*Voyage and Cosmopolitanism: From the Island to the World*

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**Clandestine Mobility, European Peripheries and Practical Cosmopolitanism in Fabienne Kanor’s novel *Faire l’aventure* (2014)**

Mobility is a recurrent theme in contemporary Afrodiasporic literatures. Because of the entangled histories and presents of the two continents, mobilities between Africa and Europe continue to inspire Afrodiasporic authors. With their representations of Afroeuropean mobilities, contemporary Afrodiasporic authors not only contribute to the re-writing of Europe from an African perspective, but also inscribe different central and peripheral European locations onto the postcolonial map. As mobility is frequently perceived as the “essence of cosmopolitanism” (Sheller 2011, 349), literary texts featuring representations of Afroeuropean mobilities and the transcultural encounters they entail may also lend themselves to an analysis focusing on the manifestations of the idea(l) of cosmopolitanism.

This paper focuses on Fabienne Kanor’s novel *Faire l’aventure* (2014) and its portrayal of clandestine Afroeuropean mobilities and a form of popular cosmopolitanism which I will refer to as “*débrouillardise* cosmopolitanism” in order to highlight its resourceful, pragmatic character. The novel represents the protagonist’s clandestine travels from Senegal to European insular locations that are peripheral from the central European perspective; the Canary Islands and another currently widely mediatised “gateway” to Europe, namely the isle of Lampedusa. Kanor’s protagonist is represented as resourceful clandestine African adventurer trying to gain his livelihood in the shadows of globalisation as a street vendor and working on vegetable plantations. I am particularly interested in the text’s construction of the insular settings as peripheral and unsatisfactory substitutes for the “real” Europe that the protagonist keeps obsessively pursuing. This way, the text associates peripheral European insular spaces with the melancholic loss of an unreachable dream.

The other focus of this paper is on how *Faire l’aventure* redefines and revises the concept of cosmopolitanism in the context of clandestine Afroeuropean mobility. I argue that the pragmatic *débrouillardise* cosmopolitanism that the text embodies remains inevitably imperfect: rather than from active engagements with cosmopolitan ideals such as openness to Otherness, it springs from the constraints of the situation, and should therefore not be romanticised. As Galin Tihanov maintains, the difficult material realities of exiles such as clandestine migrants only rarely enable them to “somehow effortlessly develop the toolkit of a cosmopolitan” (2015, 154). *Débrouillardise* cosmopolitanism, as manifested in Kanor’s novel, is a means of survival, and should not be celebrated as a manifestation of an active cosmopolitan attitude.

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