

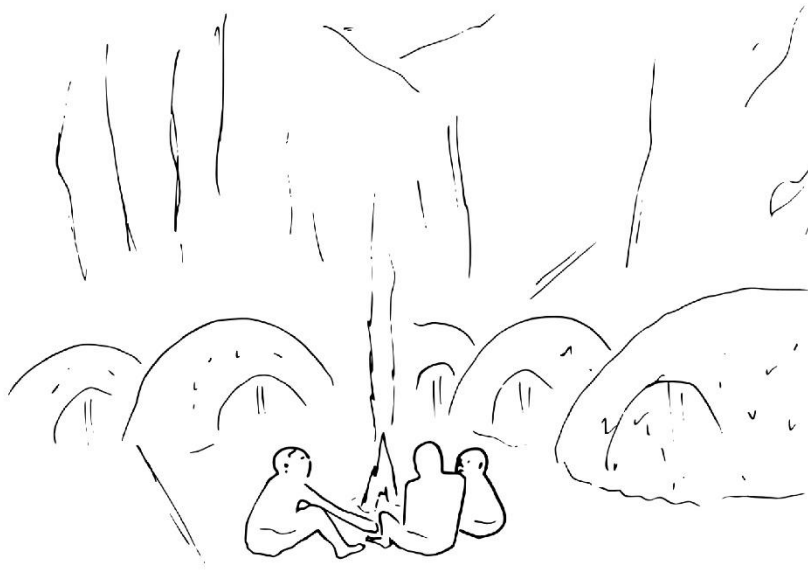


Fig.005 Illustration portraying a group of natives sitting around a fire and chatting. This chatting can be based on a particular hunt expedition that just occurred or it can be an actual storytelling section in which the ancient lore is transmitted from generation to generation since the beginning of time.

Storytelling Among the Natives of Higher Africa

Natives are "exceedingly interesting" going as far as speaking "several languages" like that of their black neighbours (Schebesta 1933). Their language however is more similar to that of the whites with sentences such as "Afa osi éma, father sees mother" or "Mai éma udi, my mother digs" or "Eti muné mai oro! Give me my arrow!". And when it comes to learning European science, they can easily be "taught reading, writing and arithmetic" quickly resolving "that $12 \times 23 = 276$." Remarkably natives "have an average cranial capacity of nearly 1,500 cubic centimeters" while "the range for European Caucasoids is 1,300" (Hallet 1973). But these natives "are incapable of any sustained" discussion getting "bored" and refer to an "old man" for "the required information". An old man then is the repository of knowledge and "once his interest in the saga was thoroughly aroused, he went into exhaustive detail and illustrated incidents in his narrative with gestures and weird vocal inflections" (Schebesta 1933). During a "shared meal" he tells stories with "great drama and irresistible humor" and has an "extraordinary ability to make sound effects and to mimic the people he talked about causing the audience to roar with laughter" and is capable of even to "reenact" antelopes, hogs, elephants and other games (Duffy 1984).