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CHAPTER 5

THE CREATIVE RITUALS AND THE SELF-CONSTRUCTION OF THE CONVICTS

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to discuss how creative rituals of torment take part in the self-development of the convicts. An information survey was conducted at the Association for the Protection and Assistance of the Convicted (APAC), a criminal system that dispenses with police presence. We started from the concept of dialogical multiplication (Guimarães, 2013, 2017) as a guide for the interpretative analysis of the content of people's narratives. We took into consideration rituals suggested by convicts for the board of directors of this

institution: electing a monthly date when they would be detained in the cells, in order to recall the previous experience in the conventional prison, as well as perform artistic-religious presentations in the local community. Between the two contexts, APAC and the conventional prison, chaotic zones of mutual affection are created. In this chaotic zone, there is a field of affective and cognitive exchanges, full of noise, but also full of communication possibilities. One can construct a vision of oneself from a disciplining mechanism that sustains torment as inherent to one's life course, complying with a religious precept of penance. We observed that choosing a ritual that favors the retrieval of memories of experiences in the conventional prison can be an attempt to construct the subjectivity of the person, since these experiences allow a resignification of the lived facts related to pain and suffering. We understand these creative rituals in the APAC method refer to symbolic actions that integrate past and present in a process of creative transformation of the experience of pain and suffering lived in the prison system, as an attempt to maintain dignity and challenge barbarism by transforming it into a scenario loaded with subjective values. Choosing to temporarily experience a kind of ritualized barbarism promoted the integration of the tensions within the self, creating possibilities for redefining the lived facts related to the pain of the people involved.

The objective of this chapter is to discuss how creative rituals are part of the self-development of people who are serving a custodial sentence, from an information gathering at an institution belonging to the Association for the Protection and Assistance to the Convicts (APAC). We reflect on the dynamics of the self-comprehension, considering the institutional dimension as being articulated with other dimensions of the person through the creative rituals carried out within this criminal system.

The APAC is a Brazilian criminal system that dispenses with a police presence. In this institution, the administration is shared among all the members of the community and, as such, implies an effective co-participation of the convicts in the institutional practices and regulations. Therefore, the person assumes a double position: not only serving the sentence, but also institutionally administering the prison, being responsible for its security. This presents a challenge for the theoretical understanding of the self, since it implies a multiple positioning of the self (at least double) being the authority at the same time as being an object on whom such authority is applied. This particular dynamic of the self determines a central aspect of the identity of the people participating in this regime, which produces tensions that we hypothesize seek to be resolved creatively through rituals.

Traditionally, the self has been studied dichotomously, sometimes occupying an individual position (individual self), sometimes in a group or collective position (Spears, 2001; Tajfel, 1981; Turner et al., 1994). The dynamics of the relations between these selves was explained in the sense that, looking for reaching his identity, the individual would slip into a continuum

in which his belonging feeling goes from the pole of the individual to the pole of the group or intergroup (Spears, 2001). In other words, as a member of his group and a member that is outside it. In that sense, the self or the sense of self can be defined at different levels of abstraction (Turner et al., 1994), sometimes based on the sense of their individuality and, sometimes, in terms of their participation in certain groups.

In the scenario addressed in this chapter, different positions are lived simultaneously by the participants, without being free of conflicts and tensions. The tensions in the various positions of the self have been studied by dialogical self theory (Hermans, 2001). The dialogical self theory (DST) is an alternative model that emerged in recent years, enabling a more dynamic understanding of these phenomena. From the Hermans model, self and culture are conceived as a multiplicity of positions, among which dialogic relationships can be developed. Thus, culture and self become concepts that can be studied by psychology as a unit and a totality composed of parts. Following the Bakhtinian metaphor of “polyphony,” the self is conceptualized in terms of a dynamic multiplicity of I positions. In this way, the self has the ability to move from one position to another, allowing the self to obtain a variety of perspectives on the world (Hermans, 2001, 2002). In contrast to the idea of an individual self, the dialogical self is based on the assumption that there are multiple positions of the self that can be occupied by the same person. Hermans contrasts (inspired by Bakhtin’s ideas about multiplicity of voices) a notion of “multiplicity in unity” (Hermans, 2008) with the idea of a self as an indivisible unit, as traditionally held in psychological theory. The self as such implies “unity,” but at the same time does not deny a multiplicity. This multiplicity would be given by the various positions that are assumed without losing the continuity of the self.

As for the ritual, in this chapter we understand it in the sense of a “formal, significant, symbolically intended and complex action” (Gellner, 1999, p. 135). According to Asad (1993), the ritual, being a symbolic activity, opposes the everyday instrumental behavior. Regarding the focus of the study addressed in this chapter, it has to do with the fact that the ritual would be a kind of routine behavior that symbolizes something by relating an individual conscience to a social organization (Asad, 1993). In this sense, insofar as it allows a manifestation of the individual organized under certain rules, some stability is given to the organization where those rules are constructed.

We suggest here that the observed rituals are an activity in which the self of individuals is articulated with the organizational and institutional dimensions, participating in a creative process of construction of the self. For that, it is necessary to use a set of conventional symbols (Bell, 2009) as well as embodied practices (Mauss, 1979) through the ritual. On this last point, Guimarães (2017), invites us to reflect on the relevance of rituals and disciplinary processes in the construction of the self, as “the contributions of nonverbal

processes have been underestimated by psychology” (p. 69). From a discussion about the processes of dialogic multiplication, the body is not understood as a strictly biological entity, but rather an entity that is symbolically constructed and disciplined by a process of cultural channeling (Valsiner, 1998) of the affections that guide the people’s perceptions and imaginations. By exploring the world with his or her body, the person becomes familiar with his surroundings and people according to processes that are regulated at a pre-personal and sub-personal level (Guimarães, 2017).

From the point of view of dialogic multiplication, the self refers to a dynamic and dialogical constitution, which starts from the intra and interpersonal relationships that are articulated in the construction of interpsychological aspects. The self is constituted in the relationship between the I and the other in a sensitive world and is involved in the attempt of a dialogue and search for intersubjective shares. Such shares will not be complete depending on the limit for that exchange of experiences, since the objects are not the same for different perspectives in relation. The self, as addressed by the notion of dialogic multiplication, is understood as a territory of dialogic tensions between identities and alterities, by including multiple perspectives from concrete social relationships, which involves the articulation of experiences lived in the interpersonal sphere (perceived as external to the person) and intrapersonal sphere (perceived as internal to the person).

Taking into account the bases and theoretical discussions presented up to this point on the notions of self and ritual, we propose the analyses carried out to rethink and reconsider these notions at the studied scenario.

CONSTRUCTING DATA THROUGH OBSERVANT PARTICIPATION

The present work consists of a cut of a larger study carried out by Miranda (2018) focused on the creative rituals that this researcher (and one of the authors of this chapter) observed in the APAC system. The study consisted of a case analysis through observant participation carried out through visits to the institution. According to this type of technique, the observer participant is someone who already participates in the context and begins to perform an analytical observation. In counterpoint “the participant observer [...] is the researcher who goes to the field to conduct an investigation. His objective is not the participation, but the observation” (Malfitano & Marques, 2011, p. 290). The observant participation has been justified through studies on four grounds:

1. the need to underline the particularly prolonged contact within a group, community or organization, as well as the search for the

- originality of the study, without justifying the previous exercise of a function in the field where the investigation begins;
2. by the presence of the researcher in a unique field of research, whose particular characteristics justify the notion of observing participation, to understand from within a phenomenon unknown a priori;
 3. by an intense participation of the researcher in the field, which is part of the environment, in an intense and momentary way, but that allows him to go back in some moments to observe the phenomenon in which she participates; and
 4. through a priori commitment and intentional involvement in the field of research, not being a cold analyst or observer, focused solely on the duty of an investigator, but placing himself as an actor in an event or part of a continuous process in the investigated field (Miranda, 2018).

In this study, we use the term *observant participation* due to the specificity of the research field and the objective, as well as for the intense and prolonged presence of the researcher in the field. This presence implied a prior established link with the institution as well as the prioritization of the participation involved rather than the distanced observation.

Twelve visits to the institution were made, observing how interpersonal relationships occurred, as well as a visit to the two reference units of the APAC method. The information was recorded in a field diary. In total, 18 people participated, all duly informed of the implications and ethical safeguards considered as reflected in the signing of the informed consent.

The data were constructed according to a dialogic approach, which presupposes a researcher-participant relationship in which knowledge is elaborated from exchanges, tensions and negotiations that arise from sensitive experiences in the Self-Other-World relationship. As an analysis tool, a mapping of antinomies present in the statements that emerged in each interview was used. The interviews were semi-structured, contemplating tensions, contrasts and ruptures between personal and institutional positions. For Wertsch (1993) the unit of analysis is always a mediated action, an action that is manifested by the cultural tools offered by the specific cultural setting of the study. In these units of analysis, and in emerging tensions, we identify the perspective of who is the speaker, who is spoken to, what is spoken, and how is it spoken.

The APAC was better systematized by Ottoboni (1997/2001) from the 1990s, with emphasis on the participation of the local community, family and health care (Silva, 2013). The movement that gave rise to the APAC, called *Cursilho de Crisandade*, began in **Spain**¹ social, economic, and political context in the 30s and 40s. In Brazil, the beginning of the *Cursilho*

¹AU: Do you mean "Spain's"?

AU: pastoral?

movement occurred in 1962, in Valinhos city, at the countryside of Sao Paulo (Beraldo, 1992). That movement was established as a **pastoral of the** Roman Apostolic Catholic Church. The Pastoral Prison, to which the Cursilho de Cristandade is related, and that makes frequent visits to the people who are serving sentences in the conventional penitentiary system, relies on various theological perspectives and needs to be considered in a specific descriptive-comprehensive context (Silva, 2013). Also “the Cursilhos are not endowed with a unique interpretative line, sometimes linked to the Catholicism of yesteryear, sometimes linked to the Theology of Liberation, with all its nuances” (Silva, 2013, p. 77). However, “APAC has a training course that is not part of the Liberation Theology, and it is rooted in a mixture of traditional and modern models of pastoral prisons (Silva, 2013, p. 77). The movement that originates the APAC methodology opposes the Liberation Theology and presents a traditional Christian ideology, in the sense that it leads to the conversion of the penitent.

CREATIVE RITUALS AND SUBJECTIVITY OF THE CONVICTS

From all the data obtained during the visits, we chose to make a cut focused on the following rituals: spending a day in the enclosed cells (as if it were the conventional system) and the artistic-religious presentations for the local community.

The APAC method relies on the effective co-participation of the convicts in the practices and regulations implemented by the institution. The convicts often elaborate projects or suggest activities that are not yet part of the institution's routine. These suggestions are evaluated by the institutional management and, if approved, can be implemented in the routine.

During a visit to the institution, one of the participants told the researcher that the cells remain open every day, except one day per month. On this day, which has been chosen by the convicts themselves, they remain confined and locked up for 24 hours, receiving food the same way they received in the conventional system. During these 24 hours it is also forbidden to walk around the institution, visiting the laundry, the study room, the library or the cafeteria. The members of the discipline council proposed this day to the management as a way to promote spiritual strengthening and to value the autonomy that they have at APAC institution. It is also an activity that seeks to avoid situations of serious offenses by resorting to the use of memories related to the conventional system.

From this information it is necessary to reflect on the process of socio-historical construction of the prison as a penalty. From Ancient times to present, in the Western tradition, criminal compliance processes are narrated by social control and policies that exclude less favored people, and

which, therefore, assume that suffering and social isolation are inherent to the sentence serving. This entails that the convicts consider themselves as inferior to society and humiliated. We confirm, from the statements of the participants, that they bring reminiscences related to the modes of subjectivation of the prison and that, being evoked at present, emerge from the socio-historical process of the prison built on socially shared memories. These reports show an imaginary of the prison as if it were of the middle age, transmitting and reporting a totally antithetical system. From this data we understand that the discipline in prison experiences emerges as a semi-otic organizer that constantly modulates the relationship of the person with the prison context. In the experience reported by these participants, penance suggests spiritual strengthening facing challenges, from the Christian point of view. In the biblical sense, and according to the catechism of the Catholic Church, penance offers to the penitent the expiation of sins and spiritual peace. From our perspective, we understand that the practice of sacrifice performed by the participants is presented as a ritual, as a human practice that is repeated continuously and modulates the person's affective fields (Valsiner, 2012).

From some Anthropology point of view, the rituals of penance are understood as cults that express a collective manifestation of feelings (cf. Mauss, 2012). It is relevant to consider at this point that penance practices belong to the group of rituals related to fasting (Bell, 2009). In a way, inherited from the Christian tradition, penance would seek the atonement of guilt through suffering and submission to the rules that guide fasting. Bell (2009) emphasizes that the common aspects of this practice are a powerful affirmation and extension of doctrinal conformity. The role of group pressure on individual submission also points to more subtle ways in which a religious community socializes its members in physical practices that reproduce central doctrinal traditions and their own identities. These purification practices resemble the Christian pilgrim who follows a path of mortification in the search for atonement for his sins (Bell, 2009). If these practices arise from a need verbalized by people as a claim, we can think of a construction of a mode of subjectivation built and maintained in an exclusive socio-cultural fabric in Western tradition. Likewise, we call this ritual as a creative ritual, since it **says of** actions that transform experiences with a greater degree of stiffness into more fluid and probable elaborations. Thus, these constitute a symbolic exit for intrapersonal conflicts experienced in the participant since they are serving a sentence with dignity in front of a society that attributes to the penalty a non-dignified character.

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From this case, we observe that other processes and symbolic actions permeate the discourses of the APAC institution. Such is the case of the dramatization carried out by the participants, which consisted of a play called "Os Malacabados da APAC." This work is based on the poem "José" by Carlos

Drummond de Andrade and was organized by a professional volunteer of the institution. The play portrays the anguish of a convict who lost his family and freedom, questioning his involvement with the crime. As reported by the participants, the presentation of the theater play was relevant from an artistic, cultural point of view but above all as a strategy of social inclusion and reflection upon one's life trajectory. They also reported to the researcher that the work had the presence and the speech of a judge (and other authorities) during the opening of the event. They also narrated that the members of that theater group increased their self-esteem and satisfaction by living more closely with the surrounding community. In addition, convicts and employees reported that the rest of the population seemed to be more aware of the work done by APAC in witnessing the plays by convicts that didn't have handcuffs in their hands:

JOSE

And now Jose? The party is over, the light is out, the people are gone, the night is cold, and now, Jose? and now, you? You who are nameless, who mocks others, You who make verses, who loves, protests? and now Jose? No woman, no speech, no love, no longer drinking, no longer smoking, no longer spitting, no night, no day, no tram, no laughter, no utopia and it was all over and it was all gone and everything was moldy, and now, Jose? And now Jose? your sweet word, your instant of fever, your gluttony and fasting, your library, your gold mining, your glass suit, your incoherence, your hatred—Now what? With the key in hand you want to open the door, there is no door; you want to die in the sea, but the sea has dried up; you want to go to Minas, Minas no more. Jose, what now? If you screamed, if you moaned, if you played, the Viennese waltz, if you slept, if you got tired, if you died . . . But you don't die, you're hard, Jose! Alone in the dark like a weed, no theogony, no bare wall to lean against, no black horse to run off, you march, Jose! Jose, where to? (Free translation from Portuguese of the Carlos Drummond de Andrade's poem)¹

After this play at the Cultural-artistic presentations center of the municipality, they made a presentation for high-school teenagers in the institution's city. At the end of the play, a convicted shared his life story. He told the researcher that he was very happy, that at first he was afraid of not being able to speak, but that he left the role he had taken as support and went on to say in his own way:

I got really nervous, you know! I took a paper to read, but I couldn't read it. I practiced before and nothing came up. Then I got desperate! And then I thought, I'm talking my own way. I said it, and it worked! People seem to like it. They even came to congratulate me afterwards. And I'm liking that, you know, this whole public speaking thing. When I went to school teenagers . . . All teenagers like that, hard to catch their attention right, but I talked about their way, in their language, I got into their minds. At first they kept

talking between them and laughing softly. Then they started asking me questions and I answered them all. I said I was wrong, that I was doing time for a crime I committed, but that I chose a bad path! That when I was their age, I could have chosen a different path, but I chose the wrong one. But that I learned from it, with the suffering, you know! I gave examples, thus, of their reality, right... All teenagers there. But I really enjoyed that! I want to keep giving a lecture! (Oral Communication, May 28, 2016)

He reported being concerned about hanging on in his activities and studies and not falling into recidivism or use of alcohol when he is in the semi-open or on probation to give an example to young people that it is possible “to recover,” as well as follow paths outside the Crime.

I am very happy with this opportunity that APAC is giving me... And I don't want to miss it... But when everything seems to be going well and you feel strong and prepared... This is the greatest danger, you think that you can face alone the difficulties out there that will appear... And you relax and think it's all settled... It's a fight with yourself. We here do not fight against the police, against the system, against the people who have offended us, we fight against our own will to err again, to drink, to smell in the case of those who enjoy drugs, but it is this fight... Think you can handle it is a mistake! You don't worry and you miss... You do not see that here even some fall in serious disciplinary lack for nonsense, you can put everything to lose for very little, it is very easy. [Field notes, April 28, 2016]

Two other convicts also reported to the researcher that participating in the play had favored a desire for life change, an additional motivation to fight for a better life and seek alternatives of life that can break with crime. We understand that dramatizing a theater play that resembles one's own life history, but at a distance, as it was another person's life—a character, promotes a therapeutic and symbolic function laden with senses and elaborations for the *self* of the convicted.

We found out that the theatrical practice, based on the report of four convicts, has favored a resignification process of their own life histories and has triggered a reflection on the experience of serving their sentence, as well as on the intra and interpersonal relations. “The experience of artistic activity can favor a re-elaboration and re-signification of the person's relationships, either with himself or with his different forms of socio-cultural interactions” (Moraes & Guimarães, 2015, p. 28).

In addition, the theatrical play favored the contact between APAC people and the surrounding community. Although the APAC method presuppose a community involvement with this alternative method's management, only a few members of the board accompany it, as the researcher realized in the events and activities promoted by APAC. As APAC did not receive the visit of the surrounding community, the theatrical play favored an inverse

movement, the people serving the sentences going to the society through their artistic performances (at the present time) and musicals. The fear of the population in relation to the behavior of these convicts seems to be mitigated, favoring their interest in knowing APAC. After these four theatrical performances (at the cultural center of the city, at a state high-school, another during a mass in the main church and one for seminarians in formation during a retreat in another parish of the local Catholic church), four people from the community presented themselves with interest to volunteer at APAC.

Other plays were also confirmed, a presentation at the local university and in other schools and colleges. The APAC theater group attended the mass in the main church (Catholic Church), at the feast of the municipality patron saint. A convicted narrated that the team of the play and other inmates entered the center of the church along with the celebrant and they stayed in a place reserved at the front of the altar, alongside everybody in the church. Another convict reported that he felt valued, respected by society and embraced by everybody there, which, he said, moved him.

When I entered that church through the front doors next to the celebrant and sat right by the altar... I can't even say what I felt... It was very good! I was thrilled and after this day I felt blessed and able to overcome all my weaknesses and fight for a new life, because society is opening the doors for us. I felt that way... you know... Accepted, valued, respected! As the priest said during the mass that the "last would be the first"... and we were the last ones to enter and the church was already full, but our place was reserved out front. (Field notes, May 28, 2016)

In these contexts described above, the following antinomies emerged for the self of the convicted:

1. being deprived of freedom, but serving the sentence with dignity vs. transforming this dignity into penance, since pity implies suffering;
2. being recluse due to a committed crime vs. being included in the festivities and academic, religious and artistic events of the municipality;
3. feeling guilty for the offenses, having this feeling of guilt optimized by the authoritarian discourse of the judiciary vs. being applauded by the community and the judge of the Criminal Division, representative of the Court of Justice organ that even condemned him; and
4. The last, the condemned, the excluded vs. the chosen ones to enter the main church by the center next to the celebrant and to have the church's front seats, usually reserved for ecclesial and political authorities.

The opportunity to transform exclusion into inclusion, devaluation and guilt in applause and recognition of artistic potentials emerge as an integrative solution to the self for the dialogical tensions in the intrapersonal plan. These transformative rituals of the experience of pain into something symbolic occur both in the unit that hosted the case study and in the other APAC method reference units that were visited, albeit with different guises. People from several units, from distant municipalities, without knowing each other, share very distinct symbolic actions, but with similar meanings: What can be done with the dialogical tensions that surround the sentence serving, how can we turn something painful into something softer and prone to self-elaboration? The penance ritual that includes seclusion for 24h emerges as something lighter than the practices of torture historically sustained in conventional prison systems, rituals that transform pain into something more easily accepted and resignified by the self. These different guises for symbolic actions with similar meanings occur due to the synchronicity processes, both basic and cultural processes. They express the search for production of unmatched moments for the self, as narrated by the convicts, as a creative exit from the conflicts and as an opportunity for emergence of values as hypergeneralized **affective** signs (cf. Valsiner, 2012).

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DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

At this point, we have discussed how these rituals are articulated in the self development of these people and what meaning they have in the process in which they are involved. Throughout the month, these people maintain a double position between being subdued to authority and being at the same time administering that authority. As reported, it could be thought beforehand that one day a month there is a movement from one position towards another one more individual (Spears, 2001; Tajfel, 1981), represented by the subject who needs to remember, in turn, from a former position (that of an inmate of the old system). This monthly process is constituted as a ritual performed as a form of penance and a way to atone for the guilt (Bell, 2009) different from the rest of the month. Therefore, it is relevant to discuss the dynamics of this movement and the positioning of the self through the elaborate ritual.

This ritual is a process through which the person applies the punishment at him or herself, while maintaining the positions of authority and inmate, thus preserving a certain unity of the self. In this sense, it is a disciplinary process that seeks to articulate two positions of authority, the former classic with the new APAC. Thus, the disciplinarization in prison experiences emerges as a semiotic organizer that constantly modulates the relationship of the person with the context of penal execution, based on the practices of

penitence experienced in the two Brazilian prison systems. And the meaning attributed to the APAC method emerges from the person's previous experience in the conventional prison system.

We understand the creative rituals discussed here as persistent imitation repertoires from the recursion as a relationship of interdependence between the person and his sociocultural environment (Guimarães & Cravo, 2015). Furthermore, it is relevant to take into consideration the narrative sharing among people in a given sociocultural and world's perspectives field, that, when internalized, can reflect in the construction of the person's subjectivity. The ritual tells of a human practice that continually repeats itself and modulates the affective fields of the person (Valsiner, 2012).

The relations people establish with penal sanctions and the practice of penance are articulated to a historical reading, because the aesthetic-affective personal references provided and valued by culture promote understanding distant from the present reality at the socialization. Thus, the person who is serving in the APAC method can assign a sense of incoherence in relation to the expected for the sentence, as an afflictive character, and does not go through experiences of torment or penance as they were internalized. As a means to obtain forgiveness for the "mistakes" committed legally or for the "sins" practiced against others, in an attribution of religious senses, a form of atonement for sins by sacrifice and a gratitude to the most dignified procedures to serve the penalty.

In the interpersonal context, other antinomies are present: to serve a penalty in the APAC method, although it favors the sentence remitted due to the professional and professionalizing activities, and implies to receive family visits without vexatious journals, can promote a conflict with the people from the conventional prison system. Since they need to follow disciplines and to tell on the colleagues who do not follow them during the sentence. This conflicting interpersonal interaction favors the construction of the affective-cognitive processes established and shared in the penal institution APAC.

There are two distinct institutional experiences, APAC and conventional penal serving, each with its signs, directions and rhythms, as well as productions of stereotypes. Among these two modes of rhythmic tuning, chaotic zones of mutual affectation are created, in which there is a field of affective and cognitive exchanges, loaded with noises, but also of possibilities of communication. In this chaotic zone we can situate semiotic walls (Guimarães, 2016) that block the perception of alterity and temporary exchange of meanings, and that is manifested in the narratives of people who serve the penalty. The semiotic wall tells of interdictions and limits to affect the rhythm of the other. For example, an interviewed person narrated that he is a happy prisoner in the APAC method, which was not true in the conventional system. The antinomy that is present in this narrative is to be

arrested versus to be a happy prisoner, producing happiness in a context of imprisonment.

Guimarães and Nash (*in preparation*) and Guimarães (2016) point to a systematization of the processes of rhythmic synchronization between different cultural modes of organizing collective actions. In the context of sentence serving, we have two distinct institutional contexts, APAC and conventional penal execution, each with its signs, directions and rhythms, as well as productions of stereotypes. Figure 5.1 presents these two relational contexts and these two modes of rhythmic tuning (A and B) in a sine curve with concavity facing downwards and with the lines open to infinity. Border lines are the borders between the divergent relational contexts of penal execution. And the center is a chaotic and mutual affectation between these contexts based on communicative and affective exchanges established in intra-and interpersonal relations.

The socio-cultural environment favors the presentation of multiple possible paths for the person, through the diversification of personal repertoires and from the experienced situations (Guimarães & Cravo, 2015).

The creative rituals challenge and permeate different historical moments, therefore they are a persistent imitation that maintains these ritualistic practices crystalized in a cultural field. The experience of persistent imitation refers to the actions that adults present in a repeated and directed way to personal goals, and which are conducted by the experiences of primary socialization, in a given socio-affective and cultural context (Guimarães & Cravo, 2015). Culture organizes the rhythms of people's life through rituals within a given community, from daily habits to more complex repertoires that remain in the institutions as beacons arising from dialogical negotiations between the experiences of people from personal culture and collective culture.

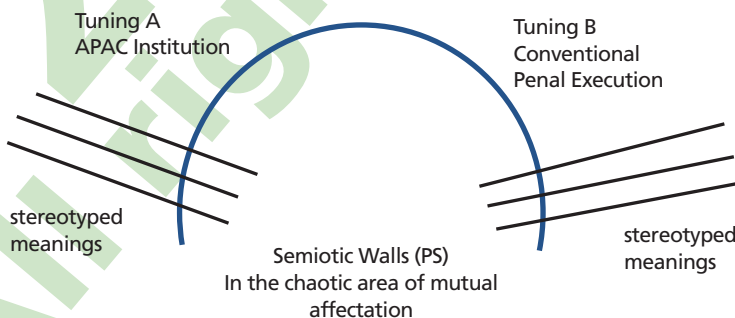


Figure 5.1 Rhythmic tuning between the institutional contexts APAC and the conventional Penal execution and the emergence of the semiotic walls. *Source:* Adapted from Guimarães & Nash, (*in preparation*).

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The views on the execution of penalties are based on the construction of narratives in different cultural fields (public policies, social, religious and justice institutions, community interventions, family relations) in a dialogical multiplication in the production of meanings about the torment and the applicability of the sentences.

The processes of dialogical multiplication (cf. Guimarães, 2013) refer to a body that, in addition to a biological entity, is also symbolically constituted and disciplined by cultural aspects. In the case of the convicts. This can construct and internalize a vision of oneself from a repressive and disciplined mechanism that sustains the torment as necessary and inherent to his or her life path. As a result of an imitative process of constructing a subjectivity of 'prisoner', as someone who needs to suffer physically and emotionally, humiliate himself, fulfilling a religious precept of penance. The APAC method maintains this religious perspective, in addition to a disciplinary perspective, in the applicability of penal sanctions, so doing time is also doing penance. On the other hand, in a multifaceted society such as the Brazilian society nowadays, we seek to construct the means and strategies of public policies and penal systems that are more coherent with this diverse sociocultural context, means and strategies which are not restricted to a perspective of disciplinary regime. But that favors the convicts an autonomy in relation to their presentified memories and their singular processes of attribution of meaning to the experience.

Regarding this search for autonomy in adverse situations, Boesch (1997) described the attitude of a prisoner of war, in the Nazi concentration camps, that by occasionally receiving a piece of bread, music papers and a pencil, delivered by an officer, produced a quartet. And he played this quartet with the musical instruments that remained in the field of war: a cello with three strings only, a clarinet with an inverted key and a violin, the only intact instrument. When producing music, the warrior uses a valid symbolic action to produce the least amount of dignity in that context of war. For Boesch:

Man is the perceiver, interpreter, transformer and, to some extent, also the maker of his world, and so he becomes also responsible for it—each in his or her smaller or bigger ways. Trying to understand man as a cultural being forced me to see the diversity of cultures as a proof of human creativity. Then, however, a strictly deterministic theoretical framework could not be appropriate anymore. For all these reasons, although having undergone quite a few theoretical influences, I unhesitatingly opted for the one which not only allows inclusion of man's creativity, but also promises to restore his dignity. (Boesch, 1991, p. 367)

Thus, the ability to promote symbolic actions is a creative output found by the person to assign new meanings to the experience and as a strategy to restore autonomy.

Returning to the empirical data, resorting to a monthly date that favors the redemption of memories of the experiences in the conventional prison can be a valid attempt to construct the subjectivity of the person if these experiences allow a resignification of the experienced facts involving pain and suffering. If this experience allows the elaboration of the facts experienced in the past, they can also be considered significant in the construction of the subjectivity of the convicted. From this criteria of preserving the autonomy of the convicted during the serving of his own sentence, which manages and serves to the APAC penal method at the same time, an alternative arises to give vent to the multiple knowledge, looks and meanings that the person constructs and rebuilds over a sentence of deprivation of freedom.

We understand these creative rituals in the APAC method as symbolic actions that integrate past and present in a process of creative transformation of the experience of pain and suffering experienced in the prison system, as an attempt to maintain the dignity and to defy barbarism, transforming it into a scenario laden with subjective values. Experiencing the non-dignity (a kind of barbarism) to help integrate the experience with the self, aiming at a possible resolution of intra and inter-psychological conflict regarding the serving of the private penalty. This experience creates possibilities to re-signify the pain of the people involved. These rituals can occur from different modes of expression, in a ritual of penance (as in the ritual of arresting people during 24 uninterrupted hour in the cells), ritual of appreciation or praise (as it occurs in the religious cults and in the choirs of this Institution) and as contemplative rituals of his or her own life history, from the theaters, artistic presentations and making of handicrafts (painting, carpets, concrete objects loaded with symbolic resources).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The creative rituals challenge and permeate different historical moments: a persistent imitation that maintains these ritualistic practices crystallized in a cultural field. The persistent imitation here says about the result of development processes in the person's life path (cf. Baldwin, 1909/1990).

From the strongly asymmetric dialogical positions in the **I-institution relations APAC-conventional prison system**, intra- and inter-subjective tensions guide conflicts between the penitence rituals culturally constructed and internalized by the person and personal positions about the resignification of the life path in the APAC prison system. AU:??

Serving time is also doing penance. However, it is worth thinking about the construction of means and strategies of public policies that are not restricted to a perspective of disciplinary regime, but that allows an autonomy

in relation to the memories of people who fulfill the penalty and their singular processes of assignment of meaning to the experience.

In the situation narrated by the convicts, a creative transformation occurs in the process of assigning meanings to the experience, in which the capacity to promote symbolic actions is enhanced as a creative output found by the person to assign new meanings to the experience and as a strategy to restore autonomy. If the experience of ritualistic penance allows for the elaboration of the facts experienced in the past, they can also be considered significant in the construction of the subjectivity of the convicted. It is configured as a way of preserving the autonomy of the convicted, who administers and serves to the APAC's penal method at the same time.

These creative rituals in the APAC method refer to symbolic actions that integrate past and present in a process of creative transformation of the experience of pain and suffering lived in the prison system, as an attempt to maintain the dignity and challenge the barbarism, transforming it into a scenario loaded with subjective values. Living the experience of non-dignity (a kind of barbarism) in order to help integrate the experience with the self, aiming at a possible resolution of the conflict between the multiple positions of the self serving the sentence.

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NOTE

1. “E agora, José? A festa acabou, a luz apagou, o povo sumiu, a noite esfriou, e agora, José? e agora, Você? Você que é sem nome, que zomba dos outros, Você que faz versos, que ama, protesta? e agora, José? Está sem mulher, está sem discurso, está sem carinho, já não pode beber, já não pode fumar, cuspir já não pode, a noite esfriou, o dia não veio, o bonde não veio, o riso não veio, não veio a utopia e tudo acabou e tudo fugiu e tudo mofou, e agora, José? E agora, José? sua doce palavra, seu instante de febre, sua gula e jejum, sua biblioteca, sua lavra de ouro, seu terno de vidro, sua incoerência, seu ódio—e agora? Com a chave na mão quer abrir a porta, não existe porta; quer morrer no mar, mas o mar secou; quer ir para Minas, Minas não há mais. José, e agora? Se você gritasse, se você gemesse, se você tocasse, a valsa vienense, se você dormisse, se você cansasse, se você morresse . . . Mas você não morre, você é duro, José! Sozinho no escuro qual bicho-do-mato, sem teogonia, sem parede nua para se encostar, sem cavalo preto que fuja do galope, você marcha, José! José, para onde?”

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