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To promote interdisciplinary studies in the fields of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences and provide a reliable academically trusted and approved venue of publishing Language and culture research.

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Transcultural Journal for Humanities & Social Sciences (TJHSS)

Prof. Hussein Mahmoud

BUC, Cairo, Egypt

Email: hussein.hamouda@buc.edu.eg

Prof. Fatma Taher

BUC, Cairo, Egypt

Email: fatma.taher@buc.edu.eg

Prof. Nihad Mansour

BUC, Cairo Egypt

Email: nehad.mohamed@buc.edu.eg

Prof. Mohammad Shaaban Deyab

BUC, Cairo Egypt

Email: Mohamed-diab@buc.edu.eg

Dr. Rehab Hanafy

BUC, Cairo Egypt

Email: rehab.hanfy@buc.edu.eg

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EDITORIAL BOARD

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baheer.elgohary@yahoo.com

Prof. Lamyaa Ziko

BUC, Cairo Egypt

Email:

lamiaa.abdelmohsen@buc.edu.eg

Prof. El Sayed Madbouly

BUC, Cairo Egypt

Email:

elsayed.madbouly@buc.edu.eg

Prof. Dr. Herbert Zeman

Neuere deutsche Literatur

Institut für Germanistik

Universitätsring 1

1010 Wien

E-Mail:

herbert.zeman@univie.ac.at

Prof. Dr. p`hil. Elke

Montanari

University of Hildesheim/
Germany

Email: montanar@uni-

[hildesheim.de,](mailto:hildesheim.de)

elke.montanari@uni-

hildesheim.de

Prof. Dr. Richard Wiese

University of Marburg/
Germany

Email: [wiese@uni-marburg.de,](mailto:wiese@uni-marburg.de)

wiese.richard@gmail.com

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Universität Trier/ Germany
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Universität Trier/ Germany
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Prof. Salwa Mahmoud Ahmed

Department of Spanish Language and Literature
Faculty of Arts
Helwan University Cairo-Egypt

Email: Serket@yahoo.com

Prof. Manar Abd El Moez

BUC, Cairo Egypt
Email: manar.moez@buc.edu.eg

Isabel Hernández

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain
Email: isabelhg@ucm.es

Elena Gómez

Universidad Europea de Madrid, Spain
Email: elena.gomez@universidadeuropea.es
Universidad de Alicante, Spain
Email: spc@ua.es

Mohamed El-Madkouri Maataoui

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain
Email: el-madkouri@uam.es

Carmen Cazorla

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain
Email: mccazorl@filol.ucm.es

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Peking University
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Prof. Jan Ebrahim Badawy

Professor of Chinese Literature
Faculty of Alsun, Ain Shams University
Email: janeraon@hotmail.com

Professor Ninette Naem Ebrahim

Professor of Chinese Linguistics
Faculty of Alsun, Ain Shams University
Email: ninette_b86@yahoo.com

Prof. Galal Abou Zeid

Professor of Arabic Literature

Faculty of Alsun, Ain Shams University

Email: gaalswn@gmail.com

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Taibah University, KSA
Email: alaaghamdi@yahoo.com

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African Roads to Prosperity: People en Route to Socio cultural and Economic Transformation: A Book Review

Yemisi Isaac Olawale
University of Ilorin, Nigeria
Email: Yemisiwaleisaac@gmail.com

Book Review of African Roads to Prosperity: People en Route to Socio-Cultural and Economic Transformations by Akinyinka Akinyoade & Jan-Bart Gewald (Edited volume)

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The edited volume entitled, 'Roads to Prosperity: People en Route to Socio-Cultural and Economic Transformations', adopts a multidisciplinary approach to study the trajectories and social construct of peoples' transience. It focuses on the socio-economic, cultural and historical perspectives and the changing dynamics of migration in a globalising world. The edited volume recounts the histories, emergence and consequent societal changes in specific parts of Africa that have become spaces for transit and disembarkation of African migrants in search for better socio-economic opportunities.

The book is divided into four main parts. The first part comprises of three chapters that explicitly define the concept of 'Road to Prosperity' as an economic concept to demonstrate the relationship between road infrastructure, development and prosperity. The first chapter titled 'African Roads to Prosperity: People En Route to Socio-Cultural and Economic Transformations', argues that migration was a norm in Pre-colonial Africa. The process became exacerbated under colonial socio-economic policies. The chapter discusses the zones of transit which function as social space which not only connect the origin and destination of migrant but also in the way in which they produce social realities that determine the social-economic and political relations. Migrants social mobilities and experiences are often determined and shaped by their place of destination

The second chapter in the introduction entitled 'Roads to prosperity: Social zones of transit' focuses on providing a conceptual parameter for the study through a review of extant literature. Moreover, the chapter focuses on social mobility, capital and networks in migration and transit migration. The third chapter entitled 'Roads to prosperity: Reflections about a concept,' discusses the concept from social science perspectives which focuses not only on the migrants but the support structures along those routes that moulded their transition, transference and social mobility. Dietz uses what he terms 'geographical liminality,' a geographical-anthropological approach which acknowledges that recognised to indicate an in-between phase in peoples' road to prosperity

The second part of the book includes four chapters which focus on the histories and migrants' experience in the different African regions with the sustained argument that in migration, there are often positive and negative experiences, losers and winners. Citing examples from South Africa and Nigeria, the chapter four and five observes that people

migrated to the mines of South Africa's Witwatersrand and northern Nigeria in search of employment and reward in anticipation of a better life at home. In this process, migrants gather several experiences which are often different from those who did not engage in migration. The other next two chapters recount migrants' experience in commercial spaces and resettlement areas, drawing examples from the popular Kumasi Central Market and in Zimbabwe. Dekker's study on Zimbabwe resettlement areas, for instance, tries to interrogate whether labour migrants leave behind their experiences at the zone of transition.

The next part has four chapters which discuss zones of transference as a social space that forms a zone of transit in terms of upward social mobility. The case studies provided in the chapters reveal that some zones of transit provide opportunities for upward mobility. For instance, Rijk van Dijk recounts how mixed marriages in Botswana often become a marker of migrant social transference. Similarly, Walter van Beek interrogates the opportunities and challenges faced by blacksmiths of Kapsiki/Higi society located in northern Cameroon and in northeastern Nigeria in their zone of transference. In addition, Augustine Tanle and Benjamin Nyarko discuss a formal zone of transference by assessing the migration prospect of conservancy labourers in the University of Cape Coast in Ghana. Their findings reveal that University of Cape Coast has become a social mobility zone to migrants from northern Ghana. The last part discusses a very crucial topic on the dynamics of migration, namely female migrants, human trafficking and emerging global sex market, using the Nigerian women working in the unregulated parts of the Dutch sex market as a case study. On the contrary, migrants in this category have not witnessed significant social mobility because of the commercial sexual exploitation which has not offered them enough earning to the point of making substantial remittance to their states of origin.

Furthermore, the last part discusses spaces in Africa which function as zones of transit and transference. Samuel Ntewusu and Edward Nanbigne examine how the process of transit can become a point of social mobility. Using the emergence of tricycles in the process of migration in Wa and Tamale, northern Ghana, the mode of transportation not only serves as the peak of migrants transiting the space but also serves as a source of income. Adeyinka Akinyode's study on Nigerians in transit at Jerusalem House, Odorkor suburb of Accra, Ghana, identifies the transience nature of migrants' transit and transference in terms of geographical location and the course of life. Akinyode's finding reveals that places like Jerusalem House performs both social and economic importance to migrants. Amisah Bakuri also interrogates Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands who use Germany as a transit zone in the course of their journey for greener pastures. This section is similar to several studies on African migrants to Italy who use Libya as their transit zone. Amisah states that migration push is primarily associated with prestige and individual socio-economic development. Mieke de Goede also offers insight into the case of Congo, particularly Kinshasa, which he describes as a city of refugees. Mieke laments on the political situation in Congo which influences people's choice towards migration for a better future.

The book addresses transit migration with specific reference to place utility, intervening opportunities and desire for upward social mobility as undoubtedly an important factor behind people's decision to migrate. It discusses spaces of transit and transference of African migrants within the framework of culture, geography and institutions and spaces that shape African migrant experiences -- trajectories, characteristics and outcomes of migration on the road to prosperity. This is an interesting book based on diverse perspectives and painstaking research. The book possesses important core arguments to which it provides

valuable and original insight into migration patterns which often occur through diverse intermediaries in different locations and in specific migration institutions.

Within the purview of the book, there are some obvious highlights – on the description of Africa as a continent of expulsion and the concept of transit migrant. On Africa's description as an expulsion area for citizens, the book argues that migration is not unidirectional but rather a multi-directional pattern of human search for livelihood. Without doubt, an appreciable number of Indians, Lebanese, Europeans and recently, Chinese, have found their way to Africa on the road to prosperity. Each of fifteen chapters in the book also offers substantial perspective to the study of migration and migrants in Africa through wide range case studies from West, Southern and East Africa to African migrants in the Netherlands. In each chapter, attempt is made to offer broad discussion of the case studies in the context of the subject-matter. The long list of end notes and references, concise and apt introduction offer great opportunity for further researches on transit migration in Africa and across the globe.

Overall, the book provides remarkable discussions, setting out migrants' concerns in transit spaces and places. The diversity of case studies in the book reflects the multifaceted nature of people's transience, societies (space) and times of being in transit on the road to prosperity. In spite of the core concept of this book, it is not without limitations. The first three chapters are not presented adequately in terms of what an introduction to a book of this nature should expect. The opening chapter entitled: *African Roads to Prosperity: People En Route to Socio-Cultural and Economic Transformations* does not outline the basics of the book but instead focuses more on the summary of the whole book based on each chapter contribution and findings. This, in particular, appears discouraging and apparently denies the reader the opportunity to draw conclusions from the main ideas presented in the book. In a sense, therefore, the two chapters present a picture of the key concepts and findings that runs through the book. The other two chapters in the introduction should have formed the basis of the book's introduction. This is because they explicitly provide readers with an understanding of major concepts like migration and its dynamics, road to prosperity among others. In spite of the book's approachable style, insightful chapters and comparative focus, beginners in migration studies may find most of the chapters difficult to comprehend. In particular, the book is most useful for scholars and policy makers who are well-grounded in the study of migration. In addition, the chapters in the book contain regional and local details and routes but did not complement them with maps and, thus, makes it difficult to grasp some geographical descriptions.

Despite these reservations, this is an important book that significantly advances the frontiers of knowledge and debates on transit migration in Africa. Most fascinating is the methodological approach. The chapters in the book support their thesis with extant literature, statistical data, interview with key informants, media content among others. Perhaps the most useful service is to remind us that economic perspective alone is not enough on the debates around migration as other aspects of migration such as the social, cultural and mobility process can do well to help our understanding of this crucial human problem which the book has adequately addressed.