# Contents

Prolegomenon: Robert Ouko, a Life and a Death ix

Acknowledgments xiii

**Introduction**

- A Death Reported 1
- Dead Bodies in Kenya 3
- A New Habitus 7
- The State 8
- The Ouko Dossier 12
- Indeterminacies 16
- Economies of Knowledge 20
- Social Histories 24
- States of Loss 32

**Chapter 1** Investigating a Death in Kenya 33

- Locks and Keys 39
- Commissions 43

**Chapter 2** In a Nation of White Cars 46

- Kenyans and Their Women 47
- Kenyans and Their Man 48
- White Cars, Gum Boots, and Multiparty Democracy 50
- Hearing Selina Speak 53
- The Headlining of Selina 67
Chapter 3  Robert Ouko’s Pain  
A State of Mind in Kenya  
“These are the things that are killing me”  
Last Days  
Prayers for the Oukos  
Mandela’s Release  

Chapter 4  The Note  
An Inventory of Mbajah’s Statements  
Troon and Mbajah  
A Marriage Game  
Mbajah: Reader and Author  
Papers Seen and Unseen  
The Dramaturgy of Incarceration  

Chapter 5  Readers of the Found Remains  
Remains of the Dead  
The Force of Difference  
The Temporal Work of a First Observation  
The Shifting Stage  

Chapter 6  “Why, Mr. President?”  
“J’accuse!”  
Husband and Wife  
The Author Anguka  
Two Governmental Systems  
Indispensability and Dispensability  
A Terrifying Triangle  
The Presence of Anguka  

Chapter 7  No Stone Unturned  

Chapter 8  Ouko: A Biography of African Nationalism  
Triumphal Beginnings and False Starts  
Lions in Winter  
The Sticky Thing Called Development  
Molasses  
The Second International Sphere  

Contents
Chapter 9  Contradictions of Development  193
   Revival  195
   Roman Holidays  199
   Molasses Narratives  204
   Death by Molasses  211
   “Cleaned his slate”  218

Chapter 10  The Negotiation of a State of Mind  220
   Dramaturgical Moments  222
   A Sister’s Brief  225
   Last Conversations  231
   A Church in Kenya  234
   The Possibility of Ouko  242

Chapter 11  “A White Car” Becomes a Truth  246
   Authentic Voices  250
   Work of Truth, Truth of Work  254

Conclusion  The Risks of Knowledge  258
   Epistemologies  259
   Producing Knowledge  261
   The Pain of Others  267
   The Excision of Ouko  270

Notes  273

Bibliography  317

Index  333