



# Matriarchy and Power in Africa: Aneji Eko

*David Uru Iyam*

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Capturing a dimension of the dominance and power of a Nigerian woman, *Matriarchy and Power in Africa* shows the diverse ways in which women controlled a variety of people in their society, asserted their power, and maintained their authority in spite of the hurdles erected by a patriarchal system that minimizes women's role. In exercising her matriarchal authority, Aneji Eko defined the manner of domestic relationships, influenced the statuses of individuals within and beyond her household, established the character of the relationship between men and women, adults and children, and facilitated the balance between the temporal and secular domains of members of her household. This book fuses the underlying importance of women in Nigeria with issues of social class relations, gender construction, child-raising ideology, and their implications for prestige both in the traditional past and in the contemporary present. Many readers will recognize the woman, Aneji Eko, on whose social philosophy this account is based, as her story mirrors what they may remember or have heard concerning a parent or a relative, and even non-Africans will be familiar with the pattern of relationships the story of Aneji recounts.

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