



Fig.018 Illustration showing natives sited in front of their huts making necklaces. These ornaments are made of natural material and decompose with time. The fact that they are not long-lasting and that they are continuously shared as gifts among the natives, do not make them an object of jealousy.

Generosity Among the Natives of Higher Africa

Natives don't have "a word of thanks" for receiving a gift since they have "no use for such conventions" but they show a "cordial generosity" in return "thrusting gifts upon" people as soon as they have some to share. The result has "far more genuine worth than any perfunctory" word of thanks (Schebesta 1933). Also, anything that is "useful or edible" among natives is considered "antisocial" to "selfishly hoard it instead of sharing". Even after "a lifetime of hard work in the forest" an old native may own next to nothing. Outside his hut he may have "two cooking pots", a "wooden mortar" and a knife". On him he could have his "tattered bark cloth" and against "the smoke-blackened wall of the hut" his "well-worn bow" as "a proud reminder of his days as a hunter". Despite this the old native is "not aware" that he has so little and think of himself as "having everything an old man could wish to have, for he had his children and grandchildren living around him". Moreover, if one of his yet-to-be-married daughters spend the night with a stranger and the latter gives him "a stainless-steel hunting knife" as a gift, the old man is "well pleased" and loans it around "for a day to each of his hunting friends". And if his wife gets a piece of candy, she breaks in "tiny" pieces and shares it "among many people" (Duffy 1984).