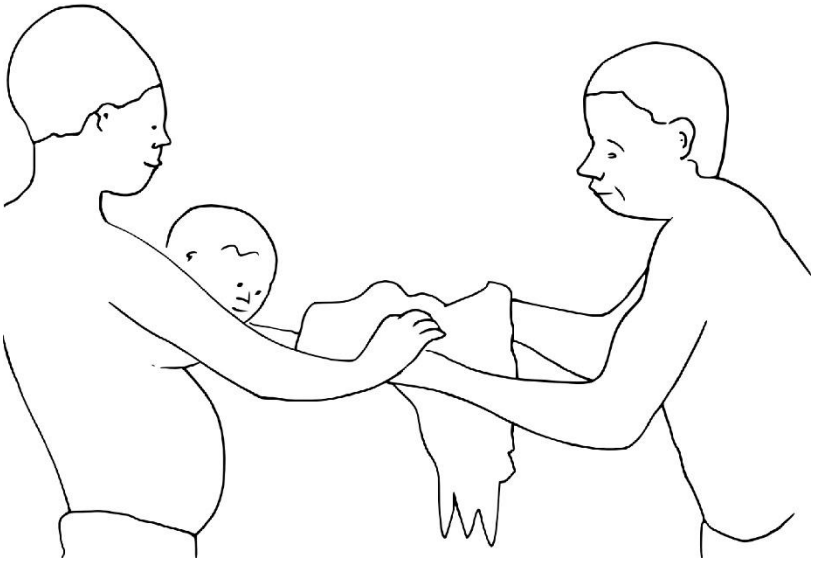

Fig.020 Illustration showing a native giving to another native a share of the meat he has just hunted. Sharing it is engrained in their customs and enables members who have no possibility to obtain their food to thrive. In this case an older hunter provides a young mother with her share. Perhaps this time he was the lucky one and her husband came home empty-handed.

Sharing Among the Natives of Higher Africa

Natives have a "clearly defined home territory" in which the tribe "hunt and collect the produce of the forest". On the other hand, "each family has its ant-hill, which it alone exploits". In this respect everyone has "an equal claim to the entire territory" and no one "can call a patch of land his own". At the end of the day "everything is common property" and the "welfare" of the tribe is ensured by the fact that the "proceeds of the hunt and the fruits of the forest are common property". Elders "cut up" the day's game and divide it "among the individual families". In this respect the "man who killed the animal has no say in the actual division". Moreover "even an outside family group" can have a "claim on the grounds of kinship by marriage". To be more specific vegetables are rarely shared "owing to the fact that all the women of the family group" who set out gathering "bring home approximately similar quantities". But for whatever reason when a family group have nothing "the others come to their assistance". In substance the tribe "represents the nucleus of primitive social and economic life". If an individual family is left for any length of time to their own resources" it would meet with the fate of an ant isolated from its group (Schebesta 1933).