

Ethiopian/Israeli Children and Parents: Inner Lives in Transition
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We report on a three-year study of the inner lives of six year-old Ethiopian/Israeli children and their parents. The parents were all born in rural, pre-literate, subsistence agricultural, preliterate villages in Northern Ethiopia, near Gondar; most mothers were married by 13 years; most mothers are tattooed, including with crosses on their faces and arms. Half the children were born in Ethiopia and arrived as infants to Israel. Most fathers, from this formerly patriarchal society are marginalized, unemployed. Some originate from families force-converted to Christianity in the 1890 s.

How do these children think and feel about themselves, understand the worlds in which they live; how do the parents think of relationships and recall the world which they left, and feel and think about the world to which they came? What is the nature of attachment? What happens to inner lives in transition? These are the fundamental questions we hope to raise and begin to address today.

While we will show the children s pictures, tell their stories, show histograms of Child Behavior Checklists before and after war, and present parent and child attachments, the fuller sense of their lives and research methods are better captured by an account of a typical day at the after school program where I met them, of their neighborhood and playground and of home visits.

K nafa im^[1], is a dust-blown, sun-seared town in the northern desert between Beersheva and Gaza, near enough to Gaza to be bombed: It could be a movie set for a Sergio Leoni spaghetti Western. The town was formed by Moroccan immigrants in the 1950 s. Many resent the influx of Ethiopians, even envying their Soviet-style apartment buildings, as the Morrocans had to live in tents on arrival. K'nafa'im's entrance is easily missed: a frontage road suddenly branches from a six-lane highway near a bus juncture. At the first light, a sharp right takes you into a side-street lined with weary-looking malls and a gas station. After wending through over-parked streets and skirting the tarp-covered *shuk*, then flung around three traffic circles, you enter the boulevard of the school, which is in a gracious Jerusalem-stone clad building. It s presence is marred by the obstacle course entrance: garbage and recycling bins crowd the parking lot, strewn old sneakers, clothes and tissuey shopping bags whirling about; the gate is locked during school hours to prevent terrorist break-ins. The guard, a middle-age Moroccan often reads contemporary Hebrew literature, smiles as you approach, asking whom you will visit; he holsters a Berretta. He talks freely of his two sons in the army as he walks you to the sweeping staircase before the double-doored entrance. Avi,

the super, who wears a knit skull-cap, is likely about, getting food ready for the children, cleaning up or repairing. At the end of the day, he rides home on his bike, a tool basket strapped on the back. During the Gaza War, he worried about his son-in-law and son fighting there. Smiles light easily on his lips.

This day, I spend visiting E's classroom of six-year olds, where I have been the past three years. Children will join me to draw pictures and tell stories in the library or the hall table. At break, we head outside, where they ask for one of their favorite games: "El Al." I lift and soar them around as they shout where they will fly to: Jerusalem, or Paris, or America. They ask me to sing something in English, then chorus-in; we do "Somewhere over the rainbow." The girls show me a favorite game: a massive rubber band is held by two-girls around their ankles or legs, while other girls dance in and out reciting poems: Middle-East double Dutch. The boys approach complaining. They have plastic short Lacrosse sticks, but the balls are lost. We head inside, where I soak paper-towels and make balls. This both works to play and also sprays the over-heated children as they catch them. Other days, instead of heading outside, the children will ask to draw pictures and tell stories or read in the library with me. S., in particular, heads for me like metal filings to a magnet. She has corn rows, which are both pretty and also defeat lice, a scourge among Israeli children. She is lively. Boys do not to tangle with her, as she whacks back with interest. She travels with her cohort of 3-4 girlfriends. Her greeting is a great smile, a leap into my arms and a bear hug, followed by insistent requests for El Al, or picture drawing, or just visiting her class. Here, she lives life in upper registers. She's like a defensive lineman: if I say that I can't play with the children, as I have to meet with someone, she converts her entreaties to play into arm-waving and body-blocking other children.

After recess, the class heads for the computer room. Today, by happenstance, I meet with S's mother and Aliza, my Amharic/Hebrew translator. I will tell you more about this and other mothers, but for now, let me take you back a few weeks for a vignette about how I first *almost, sort of*, met this mother and learned something about S. and her mother.

On a day when the school was closed, I was waiting on the parking lot for Aliza, when some girls and their mothers passed by on the alley next to the school. I can't tell at first which children belong to which mothers; there is a touch of anomie in this group. One child looks familiar as she meanders with a downcast face. She looks at me briefly, then drops her gaze. I believe it is S. As they approach, she looks up again and as I smile to greet her, she smiles tightly. Finally, she introduces one of the women as her mother. The sense of distance from her mother, the lack of S's usual ebullience is strikingly different than what I have seen the past year when she is with her friends, her teachers or myself. I am reminded of Bowlby and the Robertson's description

of de-tached children in chronic disease hospitals: detached in their mothers' presence, but overly friendly to the hospital staff.

Today, after interviewing this mother, S. and a pack of her friends ask if I can walk them home and visit. They live perhaps five minutes away. At the curb, S. stands between her mother and myself, waiting for traffic to pass. S. surreptitiously extends her arm to me and works her wrist into my hand; her mother she doesn't touch. On the other side of the road, she releases herself to run ahead with the children, calling me to follow. She gathers a flock of friends to enter the building.

In the darkened landing, we are silently greeted by an ancient woman and almost toothless wizened man hidden in shadows, who S. briefly announces is her father. I know from mother that he is deaf and dumb, which mother learned on her wedding day. The children burst into S.'s three-bedroom apartment where the TV plays an Amharic station with repetitive, cheerful Amharic music playing, while teen-age Ethiopian actors dance shoulder-shimmies and sing. The half-dozen kids dance, bounce on the couch, run-about and ask me to visit their homes. S. introduces me to her sibs, including her sister-in-law and new baby and her brother, then S. tours me: the back bedroom where the young married couple and baby sleep, her parents' room, and her siblings' room, where all four sleep. Mother brings out sweet cakes for all, and a specially wrapped cake for me. S. is now carrying her infant nephew while dancing, his head bouncing backwards and his mother looking a bit nervous. I suggest S. and the children walk me back to the school, but before we leave, mother wraps some home-baked injara bread, a pita-shaped, spongy-textured flat bread with a slightly tart flavor. It is still warm.

At the school, the children ask to ride in my silver Prius. Some eight pile in and we tour the parking lot; other children run to join us, more pile in like some circus clowns. Seatbelts are forgotten as we circle the lot, children waving and cheering out the windows. Then, they head home, and I, to Jerusalem.

This gives a sense of how the research was done over two years. In more technical terms, as Wallerstein articulates in his recent article on Psa research, this study has both nomothetic and idiographic methods: nomothetic methods are repeated observations, like using standardized instruments; idiographic, like anthropological observations, or clinical sessions, are unique events that can be described. Let us turn to the more conventional nomothetic ways to look into the inner lives of these children.

I present three cohorts over six-year olds from 2008 to 2010. These children represent a random sample of one-quarter of all the Ethiopian children in *Kanafa*. We studied the children before and after the January 2009 Gaza action, during which time they were confined to their homes for almost

two weeks because of concern about rocket attacks; none landed in *K* *nafa* *im*.

I will present our children, then introduce the parents. The children were observed in the classroom, playground, neighborhood and, in select cases, at home. Each class has 14-18 children, a teacher and assistant teacher. Observers completed the **Child Behavior Checklist**, both before and following the Gaza action. All children were asked individually to draw and tell stories: first a **Draw-a-person** (both genders), **House, Tree and Kinetic Family Drawing**. Many asked to return to draw more for months afterwards. We also designed a visual Likert-type instrument suggested by Everett Waters, to measure the child's sense of **closeness with both teacher** and assistant teacher. This measure has five photographs of both teacher and assistant teacher with a black child (boy and girl sets) ranging in distance from holding hands to being at opposite sides of the page. The child is given a photo of either boy or girl and asked to put the child where they feel how close or far they are with the teacher or assistant teacher. This was performed three times and an average score is given. Children's attachment to the mother was assessed with the Waters=Dean Q-set at home and the neighborhood.
(power point \square closeness to teacher slides 1-5)

The school provided **academic scores** for reading and arithmetic: most children could not read on entrance, few could count beyond ten. **Demographics** include date and place of birth, number of siblings, single or double parent family. All families SES status was IV or V in the Hollingshead-Redlich Index.

Mothers were interviewed with the **Adult Attachment Projective**, designed by Carol George, then an **anamnesis** of her childhood in Ethiopia, marriage, immigration and current family life.

While all children and parents gave consent, the parents refused both audio and videotaping. Parents also insisted that we not use standardized tests that could be used by the school or social service systems, such as an IQ, Rorschach or CAT.

Rating. The Draw-a-Person (DAP) was rated with the Gesell criteria for developmental level. Then, each child's set of five pictures and stories (HTP and KFD) were rated using a five-point \square Emotional Health \square Likert scale ranging from optimal (5) to severe emotional disturbance requiring imminent treatment (1). Two psychoanalytic raters^[2] achieved interrater reliability: 88% exact concordance; 100% within one scale point. Differences of one point were discussed and resolved. The CBCL were rated for pre and post war.^[3]

The AAP's were performed on twenty-eight 2009 parents and rated by Carol George, who was blind to subject and background, although she knew

that these were Ethiopian parents. Two fathers were assessed instead of mothers; one mother had committed suicide two years earlier; one mother is unable to leave home for several years because of chronic psychosis. Q-set was performed on all children and repeated on a second home visit; scores were averaged.

Results.

CBCL

While no scores reached clinical range, *boys* □ *scores were significantly higher than girls* □, both before and after war. Scores were not statistically different before and after the Gaza operation.

(power point □ slides 6-8)

Gesell DAP: boys □ scores were significantly lower than the girls and girls scores are comparable to Gesell □s American norms.

(power point □ slides 9-10)

Closeness to teacher

Girls tend to feel closer to teachers than do boys.

□ **Emotional Health** □ : HTP and KFD

This scale runs from optimal emotional and developmental (Gesell Draw-a-Man) health (5) to average mental health (with modest Gesell delay or normative emotional concerns that could benefit from counseling) to severe emotional and/or developmental difficulties that require imminent, significant professional help[4]. All children are 6 - 6.5 years old.

Likert scores. Girls □ scores were higher than boys □.

5. Optimal emotional and/or developmental health. Developmental level (Gesell) on target for age. &/or Stories are rich, interesting, show signs of humor or hope. There may be developmentally-normative family romances. In Erikson's terms, there is significant initiative, care-giving and preparedness to expect help from adults. Much interpersonal interaction in stories. This child is the kind of child to whom other children will flock to for friendship and fun and teachers look to as leaders in the classroom. Child may also have a quiet quality, but with optimistic tones.
4. Good Emotional and/or Developmental health. Developmental level within six months of age. &/or Stories rich, interesting. May show signs of humor or hope. While other children may not be drawn to this child, he/she is a pleasure to have in the classroom and there are no significant clinical concerns about the child.
3. Average Emotional and Developmental Health. Developmental level within one year of age. &/or Stories are full. May or may not be interesting. There is

evidence of developmentally-normative concerns, but not significant enough to recommend clinical intervention. In Erikson's terms, while there is evidence of Initiative, there is little in the stories to suggest care-giving and there is evidence of guilt. No evidence of severe fixation, regression; no evidence of overt aggression, hostility, isolation or body damage in stories. Brief counseling of parents or child may be helpful.

2. Suboptimal Emotional and/or Developmental Health. Developmental lag of 1-2 years. &/or Need for clinical intervention. This child's stories show elements of isolation, loneliness, emptiness, body damage/mutilation, abandonment or severe conflict. Little or no Initiative, with predominance of guilt, harsh Superego. There may be elements of hope, but these are overwhelmed by darkness or pessimism.

1. Poor Emotional and/or Developmental Health. Developmental lag of >2 years. &/or Stories show profound isolation, possible psychotic thinking, mutilation, abandonment. No Initiative; much evidence of severe self-punishment, harsh superego. This child needs treatment imminently.

(power point □ slide 11)

(power point □ slide 12)

The **children □s drawings and stories**, as with dreams or Winnicott □s Squiggle game, reveal the child □s inner world via their associations. The children readily engaged in the drawings and stories flowed freely. The drawings/stories show the child □s developmental age, some aspects of self-representation and the child □s view of its immediate world. We tried, above, to capture the quality of inner emotional life by rating all of a child □s drawings/stories as optimal, average or suboptimal emotional health. Because you will see the final drawing, you see a montage of a sequence. The final drawing, in some ways, is analogous to summarizing a video sequence, or putting together Winnicott □s Squiggles into one summary drawing: in fact, children tell us the □chapters □ of the drawing in their stories. I will describe how the child proceeded over the drawing to offer a more complete sense of it.

Cases

Optimal Emotional life

These children □s stories were developmentally appropriate, with qualities such as family romance, sense of humor, hope. In Erikson □s terms, they are solidly in the stage of initiative versus guilt, with predominance of initiative and goal-directed action and caring. These children tend to attract both peers and adults.

1. 1408

(power point □ slides 13-16)

Note the sense of hope, fantasy, future and joy in the series of stories. When asked about the blue eyes, she turns to me with a smile and dismissive wave, saying "Come on! They're just wearing colored contacts." She calls the house a palace, as it has stairs inside and her union of King Shlomo and the Queen from Ethiopia captures the story of King Solomon's marriage to Queen of Sheba. The house is warm. As is the family she draws next: the baby well-cared for, the parents work and children go to parties, but also care for the baby. Hints of aggression towards the baby ("He can fall from the play pen and his head.") are defended against with a protective guard rail. In Erikson's sense, she shows a sense of play, initiative both for work and caring for others versus deep-seated guilt.

Let us look at two examples at the opposite end of the spectrum of emotional health.

13/09: Here are two picture stories from P. (girl w. umbrella and house)
(power point slide 17)

Note that this girl must wander; first some kids burned down her home, then he says she wanted to do this herself; the sun is out, but it rains directly on her. While he ends saying she has "fun," we hear this in the context of the story as a manic defense. The second story strengthens our concerns.
(power point slide 18)

This roof has a point that stabs kids in their backs, making them bleed, fall and die, all because they didn't listen to their father. Here, the boy speaks of transgressive actions and retributive punishments; in either Klein's or Erikson's framework, he is struggling developmentally. Another boy, 0709, tells us of the danger of women, when asked to draw a girl

(power point slide 19)

S. gets carried away with drawing all the children whom this woman monster will eat. Yet, for all her consuming, she remains angry because she remains hungry; possibly, like the ravenous panther in Dante's *Inferno*: the more she consumes, the hungrier she grows. Who can defeat her but a boy who must also become a monster, then is born aloft as a hero. And at this critical moment, at this peak moment of victory, S. begins licking his hand and falls silent.

While these boys' stories carry a sense of grimness, body damage, the danger of home, the next carries a different, albeit worrisome quality.

I (0108) is the ninth of nine children; he has three first names, two Hebrew and one Amharit. His clothes are filthy and his face has an empty appearance. He willingly draws the persons, the house and tree and gives short descriptions.

(power point slides 20-23)

But, when we ask for a family doing something, he turns his head, stares into a corner and does nothing. When asked if he knows what a family means, he nods yes, turns away again and stares.

Another boy, A, talks with his hand in his mouth, occasionally a crayon. He draws a boy, girl and tree and gives brief stories, including how the tree keeps its fruit hidden, has friends whom he misses. When asked to draw a house, he says plaintively and repeatedly, "I have no strength."

Both boys are too emotionally drained to have achieved the stage of initiative versus guilt. They are fixated, frozen in an empty time.

Let us look at one "average" child, 1208.

(power point slides 24-28)

The pictures are simple, diminutive; the Gesell DAP, while lacking a neck, as about six years old. The stories are straightforward and even hopeful. The boy drew a tree, he wants to bring a flower to his mother, the tree will grow with lots of leaves (Pict 2); only in the house picture do we have a hint of (projected) sadness: the house misses the family, loves them. We rated this as average: while many of us would suggest further assessment and possibly counseling for this child, he does not show the grimness, the body damage or the hopelessness of the previous two children, yet not quite the overarching brightness of the first child.

0608

(power point slides 29-30)

This boy tells of a deeply rich inner life, one filled with danger and possible hope. In the first picture, the life of the animals which he shares with his father is rich but also a world in which a mother will stab her child for trying to leave. In the second world, Goliaths are killed but so are heroes who may be stabbed in the back. But, when I asked Eli, as he was leaving, what happens after king Solomon, he turned about with a smile and a shrug and said dismissively that there were no kings left to kill.

Finally, one child, 0509, whose emotional robustness is stormed upon.

(power point slide 31)

When looking at this picture, the storm is obvious, but was an afterthought.

First, she drew the house with a strong red roof, her father decorating the house and even nature. She changes this cheerful portrait when she says suddenly, "I forgot something" and draws black clouds with purple rain, then a stormy wind that blows down everything the father had made. Several months later, while I was interviewing her mother, M. waited outside and drew a picture with a similar theme.

While as a group, our children's stories showed average emotional health, the discrepancy between boys and girls on both Emotional Health and the Gesell Draw a Person was impressive
(power point slides 32-33)

Their parents.

AAP..

I will present both the Adult Attachment Projectives and brief vignettes of these parents. In most cases, we interviewed the mothers, except for two fathers. These mothers were all born in Ethiopia, most did not attend school in their pre-literate, subsistence agriculture villages, married by thirteen and wore facial or arm tattoos.

But, I begin with the AAP as we had two surprising findings in addition to the attachment ratings.

Here are the eight AAP, which are given in a sequence to increase the level of the viewer's concern or anxiety about loss, separation or abandonment. While the first card is intended to be neutral, you will hear how this is not at all neutral for some mothers.

(power point slides 34-44)

Only one of fifteen parents was rated with autonomous/secure attachment; six had Unresolved (trauma/mourning) and the remainder insecure dismissive/defended. We will discuss these findings below, but let us hear their responses.

While the majority of the mothers saw, perceived the simple black and white drawings as did Western mothers, about one-third literally saw the projective drawings differently. Second, many of the mothers noted hand and hand gestures, eye-contact or their lack in the pictures, to interpret the emotional tone of the stories.

Card I

M#7/09: I think something warm, a fire and their hands & are trying to warm from afar. Looks like the sun, but the sun is not below (she points to the ball in the center) & They want to warm up; they feel happy at the end; when they have warmed enough, they will stop.

CARD II

M; 06/09

Looks to me like a house. The girl wants to enter. She has a problem. The line above the head is interfering with her & maybe she was outside. She wants to enter, but there is a problem. Standing next to the entrance & She probably arrived late. It seems as if she got hit by something (points to the line on the right of the girl's head). Someone three own her. If she is standing at the

entrance. Thinks alot, wants to enter, but to go back outside. Can □t so she needs to ask for forgiveness & If she asks for forgiveness, she will enter the house. Will manage. I f not she will have many problems.

M: 08/09

It □s a house, a synagogue. I don □t □ know. The girl raised her hand and hey cut off her hand. I don □t know

(What will she do now?)

Her hand is cut, she won □t do anything &.

She must be in pain.

Card III

M: 03/09

It □s a trip abroad or a vacation. It □s a couple going on vacation. They are both with their hands in their pockets. If there was love between them, they would have held hands or something. &.what □s this line (points to diagonal below)? It □s like he is feeling up and she down. He doesn □t □ look at her eye-to-eye (uses an idiom *b □gova eynaim*, which means, respectfully). It seems to me that there is a like a distance between them and the ands in the pockets.. it doesn □t look good &

Card IV

OOH! OOH! What happened to him. He is sad. Studies are too difficult (picks up card and points to the □bricks □ above). There are these stairs above. A sad child. Very. There are stairs up on both sides. The boy has a lot of problems & doesn □t know ho w to handle them. He is thinking about what wil happen, what he will do □how I a going to handle the problems □?...The stairs are above. He needs a lot of time to get to these stairs above & to deal with the problems he has to talk to people, try to solve &.

M: 07/09

Wahyiy! Wahyiy! A woman sits on a table, not a bench. Sad, like this & crying & If some.. sometimes people don □t get help. They say, □Il □ll do it myself, I □ll do it myself! □ I □ve been like this in the past. I □m stubborn: if I got myself into a problem alone I will get out of it alone. Because of this, I understand a woman like this.

Here are three examples of apparently visual denial.

Card VI

M: 08/09

I see a taxi &and the woman is supporting the boy. I think it □s a mother I don □t know why she □s holding him. I think she is telling him to sit down.(what are they feeling?) I don □t know. (what is the taxi doing there?) I don □t □ know &.(What is happening next to the taxi --- P.I. points to the two men and the guerney) I don □t see anything. (What are the mother and the boy seeing?) I don □t think they can see the taxi &.

Another woman thought that the two men were moving logs to build a house; I asked her to point to the house and she fingered the ambulance.

Card VII

M: 01/09

(Slaps hand on her forehead, laughs lightly afterwards)

What □s this!? It looks like a gardener or a farmer. It is not so clear. It looks to me like he works in gardening. Or it looks to me like a beehive (Hebrew for beehive is □*kaveret*, □ which is almost a homonym with graveyard, □*kevarim*. □) It looks to me like he lives in a village, not a city, a village. Could be agriculture. He works in a beehive. He worries about being stung by the bees. I don □t know what it is in the front.. I don □t know what this is (points to the tombstone before the man.)

(What □s he thinking or feeling?)

How to enter the beehive, what has to do. □What will I do? □

In the end he will manage.

M: 09/09

I □m tired! It □s hard for me. I see a man who is handicapped, disabled & his nose is not full. The face is not clear. He is well-dressed, but seems like a disabled person

(What □s he thinking?)

If he is handicapped.. his face and nose don □t look complete. He is thinking about his health

(what is he feeling?)

If he is handicapped, what can he, what can he think, what can he feel &.He will stay sad until god calls him and he will die.

Finally, a response that suggests that two-dimensional representation of three-dimensional space that we (and most of these mothers) □see □ since Renaissance times, is not seen by this mother.

CARD VIII

M:08/09

Oh mother! What is this?! Looks like a boy turning his face. On the other hand, looks like there is a stick. Next to his foot he has sticks or iron. (He □s thinking) that he doesn □t get it. He will get hit if the stick well fall on him. he is trying to prevent &..He is just standing. Maybe next to him there was iron or a tree that fell (laughs) If he will get it will hurt him and if not, nothing will happen to him. On the one hand, it □s not clear from how he stands; it looks like someone is trying to hit him, but on the (other) hand there is nothing next to him.

The parents □ stories

Time won □t permit us to hear vignettes from the parents □ lives, but you have already heard common themes: most quietly yearn for their villages, their

childhood freedom and simplicity, the warmth of the extended family, the streams, the landscape, even for the Hamadrayas baboons periodically raiding the huts for corn and bananas. Not all recall life so fondly: a minority recall having to flee because of blood feuds, the childhood marriage, and allude to the difficulty of life in the transitional villages in Gondar. But, all see greater possibilities for their children and many refer to a life-long desire to come to Israel. Some mothers are laconic about the status of their marriages: a few allude to distance, alienation, men living in the shadows of life.

I want to mention one father whom my Ethiopian research assistant wanted me to interview:

G. is handsome, with highly sculpted face; his tee shirt shows a powerful chest, yet slim build. He wears carefully pressed jeans. Engages easily and eye to eye. He has taken time off work and when the interview runs longer and he is phoned by work, he tells them that he needs to finish this meeting, and resumes without rushing. It is important to him to explain matters to me.

He smiles at memories of village

I have a lot of memories. I feel like I am still there right now. I yearn for it. I grew up in a big family. Big. Lots of bros. and sisters (How many sibs?) Too many. I had enough siblings. I was the last, the second to the last. My oldest brother has a son my age.

We made aliyah in 2001 because of the family, because Israel is our land. I was 33 so I came with my three children and wife &.

E. (in our study) was born here. She's number four. I have four children now. We moved here Jan 16 2001 to a kibbutz "A.", and lived in an absorption center for new immigrants, and were there for a year. ... Our situation wasn't good: My wife's family fought with my family; then my wife and I fought and separated. Then we got together again

& & After three months, we separated and divorced again. Today I raise the children by myself and she lives in G. (a few Km away)

& &

In Israel there is a cultural difference, like in the rights and obligations. My children are growing up in a different world than mine; different values. I am not teaching them values; they learn from the society, from the street.

The inner structure ('mivne') of a parent and a child are different. I grew up to honor parents: a million percent belief in the word of the parents, like Torah. Here, from an early age, the children are taught (about conduct) from others, school. The children connect quickly with the outside, not what is internal (he uses an ambiguous word -- internal to the family, or internal to the person b'ifnim)

The status of men is different in Israel. &. Men here don't know their rights, the laws. The men don't have any position, they are discarded, thrown out onto a street corner, out on the street by society. The women take advantage of it and that's what caused the break-up of the family. In my life I went through a lot of difficulties. I needed to explain myself a lot of times. That's why there are men who won't reveal their problems and difficulties; they give up. I was strong, I persisted, which is why I am raising the children.

(It's difficult to raise all four alone?)

You want me to tell you the truth or a lie? A lie is, it's no problem [smiles].

If someone knows how to pursue things to the end, you can do things here.

But, some men don't know their rights.

(Can you give me an example).

An example? When my youngest found a piece of electrical wire on the playground at school, her older brother told her not to play with it, to throw it down. She refused. Then he said, "if you don't throw it down, I will give it to Daddy and he will beat you with it. □

A teacher on the playground heard this and made a report to the police. The Police initiated an investigation; an investigation! After some months they found out from my children and neighbors that I never hit them. But, now, if my children do something wrong in public, do you think I raise my voice?

Ever? And my children know this too. (He leans across the table towards me.)

What would this do to you? What would this do to you? How would you handle it?

& & & &

During Mr. G's account, my generally quiet, polite translator, Aliza is nodding affirmatively to what he says about both men and the deterioration of family and transmission of values in Israel. After he leaves, for the first time in two years, Aliza talks openly about young adolescent girls □ sexual delinquency in town with Bedouin men. She suggests that this is connected to the break-down of teaching children the family's values and o what Mr. G. recounted. While I had heard that a form of prostitution or sexual license occurred with young adolescent Ethiopian girls in other communities, this the first time it is confirmed by someone in K □nafa □im.

Discussion

Our aim is to glimpse, to grasp, to understand what we can of the developing inner lives of these children and their parents-- lives in transition. How can we weave together the nomothetic measures □ CBCL, HTP, AAP □ with the more idiographic observations of listening to their stories being with them in school, playground, home?

Erikson in *Childhood and Society* writes,

□ *There is in every child, in every stage.. a new miracle of vigorous unfolding.. a new hope and a new responsibility for all.* □

At the stage of these children □s development, Erikson continues, □ initiative adds to autonomy the quality of undertaking, planning and □ attacking □ a task for the sake of being active &. The danger of this stage is a sense of guilt over goals contemplated acts initiated.. aggressive manipulation & □ A goal at this stage is of *mutual internal regulation* of the more infantile □,, exuberance of growth potentials and parental set which supports and increases *self-observation, self-guidance and self-punishment.* □

Now, schools have a role: □ offer children & an economic ethos.. in the form of ideal adults. □ (p. 258). But, the child must be developmentally ready for these adults.

For these six year olds, the after school program of *K □naf □aim* is an extension of school, it is their first serious venture into a world outside their families, families who, we suggest, live between two worlds. In terms of initiative versus guilt, the girls in this group are well-situated; the boys struggle. The children □s stories, their pictures can be read by analysts as stories from children in many other cultures; the pictures nor the stories sound alien to us.

But the life stories of the mothers and even the fathers will sound unique and compelling to many of us. All our mothers but two were married by thirteen years. One was married at nine, returned to her family at ten, then married off to someone else; she refuses to talk about the first □ marriage. □ While these parents come from a pre-literate, subsistence culture, many recall their childhoods with fondness and even yearning. Not all; some mothers are relieved to have left what for them was a setting in Ehtiopia of blood feuds, grinding poverty, and ritual childhood □ surgeries, □ such as periorbital incisions to stop tearing, uvula resection at one year of age and molar removal at two, let alone cliteroidectomy.

Our adult attachment results are surprising and worrisome. Of fifteen children, *one parent showed autonomous/secure* attachment, six *Unresolved* with respect to trauma or mourning, the remainder *Insecure/dismissive*. We need consider to what extent the AAP is an accurate measure of Ethiopian adults □ attachment; we need examine the interactions between parent and child to learn whether the AAP in fact is capturing the nature of interaction (as

was done in the Northern Germany studies of infants). But, we must consider the possibility that these parents' lives, particularly the childhood ritual surgeries (cliteroidectomy, uvula removal, periorbital incisions, and possibly marriage in early youth) may result in forms of insecure or Unresolved working models of attachment. There is suggestion in the responses to the AAPs that many do not consider themselves active agents in their future: in fact, god will decide.

Van IJzendoorn and colleagues' meta-analysis of over 2,000 AAIs found that in nonclinical samples, the distribution is 58% *Autonomous*, 24% *Dismissive*, 18% *Preoccupied*. But, 19% were *Unresolved* with respect to trauma or mourning. In lower SES groups, such as ours, dismissive and unresolved were more prevalent. Immigration, per se, as a stressful, even traumatic variable needs to be assessed. Our study adds acutely to these findings.

Several studies suggest possible developmental explanations for our findings. For instance, Levine et al (1994) reported in Africa, discouragement of eye-to-eye contact between adults and children. True, et al. in a study of the Dogon of Mali, (2001) found that there was an association between discouraged eye-contact and other frightening parental behaviors with insecure attachment. In Ethiopian immigrants, observers report that children are taught not to make eye-to-eye contact with adults; however, we found in our children that they freely made eye contact with non-parental adults. We do not have enough observations to confirm whether this is so with their parents.

There may be a connection between parental attachment and attachment to nonparental providers (Ahnert, et. al. 2006). Our closeness to teacher measure begins to assess this, but a study with Waters-Deane Q-Set, AAP and the closeness measure would need to assess this systematically. Our observations suggest a phenomenon closer to Bowlby and Robertson's thoughts about children in hospital: the over-friendliness to nurses may be a form of seeking security with alternative parent-surrogates.

What of our prevalence of insecure/dismissive parents? George writes, "Dismissing is an organizing tool that works to neutralize & cool down attachment. & most of the dismissing material in these AAPs evidence of some form of emphasis on achievement, work, school, personal strength to overcome difficulty. To the extent that these parents see or value achievement aspects of relationships (even rightfully so) they are likely to be ignoring important attachment cues combined with their own trauma. Trauma may infect the relationship. George continues, "We don't see this kind of trauma in story after story, case after case, in normative samples."

Whether these children may find succor with alternative figures, how this affects their relationship with their parents and how this affects the dynamics of

the family and inner lives of these children living between cultures, we will need to pursue.

In some sense, I feel like Hermes, returning with winged feet from visiting another land, an inner landscape in this case, to report to you what inner life is like in these islands of thought and feeling. For the most part, I hope I leave you with the sense that these children do not live in lands that are so strange or foreign to us; but many Ethiopian parents do. In some sense the parents and children occupy the same physical space, but live in different worlds. How do we explore this further, respecting such apparently foreign, but very human landscapes, and moreso, help them immigrate more completely.

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Ethiopian/Israeli Children and Parents: Szajnberg, Minde

[1] The town s, program s name and children s names are disguised for confidentiality.

[2] I thank Yolanda Gampel for her generosity and clinical acuity in rating these.

[3] While we piloted the Waters-Deane Q-Set, we were unable to evaluate all the children at home this year.

[4] Note: for this scale, developmental health refers only to the Gesell Draw-a-Person.