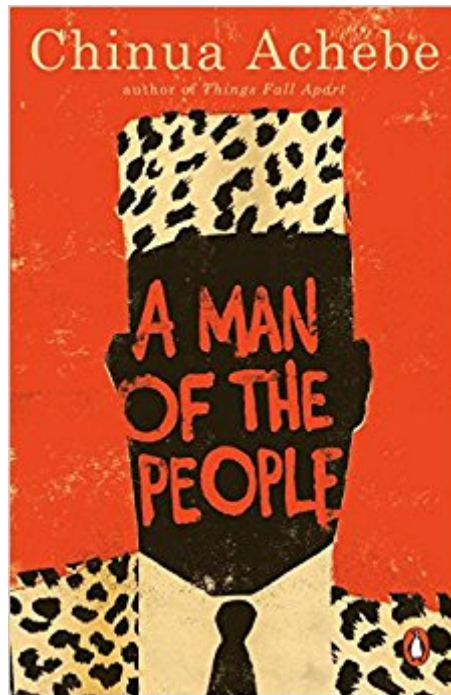




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A Man Of The People



Synopsis

From the renowned author of *The African Trilogy*, a political satire about an unnamed African country navigating a path between violence and corruption. As Minister for Culture, former school teacher M. A. Nanga is a man of the people, as cynical as he is charming, and a roguish opportunist. When Odili, an idealistic young teacher, visits his former instructor at the ministry, the division between them is vast. But in the eat-and-let-eat atmosphere, Odili's idealism soon collides with his lusts, and the two men's personal and political tauntings threaten to send their country into chaos. When Odili launches a vicious campaign against his former mentor for the same seat in an election, their mutual animosity drives the country to revolution. Published, prophetically, just days before Nigeria's first attempted coup in 1966, *A Man of the People* is an essential part of Achebe's body of work dealing with modern African history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I haven't read all of Achebe's works, but so far this is the best. There are two main reasons: storytelling and insight to Nigeria, and by extension, Africa. If you're going to read one Achebe book, it should be this one (unless you're specifically interested in pre-colonial/early colonial setting which would be *"Things Fall Apart"*). Storytelling: Achebe's strengths are highlighted and weaknesses hidden in this tale. The plot is well-paced, taut and compelling. The style is sharp with a masterful balance of attention amongst setting, characters, and action. In short, "readability" or "page-turnability" is high. The pidgin English conversation may cause a few stumbles for the reader but overall it is more value-added than obstacle. Female characters are still rather more flat than

males, which is usual for Achebe. Insight: The beauty of the storytelling is matched by the contextual insight. In fact, this is the most important aspect of the story for me. One can look up Nigerian history and read that the First Republic lasted from 1960 to 1966, fraught with social unrest and ended by coup and Biafran Civil War in '67. Achebe fills in this time and place with living color - insight as to splits in society, individual motivations, and the legacy of colonial ideas mixing with traditional. He wrote the story real-time, that is, without big picture hindsight of the coup so as to align historical details. However, this makes his prescience all the more remarkable. Specific observations:- The single most profoundly insightful scene I've read by Achebe occurs with the post sex-with-Jean drive around Bori (a made-up name - all locations are thus as a means of self-preservation vs Nigerian state censorship and punishment).

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