, 199–215.
- Santos, B. S., & Rodríguez-Garavito, C. A. (2005). Law, politics, and the subaltern in counter-hegemonic globalization. In B. S. Santos & C. A. Rodríguez-Garavito (Eds.), *Law and globalization from below: Towards a cosmopolitan legality* (pp. 1–26). Cambridge University Press.
- Segato, R. L. (2003). *Las estructuras elementales de la violencia: ensayos sobre género entre la antropología, el psicoanálisis y los derechos humanos*. Universidad Nacional de Quilmes.

- Tamale, S. (2013). Confronting the politics of nonconforming sexualities in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 56(02), 31–45. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2013.40>
- Taylor, Y. (2009). *Lesbian and gay parenting: Securing social and educational capital*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Trujillo, G., & Burgaleta, E. (2014). ¿Queerizando la institución familiar? Entre los discursos bio-sociales y las múltiples resistencias. *Feminismo/s*, 23, 159–179.
- Warner, M. (Ed.). (1991). *Fear of a queer planet: Queer politics and social theory*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Weeks, J., Heaphy, B., & Donovan, C. (2001). *Same sex intimacies: Families of choice and other life experiments*. Routledge.
- Weston, K. (1991). *Families we choose: Lesbians, gays, kinship*. Columbia University Press.
- Wittig, M. (1992). *The straight mind and other essays*. Beacon Press.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

