



Power and the Presidency in Kenya

In December 1963, Kenya formally declared its independence yet it would take a year of intense negotiations for it to transform into a presidential republic, with Jomo Kenyatta as its first president. Archival records of the independence negotiations, however, reveal that neither the British colonial authorities nor the Kenyan political elite foresaw the formation of a presidential regime that granted one man almost limitless executive powers. Even fewer expected Jomo Kenyatta to remain president until his death in 1978. *Power and the Presidency in Kenya* reconstructs Kenyatta's political biography, exploring the links between his ability to emerge as an uncontested leader and the deeper colonial and postcolonial history of the country. In describing Kenyatta's presidential style as discreet and distant, Anaïs Angelo shows how the burning issues of land decolonization, the increasing centralization of executive powers, and the repression of political oppositions shaped Kenyatta's politics. Telling the story of state-building through political biography, Angelo reveals how historical contingency and structural developments shaped both a man and an institution – the president and the presidency.

ANAÏS ANGELO is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Vienna, where her research focuses on the history of presidentialism, political biographies, and women in politics in postcolonial Africa. She holds a Ph.D. in history from the European University Institute and has conducted extensive archival research in Kenya.

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Power and the Presidency in Kenya

The Jomo Kenyatta Years

ANAÏS ANGELO
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To my parents, Annik and Vladimir.

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Anaïs Angelo
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Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page viii</i>
Introduction	1
1 Kenyatta’s Stateless Political Imagination	38
2 From Prison to Party Leader, an Ambiguous Ascension (1958–1961)	66
3 Kenyatta, Land, and Decolonization (1961–1963)	95
4 Independence and the Making of a President (1963–1964)	115
5 Kenyatta, Meru Politics, and the Last Mau Mau (1961/3–1965)	141
6 Taming Oppositions: Kenyatta’s “Secluded” Politics (1964–1966)	179
7 Ruling over a Divided Political Family (1965–1969)	219
8 “Kenyatta Simply Will Not Contemplate His Own Death” (1970–1978)	250
Conclusion	266
<i>Sources</i>	276
<i>Bibliography</i>	280
<i>Index</i>	304

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ix

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