



# A General Theory of Oblivion

By Jose Eduardo Agualusa

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**A General Theory of Oblivion** By Jose Eduardo Agualusa

As the country goes through various political upheavals from colony to socialist republic to civil war to peace and capitalism, the world outside seeps into Ludo's life through snippets on the radio, voices from next door, glimpses of someone peeing on a balcony, or a man fleeing his pursuers.

*A General Theory of Oblivion* is a perfectly crafted, wild patchwork of a novel, playing on a love of storytelling and fable.

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## A General Theory of Oblivion By Jose Eduardo Agualusa Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

Review

**Shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize 2016**

**Shortlisted for the Three Percent Best Translated Book Award**

"Like Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa and Argentine Jorge Luis Borges, Portuguese-Angolan writer José Eduardo Agualusa is a literary trickster who dazzles with his artificial fictional creations... Agualusa is a master of varied genre structure, and he has great fun shifting from spy novel to pastoral narrative to interior reflection, but his heart is deeply invested in his characters, and each individual's story burns itself into the reader to make us reconsider our capacity for empathy and understanding." — *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"A master storyteller...It's a tribute to Agualusa's storytelling that the bittersweet redemption found by his characters feels authentic; he and they have earned it." — *Washington Independent Review of Books*

"The story challenges what we imagine to be the clearly drawn lines between 'hero' and 'villain' and forces a reconsideration of history and our fictions. It does what the best of literature ought to do: keep us glued to our seats, unable to break away." — **Maaza Mengiste, *Words Without Borders***

"Each page brimming with imagination" — *The Irish Independent*

"In this tale, based on real-life events, one of Angola's most inventive novelists has found the perfect vehicle to examine his country's troubled recent past. . . Alongside Mozambique's Mia Couto (shortlisted for this year's Man Booker International), Agualusa has already become one of lusophone Africa's most distinctive voices." — *Financial Times*

"The translation ... is seamless, with the light detachment and readability of Louis de Bernières at his best, but combined with the sharp insights of JM Coetzee ... Agualusa's writing is a delight throughout, as he opens up the world of Portuguese-speaking Africa to the English-speaking community. And what a world it is." — *The Scotsman*

"Hahn is one of our most experienced translators. Such experience shows in tiny interventions to guide the English reader through the chaos of the Angolan battlefield ... and in his taking confident ownership of certain descriptive passages, ensuring the music of the original is conveyed along with the meaning... a timely homage to the prize of Angolan independence." — *The Independent*

"*A General Theory of Oblivion* is both more and less than its title; it certainly provides a kind of blueprint of the encroaching obscurity inherent to living and dying—at times bemoaning its certainty, at times celebrating the assured darkness—but it is also a general theory of love, of life, and, finally, of literature. Working in the fertile ground between fiction, philosophy, and enchantment, Agualusa has accomplished something strange and marvelous here, a whirling dervish of joy and pain, blood and memory, whose many high points I found myself re-reading immediately, eager to experience the shine of the prose like spun gold. It left me in awe of these stories we tell ourselves: those we need to survive, those that change us, and those that change with us." — **Dustin Illingworth, *Quarterly Conversation***

"Without doubt one of the most important Portuguese-language writers of his generation." - **António Lobo Antunes**

"Cross J.M. Coetzee with Gabriel García Márquez and you've got José Eduardo Agualusa, Portugal's next candidate for the Nobel Prize." - **Alan Kaufman, author of *Matches***

#### PRAISE FOR *THE BOOK OF CHAMELEONS*

"Humorous and quizzical, with a light touch on weighty themes, the narrative darts about with lizard-like colour and velocity. Agualusa's delightful novel skitters across minefields with grace and poise." - **Boyd Tonkin, *The Independent***.

"Ingenious, consistently taut and witty." - ***The Times Literary Supplement***

"Strange...elliptical...charming." - ***Guardian***

"A book as brisk as a thriller and as hot and alarming as the most powerful kind of dream." - **Michael Pye, author of *The Pieces from Berlin***

"A work of fierce originality." - ***The Independent***

"A subtle beguiling story of shifting identities." - ***Kirkus***

#### PRAISE FOR *CREOLE*

"One of the most powerful and most beautiful arguments against a stereotyped vision of Africa." - ***El País***

"Winged me into the lore of 19th-century Portuguese colonies and the slave trade." - **Lisa Appignanesi, *Independent Books of the Year***

"Captivates with Picaresque adventure and evocative impressions." --***Maya Jaggi, Guardian***

#### About the Author

José Eduardo Agualusa, a writer and journalist, is one of the leading literary voices in Angola and the Portuguese language today. His books have been translated into 25 languages. Four of his books have been translated into English: *Creole* (2002), winner of the Portuguese Grand Prize for Literature; *The Book of Chameleons* (2006), which won the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize; *My father's wives* (2008), and *Rainy Season* (2009). He has received literary grants from the Centro Nacional da Cultura, the Fundação do Oriente, and the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst. Agualusa has also written four plays: *W generation*, *O monólogo*, *Chovem amores na Rua do Matador* and *A Caixa Preta*, the last two written with Mia Couto.

Daniel Hahn is the author of a number of works of non-fiction. His translation of *The Book of Chameleons* by José Eduardo Agualusa won the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize in 2007. He has translated the work of José Luís Peixoto, Philippe Claudel, María Dueñas, José Saramago, Eduardo Halfon, Gonçalo M. Tavares, Corsino Fortes, and others.

#### Users Review

##### From reader reviews:

**Shannon Batiste:**

A General Theory of Oblivion can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort to place every word into delight arrangement in writing A General Theory of Oblivion nevertheless doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one of it. This great information can drawn you into fresh stage of crucial thinking.

**Kimberly Thibault:**

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