

MORAL  
IMAGINATION IN  
KAGURU MODES  
OF THOUGHT

*T. O. Beidelman*

Indiana University Press / BLOOMINGTON

# CONTENTS

*Preface* / xi

**Chapter 1 *Imagining Beliefs and Morality*** 1

**Chapter 2 *Kaguru Life*** 11

Land, Climate, and Economy / 13  
Matrilineality and Domesticity / 15  
Conclusion / 24

**Chapter 3 *Cosmology and Dualism*** 26

Opposition and Complementarity in Groups and Space / 28  
Individual Kaguru and Their Beliefs / 30  
Metaphors of Bodily and Spatial Orientation and Sexuality / 31  
Fire, Food, and Sexuality / 37  
Disorder, Power, and the Bush / 41  
Dualism of Groups and Their Ceremonies / 42  
Conclusion / 45

**Chapter 4 *Moral Space: The House, Settlements, and Body Etiquette*** 49

History, Settlement, and House Types / 50  
Housebuilding / 52  
Kaguru Settlements / 53  
Social and Cosmological Contexts of Houses and Settlements / 54  
Houses, Settlements, and the Bush / 56  
The Cultivation of the Person: Etiquette and Grooming / 60  
Conclusion / 64

**Chapter 5 *Legendary Time, Clans, and Ethnicity*** 67

Ethnicity / 68  
Legends and History / 71  
History (*Usimo*) of the Mukema or Mphene of Talagwe / 72  
The Metaphors of Legend and History / 76  
Conclusion / 82

<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b><i>Persons and Time: Seasons, Names, and Omens</i></b>	<b>84</b>
	Temporal Reckoning / 85	
	Seasonal and Quotidian Dichotomization of Social Life / 90	
	Names and Time / 91	
	Omens, Events, and Temporal Disorder / 97	
	Conclusion / 102	
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b><i>Death and the Ancestors</i></b>	<b>105</b>
	The First Tale: The Return of the Dead / 106	
	The Second Tale: The Old Lady Who Picked Okra / 108	
	The Third Tale: The Jealous Grandmother / 110	
	The Relation of the Living to the Dead / 111	
	The Tales Considered / 116	
	Conclusion / 118	
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b><i>Kinship, Pollution, and Death</i></b>	<b>121</b>
	Rituals and Death / 122	
	Calendrical Rites / 123	
	Affliction within a Kin Group / 123	
	Rites Related to Death / 124	
	<i>Watani</i> and Other Categories of People / 127	
	Conclusion / 134	
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<b><i>Witchcraft and Sorcery</i></b>	<b>138</b>
	The Definition of a Witch / 139	
	Activities of Witches / 140	
	How to Become a Witch / 143	
	Identification, Accusation, and Punishment / 143	
	Persons Suspected of Witchcraft / 146	
	Witchcraft Cases and Suspicions / 147	
	Some Modern Trends / 155	
	Conclusion / 156	
<b>Chapter 10</b>	<b><i>Speculations about the Social Order: Stories and Society</i></b>	<b>160</b>
	Kaguru Folktales and Society / 160	
	The Evil at the Foot of the Fig Tree: Sharing and Community / 162	
	The Son-in-Law and His Father-in-Law: Sharing and Affinity / 165	
	The Man and Wife and the People Who Could Not Shit: Eluding Affinity / 167	

The Men Who Married Man-Eaters: Affinity and Danger /	169
The Beast Which Finished the People of the Land: Succession and Domination /	173
Mukejuwa: Women and Domestic Order /	177
Conclusion /	180

<b>Chapter 11 <i>Humans and Animals: Stories and Subversion</i></b>	<b>186</b>
---	------------

Hares and Hyenas /	188
The First Tale of Hare and His Uncle Hyena /	191
The Second Tale of Hare and His Uncle Hyena /	192
About the Two Tales /	197
Conclusion /	200

<b>Chapter 12 <i>Conclusion</i></b>	<b>212</b>
-------------------------------------	------------

Postscript /	212
--------------	-----

<i>Bibliography</i> /	216
-----------------------	-----

<i>Index</i> /	225
----------------	-----