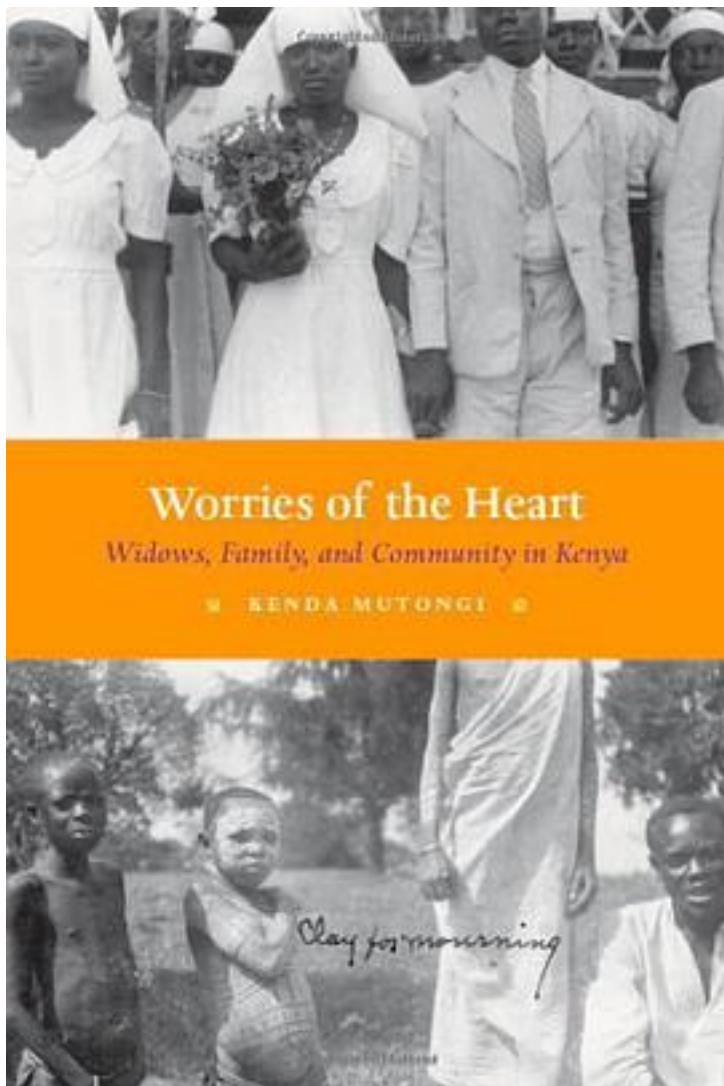


# Worries of the Heart



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Growing up in the Maragoli community in Kenya, Kenda Mutongi encountered a perplexing contradiction. While the young teachers at her village school railed against colonialism, many of her elders, including her widowed mother, praised their former British masters. In this moving book, Mutongi explores how the challenges and frustrations of both colonial rule and independence shaped the lives of Maragoli widows and their complex relations with each other, their families, and the larger community. Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, rates of widowhood have been remarkably high in Kenya. Yet despite their numbers, widows and their families exist at the margins of society, and their lives act as a barometer for the harsh realities of rural Kenyan life. Mutongi here argues that widows survive by publicly airing their social, economic, and political problems - their "worries of the heart" - and she concludes that this strategy has led to the development of a new language of citizenship and a demand for greater political recognition that would have been unthinkable under colonial rule. An innovative blend of ethnography and historical research, "Worries of the Heart" is a poignant narrative rich with insights into postcolonial Africa.

作者介绍:

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