traits et les habitudes culturels du groupe majoritaire. Au contraire, les premiers désirent que les seconds conservent les caractéristiques qui leur sont assignées, ce qui conduit alors à une volonté de ségrégation et d'exclusion.

Ces diverses contributions reflètent donc parfaitement les différentes approches développées sur les phénomènes migratoires et notamment celles étudiant les contextes lusotopes.

24 mars 2007, **Victor Pereira**

David BIRMINGHAM, *Empire in Africa. Angola and its neighbors*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2006, ix + 190 p. map, notes, further reading section, index, ISBN : 0-89680-248-5.

This is a great book. *Empire in Africa. Angola and its neighbors* gives us an overview of Angolan history from colonial times to the present, framed in the wider context of Southern and Central African history. The book consists of eleven essays, some of which have been published before, others based on unpublished papers, and yet others new pieces written with the specific foci of this book in mind. People familiar with the work of David Birmingham may hence know some of the essays, but the author's effort to integrate the eleven essays through the book's themes is both creative and innovative. The themes of the book are interesting in their own right and cover a broad spectre of the region's past : they are summarised as Christianity, money, the military, relations between men and women and the oil revolution of 1973. Through this selection, the author is able to offer us a socio-cultural history of Angola and its neighbours, dealing with subjects as wide apart as alcohol sales of Calvinist *trekboers*, the economy of mission stations, literacy and the various cultural traditions of Angola's elites, Belgian, Dutch and Portuguese ways of empire building, and street carnival in Luanda. David Birmingham writes about these issues in beautiful prose and throughout the book the reader marvels at the author's ability to connect the 'small' histories of 'small' people with the broader narrative of vast political and economic relations. It is especially these connections between various levels of Angola's past : ranging from micro-history to *longue-durée* structures that render *Empire in Africa* so important : the author's commitment to the future of Angola and its people is combined with academic rigour and sound interpretation.

The present reader only had problems with the limited conceptualization of the concept 'empire'. 'Empire' is clearly not an innocent term : it has a long and much debated history. David Birmingham is too imprecise in his use of the term and tends to classify every form of cultural contact as 'empire'. Even the arrival of Indonesians at Madagascar is made to fit in within the definition of empire, although here the author is aware of the awkwardness of his position and writes about it as an 'early empire', using quotation marks to indicate his own reserve (p. 2). Apart from this critique, *Empire in Africa. Angola and its neighbors* stands as a wonderful contribution to the socio-cultural history of Africa in general and of Angola more particularly.

March 2008, **Inge Brinkman**