

Hope and Despair: Representations of Europe and Africa in Finnish news coverage of “migration crisis”

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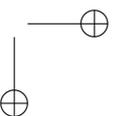
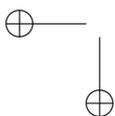
Introduction:

African migrants and the issue of old and new identities

WHEN confronted with the images of black African men in boats, in silent groups, in police custody, drawn from the sea by men wearing respiratory masks and plastic gloves, I felt puzzled here in the North of Europe. It is all happening far away and still it is right here, it is part of my everyday news, part of my social and political reality. This paper is an attempt to make sense of the news coverage of immigration to Europe from Africa – social reality that has been constructed frequently during the past ten years in a number of mediatized crises at the Mediterranean.

The story of African migrants arriving in Europe through “the back door” as it is called in *Helsingin Sanomat (HS)* (23 June 2006) has been a recurrent news theme from the mid 1990s when Europe started to strengthen control at the Mediterranean. This paper analyzes news coverage in *Helsingin Sanomat*, the largest and only nationwide broadsheet in Finland, during March-July 2006 when African migrants arrived in a number of boats to the Canary Islands from Senegal and Mauritania¹. Many of them died on the way. The first news items on the relocation of the migration route were published in March 2006 with the focus on numbers of arrivals and drowned ones. The news also referred to previous migration conflicts in Gibraltar in the early 2000s and in Melilla and Ceuta in 2005. The news report that migration “flows”, “waves” and “streams” are re-directed to Western African locations since the border control, surveillance and patrol at the previous locations have been tightened by the EU and Spain.

¹ Approximately 30 000 African migrants arrived at Canary Islands without permits in 2006. An estimated 6 000 died during the same year in this pursuit. Reuters 12 April 2007.



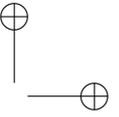
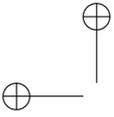
The ideologies of the past centuries, nationalism and racism, are still strong in the European imagination, therefore we still need to struggle with them in various forms. To emphasize the importance of this setting I quote Stuart Hall (1993):

Since cultural diversity is, increasingly, the fate of the modern world, and ethnic absolutism a regressive feature of late-modernity, the greatest danger now arises from forms of national and cultural identity – new and old – which attempt to secure their identity by adopting closed versions of culture or community and by refusal to engage –with the difficult problems that arise from trying to live with difference.

The headlines of the *Helsingin Sanomat* on the Canary Islands case stress that the “illegals” are aiming for “Europe”, which is therefore presented as one mental/imagined, geographic, social, economical and political space. This setting makes Stuart Hall’s quotation current: What are the old and new ethnic and cultural identities and versions of community that are being constructed in the coverage of African “illegal migration” to Europe? What types of positions are offered for various social agents? How are Europe, Spain, Morocco, Finland and African migrants/ sending and transit areas identified and represented?

The destination of the Africans’ journey is defined in news journalism as “Europe”, although some of the few direct interviews of the newcomers reveal that their journey is not as random and misplaced as the headlines suggest. Most of the Africans who take the sea journey to Spain have relatives or acquaintances already living in France, Spain, Italy and beyond. The networks are transnational, remittances to African countries from Europe are significant. Therefore, the issue that is at stake here is not only about “strangers intruding Europe” as the media coverage and political atmosphere in Europe seems to frame these issues, but also about “the difficult problems that arise from trying to live with difference”. Europe is part of this mobility in many ways: colonialism, diasporic communities, global economy, need of labour, temptation to cheap low skilled labour and demand for prostitution.

This paper will analyse the representations and identities constructed in the news of African migration to Europe by operationalising critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003). These issues are scrutinized through the coverage of *Helsingin Sanomat* of “migration crisis” at the Canary Islands in summer



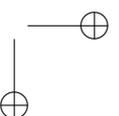
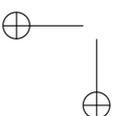
2006. The coverage of a Northernmost European newspaper of a southernmost event offers an opportunity to analyze discourses of Europeanization and identity constructions of Europe and Africa.

Narratives are crucial in the construction of identities. According to Stuart Hall (1999: 11-13) specifically transitions and pressures in the crossings of cultural narratives bring the need for identity negotiations. Making reference to nationalistic and colonialist narratives he points out that instead of asking “who we are” we are asking “who we can be, how we are presented, and how we present ourselves” (Hall, 1999: 250).

There is a line of journalism research that analyzes news as narratives. Although single news items are not necessarily structured as stories (Pietilä, 1995) a conjuncture of news stories of an event can produce a narrative. Furthermore, news is an important part of constructing an issue culture (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) for instance of immigration. The more general macro level issue culture is the sort of common sense to which all viewpoints need to react. The frame of “illegal” migrants as intruders, which I will discuss further in this paper, is one example of such strong characteristic of the issue culture on migration. From the narrative viewpoint there are actors or agents doing something in the news stories. Some actors are included, some excluded, some act more saliently than others. The methodology of this analysis focuses on the representations and the positions of various social agents. They are considered social to signify the structural, social and cultural meaning of their actions. The representations and positions construct certain identities and are crucial to media effects in society. The routinely produced identities set the terms in which people can talk about these agents.

Mediatized European crisis

In the course of history of nation states the media has played an important role in creation of national imaginary and national identity. National media institutions have played one side of this process, but dissemination of stories that encourage people to attach themselves into national community has played the other side of the construction of imagined communities (Downey and Koenig, 2006: 165-6). European perspective on identity and community is somewhat different. Attachment to culturally shared European identity has long been a



strong concern of the European Commission, and communication issues are central in these concerns². There is not really any European media or common language except for small European elite (Schlesinger, 1999). However, questions of European public sphere can be approached from a more culturalist viewpoint. National media can discuss issues with European dimension in a way that encourage citizens to attach to European identity. Many events and issues are also discussed simultaneously throughout various national media in Europe (van de Steeg, 2002: 508). In this paper European public sphere is approached from the culturalist viewpoint: Europeanization of national public spheres through simultaneous public discussion.

Many of the events, issues and people that rise to the level of European public discussion can be characterized as mediatized European rituals, exceptional issues which through the media intervene in the life of European societies simultaneously. Simon Cottle (2006: 415) stresses that mediatized rituals can either legitimate the existing power composition or question it and catalyse social change. Cottle defines mediatized rituals as follows:

Mediatized rituals are those exceptional and performative media phenomena that serve to sustain and/or mobilize collective sentiments and solidarities on the basis of symbolization and a subjunctive orientation to what should or ought to be.

Similarly Nick Couldry (Couldry, 2003: 29) stresses the wider shared social values that are at stake in mediatized ritual:

Media rituals are formalised actions organised around key media-related categories and boundaries, whose performance frames, or suggests a connection with, wider media-related values.

News of undocumented migration could be analyzed as a mediatized public crisis (Alexander and Jacobs, 1998: 28). Media events (e.g. Eurovision song contest, European elections) tend to legitimate the powers and authorities outside the civil sphere. Mediatized public crisis, on the contrary, tend to give

²The White Paper on a European communication policy of the Commission of the European Communities (2006) is one recent example of the concerns and proposed practices to enforce European public sphere. http://www.europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com2006_35_en.pdf [Referred 3 October 2007.]

to civil society power for social change. The media create public narratives that emphasize not only the distance between is and ought but the possibility of heroically overcoming it (Alexander and Jacobs, 1998: 28). The crises are essentially conflicted in nature, and therefore they are principally disruptive and challenging established institutions and conventions in terms of their enactment and outcomes. Alexander and Jacobs take the Watergate and Rodney King as cases of crisis where the public opinion created a pressure to authorities and elites and changed policy and practice. However, these cases are local and national. The question here arises: Could there be a European level mediatized public crisis that could offer opportunities for social change?

Mediterranean “illegal” migration has been a European wide news issue especially for the last ten years. The news of migrants without documents entering Italy (Lampedusa), Malta, and Spanish territory (Costa del sol, Gibraltar, Melilla, Ceuta, Canary Islands) construct a long-term narrative. The Gibraltar and Ceuta/Melilla cases can be seen as key events (Brosius and Eps, 1995) which increase the media access of similar events taking place afterwards. The media tend to take an interest in events which resemble earlier cases with high media visibility. Furthermore, the frames and sources used in the key events are generally easily and automatically applied in the coverage of the new event.

The Canary Islands case, examined in this article, is one event in the continuum of similar mediatized crisis at the Mediterranean. The media images on television and newspapers of African men in wooden boats and corpses at beaches in Italy and Spain have been engraved in the minds of European citizens. One manifestation of the forcefulness of these mediated images is the piece of art work at the Venice Art Biennale 2007 by a Finnish artist Maaria Wirkkala³. Her installation contains a wooden boat on broken Venice glass. As the motivation for this particular peice she states: “People who are forced to leave on boats and who cannot beach their boats anywhere. People, who never reach their destination. These are the news I repeatedly see in the newspapers’ (*HS* 7 June 2007.)

There are no people coming ashore as immigrants in Finland. Still, the mediated experience of African migrants attempting to enter Europe and being

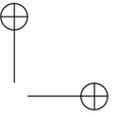
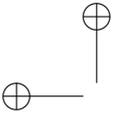
³Images of the work of art at http://www.maariawirkkala.com/index_flash.html [Referred 10 January 2008.]

denied entrance by the European authorities has touched someone living far North: this Finnish artist felt it was her duty to engage in this debate; instead of perceiving it as a Spanish issue and debate she feels it is also her business. This is a concrete example of Europeanization of public sphere and media repetition of certain events and frames as crisis. The news coverage of immigration conflicts at the Mediterranean has increased the mediated salience of immigration as a European issue. The result has been that the issue can be, and *is*, discussed by anyone who feels responsible, not necessarily by those who are immediately geographically, socially and economically affected by this type of migration.

The issue of African migration is recurrently raised on the agenda, and increasingly in the context of European security and policy. I went through the news coverage of previous events in the 1990s at the Mediterranean and they were framed as national problems of Italy and Spain rather than as common European problems. News framing was focused on the Mediterranean countries rather than Europe as a whole. Undocumented migration was presented as the problem of European Mediterranean countries, not as a European problem. The claims that were made by Italian and Spanish authorities in news coverage were directed to North African countries, not the European Community.

However, since the immigration and asylum policy is increasingly shifting to supranational decision making in the European Union⁴, the issues related to Europeanization become more and more current. European mediatized public crisis would mean Europeanization of public debate around an issue. National media would simultaneously discuss the issue and they would find sources and viewpoints from each other. Increased status on the agenda would create opportunities for various viewpoints, genres and sources. The media coverage could create pressure against authorities and change policy. A public crisis

⁴The Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 followed by the European Council's Tampere conclusions in 1999 and the Hague Action Plan of 2005 started a policy development to set some migration issues under supranational powers. Although there were elements of partnership between countries of origin and transit, a joint European Asylum System, and fair treatment of third country nationals in the Tampere conclusions, the focus of the practical side of "harmonization" has been on the management and control of migration flows, namely on the fight against "illegal" migration, smuggling and trafficking. Little energy has been devoted to the management of legal migration.



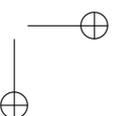
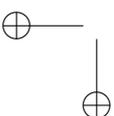
generally begins with the break down of existing social order, and media coverage explores possibilities to sustain order. Methods of textual analysis can track down the offered problem definitions, positions of agents and solutions.

Illegals, objects of control and victims

Previous research on media representations of asylum seekers and “illegal” migrants prove that in general three types of framing are used in news coverage: the often unwanted immigrants are framed as “illegals”, as objects of control and as victims. Many case studies claim that the media are involved in a process, where, in collaboration with state authorities, they construct a social problem which may develop into a moral panic (Cohen, 2002) in the society at large. The panic or a threat of a panic often results deportations of ‘illegal’ migrants, changes in the asylum process, tightening of internal and external immigration control, changes in the rights and privileges of asylum seekers etc. (Hier and Greenberg, 2002; Nordberg, 2004; Brune, 2004: 57-120; Horsti, 2003; ter Wal, 1996). In most cases the construction of a social problem involves surprisingly similar language use in media texts. The activity is verbalised in terms of natural catastrophe or war: the people are framed as intruders (Van Gorp, 2005).

The illegality frame is supported by presenting undocumented migrants as objects of control and surveillance (Horsti, 2007). For instance visual images where asylum seekers are filmed in the custody of the police, in handcuffs, or behind bars support these frames. These images resemble images of criminals and animals (Ana, 1999). Asylum seekers are often dealt with from the authorities’ viewpoint: they are moved, removed, and observed. The control framing is also produced by the close connection between authorities and journalists. Journalistic text easily adopts language from the authorities but certainly authorities giving statements to the media are aware of the public debate. There is a mutual interest to make the story and therefore it is not always clear who is adopts whose language in the first place. (Brune, 2004: 87; Horsti, 2003: 49-50; Horsti, 2005: 178-80.)

Although most of the studies focus on the criminalizing framings of asylum seekers and “illegal” migrants, van Gorp (2005:) and Brune (2004: 72-8) remind us that the media also frequently uses victimization. This framing



has also been connected to victims of natural catastrophes and wars and refugees located in neighbouring areas of catastrophes (Malkki, 1995). Ylva Brune (2004: 72-8) in her study of Swedish hard news coverage of refugees and asylum seekers in 1993 summarizes the coverage to two frames: security aspect (säkerhetsaspekten) and bureaucracy's object (byråkratins objekt). However, in the more popular news genres there is also a consistency of stories of victimized heroes with topics related to deportation orders. These news invoke emotional reactions particularly since they mostly have a young girl or a child as a victimized hero. The storyline in these items is very similar, Brune (2004: 89-105) analyses the texts with Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the folk tale: there are villains, donors, helpers, kings, princesses, victimized heroes and false heroes. However, the criticism towards authorities in these emotional melodramas is not structural since the campaign focuses only on single persons who are presented as being part of "us" and their "Swedish" qualities are highlighted. Similarly, van Gorp (2005) in his analysis of Belgian press coverage of asylum seekers shows that the victim frame increased during Christmas time when helping others is part of the Christmas "mood". The Belgian press framed 20 per cent articles on asylum seekers "purely" as victims compared to 25 per cent articles in which they were framed "purely" as intruders. Most of the articles used mixed framing.

However, it is clear that in all framings, undocumented migrants are presented as objects (of charity, criminalization or control), which means that they are treated as having no social or personal history and life: non-persons (Dal Lago, 1999). In addition throughout the three frames there lies an atmosphere of conspiracy. "Illegal" migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are presented as hyphenated: there is never a positive trust or answer to who these people are and why they are here. Conspiracy is evoked by terrorism, human trafficking, smuggling and drug trafficking –themes which are routinely contextualised with undocumented migrants and asylum seekers (Horsti, 2007).

It should also be reminded that European foreign news coverage of Africa is usually biased. It has been more than 10 years since foreign news flows were analyzed in Finland, but the study from 1995 reveals that only four per cent of the foreign news was about Africa. The topics were either entertainment and sport or conflict oriented. (Pietiläinen, 1998: 84-97.) Foreign news coverage is afflicted by "euroscleritis": the news cover mostly familiar areas and issues (Kivikuru, 2003: 179). This is part of the issue culture of Africa

and Africanness: the background from which the news frames of “illegal” migration surface.

Domestication of a foreign news event

The re-location of African undocumented migration became news in March 2006. The main change in intensity and frequency of coverage took place in early June when the case became domesticated as a Finnish story. The following table summarizes the coverage.

Tabela 1: Helsingin Sanomat 2006

	March	April	May	June	July	August
Frequency: Days of coverage	2	0	3	8	4	4
Intensity: Number of stories	2	0	3	13	6	5
Main events	change of route	–	Finland considers assisting	Finland decides to send assistance	migrants keep arriving	migrants keep arriving
	arriving migrants			Spain claims for help from EU EU accelerates patrol Finland's assistance not needed		

In 31 May *HS* reported that Finland considered sending an aircraft for patrolling the shores of Mauritania and Senegal. Furthermore, in June it was reported that the EU commission decided on a joint emergency border squad

which would give assistance to countries facing problems with migration at the Schengen borders. The fact that the Executive Director of Frontex⁵ is a Finn increased national interest in the issue. The news genre dominated the coverage until 7 June, but after that a diversity of genres and sources appeared. For instance on 7, 8 and 11 June, *HS* published reports from Tenerife by the Barcelona correspondent. Another set of reportage style coverage was published on 23, 29 June and 3 July when a *HS* reporter and photographer were sent to Senegal to cover the issue of migration from the viewpoint of sending countries. In addition to these genres one editorial was published with reference to the events taking place at the Canary Islands.

In the news coverage of African undocumented migrants all the three frames introduced in the literature review section were used. The migrants were presented as victims, illegals, and objects of control. In the following section I will analyse in more detail two news stories and illustrate with examples how the three frames appear in the research material.

The frames are mixed within single news stories. However, victim framing can be interpreted only in few cases whereas frames of illegality and control dominate. Victim framing shows rarely for instance in some images which present the migrants as victims of nature (the sea) or stories which mention difficulties encountered by migrants. However, drownings and tragedy are not highlighted in the coverage: only 3 out of 31 headlines focus on deaths and dangers. This means that the victim frame is clearly in a marginal position.⁶

Still, the few cases of headlines focusing on the tragedy from the migrants' point of view should be taken into account. These extracts illustrate the stress on danger. The first one is the only case where an African migrant is given a social existence. Tragedy of death and dangerous sea journey is stressed by mentioning a name and social relation. The second one is an example of a matter of fact style used also in news text elsewhere. Emotionality and empathy is not specifically added but repeating the fact that many die on the way to Europe an opening to victim framing is created. The third headline is

⁵Frontex, the EU agency based in Warsaw, was opened in 2005 to coordinate the operational cooperation between Member States in the field of border security.

⁶In another paper (to be presented at the ICA 2008 conference, Montreal) I compare the news coverage of Swedish daily paper *Dagens Nyheter* with the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat*. *DN* tends to stress the drowning, deaths and dangers more and raises these issues into headlines frequently (41 per cent of headlines focus on these issues).

not a news item particularly on migrants heading for the Canary Islands but a case elsewhere in the Mediterranean. However as it is published while the Canary Islands case is hot it contributes to the issue culture. In this extract the words “abandoned” and “languished” stress victimhood.

The son of Yayi Bayam Diouf and hundreds of other Senegalese have died in dangerous sea journey.

Yayi Bayam Dioufin poika ja sadat muut senegalilaiset ovat kuolleet vaarallisella merimatalla. (This is a reportage story made from Africa. *HS* 29 June 2006.)

18 migrants found drowned on the shore of Mauritania.
Mauritanian rannikolta löytyi hukkuneina 18 siirtolaista.
HS 16 March 2006.

Abandoned refugees languished over a week at the Mediterranean.
Hyljeksityt pakolaiset viruivat toista viikkoa Välimerellä.
HS 21 July 2006.

In addition, in this following image the African migrants can be seen as victims of dangerous seas. They are collected into a ship and they are wearing protective clothing provided by authorities. The angle is from above which makes the target suppressed. The clothing gives connotations not only of protection but also unhygiene and disease. They are all wearing similar abnormal clothing which somehow gives an unhumane feeling: the image resembles pictures of oil catastrophes where birds are rescued from the sea or even of aliens. To sum up, the image is highly passivising and distancing the migrants: they do not have names, there are many of them in the same picture, they are objects of patrolling and caring.

Although the image makes a reference to victim framing the headline and the stories connected are strongly supporting the frames of illegality and control. This is a good example of how the news often use a variety of frames interconnectedly. The headline states that ten EU countries are ready to prevent illegal migration at the Canary Islands. EU (and more specifically those ten countries) is put on as an actor capable of solving the problem. The defined problem is illegal migration and resolution is to fight off the incoming migrants. The term used here for prevention (*torjua* in Finnish) carries a militaristic connotation (an enemy *torjutaan*), and therefore the headline strongly

supports illegality and control framing albeit for the possible interpretations of victimhood suggested in the chosen newsagency image.

The main news story written by a Finnish journalist based in home editorial office and an interlinked story by a correspondent from Madrid are lacking victim framing. The main story focuses on the role of Finland, EU and Frontex in decision making and patrolling. The sub-headline “Finland guarantees an aircraft and experts for border patrol” reflects the nationalistic discourse produced in the story. Solution to the problem is presented in technical and bureaucratic terms and Finland is seen as a key player in this area as the following example illustrates.

As expected the ministerial committee of EU affairs decided on Friday to support Finnish participation to border patrol operation at the Canary Islands.

EU-asioiden ministerivaliokunta päätti perjantaina odotetusti puoltaa Suomen osallistumista rajavalvontaoperaatioon Kanariansaarilla.

In this second image the Africans are again in a controlled group. There is a policeman with a gun in the front which implies criminality and authoritative control. This is an example how the illegality frame and control frame are

Kymmenen EU-maata valmiita torjumaan laitonta siirtolaisuutta Kanariansaarilla

► Suomi lupasi rajavalvontaan lentokoneen ja asiantuntijoita

Leo Pugin
Helsingin Sanomat

► EU-asioiden ministerivaliokunta päätti perjantaina odotetusti puoltaa Suomen osallistumista rajavalvontaoperaatioon Kanariansaarilla. Suomi on valmis lähettämään alueelle kahdeksi viikoksi Dornier-valvontalentokoneen sekä kahdeksan neljän asiantuntijaa.

Rajavalvontaoperaatio toteutetaan Espanjan pyynnöstä. Espanja pyysi viikko sitten EU:n uudelta rajavalvontavirastolta Frontexilta kirettä apua, koska laittomasti Eurooppaan pyrkivien afrikkalaisiirtolaisten virta Kanariansaarille on lisääntynyt rajusti.

Viime vuonna Kanarialle tuli espanjalaisviranomaisen mukaan to ooo laitonta maahan-
Tämä vuonna määrä

”Tämä [rajavalvontaoperaatio] ei tule olemaan varsinaisen operatiivinen toimi, vaan kyse on lähinnä asiantuntijoiden antamasta teknisestä avusta, kuten laittomien siirtolaisten tunnistamisesta, tietojen vaihdosta osapuolten välillä ja espanjalaisen viranomaisen avustamisesta laittomien siirtolaisten palauttamisessa”, Frontexin tiedottaja Michel Parzycek kertoi.

Lisäksi Espanjan viranomaisia autetaan ihmisalakuljettajien jäljittämiseksi. Se toteutetaan yhteistyössä Euroopan kanssa.

Suomalaiset eivät ole suoraan tekemisissä laittomien tulojen kanssa. Sisäministeriön mukaan näin välitetään oikeudelliset ongelmat.

Sisäministeriö ilmoitti myös, että rajavartiolaitos voi

GIORGIO FELICE CAPETTI / AP

ATLANTTI
Ceuta (Espanja)
MAROKKO
Kanariansaaret (Espanja)
Länsi-Sahara
Kabo Verde (Portugali)
MAURITANIA
SENEGALI

Espanjan valvottu tehot

Johanna Kippo

MADRID. Espanjan omat yritykset hillit laittomien siirtolaisten pyrkimisiä Kanariansaarille ystä riuottaneet vain

Espanjan kansalliskaartin alus toi perjantaina kalastusvenestä löytyneitä maahanpyrkijöitä Arguineguin satamaan Kanariansaarilla.

Figura 1: *Headline: 10 EU countries ready to prevent illegal migration at the Canary Islands. Finland guarantees an aircraft and experts for border patrol. Helsingin Sanomat 3 June 2006.*

very often interconnected. The viewer of this image is situated at the same level with the migrants. However, the group is being surveilled through the control agent and the viewer (“us”) remains on “this” side (freedom) where as the migrants are on the “other” side (captured). The migrants are wearing individual clothes in this image, but again their names or stories are not told which make them seem as strangers.



Figura 2: *Headline: Tenerife became a transfer station of Europe. Beach resort has become the meeting spot of the rich of Europe and the poor of Africa. Helsingin Sanomat 7 June 2006.*

Framing of the news story supports the division suggested in the image. The headline states that “Tenerife has become a transfer station to Europe” and that “Beach resort has become the meeting spot of the rich of Europe and the poor of Africa”. The headlines therefore highlights division between us and them, rich and poor, also suggested in the image. Although the subheading claims that Tenerife would be a “meeting point”, the image reveals that there is no meeting taking place, but the opportunity of the rich to survey the detention and incoming of the poor.

This news story uses victim framing within the news text. The story is basically constructed of material gathered in interviews with a Spanish fisherman and an adviser to the Spanish Minister of Interior. In the first paragraph

migrants are presented as victims receiving humanitarian aid from fishermen and authorities. The interviewed fisherman is presented heroically, but with a mundane attitude. Although his work is sometimes interrupted by poor migrant ships needing rescue, he continues with his everyday activities – he is off to catch sardines again. The following paragraph makes the difference between Europe and Africa. In addition, migration is presented as a possible threat to the rest of Schengen countries, Finland included. This makes the migrants seem as potential criminals and problem to the rest of Europe. Therefore, it implies that common action needs to be taken.

“They were reticent but very thankful that they were found. They just asked for water. We called the marine rescue and waited with them until the authorities arrived”, explains Díaz at the port of Los Cristianos in Tenerife before he goes out for the night to catch sardines.

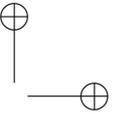
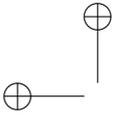
During spring the beach resort town has become a meeting place of wealthy Europe and the poor of Africa. However, instead of being the final destination of the hundreds of African migrants Los Cristianos is the first foothold in Europe. Within the EU without internal borders the journey can continue without obstacles to any other memberstate.

“He olivat vähäpuheisia mutta hyvin kiitollisia siitä, että heidät löydettiin. He pyysivät vain vettä. Me kutsuimme meripelastuksen ja odotimme heidän kanssaan viranomaisten saapumista”, selostaa Díaz Teneriffan Los Cristiano-sin satamassa ennen kuin hän lähtee yöksi sardiinipyyntiin.

Rantalomakaupungista on kevään aikana tullut yltäkyläisen Euroopan ja Afrikan köyhälistön kohtaustaipaikka. Los Cristianos ei kuitenkaan ole satojen afrikkalaissiirtolaisten päätesatama, vaan vasta ensimmäinen jalansija Euroopassa. Sisärajattomassa EU:ssa matka voi jatkua esteittä mihin tahansa jäsenmaahan.

Representations and identifications

My methodological standpoint is in critical discourse analysis which stresses political and social functions of language use. First of all, language both reflects social realities and reproduces them. Secondly, language use (re)produces identities and positions in the society. Thirdly, language use is considered as social action: various “sponsors” inform or argue for and against something.



Therefore, there are power and political issues involved in language use. Particularly the news genre is considered influential (Richardson, 2007).

In Fairclough's (2003: 134-53) discourse analysis, texts can be analyzed as action, representation and identification. In the case of migration news we could analyse the news texts as action: they shape public opinion and policy. The news also construct representations of the world and identification of social agents⁷. This paper focuses on the representations of Africa and Europe and on constructed identities and positions of social agents.

The positions of actors are analyzed through close examination of language: verbs, nouns and noun phrases, adjectives and metaphors. The actors are proportioned with each other on the scales of activity (activated/ passivated and affected) and "positivity"/"negativity" of their actions. With this scaling I am able to compress the positions and define the more subtle and stereotyped roles (villain-victim-hero-helper) appearing in the sequence of news stories. Activity and status of the agents is analyzed examining the level of personification/ impersonification: if the agents are named (names or social relations) or classified ("migrants", Africans).

Nine types of social agents appear in the news coverage: African migrants, Spanish authorities and authorities and locals of the Canary Islands are the most often appearing agents. In addition, traffickers, NGOs and relief organizations, African sending and transit areas, Morocco, Finland and EU receive media attention. In the following table I sum up the positions and discursive characteristics which (re)produce certain identities and roles.

⁷Fairclough uses agent and actor interchangeably.

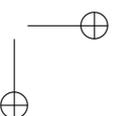
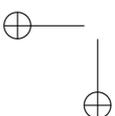
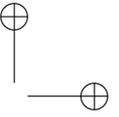
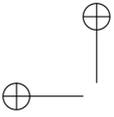


Tabela 2: Positions and roles of various agents in Helsingin Sanomat

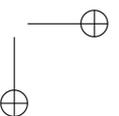
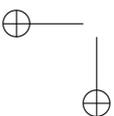
Social Agent	Position and role	Verbs, adjectives, nouns and noun phrases
Traffickers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enterprising - criminal - role: villain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relocate, make money - criminal organizations, networks of smugglers, mafia, threats of homicide - they drift, drown, wait, spend time, arrive illegally
African migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - passive objects: of control, criminalization, charity, dangers - silence: voice through official sources of NGO's and authorities - their arrival is the main problem causing the crisis - (reportage: heroes and logical agents supporting their poor families) - role: 1) impersonalized passive problems, 2) victims of traffickers and dangerous sea, 3) heroes (only in reportage from Africa) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they are a group, a pressure, troops, drought, disorder, suffering, outraged, disappointed, yearning for wealth - (in reportage): - remittances support whole families, deliver money for their families, send grand share of their income to home, work at rubber factory, sell bags, are under pressure; migrants described as: big brother, husband, migrant (without "illegal"), Senegalese residing abroad, interviewed with names
African transit and sending countries, African locals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - poor areas, diseased - incapable of sustaining order - in favour of migration - role: 1) villain (governments, traffickers), 2) heroes (in reportage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - locals benefit - oppose deportations
Morocco and authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active control agents - brutal means - role: 1) villain (un-humane actions), 2) helper of EU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased control and force, suppress migrants - dreaded transportations, violence of security forces

Positions and roles of various agents in Helsingin Sanomat (continuation)

Social Agent	Position and role	Verbs, adjectives, nouns and noun phrases
Canary Islands: authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - claims maker (to Spain and EU) - evaluate and criticise policy and practise - role: 1) victim (of catastrophe), 2) helper of EU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they ask for help, criticise, explain - Canary Islands: “gate to Europe”, “tourist islands”
NGOs, refugee/relief organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speak on the behalf of migrants - evaluate, but do not make claims or criticise - role: heroes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they believe, describe, worry, are called out, start to languish
Spain: as a nation, authorities, locals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - practical activity and heroism of local fishermen and sea rescue - authorities make claims (to EU), evaluate, describe - Spain: decision maker, but inefficient - role: 1) victim (of catastrophe), 2) villain (agreement with the devil) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spanish authorities find drowned ones, hope for co-operation, send boats and aircraft, ask for emergency help, decide, struggle, are under pressure - Spain benefits from undocumented labour
EU and Frontex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capable of bringing order - abstract and distant actors - role: heroes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coordinate, make suggestions
Finland: as a nation, authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capable of bringing order - role: 1) hero, 2) helper of EU and Frontex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - considers assisting, is going to send border guards, ready to prevent, promises, takes initiatives



The majority of news are basic items which do not give reasons for the actions of Africans. The news look at the event from European and/ or Spanish viewpoint and do not present African migrants as actors making rational choices. Rationality and motivation of the actions are presented in the reportage genres, especially in those stories which interview the migrants and possible migrants in Senegal. The image of the African migrants varies from a hero (taking risks to support families) to a victim (of social pressure to support families, of dangerous seas, of traffickers and other problems) and passive object of control (under police, border officials and relief organizations). Moreover, the image of the local Africans becomes more diverse in the reportage genre. For instance, one reportage from Senegal (*HS* 29 June 2006) presents the local women active and capable of taking the initiative. They have established a protest group to oppose the young men's eagerness to take the dangerous trip. When discussing the interconnectedness of various frames earlier in this paper I analysed the headline of this reportage story. In the following image we can see Africans presented in totally different actor roles as compared to the dominating images of migrant groups in custody or in vessels. In this image, the people have social roles, they are actively doing something, they are wearing personal clothing and the woman in front is smiling. Again the headline, the caption and the text refer to people with names and social history: these Africans are not "non-persons" but real people with life histories.





Poikansa menettänyt Yayi Bayam Diouf (oik.) kampanjoi kotikylässään, jotta nuoret senegallaismiehet eivät pyrkisi laittomasti Eurooppaan.

Thiaroyen äidit yrittävät estää poikiaan pyrkimästä Eurooppaan

Figura 3: *Headline: Mothers in Thiaroye try to prevent their sons to pursue for Europe. Yayi Bayam Diouf's son and hundreds of other Senegalese have died during the dangerous sea journey. Helsingin Sanomat 29 June 2006.*

Illegality is mentioned in all stories, also in the reportage stories. The migrants are characterized as “illegal migrants” which is the viewpoint of the destination. Senegal and other African countries do not consider emigration unwanted (except some activists) and therefore do not wish to accept the migrants back. Spanish authorities, particularly in their quotations but also the journalistic text itself, characterize the event in terms which stress the “crisis” and “illegal” nature of the event. Organized crime and trafficking of people are mentioned. However, the reportage stories from Senegal try to question the criminality in organization of trips. The interviewees claim that the journeys they know about are organized by local fishermen who are also trying to get to Europe, not by organized criminal leagues.

The following news story summarises and up-dates the event that has been covered over the summer. It is a very short item stating facts and therefore illustrates well the routine repetition of illegality framing. The concept “illegal migrant” is repeated three times in this story which gives a negative and unwanted connotation of the migrants. The arrival of the migrants is presented as a natural catastrophe and therefore the action is passivised. It is the “stream of illegal migrants” that continues – not action based on conscious decision. It is also the “boat” that “came ashore” – not people with intended action. This is a typical example how the African migrants are presented simultaneously as illegal and passive.

Stream of illegal migrants to the Canary Islands continues

Two people were found dead in a small wooden vessel which arrived at the Canary Islands on Monday. There were altogether 48 illegal migrants in the boat and many of them were taken into local hospitals. Another boat carrying 30 migrants came ashore Spanish continent in Almeria. So far this year 11 000 illegal migrants have arrived at the Canary Islands.

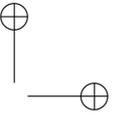
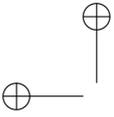
Laittomien siirtolaisten virta Kanariansaarille jatkuu

Kaksi ihmistä löydettiin kuolleena pieneltä puuveneeltä, joka saapui Kanariansaarille maanantaina. Veneessä oli yhteensä 48 laitonta siirtolaista, joista monet vietiin paikallisiin sairaaloihin.

Toinen, 30:tä siirtolaista kuljettanut vene rantautui maanantaina Espanjan mantereelle Almerian maakuntaan.

Kanariansaarille on tähän mennessä saapunut jo 11000 laitonta siirtolaista tänä vuonna. (HS 25 July 2006.)

Difficulties in reception and return are presented as Spanish problems and they do not get much attention in the coverage. On the one hand the authorities of Canary Islands are reported to make claims to both Spanish government and the EU for funds and assistance in dealing with the migrants. Spain on the other hand makes claims to the EU. However, the Finnish media does not get involved with the claims making to the extent that is typical in national coverage of incoming migrants. Previous studies on the coverage of illegally defined migrants in Finland show that the public discussion is strongly harnessed into the claims making of authorities (Horsti, 2003: 49; Nordberg, 2004).



In this case the media stresses much more the patrolling, controlling and stopping of the migrants. These actions are presented as a joint European effort. As an example, out of 31 headlines eight headlines focus on European collaboration and five headlines on Finnish assistance in patrol.⁸ In this sense the coverage is Europeanized: the EU border and controlling of it is an EU matter and requires co-operation between the countries. Reception and return on the contrary are still more of Spanish responsibility. The following paragraph illustrates how the EU is positioned as an active agent and a decision maker with technical expertise.

The European union is going to construct an extensive control network at the Mediterranean and in the area of the Canary Islands to cut off the migration stream. Operation at the waters of the Canaries and Malta has largely been agreed upon. In November a joint project headed by Greece is launched to intensify surveillance of East Mediterranean. In addition, satellite system in the area is improved with EU support.

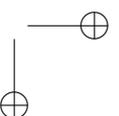
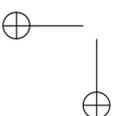
Euroopan unioni aikoo rakentaa Välimerelle ja Kanarian saarten alueelle kattavan valvontaverkoston laittoman siirtolaisvirran tyrehdyttämiseksi. Operaatioista Kanarian ja Maltaan vesillä on pitkälti jo sovittu. Marraskuussa avataan Kreikan johdolla uusi yhteishanke itäisen Välimeren valvonnan tehostamiseksi. Lisäksi alueen satelliittijärjestelmiä parannetaan EU:n tuella. (HS 11 June 2006.)

In the following illustration I have situated the various agents within two dimensions: positive actions vs. negative actions and active subjects vs. passive objects.

Positions and normative qualities of various agents

We could almost draw a horizontal line across the scheme: Europe would be above the line and Africa under it – the heroes above and the villains under. This is the main image we get from the routine news, but it would undermine the diversity of newspaper journalism. Reportage stories made in Africa change the setting by presenting (some) Africans in a more active and positive manner. In addition, the divisions constructed within Europe change the setting: not all actions within Europe are considered positive.

⁸The remaining 18 headlines focus on deaths, drownings and dangers (3), unusual numbers and re-direction of migration route (8), other single issues (7).



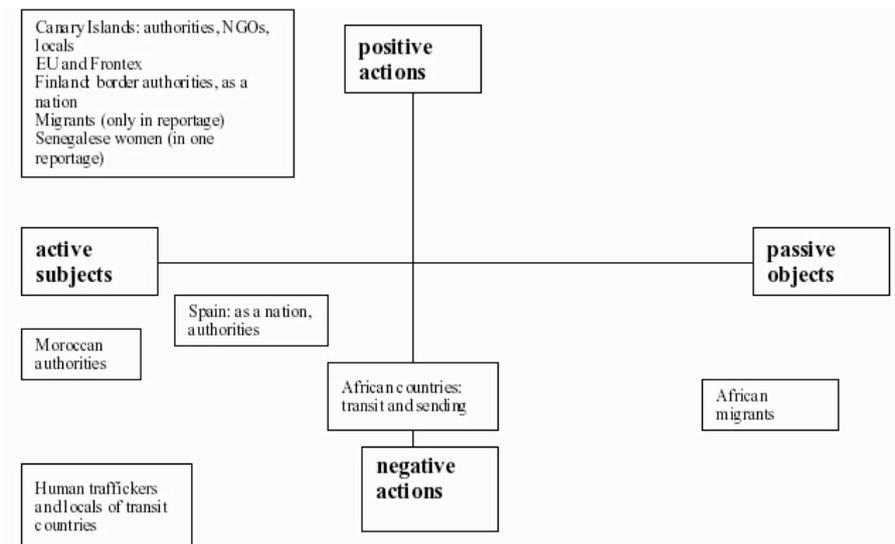
The heroes of the story are authorities, NGOs and locals at Canary Islands, the EU and Frontex, and Finland. However, African migrants are presented as heroes and the local Senegalese women as decision-makers in the reportage stories from Senegal. The most negative actors, the villains of the story are human traffickers and locals of transit countries who are claimed to organize the trips. African migrants themselves are presented in negative terms, but their role remains too passive and impersonal to produce the role of a villain. The activity of the migrants (the fact that they have left and arrived) is managed through physical objects –the ships –which are considered as subjects. See the following extracts where the ships are represented as active agents:

[...] migrant ships have directed [...] siirtolaisalukset ovat suunnanneet (13.3.2006)

[...] so that the ships would not leave from its shores [...] jotta alukset eivät lähtisi sen rannoilta (13.3.2006)

[...] bow determinedly towards the Canaries [...] kokka määrätietoisesti kohti Kanariaa (8.6.2006)

In addition, the first reports which are crucial in the definition of the problem in the first place, rationalise the actions of African migrants in very technical terms with details of routes. The problem is defined as “arrival of



migrants in Canary Islands” and the reasons for this are “tightened control in Morocco-Europe border”.

African countries are on the one hand active: they support migration and refuse to take back the deported. On the other hand, however, they are presented as passive since the transit countries cannot control mobility. However, all this is considered negatively. It should be recognized here as well that the reportage stories from *HS* reporters both in Tenerife (where she interviewed migrant children) and from Senegal produce a more diverse image of the sending countries. The local circumstances are explained which makes the migrants seem rational actors. However, in these stories Africa is also presented with problems (poverty, illnesses, and unemployment).

Spain and Morocco are both discussed controversially. On the one hand Moroccan authorities are efficient: they have “strengthened” control at the European border. On the other hand the actions are considered too brutal and the Moroccans are criminalized: the transits to the desert are described “dreaded” and the security troops “violent”. Spain is presented active (it “deports”, “sends ships”) but not active enough (“slim results”, “control ineffective”). The actions are positive (they are doing something about the problem), but at the same time they have caused the problem by attracting the migrants with amnesty and black labour market.

In the news coverage the event is presented from the viewpoint of Spain and Europe. The public is invited to participate in this group. In this setting, the Canary Islands and Spain are presented as being under pressure, they are claiming help from the EU. However, doubts that the problem would be partly caused by Spain itself (by the “naturalization” of migrants⁹) gives a conflicting image of Spain. On the one hand Spain is a victim; on the other hand it is the one to blame. For instance these paragraphs illustrate how the news evoke questions and criticism towards Spain (while simultaneously glorifying Finnish action).

The attempts by Spain itself to calm down the entrance of migrants to the Canary Islands has produced slim results.

Espanjan omat yritykset hillitää laittomien siirtolaisten pyrkimistä Kanari-ansaarille ovat tuottaneet vain laihoja tuloksia.

⁹Spain declared an amnesty in May 2005 for about 700,000 un-documented immigrants. Un-documented workers and their employers could apply for residency and work permits during a three month period. The Guardian 9 May 2005.

[...]

It turned out that the agreements [between Spanish diplomats and Western African nations] were unsteady when an enormous sensation on deportations flamed out in Senegal and a new controversy appeared between Senegal and Spain.

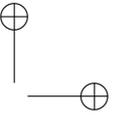
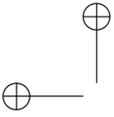
Sopimusten huteruus kävi kuitenkin ilmi, kun palautuksista roihahti valtaisa kohu Senegalissa ja uusi kiista Senegalin ja Espanjan välillä. (HS 3 June 2006.)

The news construct an image that the border between Africa and Europe is being insidiously violated. The EU is presented as capable of solving this situation, and interestingly Finland is raised as a hero and helper (of EU). Domestication of the news event through the up-coming EU presidency of Finland, the possible participation of Finland in patrolling group and Finnish nationality of the director of Frontex increases the role of Finland. EU remains significantly abstract as an agent and a source. The claims are not directly posed at EU actors and there are no direct quotations (except for Frontex, because of the Finnish director). This is a feature which is typical in all coverage related to EU and the problem of “facelessness” is acknowledged in the White Paper on a European communication policy (2006). The lack of EU sources and proper public debate enforces the distant image of the EU and declines the quality of journalism in issues related to migration. However, the lack of “human face” and public debate does not prevent the media applying the hero role to the EU.

Finland is positioned in opposition to other “not as efficient” EU countries. This following example shows how in the beginning the problem of “some countries with large migration streams” (referring to Italy and Spain) is presented to result from lack of efficiency. In the following paragraph Finland is presented as the authority to solve the problem.

It has turned out that some countries with large migration streams the finger prints are not taken although the countries are involved with the Eurodac-system. [...] During its presidency Finland is going to raise this defect. The Ministry of Interior is preparing an initiative to deepen the European burden sharing in matters of migration, border control and refugee.

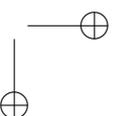
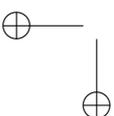
On kuitenkin käynyt ilmi, että eräissä suurten muuttovirtojen maissa sormenjälkiä ei otetakaan, vaikka maat ovat mukana Eurodac-järjestelmässä. [...] Suomi aikoo puheenjohtajakaudellaan nostaa epäkohdan pöydälle.



Sisäministeriössä valmistellaan aloitetta eurooppalaisen yhteisvastuun syventämisestä maahanmuutto-, rajavartiolaiton- ja pakolaisasioissa. (HS 14 June 2006.)

If we sum up the representations of various actors of the two continents we can find mental/ imagined border between the two geographic spaces of Europe and Africa. Division is made between “poor Africa” and “rich Europe”. This is stressed in the visual images of boatfuls of weary looking men who are taken into custody by officials wearing protection against diseases. In the visual images Africa is determined dirty and diseased, and since Europe is imagined as the opposite, it is loaded with good qualities. However, Europe is not understood as one entity, but distinctions are made between the North and South of Europe.

The following table sums up the imagined geographic and cultural spaces that are being constructed in the texts:



Imagined borders

Africa	Europe	
poverty dispair disease	prosperity hope hygiene	
	South Europe	North Europe (Finland)
	creating pull (amnesty)	consistent policy
	lax implementation of policy	order
	deficiency in border control	technical and operational knowledge
	socially accepted black market for labour	strict social control

Conclusions

Previous empirical research on the media representation of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants stresses the frames of illegality: migrants are presented as intruders and as a threat. However, a closer textual analysis shows the diversity of news journalism. Illegality and control frames are no doubt the most recurrent ones, but the migrants are also framed as victims and as heroes – particularly in reportages made in Africa. Therefore, the positions of the African migrant vary from the standpoint the journalists take. When the event is covered from the viewpoint of the Spanish (numbers, control and reception problems highlighted), the migrants are passivised. Illegal migrants are presented as Europe’s common folk devils: an anomaly which unites the “normal” of us, constructing collective solidarity among White Europeans. However, when the journalist travels to Africa and writes the story from that viewpoint, it is different. Migrants are personalized, they have names and

social status (they are someone's sons, husbands and brothers) where as in the routine news coverage they are represented impersonally as "non-persons". Still, the image of Africa is "poor and despair" where as Europe is presented as the opposite.

The argument of contradictory roles also applies to some other actors appearing in the news. Moroccans are effective on the one hand and brutal on the other hand. EU, Finland and the traffickers are the only actors which have consistent positions. Europe is presented as holding the position to solve the problem and determine the future course of events. Finland is granted an important assisting position in the EU. Spanish position is divided between a struggler and a guilty one.

The case illustrates that European identity is a complex issue. Europe is presented as a unity when it comes to the opposition between the "chaotic and diseased Africa" and "Europe needing protection". In this context EU is expressed as an agent in principle capable of dealing with the "problem of Africa". Individual countries, especially the Southern European countries are presented as having almost no powers to deal with the issue. From the Finnish perspective, the EU is presented effective especially because such well organized states as Finland are involved. The news constructs mental geography where the outer frontier of the Finns is drawn along the shores of Canary Islands. However, Europe is not presented as a unity with shared cultural identity when it comes to the effectiveness and organization of the Union. The case illustrates that the European identity is both stressed and questioned through the media depending on the setting and viewpoint.

Furthermore, the case demonstrates that European and national frameworks are not necessarily exclusionary but complimentary. Finland is taking the EU Presidency and this increases the news value of European related news items per se. The rotating Presidency seems crucial to the development of European public sphere. The migration crisis becomes "domesticated" and therefore its news value is raised. Nationalization of a "European" or "foreign" news event increases the frequency and intensity of coverage and therefore enhances the European framework. By increasing the relevance on the agenda through national framework the media also increases the access of other frameworks into the agenda, for instance more humanistic frameworks become relevant. In previous research (Horsti, 2005: 288-9) I have claimed that human rights frames get access to the news agenda in other genres than the basic news genre.

Documentaries, reportage, talk shows, personal interviews and columns have more means to address the voice of an “ordinary” person than the news genre which is more oriented towards official and organized sources in all types of coverage, not only in immigration coverage. When the issue is on the agenda, the media tends to deal with it in variety of genres and viewpoints.

In the introduction I posed a question: Could there be a European level mediatized public crisis that could offer opportunities for social change? Based on the material analyzed in this paper I would suggest that the main obstacles for mediatized public crisis to develop around issue of “illegal” migration are firstly related to meta-discourses of colonialization and racism which still are re-produced through stereotyped images of Africa and secondly to communicative practices of the EU and individual countries. Journalistic production clearly needs to be scrutinized more thoroughly, but it seems that the “facelessness” of the EU and the structural difficulty to reach migrant sources prevents the development of public discussion.

Evidently news coverage of migration is increasingly dealt as a European issue. “Illegal” migration is routine news and at times the issue rises to the level of European mediatized ritual: it is discussed in all European countries simultaneously and visibly. However, the ritual is rather stabilizing the existing power relations and creating the border of Europe than offering possibilities to question policy and creating social change towards a more open and humane policy.

There lies a dilemma under all coverage of poverty and experience of the South, which is radically different from the experience of the well-off in the North. Poverty is transferred and transmitted “here” in Europe from “there” in Africa. Confrontation to African circumstances, like to the recklessness of the young African men to take the dangerous and costly sea journey, is disturbing.

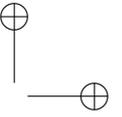
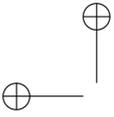
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