

beyond using only the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as markers to explain African growth rate (Ute Riefdorf, pp. 671-87).

Africa is a large continent with diverse histories and cultures. The various essays in this book succinctly discussed interesting sources of information on African pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial historical experiences. Some of the essays interrogated unexpected and “weird” accounts that reveal the depth of historical knowledge about African peoples and cultures. The book is a befitting farewell gift to Adams Jones from both older and younger scholars of Africa.

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Jennifer Cole and Christian Groes (eds.). 2016. *Affective Circuits: African Migrations to Europe and the Pursuit of Social Regeneration*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press. 352 pp.

If we could characterize the last two decades of the twentieth century as the times of the de-structuring of national economies thorough Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, then the first two of the twenty-first will probably be remembered by the problematization of migrant populations in Europe and in the United States. Within academia, several scholars have examined the relation between these divergent processes. Some have looked at the advent of migrant and anti-migrant political movements by studying the uneven distribution of resources among populations or nation-states. Others have examined the mediating power of economic hardships in the relationship between migrant populations and their host communities. While insightful, much of this body of work rests a set of assumptions that warrant further deconstruction. Primary among these is the notion that in order to construct comprehensive objects of analysis researchers must divide immigrants from locals, countries that expel from countries that receive, past violence from present opportunities; falling into what Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller (“Methodological Nationalism and Beyond,” 2002) have termed as a “methodological nationalism.” Novel ethnographic research has begun to question the nature of these dissections and, by exploring the fabrics of everyday life, recalled that the transnational experience is above all an amalgamation of worlds (Dreby, *Everyday Illegal: When Policies Undermine Immigrant Families*, 2015; Alarcón, Escala, and Odgers, *Making Los Angeles Home: The Integration of Mexican Immigrants in the United States*, 2016; or Coutin, *Exiled Home: Salvadoran Transnational Youth in the Aftermath of Violence*, 2016, to name a few). In a similar fashion, Jennifer Cole and Christian Groes’ edited volume *Affective Circuits: African Migrations to Europe and the Pursuit of Social Regeneration* adds important arguments to the scholarly conversation. By attending to diverse textures such as childcare among Ghanaian immigrants, motherhood within the Cameroonian diaspora, young Guinea-Bissau men who traffic cocaine, or marriage among Mozambican women and European men, the volume collectively suggests that migration is not a process that can be explained solely by “push” and “pull” structural factors, but that in the interstices

of the quotidian experience, migrant's social relations, desires, and creativity are also at work in the making of a place they can call "home."

Affective Circuits is the outcome of the conference "Intimate Migrations: Marriage, Sex Work and Kinship in Transnational Migration," hosted by Roskilde University and the Danish Institute for International Studies in April 2013. The authors analyze how African immigrants in Europe shape their sense of personhood and build community while living under the constraints of violent economic and political structures. While critically engaging with the structural analysis of neo-liberal assemblages and their generative role in fueling the mass exodus of Africa's "reserve army of labor," the book's chief contribution is its centering of migrant's fierce capacity to redefine, reproduce, and contest the bi-national social worlds they inhabit. For this purpose, the essays explore the nature of the migrant's "Affective Circuits," an over-arching theoretical apparatus proposed by editors Christian Groes and Jennifer Cole focusing on the exchange networks of goods, ideas, people, and affections in which the migrant subjects both participate and are embedded in. As an allegory to the flows of electric charge, *Affective Circuits* is a comprehensive framework that enables the contributors to focus on connections and interactions rather than on the forces of expulsion or reception. While they maintain the importance of such forces, they do so while attending to the forms of exchange—its material and affective components, its bidirectional movement, and its discontinuous intensity—which at times can be reckless and effective and at others slow and futile.

In the same vein, the volume is an outstanding example of how editorial endeavors can provide a comprehensive analysis if committed to a collective concern, theory, or agenda. As the chapters trace the flow of diverse matters—such as that of love, money, obligations, jealousy or information—each explored through the volume's shared framework, *Affective Circuits* can be read as a multi-sited ethnography on the relational nature of migration. For a selective reader, the essays can be also grouped into four thematic clusters. The first one corresponds to the essays written by Cati Coe, Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg, and Pamela Kea who analyze the bi-national logics and the effects of transnational migration on the dynamics of parent-child relations. In the second, Carolyn Sargent, Stephanie Larchanche, and Leslie Fesenmyer trace how systems of beliefs affect the way that immigrants relate to their communities of origin. In the third, Helene Neveu Kringelbach, Christian Groes, and Jennifer Cole study family life and transnational marriage in relation to both life-goals and long-term ancestral obligations. In the fourth, authors Henrik Yigh, Julie Kleinman, and Sasha Newell look at diverse questions that revolve around youth and gender; exploring how the cocaine trade has constituted a space of opportunity for young men, how young people transform relations among peers, and how movements of goods and fashion define belonging and exclusivity.

By studying the textures of everyday life, the volume provides two key nuances to the study of the African diaspora in the twenty-first century. First, scholarship should not solely focus on the study of the immigrant individual, as migrant populations are embedded in broader networks of exchange to which they recur in order to give

meaning to their transnational experience. Second, political and economic restrictions do affect the movements of populations to Europe; nonetheless, immigrants resort to myriad strategies in order to create, reactivate and navigate their bi-national social networks to make their life "habitable." Above all, *Affective Circuits* is a direct challenge to the usual narratives of exclusion, suffering, and abandonment that pervades contemporary depictions of African migrants by shedding light on their capacity to elude, challenge, and transform structures of power as they re-imagine their life worlds.

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David C. Conrad. 2016. *Sunjata: A New Prose Version*. Indianapolis, IN and Cambridge: Hacket Publishing Company. 140 pp.

Certainly, the "seventh folklore miracle" of the world is the heroic epic poetry of Africa, the incredible wealth of which has been recognized over the last decades after a long period of ignorance. The heroic epic genre in Africa came out of the fog of ignorance (non-recognition, non-discovery) to the light illuminating its incredible richness from the previously unknown depth. Before 1960 (which is the year of the publication of D. T. Niane's *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*) western scholars still do not know that there was an African heroic epic. Frobenius himself undoubtedly discovered Sunjata's text and other types of West African heroic epic (1907–1909, published in English, in *The Voice of Africa*, vols.1-2), but he considered them knightly stories. Due to the wide range of researches on the new types and new variants across the continent, the emblematic story of West African Mande peoples, the Sunjata epic, stands out in the African material, which to this day has become one of the most important sources of historical and cultural identity for the peoples of the continent.

The Sunjata epic left behind, for example, the Nyanga Mwindo epic of Congo rich in variants and Fulbe epic material discovered in many places in West Africa as well as the Mongo-Nkundo Lianja, likewise of Congo, as Africa's richest known heroic epic type. According to Stephen Bulman's bibliography ("A Checklist of Published Versions of the Sunjata Epic," *History in Africa*, 1997) we know about forty to fifty pieces of total or fragmented versions, and since then they have only increased their number, among other reasons due to recent publications by Conrad. He has already published a different (very large, 5445-line) version with the same publisher as the present volume (*Sunjata. A West African Epic of the Mande Peoples*, 2004).

The present volume, surprisingly for many, emphasizes prose as the special genre definition in its title, although the first known versions of Sunjata are prosaic (Frobenius, 1911–1912, Zeltner 1913, Humblot 1918). The Russian E. Meletinsky, whose noteworthy, but maybe little known study to Western European/American researchers, says that oral epic texts can be of three types: verse form, prosaic (free or informal speech), and mixed (both verse and prose/free speech at the same time). This is contrary to Ruth Finnegan's controversial thesis (1970), namely that the basic criterion for a true epic is verse form. As far as Conrad's text is concerned, it is apparent from some places that refer to poems/songs, that we are faced with a mixed-text version.