

CARCERAL GEOGRAPHIES OF IMPRISONED MOTHERHOOD

Exploring experiences of and governance towards mothers in the
women's prison in Hindelbank, Switzerland

Bachelor's thesis

submitted by

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Abstract

Women in detention constitute a marginalized group facing gender-specific challenges during incarceration, one of which is motherhood. Research on mothers in the unique space of prison, however, is conspicuous by its neglect in geography, especially in the context of Switzerland. In this thesis, I use interviews with two formerly incarcerated mothers and two prison staff members to examine experiences of and governance towards incarcerated mothers in the women's prison in Hindelbank, Switzerland.

Despite experiences being unique and ambiguous including positive aspects too, incarcerated mothers in Hindelbank altogether encounter additional harm in prison due to being a mother. Governance towards mothers is multi-scalar, involving numerous local and cantonal formal actors as well as various non-state actors beyond the prison of Hindelbank. Moreover, broader national and global scale social structures as well as spatial features co-constitute the scope for action of mothers in Hindelbank. The findings indicate that motherhood is central to the experience of incarcerated mothers in Hindelbank, yet penal enforcement in Switzerland hardly accounts for their needs. Through the versatility of its findings the thesis underscores the necessity for further research on the gendered and discriminating Swiss prison system and some advantages geographic perspectives can contribute to such inquiries.

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1 Introduction to a topic in its infancy

“I have three children, a girl and two boys. I have a wonderful sister who has taken in my kids. [...] **I have lost my freedom but not my right to be a mother.** [...] To each their own conscience: if you think it is just to put me away for eight years for what I've done so that I cannot be there for the family, you have to make your own peace with that.”

(SRF Reporter, 2022: Min. 15:38ff, own emphasis, translated from German)

This quote stems from a mother incarcerated in a Swiss prison for drug dealing, who furthermore stated in a documentary by Anna Gossenreiter for Swiss Radio and Television SRF broadcasted in February 2022 that she had only seen her children once in the last four years, as they live in France and visits are too expensive – and goodbyes too hurtful. How does this mother feel to be separated from her children? How does her being a mother affect her experience of imprisonment? And who decides whether she can execute her rights as a mother, whether she can keep in contact with her children, enable or restrict her in mothering? These are just some of the questions underlying this thesis since despite the growing media attention devoted to women – and mothers – in prison (e.g., the SRF documentary mentioned above¹, the series ‘Orange is the new Black’ on Netflix² and films like ‘Double Peine’³, ‘107 mothers’⁴ or ‘Moms Behind Bars’⁵), the topic is still in the periphery of social, political and scientific attention (Schliehe, 2021). A reason for this might be that women in detention are a marginalized and vulnerable population group, subordinated to male dominated justice systems all over the world. However, women commit crimes too and are increasingly incarcerated: they are the fastest growing prison population worldwide (O’Malley, 2019). In Switzerland, as of January 1, 2022, 6 % of the incarcerated population was female, a level last reached in 2009 (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2022). Nevertheless, prison places in facilities specifically for women are scarce (Bundesamt für Justiz, 2021). The exceptional position of female inmates has been recognized by the United Nations in the “Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)”, which were adopted in 2010 to address the significant lack of policies regarding the unique specifics and needs of women involved in the penal system (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010). Among incarcerated women, the group of *mothers* are said to be even more disadvantaged:

“While justice-involved individuals are significantly more likely to be members of marginalized groups, even within the incarcerated population, women are significantly more disadvantaged than men. [...] incarcerated mothers in particular undergo significant stressors.” (Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019: 459)

In Switzerland, around two thirds of imprisoned women are mothers (Bundesamt für Justiz, 2021). Being a mother entails unique social, spatial and emotional implications (cf. Boyer, 2018), which is acknowledged as one of the specific gendered challenges during imprisonment by several international agreements (Europäisches Parlament, 2008; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010). Despite these international recognition and

¹ <https://www.srf.ch/play/tv/reporter/video/das-frauengefaengnis?urn=urn:srf:video:76d3c841-61d4-4f67-8f6e-a6e5acb4262c>

² <https://www.netflix.com/ch/title/70242311>

³ <https://www.kultkino.ch/film/doublesentence/>

⁴ <https://www.kultkino.ch/film/cenzorka/>

⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=az_YtxloFqM

recommendations regarding mothers in prison, there has hardly been any research on incarcerated mothers in Switzerland and if so, then incarcerated mothers were not the main research subjects but their children or relatives (cf. Bundesamt für Justiz, 2018).

Thus, in this thesis I focus on mothers and investigate how motherhood is experienced in the specific space of prison in the context of Switzerland. Furthermore, such experiences are dependent on external factors, since “[m]otherhood, perceived as a private, idealized family role, is in reality subject to regulation by laws and state policies” (Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019: 451), especially in prisons as spaces of tremendous external control:

“Everything from political decisions about where to site and build prisons to jail- and prison-specific visitation policies to local implementation of federal and state foster care laws affects whether women prisoners can maintain their parental rights and relationships with their children.” (Roth, 2004: 415)

I investigate this aspect by complementing the *experiences* of incarcerated mothers with researching *governance* towards motherhood in prison. As Switzerland is a federal state, governing power can be expected to be held on different scales by different actors, e.g., local, cantonal or national. However, not every prison is the same, but prisons are always peculiar spaces, which is why I focus on one specific Swiss women’s prison.

The so called ‘JVA Hindelbank’ (subsequent: Hindelbank) is the only all-women prison in the German-speaking part of Switzerland and contains 107 of the 250 national prison places specifically for women. There are several different living units, one of which is designed for mothers to keep their children under the age of three with them in detention. In Hindelbank, all possible forms of penal detention and measures towards female offenders – from semi-open to high-security enforcement – are carried out (Reichenau, 2021). Even though Switzerland has a national criminal code, the implementation of the penal system and measure enforcement lies in the responsibility of the 26 federalist cantons, who all have their own laws on the execution of sentences and measures. The cantons have joined together to form three so-called ‘concordats’ to ensure a uniform view and approach to penal enforcement and to enable the exchange of experience and information between the member cantons within each concordat⁶. Hindelbank is part of the concordat ‘north-west and inner Switzerland’. However, women from throughout Switzerland coming from all three concordats are incarcerated at Hindelbank as not every concordat has a women’s-only prison (Reichenau, 2021). Due to this unique position within Switzerland’s national and federalist law enforcement system, the women’s prison in Hindelbank is a crucial site to investigate experiences and governance of incarcerated mothers.

All this considered, the following research question results: **How is motherhood experienced and governed across scales in the women’s prison in Hindelbank, Switzerland?**

The aim of the thesis is not to demonstrate the *one* ‘mothers-in-Hindelbank’ experience and an outright comprehensive multi-scalar governance model towards it. Rather, I seek a broad outline of possible aspects of

⁶ cf. <https://www.konkordate.ch/>

experiencing and governing motherhood in Hindelbank to shed a light on a double marginal topic both societally and academically.

To answer the research question, I conduct qualitative interviews with formerly incarcerated women and prison staff from Hindelbank and analyze them applying a qualitative content analysis. Theoretically, I build on previous research and conceptualizations in carceral and maternal geographies, complemented by interdisciplinary research on women in prison and feminist geographic considerations of scale. These fields offer important insights because (1) feminist geographies have a long tradition of researching on and giving voice to repressed and marginalized population groups (Nelson and Seager, 2005), (2) carceral geographers have paid attention to the experiences of and control over the vulnerable group of inmates within specific carceral spaces like prisons (Moran, 2015), and (3) maternal geographers have focused on maternity, its relationship to space and embeddedness in social structures (Boyer, 2018). Moreover, in her study on governing reproductive rights of women in U.S. prisons, Ruth Roth (2004: 414) showed how in a federalist state “[...] power becomes manifest at different levels and in different forms”. Hence, due to the Swiss federalism, scalar perspectives offered by the geographical concept of *scale* (Jones et al., 2009) are beneficial to research governance towards mothers in Hindelbank. Furthermore, it is necessary to fall back on different (non)geographical subdisciplines because they fruitfully complement each other regarding the topic of imprisoned motherhood, each filling a research gap within another: in carceral geographies women – let alone mothers – have hardly ever been the research subjects, whereas in maternal geographies the specific space of the prison was seldomly considered, and even though various studies on mothers in prison have been conducted outside geography, most are missing a scalar and governance perspective and the specific Swiss context.

The thesis is structured in five chapters. After this introduction in Chapter 1, the theoretical background on carceral, maternal and feminist geographies as well as previous research on incarcerated mothers in other disciplines is detailed in Chapter 2, including definitions of important terms and concepts. Chapter 3 then describes the sample of interview participants, the detailed proceeding of the qualitative interviews and the content analysis as well as reflections on and limitations to this methodological approach. Next, Chapter 4 discusses the empirical results in three subchapters on governance aspects, motherhood experiences and scalar entanglements. Finally, Chapter 5 entails concluding interpretations of crucial findings, a reflection on strengths and weaknesses of the thesis as well as an outlook on the need for further research.

2 Conflating carceral, maternal and feminist geographies as a theoretical grounding

To study the experiences of and governance towards motherhood in the women's prison in Hindelbank, I consult two subdisciplines of human geography: carceral geographies and maternal geographies. This chapter gives a short introduction to these fields and important terms for the theoretical background of this thesis. Moreover, previous research on incarcerated mothers in other disciplines are briefly addressed. Ultimately, I outline how bringing carceral and maternal geographies into dialogue is beneficially achieved through applying a politics of scale emerging from feminist geographies.

2.1 Carceral geographies – applying spatially informed perspectives on prisons

In the early 2000s, carceral geographies emerged as a field in Anglo-American academia (Schliehe, 2021) in the broader social context of “[...] major changes in scale and scope of incarceration [...]”, including an increase in the overall governance and control of individuals through state practices (Moran, 2015: 12). This ‘punitive turn’, entailing “[...] new strategies of social control and coercion [...]”, e.g., through new technologies (Moran et al., 2018: 666) brought spaces of incarceration to the attention of human geography (Moran et al., 2018). When first appearing as a term in geography, ‘the carceral’ was studied mainly regarding security and surveillance in urban spaces, rather than prisons as carceral spaces (Moran, 2015). Today, whereas often used as synonyms, the carceral is understood as extending beyond the prison, and the prison is “[...] both the key reference point but not the full extent of carceral geography” (Moran et al., 2018: 675). Carceral geographies thus offer new perspectives on prisons and their spatiality by looking at the “[...] relationship between the prison and the world ‘outside’ [...]”, simultaneously problematizing the notion of such a ‘boundary’ and looking at the internal nature of prisons (Moran, 2015: 10).

Research interests within carceral geographies generally revolve around three broad areas: the “[...] nature of carceral spaces and experiences within them [...] [the] spatial geographies of carceral systems [...] [and the] relationship between the carceral and an increasingly punitive state [...]” (Moran, 2015: 2). Within these thematic fields, carceral geographers examine multiplex questions of (1) how inmates experience time, space and mobility across intersectional dimensions (e.g., gender, race, class) in carceral settings; (2) how prisons and other carceral spaces relate to and intertwine with society, politics and economy; (3) how geographies of state control are executed through carceral institutions and (4) how this controlling state system is or should be reformed or even abolished (cf. e.g., Allspach, 2010; Crewe et al., 2014; Gilmore, 1999, 2007; Massaro, 2020; McGeachan, 2019; Moran et al., 2009; Pallot et al., 2012a; Schliehe, 2021; Sibley and van Hoven, 2009; Turner and Peters, 2017). The primary focus of carceral geographies is on the nature, relationality, and versatile characteristics of *space* and the consequences of those unique carceral spatialities, seeing as a spatially informed view is mostly absent in other disciplines with a longer tradition of researching ‘the carceral’, such as sociology and criminology (Moran, 2015).

There is no distinct definition of 'the carceral' within carceral geographies. According to Dominique Moran (2015: 1), however, there is a basic agreement to characterize 'the carceral' as "[...] spatial, emplaced, mobile, embodied and affective". Following that, 'the carceral' is understood among carceral geographers as complex and diverse, emphasizing "[...] the *subjectivity* and *relativity* inherent in the experience of carcerality, since in its lived experience the carceral is *relative* rather than absolute" (Moran et al., 2018: 676, emphasis in original). Scholars are using the term 'carceral' as an adjective or noun to denote different processes and spaces like detention centers or the whole justice system of a country. Overall, various understandings and conceptualizations exist of 'the carceral' as well as manifold empirical research.

In this thesis, I draw upon the conceptual proposal of Dominique Moran, Jennifer Turner, and Anna Schliehe (2018) to understand 'the carceral' as a "[...] continuum of carceral conditions [...]" characterized by three specifications, which are defined and constituted in relation to each other (Moran et al., 2018: 677ff):

- **Detriment:** To separate the intent and the experience of harm as they differ, 'detriment' is understood as "[...] the lived experience of harm, as perceived by those suffering it" (ibid. 2018: 677) and can range from moderate inconvenience to heavy physical pain.
- **Intention:** As harm can also be caused by, e.g., diseases, 'intention' as a carceral condition is based on the idea that in carceral experiences of 'detriment' an external agent is causing it: "[...] a *formal* structure or organization that intends and administers punishment" (ibid. 2018: 678, emphasis in original).
- **Spatiality:** The carceral characteristic of 'spatiality' contains "[...] diverse (im)material techniques and technologies (which deliver intent), and spatial relationships to them (through which detriment is experienced, contested and resisted)" (ibid. 2018: 679). The main argument here is that if 'detriment' and 'intention' co-exist, they are always related to a particular space or spaces like prisons.

I apply these three carceral characteristics to the research question as follows. First, 'detriment' is explored through the *experiences* of motherhood in Hindelbank. Motherhood is especially suitable to explore detriment as the women in prison are not intentionally punished as *mothers* but as criminals. However, incarceration has a vast impact on mothering and can lead to unintended lived experiences of specific and additional harm due to being a mother, as Annette Keller, director of Hindelbank, stated in an interview with a regional newspaper: "for many women the separation from their children is the worst thing about imprisonment" (Kocher, 2021). Second, 'intention' is explored through the focus on *governance* regarding motherhood in Hindelbank. The main idea is that the agent who administers the incarceration – like courts or prison management – (mostly unintentionally) administers motherhood too and therefore has a crucial impact on mothers' experiences and 'detriment'. Moreover, not only are formal agents considered in this thesis, but I expect private actors like foster families to have a governing impact on motherhood in prison. Therefore, I build upon the Foucauldian concept of 'governmentality' to study the governance of motherhood in the women's prison in Hindelbank. 'Governmentality' refers to a broader conception of governance as not solely consisting of formal state actors, juridical punishment, and regulation on a macro-level, but of various state and non-state actors involved in various modes of governance across diverse scales (Häkli and Ruez, 2020).

To govern, hereafter, is to operationalize power to direct the 'conduct' of individuals or groups, "[...] to structure the possible field of action of others" (Foucault, 1983: 221). I, therefore, investigate the question of which actors enable or inhibit the actions of incarcerated women in their role as mothers in Hindelbank and in what way. Third, the 'spatiality' where 'detriment' and 'intention' co-exist in this case is the women's prison in Hindelbank and its specific features and context. Conceptually, I draw upon the understanding of prisons as "[...] connected rather than detached spaces, with permeable boundaries and highly significant internal geographies" (Moran, 2015: 10).

The 'punitive turn' with exploding prison population that triggered the emergence of carceral geographies as observed in Anglo-American countries is not as evident in Switzerland: Even though between 1988 and 2022, the number of imprisoned people in Switzerland increased by over 30 % in absolute terms, if related to the overall population in the country, the percentage of inmates, as well as the proportion of female inmates, has stayed more or less the same in the last 35 years (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2022). The reason for this may lie in the nationally different political approaches to penal law enforcement. Whereas, for example, in the USA, the penal policy got much stricter due to the 'law and order' mentality since the 1970ies (cf. Gilmore, 1999), in the same period, Switzerland has experienced a steady decrease in the predominance of custodial sanctions through the legal introduction of conditional imprisonment, outpatient therapeutic measures, semi-detention, community service or electronic monitoring (Fink, 2009). Consequently, if there is a 'punitive turn' in Switzerland, it is not apparent in the typical carceral space of prisons through increasing relative inmate numbers since legally accused or punished people in Switzerland may be put into new and less visible carceral spaces like psychiatric hospitalities or the home (electronic monitoring). This absence or invisibility of increased punitiveness might be one reason research within carceral geographies in Switzerland is scarce – with a few exceptions (cf. Richter et al., 2021; Richter and Emprechtinger, 2021). However, a geographical view on prisons and carcerality, as applied in this thesis, can contribute to better understanding the nature and experience of incarceration in Switzerland's specific societal, political, and economic context.

Even though women are the fastest-growing population group in prisons worldwide (O'Malley, 2019), according to Anna Schliehe (2017), who calls for the adaption of a feminist perspective in carceral geographies, women are still under-researched in this body of literature. One reason might be that women are a marginalized group in the penal system: in many countries, Switzerland among them, women account for only a small percentage of all people incarcerated in prisons (Fink, 2011). Furthermore, there are only a few studies in carceral geographies who address the topic of motherhood (e.g., Pallot et al., 2012b; Schliehe, 2021), but even in these cases, motherhood was not the primary research focus. However, it is apparent that prisons are highly gendered places (cf., e.g., Booth, 2021; Dirsuweit, 1999; Moran et al., 2009; Schliehe, 2021), influencing the experiences of women as a disregarded group, especially in their gendered role and identity as mothers. Like Schliehe (2017: 100f) says: "Motherhood in prison in many ways pushes boundaries of 'acceptable' gender role behaviour and stigma attached to it, while creating additional constraints on mothers during their time in prison". Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to filling this research gap on incarcerated mothers in geography by combining carceral geographies with maternal geographies.

2.2 Maternal geographies and beyond – revealing relations between mothering and (carceral) spaces

More than half of the incarcerated women in Hindelbank are mothers. Furthermore, Hindelbank is one of only two prisons in Switzerland that have a mothers-children-unit, where children under the age of three years can (in some cases) stay with their mothers during incarceration (Reichenau, 2021). Therefore, motherhood is a crucial aspect of this carceral space, which is also recognized by Anette Keller, director of the prison, who stated in an interview that the biggest challenge in the penal system was the effects of incarceration on children and family systems and that there was a need to investigate topics like mothers in prison more thoroughly (Reichenau, 2021). I contribute to filling this gap by putting imprisoned mothers at the center of my thesis. As mothers have hardly been explicit research subjects within carceral geographies (see Chapter 2.1), the field of ‘geographies of motherhood’ or ‘maternal geographies’ is consulted to provide essential insights into the relationship between motherhood and space. However, since there has been little exploration of *incarcerated* mothers by geographers, some studies from other disciplines that engaged with this topic more deeply are also included.

The subfield of maternal geographies developed in close relation to feminist theory within geography. Jennifer Johnson and Krista Johnston (2019: 9) argue that there is a need for maternal geographies as there are “[...] spatial practices of mothering” and because “[...] motherhood, and mothers themselves, are produced through the space they occupy [...]”. Maternal geographers recognize the diversity and complexity of motherhood and maternity, as well as myriad forms of mothering and their interconnection with space(s), claiming that “[i]ssues of space, place, territories, borders and boundaries in relation to maternities, maternal bodies and mothering have not yet been explored in great depth” (Longhurst, 2008: 145), which is considered highly relevant as “[e]xperiences of motherhood vary tremendously across time and space and also differ *within* any given cultural context [...]” (Boyer, 2018: 2, emphasis in original).

Previous research in maternal geographies has mostly centered around spatialized perspectives on (unpaid) mother work, pregnancy, breastfeeding, and birth. There is an overall tendency to study the space of ‘home’ since “[m]othering is bound up with conceptions of home, whether or not the practices of mothering take place exclusively within the space of the household” (Johnson and Johnston, 2019: 15). Overall, the majority of maternal geographers have studied motherhood in the context of common spaces and day-to-day experiences of mothers like breastfeeding in public places, being pregnant in the workspace, or giving birth at home (Boyer, 2018; Longhurst, 2008).

A definition or conceptualization of the term is needed to study motherhood. Nevertheless, motherhood is not a simple concept with a distinct definition but rather a term loaded with various meanings and understandings. As Robyn Longhurst (2008: 5) puts it: “There is no stable foundation, no essence, to being a mother or to the practices surrounding motherhood”. Thus, there is a vivid discussion in maternal geographies (and other fields) about what ‘mother’ and ‘motherhood’ are or mean, which to outline would be beyond the scope of this thesis. In short and very simplified, scholars mainly define motherhood either by building on “[...] the idea of a nurturing and giving adult (or youth) who cares for others [...]” or arguing biologically: mothers become mothers through the act of giving birth

and being feminine maternal bodies (Johnson and Johnston, 2019: 11). The second, essentialist understanding relying upon the dualism of womanhood/motherhood has long been challenged by feminist geographers (cf. Longhurst, 2008) and I do not want to replicate such biological essentialism. At the same time, the ‘caring’ aspect does not appear as an appropriate basis for the definition of a ‘mother’ in carceral spaces, as through the possible separation of mothers and children, ‘caring’ is regulated and restricted, sometimes even to the point that caring practices become impossible. I will therefore focus on a prior ‘definition’ of *mothers* as people who identify themselves as mothers or are seen as mothers by others (in my case: by prison staff or other inmates) and, during my research, try to capture how *motherhood* is contextually defined by those people in the space of the women’s prison in Hindelbank. Furthermore, I draw upon maternal geographic reasoning, according to which motherhood is *relational* between a mother and a child and constitutes practices, discourses, and experiences – always influenced and depending on the space(s) they take place in (Johnson and Johnston, 2019).

Unlike in geography, there has been more attention on mothers in prisons within research in other disciplines like sociology, feminist criminology, or social work (cf., e.g., Baldwin, 2015; Baunach, 2020; Booth, 2021; Enos, 2001; Enroos, 2011; Ferraro and Moe, 2003; Kennedy et al., 2020; Lockwood, 2017; O’Malley, 2019; Roth, 2004; Sufrin, 2018). Various scholars have shown how “[...] incarcerated mothers are pathologized, scrutinised, criminalised, and ultimately judged as bad mothers for not subscribing to idealised motherhood [...]” since they are separated from their children (O’Malley, 2019: 239). This leads to additional stress for imprisoned mothers, who “[...] carry the guilt and shame of apparent maternal failure for not living up to an idealized role” (Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019: 455). The effects of the physical separation due to incarceration on mothers and children vary, ranging from mental illnesses to losing parental rights (Easterling et al., 2019). Scholars have – among other topics – studied how mother-children contact is or is not maintained, how it is regulated through ‘gatekeepers’ or governed by the state (cf. O’Malley, 2019; Roth, 2004; Sufrin, 2018) as well as experiences, emotions, narratives, and mothering strategies of incarcerated mothers (cf. Baldwin, 2018; Easterling et al., 2019; Kennedy et al., 2020; Lockwood, 2017). Regarding the prison in Hindelbank, an unpublished Bachelor’s thesis in sociology recently investigated different coping strategies of imprisoned mothers (Gombo et al., 2019). Another critical topic within research on incarcerated mothers is the management, effects, and nature of mothers-children-units in prisons, where children under a specific age limit can stay with their mothers in prison (cf. Baldwin, 2015: 201ff; Feintuch, 2017). In Hindelbank, children up to the age of three can stay with their mothers in the mothers-children-unit (Reichenau, 2021).

Altogether – even though not significant in geography – there is an academic recognition of the specific challenges mothers face while incarcerated and that the spatiality of prison has manifold, complex, and long-lasting impacts on motherhood. However, in maternal geographies and other fields, there has hardly been any research explicitly considering how motherhood is constituted not only across different *spaces* but also across different interconnected *scales*. According to Longhurst (2008), maternal geographers have indeed studied motherhood, mothers, and space on different scales: from the micro-scale of a pregnant body to meso-scale places like ‘home’ and ‘workplace’, to a macro-scale perspective on politics of reproduction on the national level or performing motherhood within ‘cyberspace’, crossing national boundaries. However, these studies mainly focus on *one* scale and ignore possible

scalar interconnections and entanglements. One can observe the same gap for research within carceral geographies: Although up-to-date work in this field is “diverse and multi-scalar” (Moran et al., 2018: 667) and theoretically, carceral space is understood as constituted through practices and social relations across multiple spatial scales (Moran, 2015), there has been a lack of attention specifically towards scale in the field, as other geographic conceptual perspectives like space(es) and (im)mobilities are predominant. Furthermore, specific concepts within the field like the ‘carceral circuitry’ tend to “[...] invite a rather flat understanding of carceral space”, often focusing on the relational and fluid nature of the prison space (Gill et al., 2018: 197) without explicitly addressing different scales or scalar entanglements. Furthermore, in her call for a feminist intervention in carceral geographies, Schliehe (2017) points out the missing attention on the body as a scale within the field. In the next chapter, I outline how through the adaption of a feminist scale perspective, carceral and maternal geographies can be put in a fruitful conversation to understand both experiences and governance of motherhood in prison.

2.3 Feminist geographies – taking a closer look at scales

Scale is a central concept in both physical and human geography, but there is no single definition. Scale is, among other definitions, mainly understood as (1) a cartographical resolution, (2) a resolution of data collection (from micro to macro), or (3) a result of social, political, and economic processes (Jones et al., 2009). I draw upon a feminist conceptualization of scale as a socially constructed level of analysis – from intimate, local, and cantonal to national or global. According to Alison Mountz and Jennifer Hyndman (2006: 451), feminist geographers understand scale as “[...] a leaky category that remains fluid, contingent, and overlapping”. Consequently, there is no meaning in exclusively looking at one scale without considering others since they are relational and constitute one another. Furthermore, social relations are never confined to a single scale (Kelly, 1999), and scales are seen not as pre-defined and fixed but as socially produced (Marston, 2000). Feminist geographers have conceptualized and empirically applied this idea, among others, through the concept of the ‘global intimate’ (Mountz and Hyndman, 2006; Pratt and Rosner, 2006, 2012). In the related body of literature, scholars argue that the ‘intimate’ is not solely something personal belonging exclusively to the private sphere. Instead, it is bound up to and mutually constituted by the ‘global’, the public sphere, as well as “[...] specific political, social, and cultural meanings in different context” (Pratt and Rosner, 2006: 20). This also means that the intimate is no longer seen as something out of sight and therefore unregulated but as subject to governance and regulation (Pratt and Rosner, 2012). As Natalie Oswin and Eric Olund (2010: 62) put it:

“Intimacy thus serves as a primary domain of the microphysics of power in modern societies precisely because it is a bridge to so-called larger relations of power. Kinship, procreation, cohabitation, family, sexual relations, love – indeed all forms of close affective encounter – are as much matters of state as they are matters of the heart.”

There are two ways in which I believe such a feminist understanding of scale is fruitful for researching experiences and governance of motherhood in carceral spaces. First, the experience of motherhood can be categorized and understood as ‘intimate’. Mountz and Hyndman (2006: 447) define the ‘intimate’ as “[...] embodied social relations that include mobility, emotion, materiality, belonging, alienation” and motherhood, as outlined in Chapter 2.2,

contains the relational social tie between a mother and a child. Furthermore, just like motherhood, the 'intimate' is understood as bound up in, partly regulated, and governed by as well as mutually produced through norms, politics, social contexts, and the public sphere, instead of exclusively private and personal. Second, following the argument made through the concept of the 'global intimate', to understand experiences on an intimate scale (like motherhood), there is a need to look at how they relate to, overlap with and (are) produce(d) through the 'global', the public, the political (Mountz and Hyndman, 2006; Pratt and Rosner, 2006, 2012). However, in this thesis, I do apply this standpoint without explicitly defining a focus on the 'global' in advance, but instead trying to understand intimate experiences as scalarly entangled across "all" other scales from local to global through governance, since

"[i]ntimate life becomes a site to be known, governed, and lived in relation to particular norms, and the intimate, as a produced reality, mutually constitutes processes and institutions of national, transnational, and global scope [...]" (Häkli and Ruez, 2020: 264)

This scale crossing is critical as in a federalist state like Switzerland, many actors across different scales can be expected to be involved in governing and influencing motherhood in prison, e.g., on the politically and socially constituted particular Swiss scale of 'the cantonal'. I follow a 'topological approach' towards governance and power relations, starting from the "[...] power relationships *in practice* [...]" (Griffin, 2012: 218, emphasis in original), instead of looking at a specific, theoretically predefined scale. Hence, I do not define upfront on which scale(s) the governance of motherhood in prison happens and is intertwined with intimate experiences, but rather this is a question that I aim to exploratively answer during this research. With such focus on governance, I add to previous research about mothers being 'out of place' and different attempts and practices to regulate mothering (Johnson and Johnston, 2019: 15).

To sum up, the outlined theoretical background based on different geographical schools of thought leads to studying experiences of motherhood in prison as 'intimate' and as a form of carceral 'detriment', influencing and influenced by the governance of motherhood in prison, seen as scale-crossing and as a form of carceral 'intention' carried out by formal state but also non-state actors in the federalist context of Switzerland. Together, they contribute to the construction and are at the same time produced through the carceral 'spatiality' of the women's prison in Hindelbank.

3 Methodological approaches to study imprisoned motherhood

After a short overview of how the sample of interview participants came together hereafter, the following subchapters elaborate on the applied methodological approaches of data collection and analysis. In the last subchapter, I reflect on limitations of as well as my positionality within the research process.

When first drafting my research proposal, I planned to answer my research question by visiting the women's prison in Hindelbank, conducting observation data and interviews with currently incarcerated women to learn how they experience motherhood and forms of governance towards it within the prison. However, access to the field in carceral research is often highly restricted (cf. Abbott et al., 2018; Hostettler, 2012). Thus, after receiving a rejection email from the director of the women's prison in Hindelbank, in which she offered to provide interviews with prison staff but denied interviews with inmates, I changed my approach to finding research participants. I gratefully accepted the proposed interviews with two employees of Hindelbank since they contribute an additional view on and perception of motherhood in prison and its governance. However, coming from a feminist approach, I was still keen on not only reading and talking *about* incarcerated mothers but letting them speak for *themselves* as affected individuals. Hence, I contacted probation offices and non-governmental associations working with former inmates and their families. I explained my research aim and asked them to forward my request to possibly interested formerly incarcerated women they have been working with. Some probation officers redirected my inquiry and a few days later, I got a text message from a woman willing to talk to me about her experience in prison. She was still in contact with other mothers she had met in Hindelbank and forwarded my request to them. This is how I got to talk to another formerly incarcerated mother. Finally, the sample consisted of the following four interview participants, who have all been working or were incarcerated in the research site of the women's prison in Hindelbank.

Name ⁷	Personal Information ⁸	Interview	Documentation (in German)
Bria	Bria is 35 years old and grew up in Switzerland. She was incarcerated in Hindelbank for three years. When she was arrested, her daughter was four years old. Before the arrest, Bria was a single mother. During incarceration, her daughter was placed with a foster family and still lives there today, Bria only sees her on visits.	28.04.2022 At Bria's home	Appendix 2 a) Interviewleitfaden b) Einverständniserklärung c) Post-Skript d) Interviewtranskript e) Reflexionsnotizen

⁷ All names have been changed to ensure anonymity. I asked all interviewees what they would like to be called in the thesis, only Anita expressed her preferred name, the others left the decision to me.

⁸ To ensure anonymity, personal information was reduced to the very minimum for all four interview participants.

Name ⁷	Personal Information ⁸	Interview	Documentation (in German)
Anita	Anita is 48 years old, she was born abroad and moved to Switzerland as a child. Anita was incarcerated in Hindelbank for about five years. When she was arrested, her son was twelve years old. Before the arrest, she was a single mother. During incarceration, her son stayed with his grandmother, who flew in from abroad to look after him. Today, he lives with Anita again.	09.05.2022 At Anita's home	Appendix 3 a) Interviewleitfaden b) Einverständniserklärung c) Post-Skript d) Interviewtranskript e) Reflexionsnotizen
Christin	Christin is 42 years old and has been working in Hindelbank at the mothers-children unit for over five years. Christin has no children.	12.05.2022 At the Institute of Geography (University of Bern)	Appendix 4 a) Interviewfragen b) Interviewleitfaden c) Einverständniserklärung d) Post-Skript e) Interviewtranskript f) Reflexionsnotizen
Desiree	Desiree did not mention her age, she has been working in Hindelbank at healthcare for over thirteen years. Desiree has a foster child but none 'of her own' (biological), as she put it.	19.05.2022 At the Institute of Geography (University of Bern)	Appendix 5 a) Interviewleitfaden b) Einverständniserklärung c) Post-Skript d) Interviewtranskript e) Reflexionsnotizen

Table 1: Information on the interview participants

3.1 Communication as data – conducting qualitative interviews

Interviews are a predominant method to collect data and produce knowledge through communication in diverse human geography subfields in order to understand “[...] interpretations, experiences and spatialities of social life” but also different forms of governance, e.g., regarding climate change (Dowling et al., 2016: 680). I chose this data collection method because my thesis centers around experiences and governance in the specific space of Hindelbank and followed an integrative approach after Jan Kruse⁹ (2015: 292), whereafter “[t]he goal of qualitative interviews is to make foreign meaning reconstructable within a specifically designed communicative setting”. It has to be taken into account that such foreign meaning is verbally constructed since, for different people, words and concepts have different meanings. Thus, the main characteristic of *qualitative* interviews is their aim to be open, to let the interviewee structure the situation as far as possible as it is her/his meaning to be understood. Only with a non-directive, non-controlling, and non-structured conversation through listener-oriented and narrative-generating questions according to methodological principles is it possible for the interviewees to fully express *their* subjective cognitive frames in *their* language within the “[...] complex communicative situation [...]” of an interview (ibid. 2015: 259). However, according to Kruse (2015: 148), one “[...] cannot not structure [...]” or influence the

⁹ All quotes from Jan Kruse (2015) have been translated from the original German (own translation).

communication since minimal structuring is inevitable for the planning and conducting of an interview, and the researcher is always part of the situation, affecting and co-generating the resulting data. Therefore, the objective of complete openness is more of a “[...] *regulatory idea*, a goal where the attempt to achieve it as closely as possible is what counts” (ibid. 2015: 148, emphasis in original). To minimize the dilemma of openness vs. structure, Kruse (2015) suggests applying a compromise: to ‘structure openly’ by pre-defining the topics for the interview, e.g., with an interview guide, while leaving the right to speak and lead the conversation to the interviewee during the interview. Moreover, transparency and a detailed description of the communication and process before, during, and after each unique interview situation are crucial to ensure the quality and intersubjective transparency of the interview data. Such a procedure is consistent with methodological principles in feminist research, according to which specific attention is paid to the researcher’s positionality, requiring constant critical (self-) reflection (Dowling et al., 2016).

One main advantage of interviews as a method is that “[...] they provide useful information when you cannot directly observe participants [...]” (Creswell, 2012: 216), which was the case with my thesis as I did not get access to the women’s prison in Hindelbank. Furthermore, interviews offer the possibility to narrow the kind of information received through formulating research objective-led interview questions (ibid. 2012). However, they bear certain risks and limitations. First, interviews are strongly language-centered, making it harder for interviewees who dislike speaking as a form of expression or are not fluent, for example, if the interview language is not their mother tongue. To reduce this risk, it is important to formulate questions and use language that is appropriate and understandable for the research participants (Kruse, 2015). Second, if structured openly, the interview roles are asymmetric: the interviewee is forced to talk more in monologue style, while the researcher only asks short questions. This is not an everyday form of communication and can make interviewees uncomfortable or lead to them stating what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Thus, the structure of the spectrum monologue vs. dialogue should be adjusted during the interview depending on the interview participant (ibid. 2015). Third, interviews are always staged situations, specifically designed for research. They do not take place within the usual social context of the interviewee, and the social reality is only talked about and constructed, not performed and lived during an interview. Therefore, interview data is never a simple reflection of ‘reality’, which must be considered when analyzing and interpreting it further (ibid. 2015).

There are myriad forms of interviews with different specific goals and characteristics, mostly dynamically applied in practice as there is no distinct separation between them (cf. Creswell, 2012; Kruse, 2015). Based on the research subjects and interests, I decided to conduct semi-structured, explorative expert interviews with an interview guide (Kruse, 2015: 166ff) since I view the former inmates as well as the prison staff as experts in their respective experiences and perception of motherhood and its governance in the women’s prison in Hindelbank. Before every interview, I prepared a person-specific interview guide, a data protection information and consent form, a small gift for the participants, and the needed recording equipment. The interview guides contained different categories of open, non-suggestive questions based on the research interest and theoretical background. For all these documents, I oriented myself towards Kruse’s (2015) ideas, checklists, and templates.

The formal procedure of the interviews consisted of the same elements in all four cases: First, I gave the interview participants a small gift as a thank you for their openness, and the time they took to speak with me. Then, with their consent, I started the recording and briefly informed them about the topic of the thesis and said something about me as a person as well as the interview structure and data protection. If they had no further questions, we started the main part of the interview, where I asked them the prepared questions from the interview guide and some additional spontaneous questions depending on the situation. In the end, we finished with an open question where they could add whatever was important to them before I stopped the recording. Finally, I asked them if they agreed with my planned use of the interview data, and all of them signed the consent form. Right after every interview, I recorded or wrote down post-script reflection notes to capture personal thoughts and emotions regarding the interview. Despite this similar formal procedure, every interview presented a unique situation with a different atmosphere and process, which I reflected in more detail in the corresponding documentation in the appendix 2-5. Since the interviews were conducted in Swiss German, all related documents in the appendix are written in Swiss German or German.

In the week after every interview, I transcribed the audio-recording according to rules adapted from Kruse (2015: 341ff) to conserve as much information as possible beyond the purely semantic dimension of the spoken words in written form. I wrote the transcripts in the original interview language (Swiss German) to ensure the content was not altered due to translation. Furthermore, I wrote the whole text in lower case letters apart from words or syllables that the interviewees especially emphasized. I indicated pauses with length specification as well as non-speaking actions (e.g., laughing, sighing) in parentheses to comprehensively reflect the interview situation. Information that could threaten anonymity, like names or cities, was replaced by a placeholder in square parentheses describing the censored content, e.g. [Name Daughter]. During the transcription process, I took handwritten reflection notes about interruptions, thoughts, or emotions to make sure the subjective proceeding and initial interpretations of the interviews become transparent. Subsequently, I sent the transcripts to the interview participants for review and asked them to give me feedback, but none of them expressed any desire for adjustment. After all transcripts were finished and accepted by the interviewees, I proceeded with the data analysis.

3.2 Evaluating communication – qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a method used to systematically analyze 'fixed communication' and draw conclusions from communicative material, e.g., text documents like interview transcripts, and visual content like pictures or movies (Mayring, 2015)¹⁰. The core of this data analysis method is constructing and applying a code system to reach different goals, e.g., structuring or summarizing the data (ibid. 2015). There are various approaches to content analysis within social sciences. The methodological approach in this thesis is based on the qualitative content analysis by Philipp Mayring (2015). This method provides various advantages, e.g., compliance with methodological standards and quality criteria when carried out systematically while providing the flexibility to adjust proceedings to specific research cases (ibid. 2015). Nevertheless, this approach also has its limitations. First, the qualitative

¹⁰ All quotes from Philipp Mayring (2015) have been translated from the original German (own translation).

content analysis is 'only' a data *interpretation* technique, and its outcome thus heavily depends on the quality of the preceding data collection. Second, with its strict systematics, this method is not applicable for all research questions since a more explorative approach might be needed in some cases. Third, the emphasis on a systematic, rule-based approach to fulfil quality criteria carries the risk of applying the method too rigidly, overlooking case-specific features (ibid. 2015). To address these risks, Mayring (2015: 131) states that "[i]n the end, object adequacy has to be taken more seriously than systematics in order not to run into exactly the same problems that former quantitative research has led us into". Finally, according to Kruse (2015), qualitative content analysis focuses primarily on *what* was said during interviews, ignoring the importance of performance, like *how* something was said. To overcome this deficiency, I did fall back on the original transcripts and reflection notes while writing the empirical part of this thesis to complement the systematically generated summary according to Mayring's (2015) qualitative content analysis, the emergence process of which is described hereafter.

There are several schematic ways to conduct a qualitative content analysis after Mayring (2015: 65ff). Which to choose depends on the predefined direction of the analysis. For the aim of this thesis, I applied a summarizing content analysis approach using MAXQDA¹¹ as a tool. A summarizing content analysis aims to reduce the material to the key content and abstract these main points to a more general level. However, two critical steps must be completed before the actual analysis and process of coding can be started (ibid. 2015). On the one hand, the conditions of emergence of the data – e.g., how the sample was drawn, who conducted the interview in what exact situation with what context and background as well as after which rules the transcript was written – must be made explicit. For details on the occurrence of the data in this thesis, see Chapter 3.1. On the other hand, the overall direction of the analysis – what am I looking for? – must be determined. I based the direction of the data analysis on the thematic sections of the interviews derived from my research question, looking for *experiences* as well as aspects of *governance* regarding incarcerated motherhood in Hindelbank. Furthermore, the analysis was led by the theoretical background outlined in Chapter 2, e.g., concepts like 'carceral conditions' or governance.

According to the process model for a summarizing content analysis (ibid. 2015: 70) I then first decided on how much text can be subsumed within one code (analysis units) and the order of analysis: analysis units made up at least one word (e.g., an actor mentioned) and up to one paragraph (e.g., the narration of a child visit experience) of the transcripts and the interviews were coded in the same order as they were conducted. Second, I deductively defined super-codes according to the thematic sections that structured the interview questions, e.g., 'motherhood in general', 'motherhood in prison', or 'mothers-children unit'. While coding, I then inductively created more detailed subcodes, which ultimately led to a comprehensive code catalog (appendix 6). For the sake of transparency and inter-subjectivity, I entered post-it notes ('Memos') within MAXQDA during the coding process to capture subjective and spontaneous thoughts, emotions, and pre-interpretations (appendix 6). After this first coding round, I realized that the interview content went well beyond data relating to the research question. Thus, I decided to apply the macro operator of selection to total codes before paraphrasing in order to narrow down the next step of the analysis

¹¹ Version 2022, <https://www.maxqda.de/produkte/maxqda-analytics-pro>.

to the content of the super-codes most relevant to my research question (e.g., 'motherhood in prison') as well as some sub-codes whose content I found especially interesting during coding (e.g., 'Incarcerated women/foreigners'). In a third step, I exported the corresponding interview segments of the pre-selected codes into an excel-document and paraphrased every segment in a new column. Paraphrasing means to rewrite the sentences to a "[...] concise, descriptive form limited only to the content [...]" (ibid. 2015: 71). Finally, I applied macro operators after Mayring (2015: 69ff) to summarize and structure the relevant paraphrases into a new excel-document. This resulting excel-document (appendix 7) was the primary basis for writing the empirical section of this thesis (cf. Chapter 4), together with original quotes from the interviewees and reflection notes.

Regarding the methodological process in general, it is essential to note that researchers are always part of the data generation. For example, as communication is always aimed at a specific person, in the case of an interview, statements get (implicitly) adapted toward the interviewer (Kruse, 2015). Therefore, interviewers contribute to and are part of the jointly generated data resulting in the end. Thus, researchers need to reflect on their behavior, appearance, and communicative interactions, e.g., what kind of questions and stimuli were used (ibid. 2015). Furthermore, the data analysis process is loaded with decisions a researcher has to make – which segments to code, which codes to create, what paraphrases to select – and even if standard rules guide the qualitative content analysis, subjectivity stays inherent. To make this subjectivity in the research process of my thesis more transparent, I hereafter briefly address my positionality within the research process as well as difficulties encountered during the process and resulting limitations to the data.

3.3 Influencing research – reflections on positionality, subjectivity, and limitations

When researching in a socially and ethically controversial field like prison studies, I felt my political position as a left-wing, system-critical, socially engaged individual was the base for this thesis, as it motivated me to investigate marginalized population groups and topics like mothers in prison. However, my positionality as a young, non-married, childless, socio-economically averagely situated, Swiss university student did correspond to the four interviewees in different ways according to their background. There were few common grounds apart from gender identity shared among the interview participants and me. Especially for the interviews with the former inmates, I believe this shared gender identity was the main factor in giving me the courage to visit them alone in their homes. Suppose they had been two former *male* prisoners. In that case, their gender identity might have activated stereotypes of male crime as violent and made me anxious rather than nervous for home visit interviews with them alone. Apart from that common ground, two crucial social positions distinguished me from Anita, Bria, Christin, or Desiree: I am not a mother, and I have never been incarcerated or worked in a prison. I was open about this at the beginning of every interview, stating that they are the experts in the field. Such foreignness can be an advantage, leading the interviewees to express their experiences and knowledge more explicitly. However, it could have also hindered sympathy and the will to talk about highly intimate experiences as I, as a non-mother, could not understand such feelings anyway (cf. Kruse, 2015).

Looking back, I have recognized that when preparing the interview guides, I – unconsciously – divided and compared the four interviewees into two groups according to their status within the prison: the two inmates and the two employees. Following that, I somehow expected that the statements in the interviews and my sympathy would correspond with the status of the interviewees: the inmates agree, the staff members unanimously disagree, and I will sympathize with one of those two ‘sides’. This pre-acceptance was proven wrong after conducting the interviews. Instead, I felt more of an empathic connection with Bria and Christin than with Anita and Desiree. The four agreed and disagreed in their statements in varying constellations depending on the topic. Even if I made the data analysis as question-guided and systematic as possible, subjective components unconsciously flow into decisions, and sympathy with interviewees is one factor. This might have influenced, for example, the selection of quotes for Chapter 4, apart from the way interviewees expressed themselves. Subjectivity cannot be turned off, especially if there is no triangulation by third parties during the analysis process (cf. Mayring, 2015). However, I tried making my subjectivity visible and comprehensible through reflection notes during the research process.

As I was aware of the stigma attached to certain crimes, I consciously decided not to ask Bria and Anita about their offense because it has little to nothing to do with their motherhood and if so, they might mention it themselves. I was content with this decision and had no interest in knowing what crime they had committed until the very end of the data analysis. After diving into the data on governance, I realized that the contact restrictions regarding their children were significantly stricter for Bria than Anita, even though Bria got a shorter sentence. I started to think that the nature of the crime she committed must be the reason for this, as I saw no other explanation. In a burst of curiosity, I googled and tried to find newspaper articles regarding Bria as she mentioned her crime was all around the news. I did not find anything, and I’m glad since I know I would somehow judge her based on that knowledge even if I did not want to. This is just one example of how my thoughts and emotions influenced and accompanied the research process.

Apart from my personal influence, there are other limitations to my data. I encountered difficulties recruiting research participants due to the nature of the space of interest: access to prisons is highly restricted. I approached not only the all-women’s prison in Hindelbank but around ten other Swiss prisons where women and men are in mixed detention. All denied visits and interviews with different explanations or did not answer my request at all. Due to these access restrictions, it was not possible to talk to incarcerated women during their imprisonment, in the context of the prison space and experience, but only afterward. Hence, in the interviews, the former inmates talk about how they *remember* their time in prison. This has to be taken into account as such post-prison reflections are “[...] reliant on personal memories and emotions which may have altered over time” (Baldwin, 2018: 51). However, after conducting interviews with formerly incarcerated mothers, Lucy Baldwin (2018: 51) argued that

“[w]hilst reflective post-prison accounts might not be as raw as accounts given whilst mothers are still incarcerated, it is possible that the persistence of such powerful memories and emotions reflects the depth at which they were felt.”

A further advantage of post-prison interviews could be that the participants were not recruited by prison staff with a significant risk of coercion due to power imbalances (cf. Abbott et al., 2018). Such risk of pressure might, in this case, be higher for the interview participation of Christin and Desiree, as they were chosen and asked by their boss to talk to me, which can have an influence on their statements during the interview because they speak in their role as prison staff and not only about their personal view.

The difficulties of finding research participants resulted in a random sample, as I could not choose the interview participants as a representative or theoretically-led sample (cf. Kruse, 2015: 237ff) but was glad to be able to talk to anyone at all. Due to this circumstance, the thesis followed a more explorative, iterative path rather than a fully pre-defined, theory-based sampling. Bria and Anita could be argued to be among the more privileged mothers in Hindelbank, as they both have completed at least one vocational degree, speak German, have no substance dependence and are Swiss residents, which means their children and families live in Switzerland. Ideally, to get more comprehensive data and represent the variety of possible experiences and governance aspects, it would have been beneficial to interview some more mothers with different backgrounds, e.g., foreign women whose families reside abroad or/and who do not speak German, mothers with more than one child, mothers with a substance addiction, mothers who lived in the mothers-children-unit or mothers whose child was placed in a children's home instead of a foster family. Moreover, interviews with prison staff in more diverse positions would have been interesting to enrich the data, e.g., therapists or social workers or even actors beyond Hindelbank, e.g., prosecutors, legal guardians, or politicians.

Finally, the literature consulted in this thesis was written in English or German, leaving out much of the previous research written in other languages. Therefore, my thesis does not reflect the diversity of the existing worldwide academic debate on this topic. Overall, I recognize that the gathered data is fragmented and case specific. If I had talked to two different staff members and two different former incarcerated mothers at other times and places and consulted different literature, this thesis would have been very dissimilar.

4 Ample findings on experiencing and governing motherhood in the women's prison Hindelbank

On the following pages, I describe and discuss the data analysis findings, which are the basis for all statements in this chapter, if not indicated otherwise. The content of all four interviews was diverse, profound, and far-reaching – way too far for all aspects to be included in this thesis results section. Hence, the findings are reduced to and this chapter is structured by my research question: the results are displayed first regarding aspects of the governance of motherhood in the women's prison in Hindelbank, second the experience of it, and third in terms of the scalar entanglements.

4.1 Governance beyond the prison wall – actors, structures, and spatialities

Anita: “the imprisonment is basically – the entire confinement is under CONSTRAINT (.) you have to work together as a group, you have to follow the rules, have to get up at certain times because otherwise there won't be any more food (.) then we've got to be in the rooms because – that's when cells will be locked, if you get in later then – you just have to deal with [laughs] a lock-in or some such uhm uhm (.) all weekend you're inside and you can't be outside like – it's just all constrained.”¹² i

Contact rules – Hindelbank's primary source of governing motherhood

The most defining feature of detention is coercion, constraining the inmate's possibilities for independent actions and free decisions (Moran, 2015). Prisons enforce strict rules and routines shaping the inmates lives, which concerns female inmates in their possible role as mothers, as decisions of mothers regarding their children “[...] are subject to a host of constraints” (Pallot et al., 2012b: 181). It is the separation from their children that most profoundly shapes prison experiences of incarcerated mothers and keeping in contact has been shown to have a positive impact on resocialization and further crime prevention (Baldwin, 2018; Baunach, 2020; O'Malley, 2019). Hence, the possibilities of staying in touch with the children from inside prison are a crucial area of action for women in their role as mothers, which makes defining contact rules a central aspect of governance towards motherhood in prison.

In general, imprisoned women in Hindelbank are allowed three private visits per month in the specific space of the visitor's house, in addition to so-called official visits from, e.g., lawyers. Suppose their children are under the age of 16. In that case, there is the special offer of a 'children's afternoon' every second Wednesday, where children can visit their moms for two hours without being counted against the regular visit quota. During one of those visits children are allowed to go see the cell of their mother one time to get an impression of how she lives in prison.

Apart from visits, phone calls are the most essential means for mothers in Hindelbank to keep in touch with children. There is no specific limit to calls outside the prison, but the women have to pay for the phone calls, and there are

¹² All quotes from the interviews were translated from Swiss German and some sounds not necessary for understanding ('uhm', 'mhm') were omitted. (.) stands for pauses, [...] means omissions. The original statements can be found in appendix 1 and are referenced with Roman numerals after each quote.

only a few phones available in every unit of the prison, which limits the possibility of calling the children. Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hindelbank introduced the option to skype on one Saturday a month for 20 minutes for all incarcerated women. Like with the visits, there is a special rule for mothers regarding phone calls: usually, people outside the prison cannot call the imprisoned women; they can only call 'outside'. However, children are allowed to call the office of the unit their mother lives in once a week to speak to their mother. If a woman has one child, the duration of such calls is limited to 10 minutes; if she has more than one, it is 20 minutes. Further mother-specific offers and rules at Hindelbank are a recently introduced children's festival once a year, where there is a party for all children of incarcerated women in Hindelbank with activities, the possibility for women with prison leave to obtain child-specific conditional leave (e.g., to accompany the child to a medical clarification) or even sleep one night at home with their family, as well as less strict import regulations for objects brought to the prison by children, e.g., crafts.

Overall, being imprisoned and consequently separated from the children restricts mothers' actions, whereas Hindelbank enables particular contact possibilities like visits, phone calls, or Skype. Features like the 'children's afternoon' and the special rule for children's calls show that there are special opportunities designed for *mothers*, recognizing their vulnerable position. However, when asked about any suggestions for improvement regarding the situation of mothers in detention, all four interviewees had various ideas – from allowing more visits and making the visitor's house more child friendly, through opening a mothers-talking-round or special crafting courses where mothers could create gifts to send their children, to providing more phones, as, according to Bria, with only two phones for 23 women in the unit she lived in there was never enough time for everyone to talk to their loved ones. No interviewee had to think long about what could be changed to improve. Still, after every improvement suggestion, there was a recognition of how it is challenging to implement such changes, indicating that not only Hindelbank as an institution has an impact on the ways and frequencies incarcerated mothers can keep in touch with their children and, therefore, the governance of motherhood but that there are further governing aspects involved.

A look outside the prison – governance aspects over and above Hindelbank

Altogether, over 30 actors were named during the interviews who had an impact or a say on the issue of motherhood in Hindelbank. Moreover, multiple hints pointed toward broader social structures governing motherhood without a specific actor to be named (cf. Figure 2, Chapter 4.3). For example, both Desiree and Christin mentioned that the problem hindering improvements for mothers is missing resources, financially, personally, and timewise:

Christin: "the other thing is (...) you've got all these ideas but the resources for realizing them (...) are just not really there, we're so caught up in our everyday tasks writing reports and this and that, in meetings we keep talking about how we should also be doing one thing or the other (.) but no one has really taken the lead or the time to really get behind it [...] we keep having ideas and so on but I – we would have even more ideas anyway resources are scarce it's a financial issue what we are able to offer [for mothers]." ⁱⁱ

These statements indicate that Hindelbank cannot decide freely on what to do and how to spend resources but is subordinated to a more extensive system and more powerful actors. However, from the interviews, it did not become clear who exactly is the responsible institution for such limitations and scope given to Hindelbank.

Furthermore, even though Hindelbank provides, for example, the ‘children’s afternoon’, that does not mean that every mother can take this opportunity: Bria’s daughter was not allowed to visit on those Wednesdays. Bria was allowed to call her daughter only once a month, and their phone call had to be supervised by the foster family. Her daughter could only come to visit every two months accompanied by her legal guardian. On the other hand, Anita called her son almost daily, and he came to visit on average once a month accompanied by relatives. These examples show how governance takes place beyond the local space of the prison in Hindelbank, as according to the prison’s rules, Bria and Anita could have had more contact with their children. In Bria’s case, it was the child and adult protective services (KESB) limiting the contact further and, together with the foster family her daughter was placed in, playing a crucial role in governing Bria’s mothering as ‘gatekeepers’ for contact (cf. O’Malley, 2019), even past the term of imprisonment in Hindelbank:

Bria: “all our contact was always under strict surveillance (.) the foster family received requirements from KESB to listen in whenever I talked to her on the phone (.) [...] EVERYthing concerning [name of daughter] was decided by KESB [...] I have from KESB (.) STILL (.) very strict rules how I get to see her and how often I can see her and under what circumstances I am allowed to see her (.) uhm (..) by now [4 years after release] we are finally at a point where she can see me unaccompanied and where she is allowed every once in a while to come to our home and sleep over (..) but it has taken YEARS for me to win that right.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Whereas for Anita, her own relatives were highly involved with governing contact, especially her mother who was the official foster mother of Anita’s son during her imprisonment. However, there was no specific actor keeping her son from visiting more often, but rather her financial and social context and the distance to where he lived:

Anita: “phone daily (...) visits dependent financially because my folks are from [name of residence, in another canton] (...) and not everyone has a car or can drive a car (.) and my mum can’t anyway we always had to see if someone would drive her or like by train in a month they [a relative and her son] came maybe once (.) if it went well.”^{iv}

Anita’s quote points towards another aspect restricting contact between incarcerated mothers and their children: spatiality, for example, the very nature of the prison and visitor’s space (cf. Moran et al., 2017; O’Malley, 2019). In Hindelbank, e.g., the child unfriendly atmosphere influences contact:

Christin: “sadly what we notice is that the children often don’t come anymore (..) that they come for a visit once or twice (.) and the whole circumstance and the whole atmosphere (.) for the children partly is such a burden that they’d rather not come anymore [...] it’s just in part really not child-friendly there is – we have a playground and everything but they have to pass the security check they see people in uniform they have to walk through that metal arch (.) their relatives get searched and (.) they have to go through the gate with that barbed wire like it does something to the kids.”^v

Furthermore, maternal geographers have argued that spatial distance plays a crucial role in mothering (cf. Johnson and Johnston, 2019). This is also evident in Hindelbank, as the spatial distance between Hindelbank and the place where the children live, determines contact frequencies, e.g., making visits from children who live in another canton more difficult and phone calls abroad tremendously expensive. Presumably because in male-dominated penal systems women are a minority, there are fewer institutions for women, which means they are often incarcerated far away from their homes and families, even though the UN Bangkok rules recommend the countries to incarcerate women as close to their families as possible (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010). Although Switzerland is a small country and spatial distance does not extend to the dimensions of, e.g., Russia (Pallot et al., 2012b), the U.S. (Kennedy et al., 2020), or UK (Baldwin, 2015), the carceral characteristic of 'spatiality' in Hindelbank can be seen as a form of governance, overlapping and co-producing the carceral 'intention' and its involved actors.

Finally, it became apparent that federalist legislation impacted the possibilities for mothers to use the contact offers of Hindelbank. For example, if and how an inmate gets prison leave depends on what canton and concordat they came from, and for foreign inmates, such openings are hardly ever possible due to the risk of flight. As a whole, all these different governance arrangements involving external actors and structures beyond the prison in Hindelbank further indicate what carceral geographers have long been arguing: that the prison is not an isolated space but relational to permeable boundaries embedded in broader systems, making "the prison's connectivity [is] one of its defining features" (Schliehe, 2021: 93).

Admittedly, there is no single governance constellation for imprisoned mothers in Hindelbank: Which actors, spatialities, and structures are the most significant in governing motherhood always depends on the unique situation of an incarcerated mother and her child(ren). Apart from the two governing cases of Bria and Anita, the specific space of the mothers-children-unit reveals another constellation of carceral characteristics and consequently of governing motherhood.

A specific case of imprisoned motherhood – governing mothers in the mothers-children-unit

The previous paragraphs referred to the governance of motherhood when the mother and children get separated due to imprisonment. Yet, in the carceral space of Hindelbank, some mothers keep their infants under the age of three in the mothers-children-unit or even give birth during their incarceration. Unfortunately, I could not talk to a mother who experienced this, but Christin and Desiree talked about their perception of this form of imprisoned motherhood.

Even though officially, they are independent and personally responsible for their children (most of them keep custody), mothers in the mothers-children-unit are subordinated to strict rules from Hindelbank, e.g., they are obligated to work and put their children into daycare five days a week as from the time they are four months old, and they must get authorization for every time their child leaves the prison to visit relatives. Furthermore, mothers rely on prison staff and their approval for decisions regarding their children, which was said to be very hard to handle for

many mothers (and the prison staff) as they cannot bring their children up like they would 'outside'. Both Desiree and Christin repeatedly mentioned this dilemma as the most challenging aspect of the mothers-children-unit:

Desiree: "what I think is a difficult aspect is also kind of the supervision of the mother in parenting, health questions, surely [Christin] could tell something about that too (.) they have of course sometimes a completely different (.) totally different know-how depending on culture also HOW they do that (.) and in the end they don't have the freedom to do it the way they want (.) like they are dependent on the staff for example giving medication suppositories in case of fever and so on." vi

Christin: "they basically have all of the rights as a mother, they raise the child independently, they care for it independently so we don't get involved there unless (.) uhm (.) we see that something isn't working out well, then it's naturally our task to take responsibility there and to say 'this is not ok'." vii

These conflicts based on different perceptions of what a proper upbringing means were said to be rooted in different socio-cultural backgrounds. During the interviews, expressions like 'their idea' of nutrition and 'our understanding' of medicine were used, explaining, for example, that *African* mothers always want a fat baby as they believe then they are healthy and therefore feed them too much sugar, whereas *Roma* mothers never breastfeed despite all the advantages. Even though recognizing that the responsibility for the child lies with the mother, Desiree and Christin mentioned how prison staff tries to educate the mothers in mothering, continually with good intentions and the goal to benefit the child. Such attempts to normalize certain normative ideas of gender stereotypes like mothering were repeatedly found during prison research in various contexts, as prison is a space where under the guise of resocialization, 'bad' or 'different' women should get transformed into 'good' women, into people – and consequently mothers – of 'our kind' (cf. Moran et al., 2009; Schliehe, 2021; Smaus, 2020; Sufrin, 2018). For example, Sophie Feintuch (2017: 73), in her study in Spain, found that prison nurseries "(re)produce a white, Western, middle-class idealized vision of motherhood and rehabilitation – which is inconsistent with the background of most of the imprisoned women".

Moreover, even in the case of the mothers-children-unit, it is not only local prison actors embedded in the social structures governing motherhood. From the interviews, it emerged that four external actors were crucially involved: a midwife, the pediatrician from the village, a maternity counselor, and daycare. They all influence or take over decisions and actions the mothers make regarding their children, e.g., if a sick child gets particular medicine or how newborns need to be treated. However, mothers cannot directly contact those external supporters, but prison staff was said to be the intermediation between them, making them crucial governing 'gatekeepers' (O'Malley, 2019). Additionally, whether a mother can keep her child during detention first depends on further actors like the adult and child protective services KESB or the committing authority.

Another critical remark Desiree and Christin made was that the space of the mothers-children-unit has one unique feature distinguishing it from other units: the cells are not locked during the night, which means the inmates can move freely within the building. This is because the mothers must have access to the kitchen at all times to prepare

a bottle for their children. This shows how motherhood is not only influenced by the prison space where carceral 'intention' and 'detriment' co-exist but also produces those specific carceral 'spatiality' of imprisoned motherhood.

Altogether, prisoners in the mothers-children-unit seemed to be inmates first and mothers second, meaning that in practice motherhood was subordinated to legislation, even though formally, they were independent mothers with custody. In contrast to mothers being separated from their children, in the case of the mothers-children-unit, prison staff seems to play a key role in governing motherhood through their function as 'gatekeepers' for external support and their active efforts to change mothering styles. This governance as a form of carceral 'intention' produces additional difficulties and ultimately carceral 'detriment' for mothers in the mothers-children-unit.

Despite those findings on versatile governance modes controlling imprisoned motherhood, it is essential to me to point out that affected mothers in prison are not solely passive 'victims' (as feminist researchers long tend to frame women in general, cf. Pratt and Rosner, 2012) totally subordinated to restrictive rules, structures, and other actors' decisions, but that they have agency too. This emerged, for example, in the unpublished Bachelor's thesis on coping strategies of imprisoned mothers in Hindelbank or in a study on narrating mother identities in US prisons, where different types of mothers were found, all actively influencing their experience of motherhood (Easterling et al., 2019; Gombo et al., 2019). In line with previous efforts of carceral geographers, who have criticized traditional conceptualizations and empirical research on prisons for ignoring the inmate's agency and paying particular attention to lived experiences of prisoners as active agents (cf. Dirsuweit, 1999; Moran, 2015; Sibley and van Hoven, 2009), the following subchapter explores some experiences and personal strategies of incarcerated mothers.

4.2 "That was really everything to me"^{viii} – intimate insights into being a mother in prison

Bria: "this is EVERYTHING, being a mother is (..) that's um (..) the greatest happiness (..) but it also makes you extremely (..) attackable [laughs] because you are – you are SO attached to that child, you love that child more than anything and (..) there you are just SO vulnerable (..) so (..) it is the most WONDERFUL thing but the most DIFFICULT too."^{ix}

What is a mother anyway? Twofold understanding of becoming/being a mother

When we finished talking about their life in Hindelbank more generally, and I started asking questions regarding their motherhood, both Bria and Anita got more thoughtful and calmer when answering my questions. It was obvious that this topic was highly emotional and personal to them. Moreover, the interview with Desiree also indicated the complexity and intimacy surrounding the issue of motherhood in general: the question about what motherhood means to her personally slightly took her by surprise, and she stated that it was too big an issue for her to talk about without having more time to think about it. In line with the statement of maternal geographers that motherhood has 'no essence' (Longhurst, 2008: 5), the sense of what motherhood generally means to them was hard to put into words, apart from notes of motherhood being related to giving birth. However, it seemed easier to answer questions about the role and duties of a mother, which indicates strong normative ideas surrounding motherhood: the role of a mother is not something every individual defines for itself, but rather some kind of common knowledge in a society,

which can differ tremendously depending on context and cultural background (Boyer, 2018; Longhurst, 2008). Overall, the four interviewees agreed that being a mother is *challenging*, that a mother has *responsibility* and must put the *needs of her children before her own*. Furthermore, mothers must be there for their children daily, give them advice, guide and support them emotionally and practically. Being a mother is 'not done' by giving birth; a real and good mother becomes a mother through caring and taking responsibility for her children – being a mother is to learn and fulfill a specific function.

Altogether, the data suggest an understanding of motherhood in the carceral space of Hindelbank as twofold. First, the essentialist notion of becoming a mother through birthing a child exists. This can be recognized, for example, in the statement of Bria that only if one becomes a parent (biologically) can one understand the full scope of what it means to be a mother and no matter what happens, "the mum [birth mother] stays the mum throughout your whole life, that's just the way it is" ^x, even if the child gets to live with a foster or stepmother who takes on the daily care. Second, beyond the notion of 'just' being a mother, there seems to be a normative understanding of 'good' mothers. Even though the idea of what 'good' means differed between the four women, all agreed that being a good mother requires fulfilling care duties and being there for the children:

Bria: "you're always torn, of course you want (.) to be there for the child but you CAN'T (..) and you don't feel just because of that no longer (.) yeah (.) like a real MOTHER almost, you're really like (...) yeah, I don't know (...) (.) you just don't feel uhm (..) WORTH it as a mother because, cause you just can't BE there for the child." ^{xi}

In contrast to biologically becoming a mother, this part can be taken over or substituted by a foster or stepmother. Such a two-part definition is in line with what Johnson and Johnston (2019) wrote about the different understandings existing about motherhood and suggests that based on the data, they cannot be strictly separated in the space of the women's prison in Hindelbank.

(Not) Fulfilling the mother's role – experiences of being a mother in prison

During incarceration, the execution of the mother role becomes highly delicate for mothers because most of the features they should fulfill to be a 'good mother' require spatial proximity to their children, which is drastically limited due to imprisonment (exception: mothers in the mothers-children-unit). When asked about possible differences in experiencing incarceration between women with children outside the prison and women without children, all interviewees agreed that mothers feel additional pain and a higher level of suffering. Mothers, compared to non-mothers, were said to be more worried, stressed, burdened, restless, and less lighthearted in prison. Anita explained how she felt useless when her son called and cried on the phone because something was happening in school, and she could neither help or comfort him nor hold him in her arms. This contradiction of being a mother but not being able to 'be there' for the children due to separating and having to endure a lot of uncertainties and powerlessness was also observed by Christin:

Christin: "well I think children are definitely a source of stress for the women cause they (.) DON'T stop being a mother just because they are imprisoned (.) and, if the children are unwell, if they are sick if the children are in the hospital (.) then it's an immense

lack of power that the women feel, cause they just cannot do ANYTHING (.) and to bear THAT has to be one of the hardest things [...] yes I think they just have different worries (..) because they – because they are mothers.”^{xii}

From a nurse’s perspective, Desiree had the feeling that mothers experience more health problems than other inmates in Hindelbank, especially psychosomatic ones, which could be a consequence of the emotional distress of being a mother (cf. Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019). Imprisonment limits the capability to fulfill the normative western ideal of the mother role, which results in profound guilt among incarcerated mothers (cf. Baldwin, 2018; Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019; Schliehe, 2017). Both Anita and Bria expressed such feelings of guilt, shame, and negative self-perception, along with the notion of being worthless and helpless as a mother.

Anita: “right in the beginning I first had to come to terms with (.) with the feelings of GUILT (..) [...] and (..) I just had th- th- the feelings of guilt were – they just took over for me (..) there were times when I just only wanted to DIE I’ve already attempted (..) two tries (..) and then (...) because I was just (.) I just couldn’t look at myself in the mirror anymore. For YEARS (...) I just HATED myself.”^{xiii}

Bria: “I often felt like I am the worst mother in the world but I think that was the case for a lot of mothers there (.) just yeah because you just feel bad for your children (.) you’ve disappointed them, you’ve abandoned them, you’ve (.) yeah (...) yeah you’re not there for them, you miss so much.”^{xiv}

The last phrase in Bria’s statement indicates another aspect that repeatedly came up during the interviews: incarcerated mothers miss out on their children’s lives, which is deeply hurtful, and some even stand still in time regarding their children, as if in a vacuum. Christin recounted how many mothers in Hindelbank misremember the age of their children and think they are younger than they are.

Furthermore, from the interviews, it emerged that being a mother resulted in a more vulnerable position within the prison social life in Hindelbank. In addition to being more vulnerable overall when being a mother due to unconditional love, emotional dependency, and resulting constant worrying, the data suggests that having a child is an even bigger ‘weak-point’ for an *incarcerated* mother. In contrast to previous studies, this weakness was not defined as relational to prison staff, who were found to threaten mothers with the prohibition of children contact if they don’t behave well (cf. Schliehe, 2021), but rather concerning other inmates. In conflicts, inmates were said to bring up the children and issues of a ‘bad mothering’ to provoke the mothers:

Anita: “there were a few who on purpose used this [motherhood] (.) to provoke (.) [...] when they knew exactly ‘aha she has two kids and so, she has now – those are now with the foster family’ that they knew exactly that’s her weakness (...) she misses them she hasn’t seen them whatever and then when there were fights that they just attacked the children.”^{xv}

As a result, according to Bria and Anita, mothers in Hindelbank were reluctant to have private conversations about their children in common areas as they were afraid that the information would be used against them, therefore experiencing constant fear and need to be cautious. However, therapy or the private cells were named as spaces where the topic of motherhood was frequently discussed with people who were considered loyal and trustworthy.

Apart from the therapists, these were primarily other mothers who were 'in the same boat'. Thus, the specific experience of motherhood in prison seems to lead to a shared group identity and higher trust among incarcerated mothers. The fact that motherhood was discussed mainly privately was also evident from statements by Christin. She said that motherhood and the children outside of prison were not visible and talked about enough, apparently due to shame and guilt felt by the mothers. Christin suggested that Hindelbank as an institution could do something to encourage conversation, maybe a guided discussion group for mothers. However, when asked about this, Bria was skeptical that anyone would take such an offer because she believes that the issue of motherhood is just too hurtful and private to talk about in a circle of mostly strangers. This statement again contradicts the findings of another study with post-prison mothers, where almost all agreed that they would have participated in and appreciated an institutionalized space to talk about motherhood (Baldwin, 2018).

Overall, the experience of being a mother in the women's prison in Hindelbank with children outside articulates the carceral characteristic of 'detriment' by enhancing the extent of felt harm – emotionally, socially, and in health terms.

Bria: "the pressure of SUFFERING is there for EVERYONE and I think everybody deals with that differently (..) and yeah especially for mothers it's often just (..) even more intense (..) because just – yeah, nothing gets to you like the children [laughs]." ^{xvi}

In line with previous research on incarcerated mothers, separation from their children is the most defining aspect of their imprisonment and is said to be the true punishment (Baldwin, 2018). However, not only negative aspects and experiences about being a mother when incarcerated came from the interviews.

A reason to stay alive – the positive side of the coin and mothering strategies

At one point, the experience of imprisonment was no longer bearable for Bria and Anita. Both told me that there were times when they thought about or even attempted to kill themselves during detention and that it was the words of their children keeping them alive.

Anita: "I had a call with him [her son] then (...) and then he – we really talked for a long long time and then I said it – I told him I was so sorry that I – I just have to apologize but I don't want to (.) I just don't want to live anymore (..) and then he said 'mum yes you have to be there for me I I uhm forgive you' and when I heard that he – that HE forgave me then (.) it was like a second life for me." ^{xvii}

Bria: "well I can remember one situation where I really didn't want to live anymore yeah I was really not well then (.) and that's when [name of daughter] basically – she was calling me (.) of course I didn't show anything on the phone and I just like thought 'hey yes (.) I want to hear her once again' so really already with the thought 'I don't want to live anymore' (.) and then at the end of the call she WITHOUT knowing anything said one sentence (..) [laughs] and she said (..) 'bye mummy, I love you so so much NEVER forget that you have a daughter who loves you more than anything' and in THAT moment I could only (.) CRY and I realized 'hey shit (..) yeah okay I can't do that, I can – I can't DO that to her'." ^{xviii}

The responsibility and profound love towards the children motherhood entailed for them gave Anita and Bria the strength to endure the difficult time of imprisonment. The other interviewees also noted positive aspects of having

children when being incarcerated. As in other studies, mothers were said to have more prospects for their life post-incarceration due to children, as they are likely to take up caring responsibilities again in some way or another after release (cf. Baldwin, 2015; Ferraro and Moe, 2003).

Desiree: “for women with children it is (.) quite often given how life goes on again afterwards (..) they go back to their families (.) they have- the meaning of their existence is- or in prison is (.) to get through prison time as quickly as possible so they can see the children again.”^{xix}

Moreover, visits, phone calls, gifts, letters, and photos from the children led to positive experiences and feelings like pride or joy. However, as already observed by Baldwin (2018), emotions towards visits and contact with children are hardly ever only positive, but more so ambivalent, as visits are highly complex emotional situations for all involved, additionally affected by the space they take place in.

As outlined in Chapter 4.1, governing motherhood takes myriad forms in the women’s prison in Hindelbank. However, even if highly restricted, Bria and Anita still found ways to act actively in their role as mothers, showing their agency within the rigid prison space in various ways, dependent on what the governance in their specific case looked like. In Anita’s situation, apart from regular visits, daily phone calls were the primary means to keep mothering from inside prison by listening to her son and giving him advice. On the other hand, Bria was only allowed supervised phone calls and visits and therefore fell back on different strategies of mothering.

Bria: “the legal guardian always (.) came along to visits [...] and because he was always there the legal guardian it was basically always an official visit. I wasn’t allowed to bake for her [her daughter] (.) because it was OFFICIAL, it also wasn’t counted towards my visiting quota but because of that I couldn’t do ANYTHING for her (.) I had (.) really during that time I was in prison I tried (..) yes to do EVERYTHING for her for example despite it all (.) for Christmas (.) I made her an advent calendar.”^{xx}

She explained how she regularly crafted gifts, sent letters to her daughter, and even wrote and drew her a children’s book, telling the story of a girl who found comfort in sharing her worries with a stuffed animal after her mother died. Bria sewed a similar-looking soft toy for her daughter to help her cope with the loss of her mother – not to death, but prison.



Figure 1: Cover of children’s book Bria created for her daughter.
Translation: “Bino the little ‘worry muncher’. From [Bria] to my beloved daughter [name]”

Furthermore, both Bria and Anita retained custody of their child while incarcerated, allowing them to perform motherhood through the formal act of signature consent for minor decisions, e.g., for school field trips or vaccines. Such decisions regarding their children still run by them were crucial as means of mothering for Anita and Bria.

Anita: “whenever he [her son] goes on a trip that I SIGN and stuff (.) right (.) then I said I want to do THAT small thing that I can (.) that this is not taken away from me because she actually wanted to take everything away (.) my mother ‘yeah you’re in jail anyway you can’t do anything so (.) you might have birthed him but you AREN’T anything more’ like that (.) then I had to fight a lot to get at least THAT little bit of ability to decide.”^{xxi}

However, signatures were often only pro forma, and most decisions were made by the foster parents or the legal guardian, leaving the incarcerated mothers feeling excluded, powerless, and deceived. Bria recalled feeling betrayed when her daughter was placed in a special school against her will. This is just one of several situations both mentioned where they did not agree with the decisions of the foster parents – which in Anita’s case was her own mother, whose upbringing philosophy she did not support at all.

Anita: “and then I really had a WAR with my mother because she did that totally – she didn’t agree at all (...) yeah (...) that’s it – the hardest was making clear to her that (..) that it’s not GOOD (.) how I was raised and I don’t want that for him [her son] (.) I don’t want him to be used and abandoned later like ME (.) I didn’t want that (...) (...)”^{xxii}

For every mother, the positive and negative aspects of being a mother in prison may exist in another ratio depending on their individual situation and circumstances. There is no single ‘mother in prison’ experience, and several testimonies within the interviews pointed to this topic’s versatility, subjectivity, and intersectionality. For example, the experiences of being a mother who stays with her child in the mothers-children unit, a mother whose child is cared for by a foster family, a children’s home, or relatives outside of prison may all differ significantly in every unique constellation.

Furthermore, all four interviewees repeatedly pointed out that the situation is much worse for foreign mothers whose families live abroad, because child visits are usually not possible for those mothers as they cannot afford it or since phone calls are scarce due to immense roaming costs when calling a number abroad. In addition, some of the foreign women do not have health insurance, which means that they are denied access to therapy – which was mentioned to be an essential space for talking about issues of motherhood – or other non-emergency health care because funding is not secured. Such findings support the crucial role intersectionality plays regarding incarcerated motherhood since “[...] most of incarcerated mothers experience multiple marginalities [...]” (Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019: 452). In all cases, however, mothers’ experiences can be understood as ‘intimate’ in the sense of Mountz and Hyndman (2006: 447). From a feminist geographies perspective, it is essential to consider the scalar embeddedness inherent in such intimate experiences (Pratt and Rosner, 2012).

4.3 Entanglements – co-producing imprisoned motherhood across scales

As seen from previous chapters, in the case of incarcerated motherhood, the intimate is bound up in governance across different scales, from local to global. To create an accessible overview, I summarized and assigned the

specifically named actors to different scales (grey) around the intimate (rose) and the broader structures (water-color) emerging from the data in a graphic. However, this visual representation does not claim to be complete, as it is case specific and shows the “[...] power relationships *in practice* [...]” (Griffin, 2012: 218, emphasis in original) based on the four interviews. To acknowledge this, there are some fields left empty. This indicates that different actors and structures would have emerged for other interviewees and with other methods (e.g., document research, observation) instead of interviews. The different colors represent that the governance and experiences take place not only across multiple scales but also in various spheres, e.g., political, societal, spatial, domestic, economic, or legal.

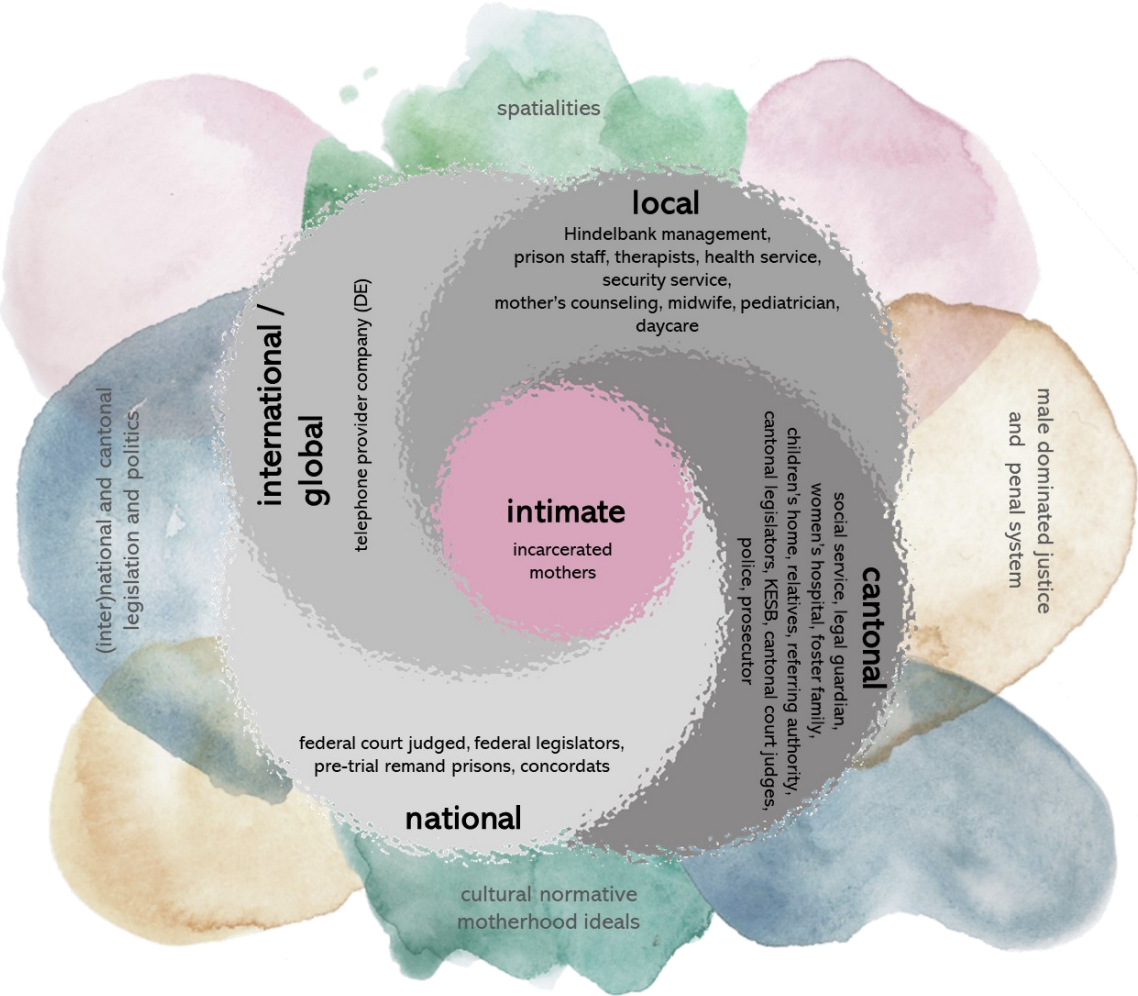


Figure 2: Overview multi-scalar governance towards motherhood in Hindelbank

Local to global – governing the intimate from different scales

Blurring the boundaries on the graphic was a means to visualize the intertwined characteristic and mutual interplays between the actors and structures on different scales. What is apparent from the illustration is that local and cantonal actors were named the most numerous, playing a substantial role in governing imprisoned motherhood. One reason might be the methodological approach, as I talked only to people from the local scale of Hindelbank. Another reason might be the federalist context in Switzerland, where law enforcement is delegated from the federal to the

subordinated but autonomous scale of the cantonal, giving cantonal actors powerful positions (Vatter, 2020). Despite this predominance of the local and cantonal scale, some illustrative examples emerged of how the national and even global scale significantly influence the intimate experience of motherhood in prison – even if no specific governing actors were named.

First, the global COVID-19 pandemic was the driver for the quick introduction of Skype video calling as a new contact option for inmates in Hindelbank, which, according to all four interviewees, meaningfully improved the situation for (especially foreign) mothers, as it was a free new contact possibility to see and talk to their children. The COVID-19 pandemic was mentioned almost exclusively positively and concerning the introduction of Skype during the interviews, which reinforces the impression of Skype being an extraordinary improvement with a significant impact on the intimate experiences of mothers. This supports the findings of previous studies indicating that keeping contact with the children is essential for incarcerated mothers (Baldwin, 2015; O'Malley, 2019).

Second, when asked about assumptions on differences between men's and women's prisons in Switzerland, indications of male dominance within the national penal system emerged.

Christin: “also the whole medical coverage is kind of more complex with the gynecology ward for us [mothers-children unit] also with the midwife with births with (.) difficulties also with the cooperation with institutions it's just all oriented towards men, the custody ward at the Inselspital it doesn't come to a women's clinic or a children's clinic to guard mothers so like we continually have overlap there that is really difficult because detention is just not tailored to (.) the six percent of women (.) where we again and again have to say 'uh we are here too' [laughs] and 'our women have needs too'.”^{xxiii}

Christin explained that there was a particular unit for the surveillance of inmates who needed treatment in the hospital but that new mothers could not be assigned there with their babies. As there is no surveillance possible in the women's hospital but – legally – prisoners must be constantly secured, new mothers must go back to Hindelbank 6 hours after giving birth, or if either the mother or the baby needs monitoring, they are separated: the mothers go to the particular surveillance unit, the babies to the neonatal department. The legislation and infrastructure dependent on the national system, therefore, discriminates incarcerated new mothers, as in contrast to mothers outside of detention, they hardly ever have the possibility to stay in hospital for a few days after birth to rest and get support from medical professionals in this highly intimate and vulnerable early post-natal period. This coincides with what Baldwin (2018: 49) found in her research with post-prison mothers in the UK: “The lived experience for mothers in prison is very different from that of mothers outside. Simple things that a mother outside might take for granted [...] are deeply affected by space and place in prison”. Nevertheless, this national structure of a male-dominated penal enforcement system does not affect all imprisoned mothers similarly. Christin recalled that in very few cases, female inmates were permitted detention leave for the birth and first post-natal days, which meant the punishment was paused, and they were not surveilled during this time, being able to stay in the women's hospital and welcome visitors without restrictions. Those days were then added at the end of their sentence. However, detention leave was only possible for Swiss women. In contrast, foreign women, who make up more than half of the mothers in the mothers-children unit, are never granted detention leave due to the risk of flight. This is an

example of how intersectional characteristics of incarcerated mothers on a personal, bodily scale, like their origin, can significantly influence which governance modes are activated within the gendered system on a national scale, which in turn massively shapes intimate experiences of motherhood in the carceral space of Hindelbank.

Feminist geographers have argued that globalization and the constructed global scale are ‘masculinist’, rendering them more powerful than seemingly less important scales like the local (cf. Mountz and Hyndman, 2006). The fact that Skype was introduced only as pressing *global* forces came into play, even though already in 2018 Annette Keller talked about Hindelbank’s wish to offer Skype to the inmates (Galli, 2018), reinforces the impression of different power gradients across the scales. Furthermore, this aspect is supported by the finding that local actors in Hindelbank have to ‘fight’ for the recognition of women’s needs within the overall penal system on an apparently more dominant national scale.

Mutuality – how the intimate influences multi-scalar governance in turn

Altogether, multi-scalar governance from local to global co-determine the intimate experience of incarcerated mothers in Hindelbank. However, the influence between scales is mutual. Even though the effect of *intimate* experiences on governance across other scales was less apparent (probably also due to the power imbalance among scales mentioned above), the interviews yielded three vivid examples. First, Christin and Desiree explained how daycare for children in the mothers-children-unit was introduced to improve the situation of the children and mothers, as their experiences of independently looking after the children seven days a week within the rigid structure of the prison made the relevant actors worry about the wellbeing of the children and introducing this new mode of governance towards motherhood in prison. Second, the often hurtful and emotional experiences of children visiting due to the child-unfriendly environment led to local actors in Hindelbank taking action to improve the situation for children and mothers by changing the governing space of the visitor’s house:

Christin: “often it’s like the children haven’t seen the mothers for two or three weeks and then they should suddenly tell them everything they’ve experienced for two hours and so on and (.) many mothers later say that they [the kids] warm up in the last five minutes and then they have to say goodbye and in the worst racket the children go home again (..) which is also very hard for the mothers (.) and THERE we are always trying with new ideas to kind of work against that like we have new two game closets at the entrance [of the visitor’s house] where the children can pick something with their mum that they can play together (.) something to break the ice.”^{xxiv}

After this introduction of two game closets, a redesign of the visitor rooms is currently being planned by the management. Third, another way of how the intimate influences the governance became apparent through paying closer attention to stories regarding distinct governing actors. For example, Bria stated that she had the very best prosecutor during her legal proceedings, as he made it possible for her to see her daughter during pre-trial detention. There was no official room where children under the age of 12 could visit in that specific pre-trial prison, and he arranged for Bria to meet her daughter in his own private office – which was not his duty as a prosecutor but an individual effort. Without that, she would not have seen her daughter for six months. She also felt lucky to have had a ‘good’ legal guardian for her child:

Bria: "EVERYTHING concerning [name of daughter] was basically decided by KESB (..) I could count myself lucky to be able to be in contact with her, really because they could have reacted completely different you know to somehow not extend the trauma [of her daughter] right (.) they could have really said it's better to break contact and so on (..) but luckily I had a good legal guardian then (.) and he really supported that the contact was allowed to continue." ^{xxv}

According to Sinead O'Malley (2019), such decisions whether and how often children can contact their incarcerated mothers are usually based on the 'best interest' of the child, which is "[...] inherently the subjective opinion of an individual social worker" (ibid. 2019: 247). Another example is that whether actors like foster parents and prison staff are sensitive and supportive towards incarcerated mothers or not depends more on the individual person than the responsibilities inherent in their job. Interviewees explained how some care about inmates being a mother, ask about the children and support them, whereas others do not care or pay attention to the fact that someone has children at all. These examples show how on the one hand, there are formal positions on a specific scale like a cantonal legal guardian or local prison staff member with certain rights and duties to govern (e.g., to serve in the child's best interest or to secure the inmates). On the other hand, these formal positions are always filled by an *individual* who, presumably based on their very own intimate experiences and values towards issues like motherhood, acts differently, significantly influencing the actual governance in practice and taking the role of a 'gatekeeper' between mother and child (ibid. 2019).

5 Conclusion on a topic that needs to grow out of its infancy

“I have lost my freedom but not the right to be a mother.”

(SRF Reporter, 2022: Min. 15:38ff, own emphasis, translated from German)

The woman in the SRF documentary is somehow right: there is no law in Switzerland, neither a national nor a cantonal, stating that with imprisonment women lose their rights as mothers. Although – or maybe because – the penal law does not explicitly address motherhood, incarcerated women in Hindelbank experience a significant loss of their ability to act in their role as mothers, the consequences of which reach beyond the sentence:

Bria: “in conclusion it just needs to be said that (...) for me it’s not necessarily (.) the prison sentence that is the real punishment but the guilty conscience I have towards my daughter, that’s the REAL punishment and I think I will carry that for a long time – my whole life [...] that’s hard (.) that’s the thing and – (...) would have wished for a different childhood for her (...) [...] yeah, that uhm (..) the feelings of guilt will be there forever (..) cause I’ve cheated her out of a lighthearted childhood (..) and that knowledge (..) THAT is the true punishment (...) (...) (...) (...) yes [laughs].”^{xxvi}

Despite mothers in prison not being a homogenous group, according to multiple studies most are experiencing feelings of “[...] despair, anger, grief, loss, frustration, hopelessness, guilt, sadness and shame [...]” (Baldwin, 2018: 52), which I also found for imprisoned mothers in Hindelbank: being a mother was said to cause additional pain and vulnerability, no matter the individual situation, reinforcing that “[...] simply being in the physical space of prison magnifies the challenges to motherhood [...]” (ibid. 2018: 55) and supporting the main argument of maternal geographies: “[...] motherhood, and mothers themselves, are produced through the space they occupy [...]” (Johnson and Johnston, 2019: 9). However, positive aspects of being a mother have also arisen, e.g., children giving their imprisoned mothers the strength to endure imprisonment and a perspective for the future. Those key findings on the experiences of incarcerated mothers in Hindelbank account for mothers who are *separated* from their children, whereas for mothers in the mothers-children-unit I found hints regarding increased challenges and harm due to the prison space too. However, I was not able to speak to a woman who has been imprisoned in that unit.

Motherhood in Hindelbank as an intimate issue is not solely a private matter, nor excluded from regulation or public intervention. In contrast, it is governed externally in various and far-reaching ways depending on the unique situation of mothers. This was demonstrated by the examples of the different governance constellations for Bria, Anita, and mothers in the mothers-child unit. To sum up, the governance of motherhood in the women’s prison in Hindelbank consists of multiple actors intertwined in a complex network, broader social, political, and legal structures as well as spatial features. What became clear is that through the involvement of those diffuse broader structures and spatialities, the governance reaches further than the initially outlined definition of the carceral characteristic of ‘intention’ and my understanding of governance with its focus on actors (Foucault, 1983; Häkli and Ruez, 2020). The complexity of governing motherhood in Hindelbank also showed through various scalar entanglements among the intimate experience of imprisoned mothers and versatile multi-scalar governing aspects, reinforcing the importance of applying a feminist scale concept in carceral geographies to investigate power relations beyond the ‘permeable’

prison boundary (Moran, 2015: 10). A scalar perspective also revealed power imbalances and mutual influences between actors and structures on different scales, underlining the intricacy of this topic, especially in a federalist state like Switzerland where local and cantonal actors seem to be the most influential and numerous, but in an opaque manner intertwined with other scales and structures. Ultimately, I would like to reiterate that incarcerated mothers are not just passive ‘victims’ subjugated to total control over their motherhood, but that they have agency too, which – even though it was not the focus of the thesis – became apparent for example through Bria’s and Anita’s adaption of different individual mothering strategies from inside Hindelbank.

Overall, investigating the carceral space of the women’s prison in Hindelbank through motherhood revealed “[...] the *subjectivity* and *relativity* inherent in the experience of carcerality [...]” (Moran et al., 2018: 676, emphasis in original) and a unique manifestation of the three interdependent ‘carceral conditions’ after Moran et al. (2018): The carceral characteristics of ‘intention’, ‘detriment’ and ‘spatiality’ found in the specific case of the women’s prison in Hindelbank contain an additionally painful but ambiguous experience of motherhood, bound to the prison and its spatial features and embedded in relations of myriad multi-scalar governance aspects way beyond Hindelbank.

However, with only four interviews and a wide range of topics covered due to the broadly formulated research question, there is not much depth to those findings. They only raise numerous issues of incarcerated motherhood in Hindelbank dependent on the individual experiences, perceptions and opinions of Bria, Anita, Christin, Desiree – and me, influencing the results as researcher – without investigating and explaining the phenomena touched upon or personal stories told in more detail. For example, it became apparent that Hindelbank as an institution is given some sort of scope for actions, however, it was not detailed who exactly limits and decides on the resources of the prison and how much decisive power is distributed to which actor on what scale through what mechanism.

Nevertheless, the breadth of the results is also an advantage, as they suggest that many aspects found to be problematic for imprisoned mothers in other contexts are relevant for Hindelbank too, showing that Switzerland – even if said to be progressive, democratic, and neutral – is not excluded from cultivating a gendered and discriminatory penal enforcement system. This is especially important when bearing in mind that Hindelbank is said to be a flagship prison already geared to the needs of women and mothers (cf. Galli, 2018), which indicates that in gender-mixed Swiss prisons the situation must be worse still. Even if the harm caused to mothers involved in the Swiss penal system might be argued to not reach the scope of other countries like the U.S. (cf. Baunach, 2020; Ferraro and Moe, 2003) or Russia (cf. Pallot et al., 2012a), significant additional harm is *still* caused to prisoners because they are mothers, and motherhood is central to their experience of detention.

Anita: “I think more things like this [interview] should be done so that people engage with the topic and (.) something might change, even if it’s only something SMALL cause I think it’s an important aspect [motherhood] and I think (.) if one would support that a little more in detention (.) the women would kind of (.) settle down (.) and not freak out so much and be a little (...) calmer (..) yeah (...) that’s really missing (...) [...] it’s an important issue like (...) that was really everything to me (..) being a mother in detention (...).” xxvii

Altogether, the fragmented and superficial findings of this thesis might not be of use for practitioners like the management of Hindelbank, as they seem to already be aware of many aspects addressed (cf. Bundesamt für Justiz, 2018). Still, the thesis brings together perspectives of carceral, maternal and feminist geographies for the first time, giving voice and space to a marginalized and vulnerable group of people little considered in geography – nor in Swiss society: imprisoned mothers. Furthermore, it provides many starting points for further research topics, three of which are alluded to hereafter.

Researching carceral ‘intention’ further – state governance

Investigating the detailed legal situation and mechanism of state governance – *who* exactly decides *what where* and on *which* legal basis with what *consequences* and which *reasoning* – would provide an overview of important basic knowledge on the carceral condition of ‘intention’ regarding mothers’ situation in Hindelbank. This seems especially crucial because my findings suggest that the governing situation is opaque, complicated, and multi-scalar in the federalist Swiss context, just like Roth (2004: 418; 430) has argued for the federalist U.S.:

“These high levels of decentralization, delegation, and discretion often obscure the locus of official decision-making authority [...] Putting the state at the center of analysis points us in a promising direction to determine just how it is that prisons constrain women’s lives and rights. From an advocacy perspective, it is important to know who is responsible for what, to determine the best avenues to press for accountability and change.”

Researching carceral ‘detriment’ further – intersectionality

The findings indicate that the mother’s nationality is a discriminatory aspect increasing the already articulated carceral condition of ‘detriment’ in Hindelbank. Further research should therefore focus on intersectional injustices and how the experience of motherhood and perceived harm of incarceration are influenced by the background and societal position of the mothers (e.g., citizenship, socio-economic status, or experienced trauma and substance addiction) in line with “[...] mother scholars [who] continue to highlight class, poverty, and structural and gender inequality, which is equally pertinent to the case of the incarcerated mother” (O’Malley, 2019: 249) since “[...] most of incarcerated mothers experience multiple marginalities [...]” (Borshuk and Eljdupovic, 2019: 452). My findings suggest that such discrimination happens through seemingly small and everyday practices like phone calls abroad being very expensive in Hindelbank or foreign inmates not being allowed detention leave.

Researching carceral ‘spatiality’ further – remand prisons

Hindelbank is not the only prison in Switzerland where mothers get incarcerated. During the interviews, several remarks repetitively referred to pre-trial detention in gender-mixed remand prisons being way more harmful and restrictive than confinement in the ‘women and mother friendly’ prison in Hindelbank. Both Bria and Anita explained how the pre-trial regime was the worst time of their whole sentence.

Bria: “pre-trial detention is quite tough, it’s exactly how you’d imagine prison. Hindelbank is different. But remand is really 23 hours INSIDE the cell with a flap at the door and you get the food pushed in through there, two times a week you are allowed to take a shower under surveillance, locked in and everything like there it’s REALLY tough.” xxviii

Thus, the carceral 'spatiality' of Swiss remand prisons and its tremendous yet societally and scientifically unseen impact on mothers needs further matricentric academic attention. Precisely because previous studies have shown how different prison settings affect the experiences of incarcerated mothers in various ways, e.g., prisons with open vs. closed conditions (Baldwin, 2018) and that the solitary confinement practiced in many Swiss remand prisons is inhuman and against the UN Nelson Mandela Rules (cf. Künzli et al., 2020), feminist geographic research should be pursued in Swiss carceral spaces other than Hindelbank.

My thesis left me with a lot of insights but many more open questions beyond the suggested further research topics. I do not agree with Annette Keller who wrote in her email answering my initial inquiry to conduct research on motherhood in Hindelbank that "[a]t the moment I do not see any concerns in the area of 'motherhood and detention', whose deeper investigation is urgently needed"¹³. Instead, after writing this thesis, I believe that what Kathleen Ferraro and Angela Moe (2003) stated in their study on reproductive rights (including mothering rights) of women in U.S. prisons is still true for Switzerland almost 20 years later: "[k]nowledge of incarcerated women's experiences and responsiveness of prisons and jails to women's circumstances have both been retarded by neglect of the gendered dimensions of incarceration" (ibid. 2003: 12). Even though Switzerland accepted the UN recommendation to adhere to the 'Bangkok Rules' and minimum standards regarding the treatment of women in detention¹⁴ and the prison management of Hindelbank repeatedly recognized the special situation of mothers in prison in media interviews (cf. Bundesamt für Justiz, 2021; Galli, 2018; Kocher, 2021; Reichenau, 2021; SRF Reporter, 2022), there is no wider societal, political, or academic discussion on this topic in Switzerland. Formerly incarcerated women do not feel seen, hoping that research like my thesis will help foster change and a broader awareness for the issue:

Bria: "I just think that a little bit of rethinking could be fostered here for many people and maybe also kind of (...) – when you get out you're pretty alone (..) mostly (...) and it would be nice if MORE people were aware that EVERYBODY who sits next to you on the bus could actually be an ex-convict and that they maybe – that they have maybe already been through a LOT and (.) I think people always feel like this is so far away but it's actually so present." ^{xxix}

Further research is indeed urgently needed to lift the topic from its infancy by advancing the understanding and visibility of the situation of incarcerated mothers in Switzerland, and, ultimately, to change it for the better. I conclude my thesis with what I see as a key quote regarding incarcerated mothers by Lucy Baldwin (2018: 55):

"Additional punishment in the form of emotional harm, uncompassionate responses and uncompassionate organisation of spaces for mothers in custody is not and should not be an inevitable feature of incarceration. If we continue to imprison mothers, then the penal system needs to respect and account for their maternal needs and responsibilities, and to explore ways in which maternal identity and relationships can be enhanced, protected and maintained through matricentric thinking."

¹³ E-Mail A. Keller 21.03.2022, original statement: "aktuell sehe ich keine Frage im Bereich 'Mutterschaft und Haft', deren tiefere Erforschung dringend anstehen würde".

¹⁴ cf. <https://www.skmr.ch/de/themenbereiche/justiz/artikel/bangkok-rules.html>

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Declaration of independence¹⁵

Declaration of consent

on the basis of Article 30 of the RSL Phil.-nat. 18

Name/First Name: Etter Nina Sarah

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Bachelor Master Dissertation

Title of the thesis: CARCERAL GEOGRAPHIES OF IMPRISONED MOTHERHOOD

Exploring experiences of and governance towards mothers in the women's prison in Hindelbank, Switzerland

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Carolin Schurr

I declare herewith that this thesis is my own work and that I have not used any sources other than those stated. I have indicated the adoption of quotations as well as thoughts taken from other authors as such in the thesis. I am aware that the Senate pursuant to Article 36 paragraph 1 litera r of the University Act of 5 September, 1996 is authorized to revoke the title awarded on the basis of this thesis.

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Appendix (in German)

1. Verweise Originalzitate Interviews

ⁱ **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 123ff, original statement:

“d'haftzyt isch eigentlich – di ganz haftzyt isch ja unter ZWANG (.) me muess mit de gruppä zamäschaffä, me muess regle ihalte me muess um die zyte ufstah will susch gits kes ässä me (.) da mümer ide zimmer si wills- dänn werdet zällä ibschlossä wemer spöter ide zälä dinnä isch den hämer – kassiert mer eifach (lacht) ischluuss oder susch irgend äh äh (.) s'wuchenänd ischmä drin u me dörf ned dussä si aso s – s'isch eifach alles unter zwang”

ⁱⁱ **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, lines 240ff and 269ff, original statement:

“z'andere isch (...) dsme ganz viu idee het aber haut eifach d'ressource zum umsetzä (...) nid würlch gäh si, aso mir si so im autag innä beschäftigt mit brichtä schribä und dises und jenes dasmer immer wider ade sitzigä sägä u das sött me no u das sött me no u das sött me no (.) aber es het nid würlch öpper dr lead oder d'zyt ds würlch azgah [...] mir hei immer wider idee und so aber i- hätte no viu meh idee aso es fäut a ressource es isch e finanzielli frag haut was chamä abietä”

ⁱⁱⁱ **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, lines 555ff, 611f and 649ff, original statements:

“au di kontäkt wo mir gha hei si sehr überwacht o immer gsi aso (.) pflegfamilie het vor KESB d'ufslag gha ds si zuelosä weni miterä telefonierä (.) [...] AUS was d' [name tochter] betroffä het het eigentlech d'KESB entschidä [...] i ha vor KESB (.) IMMER no (.) sehr strängi reglä winisä darf gseh u wi oft i se darf gseh u i welem rahmä dasise darf gseh (.) ähm (..) iz mittlerwilä [4 Jahre nach Entlassung] simer ändlech so wit ds si mi ohni begleitig darf gseh u ds si omau zu üs hei darf cho übernachtä (..) abr ds isch iz JAHRELANG gange bisi ds mir erkämpft ha”

^{iv} **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 301ff, original statement:

“telefon täglech (..) bsüech je nach dem finanziell will mini lüt sind ja vo [name wohnort, in einem anderen Kanton] (..) und nid alli händ es auto oder chönnä auto fahrä (..) und mis mami sowieso nöd mir händ immer müesse luege öb öpper si fahrt oder halt mitem zug im monet sinds [ihre Mutter und ihre Sohn] villicht äimal cho (..) wenss guet gangä isch”

^v **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, lines 251ff and 260ff, original statement:

“ws mir leider feschtsteuä das d'ching oft nüm chömmä (..) ds si einisch zwöimau chömä cho bsuechä (..) und dr ganz rahmä und z'ganzä ambiente (..) für d'ching zum teil so belaschtend isch ds si lieber nüm chömä [...] es isch haut eifach (unv.) zum teil würlch nid so chinderfründlech es het – mir hei e spiuplatz u so aber si müesse dür di sicherheitskontrouä si gseh lüt i uniform si müesse dür dä me-taubogä loufä (..) ihri aghörigä wärdä dürsuecht und (..) si müesse dür ds tor mit däm stachudrah aso es macht öppis mit de ching”

^{vi} **Interview Desiree**, 19.05.2022, line 274ff, original statement:

“was ich e schwirige punkt find isch denn e so chli au d'aleitig vode muetter i erziehigs-frage, gesundheitsfragä da het sicher a d[Christin] chönnä drüber verzellä (..) di händ natürlech mängisch ganz e andere (..) ganz es anders know-how je nach kultur au WI si ds machä (..) und schlussändlech händ si det wie a nid freiheitä das sis chönnä mach wiesi wänd (..) aso si sind doch vode betröiig abhängig bispilswis medikamäntäabgab zäppli bi fieber und so witer”

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- vii **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, line 359ff, original statement:
“si hei eigentlech aus muetter aui rächt, si erzieh ds ching säubständig, si pfleges säubständig aso dert rede mir onid dri ussert (.) ähm (.) mir gseh ds irgendöppis nid guet louft, denn isches natürlech scho üsi ufgab o dert verantwortig z'übernäh u z'sägä ds geit nid”
- viii **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 672, original statement:
“dsch eigentlich für mich s'ein und alles gsi”
- ix **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 139ff, original statement:
“ds isch AUES, aso muetter si isch – ds isch ähm z'gröschtä glück aber es macht di oh wahnsinnig agriffbar [lacht] wüu du bisch – du hangisch SO a däm chind, du liebsch das chind über aues u dert bisch eifach SO verwundbar aso, es isch z'SCHÖNSCHTÄ aber o z'SCHWIRIGSCHTÄ”
- x **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 227, original statement:
“z'mami [leibliche Mutter] blibt z'mami z'läbä lang, es isch eifach so”
- xi **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 766ff, original statement:
“me isch immer hin u här grissä, me möcht ja für z'chind da si aber cha NID, u und me füut sech när eifach dür das eifach o gar nümme (.) ja (..) aus richtigi MUETTER fascht, me isch när würtlech so (...) ja, weiss o nid (...) (.) me füut sech eifach nid äh (..) WÄRT aus muetter wüu, wüume eifach nid DA cha si für d'ching”
- xii **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, line 403ff, original statement:
“aso i dänkä chind si sicher e stressfaktor für d'frouä wüu si (.) NID ufhöre muetter si nur wüusi in haft si und, wes de ching nid guet geit, we ching chrank si we ching im spitau si de isch ds e risä ohnmacht wo di frouä hei, wüu si eifach NÜT chöit machä (.) und DS uszhaute muess öppis vom schwirigschte si [...] ja i dänkä si hei eifach angeri sorgä (..) wüu si – wüu si muetter si”
- xiii **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 274ff, original statement:
“guet am afang hani mer zersch müesse klar cho mit (.) mit de SCHULDgfüuel (..) [...] und (..) ich han eifach di di die schULDgfüuel sind – di händ eifach bi mir d'oberhand gnoh (..) s'hät so zyte gäh woni eifach nur no ha wellä STERBÄ ich ha scho zwäi versüech (..) gmacht (..) und dänn (...) will i bi eifach (.) ich ha mich eifach nümme im spiegel chönnä aluege, JAHRElang (...) ich ha mich eifach nur no GHASST”
- xiv **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 759ff, original statement:
“i ha oft z'gfüu gha i bi di schlechtischi muetter uf dr ganze wäut aber i gloub dsch zimli viune müetere dert so gangä (.) eifach ja wüume haut es schlächts gwüsse het gägänüber sine chind (.) me het se enttäuscht, me het se im stich glah, me het se (.) ja (...) ja isch nid fürse da, me verpasst ganz viü”
- xv **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 415ff, original statement:
“s'hät scho paar geh wo extra mit dem [Mutterschaft] (.) provoziert händ (..) [...] wensn gnau gwüsst 'aha di hät doch zwäi chind und so di hät doch jetz – di sind jetz bide pflägeltere' das di händ gnau gwüsst das isch ihre schwache punkt (...) si vermisst si si hät si nümme gseh wie au immer und dän wensn zune striteräie cho sind dases eifach d'chind agriffe wordä”
- xvi **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 806ff, original statement:
“dr LIDENSdruck isch bi AUNE dah u i dänke jede geit individuell angers dermit um (..) und äbä gd bi müetere ischer oftmaus eifach (.) no chli intensiver (..) wüu eifach – ja, nüt geit der so nöch wi d'ching (lacht)”

xvii **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 287ff, original statement:

“dänn hani es telefon gha mit ihm [ihr sohn] (...) und dänn hät er – hämer wirklich lang lang gredt und dänn hani gseit es – hani ihm nä gsäit es duet mer mega läid ds i – ich muess mich eifach entschuldigä aber ich mag nümmä (.) ich wott eifach nümmä läbä (..) und dänn hätter gsäit 'du mammi mol du muesch für mich da si ich ich ähm verzäih dir' und wonich das gehört han das er mir – das ER mir verzäie het dänn (.) isch so für mich so wi so s'zwäitä läbä gsi”

xviii **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 774ff, original statement:

“aso i chami a ei situation erinnere woni würklech nüm ha wöüä läbä äbä da ischsmer würk sehr schlächt gangä (.) u da het d' [name tochter] eigentlech – di het mit mir telefoniert (.) i ha natürlech am telefon mir nüt amerke la u i ha eigentlech wi, wi so gfunge 'hei mou (.) i wott se no einisch ghörä' so würk scho mitem gedankä 'i wott nüm läbä' (.) u när hetsi am schluss vom telefon OHNI dassi öppis gwüsst het e satz gseit (..) (lacht) und zwar hetsi gseit (..) 'tschüss mami, i hadi ganz ganz fescht lieb vergiss NIE das du e tochter hesch wo di über aues liebt' u i DÄM momänt hani wi nume no chönnä (.) HÜLÄ u ha wi gmerkt 'he scheisse (..) ja okay i chas nid machä, i cha – I CHA ds ihre nid ahtue”

xix **Interview Desiree**, 19.05.2022, line 229ff, original statement:

“bi fraue mit chind isches (.) rächt oft geh au wie goht z'läbä nächär wider witer (..) ähm si gö i ihri familiene zugg (.) si hand- dr sinn vo ihrem dasi isch- oder im gfängnis isch (.) so schnäll wi mögliche die gfängniszyt überstah dass si d'chinder wider chönd gseh (..)”

xx **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 556ff, original statement:

“dr bistan isch immer (.) mitcho bide bsüech [...] und wüu är immer derbi gsi isch dr bistan isch eigentlech immer ä AMTLECHÄ bsuech gsi i ha nid dörfä fürsä [ihre Tochter] bachä (.) wüus ä amtlechä gsi isch es isch onid a mis bsuechskontingänt agrächnet wordä aber dür das hani o NÜT fürsä dörfä machä (.) i ha (.) würklech i dere zyt woni im gfängnis bi gsi probiert (..) ja AUES für si zmachä i hanere zum bispiu trotzdäm (.) a wiehnachtä (.) ä adväntskaländer baschtlet”

xxi **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 323ff, original statement:

“wänn er [ihre Sohn] än usflug macht das ich unterSCHRIIBE und so (.) genau (.) de hani gseit will das bitzeli woni cha machä (.) dasmer iz ds nid wäggnoh wird will si hät mer eigentlich alles welle wägneh (.) mini muetter ' ja du bisch sowieso im knascht chasch eh nüt machä aso (.) du häsch en zwar geborä aber meh BISCH nöd' so i dem stil (.) dänn hani rächt müesse kämpfä das ich wenigstentens DAS bitzeli ha no chönnä mitentschäidä”

xxii **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, line 342ff, original statement:

“und dänn hani rächt KRIEG gha mit dr muetter will si het das gaanz – as hetere garnid passt (...) ja (...) das isch es – z'schwirigschte isch gsi ihrä z'vemittlä dases (..) dases ned GUET isch (.) win ich erzoge worde bin und ds wotti nöd für ihn (.) ich wott nöd daser usgnützt wird und nacher so im stich glah wird win IG (.) das hani nöd welle (...) (...)”

xxiii **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, line 112ff, original statement:

“o di ganzi medizinischi abdeckig isch irgendwie komplexer mit dr gynäkologie bi üs [Mutter-Kind Abteilung] no mit hebamme mit geburtä mit (.) schwirigkeite o mit dr zämäarbeit mit institutionä es isch eifach aus uf männer usgrichtet, bewachigsstation ir insu di chunnt nid ines frouäspitau oder ines chinderspitau cho müettere überwachä aso da heimer immer wider schnittsteuä wo ganz schwirig si wüu dr vouzug eifach nid uf di sächs prozänt frouä (.) zugeschnittä isch (.) womer de immer wider müesse sägä 'äh üs gits de ono' (lacht) und üsi frouä hei o ihri bedürfnis”

xxiv **Interview Christin**, 12.05.2022, line 254ff, original statement:

“oft ischs de o so das di ching di müettere zwöi drü wuchä nid hei gseh u när söttesi zwöi stung lang plötzlech aus verzeuä wosi hei erläbt u so und (.) vili müettere sägä när ide ledscht fuf minutä toue si [die Kinder] uf u när muessi mi verabschidä und im gröschtä gschrei gö di ching när widr hei (..) was de o für d'müetter sehr schwirig isch (.) u DERT versueche mer o immer wider mit nöiä idee so chli däm entgägä z'würkä aso mir hei iz nöi so zwe spiuschränk bim igang [des Besucherhauses] wo d'ching mitem mami öppis chöi usläsä wosi de gemeinsam chöi spilä (.) wo so chli ä isbrächer söu si”

xxv **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 611ff, original statement:

“AUS was d' [name tochter] betroffä het het eigentlech d'KESB entschidä (..) i ha chönnä vo glück redä dasi no kontakt ha zunere dörfä ha, wükech wüu si hätte o ganz andersch chönnä reagierä weisch zum irgendwie di traumatisierig [ihrer Tochter] nid no vertüfä odr da (.) häts guet chönnä si dasme gseit hät ja gschidr dr kontakt abbrächä u so (..) aber zum glück hani ä guetä bistan d gha denn (.) u dä het sech igsetzt derfür ds äbä dr kontakt witerhin darfsch bestah”

xxvi **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, lines 1113ff and 1123ff, original statement:

“abschliessend isch eifach z'sägä ds (...) für mi nid unbedingt (.) d'haftstraf di eigentlichi straf isch sondern z'schlächtä gwüssä woni ha minere tochter gägänüber, ds isch di EIGENTLICH I straf u di tragi gloub rächt lang – läbenslang [...] das isch bitter (.) ds isch ds u – (...) hätt mer für si e ander chindheit gwünscht (...) [...] ja, ds ähm (.) d'schoudgfüu wärdä immer da si (..) will i ha se umnä unbeschwärti chindheit betrogä (...) und das wüssä (...) DS isch di eigentlechi straf (...) (...) (...) (..) ja (lacht)”

xxvii **Interview Anita**, 09.05.2022, lines 664ff and 672f, original statement:

“ich finds me sött meh so sachä [interview] machä damit d'lüt sich au mit dem thema befasst und (.) villicht öppis verändertet wird, a nur wäns öppis CHLISES isch will ich find ds isch en wichtige aspäkt [Mutterschaft] und ich dänkä (.) weme das e chli meh würd unterstützä ide haft (.) würdet d'fraue a chli (.) beruhigt si (.) und nöd so ustickä und ä chli (...) ruhiger si (..) ja (...) ds fählt scho (...) [...] dsch es wichtigs thema aso (...) dsch eigentlich für mich s'ein und alles gsi (..) muetter si ide haft (...)”

xxviii **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 103ff, original statement:

“untersuechigshaft isch rächt sträng, ds isch würklech so wime sech gfängnis vorsteut. hindubank isch anders. aber u-haft isch würklech 23 stung IDR zäuä mit dr klappä bidr türä u berchunnsch z'ässä dört durä gschobä, zwöi mau idr wuche darfsch duschä unger ufsicht, ibschlossä u so aso dert isch WÜRKLECH sträng”

xxix **Interview Bria**, 28.04.2022, line 1171ff, original statement:

“i gloubä eifach dasme da bi viune o so chli es umdänkä o cha bewürkä und villech o so chli (...) – weme use chunnt ischme zimli allei (..) meischtens (...) und es wär schön wenn MEH lüt sech bewusst wärä ds JEDÄ wo im bus näb eim hockt eigentlech e ex-häftling cha si u dases dä villech – ds dä scho villech EINIGES hinger sech het und (.) i gloub d'lüt hei immer so z'gfüu ds isch so wit wäg, aber es isch eigentlech so presänt”