



Fig.036 Illustration showing a native man lighting up a pipe from which he is smoking hemp. As Hallet also points out, natives don't get wasted from this smoking but get more energetic and face their demanding days of hunting and gathering and roaming around the forest fully re-energized.

Intoxication Among the Natives of Higher Africa

As natives manage to kill a forest elephant a "long caravan" of black people arrives carrying "large empty wicker baskets for the prospective load of meat". As a reward the natives get some "bananas and a big pot of pombe". The leader of the blacks makes an "imperious gesture" and seize the spears of the natives giving them in return machetes "to cut up the corpse". Later the machetes are also "returned to the masters". Despite this treatment native elders do not approve of "strong drink, beer or wine" saying that it is "debilitating" and destroying "the physical and moral health of the community". As a result, some natives are "chronic alcoholics" behaving like "hoodlums". But natives claim to "have smoked hemp since the beginning of time" by means of a "bamboo water pipe" and far from being "slowed down or stupefied" native hemp smokers "walk and run up to fifteen miles a day during their hunts and sometimes dance for hours in the evenings". Not only hemp "increases the vital force" but they suffer "no ill effects" and do not have a "psychological compulsion to smoke hemp" (Hallet 1964). So, beside the "potent banana beer" villagers brew for the natives in exchange for their elephant meat, the latter "inhale bangi smoke" from a pipe made from "the stem of a banana leaf" (Duffy 1984).