

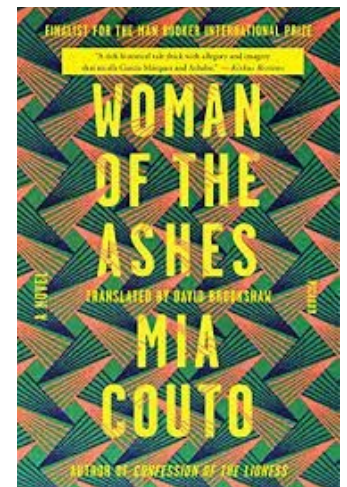
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Woman of the Ashes Mia Couto

Discussion Questions

1. What was your previous knowledge of Portuguese colonization in Africa before reading this book? What do you know now about Mozambique's fight for independence that you didn't know before?
2. Mia Couto was in late teens when the anti-colonial guerrilla movement in Mozambique's was struggling to overthrow the Portuguese colonial rule. How do you think this might have inspired him to write this book?
3. The original title of the book in Portuguese is *Mulheres de Cinzas*, or *Women of the Ashes*. Why do you think the translation changed the noun to the singular form? Does it alter its meaning?
4. Which "voice" did you enjoy reading more? Imani or Germano? Why?
5. Was it difficult to keep our own, modern-day experiences from influencing the reading of a historical fiction tale? Can we imagine what life was really like for the characters within the context of the time period?
6. Compare this book to other works of historical fiction your group has read. Is it similar to any of them? Did you like it more or less than other books you've read? What do you think will be your lasting impression of the book?
7. What did you like or dislike about the book that hasn't been discussed already? Were you glad you read this book? Would you recommend it to a friend?
8. What are your predictions for the next book in the series, *The Sword and the Spear*?



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About the Author

Mia Couto, born in Mozambique in 1955, is one of the most prominent writers in Portuguese speaking Africa. After studying medicine and biology, he worked as a journalist and headed several Mozambican national newspapers and magazines. Couto has been awarded the Camões Prize for Literature and the prestigious Neustadt International Prize for Literature, among other awards. He was also short-listed for the 2017 IMPAC DUBLIN Literary Award and was a finalist for the Man Booker International Prize in 2015. He lives in Maputo, where he works as a biologist.

Via Macmillan (<https://us.macmillan.com/author/miacouto>)

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