

# *A Political History of the Embu and Mbeere Communities of Kenya*

As told through their elected representatives, 1957-2021

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## Limitations

- Excludes Local Government throughout.

# Embu and Mbeere Political History

## A history of elected Embu & Mbeere MPs

The Embu and closely-related Mbeere communities are Bantu speakers living mostly south east of Mount Kenya, mostly in Embu District at independence.

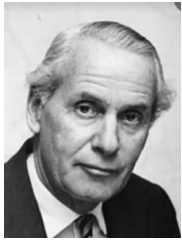
The Embu and Mbeere languages are linguistically very similar to the Kikuyu of Gichugu and Ndia.

The Embu and Mbeere have historically been less mobile than the Kikuyu and most members of the “tribes” continue to live in the district.

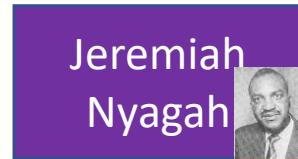
The region has experienced little “out of band” political change since independence – with few or no murders, sackings or nullifications due to election petitions. Its political history was dominated for three decades by two long-serving MPs – Jeremiah Nyagah and Kamwithi Munyi.

# Embu Political History

1958: LegCo Enlarged



Governor  
Renison

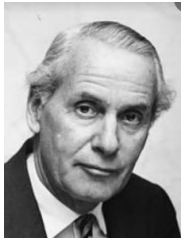


Embu-Nyeri

1958 Central province was split and a new Constituency of Nyeri-Embu created. Teacher and education officer Jeremiah Nyagah (Mbeere), who had been defeated in 1957, was now elected as representative

# Embu Political History

1960



Governor  
Renison

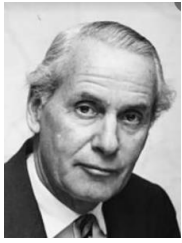


Embu-Nyeri

Nyagah was chosen as the first elected Africa Deputy Speaker in the colonial Legislative Council in October 1960.

# Embu Political History

Feb 1961: The Kenyatta Election



Governor Ronald Ngala  
Renison (KADU)



Embu

In the 1961 “Kenyatta election”, Nyagah was re-elected for KANU in a constituency still covering both Embu and Kirinyaga. He remains Deputy Speaker

# Embu Political History

1963: For Self-Government



Governor Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya  
Macdonald (KANU)

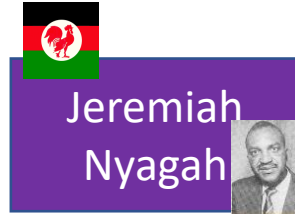


Ngei  
(APP)

Ngala  
(KADU)



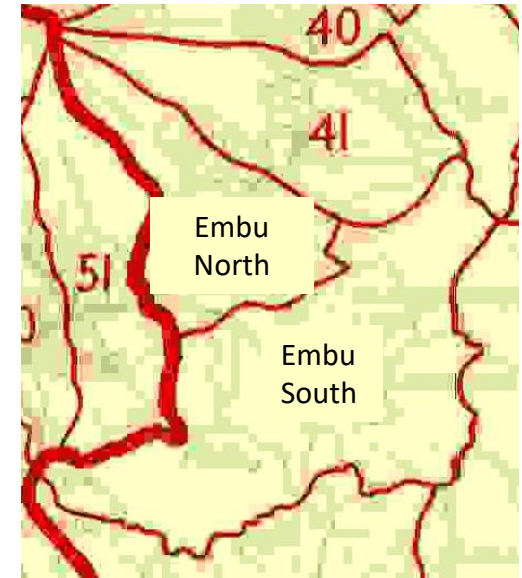
Embu North



Embu South



Embu Senate



KANU wins decisively the two MPs and one senatorial seats in the new Embu. Nyagah re-elected and appointed Parliamentary Secretary (below ministerial level)

# Embu Political History

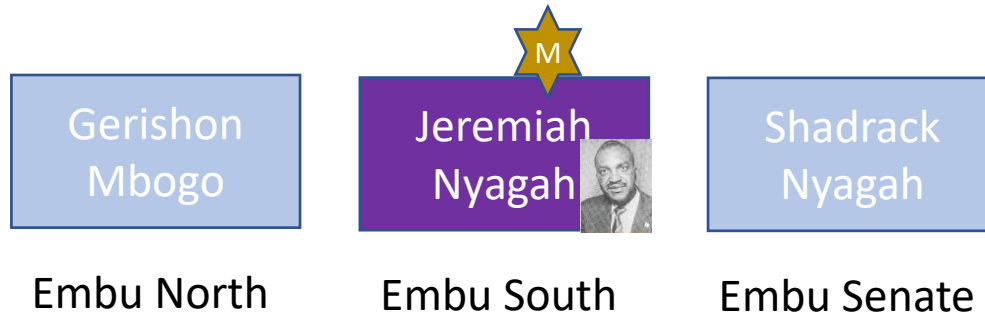
Dec 1964: Republican Constitution



One Party State  
(Part 1):  
1964-66



Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya  
(KANU)



KADU folds and join KANU. Republic established with Kenyatta as President. Nyagah made minister

# Embu Political History

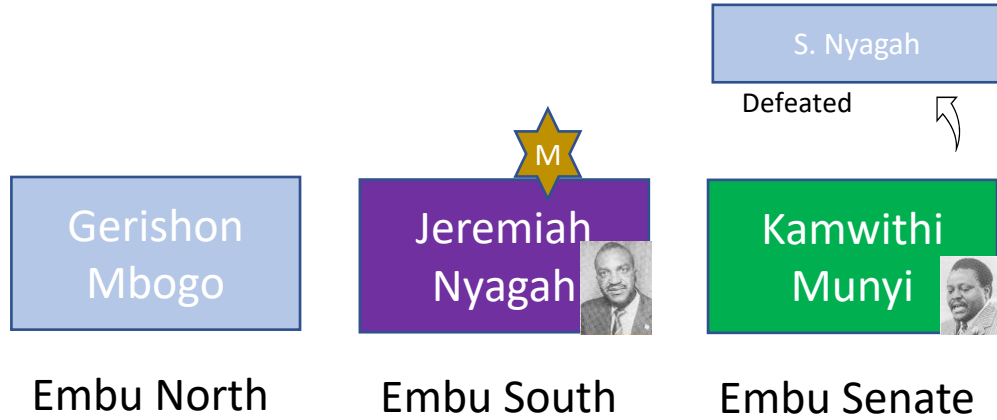
1965: Senate By-election



One Party State  
(Part 1):  
1964-66



Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya  
(KANU)



Senate by-election brings in Kamwithi Munyi (Embu) for the first time



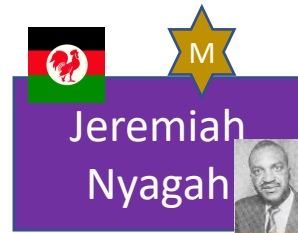


# Embu Political History

1966: Little General Election - KPU vs KANU



Embu North



Embu South



Embu Senate

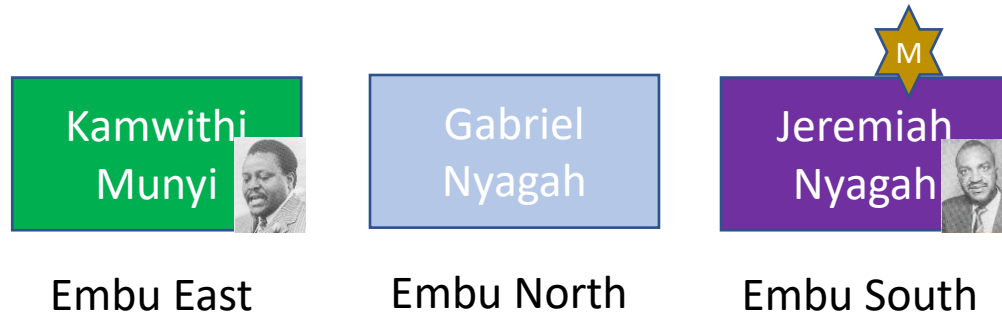
KPU launch had no material effect here - no defections and no by elections

# Embu Political History

## 1969 General Election



One Party State  
(Part 2):  
1969-82



KPU Banned, return of one-party state. Senate abolished and boundary redistribution. Nyagah and Munyi both re-elected in new constituency structure



# Embu Political History

1974 General Election



Embu East

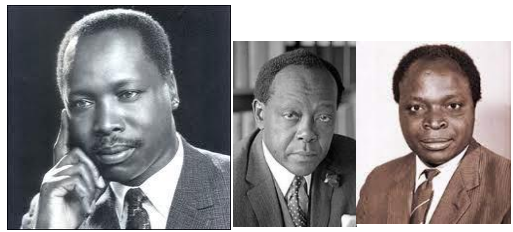


Embu North



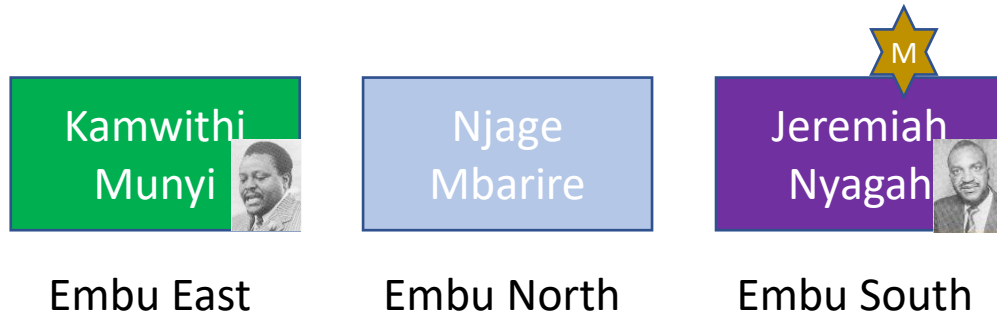
Embu South

Nyagah and Munyi re-elected again. Mbarire (Embu) elected for Embu North (father of Cicily)

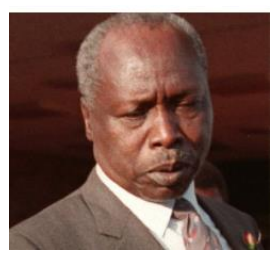


# Embu Political History

1979 General Election



Moi's new broom sweeps away no one in Embu district. Nyagah reappointed a Minister (even though he had unsuccessfully stood against Kibaki for KANU Vice president in October 1978, to official displeasure)

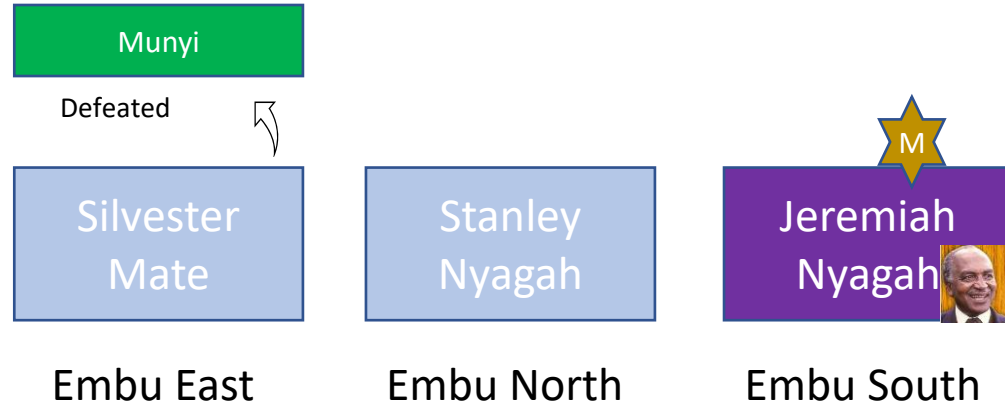


# Embu Political History

1983: Snap General Election



One Party State  
(Part 3): De Jure  
1982-91



Munyi (and Mbarire) defeated in 1983 snap election. Nyagah re-elected and reappointed as Minister.

# Embu Political History

1988 (Public Queue Voting)



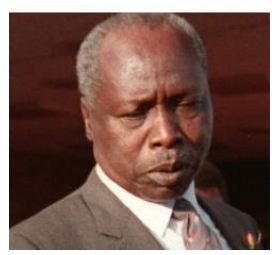
Mbarari Karingi

Nominated MP

Boundary redistribution renamed seats but added none. Nyagah re-elected again, Munyi returns. Embu gets a nominated MP (a Munyi ally).

# Embu Political History

Late 1992: Multi-Partyism



Kitui

Machakos

Makueni



Runyenjes



Siakago



Gachoka



Nominated MP

Queue voting abolished 1991. Multi-party democracy returns Dec 1991. As FORD and the DP emerge, a few MPs defect, but no change is seen in Embu superficially.

# Kamba Political History

December 1992: Multi-party General Elections



Munyi

Lost KANU Primary ↗



Runyenjes

J. Nyagah

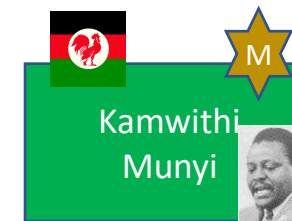
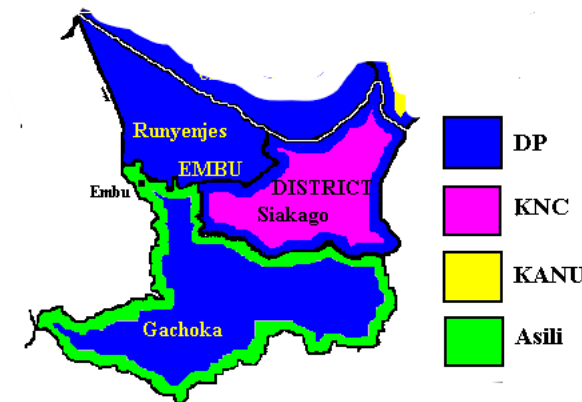
Did not stand ↗



Gachoka



Siakago



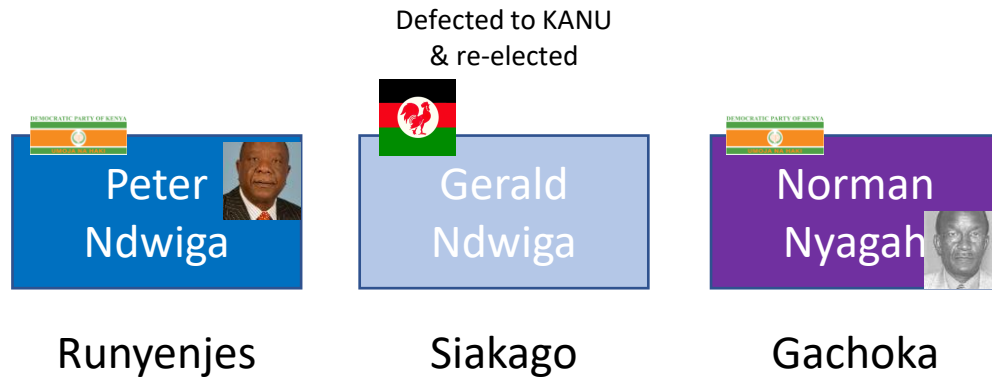
Nominated MP

In the Dec 1992 elections. Nyagah retires from politics after 34 years as elected representative and his son Norman is elected for the DP in his stead. Kibaki wins all seats for president. Munyi loses the KANU primaries but is nominated by Moi to parliament and made a minister, keeping some form of KANU representation in the district. Peter Ndwiga elected in Runyenjes.



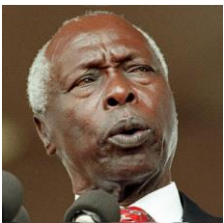
# Kamba Political History

1995: By-election and defection



Nominated MP

Gerald Ndwiga defects, reelected for KNAU.



# Embu Political History

## Dec 1997 General Election



Embu

Mbeere

FORD-A  
Augustine  
Kathangu

Runyenjes

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA  
Peter  
Ndwigu

Manyatta

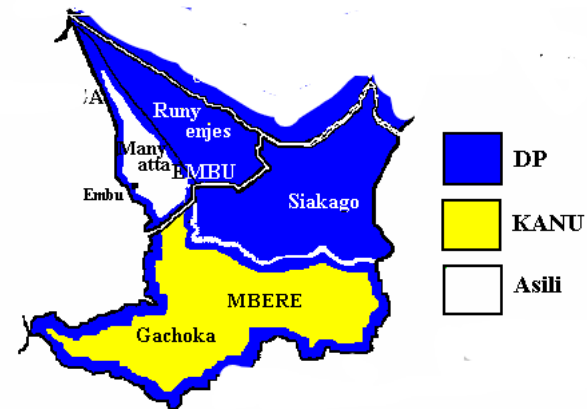
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA  
Silas  
Ita

Siakago

N. Nyagah  
Moved  
M  
Joe  
Nyagah

Gachoka

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA  
Norman  
Nyagah  
Kamukunji

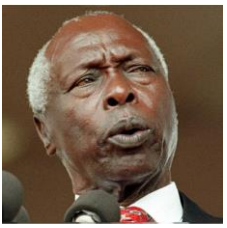


Lost KANU Primary  
Munyi

Boundary redistribution splits Mbeere district from Embu and adds one seat to Embu. Opposition wins Embu ad Ndwigu re-elected. Munyi lost KANU primary and not renominated, Norman Nyagah moved to Nairobi to let his brother stand uncontended in Gackoka for KANU. Joe then made minister

# Embu Political History

1999 By-elections-death



Embu

FORD-A  
Augustine  
Kathangu

Runyenjes

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA  
Peter  
Ndwigu

Manyatta

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA  
Norman  
Nyagah  
Kamukunji

Mbeere

KANU  
Justin  
Muturi

Siakago

KANU  
M  
Joe  
Nyagah

Gachoka

Silas Ita (Siakago) died and Justin Muturi elected for KANU

# Kamba Political History

2002: Moi's Retirement, Kibaki Elected



Embu

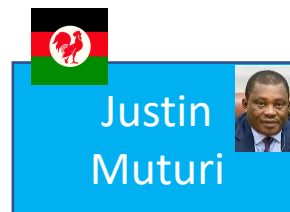
Mbeere



Runyenjes



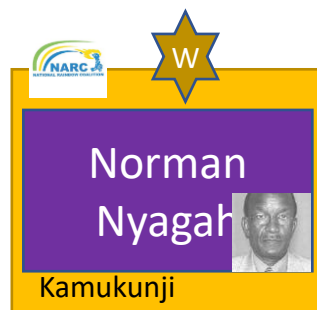
Manyatta



Siakago



Gachoka



Kamukunji

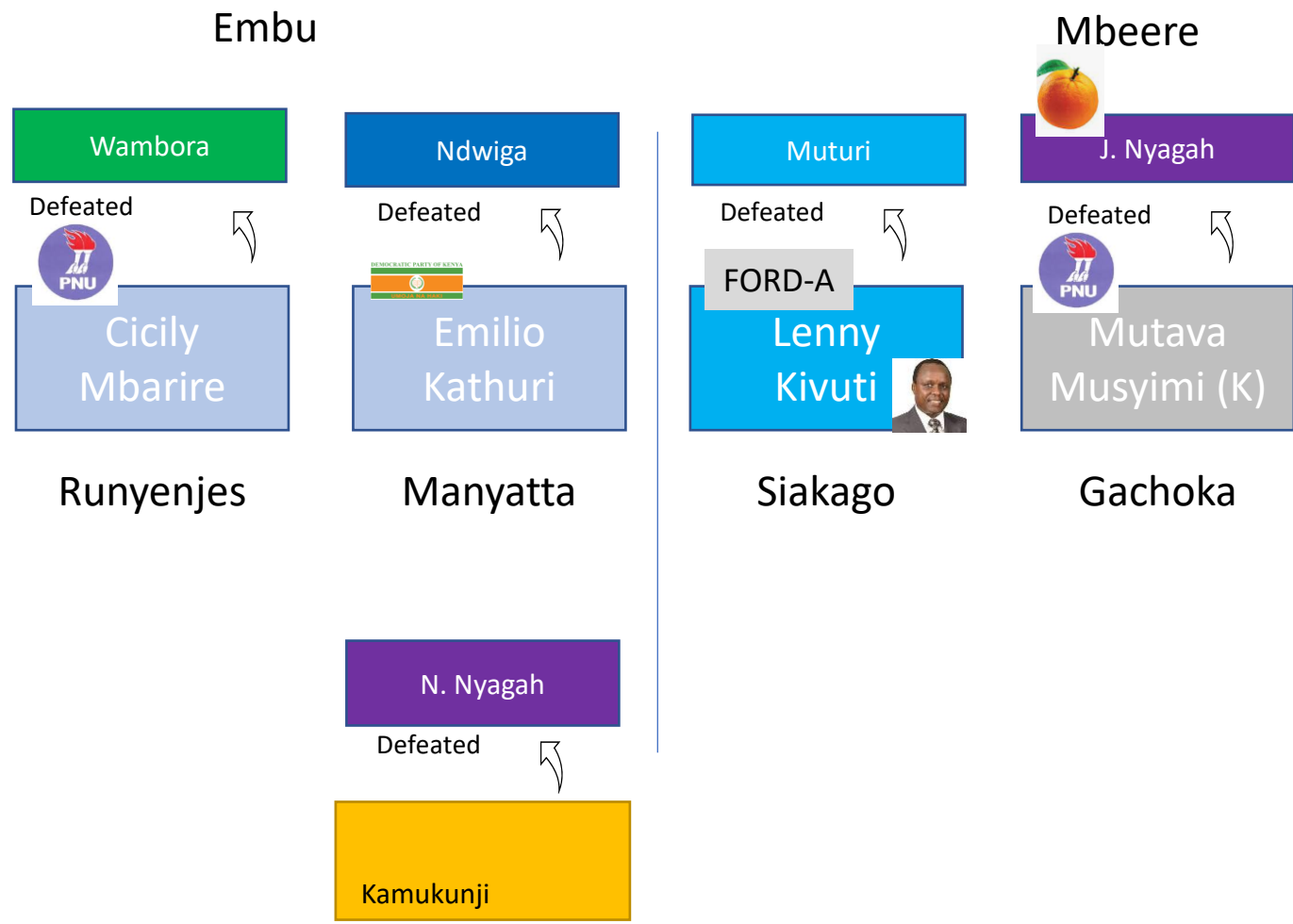


Nominated MP (NAK)

Kibaki defeats Uhuru Kenyatta and wins all Embu and Mbeere seats presidentially. NARC wins most parliamentary seats. Most MPs changes parties but the names remain almost the same. Ndwigwa made minister and Norman Nyagah Chief Whip. Only Mutiri re-elected for KANU and became chief opposition whip.

# Embu Political History

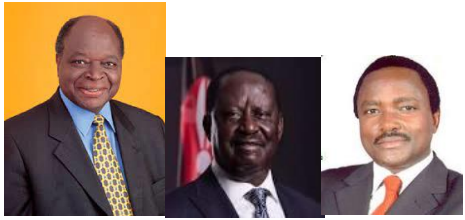
## 2007: General Election and Subsequent Chaos



ODM-PNU battle nationwide has little effect in Embu, except that Joe Nyagah joined ODM and lost. Kibaki won all seats presidentially. Strong protest vote against incumbents but not for ODM. All four evicted and Norman also lost in Nairobi. Religious leader Mutava Musyimi (of Kamba origin) elected from the settlement areas of Gachoka. No Embu/Mbeere at Ministerial level in new govt

# Kamba Political History

## 2008: Grand Coalition



Embu

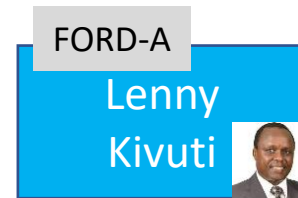
Mbeere



Runyenjes



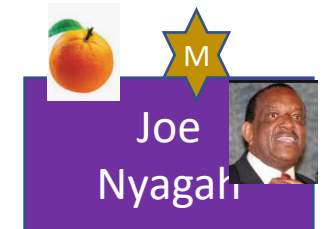
Manyatta



Siakago



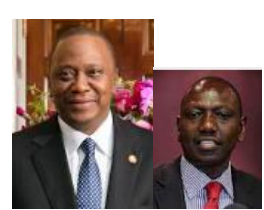
Gachoka



Joe Nyagah – nominated to parliament by ODM - becomes Minister in grand coalition

# Embu Political History

2013: New Constitution



Runyenjes



Manyatta



Mbeere North



Mbeere South



Speaker



Governor

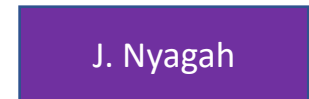


Senator



Women's Rep

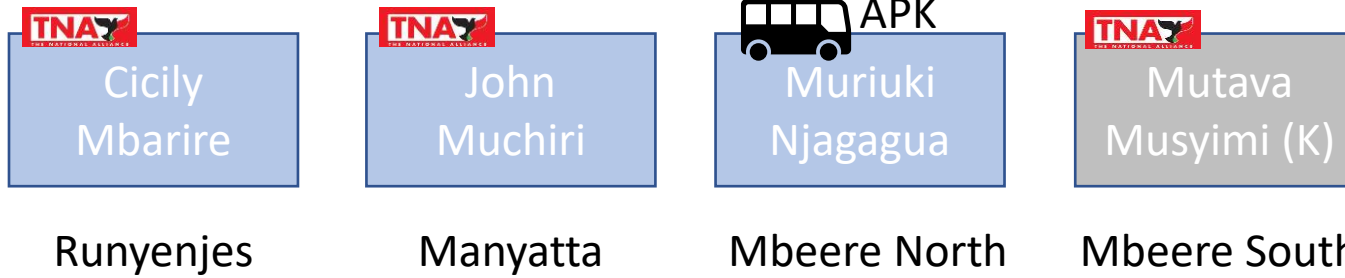
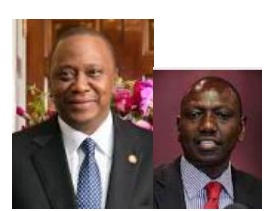
Not a candidate



New constitution, new boundaries (but no new seats), bicameral parliament, Governors. Ministers (Cab Secs) no longer elected MPs. TNA and URP in alliance win the election. Embu becomes one county again. Embu votes mostly for TNA and Kenyatta but APK (the Meru-led regional party) also does well. ODM and Mudavadi's UDF unimportant. Muturi elected Speaker of the house

# Embu Political History

2014-5



Impeached-overturned



Speaker



Governor



Senator



Women's Rep



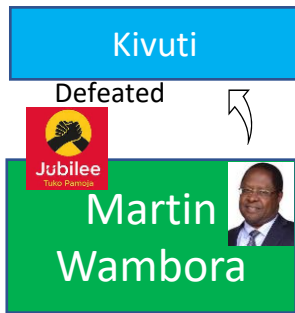
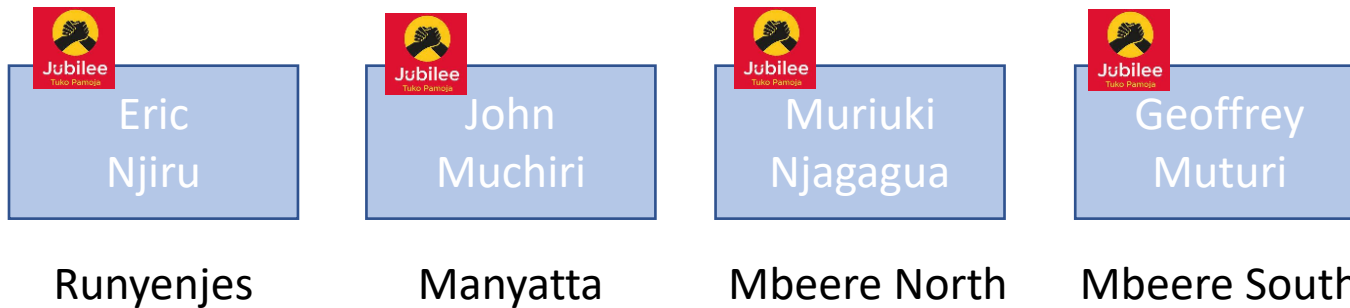
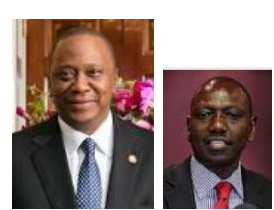
Cabinet Secretary

2014 Martin Wambora impeached by county, ratified by senate but eventually overturned by courts. 2015 senior executive and Principal Secretary Sicily Kariuki (originally from Embu) appointed cabinet secretary



# Embu Political History

## 2017: Second "Second Republic" Gen Elections



Speaker

Governor

Senator

Women's Rep

Nominated MP

Cabinet Secretary

Wiper rejoins ODM in NASA but loses to the new Jubilee alliance of TNA and URP. Embu votes overwhelmingly Jubilee (except for Kamba in Mbeere South). Peter Ndwiga returns. Muturi reelected Speaker.


# From fact to opinion

- The next image captures my understanding of the current political alignment of this group of elected (and appointed) individuals as of December 2021.



# Embu Political History

## 2021: Current estimated alliances

Eric Njiru

Runyenjes



John Muchiri

Manyatta




Muriuki Njagagua

Mbeere North



Geoffrey Muturi

Mbeere South



Justin Muturi

Speaker



Martin Wambora

Governor



Peter Ndwiga

Senator



Jane Njiru

Women's Rep



Cicily Mbarire

Nominated MP



Sicily Kariuki

Cabinet Secretary

Most MPs backing Ruto, while country level leaders back the handshake. Njagagua backing Ruto but also Muturi for President