

## Book Review

Anaik Pian (2009), *Aux nouvelles frontières de l'Europe. L'aventure incertaine des Sénégalais au Maroc*, Paris: Éditions La Dispute, ISBN 978-2-84303-161-8, 240 pp.

Just reading the title of the book, one might think, “Oh, yet another book about migration.” One might also think the book is outdated because the fieldwork ended in 2006. This is particularly bad news because the situation of migrants in Morocco, the area the author focuses on, (and to which the “Fortress Europe” has in fact been extended), is undergoing constant change, adapting restlessly to new political strategies, new economic conditions and new opportunities that affect “circular migrations”, along with both forced and voluntary migrations.

In this book, sociologist Anaik Pian analyses the motivations, strategies, modalities and lifestyles pertaining to migration, which have not changed dramatically over time, therefore her findings from 2006 remain valid today. It is important to pay attention to her careful categorization of migrants and their forms of migration (namely their “adventures”), but also to her use of the terms “transit”, “circular”, “labour” and “seasonal” migration. The political discourse thus far has offered only rigid and misleading categorizations, namely “emigration, transit and immigration”, thereby misrepresenting the complexities of routes and of migration strategies.

The aim of this book is to assess the situation of Senegalese migrants who continue to live in Morocco (25). The introduction mainly challenges the applied terminology in the context of migration, i.e. the common labels used in politics and taken from everyday language, with their tendency to stress the victimization of the migrants.

Particular attention is granted to the term “adventurer”, as the migrants frequently call themselves (11–14). The description of a policy that outsources the control of illegal migration and its concrete management—with its tendency to disturb the regional, geopolitical equilibrium in West and North Africa—forms the main context. Finally, the term “transit” is questioned, as it can designate “new cosmopolitans”; liken migrants to “immigrant workers” (22); or serve as a new categorization of migration that, de facto, plunges them into precarious situations insofar as they retreat into completely lawless areas (24).

The book is divided into two main parts:

The first tackles the “adventure” and gives voice to the migrants, thereby questioning concepts held dear by the media and complicating the

concepts of globalization, migration forms, and the *champs migratoires*, in Bourdieu's sense. The migrant, who actively participates in social spaces—in his own, as well as within the local and migrant societies—is integrated into the tangled networks of the sub-region ranging from Morocco to Libya. The migrants have not established themselves “beyond the state”, but on the contrary they do so in the framework of opportunities left open by the nation-states, (which are themselves subject to the dynamics and limits of globalization), by adapting to and bypassing their boundaries (75).

The second part consists of an analysis of life in this *entre-deux*, meaning the range of attitudes from the initial expectations of the migration and the possible change of intent due to failure, as well as the strategies of reconversion and the re-organization that the migrants who are “captured in the fishing net” put in place. The presence of the migrants themselves transforms the social make-up of the geographical area where the migration takes place. The migrants innovate forms of social organization in order to stabilize an inherently unstable situation (155), institutionalizing informality and integrating modes of solidarity without forgoing cultural, social and geographical benefits (169).

The established pattern of aiming at reaching exclusively Europe (as is the stated ambition of most “adventurers”) is regrettable because only a few will attain that goal. The majority of the “failed adventurers” will generally try to compensate for the failed migration to Europe by choosing a strategy of “circular migration”. This strategy is promising within the context of a policy of regional integration that is being gradually implemented in West and North Africa, but isn't paid much attention in this study, which focuses mainly on clandestine migration.

However, the author warns against overestimating the migrants' capabilities because in her studies she did not encounter any “success stories” (187). Maybe the Moroccan context is unique. Or maybe a different profile, one of migrants who “have success”, has to be made, asking them if one day, they too hope to go to Europe.

The main strength of this work lies in the new perspectives offered. Pian proposes a different image of migration (10), focusing on the perception of the migrants themselves, the perception of their own situation, and the analysis of their own strategies: a perspective “from below”, to paraphrase Portes. Through combining multidisciplinary methods and through integrating the analysis of applied categories of politics and their appropriation by the population, she manages to clarify individual value systems. She keeps a professional distance when telling the stories of her informants, integrating them into the history of mobility in the area and into the subjective logic of the “adventure”, though always in the political and legal context

of migration along the Africa–Europe axis. This allows her to enlighten the social mechanisms of this area that emerge from the interaction between migratory policies and migratory behaviours.

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