

## On the G|ui Experiences of ‘Being Hunted’ : Analysis of Oral Discourses on the Man-Killing by Lions

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## **On the G|ui Experiences of ‘Being Hunted’: Analysis of Oral Discourses on the Man-Killing by Lions**

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### **ABSTRACT**

‘Since the old days, we had encountered the lion, and lived in the same land. We (the people and the lion) were created together. We cannot fear him.’ This discourse of a G|ui elder, objecting to the relocation program implemented in 1997 by the Botswana government, provides us with a clue for reconsidering human–animal relationships in the recent socio-political context of the Central Kalahari. From 1982 to 2014, the author conducted fieldwork among the G|ui San, at both the Xade settlement inside the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) and at the relocated village, Kx’oensakene (New Xade). One important purpose of this longstanding investigation has been to illuminate the habitual thoughts and practices of the G|ui toward animals. This chapter specifically examines the dread of *paa-χó* (bite-thing), whose prototype is the set of harmful animals such as lions, leopards, and poisonous snakes. The author devotes special attention to three incidents of humans killed by lions that occurred before the 1970s. The narrators interpret that two of these attacks resulted from the ‘curse’ (*/χoi*) of a particular woman. This interpretation correlated with an enigmatic concept, *cimā*, that implied the dark side of the circuits of corporeal syntony spreading over not only interpersonal relationships, but also interactions among humans, animals, and things. In an encounter with a lion in daytime, the G|ui tried to negotiate with this overwhelming ‘other’, projecting some communicative expectation toward that other. In the recent context of modernization, an intelligent adolescent G|ui man who had enjoyed higher education felt it difficult to articulate various beliefs related to ‘supernatural’ agency that had been prevalent among elder generations. In spite of this, he spontaneously associated these beliefs with the woman’s curse that had caused attacks by the lion. Those of the younger generation still harbor a sense of discerning some family resemblance among diverse incidents that are symptomatic of invisible agents. Human vulnerability to the *paa-χó* animals that had shared the most fundamental conditions of nomadic life has rapidly lost its underpinning in settlement life. However, if the G|ui of the younger generation keep remembering that the human being (*k<sup>h</sup>óè*) has an equal relationship with the

animal, in that he not only hunts it but also sometimes is hunted by it, then they would obtain a valuable epistemological resource for holding and renovating the unique view of the world that had been fostered by their hunting-gathering way of life.

## INTRODUCTION

‘Since the old days, we had encountered the lion (*χám*), and lived in the same land. We (the people and the lion) were created together. We cannot fear him<sup>1)</sup>.’ This discourse of a G|ui old man, |Xou, objecting against the relocation program implemented in 1997 by the Botswana government, provides clues for reconsidering human/animal relationships in the Central Kalahari. Before explicating this subject, one should understand the research history and methodology.

The G|ui and G||ana are closely related dialect groups of Khôe-speaking people. These groups have adapted to the harsh, dry environment of the Kalahari Desert (Tanaka 1980). The G|ui phonology and grammar were explicated systematically through a collaborator, the linguist Hiroshi Nakagawa (Nakagawa 1996, 2006). In G|ui, four types of click influx (dental: |, alveolar: !, palatal: †, and lateral: ||) and thirteen types of click accompaniments are distinguished. Consequently, 52 (= four times 13) types of click consonant are distinguished. The order of words basically follows the Subject + Object + Verb structure (Nakagawa 2013). Anthropological investigation of the G|ui was pioneered by George Silberbauer in the 1950s (Silberbauer 1981). Silberbauer contributed to the establishment of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (‘CKGR’) that was demarcated in 1963. In 1966, Jiro Tanaka started his study of ecological anthropology, primarily in the Xade area, located in the mid-western part of CKGR (Tanaka 1980). In 1979, the Botswana government started to make the people living in this area settle around the !Koi!kom borehole<sup>2)</sup>. In 1997, the government conducted its relocation program so that all of the Xade settlement residents, including G|ui, G||ana, and Bakgalagadi agro-pastoralists, migrated to Kx’oensakene (New Xade), a new settlement outside the CKGR about 70 km distant from Xade (Tanaka 1987).

From 1982 to 2014, the author conducted thirty fieldwork sessions among the G|ui, both at Xade and Kx’oensakene. The purpose of this longstanding investigation is immanent comprehension of the G|ui ‘form of life’ that has been embedded in a unique social, historical, and ecological context (Sugawara 2013). One important aspect of this investigation is to reveal the habitual thoughts and practices of the G|ui toward animals. Recently, this task has been accomplished in a volume, *A Phenomenology of the Hunting/Hunted Experiences: Corporeal Syntony and Metamorphosis among the Bushmen* (Sugawara 2015). The present chapter specifically describes the dread of *paa-χó* (bite-thing), i.e., harmful animals, as exemplified by the lion. Special attention will be devoted to three

incidents of human killing by a lion (or lioness) that occurred before the 1970s. This chronology might incur suspicion that my study epitomizes 'salvage anthropology' that has little relevance to the actual circumstances faced by contemporary San. However, it is my confidence that the prominent responsibility for an anthropologist who is personally committed to the San former foragers, is to depict the brightness and hardship that had permeated their life in the 'wilderness'. This reconstruction must solidify the ground for radical criticism against the modernization that has overwhelmed all the San communities.

### **IMMANENT COMPREHENSION OF ORAL DISCOURSE: METHODOLOGY AND BASIC CONCEPTS**

This methodology is designated as 'phenomenological positivism'. The following analysis of ethnographic material is phenomenological in that the comprehension of the sense lived by the G|ui illuminates the continuity of immediate experience between them and myself. The methodology is positivistic in that the author endeavors to construct an ethnographic description that rigidly relies on direct observations, including systematic transcription of conversations and narratives. In 1994, twelve years after commencement of the first research, the author began to collect life-history narratives from several G|ui elder men. This collection has continued to the present. The method used to record the narratives is designated as an 'artificial setting of an interview' consisting of tripartite interactions among an informant (an elder man), one or more research assistant(s) from a younger generation, and the author. All utterances during the interview were recorded using an audio-tape recorder. Most of the interactions between the informant and the assistant(s) were also recorded using a video camera. The advantage of this method is its feasibility for analyzing the process of negotiation from which the narrative emerged and through which it was socially organized.

Through the laborious task of analyzing everyday conversations of 1987–1992 (Sugawara 1996; 2009; 2012), hunting was noted as the favorite topic for the G|ui men to discuss. However, soon after collecting the narratives, the author encountered another type of story, in which the narrator had been attacked by a leopard or the narrator's father had been killed by a lioness. Furthermore, during research conducted in 1999, the author recorded a striking story in which a woman had been killed by a lion. Analysis of the last story led to some assessment of the 'body arrangement' that forms an essential core of the past incident.

It is necessary to formulate the concept of body arrangement tentatively (Sugawara 2006)<sup>3</sup>. The primary resource that constitutes an instance of body arrangement is a specific pattern of face-to-face interaction that includes postural stance and its shifts, proxemic relations, verbal/gestural interchanges, and so on, among those who are immediately co-present in any kind of encounter or gathering (Goffman 1963). It is assumed that, so far as the co-presence continues,

its participants incessantly perceive this interactional resource mostly at an unconscious level. After a lapse of time, when some of the previous participants are motivated to recollect the above co-presence, the person is apt to recollect it as a discrete ‘incident’ that *was* demarcated by an intrinsic beginning and ending<sup>4)</sup>. Furthermore, the person might divine some meaning underlying this incident through a particular body arrangement. In this sense, the body arrangement is not to be reduced to any of the above constituents of interactional resource that can be identified objectively from an external perspective. Rather, through the iteration of recounting the past incident, the body arrangement settles into invariant memory that reifies the core meaning of that incident. Consequently, proposing the concept of body arrangement requires reconsideration of the nature of memory.

For more than three decades, an intriguing current has proceeded in the discipline of cognitive psychology that assigns special attention to the ecological environment in which the recollection of a past incident is prompted (Neisser ed. 1982; Neisser and Hyman eds. 2000). This current originates from a classic work of social psychology that illuminates the significance of cultural context for reserving and modifying a long-term memory (Bartlett 1932). Several studies engaging in this current cast doubt on the dominant view of neuropsychology, as well as of its vulgar version, that equates the activity of recollection with the recovery of mental representations stocked in the brain. In the discipline of anthropology, being stimulated by the cognitive science of memory, Maurice Bloch put special emphasis not only on culture-specific styles of narrative, but also on particular ecological settings that motivate local people to recollect and to talk about past incidents (Bloch 1998). In accordance with this line of argument, one can regard the body arrangement as an important aspect of embodied thought that is deeply rooted in the corporeality of participants who had experienced a peculiar incident and who attempt to comprehend its meaning from within a here-and-now context (Varela et al. 1991).

Immanent comprehension is the key of the phenomenological methodology developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962), who emphasized that the essence of ‘spoken word[s]’ is not the transfer of representation, but rather consists in expressive gesture. Generally, the prerequisite for any discourse analysis is to understand the representations that are encoded into oral language. However, this process of encoding can be regarded, in itself, as motivated by human corporeality. The most important motivation that organizes discourse is emotion. The primary strategy of the following analyses is to grasp the act of talking about the past experience as an emotional act (Sugawara 2013).

### **ITERATION OF NARRATIVE AS AN EMOTIONAL ACT<sup>5)</sup>**

Presumably, the narrative of a particular experience might be told repeatedly in the everyday life of the G|ui. An important channel runs from parents to children. In fact, one of the author’s research assistants, Thabuuka, had told the author quite

a short version of the following narrative before recording it from his father, N!uekucue. Since childhood, Thabuuka might have heard such a narrative repeatedly. For convenience of analysis, the whole narrative is divided into four parts.

**[Case 1]** ‘Daddy was killed by a lioness’ [N!uekucue (1926?–2001); recorded on October 2, 1994]:

(1) It was the mid-rainy season. We were living at |Ou [land name] near the N!ootsono pan<sup>6</sup>. During those several days I had kept searching for a juvenile gemsbok that was loitering around our camp. One morning, Daddy went hunting together with Sukuuta, who was Daddy’s [classificatory] cross-cousin. About at noon, I overtook that gemsbok and beat her to death. The women were going out to draw water from the N!ootsono pan. I dragged the carcass to near our camp. When the women came back, I was skinning the carcass. In the evening, we made a fire and roasted the meat with hot ash. We kept waiting for Daddy to come home. At night, only Sukuuta came back breathlessly.

(2) Sukuuta told us the following. In the morning, he parted from Daddy and continued springhare hunting. In the evening, on the way to our camp, he was so thirsty that he took a side trip to the ‘tree-water’ (*iĩ-tsʰáā-sà*: rain water remaining in a hollow tree). Under the tree, a lioness who had raised her infants attacked him. Swinging the *gʰàñ* (a long pole for springhare hunting), he narrowly escaped death. However, he dropped his hunting bag there. Listening to this, I blamed him, saying, ‘You should have caught Daddy on his way to home’. Until midnight, Daddy did not come back. Worrying about him, we slept.

(3) The next morning, I urged Sukuuta to take me to the ‘tree-water’. When we approached that tree, we noticed something brown hung on the branch. I immediately recognized it as the coat Daddy had worn, but Sukuuta insisted that it was his hunting bag. As we were mutually arguing, the lioness heard our voices and ran to us. I ran away at full speed, leaving Sukuuta behind. After a while, hearing his cry of supplication, I stopped to wait for him. The second next morning, we tracked Daddy’s footprints, and at last found that those footprints had joined into the trail of the lioness. Getting a distant view of that tree, we saw vultures flying over it. At this moment, we became convinced that Daddy had died.

(4) Coming back home, I told the women of this bad news. From that time, they spent their days in tears. I decided to migrate to my [classificatory] uncle’s camp. Arriving at that camp, I informed its residents of Daddy’s death. Next evening, my elder brother, Piri, and his wife unexpectedly visited this camp on their way to traveling to our homeland, Kaochue (located about 40 km south of Xade). Hearing of Daddy’s death, Piri wept. The next morning the couple left the camp for Kaochue. After a while, I and another several men of the camp traveled to a big waterhole near Rakops (a town located outside CKGR about 190 km northeast to Xade) to get tobacco leaves. After coming back, and still enjoying the remaining tobacco, Piri and

his wife joined us with a present of a foreleg of a goat. A rich man, Gyuroo, living at !Kaidzi (near Kaochue) slaughtered the goat for the couple. Piri so eagerly urged us to migrate to !Kaidzi that, finally, we migrated. Our death in the past occurred in this way.

What is the body arrangement that forms the most basic core of this disastrous incident? Before answering this question, one must devote particular attention to the iteration of the narrative about the same incident. Two years later than the recording of the narrative presented above, the author interviewed N $\neq$ uekucue again, but on different topics. After he had talked about his hunting experience and the habits of several animal species, his daughter in her adolescence (Thabuuka's younger sister) knowingly suggested to him that he narrate a funny folktale. Being offended by his daughter's interference, N $\neq$ uekucue declared, 'I'll never tell of such a useless thing!' and firmly began to tell of the same incident in which his father had been killed by a lioness. These two narratives are designated as ver. 1 and ver. 2, respectively. From strict comparison of the sentences used for the speech constituting each corresponding part between the two versions, strikingly great differences were confirmed, especially in (1) and (4).

As pointed out in the previous section, it is misleading to assume that the past event exists in the narrator's memory as a fixed representation, or as a consistent 'text', that would be reproduced automatically at every opportunity of narration (Bloch 1998). Far from that, being highly sensitive to the 'now-and-here' context, the narrator undertakes a subtle cognitive task of 're-editing' the intrinsically indefinite material of remembrance. This indeterminacy of recollection, as well as the thorough nature of re-editing, is also evidently observed, even in parts (2) and (3), even though the two versions share mutually similar 'contents' in these parts. Finally, a cluster of sentences was sorted out, which preserved the most distinctive similarity between the two versions. This was Sukuuta's cry, supplicating the narrator to wait for him, which had been shouted during their running from the lioness, and which was represented by the direct narration:

Version 1: 'Wait for me! Do you throw away me? Wait for me! Me! Wait for me!'

Version 2: 'Me! Wait for me! Do you throw away me? Do not throw away me! Do not throw away me! Listen to me!'

This direct narration, in general, has a privileged status for discourse analysis. It is plausible to assume that, by the discrete nature of language, the multi-faceted ambiguity of a past incident is filtered out when the narrator quotes somebody's words that were uttered at some critical phase of that incident. If this is true, then we can expect that the oral sentences quoted by direct narration would acquire

special stability that can survive the relentless test of re-editing. However, this assumption does not hold true for this case: most of the 'utterances' quoted by direct narration varied greatly in the two versions. Why, then, does Sukuuta's cry of supplication maintain such consistency after having gone through the thorough re-editing?

The answer is that the body arrangement that forms the most essential core of this incident is condensed into this cry. When the audience members listen to this cry vividly enacted in a loud voice, a scene might arise in their minds so clearly, in which the three 'protagonists' (i.e., the narrator, Sukuuta, and the lioness) are arranged in the most unavoidable configuration. This arrangement can be called 'the most unavoidable' because it equals the most essential body arrangement for this incident, which in turn is most deeply associated with the narrator's emotion. This emotion is persistent anger against Sukuuta, who had been able to wait for the narrator's father in the midst of his predictable course to the 'tree-water' and to warn him against the danger. That emotion motivated the narrator to tell of the 'same' incident repeatedly to the same audience, in this case, the author.

### BODY ARRANGEMENT EMERGING FROM THE CO-ENACTMENT

The second case of human-killing by the lion was collected five years after the recording of Case 1.

[Case 2] 'Why was she killed by the lion?' [||Qaogyi (1928?-2011); recorded on August 10, 1999]:

The principal of this story is Kemagyi, who had been regarded as 'stupid' (*piripiri*) by the people. He had three wives and especially loved the youngest, third wife, Ton≠ebe. Several days before the disaster, Kemagyi and another two men collected three ostrich eggs that were divided among them. Because the husband obtained only one egg, the first wife, |Kheig||ae, sulked. Kemagyi became so angry that he badly abused her. Then, she replied quietly, 'You are very happy for getting married with the young girl, but she will be attacked soon'. She 'cursed' (*/χoi*) the third wife. It rained that night. Lying in Ton≠ebe's hut, Kemagyi was picking out boiled meat from a tin to eat it. Ton≠ebe came back with a mortar she had just borrowed from ||Qaogyi's wife. She strode over the husband's legs and sat with her hips touched to his hips. Kemagyi entwined his legs with the wife's legs, so that she was sitting within the small space surrounded with the hollows of the husband's knees.

Then a male lion peeped into the hut from the entrance. However, Kemagyi mistook it for a dog. Although nobody had raised a dog in this camp, he presumed that somebody had come to visit with a dog. After walking around the hut, the lion abruptly rushed into the hut and bit Ton≠ebe's shoulder. Without crying, Kemagyi tried to pull the lion apart from his wife, and merely kept turning around them. When the lion dragged her out of the hut, Kemagyi began to cry out to seek help.



The people ran to the scene. ||Qaogyi attempted to shoot the lion with an arrow, but could not do so because he was afraid that the arrow might hit Ton≠ebe. At last, the lion gave up and faded into the darkness. She had already bled heavily. The next morning, all the people escaped from this camp and migrated to another land. Kemagyi carried his wounded wife on his back. At the new camp, the people were treating her wound continuously, but she died several days later.

This narrative is organized with quite a persistent intention to make it explicable why such a terrible incident had occurred. First, the simple causation is specified: because the first wife had cursed the third wife, the latter was attacked. However, it is a subtle problem, the extent to which the G|ui believe in such an ‘invisible’ causation. In fact, it was described that Kemagyi himself had sneered at the first wife’s curse. If such a disaster had not happened, this episode of ‘cursing’ would be cited as empirical evidence that harms the plausibility of such a ‘reflexive belief’ (Sperber 1996). In this context, far more important is the persistent effort of the narrator to explain the causal relationship more practically. Here, Kemagyi’s stupidity is treated as an *a priori* condition that requires no explanation. Therefore, the most essential question is formulated as follows: why did Ton≠ebe, the third wife, not notice the lion? The answer was demonstrated through the co-enactment into which the narrator led the research assistant, Thabuuka. The narrator told him to stand up and then to sit down with him on the sand. Furthermore, entwining his legs with Thabuuka’s legs, the narrator ‘designed’ their sitting postures, saying, ‘Do not turn your face in that direction!’ and so on. The answer therefore demonstrated was quite simple: in sum, because Ton≠ebe was sitting in quite intimate contact with her husband, having her back to the entrance of the hut, she could not have seen the lion.

The narrative structure in this case excellently interlocks with the fundamental condition of being-in-the-world: no participant is at the vantage point from which the whole incident can be glanced over. What thrills the audience most is the scene where the narrator, ||Qaogyi, was lying down to hear without caution the exchange of words between his wife and Ton≠ebe, who had come to borrow the mortar, probably several hours before the disaster. Such a depiction reminds us most realistically of the overwhelming fact that all of our experience is ensconced in a restricted perspective. Then, how could the same narrator re-enact the body arrangement of the couple within their hut, as if he himself had witnessed it? No answer can be assumed but that this body arrangement had been re-enacted repeatedly by the husband himself after the wife’s death, probably as the excuse to the people’s accusation of his irreparable folly. This answer came to the author several days after the recording, when the author was analyzing this narrative by replaying the audio records in front of two research assistants, Thabuuka and Kaaka. When asked how the narrator had ‘designed’ the sitting postures of the couple together with Thabuuka, immediately they began to re-enact again the same postures (Varela et al. 1991)<sup>7</sup>. At this moment, the author understood that

the will to re-enact the body arrangement had surely been inherited from Kemagyi to the narrator and from the narrator to the younger research assistants.

### INVISIBLE AGENCY CAUSING THE LION'S ATTACK: WOMEN'S MAGICAL POWER?

The third case of man-killing by the lion was recorded by rather a strange chance of fortune. During a period of research in 2006, the author attempted to collect the discourses that would illuminate how the people had gone through rapid modernization. The most appropriate candidate for a narrator was Remesi, about twenty-seven years old at that time, whom the author had known well since his infancy<sup>8)</sup>. After entering the Xade primary school, he had gotten such good grades that he proceeded to the Ghanzi high school and then on to college in Gaborone. In August 2006, he was spending the end-of-semester holidays at his parents' camp in Kx'oensakene. In the 'artificial setting of interview' defined above, after he had told, in G|ui, of interesting episodes in the primary and secondary schools, the author set him rather a tricky task: to describe, in English, various G|ui beliefs related to the 'invisible agency'. In the following simplified transcription, the utterances in English are shown in italics. Unintelligible utterances, as well as those in Setswana, are omitted. Only their locations are specified by ellipses in parentheses (....).

#### [Case 3a] Remesi's association [recorded on August 22, 2006]:

SG:<sup>9)</sup> It is said that, when *!ʔánè* [the waning moon] remains in the morning sky, the gemsbok mother and her calf will not separate from each other. What do you think about this?

RM: You...*that belief is very difficult. These beliefs are also fic...*

SG: *Fictitious?* Then, it is said that if the dog eats *g/ǒrī* [slender mongoose], it would become thin and finally die. What do you think about this story?

RM: *and...hmmm...people, like that old woman, Eh – that female – Gyiocue, I heard that she did it. She said to a man, 'The lion will attack you'. The lion made another man disabled. (....) Old man said, (....) You [c, pl]<sup>10)</sup> and that day – that lion come, and take eh... hhm...one.*

SG: Oh, that's */χoi – curse*. Then, if a man curses another man, on the next day the lion comes or the mamba bites him; do you think so?

RM: *Eh – that was happening like this... That one – as I was told of g/ǒrī [slender mongoose].*

CH: Gyiocue.

RM: Gyiocue.

Let me explain the related background knowledge on which my questions were based. First, the waning moon in the morning sky is called *!ʔánè*. It is

believed that infant gemsboks will never ‘be left’ (*/χāō*) by their mothers as long as the *!ǀánè* remains in the sky. Secondly, the G|ui have developed a complicated code of food taboo and avoidance, in which the slender mongoose occupies a peculiar position. As many as forty-two percent of married men would eat its meat, although women never eat it (Sugawara 2001). Furthermore, only for this animal, the food taboo is extended to the dog. According to the G|ui, if a dog eats mongoose meat, then it becomes thin and usually dies. Therefore, on a hunting trip, as soon as the accompanying dog catches a slender mongoose, the G|ui hunter snatches it away from the dog’s mouth and claws and throws the carcass upward on to the branch of a high tree.

It is evident from Remesi’s awkward response that he was not confident about the knowledge, which was self-evident for the G|ui hunters in the elder generation, related to the network of invisible agency covering the animals and the other natural beings, e.g., the moon. In spite of this, the embarrassment induced by my questions prompted him to spontaneously associate these topics with ‘Gyiocue’s curse’. Although this old woman has no close kinship relation with the members of the author’s host group, the author has known her well since first undertaking research in this area. After having been widowed by the disaster described below, in which her ex-husband, G|oikua, was killed by a lion, she re-married as the second wife of an excellent hunter, |Xou, whose discourse on the lion is cited in the *Introduction* above.

After closing the interview above, the author asked the two research assistants, Gyube and Cherexo (CH), who had been in attendance, ‘What had Gyiocue done in the distant past?’. They told a story that can be summarized as shown below.

**[Case 3b]** Gyiocue’s curse [the research assistants; recorded on August 22, 2006]:

As Gyiocue was jealous of her husband’s *dzáā-kú* (extra-marital) relationship<sup>11</sup> with another woman, she cursed G|oikua. After a while, G|oikua went hunting and shot an eland. Next morning, his co-resident, G|aag!aba, went with G|oikua to track the wounded eland. After butchering the eland, they slept by an open-air fire. A lion attacked them and killed G|oikua. G|aag!aba struck a poisoned arrow into the lion’s armpit so that he [the lion] also died. At the crack of dawn, G|aag!aba ran to the camp to inform the people of this tragedy. They came to the scene to find G|oikua dead. People admired G|aag!aba for his bravery in killing the lion. Gyiocue, ashamed of her own act of having cursed her husband, neither glanced at the carcass of the eland nor ate any piece of its meat.

After having told the story above, they said to the author, ‘At that time, ||Qaogyi was living with the couple, so that he knows well about this incident. Take ||Qaogyi’s narrative!’. Following their advice, about two weeks later, ||Qaogy’s following narrative was recorded. It is noteworthy that he had also

narrated Case 2, above, seven years prior.

**[Case 3c]** ‘What has entered this man’s heart?’ [||Qaogyi; recorded on September 4, 2006]:

G|oikua had married with |Kheig|ae’s daughter. Because he treated his mother-in-law coldly, she had a deep grudge against him. Then she cursed her son-in-law. One day, G|oikua and ||Khoug|ama went hunting, and G|oikua shot a female eland with a poisoned arrow. ||Khoug|ama said, ‘Let’s go back to the camp and sleep well. Tomorrow morning, all of us [*l/m/pl/inc*: those men living in the same camp] will track her.’ They went back to their camp. The next morning, as G|oikua was unwilling to take another man, only the two men went tracking the wounded eland. On the way, they found traces of a lion on the sand wet with the morning dew. ||Khoug|ama was terrified, but G|oikua merely insisted on going on: ‘Let’s walk with the eland!’ ‘No! The lion has passed just now!’ ‘The eland climbed that hill. You stab her.’ They caught up with the eland and put an end to her life. Then, they began to butcher her. ||Khoug|ama was quite anxious, thinking, ‘It seems that the lion is resting very near’. It had become late in the evening when they had finished the butchering. They made a fire, roasted edible grasses *qólè* (*Ledebouria apertiflora*; Imamura-Hayaki 1996) with hot ash, and ate them. G|oikua was relaxed, lying near the fire on his back. Planting a short spear into the sand, ||Khoug|ama kept sitting in a shrinking posture. In his heart, he thought, ‘What has entered this man’s heart? He neither stands nor makes the fire larger.’ After a while, he [the lion] roared ‘GRU!’ A lion jumped into the bivouac site and bit G|oikua in his right arm. ||Khoug|ama snatched the spear and attempted to stab the lion with it, but it missed and fell on the ground. The lion, throwing G|oikua aside, clawed and tore up |Khoug|ama’s nape. ||Khoug|ama barely repelled him; G|oikua was in anguish because of the pain in his broken right arm. They ran away. G|oikua left his hunting bag behind, although |Khoug|ama held it, in which was contained a hatchet as well as the quiver. They arrived at a land named Siburue and stopped near the base of a high  $\eta|ò\bar{n}\bar{e}$  tree (*Boscia albitrunca*). ||Khoug|ama told G|oikua to climb it, but he refused. ‘Ao! How can I climb with only one arm?’ At last, they said unanimously: ‘Ae! There must be a deserted camp where we had previously lived and drunk the water drawn from the pan!’ Arriving there, they made torches of grasses and set fire to many huts. Then, they entered one hut. Just as they were making a fire within the hut, the lion jumped into it. Although many huts were flaring up, he bit G|oikua again in the calf, attempting to drag him away. G|oikua, getting down on all fours, resisted being carried off. ||Khoug|ama, trying to pull G|oikua away from the lion, groped for his quiver containing three arrows, only one of which had been coated with poison on its head. ||Khoug|ama picked the poisoned arrow out of the quiver, lifted the forearm of the lion, and hammered the arrow with the hatchet deeply into his armpit. The lion, feeling pain, escaped from the hut. In the light of flaming huts, the lion kept roaring, while G|oikua kept crying in agony. With the first daylight, they two (*?étsèrà*

[3/m/dl]) fell silent. Because his nape was severely wounded, ||Khoug|ama could not face forward: he walked with his neck twisted, looking ahead out of the corner of his eye. He arrived at the camp at G|erixonam (about 9 km south of Xade). Looking at his haggard face, the residents were astonished: ‘*Ae!* How miserable you look!’ ‘*Eh::i*, Look at my figure. You can see what the lion’s teeth did. Another man has been attacked and killed. Leaving him behind, I have fled to come back here.’

A curious discrepancy is immediately noticed between Cases 3b and 3c: The brave man’s name differs greatly between the two cases, and ‘Gyiocue’s curse’ was never described by ||Qaogyi in the latter case. We should not hastily judge that the latter narrative reflects an authentic history because even Remesi, in the younger generation, knew the story, which is assumed to be closer to the former version. It is probable that ||Qaogyi refrained from giving a negative evaluation of his co-resident woman, Gyiocue, who remained living at that time. The point is that assignment of the agent of invisible causation, such as a curse, is open to intrinsic ambiguity.

It deserves special attention that, in both Cases 2 and 3, ||Qaogyi interpreted that the lion’s attack was the result of the ‘curse’ (*/χoi*) of a woman, |Kheig|ae, who was Kemagyi’s first wife and G|oikua’s mother-in-law. According to the research assistants, even if a man curses another person, the incident foretold by the curse will not occur. Women are often motivated to curse their husbands, being obsessed with jealousy, so that women’s curses are more dangerous than men’s. Furthermore, the magical power inherent to women is associated with an enigmatic concept, *cimā*, that was, in fact, described both by N≠uekucue in Case 1 and by ||Qaogyi in Case 3c. To explicate this concept, one can cite Nakagawa’s interpretation that is proposed in a preliminary version of the *G|ui-English Dictionary*: ‘*cimā* [n] dangerous animals’ anger, which results from woman’s violation of taboo.’ However, when the author recorded ||Qaogyi’s narrative in 2006, in spite of the author’s persistent efforts to induce some interpretation from the attending research assistants that was similar to Nakagawa’s, the author was unable to attain any clear understanding. According to the research assistants, *cimā* is almost identical to */χoi*. It correlates with the female property of ‘changing’ (*tsentsa*: probably a loan word from English), i.e., the menstruation cycle. Living with his wife, *cimā* would gradually accumulate in the husband’s liver, so that someday it might be embodied as the attack of *paa-χó* (bite-thing), i.e., dangerous animals such as lions, leopards, or poisonous snakes. There is a slight difference between */χoi* and *cimā*: any *paa-χó*’s attack caused by */χoi* must be fatal to the man cursed, although if the *cimā* works, the lion would pass by him, or the mamba’s fang would graze his leg.

The narratives presented above might shed light on the tension lurking in gender relationships within G|ui society. On the one hand, this fear of the female force, condensed in concepts such as */χoi* and *cimā*, might reflect the male-centric ideology that associates femininity with ‘the wild’ or ‘Nature’. On the other hand,

it also would function as an antidote against the male power, or even unreserved violence, supported by this ideology. However, more fundamentally, the concept of *cimā* might closely correlate with the most basic concept, *η!àrē*, which forms the core of G|ui inter-corporeal sense. This word, *η!àrē*, is a transitive verb, tentatively translated as 'anticipate' or 'sense'. In the following sentences, the italic words approximately correspond to *η!àrē*: (1) When one's belly rumbles, this incident is expressed as 'my intestine *anticipates* [something]', interpreting it as a hunch that, for example, a kinsman will come back with the meat of game caught in a snare. (2) When butchering the carcass of a gemsbok, the hunter must not allow his dogs to eat its heart, because in another occasion of hunting, 'other gemsboks *sense* the dogs' that have eaten their conspecific animal. (3) In the work of skin-processing, a man scrapes fat flakes off the skin with a hatchet. If dogs are gathering around his workshop to eat the flakes, then he tries to drive them away because 'the edge of an adze *senses* a dog and refuses [to cut]'. If the hatchet 'senses' that its product is eaten by dogs, then it becomes so dissatisfied that it refuses to work. In consequence, its edge becomes dull.

As described above, the semantic field centering around the verb *η!àrē* represents invisible networks of some kinds of influences, which affect not only the human social world but also the world of animals and even tools. This observation of *η!àrē* enables us to understand the fundamental meaning of *cimā* as the former's reversed image. Although the G|ui corporeal existence is resonant with various changes occurring in others' bodies (those of co-members, animals, or even tools), the negative feelings, such as jealousy or grudges, that invariably arise in social life would ooze out from the camp into the bush, to evoke the anger of animals. In this sense, *cimā* is the dark side of circuits of 'corporeal syntony' spreading over not only interpersonal relationships, but also interactions among humans, animals, and things.

## SURVIVING THE ENCOUNTER WITH LIONS

Both the G|ui and the lion occupy the summit of the food chain in the Central Kalahari. More accurately, the G|ui seldom eat the lion's meat, although the lion occasionally becomes a 'man-eater'. Except for the iron trap and the gun, which have been quite scarce properties (almost monopolized by only a few men with Bakgalagadi backgrounds), the G|ui have had no means to stand against the overwhelming power of the lion. However, it is not correct to regard the lion as the 'natural enemy' with whom the G|ui lack any possibility of communication. Other stories collected from an excellent narrator in old age cast light on a different aspect of the encounter with lions, although the detailed transcription must be omitted here for want of space. In sum, in daytime both the hunters and the lions keenly discern their distance of mutual separation, so that the former try to 'appease' (*g!àè-/χàè*)<sup>12)</sup> the latter by emitting a peculiar tone of cry, 'Awawawawawa.....' It is evident that the lions themselves also regulate in a subtle

way their behavior toward human beings. The most dangerous is a lioness suckling her whelps. When she rushes to a man, he must be in all silence and must not stir an inch. Even though she might whip him with her tail, she would turn away from him. Occasionally, a group of men even succeed in snatching away a carcass from the lions. The G|ui try to negotiate with these overpowering ‘others’, projecting some communicative expectation toward them.

The fourth and final narrative case illuminates the human bravery that might be exerted even in an extreme situation.

[Case 4] Mistaking a lion for a gemsbok [≠Aa (1931?- ); recorded on February 14, 2004]:

In the mist of an early morning, we three, Sibi, I, and another man, were going to a pan named Zuixa. We dispersed from one another, looking for the gums of tree. In the dark shade of the morning, he [the lion] was lying on his belly, digging up the cool sand. I looked at his black scrota between the buttocks. I believed that he was a gemsbok, so that, intending to pierce the center of his anus, I began to pull out the spear from the hunting bag very quietly. Holding the shaft behind me, I took several steps. At that moment, I noticed a very long and thick tail. ‘Ah! This is *paa-χó* (bite-thing). Can I survive?’ Just as I stepped back very slowly, he sensed my existence. Without turning around, he dashed forward, jumping over another one who had been lying in his front. He [the lion] ran toward Sibi, who intended to whip him [the lion] with a *g#q̄n̄* (a long pole for springhare hunting), but he missed the target. At once, he threw a hunting bag at him [the lion]. He [the lion] passed near him and ran away with the bag on his back. Another one rushed to me, but as I shouted at the top of my voice, he turned away from me and also ran toward Sibi, who was collecting the things that had dropped from his hunting bag. As soon as he noticed the lion charging at him, he turned toward him and beat his face with the fist as forcefully as he could. That one ran away, growling ‘*GO, GO, GO...*’

Even in this funny episode, only a fine line separates death and survival. Recording similar stories, I was always impressed with the joyful expression shown by the narrator. Therefore, we return to |Xou’s discourse cited at the beginning of this chapter: ‘We were created together. We cannot fear him.’

## DISCUSSION

There are many ways to tell about the past, as well as to analyze and understand discourses on past incidents. The methodology proposed in the present chapter, i.e., grasping the narrative as an emotional gesture and devoting special attention to the body arrangement underlying the past incident, is not to be restricted to the anthropological enterprise of reconstructing the past foraging life of the San in the Kalahari Desert. There is some validity for any attempt to comprehend those

experiences immanently 'beyond description' in the formidable history of modernity, such as surviving war, a concentration camp, or genocide. However, anthropology has a peculiar epistemological difficulty that is not so relevant in other disciplines that are intended to reconstruct the past. Immanent comprehension of the 'form of life' in a society different from 'Western' industrial societies is always hindered by the opacity of indigenous concepts that are so deeply rooted in the people's inter-corporeal sense toward the world that an anthropologist cannot share this sense sincerely, even after more than thirty years of fieldwork. Analyzing the third case of human-killing by the lion, I attempted to propose an interpretation of *cimā*. However, one must admit that no ultimate remedy exists for escaping from the hermeneutic circulation that haunts any anthropological project aiming at immanent comprehension of others' life-world.

The reflection above leads me to a rather ordinary insight. The G|ui in younger generations are now standing at a similar position to myself, because they also have difficulty comprehending some of their own indigenous concepts. Remesi, who had enjoyed higher education at Gaborone, felt it difficult to articulate various beliefs related to 'invisible agency' that had been so prevalent among elder generations. In spite of this, he spontaneously associated these beliefs with women's curses. This point suggests that those in younger generations might still perceive some family resemblance among diverse incidents that are symptomatic of invisible agents. Human vulnerability to the *paa-χó* animals that had been the most fundamental condition of the nomadic life has rapidly lost its reality in the settlement life. However, if the G|ui of the younger generation keep remembering that the human being (*k<sup>h</sup>óè*) has an equal relationship with animals, in that he not only hunts them but also sometimes is hunted by them, then they would obtain a valuable epistemological resource for holding and renovating the unique view of the world that had been fostered through the hunting-gathering way of life.

The above argument is intended to be immune from the vacant hope of a rosy future in which 'local development' and 'traditional knowledge' will be mutually harmonious. In contrast, I have been anxious about the rapid loss of knowledge of the 'bush' in younger generations. In 1992, a systematic survey of food taboos revealed that a man in his 30s, who had been engaged in wage labor, did not know the vernacular name of wildcat (*!qóru*), which had been a favorite meat for nearly eighty percent of married men (Sugawara 2001).

However, another possibility exists. Remesi, recently working as a safari guide, related both the G|ui and English names of various ornithological species that I had identified. Another man, Tamaxa, in the same generation with Remesi, working on the staff of a development office, told me of a plan he dreamed of: a big safari lodge would be established at Xade, where anthropologists would give a lecture to the G|ui children on myths and folk-knowledge of animals. Such a dreamed plan is never a valid strategy on its own to override the government policy of suppressing hunting activity in and around the game reserves and



national parks. However, if his dream were realized, then ‘we’ (both anthropologists and the G|ui/G||ana people) would be able to go back again to the CKGR, ‘our’ homeland.

## NOTES

- 1) The precision of personal pronouns is an outstanding feature of the G|ui grammar (Nakagawa 1993). In general, the meanings of personal pronouns are organized according to the three dimensions of inclusion/exclusion of speaker, inclusion/exclusion of listener, and minimum/non-minimum memberships (D’Andrade 1995). In G|ui, the dimension of gender is added, with member number further adding the three values of singular/dual/plural. Therefore, a *nearly* complete paradigm is formed. However, because it does not distinguish gender for first person singular, its completeness is spoiled. As this paradigm of personal pronoun is applied to humans, animals, and things (generally a long object is masculine, while a short or round object is feminine), in the translation of G|ui discourse the author uses the pronouns ‘he/his/him’ or ‘she/hers/her’ to refer to a male or a female animal, respectively.
- 2) The proper name denoting land or person is given not in the accurate orthography developed by Nakagawa, but in simplified notation that has been used by Tanaka and other anthropologists.
- 3) Although in the original article I used the term ‘body configuration’, afterwards I began to think that ‘body arrangement’ is more appropriate because ‘configuration’ implies a static mode of a single body.
- 4) Elsewhere, I distinguished ‘incident’ from ‘event’. Each incident is characterized by its contingency and individuality. Even if a participant’s action in response to each incident is guided by a culturally stereotyped script, it happens only once. It will never repeat itself again in the same form. However, the events, not closed to the individuality peculiar to each person’s circumstances, are connected with some communal and cooperative projects, e.g., rituals and ceremonies. The interpretation rendered to a particular incident is, after all, left to the subjectivity and arbitrariness of each individual person, while an event is open to an inter-subjective meaning from the beginning (Sugawara 2008: 85).
- 5) Much of the ethnographic material cited in the following descriptions has already been published (Sugawara 2006; Tanaka and Sugawara eds. 2010). See especially the following entries in the latter encyclopedia: ‘curse’, ‘food taboo and avoidance’, ‘lion’, ‘love relationship’, ‘moon’, and ‘presentiment’.
- 6) It is supposed that |Ou is located about 20 km east–southeast of Kaochue, which will be included in the following description.
- 7) The key concept proposed in *The Embodied Mind* by Varela *et al.* is ‘enact’ or ‘enaction’, which means the simultaneous emergence of the mind and the world. This concept of ‘enaction’ is quite relevant for the argument in this section.
- 8) During my first research period in 1982, Remesi was in a condition of habitual frustration that had been caused by separation from his mother’s breast. He had been weaned forcefully because of the birth of his younger brother earlier that year. The G|ui/G||ana women have a belief that decidedly enables them to accomplish the weaning: as soon as the mother becomes pregnant again, her milk becomes poisonous and will cause the death of the infant who continues to suckle.
- 9) SG, RM, and CH respectively denote the abbreviations of Sugawara, Remesi, and Cherexo, another research assistant.

- 10) Person, gender, and number of pronouns are designated by the following abbreviations: *1*, first person; *2*, second person; *3*, third person; *m*, masculine; *f*, feminine; *c*, common; *dl*, dual; *pl*, plural; and *inc*, inclusive form of the first person, dual or plural.
- 11) The prevalence of persistent extramarital relationships, called *dzáã-kú*, was the most peculiar aspect of G|ui sexuality (Tanaka 1989; Sugawara 2004). The morpheme *-kú*, when connected to the preceding verb, means 'each other'.
- 12) The transitive verb *g!áè* means to calm down someone's anger, whereas */χàè* is a postposition that usually means 'above', 'on', or 'about'.

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