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**Sommario/riassunto**

This classic ethnography, now in its second edition, describes the traditional way of life of the Kaluli, a tropical forest people of Papua New Guinea. The book takes as its focus the nostalgic and violent Gisalo ceremony, one of the most remarkable performances in the anthropological literature. Tracking the major symbolic and emotional themes of the ceremony to their sources in everyday Kaluli life, Schieffelin shows how the central values and passions of Kaluli experience are governed by the basic forms of social reciprocity. However, Gisaro reveals that social reciprocity is not limited to the dynamics of transaction, obligation and alliance. It emerges, rather, as a mode of symbolic action and performative form, embodying a cultural scenario which shapes Kaluli emotional experience and moral sensibility and permeates their understanding of the human condition.