Manuscript accepted for publication in Current Anthropology

Parents, Caregivers, *and* Peers:
Patterns of Complementarity in the Social World of Children in Rural Madagascar

Gabriel Scheidecker
Freie Universität Berlin

An edited version of this paper will appear along with commentaries and author's response in Current Anthropology

Abstract

Research on childhood in anthropology and neighboring disciplines has continuously broadened the range of the social partners that are considered relevant for young children's development—from parents to other caregivers, siblings, and peers. Yet most studies as well as interventions in early childhood still focus exclusively on parents, who are presumed to be the *most significant* socializing agents. Objecting to such a hierarchical understanding of the social world of children, I propose a complementarity view. Rather than being linearly ranked in a hierarchy of significance, children's social partners may complement each other by providing different but equally significant experiences. My suggestions are based on an ethnographic study in a rural community in Madagascar. Focusing on children in the first 3 years of life, I explore the full range of their social partners and the respective experiences they provide. Caregivers focus on children's physical needs and aim to keep them in a calm emotional state, while other young, related children are the most crucial partners when it comes to play, face-to-face interaction, and the exchange of intense emotions. These complementary roles, I argue, lead to the parallel formation of two distinct socio-emotional modes—a hierarchical and an egalitarian one.

Introduction

Parents are usually considered the most influential figures in young children's lives and development—in research as well as in early childhood policies and interventions. Global endeavors to improve early child development, for instance, which have become a booming sector of international aid in the last three decades, are mostly directed at parents or caregivers. UNICEF's program *Care for Child Development*, to take one prominent example, claims on its website that "over 200 million children … do not reach their full human potential." As a solution, the program aims to train parents and caregivers "to focus on the most important activities for the development of young children—play and communication."[1] These claims are derived from a series of three articles in *The Lancet* that identify "inadequate cognitive stimulation" as a major risk for children under 5 years of age in so-called developing countries (Walker et al. 2007:153). As evidence, the authors state that only a minority of parents in these countries "provide cognitively stimulating materials to their child" or "actively involve their children in cognitively stimulating activities" (2007:153). The corresponding interventions they refer to were all directed at mothers or parents and consisted mainly in training them how to play or talk with their children (2007:151).[2]

This is but an example of a widespread parent-centric approach to early childhood research and intervention. It is based on the premise that parents are the most influential people in virtually *all* domains of young children's development. Although seemingly trivial, this premise is far-reaching. In the case above, the diagnosis that millions of young children do not receive adequate cognitive stimulation is directly derived from what parents do. This premise is misleading, I claim, especially when applied to those settings that are most frequently targeted by global parenting interventions (Morelli et al. 2018*b*) and least frequently studied in behavioral sciences (Henrich, Heine, and Norenzayan 2010): rural communities in low- to middle-income countries. Here, and potentially everywhere, children might experience some modes of social interaction that are considered crucial for their learning and development, mainly with social partners other than their parents or caregivers. I ground my contention on cross-cultural research and substantiate it through a case study on the social world of infants and toddlers in a rural community of pastoralists in Madagascar.

In order to highlight the implications of my study and the corresponding literature for the broader field of early childhood research and intervention, I propose the concept of *complementarity* in the social world of children. Contrary to the conventional understanding that children's social partners are ranked in a hierarchy of relevance—from parents to other caregivers to siblings and peers—complementarity highlights the fact that children's social partners might be equally relevant, albeit with regard to different developmental domains and needs of the child. For instance, one partner may be most relevant for meeting the child's bodily needs, another for play or emotional intimacy. How and to what degree the diverse functions of child development are distributed among children's social partners may differ greatly across cultural and social settings. Thus, I propose complementarity as an important dimension of cross-cultural variation that needs to be considered to avoid serious ethnocentric fallacies.[3] The concept builds on and combines diverse strands of cross-cultural research, which I will review next, before presenting the ethnographic study.

From mothers to parents to other caregivers

Anthropology has played a crucial role in expanding the scope of social partners that are considered in studies on socialization and child development across the involved disciplines. An important milestone within this process was Thomas Weisner and Ronald Gallimore's article "My brother's keeper" (1977). By presenting ethnographic research demonstrating widespread use of nonparental caregivers around the world, they substantially challenged the almost exclusive focus on parents in mainstream research on early child development up to the 1970s. They also inspired a wealth of ethnographic and cross-cultural research on diverse multiple caregiving arrangements (e.g., Hewlett 1992; Keller and Chaudhary 2017; Seymour 2004; Tronick, Morelli, and Winn 1987). Influenced by these cross-cultural findings as well as the expansion of day care in Western industrialized countries, developmental psychologists have given greater attention to nonparental caregivers (see Lamb 1998 for a review). Multiple caretaking is now even sometimes considered within the framework of classical attachment theory, a leading paradigm for early relationship formation (Howes and Spieker 2016).

Despite increasing attention to multiple caregiving, much of the research on early childhood development still looks exclusively at parents as socializing agents—not only in mainstream psychology, but also in cross-cultural research. It may seem justifiable, for the sake of efficiency and convenience, to focus on the parents as the most significant social partners of young children. After all, no cross-cultural study has claimed that anybody other than the parents are the most important caregiver of the youngest children in a given society, at least not under normal circumstances. Furthermore, attachment theory continues to legitimate an exclusive focus on parents (Keller 2013). According to monotropy, a major tenet of this theory, children form a primary attachment to a principal caregiver, which is usually the mother. This does not preclude the formation of additional attachments, which are believed to be hierarchically ranked according to their significance to the child (Cassidy 2016). As others have noted, research on early childhood more generally is largely guided by a hierarchical model of children's social partners (Tronick, Morelli, and Winn 1987). Such a hierarchical model implies that there is a principal caregiver, who has the greatest influence on the child and, thus, is the most important social partner to study.

However, the exclusive focus on the supposed principal caregivers becomes problematic when children's social partners are actually not linearly ranked in a hierarchy of relevance, but assume complementary roles toward the child. In anthropology, such a complementary division of roles among caregivers has already been described for several communities in East and Central Africa, for example by Herbert and Gloria Leiderman (1974:83): "We may find that although the mother remains the primary agent for meeting the physical needs of the infant, another meets his social needs." Robert LeVine and colleagues (1994:40) found that among the Gusii in Kenya, "the child caregivers engage babies in social interaction more frequently than mothers do, indicating a possible complementarity in which the mother provides physical care and the child nurse social stimulation."[4] In these examples, the mother is the most significant person only in regard to physical care, while another social partner is more relevant with regard to social stimulation. Even the tasks of physical care may be divided in a complementary fashion among caregivers. Elinor Ochs (1988:81-85) observed that in a Samoan village the older caregivers, as for instance mothers, tended to delegate the tasks requiring a high level of activity and involvement to younger caregivers. Hence, in these and probably many other communities it would be misleading to assess children's experience of social stimulation or involved caregiving solely through their interaction with their mothers.

Despite their critical potential, these propositions of complementary role division have had little influence on the general study of early childhood development. In part, this may be explained by a certain self-restriction in much of the debate about children's social partners: it appears to be confined from the outset to *caretaking* and *caregivers.* This is clear from the varying notions used in this area, such as *polymatric caretaking* (Leiderman and Leiderman 1974), *child- and sibling-caretaking* (Weisner and Gallimore 1977), *multiple caretaking* (Tronick, Morelli, and Winn 1987), *nonparental child care* (Lamb 1998), and simply *child care* (LeVine et al. 1994). In a sense, the extension from mother to parents to other caregivers remained parent-centric, which is most evident in the use of terms such as *polymatric caretaking*, *allomothering*, and *parenting*.

Thus, among the whole range of children's social partners, only those who assume the particular role of caretaking toward the child were considered significant for the purposes of research. Even if the category of caregiving is understood in the broadest possible way, it still implies prioritizing consideration of those social partners who come relatively close to its core meaning, for example, to focus on social partners who are older than the focal child, rather than on similarly aged or younger social partners. As a consequence, those social partners who do not fit well into the category of caregivers, but might be important to the child in other ways, were unlikely to be considered as socialization agents. Furthermore, within the caregiver paradigm, the relationship between multiple social partners has mostly been conceptualized as one of alternation rather than of potentially simultaneous supplementation. Taken together, caregiving is not an optimal starting point for exploring the full scope of complementary role division among the whole range of children's social partners or for effectively undermining the universal validity of the hierarchical model of children's social partners.[5]

Beyond caregivers

Research on early childhood has increasingly looked beyond caregivers, often combined with a shift in perspective—from attachment bonds to children's groups, from socio-emotional development to the acquisition of cognition and skills, form other-directed socialization to self-initiated learning and agency, and from infants to older children. In his pioneering work, William Corsaro (1985) has pointed to the partly autonomous dynamics of young children's peer cultures. His own and most other research on peers in early childhood pertains to Western contexts, and here especially to childcare centers (Corsaro 2009). In cross-cultural research, peers came into view mainly through the study of certain domains of interaction and learning, particularly play (e.g., Gaskins, Haight, and Lancy 2007; Pellegrini 2009; Takada 2020), social learning or cultural transmission (e.g., Boyette 2016; Lancy 1996; Maynard and Tovote 2010; Lew-Levy et al. 2019; Hewlett et al. 2011), and language (e.g. de León 2007; Goodwin and Kyratzis 2011).

This research has produced several findings that are highly relevant for the concept of complementarity suggested here. In many non-Western rural settings, children spend large amounts of time without direct adult supervision in the company of other children, who are often related and of mixed age (e.g., Gaskins 2006; Konner 1976; Martini 1994; Nsamenang 2011; Rogoff 1981; Rogoff, Morelli, and Chavajay 2010). Under these conditions, children's influence on one another might be even stronger and more independent of adult guidance than it is among peers in day care settings, who, after all, interact in a context heavily structured and controlled by caregivers. Furthermore, this research demonstrates that for a number of developmental domains, children may rely to a large degree or even entirely on other children.

Most notably, children in many communities play exclusively with other children, as mothers and other caregivers lack the time or motivation to play with them (e.g., Martini 1994; Rogoff 1981; for a review, see Lancy 2007). Even an activity such as teaching, which seems to imply a hierarchical relationship, has been shown in one community to occur mainly in child-to-child relationships (Lew-Levy et al. 2019), whereas adults were found to be more important teachers in other communities (Boyette and Hewlett 2017). Finally, one study demonstrated that the proportion of children's conflicts with adults versus with other children differs clearly across two neighboring communities of foragers and farmers (Fouts and Lamb 2009:400-401), pointing to varying patterns of complementarity in yet another domain.

Taken together, this body of research challenges the primacy of caregivers in toddlerhood or middle childhood regarding particular domains of interaction and learning. It demonstrates that children may assume leading roles as socializing agents in these domains and, thus, complement caregivers in crucial, not just supplementary ways. However, it does not help establish complementarity on a more fundamental level, since it leaves one aspect of the hierarchical model of children's social partners unchallenged: its sequential dimension. As Dale Hay and colleagues (2009:125) point out, "most major developmental theories hold that … the ability to engage in peer relationships develops later in childhood and derives from earlier relationships with caregivers." According to attachment theory, for instance, the child first needs to develop an attachment bond to a primary caregiver who can function as a secure base. This allows the child to explore and, by doing so, to socialize with other children. Thus, even if toddlers play mostly with similar-aged children, parents may still be considered the primary social partners in the sense that they initially established or enabled peer relations. Most cross-cultural studies on child-to-child interaction fail to effectively scrutinize this assumption, as they tend to focus on those dimensions that are associated with peer relations in Western contexts—play, talk, and other modes of social interaction in toddlerhood or middle childhood.

The view of peers as secondary social partners may be biased, however, as the dominant theories on the emergence of peer relationships are based on research in Western middle-class contexts (Corsaro 2009), where children are typically born into nuclear families and only *subsequently* experience considerable peer contact, for example through play dates, playground visits, or day care institutions (Howes 2009). This contrasts with the social world of infants in some other settings as described, for example, by Edward Tronick and colleagues: "Efe infants' and toddlers' experience of a diverse array of social contact with many individuals begins during the newborn period" (Tronick, Morelli, and Ivey 1992:573). To be sure, even among the Efe and in other non-Western communities, children initially spend most, but rapidly decreasing amounts, of their time with adults, while contact with other children increases over the first years of life (e.g., Rogoff 1981; for the ethnographic record, see Barry and Paxson 1971). Yet this pattern of ontogenetic change does not necessarily mean that children's caregivers are somehow replaced by other children in the course of the first years. These changes may as well result from decreasing needs for the kind of care caregivers have to offer and increasing needs for the kind of social experiences other children provide.

The concept of complementarity proposed here pertains not only to role division among social partners at a particular age, but also to the ontogenetic dimension of relationship formation. It implies considering that children's relationships to different social partners may emerge in a parallel fashion, not necessarily in a causal sequence. Hay and colleagues (2009) present research indicating that parallel relationship formation is actually the case for peers and adults in Western settings. Closely related is the assumption of context-specific learning. Judith Harris (1995, 2000) argued that children (in Western societies) acquire at least two "patterns of behavior, cognitions, and emotions" (1995:462), one specific to the family and another to the public sphere. I assume that context-specific learning also applies to children's complementary relationships. Thus, complementarity may go along with the acquisition of relationship-specific ways of behaving, thinking, and feeling.

Researching complementarity in the social world of children

Cross-cultural research from a socialization perspective has greatly expanded the range of potentially significant social partners, but has for the most part remained confined to caregivers and caregiving. Cross-cultural research on particular domains of learning, on the other hand, has demonstrated the significance of child-to-child interaction, but has focused mostly on those aspects that are conventionally associated with peers. The concept of complementarity I am proposing here suggests combining the two approaches and looking across categories of social partners as well as across domains of activity or development. It may serve several purposes: to encourage research on cross-cultural variation in the pattern and degree of complementarity; to sensitize cross-cultural research on particular developmental domains for the importance of carefully selecting children's social contexts; and to alert policy makers and practitioners in the applied field of global child development to the problems of assessing children's developmental risks solely on the basis of what caregivers do.

In order to provide a detailed empirical example of complementarity, I explore its particular manifestation and implications in a community of pastoralists in Madagascar. In using this case study, I do not wish to suggest that the specific patterns I am going to describe can be generalized to other social and cultural contexts. Nonetheless the case study implies that in other settings the existence of *some* form of complementary division of roles should be expected and needs to be carefully considered if blind spots resulting from a priori role ascriptions to children's social partners are to be avoided and children's social experiences captured adequately.

In the first part of the study, I explore the full range of infants' and toddlers' social partners based on observed contact. Second, I focus on a number of diverse modes of interaction and explore how they are distributed across the whole array of social partners. Taken together, these two sub-studies will provide the contours of complementary role division in the community under study. In order to explore the ontogenetic dimension of complementarity, I then reconstruct in greater detail the formation of two patterns of relationship that complement each other most clearly in the community: hierarchical and egalitarian.

The people of Menamaty

Menamaty is a rural commune of a dozen villages in southern Madagascar where I conducted 15 months of ethnographic research on childhood between 2009 and 2015 (Scheidecker 2017).[6] With few exceptions, the villagers self-identified as Bara pastoralists and maintain a subsistence lifestyle, depending primarily on animal husbandry and cultivation of rice and other crops. The villages were not connected to the road system of Madagascar nor to the electricity grid or phone network. Colonial and more recent efforts to Christianize the population and establish schooling in the region proved untenable. Aside from a few migrants from other regions of Madagascar, the villagers did not consider themselves Christian. Instead, their religious practices and beliefs were centered on ancestral spirits. Education in Menamaty was informal during the period of data acquisition. Only at the end of the research period was a basic primary school with one teacher established in the village where I lived during my stay. The village population spoke exclusively Malagasy, a Malayo-Polynesian language that is used all over Madagascar.

The village where I did most of my research, which I will call Ranomadio, consisted of about 350 people living in roughly 60 houses that were situated in close proximity to each other without any fences or courtyards separating them. Children could safely roam throughout the village and its vicinity, since there was no automobile traffic, dangerous animals, or other sources of danger. Children were not strictly associated with any single household: while usually eating with their parents, they often slept together in one of the vacant houses. While households were somewhat fluid, the village population was clearly divided into several patrilineages (*tariky*). Ranomadio consisted of seven *tarikys*, varying in size from a dozen to more than one hundred members. Most *tarikys* in the villages were connected through kinship ties resulting from intermarriage. As a consequence, all children were related in one way or another to the majority of the people in the village. This environment was typical of most of the neighboring villages as well.

In order to contextualize the social world of children, let us now have a closer look at the modes of relationship and associated ways of interacting. Through my participation in the social life of the villages, I initially had the impression that people in Menamaty were completely embedded in hierarchical relationships and had a pronounced sociocentric (Shweder and Bourne 1984) or interdependent (Markus and Kitayama 1991) orientation. My impressions were in line with the major ethnographies about the Bara. Jacques Faublée (1954:82) observed that "there are no individuals in the strict sense of the word, just persons in so far as they are part of their group."[7] Richard Huntington (1988:55) noted: "When the Bara voice their approval of a person, the highest praise is that the person is 'no trouble' (*tsy magnay*)." However, in the course of my fieldwork I started to question this view, as I increasingly observed people behaving in a loud, emotionally expressive, and self-assertive manner. These observations corresponded more to the descriptions in an ethnography by Louis Michel, according to which the Bara are "belligerent pastoralists with a proud and independent temperament" (1957:35).[8]

It took me some time to realize that these self-expressive behaviors were not just exceptions from the hierarchical-interdependent norm, but were embedded in a second, equally relevant, egalitarian socio-emotional mode. While most cross-cultural studies characterize children's relationships as either hierarchical or egalitarian, such a co-existence of contrasting socio-relational modes has already been described for another—distantly related—society: "Polynesian children learn two sets of rules for interacting with others. One applies to hierarchical relationships … and the other applies to interactions among age-mates and status-equals" (Martini 1994:77).

In Menamaty, the hierarchical mode was most pronounced in intergenerational relationships within the patrilineage but, by extension, also characterized all other relationships between young and old. Younger individuals were expected to acknowledge their lower status and show respect to their elders by behaving in a calm, modest, and emotionally restrained way, keeping a certain physical distance, and performing particular gestures of respect. In addition, throughout their lives, individuals were supposed to obey elders from the same patrilineage, especially parents, grandparents, and ancestral spirits. My interview partners conceptualized—and legitimized—intergenerational relationships as an exchange of vitality for obedience.

According to them, the life of the younger generation depended on a constant influx of life force from the parents and ancestors. In exchange, the offspring were supposed to submit to the will of their procreators. Disobedient or disrespectful behavior would enrage elders, including ancestral spirits, leading to a life-threatening lack of vitality and diseases that could only be averted by offerings of alcohol or cows. This scenario was closely related to a kind of moral fear (*tahotsy*) that parents aimed to instill in children through threats or acts of physical punishment (Scheidecker 2017).

In the beginning, I mistook this hierarchical mode as the norm because most of my initial ethnographic encounters took place in hierarchical constellations, for example, when I was received as a guest, during ceremonial events, or due to the age gap between myself and the children I observed. I only began to realize that there was another, egalitarian mode after I socialized more with my peers and, in particular, after the children had overcome their inhibitions in my presence. Egalitarian contexts occurred whenever people were in the company of others from the same age group, since in these cases the age-dependent hierarchy no longer applied. People would spend most of their working and relaxation time with relatives of a similar age (*nama*). In contrast to highly formalized, hierarchical relations, the egalitarian relationships between *nama* were built on individual preferences, reciprocal support, emotional intimacy, and mutual affection demonstrated, for example, by publicly holding hands. *Nama* relationships resembled friendships in many regards, but had additional dimensions in that they were based on kinship, permanent cohabitation, and daily cooperation. Apart from *nama*, the people of Menamaty were also engaged in other egalitarian relations, most notably pre- or extramarital romantic relationships and hostile relationships with unrelated peers based on fierce competition and mutual retaliation. While not ignoring other dimensions such as gender or kinship, in this contribution I will foreground the dimensions of hierarchical and egalitarian relationships, as they were most clearly associated with distinct, complementary interaction patterns.

Methods

To explore the social world of children in Menamaty, I present data from spot observations, which I then interpret and extend on the basis of extensive interviews and long-term participant observation (for details, see Scheidecker 2017). In conjunction with the spot observations, I interviewed 42 mothers and 29 child-minders between 6 and 18 years of age about infancy and early childhood. The interview partners were chosen from these two categories because the villagers unanimously identified them as main caregivers. One year of prior ethnographic fieldwork included constant participant observation and interviews with a wide range of individuals, including 98 children, about their daily activities and relationships.

Spot observation is a well-established time sampling method in anthropology, especially in research on young children (e.g., Hewlett 1992; LeVine et al. 1994). Its systematic procedure allowed me to recognize patterns in the quickly changing contacts of young children with a large number of social partners. These patterns had largely escaped my attention during my earlier participant observation, when I unwittingly limited my attention to particular caregivers.

The spot observation sample consisted of 45 children, aged 3 months to 3 years, living in Ranomadio and a neighboring village of about 500 inhabitants. Data collection and initial interpretations were supported by two field assistants, one of whom grew up in the neighboring village. After the families gave their consent and participated in the interviews, we observed the children according to a pre-determined schedule. The plan stipulated that each child was to be observed twice a day over a period of two weeks. Furthermore, the spot observations were distributed across all hours of daylight (from 6 am to 5 pm). If a child could not be found for an observation on a given day, that observation would be made the next day at the same time. Not all planned observations could be realized because some children left the village for a time during the observation period. Ultimately, each child was observed between 15 and 22 times, resulting in a total of 830 observations.

As it turned out to be too difficult to manually record the large number of people that were usually in the vicinity of the focal child as well as all ongoing interactions, at the suggestion of my field assistants and with the consent of all participants, we video-recorded the observations. This video documentation made it possible to view the recordings every evening with the field assistants and participants to identify all of the children's social partners and discuss the documented interactions.

After my fieldwork, a student assistant and I coded the recorded spot observations using the software INTERACT. The coding system was based on categories developed by Heidi Keller (2007), which we inductively extended. For the analysis of children's social partners, we excluded observations when the focal child was sleeping, resulting in a total of 727 valid spot observations. We determined social partners according to their distance from the child at the beginning of each observation, using three categories: "body contact," "in arm's reach," and "in view." Each social partner was then identified by name, age, gender, and kinship. Furthermore, we coded a wide range of behaviors or interactions that occurred in the first 10 seconds of the spot observation, including play, face-to-face contact, and smiling, that occurred in the first 10 seconds of the spot observation. We carried out our data analysis using SPSS.

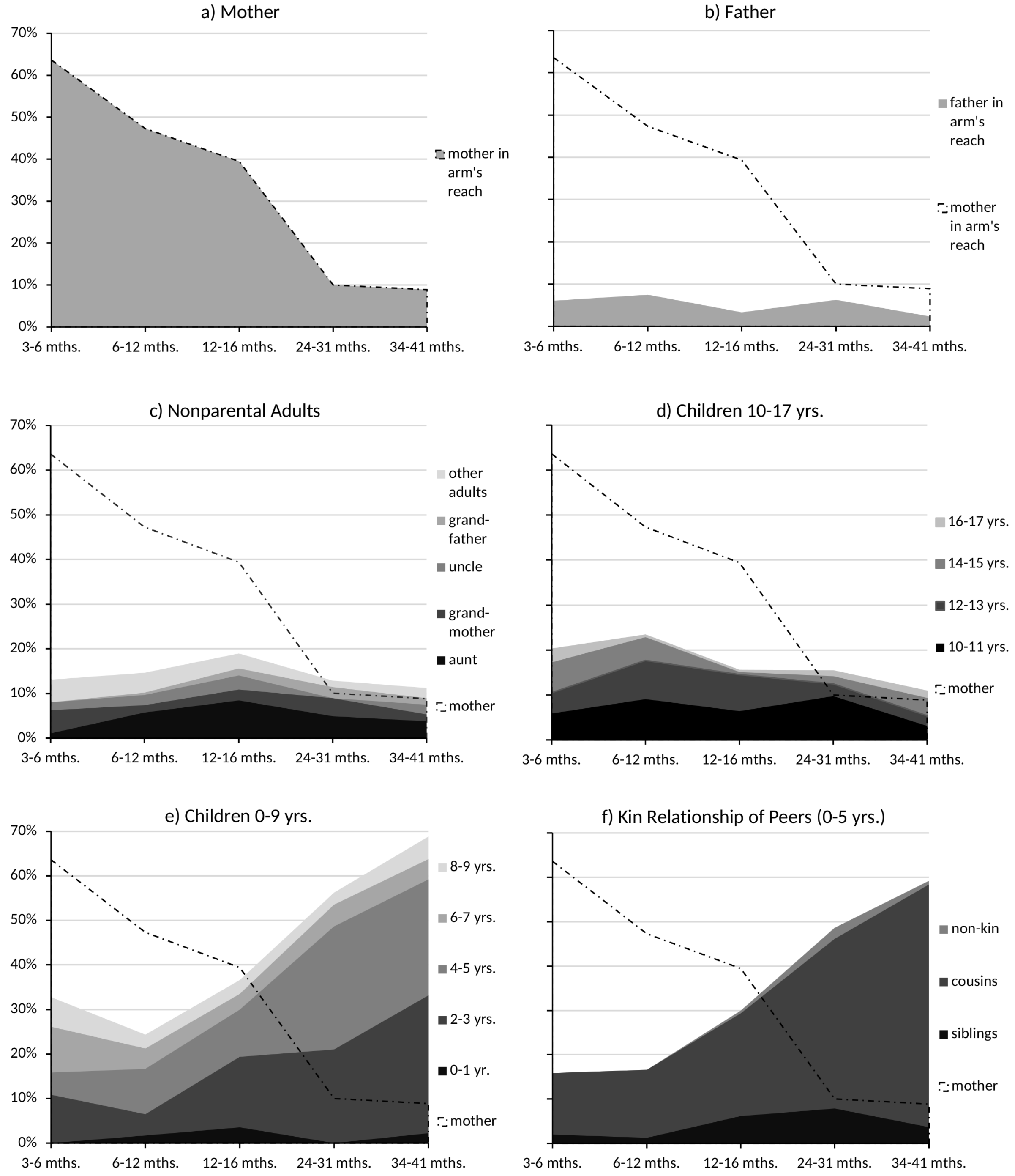
After aggregating the data for each child, we grouped the children according to their age and developmental milestones (see Table 1).

Age in months	3-6	6-12	12-16	24-32	34-41	Total
Developmental milestones	able to sit on the ground	able to crawl, stand	able to walk	weaned	younger sibling	
Number of children	10	10	10	8	7	45
Gender	7 female 3 male	4 female 6 male	5 female 5 male	3 female 5 male	2 female 5 male	21 female, 24 male
Number of observations	131	153	179	142	122	727

Table 1: Characteristics of observed children

Children’s social partners in the first 3 years of life

The infants and toddlers of Menamaty were almost constantly surrounded by people, frequently engaging with two or more individuals at a time. Figure 1 presents the full array of social partners during the spot observations. For the sake of clarity, I focus here on social partners maximally at arm’s reach from the focal child. This distance is close enough to indicate some social interaction, yet far enough to capture the simultaneity of children’s social engagements. Children’s partners are grouped according to the categories “mother,” “father,” “nonparental adults,” “children 10–17 years,” and “children 0–9 years.” Apart from the first two, these categories refer to groups of social partners. Thus, they are not particularly revealing regarding the prominence of individual social partners. Nevertheless, they allow us to explore how the social world of children is structured according to complementary roles, some of which are rather individualized while others are typically shared by a number of individuals.


a) Mother

b) Father

c) Nonparental Adults

d) Children 10-17 yrs.

e) Children 0-9 yrs.

f) Kin Relationship of Peers (0-5 yrs.)

Figure 1: Children's social partners in the first 3 years of life

The graphs depict the full array of social partners that were observed within arm's reach of the focal children. In each graph, the y-axis represents the percentage of observations during which the social partners were present. It approximates the proportion of time the focal children spent with those partners. The x-axis represents the age of the focal children and indicates ontogenetic changes during the first 3 years of life.

a) *Mothers* clearly stood out among all social partners—at least in the first year of the child's life. The youngest focal children (3–6 months) were in close proximity to their mothers for more than 60% of the observations. This dominant role of mothers, however, was rather short-lived. The 2- and 3-year-old children spent only 10% of the time with their mothers; at

80% of the observations the mothers were not even in sight. Mothers unanimously cited their exclusive capacity to breastfeed their own children to explain their prominent role at this early stage. Accordingly, they considered weaning, usually at the end of the second year, as an endpoint of their special role in the child's life. If the parents were divorced, mothers usually returned to their native village and left the child with the father or, if the father was deceased, with his relatives. As a consequence, 22% of children aged 5–8 years and 38% of 9- to 13-year-olds lived without their mothers in the village of Ranomadio.

b) *Fathers* spent much less time with young children than mothers. They were within arm's reach of the child at only about 3–8% of the observations, without any significant changes throughout the children's first 3 years. However, fathers gained in relative importance as the presence of mothers in the child's immediate environment sharply decreased. In the interviews, fathers were not portrayed as regular caregivers of children, but rather as providers and authority figures whose importance increases with the child's age.

c) *Nonparental adults* provided considerably less close contact to infants than mothers. According to the data I gathered during participant observation, they rarely served as regular caregivers for infants and toddlers because their availability was limited. Grandparents, who are described as important supplementary caregivers in many societies (e.g., Knodel and Nguyen 2015), had already passed away in most cases. Adults from the parents' generation usually had children of their own, which is why they would only occasionally take care of a relative's child. Aunts, who clearly stand out among nonparental adults, usually jumped in as caregivers while sharing work or leisure with the mother. It should be noted, however, that nonparental adults may gain in relative importance as children become older. Two- and 3-year-old children spent more time with nonparental adults than with their mothers, although mothers remained the single most prominent caregiver of toddlers. For older children it was not uncommon for a paternal aunt or grandmother to become their principal caregiver, especially if the mother had left the village.

d) *Children aged 10–17 years* were more frequently present in the immediate environment of infants than nonparental adults or the father, but less than the mother. Among these social partners, preadolescent children aged 10–13 years clearly dominated. According to my interviews and participant observation, they were usually in charge as child-minders (*mpitan-zaza,* lit.: "child-holder"). Their task was to take care of the child for short periods of time in order to allow the mother to do her work more efficiently or to recreate. All focal children up to the age of around 15 months had one or two regular *mpitan-zaza*. Their ages ranged from 6 to 18 years, although the vast majority of them (90%) were between 10 and 14 years old. Mothers gave two reasons for preferring preadolescent child-minders: they were more skilled caregivers than younger children, and more reliable than older ones, who may be unavailable due to their dating activities.[9] All child-minders were related to the child, mostly as siblings or cousins. Eighty percent of them were girls. Boys were only appointed as child-minders if no girls were available. The preference for female child-minders corresponded to the gendered division of labor more generally, and was also regarded as a way to train girls for their future role as mothers.

e) *Children aged 0–9 years* turned out to be extraordinary. In contrast to all other social partners, their presence increased dramatically across the children's first 3 years of life. Infants aged 3–6 months already spent more time with other young children than with any other category of social partners except for mothers: 1-year-olds spent roughly as much time with them as with mothers; 2-year-olds spent more than 50% and 3-year-olds almost 70% of their time with other young children. Within the group of young social partners, the age distribution is clearly unequal: most of them were 0 to 5 years of age, while 6- to 9-year-olds were only marginally represented. This finding corresponds to the results from my interviews with 98 children about their closest friends/companions (*nama*). Throughout childhood, they were of similar age, maximally 3 years older and 2 years younger. The prevalence of similar-aged social partners may be explained by children's preferences. As mothers frequently put it, similar-aged children are simply more attracted to each other as companions and play partners. Children older than 5 showed little interest in toddlers as play partners, preferring instead to spend most of the day with their own peers outside the village. Furthermore, unlike preadolescents, they were rarely in charge as child-minders.

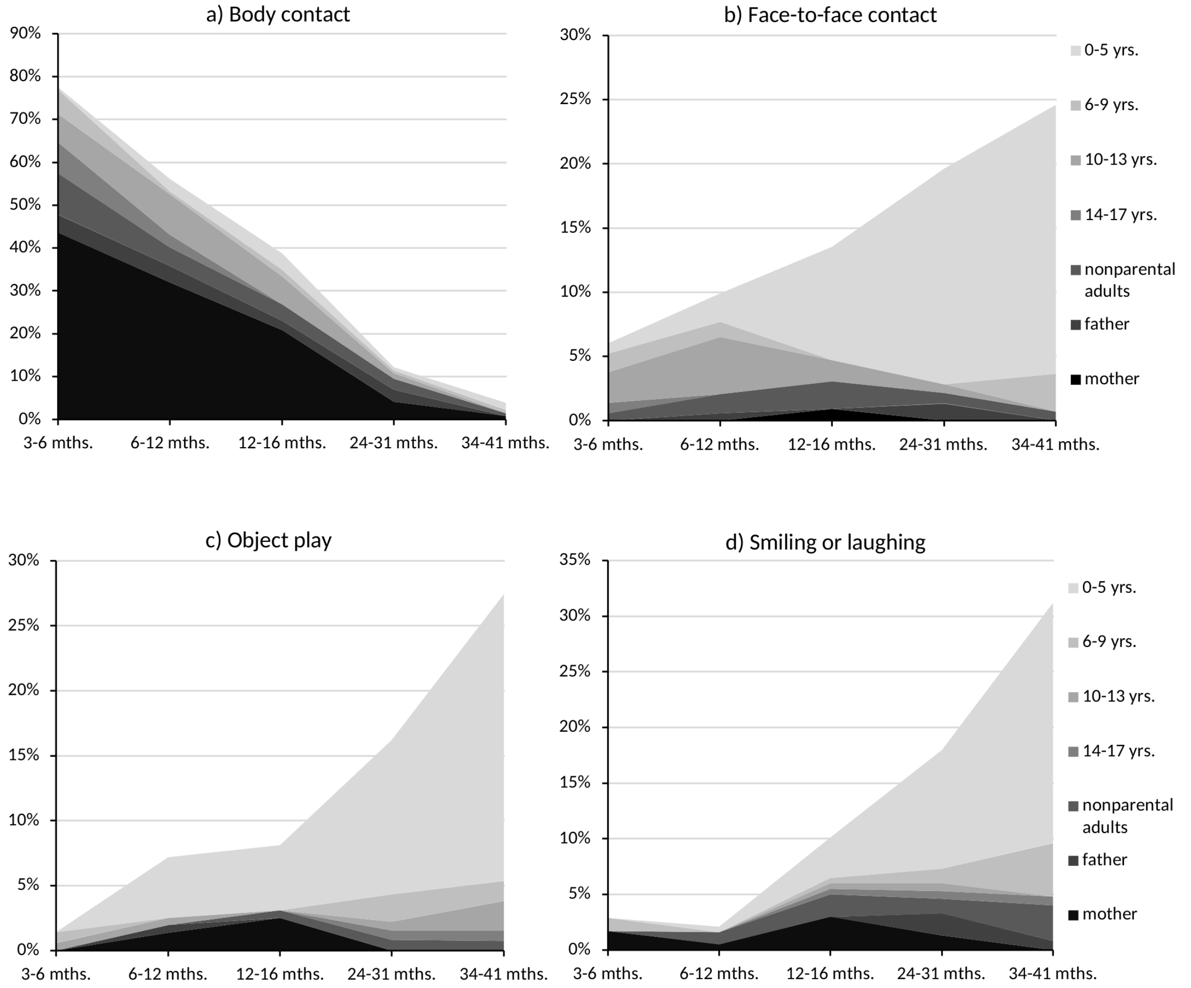
f) To further specify children's youngest social partners (0–5 years), the last graph differentiates them according to kinship. Only a tiny fraction were unrelated. Some were full or half siblings, but the overwhelming majority were cousins of varying degrees. This distribution may be due in part to the fact that, within both villages, cousins of different degrees simply outnumbered siblings and unrelated children. However, according to the interviews mentioned above, children of all ages clearly preferred cousins as friends and companions over siblings. All the close relationships I learned about during participant observation were between cousins. Sibling relationships were frequently burdened by jealousies, and relationships with unrelated children tended to be distant if not hostile.

Taken together, the data demonstrate that infants and toddlers in Menamaty had regular contact with a wide range of social partners, not only parents and other related adults, but also, to a large degree, related children. As indicated above, some cross-cultural studies have already demonstrated the importance of related, mixed-age child partners in diverse rural communities (e.g., Rogoff, Morelli, and Chavajay 2010). My findings indicate that, at least in Menamaty, the child partners can be differentiated into three groups: preadolescent child-minders (*mpitan-zaza*), relatively uninvolved middle-age children, and similar-aged children, mostly cousins, who clearly stood out as companions (*nama*). In mainstream early childhood research and interventions, related, similar-aged children have rarely been investigated as crucial social partners—perhaps because they do not fall neatly into the commonly accepted categories of caregivers, siblings, or (unrelated) peers. In order to capture complementary role divisions, we need to supplement the data with an analysis of children's social interactions.

The distribution of social interaction across children's partners

My analysis of children's social interactions was initially guided by the theoretical distinction between pediatric and pedagogic cultural models of parenting (LeVine et al. 1994) and by the similar differentiation between proximal and distal parenting styles (Keller 2007). Pediatric or proximal parenting focuses on the child's physical needs through practices of primary care (e.g., feeding), body contact, and bodily stimulation. Proximal parenting fosters "hierarchical relatedness," a relational mode in which the individuals form part of a hierarchically structured group. The pedagogical or distal mode of parenting focuses on stimulating interactions such as face-to-face contact, object play, the exchange of positive emotions, and verbal communication. It promotes "psychological autonomy," which Keller describes as the prioritization of individuals' emotional concerns and egalitarian social relations. LeVine and colleagues and Keller both demonstrate that parenting in Western urban middle classes leans toward the pedagogical or distal mode, whereas parenting in the non-Western, rural farming communities they studied conforms to a pediatric or proximal mode.

In this section, I look at interactions that characterize the two modes: bodily contact as an exemplary proximal parenting practice, and face-to-face contact, object play, and exchanges of smiling/laughing as exemplary distal interactions. However, while these authors focus exclusively on parents or caregivers, I extend the analysis to take into account all social partners who were found to be engaged in these interactions with the focal children. Figure 2 depicts how children's experiences of these interactions are distributed across their social partners.



a) Body contact

b) Face-to-face contact

c) Object play

d) Smiling or laughing

Figure 2: Partners in social interaction

The graphs depict children's social partners in four modes of interaction. In each graph, the y-axis represents the percentage of observations during which children were engaged in one mode of interaction with various social partners. The x-axis represents the age of the focal children and indicates ontogenetic changes across the first 3 years of life.

When comparing the graph of body contact with those of the other three interaction modes, a complementary distribution across social partners becomes immediately apparent. The focal children experienced the most bodily contact with their mother, with preadolescent child-minders, and, to a lesser degree, with fathers and other related adults. They had very little bodily contact with other young children. By contrast, children experienced face-to-face interactions, object play, and positive emotions mostly with other young children, and rarely with adults. The mothers figured even less than other adults as social partners in these distal forms of interaction. Face-to-face interaction, which was coded on the basis of eye contact, occurred only once between mother and child during spot observations. Object play, which was coded on shared attention to an object, occurred somewhat more frequently in the mother–child relationship. However, none of these instances resulted in joint play. Rather, mother–child play consisted of the mother drawing the child’s attention to an object in order to encourage him or her to play alone or with other children. While children sometimes smiled or laughed in the presence of mothers, the mothers never actively solicited these emotions from children. Taken together, the data point to a highly pronounced complementary distribution of proximal and distal interaction modes between caregivers and young child partners.

On the basis of my participant observation and interviews, I conclude that there are two major reasons for this complementary role division. First, parents and other caregivers found it unnecessary to engage with children in distal interactions. In the interviews, all parents and other caregivers stressed that their major concern was to ensure the children's physical health and bodily development. It was only on my insistence that they would also address the issue of the child's cognitive development, with reference, for instance, to the common saying *Ngy ray aman-dreny tsy niteraky fagnahy fa nitera-bata*—"Parents do not engender the mind but the body [of the child]." In their view, children's minds develop well enough without their help, as children play and explore the world around them with other children, who are constantly around and naturally interested in play. In short, caregivers did not consider play and cognitive stimulation to be their domain of responsibility. Second, to play, and to engage in other symmetrical ways with children, was considered inappropriate for adults, as I quickly learned from my own attempts. Interacting with children in these ways was viewed as being childish, compromising one's dignity, and even morally transgressing the age-dependent social hierarchy that demanded asymmetrical ways of interacting.

These data indicate that some of the contrasts that have been used to capture cross-cultural differences can be present within one and the same cultural context, albeit embedded in different social relations. Caregivers in Menamaty conformed perfectly to the concepts of pediatric or proximal parenting by attending mainly to children's physical needs and dependency. However, a look beyond the caregivers revealed that similar-aged children, mainly cousins, provided ample opportunities for joint object play, face-to-face interaction, and experiencing and sharing intense positive emotions. These interaction patterns resemble what has been described as distal style and likely foster a more autonomous orientation.[10] Furthermore, my data indicate that it would be misleading to study these children's distal interactions on the basis of caregiver–child relations, since caregivers were of little relevance in that regard. A number of anthropologists have suggested that the infrequency of social stimulation in mother–child relations may be compensated by other caregivers (Lancy 2007; Leiderman and Leiderman 1974; LeVine et al. 1994). However, the possibility that those similar-aged social partners who are not in charge as caregivers may provide most of these stimulating experiences to infants and toddlers has rarely been explored.

In addition to the complementary role distribution among children's social partners, the data presented thus far also point to complementary patterns of relationship formation. This would contradict the conventional hierarchical-sequential understanding of relationship formation, according to which relationships and ways of interacting are first established with primary caregivers and then extended to other social partners such as peers. Taken alone, the data from the previous section (Figure 1) appear to support such a sequential model, as the social world of children in Menamaty is first dominated by mothers and later by similar-aged children. However, in combination with data from the current section (Figure 2), it becomes clear that these ontogenetic changes in the social world of children correlate with changes in children's time demands for the kind of care and social stimulation their social partners offer. Children's time with the mother decreases as their need for the kind of physical care she provides declines. Children's time with other young children increases as they spend more time on the kind of social interactions these partners have to offer.

Thus, I suggest that in Menamaty, children's relationships to caregivers and similar-aged children develop not consecutively but in a complementary fashion, in conjunction with two distinct modes of interacting and relating. In the remainder of this article, I will explore this assumption ethnographically.[11] First, I focus on the formation of children's relationships with mothers and other caregivers which, I argue, leads to a hierarchical relational mode. Subsequently, I take a closer look at the formation of relationships with other children, which leads to an egalitarian relational mode. I reconstruct the two relational modes along three dimensions: a) caregiving styles/interaction patterns; b) ontogenetic changes; and c) particular relationships.

The formation of hierarchical relationships

a) Caregiving style

Mothers' as well as child-minders' care for children was distinctly body-centered, that is, focused on their physical needs. As indicated by the results of the spot observations (Figure 2), caregivers provided almost constant body contact, at least to infants, while almost never engaging in face-to-face contact, play, or emotionally stimulating interaction with children. Bodily contact provided the context for most other care practices, such as feeding, soothing, or putting to sleep, since devices such as cradles, buggies, and pacifiers were not used to substitute for body contact. In 71 extensive interviews about childrearing, mothers and preadolescent child-minders expressed the same ideas (for details, see Scheidecker 2017): their primary developmental goal was the children's rapid physical growth and the resistance to diseases that such growth implied. They also placed importance on fostering children's quick motor development, especially their sitting and walking abilities, as these were recognized as reducing children's demand for care. The most important proximal goal for caregivers, however, was to keep the child calm, which they characterized as the absence of negative emotions and described as having a "clear heart" (*mazava fo*) or a "disengaged heart" (*afa-po*). They associated such a calm state with reduced care demands and good health, and with the behavioral goal of raising a respectful child. My interview partners unanimously described breastfeeding as a central care practice that was the most effective way to achieve all of these developmental goals. As one mother of four children stated, "From the moment of his birth I give him the breast. When he is a bit older, he gets some rice in addition. That's how he grows up. *Zagnahary* [the creator god] makes his mind grow. As a mother, I just give him the breast."

While mothers breastfed their children amply, usually several times an hour, they rarely focused visually on the child. Rather, their attention was devoted to other activities such as working or chatting with adult companions. Correspondingly, breastfeeding was not conceptualized as an emotionally intimate interaction, but rather as the transfer of a powerful substance from the mother to the child. Similarly, caregivers described bodily contact mainly in instrumental terms, as a way to support children's bodies and to keep them calm rather than as an expression of affection. Cuddling, hugging, kissing, holding hands, and other explicitly affectionate practices of body contact were not an established component of caregiver–child relations, but they did occur quite regularly in child-to-child relationships.

Taken together, the body-centered caregiving style in Menamaty emphasizes at least two dimensions of the emerging caregiver–child relationship: Children probably experience their caregivers primarily as a source of bodily well-being and a calm emotional state, not as a source of intense positive (or negative) emotions or as stimulating interaction partners. Moreover, they likely also learn to perceive their caregivers as clearly unequal social partners. The hierarchical dimension may be generally inherent in relationships between caregiver and "care-receiver." However, in contrast to Western middle-class parents, who tend to interact with children in a "quasi equal" way (Keller 2007), the caregivers in Menamaty strongly emphasized the hierarchical dimension of the child–caregiver relationship and avoided reciprocal interactions such as face-to-face contact.

b) Ontogenetic changes

During the first 3 years of life, the children of Menamaty experienced a dramatic reduction in bodily contact, from nearly 80% in infancy to less than 5% for 3-year-olds. In fact, toddlers were expected to avoid all physical contact with parents and other adults and even to keep a respectful distance from them. Similar observations in many other rural communities have been interpreted as “parental rejection” (Ritchie and Ritchie 1979:57), “disindulgence” (Levy 1978:226), and “toddler rejection” (Lancy 2007:276). By contrast, I argue that the ontogenetic changes in Menamaty allow children to sustain their initial experience of caregivers as powerful sources of their physical well-being and sustenance. This is possible because the initial constant body-centered care is gradually channeled into a particular social transaction: the provision of food and—on a more abstract level—the transmission of “life force” (*ay*).[12]

The interlocutors with whom I discussed the issue found the suggestion that toddlers experience hurtful rejection to be implausible. Instead, they took it as a matter of fact that toddlers simply preferred the more exciting company of other children, while they continued to approach their caregivers for food. For them, the central dimension of hierarchical relationships—the intergenerational transmission of life force—continues throughout childhood and even throughout one’s entire life. From this perspective, only the modes of transmission change across the life course: from constant body contact and breastfeeding in infancy to the provision of food in childhood to rituals of blessing and healing throughout adulthood. Accordingly, caregivers did not emphasize the affective value of any particular mode of caregiving. As outlined above, they rather focused on the instrumentality of their practices, which may quickly become obsolete as children grow older. Regarding the dramatic decline of body contact, almost all mothers explained, rather matter-of-factly, that they would stop holding the child on their lap as soon as the child was able to sit, they would stop carrying the child on their hip once the child started walking, and they would stop carrying the child on their back when the child could walk longer distances. Since caregivers never established bodily contact as an emotionally expressive interaction, its subsequent cessation did not imply emotional rejection.

Based on my observations, I argue that children in Menamaty did indeed have ample opportunities to experience feeding, or life sustenance more generally, as the core of care and of their relationship to caregivers. Children usually experienced breastfeeding as the first, and often the only, form of maternal attention when they were distressed or upon reunion. Most children were breastfed in this way until the end of the second year (21.4 months on average). Ainsworth (1977:128) has described these same features as necessary for breastfeeding to become an important dimension of the mother–child bond. While feeding in infancy is still embedded in the experience of overarching bodily care, it increasingly crystallizes as the essential dimension of care interactions. A typical observation was that a toddler between 1 and

2 years old would approach the mother, drink immediately and, after the meal was finished, quickly rejoin the other children. To facilitate weaning, mothers explained, they sometimes applied spicy substances to their nipples. This may have caused some weaning conflicts, although I never observed them (cf., Fouts, Hewlett, and Lamb 2005). However, at the age of weaning, other ways of feeding, which caregivers introduced in early infancy (around 3 months), were already well established, and mealtimes continued to be the principal occasions for caregiver–child contact. Through this channeling process from continuous body-centered care to intermittent, food-related contact, children may learn to experience feeding not just as a residue of care, but rather as a central dimension in hierarchical relationships.

To be sure, hierarchical relationships do not evolve free of conflicts in Menamaty. In return for life sustenance, children from the age of 4 or 5 onwards were expected to respect and obey their elders and to help their parents whenever asked. To enforce these expectations, and to instill a kind of moral fear (*tahotsy*), disobedient children could be punished by beatings or food deprivation (for details, see Röttger-Rössler et al. 2013, 2015).

c) Relationships

The children of Menamaty seemed to form relationships with caregivers in a consecutive manner. As described earlier, mothers initially assumed the predominant role among caregivers, but they quickly relinquished this role as infants became toddlers. Changing feeding practices contribute to this expansion of relevant caregivers. While breastfeeding was the exclusive prerogative of the mother, other kinds of feeding were frequently done by preadolescent child-minders, and occasionally by aunts and grandmothers. Through speech acts—that is, by having to address all these female relatives as *neny* (“mother”) or *neny be* (“grandmother”)—children were prompted to expand their understanding of the concept “mother” to other female relatives from the same or older generations.

Fathers and other male relatives were rarely directly engaged in feeding or other practices of bodily care (see Figure 1). Yet, in line with the patrilineal ideology, my interview partners described the role of fathers and of their ancestors as the original providers of children’s food and life force, and as major authority figures. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when children came to “recognize” fathers in this role. It is clear, however, that when children reached about 5 years of age, fathers started to assert their role as authority figures and providers through corporal punishment. All children I interviewed had clear memories of beatings or food withdrawal. For example, as one 14-year-old boy explained, “Once I refused to collect firewood because I was too tired, so my father did it by himself. Then he said: ‘You exist only through me. As you did not help me, you won't have food tonight.'" By experiencing the father's power to temporarily compromise their physical well-being, children could affectively grasp that their life was, under normal circumstances, sustained by him. As with female relatives, children had to address all of their father's brothers or cousins as *ray* ("father").

While the relationships within each collective category of father and mother evolved clearly in a hierarchical-sequential fashion, the role divisions between them entailed both sequential and complementary aspects. Ontogenetically, children's relationships to fathers appear to build, at least in part, on earlier mother–child relationships. Ideologically, by contrast, fathers (and their ancestors) were presented as primordial sources of children's lives. At the same time, their roles had a complementary dimension: mothers provided most of the proximal care, while fathers acted mainly as authority figures. Finally, these roles converge in a model of hierarchical relationships that is perhaps best expressed in an idiom that every child knows: *Ray aman-dreny Zagnahary hita masu!* — "Fathers and mothers are visible gods!"

In this section I have explored the formation of hierarchical relationships, which were central to providing for the children's bodily needs and feelings of existential security (or anxiety), and which fostered a sociocentric and deferential mode of relating in children. Yet children's lives in Menamaty were by no mean confined to these socio-emotional dimensions, as they simultaneously formed important egalitarian relationships with similar-aged children.

The formation of egalitarian relationships

a) Interaction patterns

To start with, I illustrate egalitarian interaction with an example. In search of one of the children for a spot observation, I passed by a group of children playing with a wooden door lying on the ground. The six children were between 1 and 4 years old and related by kinship. They took turns jumping on one side of the door in order to rock the children sitting opposite. They laughed together, occasionally looked at each other and exchanged words. After a while a 10-month-old boy came by and was invited by his 3-year-old brother to join in. Although he was obviously attracted by what he saw, he didn't dare take a seat on the makeshift seesaw. Except for me, no adult was around—and no one had purposefully created this seesaw. As in this case, the partners in egalitarian interactions were hardly equals, given variations in age and competency. Yet their participation, even of the 10-month-old, depended on their own agency, and their interactions followed a reciprocal pattern. Playing jointly with objects, communicating face-to-face, and laughing together all imply reciprocity through sharing or turn-taking. Such symmetric interaction patterns were virtually absent in hierarchical relationships (see Figure 2).

My data on face-to-face exchange, object play, and laughing can be generalized into broader patterns. While toddlers made little use of language with their caregivers, they could be very talkative in the company of other children. Dialogical ways of communication and, in particular, verbal exchanges about feelings, thoughts, and intentions appeared to be reserved for peer interactions. As children grew, they expanded object play into joint excursions to go fishing or to collect wild plants, as well as to cooperate in daily chores such as food preparation and cattle herding. Although parents assigned these chores, they were usually accomplished with other children. Laughing is an example of the general tendency of children to evoke and exchange intense positive and negative emotions with other children, while they remained emotionally restrained in hierarchical relations. These observations correspond to extensive interviews with older children and adults, according to which emotions were overwhelmingly experienced, expressed, and acted out in the company of similar-aged children. A 11-year-old boy, for example, told me, “After I have done my chores and eaten, I go to my friends to have fun. We laugh a lot and my heart is cheerful [*mangoa*] and happy [*ravo*].” A 5-year-old provided an example of negative emotions: “Once, I was playing with my friends in the rain. I slipped and my friends jeered at me. I got very angry [*maseky*] and threw mud at them. Then we went swimming in the river.” As I have described in detail elsewhere (Scheidecker 2020), children learn from early on to regulate and express their anger in different ways according to whether the relationship is hierarchical or egalitarian.

b) Ontogenetic changes

The steep increase in child-to-child contact across the first 3 years should not hide the fact that it was already frequent among 3-month-olds (see Figure 1e). While infants were still carried most of the time by their caregivers, they could simultaneously direct their attention and activities toward other children. In this way they reflected their caregivers’ tendency to focus on their own peers or tasks while being physically available to the child. Such a social-relational division of the child’s visual and bodily attention continues throughout childhood and, I would argue, across a person’s entire life span. While child-to-caregiver contact and child-to-child interactions often coincided in infancy, they quickly split in space and time once children began to walk. Toddlers usually played somewhat apart from caregivers in the village or its vicinity. From around the age of five, children would go for most of the day on joint excursions outside the village, often fishing, hunting for birds, collecting wild fruit, or, in the case of older boys, herding cattle. According to my interviews with 98 children, all of them had begun between the ages of 5 and 8 to spend the night with other children in a room or house separate from their parents' quarters.

This early and sustained orientation to other children appeared to be based on a strong child-to-child attraction. Infants could frequently be seen taking great pains to move toward other children, even before they were able to properly crawl. As their mobility increased, especially once they learned to walk, they could keep track of other children more easily. Thus, increasing mobility, along with decreasing time demand for bodily care, allowed for the steep rise in child-to-child company. I assume that this child-to-child attraction was fostered by the specific social conditions, in particular, complementary role division. Since caregivers focused on children's physical needs, peers were exclusively available as stimulating play partners. Furthermore, caregivers ensured from early on that their children were actually exposed to other children. Infants were made to face children while either sitting on the caregivers' laps or close by on the ground. Preadolescent child-minders usually took their charges to a group of children. In this way, the infant could interact with similar-aged children while the child-minder was free to play with his or her own peers. Mothers sometimes actively drew their infants' attention to other children by pointing, turning, or pushing their body toward them. This usually happened when the child turned their face to the caregiver, was reluctant to leave the mother's lap, or was whining for reasons other than bodily needs. On several occasions I observed mothers refocusing the attention of infants who were about to cry after being hit by another child. While the affected children turned to their mothers, the mothers turned them back to the perpetrator, sometimes guiding their arms to slap him. Thus, caregivers prompted infants to turn to other children, not only for exploration, but also for the regulation of conflicts.

The early segregation of children and caregivers can be ascribed to several factors. Adults expected children to be calm in their presence and, consequently, angrily drove them away when their play became too noisy. Correspondingly, toddlers could interact with less restraint and more freedom without adults close by. Older children explained that they avoided parents for most of the day in order to evade criticism, disciplining, or the assignment of tasks. Furthermore, parents followed a "policy" of non-interference regarding children's affairs. Even if parents were close enough to see what was going on among children, they usually did not intervene, not even if children were fighting. Parents explained that to intervene in toddlers' quarrels would drive them crazy or, in the worst case, would spread conflicts to the parents. The pattern of non-interference was also manifest in the toddlers' material environment. They neither played in specially designed or protected spaces nor with toys created by adults expressly for children. As the makeshift seesaw exemplifies, children made use of all kinds of materials or objects that were not in use (anymore) by adults and could serve their purposes.

The emergence of egalitarian relationships in Menamaty represents a stark departure from the Western urban middle-class context, which has arguably been the model for theorizing about children and their social partners. In these contexts, infants usually experience playful, expressive, and stimulating ways of interacting first with their parents. In Menamaty, children experienced them from the start with other children. When children in Western settings begin to interact more regularly with peers, for example in day care institutions where they may even create their own peer culture (Corsaro 2009), they remain under the close and constant supervision of caregivers. Caregivers not only intervene in peer interactions, especially in the case of conflicts, but purposefully create children's activity settings by, for example, going to playgrounds or giving the children toys, games, or books. By contrast, children's peer activities in Menamaty were created and transmitted among similar-aged children, largely unmediated by caregivers' pedagogical intentions and interventions. This does not mean that adult life was irrelevant to peer activities. In their games, children would generally imitate and recreate adult life activities that they saw on a daily basis, ranging from *kiaomby* ("playing" cattle) to *kibilo* ("playing" a possession ritual) to *kipetapetaky* ("playing" sexual intercourse).

c) Relationships

While child-to-child interaction generally followed an egalitarian pattern, it was differentiated according to kinship, gender, and individual relationships. All of the children whose early years I learned about had several very close and lasting relationships with other children, mostly cousins of the same gender and similar age. They were said to be inseparable (*tsy mety misaraky*), as they could be seen most of the day in each other's company. Parents and other caregivers could immediately point out the closest "friends," even of infants. They publicly displayed their special relationships through physical intimacy: Boys frequently held hands while strolling around the village, and girls often exchanged clothes with their closest friends or braided each other's hair, which was a time-consuming task. This behavior again was in stark contrast to the respectful physical distance that characterized hierarchical relations. In many regards, these relationships were more than what is commonly implied by the term "friendship." They were bound by kinship ties and grew up side by side, from birth on constantly available for each other. Their evolving relationships were unlikely to be disrupted, since causes common in other societies, such as the relocation of nuclear families or the change of care facilities, generally did not exist in Menamaty.

While infants seemed to interact with peers regardless of their gender, the majority of activities became gender-specific in the second year of life. Nevertheless, most children were known to have at least one special friend of the opposite gender. Furthermore, children as young as three learned to differentiate between kin (*longo*) and non-kin or "enemies" (*arahamba*), and to direct their aggressive tendencies toward the latter. In these *arahamba* relationships, children acquired specific emotions of retaliatory anger, which I have described in detail elsewhere (Scheidecker 2020). Thus, there was also a pronounced complementary role division among children's peers.

To conclude the current and previous sections, I return to my initial claim that, in Menamaty, egalitarian and hierarchical relationships evolve in a *complementary*, and not in a sequential, fashion. According to the hierarchical-sequential model, peer relationships partly derive from preceding infant–caregiver relationships, gain in relative prominence during childhood, and ultimately replace caregivers in many domains. As Brown and Larson (2009:75) note, in adolescence "young people become likely to spend more time with age mates, often with reduced oversight by adults" and, "in some arenas, peers compete with adults as a significant source of influence on adolescent attitudes, activities, and emotional well-being." In attachment research, it is assumed that adolescents' close friendships or romantic relationships emerge through the "transfer of attachments from parents to peers" (Zeifman and Hazan 2016:418).

My contrasting suggestion—that caregiver–child and child-to-child relationships in Menamaty emerge in a complementary way—is based on several observations. First, from infancy on, both caregivers and child partners were continuously available and provided distinct social experiences: asymmetrical body-centered care on the one hand, and a wide array of symmetrical interactions on the other. Ontogenetically, these distinct modes remained stable, leading to the formation of hierarchical and egalitarian relational modes. This ontogenetic continuity can also be traced through individual relationships to parents, whose psychological influence remained strong even after death as powerful ancestral spirits, as well as to similar-aged relatives such as cousins, whose bonds were established in early childhood and usually remained throughout life. While hierarchical relationships were central to children's physical well-being, children depended almost exclusively on other children for a wide range of crucial needs, including play and exploration, active and expressive roles in social interaction, and the exchange of intense emotions.

Conclusion

In this contribution, I have proposed the concept of complementarity as an alternative to the conventional hierarchical-sequential understanding of children's social partners and relationship formation. By way of example, I have described the specific complementary patterns in the social world of infants and toddlers in a rural community in Madagascar. I demonstrated a pronounced role division between caregivers and related, similar-aged child partners, and argued that their distinct interaction patterns lead to the parallel formation of hierarchical and egalitarian social-emotional modes of interaction.

Comparable patterns of complementarity may be present in other social settings around the world, particularly if they entail similar social conditions, such as: a) the constant availability of a considerable number of related children from birth onwards; b) pronounced hierarchical adult–child relationships that make other children indispensable for a number of needs and desires requiring reciprocal modes of interaction; and c) the lack of formal day care or educational facilities that would involve increased supervision and structuring of child-to-child interactions by adults. According to the ethnographic record, such conditions are present in many rural communities around the world (for reviews, see Lancy 2008; Weisner 2015; Whiting and Whiting 1975).

However, these are certainly not the only patterns outside Western middle-class contexts. The social world of children in several forager societies, for instance, has been characterized by egalitarian adult-child relations, including close relationships to fathers, and by a group of related, mixed-age children (see e.g., Boyette and Hewlett 2017; Fouts and Lamb 2009; Hewlett 1992; Konner 1976; Tronick et al. 1992). Obviously, these conditions should lead to different patterns of the division of roles. Moreover, complementary role divisions can be expected to change quickly, possibly even representing a dimension through which children are first and foremost affected by social transformation. Migration, for example, may abruptly remove children from whole segments of their social world, for instance, from a number of close, similar-aged relatives, confront them with new categories of social partners, such as unrelated, same-aged peers, and create expectations on parents to assume new roles towards their children that were previously performed by others.[13] How exactly these patterns vary cross-culturally and change over time needs to be further explored.

If complementarity in the social world of children is indeed widespread, though not necessarily universal, it is worth asking why it has rarely been fully accounted for. When looking back at the considerable part of my field research during which I focused unwittingly on caregivers, I see a number of conditions that foster a caregiver bias. First, most of the established theories on child development focus on caregiver–child interaction (see Hay, Caplan, and Nash 2009). Second, most researchers and research populations belong to the Western educated classes, characterized by a particularly strong preoccupation with caregiving or "intensive parenting" (Faircloth 2014). In addition to such ethnocentric tendencies, adult-centric effects might also reinforce a caregiver bias. As adults, researchers are most likely inclined to think first of adult influences when reflecting about child development. Ethnographic research procedures do not necessarily counter these biases, as interviews and conversations are usually conducted with caregivers. Thus, even the cultural models of childrearing, which are central in anthropology and cultural psychology may actually just represent the perspectives of particular social partners. When the caregivers in Menamaty talked about childrearing, they mainly talked about their own concerns as caregivers. Participant observation may again be limited by the tendency to approach children only when they are engaged in typical caregiver–child situations, as doing so seems more socially appropriate for adult researchers. Even if children are encountered without caregivers, one's own adult presence usually creates an adult–child constellation and dynamic. More recent research that has helped to overcome such a caregiver bias, on the other hand, has tended to focus exclusively on child-to-child relationships and associated domains of activity, often in conjunction with paradigmatic shifts. However, to get a full view of complementary patterns, it is necessary to look across categories of social partners, domains of activity, and associated approaches.

The concept of complementarity proposed here also has theoretical implications. Most classic ethnographies on childhood, emotion, and self in rural communities of the world converge on the claim that children in these communities acquire a strong sociocentric orientation with an emphasis on respect and emotional restraint, among other things (e.g., Briggs 1998; LeVine et al. 1994; Levy 1978; Lutz 1988). Studies in cultural and cross-cultural psychology have come to similar conclusions (e.g., Friedlmeier, Corapci, and Cole 2011; Markus and Kitayama 1991). A complementarity view on the social world of children may orient researchers more toward the possibility that these observations pertain only to one part of children's social reality, that is, to their relationships with caregivers. In Menamaty, children acquire an emotionally expressive, self-assertive mode in relation to similar-aged children which strongly contrasts to the restrained, sociocentric mode of hierarchical relationships, and they learn to switch between these different modes according to the social situation.

Finally, complementarity is of practical and ethical relevance, especially in regard to early childhood care and education programs. As indicated in the introduction, parenting interventions with the aim of augmenting children's cognitive stimulation may be entirely misguided if applied in communities where social partners other than the parents are the primary contributors to this developmental domain. A complementarity approach can help assess children's social experiences more adequately and prevent unjustified or misplaced interventions.

Endnotes

---

[1] https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_83036.html (accessed March 31, 2020).

[2] For critical perspectives on early child development interventions see Ejuu (2015), Morelli et al. (2018*a,* 2018*b*), Ng'asike (2014), Oppong (2015), and Serpell (2019).

[3] The concept I am proposing here is not to be confused with religious doctrines of complementary gender roles, which, contrary to my goal here, serve to essentialize particular role divisions.

[4] While these authors emphasized the role division between mothers and child caregivers, others, most notably Barry Hewlett (1992), examined in detail the differential roles of fathers and mothers.

[5] In response to the anthropological and cultural-psychological critique based on the notion of multiple caregiving, proponents of classical attachment theory have argued that the existence of several caregivers is compatible with monotropy and an "attachment hierarchy" (Cassidy 2016:15). In fact, multiple caregiving does not preclude one caregiver being more significant to the child than all the others. Complementary role division, by contrast, undermines this argument.

[6] Institutionally, my fieldwork was embedded in the research project "Socialization and Ontogeny of Emotions in Cross-Cultural Comparison" at the Freie Universität Berlin, funded by the DFG (German Research Foundation). The project had an interdisciplinary orientation, combining approaches from sociocultural anthropology and developmental psychology.

[7] Original in French, my translation.

[8] Original in French, my translation.

[9] Nsamenang (2011:63) suggests almost the same age range for child-tenders in traditional Cameroonian contexts (11–15 years). Studies on other societies have reported much younger child caregivers (for a review, see Weisner and Gallimore 1977). One reason for this deviation might be the presence of schooling, which limits the availability of older children as caregivers.

[10] For a comparable argument concerning Runa children in the Ecuadorian Amazon see Mezzenzana (2020:550).

[11] For a more detailed account, see Scheidecker (2017).

[12] Barlow (2013) proposes a similar pathway with regard to the Murik of Papua New Guinea.

[13] See Ward (2019) for an example of how such shifts in the social world of children in Ambo Tibet affect language acquisition.

References Cited

Ainsworth, Mary D. S. 1977. Infant development and mother-infant interaction among Ganda and American families. In *Culture and infancy: variations in the human experience.* P.

Herbert Leiderman, Steven R. Tulkin, and Anne Rosenfeld, eds. Pp. 119–149. New York: Academic Press.

Barlow, Kathleen. 2013: Attachment and culture in Murik society: learning autonomy and interdependence through kinship, food, and gender. In *Attachment reconsidered: cultural perspectives on a Western theory*. Naomi Quinn and Jeannette M. Mageo, eds. Pp. 165–188. New York: Macmillan.

Barry, Herbert S., and Leonora M. Paxson. 1971. Infancy and early childhood: cross-cultural codes 2. *Ethnology* 10(4):466–508.

Boyette, Adam H. 2016. Children's play and culture learning in an egalitarian foraging society. *Child Development* 87(3):759–69.

Boyette, Adam H., and Barry S. Hewlett. 2017. Autonomy, equality, and teaching among Aka foragers and Ngandu farmers of the Congo Basin. *Human Nature* 28(3):289–322.

Briggs, Jean L. 1998. *Inuit morality play: the emotional education of a three-year-old*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Brown, B. Bradford, and James Larson. 2009. Peer relationships in adolescence. In *Handbook of adolescent psychology,* vol. 2. 3rd edition. Richard M. Lerner and Laurence Steinberg, eds. Pp. 74–103. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Cassidy, Jude. 2016. The nature of the child's ties. In *Handbook of attachment: theory, research, and clinical application.* Jude Cassidy and Phillip J. Shaver, eds. Pp. 3–24. New York: Guilford.

Corsaro, William A. 1985. *Friendship and peer culture in the early years*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

———. 2009. Peer culture. In *The palgrave handbook of childhood studies.* Jens Qvortrup, William A. Corsaro, and Michael-Sebastian Honig, eds. Pp. 301–315. London: Palgrave.

De León, Lourdes. 2007. Parallelism, metalinguistic play, and the interactive emergence of Zinacantec Mayan siblings' culture. *Research on language and social interaction* 40(4):405–436.

Ejuu, Godfrey. 2015. Is this early childhood development ours? deciphering what African parents want their children to learn in early childhood development. *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work* 12(1):30–44.

Faircloth, Charlotte. 2014. Intensive parenting and the expansion of parenting. In *Parenting culture studies.* Ellie Lee, Jennie Bristow, Charlotte Faircloth, and Jan Macvarish, eds. Pp. 25–50. London: Macmillan.

Faublée, Jacques. 1954. *La cohésion des sociétés Bara*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.

Fouts, Hillary N., Barry S. Hewlett, and Michael E. Lamb. 2005. Parent-offspring weaning conflicts among the Bofi farmers and foragers of Central Africa. *Current Anthropology* 46(1):29–50.

Fouts, Hillary N., and Michael E. Lamb. 2009. Cultural and developmental variation in toddlers' interactions with other children in two small-scale societies in Central Africa. *European Journal of Developmental Science* 3(4):259–77.

Friedlmeier, Wolfgang, Feyza Corapci, and Pamela M. Cole. 2011. Emotion socialization in cross-cultural perspective. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 5(7):410–427.

Gaskins, Suzanne. 2006. The cultural organization of Yucatec Mayan children's social interactions. In *Peer relations in cultural context*. Xinyin Chen, Doran C. French, and B. Schneider, eds. Pp. 283–309. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gaskins, Suzanne, Wendy Haight, and David F. Lancy. 2007. The cultural construction of play. In *Play and development: evolutionary, sociocultural, and functional perspectives*. Artin Göncü and Suzanne Gaskins, eds. Pp. 179–202. Mahwah, NT: Erlbaum.

Goodwin, Marjorie H. and Amy Kyratzis 2012. Peer language socialization. In *The handbook of language socialization.* Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, and Bambi Schieffelin, eds. Pp. 365–390. Malden, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Harris, Judith R. 1995. Where is the child's environment? a group socialization theory of development. *Psychological Review 102*(3):458–489.

———. 2000. Context-specific learning, personality, and birth order. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 9(5):174–177.

Hay, Dale F., Marlene Caplan, and Alison Nash. 2009. The beginnings of peer relations. In *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups*. William M. Bukowski, Brett Laursen, and Kenneth H. Rubin, eds. Pp. 200–221. New York: Guilford.

Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan. 2010. The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33(2-3):61–83.

Hewlett, Barry S. 1992. *Intimate fathers: the nature and context of Aka Pygmy paternal infant care*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hewlett, Barry S., Hillary N. Fouts, Adam H. Boyette, and Bonni L. Hewlett 2011. Social learning among Congo Basin hunter-gatherers. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 366(1567):1168–1178.

Howes, Carollee. 2009. Friendship in early childhood. In *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups*. William M. Bukowski, Brett Laursen, and Kenneth H. Rubin, eds. Pp. 180–194. New York: Guilford.

Howes, Carollee, and Susan Spieker. 2016. Attachment relationships in the context of multiple caregivers. In *Handbook of attachment: theory, research, and clinical application.* Jude Cassidy and Phillip J. Shaver, eds. Pp. 314–329. New York: Guilford.

Huntington, Richard. 1988. *Gender and social structure in Madagascar*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Keller, Heidi. 2007. *Cultures of infancy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

———. 2013. Attachment and culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 44(2):175–194.

Keller, Heidi, and Nandita Chaudhary. 2017. Is mother essential for attachment: models of care in different cultures. In *Contextualizing attachment: the cultural nature of attachment.* Heidi Keller and Kim A. Bard, eds. Pp. 109–137. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Knodel, John, and Minh Duc Nguyen. 2015. Grandparents and grandchildren: care and support in Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. *Ageing & Society* 35(9):1960–1988.

Konner, Melvin. 1976. Relations among infants and juveniles in comparative perspective. In *Friendship and peer relations*. Michael Lewis and Leonard A. Rosenblum, eds. Pp. 99–129. New York: Wiley.

Lamb, Michael E. 1998. Nonparental child care: context, quality, correlates, and consequences. In *Handbook of child psychology,* vol. 4. 5th edition. William Damon, Irving E. Sigel, and K. Ann Renninger, eds. Pp. 73–133. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Lancy, David F. 1996. *Playing on the mother-ground: cultural routines for children's development*. New York: Guilford.

———. 2007. Accounting for variability in mother–child play. *American Anthropologist* 109(2):273–284.

———. 2008. *The anthropology of childhood: cherubs, chattel, changelings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Leiderman, P. Herbert, and Gloria F. Leiderman. 1974. Affective and cognitive consequences of polymatric infant care in the East African Highlands. In *Minnesota symposia on child psychology,* vol. 8. Anne D. Pick, ed. Pp. 81–110. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

LeVine, Robert A., Suzanne Dixon, Sarah LeVine, Amy Richman, P. Herbert Leiderman, Constance H. Keefer, and T. Berry Brazelton. 1994. *Child care and culture: lessons from Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Levy, Robert I. 1978. Tahitians: gentleness and redundant controls. In *Learning non-aggression: The experience of non-literate societies.* Ashley Montagu, ed. Pp. 222–235. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lew-Levy, Sheina, Stephen Kissler, Adam H. Boyette, Alyssa N. Crittenden, Ibrahim Mabullaj, and Barry S. Hewlett. 2019. Who teaches children to forage? exploring the primacy of child-to-child teaching among Hadza and BaYaka hunter-gatherers of Tanzania and Congo. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 41(1):12–22.

Lutz, Catherine A. 1988. *Unnatural emotions. everyday sentiments on a Micronesian atoll and their challenge to Western theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Markus, Hazel. R., and Shinobu Kitayama. 1991. Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review* 98(2):224–253.

Martini, Mary. 1994. Peer interactions in Polynesia: a view from the Marquesas. In *Children's play in diverse cultures*. Jaipaul L. Roopnarine, James E. Johnson, and Frank H. Hooper, eds. Pp. 73–103. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Maynard, Ashley E., and Katrin E. Tovote. 2010. Learning from other children. In *The anthropology of learning in childhood*. David F. Lancy, John Bock, and Suzanne Gaskins, eds. Pp. 181–205. New York: Altamira Press.

Mezzenzana, Francesca. 2020. Between will and thought: individualism and social responsiveness in Amazonian child rearing. *American Anthropologist* 122(3):540–553.

Michel, Louis. 1957. *Mœurs et coutumes des Bara*. Antananarivo, Madagascar: Imprimerie Officielle.

Morelli, Gilda A., Kim Bard, Nandita Chaudhary, Alma Gottlieb, Heidi Keller, Marjorie Murray, Naomi Quinn, Mariano Rosabal-Coto, Gabriel Scheidecker, Akira Takada, Marga Vicedo. 2018*a*. Bringing the real world into developmental science: a commentary on Weber, Fernald, and Diop (2017). *Child Development* 89(6):e594–e603.

Morelli, Gilda A., Naomi Quinn, Nandita Chaudhary, Marga Vicedo, Mariano Rosabal-Coto, Heidi Keller, Marjorie Murray, Alma Gottlieb, Gabriel Scheidecker, and Akira Takada.

2018*b*. Ethical challenges of parenting interventions in low- to middle-income countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 49(1):5–24.

Ng'asike, John T. 2014. African early childhood development curriculum and pedagogy for Turkana nomadic pastoralist communities of Kenya. In *Child development in Africa: Views from inside.* In Robert Serpell and Kofi Marfo, eds. Pp. 43–60. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Nsamenang, Bame. 2011. The importance of mixed age groups in Cameroon. In *Peer relationships in early childhood education and care.* Margaret Kernan and Elly Singer, eds. Pp. 75–87. London: Routledge.

Ochs, Elinor. 1988. *Culture and language development. language acquisition and language socialization in a Samoan village*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Oppong, Seth. 2015. A critique of early childhood development research and practice in Africa. *Africanus* 45(1):23–41.

Pellegrini, Anthony D. 2009. *The Role of Play in Human Development.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ritchie, Jane, and James Ritchie. 1979. *Growing up in Polynesia*. Winchester: Allen & Unwin.

Rogoff, Barbara. 1981. Adults and peers as agents of socialization: a Highland Guatemalan profile. *Ethos* 9(1):18–36.

Rogoff, Barbara, Gilda A. Morelli, and Pablo Chavajay. 2010. Children's integration in communities and segregation from people of differing ages. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 5(4):431–440.

Röttger-Rössler, Birgitt, Gabriel Scheidecker, Leberecht Funk, and Manfred Holodynski. 2015. Learning (by) feeling: a cross-cultural comparison of the socialization and development of emotions. *Ethos* 43(2):187–220.

Röttger-Rössler, Birgitt, Gabriel Scheidecker, Susanne Jung, and Manfred Holodynski. 2013. Socializing emotions in childhood: a cross-cultural comparison between the Bara in Madagascar and the Minangkabau in Indonesia. *Mind, Culture, and Activity* 20(3):260–287.

Scheidecker, Gabriel. 2017. *Kindheit, Kultur und moralische Emotionen: zur Sozialisation von Furcht und Wut im ländlichen Madagaskar* [Childhood, culture, and moral emotions: on the socialization of fear and anger in rural Madagascar]. Bielefeld: Transcript.

———. 2020. Unfolding emotions: the language and socialization of anger in Madagascar. In *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Emotion.* Sonya E Pritzker, Janina Fenigsen, and James M Wilce, eds. Pp. 49–72. London: Routledge.

Serpell, Robert. 2019. Perspectivist challenges for ECD intervention in Africa. In *Early Childhood and Development Work.* (pp. 39-68). Anne-Trine Kjørholt and Helen Penn, eds. Pp. 39–68. Cham: Palgrave.

Seymour, Susan. 2004. Multiple caretaking of infants and young children: an area in critical need of a feminist psychological anthropology. *Ethos* 32(4):538–556.

Shweder, Richard A., and Edmund J. Bourne. 1984. Does the concept of the person vary cross-culturally? In *Culture theory*. Richard A. Shweder and Robert A. LeVine, eds. Pp. 158–199. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tronick, Edward Z., Gilda A. Morelli, and Paula K. Ivey. 1992. The Efe forager infant and toddler's pattern of social relationships: multiple and simultaneous. *Developmental Psychology* 28(4):568–577.

Tronick, Edward Z., Gilda A. Morelli, and Steve Winn. 1987. Multiple caretaking of Efe (Pygmy) infants. *American Anthropologist* 89(1):96–106.

Takada, Akira. 2020. *The ecology of playful childhood. the diversity and resilience of caregiver-child interactions among the San of Southern Africa*. Cham: Palgrave.

Walker, Susan P., Theodore D. Wachs, Julie Meeks Gardner, Betsy Lozoff, Gail A. Wasserman, Ernesto Pollitt, and Julie A. Carter. 2007. Child development: risk factors for adverse outcomes in developing countries. *The Lancet* 369(9556):145–157.

Ward, Shannon. 2019. Learning Language, Transforming Knowledge: Language Socialization in Amdo Tibet. PhD Dissertation. New York: New York University.

Weisner, Thomas S. 2015. Childhood: anthropological aspects. In *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences,* vol. 3. 2nd edition. J. Wright, ed. Pp. 451–458. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Elsevier.

Weisner, Thomas S., and Ronald Gallimore. 1977. My brother's keeper: child and sibling caretaking. *Current Anthropology* 18(2):169–190.

Whiting, Beatrice B., and John W. Whiting. 1975. *Children of six cultures: a psycho-cultural analysis.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Zeifman, Debra M., and Cindy Hazan. 2016. Pair bonds as attachments: mounting evidence in support of Bowlby's hypothesis. *Handbook of attachment: theory, research, and clinical application.* Jude Cassidy and Phillip J. Shaver, eds. Pp. 416–434. New York: Guilford.