



# OFICINA DO CES

**ces**

Centro de Estudos Sociais  
Laboratório Associado  
Faculdade de Economia  
Universidade de Coimbra

**RICARDO PEREIRA**

**THE MANAGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN-WESTERN  
AFRICAN BORDER: ISSUES OF  
CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS AND RACISM**

**Fevereiro de 2009  
Oficina nº 321**

**Ricardo Pereira**

**The Management of the European-Western African Border:  
Issues of Centre-Periphery Relations and Racism**

**Oficina do CES n.º 321  
Fevereiro de 2009**

**OFICINA DO CES**  
Publicação seriada do  
**Centro de Estudos Sociais**  
Praça D. Dinis  
Colégio de S. Jerónimo, Coimbra

**Correspondência:**  
Apartado 3087  
3001-401 COIMBRA, Portugal

Ricardo Pereira<sup>1</sup>

## **The Management of the European-Western African Border: Issues of Centre-Periphery Relations and Racism**

**Abstract:** The European integration process has immanently been a security project since its conception. During the Cold War, it safeguarded Western Europe from Warsaw Pact annexations; after the Cold War, it counters “new security” threats. Illegal immigration has been pointed out as one such threat. Drawing from the case of the European-Western African border region, I describe in this paper the European/Spanish repressive and ‘benevolent’ responses to this phenomenon, and discuss critical perspectives on postcolonial centre-periphery relations and racism emerging from that framework.

### **Introduction**

The European-Western African border comprises a broad region where human migratory movements within Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Republic of Guinea and the European Union (Spanish archipelago of the Canary Islands) take place.<sup>2</sup> This area of the globe appears as a prominent case-study in the territorial-biological confrontation between the Western “post-modern world,” centre to the international system, and the post-colonial “pre-modern world,” the peripheries of that system (Cooper, 2004). The epicentre of this area, the Canary Islands, consists of a striking locus where the oppositions between those two worlds brutally clash. One of Europe’s grandest touristic, low-cost-flight itineraries, it is also a major destination for thousands of Sub-Saharans and others, who, in exchange for the payment (or promise of future payment) of about 1,000 euro, depart from the African shores in tremendously precarious boats, the *cayucos*.

In this paper, my goal is to understand this complex landscape by reflecting on the relationship between the rise of the number of migrants travelling towards the European

---

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral Candidate in International Relations (International Politics and Conflict Resolution), Centre for Social Studies, School of Economics, University of Coimbra. Grant Holder of the Foundation for Science and Technology. Feedback is highly appreciated: pereirarjr@yahoo.com.

<sup>2</sup> My focus on the region is primarily geographical. Yet, the whole migratory region is stretchable to many other parts of Africa and beyond, including the Middle East, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.

territory and the expanding European border and immigration policies, in their repressive and benevolent policy formulations. The point of departure of this analysis lies in the European construction as an immanent project of security since its conception in the wake of the Cold War. The first section articulates the central role played by security in the European integration project as mobilizing device for its cohesion and growth during and after the Cold War with the practice of border management in the regulation of current relations with the Global South. The second section critically discusses the political responses of securitization in the broad post-colonial centre-periphery relationship, focusing on the role of development aid and racism. The last section complements the previous one through the analysis of recently online-published Spanish media articles which confirm the dominant consensus around those responses.

### **European integration, security and border management**

The first four decades of European integration have revolved around two central preoccupations: to recover the Western European economies extremely impoverished by the Second World War, and to safeguard them from annexations by the Warsaw Pact. To a large extent, European construction under the framework of intergovernmental organisations (the European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) has happened and solidified in the face of the Soviet Other, conceived as a threat to the sovereign territory of the Western states.

The enthusiasm caused by the end of the Cold War offered renewed hopes of world peace, as an order based upon the promotion of multilateralism and European-like regional integration initiatives was established by the United States, its Western European allies, the United Nations and the main intergovernmental organisations. Beginning as scholarship proposals in the 1960s and reinforced in the early 1980s, new understandings of security came to the fore at the political level. The new paradigm of security ought to be more demanding, going beyond the “mere” realist considerations on national defence against foreign military aggressions (Buzan, 1991). Security should also account for a wider array of threats: political, social, economic, and ecologic, which are characterised by their intimate interdependence. Events such as infectious diseases, trafficking in drugs or degradation of the environment lack regard for integral and sovereign spaces and cannot be prevented through the implementation of bipolar containment policies. ‘Human security’ became the paradigm response, in which

individual security is perceived not only as a function of state security, but also taking into account ideas of quality of life.<sup>3</sup>

It was out of this new conceptualisation that the victors of the Cold War perceived their “new” Other for the post-Cold War, globalising era. Although human security largely reflected a North-South tendency during the 1990s, a number of dramatic events taking place inside the West or *directly* affecting it at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (September 11, SARS and avian flu outbreaks, warnings on climate change, exhaustion and competition for non-renewable energy resources, waves of illegal immigration, etc.), resulted in a realisation that human security was also the West’s preoccupation. In the 1990s social indicators started to decline in Europe, and popular mistrust in the EU as a better political solution rose. Poverty augmented, city life deteriorated, and racist and xenophobic movements and political parties remerged (Huysmans, 2000).

The comprehensive and human-centered EU concept of security brought about external engagements in a wide array of political-technical areas such as the environment, pandemics, human rights and migrations (Portela, 2007). Here the border becomes instrumental. Close to a neo-medieval setting, the European border is defined as “less territorial, less physical and less visible” (Zielonka, 2001). It therefore requires sophisticated, biological technologies of discrimination between EU nationals and aliens.

The 1985 Schengen Accord was the response to the necessity to conciliate both the EU member-states’ willingness to exert more and better control over the circulation of third-country nationals and, at the same time, ensure the effectiveness of the common market with regard to the circulation of community citizens. It inspired the idea of management rationalisation twenty years later in the 2005 Dublin Declaration, in which the rejection of an asylum application in a member-state is applicable to all other member-states, and the applicant should be returned to his/her country of origin.

Border securitization holds a central economic preoccupation in its own rationale. That is to say that it discriminates, as I discuss more extensively in the next section, “unwanted” from “wanted” individuals for the European globalised economy. In fact, in the pursuit of the ambitious goals at the 2000 Lisbon Strategy, the EU aims to develop mechanisms for

---

<sup>3</sup> This concept received political recognition in the 1994 edition of the *Human Development Report* by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Considering that the traditional concept of (military) security does not mirror the reality of the majority of the world’s population, “human security can be said to have two main aspects; [it] means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs and in communities” (UNDP, 1994).

effectively attracting skilled third-country nationals at the intellectual, technical or even sporting levels (Geddes, 2005). As a result, a recent European Commission's directive proposal on a Blue Card to be issued to qualified migrants constitutes an ongoing "human resources technology" in that regard (European Commission, 2007a).

Migration has become a European collective issue territorially and functionally. A "trans-pillar" approach articulates security and foreign policies, justice and home affairs, trade and development aid (Geddes, 2005). As a consequence, there has been the implementation of "externalised" migration policies through the establishment of regional centres that process asylum applications. In November 2007 the European Commission launched an 'enlarged migratory policy' particularly attentive to the transit countries (European Commission, 2007b).<sup>4</sup> These sophisticated initiatives are presented as "the most plausible solution" to tackle the issues that the continent faces with regard to borders and mobility. Frontex, founded in 2005, has been the European agency for border management, and constitutes, together with member-states' own tool, the repressive side of border policy.<sup>5</sup>

It is relevant to mention that Frontex is a depoliticised body. However, Carrera (2007) argues that this presumption has not been observed, and he puts forward three factors: the principle of dependency on member-states' solidarity; "emergency" activities are a product of political pressures and strategies displayed by specific member-states; and the influence generated by the European Commission on the agency.<sup>6</sup> Whereas the first factor might mirror prevailing 'national selfishness' within the EU's polity, the second factor accentuates the role played by the countries composing the Union's external border. The most striking example has precisely to do with Spain as far as the Canaries go.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> The "global approach to migration" was recently reinforced by the European Commission through its enlargement to the Eastern and South-eastern neighbouring regions (transit countries) and countries of origin: partner countries in the Middle East, Iraq and Iran; in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and Asian countries such as China, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia.

<sup>5</sup> Its main task is to coordinate operations related to the management of external borders, and its initiatives rely on the cooperation that the member-states might pursue (Donoghue *et al.*, 2006). Frontex supports member-states in the capacity-building of their border guards, coordinates operations, offers periodic risk analyses, and helps in the process of repatriating illegal residents and persons who were not granted refugee status.

<sup>6</sup> Frontex is, first and foremost, an intelligence body. Its risk analysis activities presuppose the knowledge and evaluation of roots, routes, modes of acting, patterns of irregular movements, conditions in transit countries, and production of statistics on irregular flows and other movements. A lot of information is kept in secrecy. That situation raises problems of democratic deficit, especially if we think that Frontex was established in order to confer transparency to national procedures usually regarded as obscure. Frontex's risk analysis has detected other important regions, which correspond to the other neighbouring regions of the EU (Mediterranean Sea, Western Balkans, the Eastern ground border of Central Europe), as well as the main airports.

<sup>7</sup> In the face of the domestic debate around the "migratory and humanitarian crisis" in March and April 2006, the Spanish authorities pursued a strategy of generally blaming the EU, with a focus on Frontex, for the problem of irregular migration towards the archipelago. Spain advanced strategies of raising awareness in Brussels about

In spite of the growing Europeanisation of border control, migrations in the region essentially remain a national problem. In complement to the European approach, the use of bilateral schemes conciliating the necessity of containing migrations through the offer of development aid has not been subsidised by the Spanish government. It expresses the “‘new model of cooperation and co-responsibility’ in immigration affairs”<sup>8</sup> (ABC, 2006). In the accords on migration flow control signed by Spain and Gambia and the Republic of Guinea, on 9 October 2006, and Mali, on 23 January 2007, there is an articulation of humanitarian support in exchange for greater border surveillance and readmission of migrants turned away in the Canary Islands. In the case of Mali, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation has extraordinarily obtained ten million Euros for investment in the world’s third poorest country (PICUM, 2007). As far as the former two go, they were promised in late 2006 five million each, and a similar deal was to be concluded with Senegal, which was promised ten million (ABC, 2006). Apart from the exchange of development aid for internal surveillance promises, those who voluntarily decide to return home are to be awarded micro-credit schemes for family businesses (González, 2007).<sup>9</sup> From the externalisation of the European border policy perspective, this model comprises the migration routes towards the EU (Blanco, 2006).

### **Critical perspectives: Post-colonial centre-periphery relations and racism**

The broader case of the Southern European border (Mediterranean coast and the Canaries) leads to the conclusion that the more securitised a border area becomes, the higher is the deviation and dangerousness of the migratory route (Lutterbeck, 2006). Border management and externalisation of migration policies through sea patrol and intersection, bilateral treaties on migration flow control and development aid have strived to contain those flows, but have also caused a higher number of deaths among migrants. According to the blog Fortresseurope.blogspot.com, whose data are collected from institutional reports and media articles, until 2002 the highest number of deaths happened in the attempt to reach Ceuta, Melilla or the Mediterranean coast, e.g. 106 against 39 in the Canaries route. However, as of 2003, that situation reversed (except in 2004). In 2006 this new tendency became tremendous, as 1,035 people died in the Canaries route against 167 deaths in the

---

“an unprecedented humanitarian crisis throughout Europe” and “a mass invasion of illegal immigrants,” urging European intervention (Carrera, 2007). Consequently the UE launched the three maritime patrol operations HERA I, HERA II and HERA III.

<sup>8</sup> “[Nuevo] modelo de cooperación y corresponsabilidad’ en materia de emigración.”

<sup>9</sup> The volume of Spanish aid for Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa has tripled in three years. In 2007 it totaled 570 million euro, and augmented in 2008 to 735 million.



Ceuta/Melilla/Mediterranean coast option. According to the Canary Government, 31,863 people reached the islands in 2006. In sum, the number of migrants towards the Canaries rose strongly in absolute terms, with a clear reflection in the number of deaths; in turn, migration via Northern Africa has remained close to the 2005 figures (123 to 167).

Some authors and NGOs have criticized the externalisation of European border management policies' implications with regard to the creation and maintenance of partnerships with third countries on identification and readmission of their citizens and others who may have originated from there (Carrera, 2007). In light of the 1951 Geneva Convention for Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, preventive actions in terms of considering a third-country national as an "irregular immigrant" before s/he even leaves his/her country and enters European territory ignore the fact that s/he can happen to be but a potential applicant for exile or refugee status. In fact, respect for human rights cannot fully occur if there is no chance for someone to submit an application. Moreover, that application is required to be individually analysed, since, generally, the applicant finds her/himself in an irregular situation (*ibid.*).

Hathaway denounces that "there is a generalised belief that when dissuasion occurs at a prudent distance from our territory it is either quite legitimate or at least exempt of legal responsibility"<sup>10</sup> (Hathaway, 2006). There are two major underlying arguments for the adoption of preventive measures: 1) the majority of immigrants are economic, and only a minority is entitled to refugee status; 2) the prevention of probable migrant deaths in the high sea and the transnational trafficking in human beings is an ethical imperative. Yet, Hathaway replies that, first, "one becomes a refugee as s/he is away from her/his country of origin due to risk of persecution from one of the reasons in the Convention."<sup>11</sup> Second, in light of the United Nations Treaty on Civic and Political Rights, all people have the right to abandon any country, even hers/his. All EU countries are signatory to these covenants; yet, there has arguably been an extensive failure in complying with them (Amnistía Internacional 2006). Another problematic situation has to do with the opacity in the process of return and/or readmission of third-country citizens, and the treatment they receive. Furthermore, as the externalisation policy transfers the border to outside the EU, responsibility is attributed to the third-countries, which are granted titles of "safe country of origin" or "safe transit country" through the offer of development aid aimed at building capacities for a better performance in migration flow control (Human Rights Watch, 2006). In the case of asylum-seekers who

---

<sup>10</sup> "Existe la creencia generalizada de que cuando esta disuasión se realiza a prudente distancia del territorio nacional es, o bien legítima o, por lo menos, está exenta de responsabilidad legal."

<sup>11</sup> The acknowledgement of such status is to be attributed, or not, by a state, and not by the applicant her/himself.

remain in European territory and wait for his/her case to be decided, they tend to face what Schuster (2003) has described as “developed regimes, sets of practices, that once would have only been possible in war-time, but today are considered ‘normal’ [i.e.] forcible dispersal, detention and deportation” (246-247)

Even though considered “failed” (Baldwin-Edwards, 2006) and “unfortunate” (PICUM, 2007) vis-à-vis the so-claimed objective of preventing migration for humanitarian reasons, that policy is nevertheless reinforced. The European Council of Ministers for Internal Affairs, on 20 April 2007, advanced measures on the creation of rapid intervention teams at the border, together with the “solidarity” rise in the budget from 19,2 million to 34,98 million Euros (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2007). How to comprehend such tendency?

First, at the political level, it is important to reassess the European post-Cold War security concept. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner claims that security is obtained through the “export” of stability in order not to “import” instability. The instruments aiding in stabilisation correspond to economic, trade, environmental, social and developmental policies (Portela, 2007). Developmental policies prevail and gain shape under a variety of strategies pursued harmoniously in the public and private domains, specially humanitarian and developmental NGOs. Latest instances of the benevolent approach are “circular migration” and “economic diasporas” (Ortega, 2007). Whereas the former is embedded in the bilateral treaties (assignment of temporary contracts with workers from the countries of origin), the latter consists in the facilitation of sending funds home.<sup>12</sup> The most repressive measures, i.e. physical contention, is moreover mitigated by Spanish relief providers as Doctors Without Borders, Doctors of the World or the Red Cross at sea, harbour facilities, and detention centres, as well as in the externalised border. It is interesting to notice that migration securitisation is not just an issue for national and European bureaucracies, not to mention ultranationalist activists and right-wing politicians. It is also an opportunity for ‘projectisation’ for humanitarian institutions as well. After all, as Huysmans argues, “securitisation is a structural effect of a multiplicity of practices” (Huysmans, 2000: 758).

The securitisation of migrations between the Canaries and the Western coast of Africa through the implementation of ‘benevolent’ and repressive techniques of containment are part of the “governance of the peripheries” by today’s centre of the globalisation system (Duffield, 2005). The contrast Duffield makes between “centre,” or “metropolitan,” and “periphery,” or

---

<sup>12</sup> It should be remembered that already in the 1950s, Germany had launched recruitment accords with Italy that turned out to reflect the existing migration flows and not to regulate them. Historical experience has shown that much migration continues to take place regardless of accords (Geddes, 2005).

“borderland,” unveils strong political and cultural components, in which the former reclaim characteristics of “civility, restraint and rationality” and the latter “barbarity, excess and irrationality” (Duffield, 2002: 1052).

Achieving security in the borderlands, and hence international stability, is now seen as lying in activities designed to reduce poverty, satisfy basic needs, strengthen economic self-sufficiency, create representative civil institutions, encourage thrift, promote human rights, gender awareness, and so on: the name of this new security framework is development. (*Ibid.*: 1064)

In current times of ‘war on terror,’ such framework gains further relevance. Since September 11 migration has been growingly referred to as contributing to terrorist-prone activities carried on in the international system’s metropolitan areas, in the major cities’ suburbia. The migrant/foreigner is increasingly categorised as suspect of terrorism (Carrera and Geyer, 2007).

Opening a recent conference on migrations in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Antonio G. Viéitez (2007) alluded to a “growing and sensitised sector of world public opinion hold[ing] that the essential objective of those inversions should be the creation of CIVILIZATION”.<sup>13</sup> Viéitez warned that such development strategy could not be led by private entities but by public institutions, which are “the sole compatible agents” (*ibid.*). But Viéitez did not include any African public institution, but institutions as diverse as the United Nations or the Canaries government (*ibid.*). For turbulent regions Viéitez, perhaps inadvertently, projects a peacebuilding idea “construed as a modern version of the colonial-era *mission civilisatrice*, at least insofar as these operations involve the transmission of norms of appropriate or ‘civilised’ conduct from the core of the international system to the periphery” (Paris, 2002: 656).

According to Huysmans (2000), a security policy assembles the range of threats that a given community identifies as menacing its existence perceived in cultural and racial terms. The entrance of alien individuals appears as opposed to an ideology of national tradition and social homogeneity. To the extreme, immigrants are conceived as a threat to Western civilisation, and thus are excluded from the normal social tissue for the fact that they are, first and foremost, a threat to the reproduction of that cultural-racial tissue. In fact, Huysmans notices that there is no need to operate a radical discourse on cultural differences in order to mobilise a “racial union” around the topic. To a large extent, it will perhaps suffice intensified media coverage on disturbing events caused by migrants. Ibrahim, writing on the xenophobic

---

<sup>13</sup> “Un creciente y concienciado sector de la opinión pública mundial sostiene que el objetivo esencial de esas inversiones debe ser el de crear CIVILIZACIÓN.”

reaction to the irregular arrival in Canada of a ship with 599 Chinese migrants in 2005, conceptualises the securitisation of migrations as an expression of racism, or “new racism.” The author claims that “the securitization of migration discourse is built upon the concept that cultural difference leads to social breakdown” (Ibrahim, 2005). New racism does not however refer to notions of biologic superiority, but to exclusion due to difference.<sup>14</sup> Ibrahim sustains that traditions are constructions with an aim to securitize the national community. They protect it from the immigrants with a diverse cultural background, who will endanger it. At the end of the day, cultural diversity will lead to ethnic conflict and dissolution of the unity of the state. According to Leach (2005), denial of institutional discrimination and racist feeling and behaviour are latent manifestations of such racism. Saxton has shown such kind of attitude in a similar case that took place in Australia in 2001 (Saxton, 2006). Liz Fekete, from the London-based Institute of Race Relations, goes as far as actually linking racism to poverty, regardless of colour of skin. Racism is targeted at poverty’s most flagrant expressions, i.e. against the “displaced, the dispossessed and the uprooted” (Fekete, 2001). Racism is construed as a criminalization of poverty and, so Fekete’s argument goes, border and immigration controls based on labour skills (as utility for the capitalist political economy) provide the necessary structure for neoliberal globalization, in that they create a “stable (...) regional environment for global accumulation” (*ibid.*). The issue of labour skills should be particularly stressed since some major arguments friendly to surplus migration cannot evade the political-economic framework. Those most publicly advocating in favour of a somewhat less restrictive approach to Third World migration cannot overlook Western population-centred contingencies such as the ageing of the Western population, the low birth rates in several European countries or the allegedly ‘unwillingness’ of Europeans to take up harsh work.

Other aspects related to the globalization of hegemonic political economy should be added. To begin with, one should signal the enormous disparities in wealth between the whole of the EU and of Africa. According to 2005 figures, the EU is 19 times richer than Western Africa in gross domestic product (GDP), and the average life expectancy and child mortality rates are respectively 78 and 5.4/1000 in the EU, against 38 and 95.1/1000 in Western Africa (Blanco, 2006). Yet, the fertility rate is much higher in Western Africa than in Europe: 5.4

---

<sup>14</sup> New racism is a term coined by Martin Baker in 1981, in “The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe”, which analyses how the British Conservative Party mobilised attentions through a discourse based on national or ethnic difference as menacing the British nation’s cohesion. Yet, Leach (2005) argues that “new racism” as discrimination based on culture is older than what is actually presumed. In fact, this author shows evidence that, namely in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia, before de jure equality among people of different races was achieved, the expression of white racism centred not so much on colour but on customs, religion, etc.

children per family in the former against 1.5 children per family in the latter. This indicator seems to be the most relevant. In fact, the rise in Sub-Saharan active population<sup>15</sup> is not proportionally accompanied by the labour market there. This factor tends to “push” towards migration as present and future perspectives in the countries of origin do not improve (Sandell, 2006). Another connected factor has to do with the growth in African urbanisation and concomitant decrease in forms of agriculture-rooted life in the rural areas (*Ibid.*). The role of future expectations and daily life is very prominent in this case. Although most of those trying to cross the Atlantic are uneducated youths animated by the utter need to evade poverty but also dreaming of successfully returning home as many compatriots have done, a relatively high number of *cayuco* travellers are educated youths.

[They] experience ferocious competition in the access to the rare available jobs, and they see the generation in power and business shamelessly ‘filling up their pockets,’ giving them only a few pieces of the ‘national pie’[...] They look at their homeland with the eyes of the afro-pessimist white and just want to get away.<sup>16</sup> (Courade, 2007: 7)

Western television and what it glamorously depicts are deemed to be a strong component in the complex pushing of migration towards Europe (Ngoye, 2007).

### **Major consensus in the Spanish online media**

The issue of migration and racism in Western societies has been analysed mostly through analysis of written materials in the media (Ibrahim, 2005; Saxton, 2006; van Dijk, 2000). A Google.es search for media materials on migrations to the Canaries (and broadly to Spain) published during August and early September 2008 offers a wide variety of perspectives and institutional recommendations on that subject. Yet they mostly reflect the dominant features shown here. Extensively, these materials confirm the dominant political and cultural aspects put forward throughout this paper on the Western-, Spanish-centred benevolent and repressive forms.

As a liberal, humanitarian-friendly country, no explicitly hateful positions on migration are transmitted in the mainstream online media in Spain, except in the Readers’ Comments section placed at the bottom of the article’s webpage. The whole phenomenon is mostly described as a “drama” demanding strong governmental intervention. The major opposition

---

<sup>15</sup> According to Sandell (2006), the active population in Western African countries will rise up to around 186 millions.

<sup>16</sup> “[Sofrem] uma concorrência feroz no acesso aos raros postos de trabalho disponíveis e vêem a geração no poder e nos negócios ‘a encherem-se’ sem qualquer vergonha, deixando-lhes apenas as migalhas do ‘bolo nacional.’ [...] Olham para a sua terra natal com os olhos dos brancos afro-pessimistas e só pensam em fugir.”

party, *Partido Popular*, blames the *Partido Socialista* government for absence of “pressure on the countries of origin” (*Diario de Cadiz*, 2008). In turn, both the national and Canary governments articulate funding for sea patrol (Sáiz-Pardo, 2008), reductions in the quantity of boat people arriving in Spanish shores through sea patrol (ABC, 2008a; Discapnet, 2008), and arrest of traffickers in immigrants (Junquera, 2008). The editor of the newspaper *El Periódico* asserts that “*ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente*” (out of sight, out of mind). Though pitying the case and thus calling for further criminalization of traffickers and foreign assistance to the developing world, the editor recognizes that the fortification policy does pay off (*El Periódico de Cataluña*, 2008). This is the dominant consensus, although specific benevolent practices are added. They range from family adoption for the increasing number of children arriving to the archipelago (Clarín, 2008) to requests for education campaigns in Africa aimed at dissuading migration, as a Nigerian association in Spain proposed (Europa Press, 2008a). “*Migrantes de avión*” (Migrants by plane), by Tere Coello, unveils to Spanish audiences the “legal” sides of migration in the Canaries. Celebrating regular labour contract-holding migrants, this report depicts the integration process of some Latin Americans in Canary society (Coello, 2008). Despite early racism, those migrants are presented as “good” foreigners since they hold contracts. To me this article shows how attribution of full human dignity by the host society depends on having or not having a labour contract. ‘Explicit racism’ is expressed in the ‘Comments’ section. Often readers let out their outright contempt for African underdeveloped surplus individuals in a society perceived to be in crisis. This is an example among many by a reader signing as “Juan IV:” “The socialists are absolute masters in presenting failures as successes. Either the economy decelerates, or there are less immigrants coming. What most people demand is that no more of them come here, and that most who came go away”<sup>17</sup> (ABC, 2008a). The sole article on an alternative approach to the case reports on the street meeting organised by the human rights group *Asociación Pro-Derechos Humanos de Andalucía* urging the Spanish government to demonstrate solidarity to the victims and their families. It also condemns the recent European directive on the compulsory return of illegal returns labelled as “Directive of Shame”, a term borrowed from Venezuela President Hugo Chávez (Europa Press, 2008b).

---

<sup>17</sup> “Los socialistas son maestros consumados en el arte de presentar los fracasos como éxitos. Ahora resulta que la economía se acelera menos, ahora resulta que vienen menos inmigrantes. Cuando lo que la mayoría del pueblo reclama es que no venga ni uno más, y que se vayan la mayor parte de los que han venido.”

## **Conclusion**

New threats to security constitute the new Other driving the European integration process. I acknowledged above a nexus between a set of concepts – human security, border and migration securitisation and new racism – shaping an institutional response with a will to regulate migration for the sake of the capitalist political economy.

The analysis of the management policies and practices in the European-Western African border leads us to the conclusion that they fail when trying to contain movements at all and somehow to conciliate them with human rights premises.

The strong emphasis on trafficking as the “sole cause of the death of migrants,” as the Spanish Secretary of State for Immigration Affairs Consuelo Rumí (Canarias 7, 2008) put it, is revealing of a tendency that one has observed in European behaviour vis-à-vis the rest of the world in today’s hegemonic globalization. Although there are individuals exploiting the migrants’ project, it seems that European (and Spanish, in this particular case) political leaders and society in general attempt to dismiss their own share of responsibility in this process. They either disconnect themselves from it or omit the linkage between their leading role in neoliberal globalization and Third World poverty and migration. Will proper ‘compensation’ lie in humanitarian relief, development cooperation or family adoptions? Will such security framework contribute to build a better, emancipating relationship with the Other? So far, my conclusion is that there are not enough elements to consider those policies, in this particular context, as likely to resolve the deep-rooted troubles of Western encounters with the rest of the world.

## References

- ABC (2006), "España firma con Gambia y Guinea-Conakry un acuerdo sobre inmigración", [http://www.abc.es/hemeroteca/historico-09-10-2006/abc/Nacional/espana-firma-con-gambia-y-guinea-conakry-un-acuerdo-sobre-inmigracion-\\_1423688047212.html](http://www.abc.es/hemeroteca/historico-09-10-2006/abc/Nacional/espana-firma-con-gambia-y-guinea-conakry-un-acuerdo-sobre-inmigracion-_1423688047212.html). Accessed October 26, 2006.
- ABC (2008a), "Interior dice que la llegada de inmigrantes ha bajado un 9%", <http://www.abc.es/20080809/nacional-nacional/interior-dice-llegada-inmigrantes-20080809.html>. Accessed September 11, 2008.
- Amnistía Internacional (2006), "Los derechos de los extranjeros que llegan a las Islas Canarias siguen siendo vulnerados. Resultados de la misión de investigación de Amnistía Internacional los días 14 al 16 de junio". Madrid: Amnistía Internacional.
- Baldwin-Edwards, Martin (2006), "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: North Africa as a region of emigration, immigration and transit migration", [http://aei.pitt.edu/6365/01/Between\\_a\\_rock\\_FINAL.pdf](http://aei.pitt.edu/6365/01/Between_a_rock_FINAL.pdf). Accessed May 26, 2008.
- Blanco, Alicia S. (2006), "La Conferencia Euro-Africana de Migración y Desarrollo: más allá del 'espíritu de Rabat'". Madrid: Real Instituto El Cano.
- Bundesministerium des Innern (2007), "Interior Ministers Strengthen European Border Management Agency Frontex in the Fight against Illegal Migration". Luxembourg: Bundesministerium des Innern.
- Buzan, Barry (1991), *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Canarias 7 (2008), "Rumí: "Los traficantes son los únicos responsables de la muerte de inmigrantes"", Canarias 7.
- Carrera, Sergio (2007), "The EU Border Management Strategy. Frontex and the Challenges of Irregular Immigration in the Canary Islands". Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.
- Carrera, Sergio; Florian Geyer (2007), "Terrorism, Borders and Migration: The Commission's 2008 Policy Strategy in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice". Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.
- Clarín (2008), "Por una nota de Clarín, varias familias quieren adoptar a una nena Senegalesa", <http://www.clarin.com/diario/2008/09/06/sociedad/s-01754578.htm>. Accessed September 11, 2008.



- Coello, Tere (2008), “Inmigrantes de avión”, <http://www.abc.es/20080901/canarias-canarias/inmigrantes-avion-20080901.html>. Accessed September 6, 2008.
- Cooper, Robert (2004), *The Breaking of Nations. Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Atlantic Books.
- Courade, Georges (2007), “O Equívoco Postcolonial Euro-africano acerca das Migrações Subsaharianas”, Colóquio *Globalização, Pobreza e Migrações*. Faculdade de Economia da Universidade de Coimbra.
- Diario de Cadiz* (2008), “El PP exige al Gobierno que ‘deje de contar muertos’ y presione a los países emisores”, <http://www.diariodecadiz.es/article/espana/220412/pp/exige/gobierno/quotdeje/contar/muertosquot/y/presione/los/paises/emisores.html>. Accessed September 11, 2008.
- Discapnet (2008), “Inmigración. Cae cerca de un 20% de inmigrantes que llegaron en Cayuco a Canarias en 2008”, [http://www.discapnet.es/Discapnet/Castellano/Actualidad/Nueva\\_Hemeroteca/default.htm?pagina=2&day=2&month=9&year=2008](http://www.discapnet.es/Discapnet/Castellano/Actualidad/Nueva_Hemeroteca/default.htm?pagina=2&day=2&month=9&year=2008). Accessed September 11, 2008.
- Donoghue, Jill *et. al.* (2006), “Report on Frontex, the European Union's New Border Security Agency”. Dublin: Institute of Foreign Affairs.
- Duffield, Mark (2002) “Social Reconstruction and the Radicalization of Development: Aid as a Relation of Global Liberal Governance”, *Development and Change*, 33(5), 1049-1071.
- Duffield, Mark (2005) “Governing the Borderlands: Decoding the Power of Aid”, in Rorden Wilkinson (ed.), *The Global Governance Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 204-216.
- El Periódico de Cataluña* (2008), “Editorial: ‘Blindage de Fronteras’”, <http://medios.mugak.eu/noticias/noticia/162626>. Accessed September 11, 2008.
- Europa Press (2008a), “Nigerianos piden al Gobierno campañas de publicidad en África que muestren el riesgo de emigrar de forma ilegal a España”, <http://www.europapress.es/noticiaprint.aspx?ch=00313&cod=20080903190112>. Accessed September 6, 2008.
- Europa Press (2008b), “APDHA se concentra hoy en Sevilla para exigir responsabilidades al Gobierno por la muerte de inmigrantes en naufragio”, <http://www.europapress.es/noticiaprint.aspx?ch=00313&cod=20080905075143>. Accessed September 6, 2008.

- European Commission (2007a), "Proposal for a Council Directive on the Conditions of Entry and Residence of Third-country Nationals for the Purposes of Highly Qualified Employment". Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.
- European Commission (2007b), "Applying the Global Approach to Migration to the Eastern and South-Eastern Regions Neighbouring the European Union". Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.
- Fekete, Liz (2001), "The Emergence of Xenophobia", <http://www.irr.org.uk/2001/september/ak000001.html>. Accessed September 9, 2008.
- Geddes, Andrew (2005), "Europe's Border Relationship and International Migration Relations", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43(4), 787-806.
- González, Dani (2007), "Senegal se fija en Tenerife para copiar su desarrollo y frenar la salida de cayucos", <http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/288149/0/senegal/visita/tenerife/>. Accessed May 26, 2008.
- Hathaway, James C. (2006), "La falsa panacea de la disuasión costera". Madrid: FRIDE.
- Human Rights Watch (2006), "European Union. Managing Migration Means Potential EU Complicity in Neighboring States' Abuses of Migrants and Refugees", <http://www.hrw.org/background/eca/eu1006/eu1006web.pdf>. Accessed September 15, 2008.
- Huysmans, Jef, (2000), "The European Union and the Securitization of Migration", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5), 751-777.
- Ibrahim, Maggie (2005), "The Securitization of Migration: A Racial Discourse", *International Migration*, 43(5), 163-187.
- Junquera, Natalia (2008), "Detenidas 11.000 personas por traficar con inmigrantes entre Enero y Julio", [http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Detenidas/11000/personas/traficar/inmigrantes/enero/julio/elpepiesp/20080809elpepinac\\_8/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Detenidas/11000/personas/traficar/inmigrantes/enero/julio/elpepiesp/20080809elpepinac_8/Tes). Accessed September 6, 2008.
- Leach, Colin W. (2005), "Against the Notion of a 'New Racism'", *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 15, 432-445.
- Lutterbeck, Derek (2006), "Policing Migration in the Mediterranean", *Mediterranean Politics*, 11(1), 59-82.
- Ngoye, El Hadji A. (2007), "La Inmigración Subsahariana Hacia Canarias y La Península", [http://www.fundacionpedrogarciaabrera.com/index\\_memoria/activ\\_06/jj%20inmigracion06/libro/09%20elhadjamadou.pdf](http://www.fundacionpedrogarciaabrera.com/index_memoria/activ_06/jj%20inmigracion06/libro/09%20elhadjamadou.pdf). Accessed September 15, 2008.

- Ortega, Manuel M. (2007), “A Europa Face aos Novos Fluxos Migratórios”, Colóquio *Globalização, Pobreza e Migrações*. Faculdade de Economia da Universidade de Coimbra.
- Paris, Roland (2002), “International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice’”, *Review of International Studies*, 28, 637-656.
- PICUM (2007), “Espanha”, PICUM March 2007 Boletim, Brussels.
- Portela, Clara (2007), “Community Policies with a Security Agenda: The Worldview of Benita Ferrero-Waldner”. Florence: European University Institute.
- Sáiz-Pardo, M. (2008), “El Gobierno crea un Centro de Vigilancia Marítima de Costas contra la inmigración ilegal”, <http://www.eldiariomontanes.es/20080906/nacional/gobierno-crea-centro-vigilancia-20080906.html>. Accessed September 11, 2008.
- Sandell, Rickard (2006), “Saltaron o les empujaron? El aumento de la inmigración subsahariana”. Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano.
- Saxton, Alison (2006), “‘Racism Ain't nothing to Do with It’. Advocating Exclusion or Inclusion of Asylum Seekers in ‘Letters to the Editor’”, *Critical Psychology: International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 18, 34-55.
- Schuster, Liza (2003), “Common Sense or Racism? The Treatment of Asylum-Seekers in Europe”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37(3), 233-255.
- UNDP (1994), “Human Development Report”. New York: United Nations.
- van Dijk, Teun A. (2000), “New(s) Racism: A Discourse Analytical Approach”, in Simon Cottle(ed.), *Ethnic Minorities and the Media*. Buckingham, UK, and Philadelphia, USA: Open University Press, 33-49.
- Viéitez, Antonio G. (2007), “Inmigración en Canarias: Contexto, Tendencias y Retos”, [http://www.fundacionpedrogarciacabrera.com/index\\_memoria/activ\\_06/jj%20inmigracion06/libro/06%20antoniogonzalez.pdf](http://www.fundacionpedrogarciacabrera.com/index_memoria/activ_06/jj%20inmigracion06/libro/06%20antoniogonzalez.pdf). Accessed September 15, 2008.
- Zielonka, Jan (2001), “How New Enlarged Borders will Reshape the European Union”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39(3), 507-536.