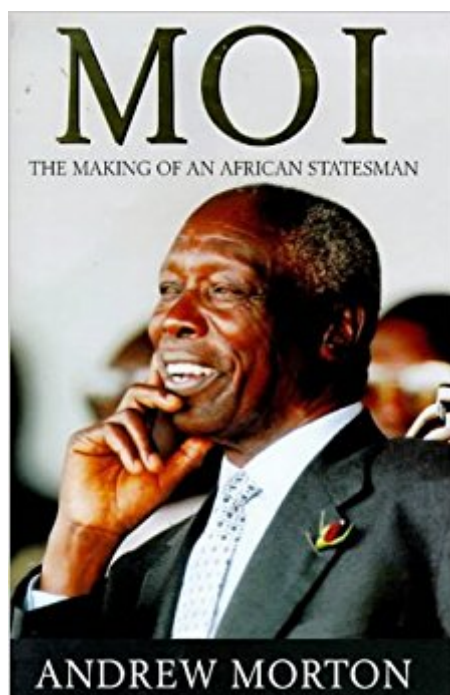


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Moi: The Making Of An African Statesman



Synopsis

This text traces the life and career of one of Africa's longest serving and most controversial leaders, Daniel arap Moi, President of Kenya. Andrew Morton seeks to challenge assumptions about a man routinely written off as a dictator.

Book Information

Hardcover: 216 pages

Publisher: Michael Omara (March 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1854792539

ISBN-13: 978-1854792532

Product Dimensions: 1 x 6.5 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,756,657 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #104 in [Books > History > Africa > Kenya](#) #922 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Africa](#) #5142 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Presidents & Heads of State](#)

Customer Reviews

In the first authorized biography of President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, British journalist Morton (Diana: Her True Story in Her Own Words, S. & S., 1997) provides insights into the enigmatic character and political philosophy of one of Africa's longest-serving and most controversial leaders. The book is a conscious attempt to probe Moi's background and besmirched international reputation and present a more objective picture of the man and his times, from Kenya's colonial era to the struggle for independence. Morton asserts compellingly that "pragmatic nationalism, combined with his Christian morality and the tribal culture surrounding the chief, are key elements in understanding Moi as a person and also as a politician." His account is enhanced by excellent photographs. A remarkably rich and compelling read, particularly for students and scholars of African politics, history, and cultural studies. [Morton's next book will be *Monica's Story*, Monica Lewinsky's account of her relationship with President Clinton.] Edward G. McCormack, Univ. of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Lib., Long Beach. - Edward G. McCormack, Univ. of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Lib., Long Beach Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A pretty objective look at misunderstood man and what he stands for. It's history of modern Kenya,

since it weaves with Moi's life. This is a Man who has remained consistent in his practical philosophy, African pride and self help when socialism was hot (Late fifties-to sixties) to now when the opposition is swallowing western ideologies in situ. Moi has fought the neo-colonists and their papa-knows -best racist and offensive attitudes, while the former communists and known tribalists noisily attempt to sabotage him. An astute politician who has survived in a very charged political environment without killing his rivals (contrary to popular belief). He has overseen remarkable change in a very poor country, all the while maintaining peace- his greatest achievement. I respect this man for his courage in taking on such a tough and thankless job- and doing a remarkable job in the face of economic downturns, drought, tribal unrest and political upheaval. Let's appreciate him when he is still with us.

If ever I have seen a total and complete divergence between the subject of a biography and the biography itself, this must surely be it. Moi, a compassionate and caring man? More like a kleptomaniac, power hungry tinpot dictator. Anyone who is Kenyan knows why Moi is so caring toward the rural poor of this country. Simply because the élite of the country see easily through his "peace, love and unity" bluster for what it really is: an uneducated and poorly-executed attempt at philosophising dictatorship. So he has to appease the "wananchi" (citizens) and demonise the well-educated middle-class as he knows that that is where his power comes from. The reader from Oxford is wrong. Multipartyism did not degenerate into tribalism. The Kenyan version introduced in 1991 was exclusively designed to be tribal in nature, so that Moi's prophecies of doom would become self-fulfilling. Since most of us know Moi for what he really is, all that really suffered in the reading of this bound copy of waste paper was our sense of decency and any shred of respect we had for Andrew Morton as an author.

Isn't it amazing what truths an objective inquiry about a subject can reveal. It would have been very simple for Mr. Andrew Morton to jump onto the band wagon and join the endless line of people who believe that Moi is the devil incarnate. Instead his well researched book reveals a man who is grossly misunderstood by most. This book changed my opinion of a man I had come to loathe simply because it is easier to do so. True Moi has been a failure as far as his presidency is concerned, as dismal a failure as Kenyatta before him was, but we should not let that cloud our judgement of Moi the human being. I have no doubt that the task of running any country is difficult and mostly thankless, that is why I enjoyed this book so much because it reveals the character of a man who willingly took that job.

Peter Kirker's strong comments about this book ignore the fact that it is a valuable contribution to the history of Kenya, and is based on a considerable amount of research among people who know Kenya well, probably rather better than Mr Kirker. It brings out particularly well how dependent the President is on his subordinates, how vulnerable he is, and the ever-present and fissiparous dangers of tribalism in Kenya, as well as showing how multi-party democracy has degenerated into tribalism in disguise. The book is too reticent about some of the dubious contractor finance arrangements that have taken place under Moi's Presidency, particularly the Turkwell Dam and the Eldoret airport.

Andrew Morton is a foreign journalist who has come to realize Moi's role in Kenya. The only true patriotic Kenyan I know is president Moi. A man who has tried to keep Kenya united despite the economic and tribal hardships. Many who pose to lead Kenya have not shown any national interests outside being president for the sake of it. Andrew has truly written of who Moi is and what Kenya leadership entails. Many in the West don't exactly understand the intricacies of Kenyan cultures and behaviours. This book will stand the tests of history. It is a great book about a great leader. Thanks Zeberio Amwoma [Minnesota]

An invaluable resource of history on a great leader. However, the author hasn't brought out the other side of Moi - his dictatorial mien! As a Kenyan citizen and knowing how Moi has ruled for the past 24 years, I can see the motive of Morton's book as that of pleasing the SUBJECT in order to capitalise on the situation. Morton must have been definitely compromised, to please the establishment, thus not to write much negative things about Moi's person and rule. There's more to Moi than one can extract from Morton's book. Hoping a future write-up will expose the areas that were left out.

This biography is a Five Star Lie, perhaps the lie of the century in Africa! That Andrew Morton is now on a mission to cash big bucks from notorious Dictators is utterly disgusting from a British author. Moi and Morton should not be mistaken that this biography will change Moi's tyrannious record in Kenya, for it's already well written and preserved. Morton can now go ahead and write biographies of other "Statesmen", like Serbian's Milosovic and Cuban's Castro. Next he can write Pinochet's biography and Cambodia's Pol Pot as well as North Korean's Kim Il Sung. After all he is a writer whose driving force is fame and money, nothing less!

A badly written collection of lies and inaccurate facts put together and presented as a book. I totally agree with the reader from Oxford concerning the credibility of the author as well as the President. I was disgusted with the account of Ouko's murder. The fact that Moi felt that it should be included in his biography already implicates some guilt. It is interesting how he lays blame on subjects who were very close to him, but have now passed away and cannot defend themselves against such accusations.

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