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*États présents, états futurs: French and Francophone Studies in the 21st century*

**From Migration to Mobilities: Applying a Mobility Studies Perspective to Francophone Afrodiasporic Fiction**

Mobility is a defining feature of the global postcolonial era. Yet, much of postcolonial literary scholarship – postcolonial Francophone studies included – adopts a somewhat limited approach to mobility by reducing it to migration. Human physical travel, however, is a diverse phenomenon that covers a wide variety of mobilities of which migration is only one manifestation. Illustrative of reductive understandings of mobility is the way in which African mobile subjects are not generally recognised as travellers (Loingsigh 2009, 2–3). Further, while the concept of migration itself entails aspects of mobility and travel, discussions on migrancy tend to erase these dimensions and foreground a rather static, nation-based focus on issues such as integration (Mainwaring & Bridgen 2016, 247, 251). This paper explores the ways in which the mobility studies paradigm can be adopted to analysing Francophone Afrodiasporic fiction. I focus on J.R. Essomba’s *Le paradis du nord* (1996), Michèle Rakotoson’s *Elle, au printemps* (1996), and Alain Mabanckou’s *Tais-toi et meurs* (2012), and argue that while these novels can certainly be read as « migrant narratives », they also feature complex representations of journeying that merit critical attention as concrete mobile practices – and that such a reading can be achieved by adopting a mobility studies perspective.

**Bio note:** Dr. Anna-Leena Toivanen is a Marie Skɫodowska-Curie Fellow at CEREP (*Centre d’Enseignement et de Recherche en Etudes Postcoloniales*), University of Liège, Belgium. Her research focuses on mobilities and cosmopolitanisms in contemporary Franco- and Anglophone diasporic African literatures. Her recent work has been published in *Studies in Travel Writing*, *English Studies in Africa*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, and *Matatu*. Her chapter on mobility and labour in contemporary African diasporic fiction features in *The Routledge Handbook of African Literature* (forthcoming in 2018).