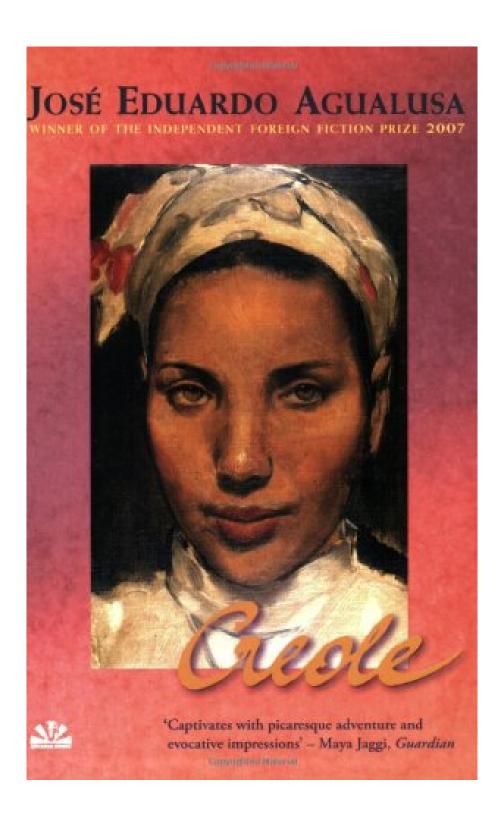


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Review

'One of the most powerful and most beautiful arguments against a stereotyped vision of Africa. Agualusa rediscovers the brutal and fascinating world of mulatto Africa, a world riddled with love and hate that jumps social barriers; with political riots that mobilize whites as well as blacks; and with intrigues that unfold in cosmopolitan settings. In short, a Creole nation that has needed more than a century to rebuild the beauty and the magnetism of this stolen memory' - El Pais

About the Author

José Eduardo Agualusa is the author of Market of the Damned and Rainy Season.

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Creole paints a vivid and dramatic picture of a decadent social order in tatters. Extraordinary characters, real and fictional, look on as their world collapses.

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Most helpful customer reviews

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

A wonderful read

By Gogol

Wonderful read (something you would take to the beach with you especially for those hot summer holidays in a tropical climate) Set in Angola, Brazil and Portugal during the close of the Portuguese slave trade the book takes the form of corrispondance letters first of all from a middle class Portuguese liberal who arrives in Angola and falls in love with a local African woman and finally from the lady herself.

Its a lovely read, wonderfully describing Angola during the 19th century the sights, the sounds the mixed culture both African and European. The author is also wise not to make things out too idealistic concerning the conditions of both native freedmen and slaves while being keen to describe how the Angolan capital had become a racial melting pot.

It would be unfair to give away too much of the story as this is a short book (about 150 pages) and you will probably have it finnished in a day but it is without doubt worth reading.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

"The hot, humid Angolan air... fruit and sugarcane, and...another smell, something subtler, more melancholy...death and decay"

By sally tarbox

Epistolary novel, written mainly by one Fradique Mendes, an 'aristocrat and adventurer' who has sailed out from his native Lisbon to Angola in 1868. In letters for his godmother and for his friend Eca de Queiroz (a famous Portugese author), he describes life in Africa - the privileged whites, the slaves and the (mixed-race) 'children -of -the -country'. And here he falls in love with the beautiful, but married, Creole woman, Ana Olimpia.

Enslavement of the one he loves, an alligator hunt, re-location to Brazil and the political fallout from his opposition to slavery.... Agualusa tells a very readable story, that vividly describes a part of the world which rarely features in fiction. But there is also the deeper side of his thoughts on the Portugese colonies of the era:

"Once dropped into Africa the unfortunate Portugese try in the first place to keep themselves in the saddle - that is, alive and thieving - little caring in which direction the continent is headed. And Portugal, having once dropped them there, has forgotten all about them."

Leaves a strong impression in a short novel.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. something got lost in translation

By jkobi2011

the book won the Portuguese Grand Prize for Literature and there is uneasy feeling about slavery in connection with the Portuguese

control over Angola and Brazil in the late nineteenth century and it is admirable that an attempt has been made to do a translation. Unfortunately in the translation some of the intense meaning of the original has been lost. For Example ,he relates briefly a story of an attempt on the life of a narrator and describes how he was not bothered by the shooting because he has some 'very high-calibre enemies'. The term high- calibre does not fit in with a narrator of the late nineteenth century and I assume an experienced novelist writing in Portuguese in the language of a late nineteenth-century narrator would have found used a word which would have been current for the times. It is still nice to have a translation and the translator is to be congratulated .

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