

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

Names: (1)

- Kaguru
- Chikagulu
- Northern Sagara
- Kiningo
- Solwa
- Kigalulu
- Kigaguru

Language/Dialects (1)

- Megi
- Tumba
- Mangehele
- Lexical (similarity 63% with Sagala and 56% with Gogo)
- Swahili

Language Family:

- Tanzania (1)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):

- kki (1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- “The Hill is located at the latitude and longitude coordinates of -1.95 and 33.466667” (8).

1.4 Brief history:

- “Before colonial rule, Ukaguru was the scene of frequent intertribal raiding. The Ka- guru were divided into many politically unstable groups, each potentially at odds with its neighbor.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- “Lowland, plateau, hills, mountain slope. Savannah, scrub, deciduous forest. 600 to 2,100 meters.” (1)
- “The Kaguru live in a hilly area near the Itumba mountains in the northern part of Kilosa district in Morogoro region, and Mpwapwa district in the Dodoma region of Tanania”. (2)
- “The large majority of Kaguru live in the plateau surrounding the mountains, where the rivers form arable valleys that are cultivated year after year.” (3)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

Population:

- 217,000

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- maize
- beans
- peanuts
- bananas
- cassava
- mango
- papaya

- limes
- sugarcane
- potatoes
- plantains

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- poultry
- sheep
- goats
- cattle

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- “Kaguru women are responsible for household work, household food production, and for child rearing, it is not uncommon for women to assist their husbands in cash crop production, thereby making polygyny economically advantageous, particularly for males. Because cash crop production is controlled by males, and because males and females generally have separate budgets, women do not necessarily benefit equally from such co-operation.” (3)

2.6 Land tenure:

- “In the higher and dryer regions, people practice slash-and-burn cultivation. The Kaguru cultivate millet, sorghum, and maize, and supplement their grain-based diet with a variety of vegetables. In addition to cultivating grains and vegetables, most Kaguru keep chickens, goats, and sheep. During the rainy season most of Ukaguru appears to consist of relatively fertile land, but recurrent droughts and related problems (such as floodings and rodent infestations) often destroy the harvest, resulting in food shortages”

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- “Most Kaguru depend chiefly upon their fields not only for their food but for their cash incomes as well. Their main crops are maize, millet, sorghum, beans, potatoes, and castor. Small but important crops of tobacco and sugarcane are also grown” (6)

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- “Tensions between co-wives sometimes culminate in witchcraft accusations. Some women are unwilling to let their children take food from a co-wife for fear of witchcraft and the possible contamination of children's food” (3).
- “Witchcraft accusations were generally directed against people who exhibited antisocial characteristics—jealousy, spite, deceitfulness; even physical ugliness and unaccounted wealth were grounds for suspicion. In the past, diviners were employed the accused were forced to confess and were often executed” (4).

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- the social support for polygyny in Kaguru society starts in the early years of adolescence. (3)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- Adolescents

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- Varies among family wealth.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- Adolescents, once each gender has gone through the ritual to adulthood.

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- “While polygyny may provide a solution for a barren woman's husband and may prevent him from divorcing his wife, the barren woman herself will not regain her lost status through polygyny because her co-wife's children belong to a different lineage.” (3)
- “polygynously married women may use the threat of returning to their brothers or parents when their husbands maltreat them or provide inadequate support. This is particularly important for women in polygynous unions, since they tend to compete with reference to the interests of their children” (3).
- “The lack of support for the divorce from a woman's kin members is not surprising, considering that a Kaguru marriage is based on bridewealth payments. Since a woman's kin members are her bridewealth recipients, they would be expected to return the bridewealth when the woman initiates the divorce” (3).

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- “According to data from the 1993 Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (Ngallaba et al. 1993), 28 per cent of all married women in Tanzania are currently in polygynous unions (including informal unions); for the Morogoro region, where the Kaguru live, the corresponding figure is 22.5 per cent.” (3)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

- “Kaguru marriage is characterized by the transfer of bridewealth that gives the husband certain rights to the children born from the union” (3)
- “Although Kaguru women are responsible for household work, household food production, and for child rearing, it is not uncommon for women to assist their husbands in cash crop production, thereby making polygyny economically advantageous, particularly for males. Because cash crop production is controlled by males, and because males and females generally have separate budgets, women do not necessarily benefit equally from such co-operation.” (3)
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4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- Endowments are given to the man from the woman's family. If by chance the couple divorces, the endowments still need to be paid in full. (3)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- “It is noteworthy that several women were upset about their husbands' lack of support, particularly when their children were sick. Clearly, the husband is expected to contribute to the needs of his children, and failure to provide assistance when children are sick is unacceptable” (3).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

n/a

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- “The Kaguru have three distinct groups in opposition to polygyny: women (the wives), the Christian Church, and the State. Support for polygyny is voiced by some men and is reflected in the traditional views in favor of polygyny as perpetuated

by the elders. Just as there are conflicting views of polygyny in cultures throughout Africa, we find them in Tanzania among the Kaguru." (3)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

- "Kaguru males employ polygyny as a strategy to increase the number of their dependents by adding a new wife, her children, and eventually perhaps daughters-in-law." (3)

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

- "The Kaguru believe that a woman should not have sexual intercourse during the period when she is nursing a child because a new pregnancy would dry up the breast milk (Beidelman 1973:262). Polygyny provides men with normal sexual activity during the lengthy period (generally more than a year, and sometimes as long as two or three years) when one wife is nursing a child." (3)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

- For Kaguru men polygyny is also advantageous because it allows them to bypass the rules regarding postpartum sexual abstinence. Polygyny provides men with normal sexual activity during the lengthy period (generally more than a year, and sometimes as long as two or three years) when one wife is nursing a child. Polygyny also enables a Kaguru man to have children even if his first wife is barren.

- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

- "Indeed, a Kaguru man has a dual obligation to care not only for his own children, but also for his sisters' children, who belong to his own matrilineage. Consequently, it is not uncommon for a Kaguru woman to complain that her husband does not sufficiently support her and her children, particularly if support decreased after he married a subsequent wife." (3)
- "All sexual allusions were forbidden between parents and child and between all siblings. Such talk would be considered shameless and perverse. It is the grandparents, cross cousins, or those unrelated of the same age that that are expected to be free to mention such matters" (5).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- Women do not necessarily have sexual freedoms, although they can threaten to divorce their husbands, the odds of them going through with it are low because their reputation will be ruined throughout the town. There is also a consensus that the women of the Kaguru tribe do not like polygamous relationships mainly due to the jealousy factors. (3)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

- Considering that the Kaguru men have other families to attend to, as well as the fact that they are not particularly hands-on with their children, the children would be raised by the mothers side of the family.
- "A child is a member of its mother's clan but not a member of the father's. Ties to the mother were automatic and profound, ties to the father and his kin went into effect only after payments were made" (5).

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

- Answer varies due to the polygamous relationships. However, the men try to have children with many different woman. This does not necessarily mean that they need to be married to have children. In some cases, the men are married but have many other girlfriends. (3)

4.22 Evidence for couvades

- None

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

- A man is ready for children when he has gone through the ritual into adulthood. This occurs in their adolescent years. (3) (5)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- The men have final say on what occurs throughout the family. Although women contribute a lot of the work along with childcare, they have to follow what the man says. Status throughout the tribe depends on money.
- “Although Kaguru women are responsible for household work, household food production, and for child rearing, it is not uncommon for women to assist their husbands in cash crop production, thereby making polygyny economically advantageous, particularly for males. Because cash crop production is controlled by males, and because males and females generally have separate budgets, women do not necessarily benefit equally from such co-operation.” (3)

4.24 Joking relationships?

- There are some “joking” relationships throughout the tribe. Especially when the young women go through the ritual to become a woman. During the ritual, there is a lot of laughter between the young woman and the older woman throughout the tribe that perform the rituals on the young girls. (3)

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

- “While the Kaguru continue to have matrilineal descent, some patrilineal traits are apparent, particularly regarding marriage. Kaguru marriage is characterized by the transfer of bridewealth that gives the husband certain rights to the children born from the union.” (3)
- With matrilineal descent, each Kaguru co-wife and her children belong to a different matrilineage, and each co-wife is ultimately responsible for providing for her own children. In other words, each co-wife and her children form a separate matrifocal unit within the polygynous family. Because a polygynous husband allocates a share of the limited family resources to each of his wives, it is likely that the share of a finite set of resources that are available for a woman and her children will reduce when her husband marries another wife.

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

- “Brother-sister relationships are important. A sister's consent to be married and not run away puts her brother in debt to her. Yet in later life, brothers may encourage their sisters to leave their husbands. The bridewealth received for a sister often enables her brother to marry. A brother hopes to make claims on the loyalty and labor of a sister's sons and bridewealth from her daughters. Men encourage marital instability among their own sisters and nieces while urging marital stability within their own households. Even though the couple's attitudes are taken into consideration, marriage is seen as a competition for alliance, and it is the relatives of a couple who determine marriage. It is this intense competition that provides the broad economic, social, and political security so necessary and so important” (5).
- “All sexual allusions were forbidden between parents and child and between all siblings. Such talk would be considered shameless and perverse. It is the grandparents, cross cousins, or those unrelated of the same age that are expected to be free to mention such matters” (5).

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- “Most Kaguru marriages were not considered complete until the birth of children, which only then complicated the varying interplay of loyalties over time” (5).

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

- “Kaguru women, however, do not gain higher status from having co-wives because the latter belong to different matrilineages. Instead, in a polygynous union, each woman and her children will compete with co-wives over resources” (3)

- “Geographical proximity and cultural similarity enable people of these tribes to intermarry with Kaguru and settle near them or even within Kaguru settlements” (7).

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

- Marriages are not arranged, they are more or less agreed upon by the amount of endowments that the female’s family has to offer.

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- “Kaguru men have a tendency to think of all the women and children of a polygynous household as one large family, it is evident that with matrilineal descent each household with a different mother and her children has its own priorities. In other words, women in polygynous unions compete with co-wives over benefits and resources for themselves and/or their children. When a woman's husband marries another wife, or has an outside wife, the resources available to her will decline because the husband's resources are then divided between the two women. At least in some cases, the husband will only support his new wife” (3).

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- “Witchcraft accusations were generally directed against people who exhibited antisocial characteristics—jealousy, spite, deceitfulness; even physical ugliness and unaccounted wealth were grounds for suspicion. In the past, diviners were employed to identify witches and sorcerers, and the accused were forced to confess and were often executed” (4).

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

- “Witchcraft accusations were generally directed against people who exhibited antisocial characteristics—jealousy, spite, deceitfulness; even physical ugliness and unaccounted wealth were grounds for suspicion. In the past, diviners were employed to identify witches and sorcerers, and the accused were forced to confess and were often executed” (4).

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

- “The northeastern Bantu-speaking peoples of East Africa include the Ganda, Nyoro, Nkore, Soga, and Gisu of Uganda; the Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya; and the Gogo” (4).
- “More severe Kaguru-Baraguyu conflict occurs over livestock trespass” (6).

4.18 Cannibalism?

- None

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- “Today Kaguru live in small hamlets of 3 to 20 huts or sometimes in lone homesteads. In the heavily settled river valleys such hamlets are evenly and thickly dispersed every few hundred yards. In the mountains and hills they are widely scattered; individual settlements tend to be somewhat larger than in the valleys” (6)
- “unsettled times many of the Kaguru retreated to the ridges and mountain areas where they could defend themselves and their livestock against attack” (6)
- “Kaguru dislike moving far away if they have good fields in a locale” (7).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

- “Kaguru society is divided into matrilineal clans. Certain rights to land and political power are held by various clans which are dominant in various areas” (6).

5.4 Post marital residence:

- “Geographical proximity and cultural similarity enable people of these tribes to intermarry with Kaguru and settle near them or even within Kaguru settlements” (7).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- “the mountain zone was composed of many separate clusters of Kaguru settlements, each defensively situated in its own series of ridges and each separated from most of the others by intervening valleys and plateaus often unsafe for settlement” (6).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

- Elders versus youth mutually respect each other. Elder males, especially ones in power have final say over what goes on politically, economically, etc.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- Elders versus youth mutually respect each other. Elder males, especially ones in power have final say over what goes on politically, economically, etc.

5.8 Village and house organization:

- Based on the clan and its population.

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

- No

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- They sleep in hand-made huts made out of scrap pieces of wood and a straw rooftop.

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

- “Their society existed of about one hundred matrilineal clans” (5).

5.12 Trade:

- “If some Baraguyu today sometimes supplement their diet of animal produce with agricultural goods, this is obtained with cash from livestock sales or in exchange for livestock and animal products” (6).
- “Kaguru-Baraguyu trade relations also existed. Kaguru and other sedentary people furnished Baraguyu with tobacco, calabashes, and metal, and probably also with sugarcane, honey, and various tools. Up until the colonial period Kaguru had their own ironworks in the Itumba Moun- tains, works controlled by local Kaguru leaders” (6).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- “The Kaguru negotiate rights to land, to rituals, bridewealth, fines and inheritance as part of kin membership determined through birth and marriage. Their society existed of about one hundred matrilineal clans each containing thousands of members. Each clan was associated with one or more pieces of land that it claimed as its own and each year would organize rituals to revitalize this land” (5).

6 Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- n/a

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- magical medicines
- rainstones

6.2 Stimulants:

- Alcohol consumption is allowed

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

- “During the digubi ceremonies, young girls are instructed by old women about the norms and values of Kaguru society, including proper behavior for married women. Several respondents indicated that during the digubi ceremonies they were instructed that polygyny is an aspect of life that may be hard to avoid.” (3)
- “Female initiation takes place in the seclusion of a house when the girl is about fourteen. The seclusion could last weeks to months and she was expected to become beautiful (fat and pale). Women inside the initiation house enjoyed singing obscene songs, laughing loudly at jokes, and dancing, it was good excuse to travel and visit. After a night of singing and dancing the girl was taken into the nearby bush, held seated on a hide and cut by an old woman. The cutting on the labia could be extensive, a light nick or not at all. The Kaguru did not remove any part of the clitoris, and the female initiate, after receiving gifts of new clothing and masses of beads from her kinswomen, was now ready for suitors and marriage” (5).
- “Male circumcision (*initiation*) is performed at puberty by men in a bush camp (not in a settlement) where the youth remains until he recovers, and consists of removing the foreskin of the penis with a knife. It was said that his childhood has died and he has been reborn as an adult. It is thought to please women because it makes males even more different from females and the sexes are attracted to the opposites of each other” (5).

6.4 Other rituals:

- “Gogo rituals are also concerned primarily with the ancestors, for they are believed to control the fertility of the land and the welfare of the clans who live on it. Cattle and beer are the chief offerings. These bridge the gap between human beings and the spirits because they belong both to the world of men and to the world of nature, as do the ancestor spirits themselves. The semipastoralist Gogo sacrifice cattle, their most valuable possession, to the ancestors for rain and good crops and to obtain their blessings at crucial stages in the life cycle. Beer is poured out around a post that is considered to be the architectural and ritual center of the household. Called the nose of the homestead, the post is the locus of contact between the world of the living and the world of the dead in the domestic rituals. Beer may also be poured onto the gravestones of the dead, which also link the living to the world of the spirits” (4).

6.5 Myths (Creation):

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- Kaguru music

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- “Fundamental to the social systems of the Gisu, Kikuyu, Kamba, Kaguru, and Gogo are rites of puberty and of initiation into adulthood. Their purpose is to transform young boys and girls into adult men and women. In these societies circumcision and clitoridectomy (or labiadectomy) are practiced. These physical operations are regarded as the outward signs of a new social position and of an inner moral change” (4).

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- “Although the Kaguru do not believe in reincarnation, they say that newborn children come from the land of the dead, where, it is said, the ghosts have villages and live as do people on earth. The difference is that life and death in the land of the ghosts is the reverse of that on earth. The ghosts mourn when one of their number dies and is born on earth, and they rejoice when a person dies on earth and is born in their land. Hence, an infant's hold on life is precarious because the jealous ghosts wish to take it back, and many rites are performed for the ghosts in order to protect the child's life” (4).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- Kaguru people believe that death is a celebration especially with the rate of newborns. The cycle of life continues on. (4).

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

No

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- “Throughout the region of the northeastern Bantu-speaking peoples, the modern era has been marked by the increasing interaction of the traditional religions with Islam and Christianity” (4).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Scarification:

- None

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- “Men wore a toga-like garment and took great care not to appear naked even when washing. Women always wore a skirt” (5).

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- “The matrilineal Kaguru offer annual beer and animal sacrifices to the ghosts of the dead at clan ritual sites. These sites contain the graves of the founding female ancestor of the clan and those of her closest descendants. The graves are cleared of growth, and beer and flour are poured onto the gravestones. The blood of animal victims is also poured out. Often a miniature shelter for the ghosts is built on the site. The dead are said to gain nourishment from the offerings and to be made cool and quiet and therefore unlikely to bother the living. The fertility of the land depends upon such annual rites, for the spirits of the dead guarantee the productivity of the land. Cultivation and other work on the land is thought mystically to wear down the earth; and the misdeeds of the people, especially of the clan elders who live near the site, are also thought to disturb the ghost ancestors. The Kaguru believe that if such rituals were not performed, the land would be less fertile, the annual rains less favorable, and illness and misfortune more frequent” (4)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Some men wear a beaded loin cloth during the performance of some rituals.

7.8 Missionary effect:

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- n/a

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

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