

Women who cross borders – black magic?

*A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Norwegian newspaper coverage
of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway*

Masterthesis in Sociology
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Chapter 1. “New hookers in town”

Mass sale of bodies in Oslo’s streets was not so obvious before. Dozens of African women are now marketing their bodies, tighter than trolleys at a supermarket. They look like everything else than ragged drugged whores.¹

Introduction

In some of Norway’s biggest cities; Oslo, Bergen and Stavanger there has been reported an increased number of foreign women in prostitution (Pro Senteret 2006²). The increase of foreign women in prostitution has led to changes within the local prostitution scene, due to the fact that women who support their drug abuse by prostitution has left the market or become less visible.³ It has also led to changes in the public discussion of prostitution. The media repeatedly describe the phenomenon by using words such as “explosions”, “invasions” and “floods” of “foreign prostitutes” or “foreign whores” who are controlled by “foreign criminals” and mafia-like organisations, something which escalated into a “whore-war”. It has especially been the Nigerian group of women who have received massive media attention, as media could report an increase from two Nigerian women in 2003, to approximately four hundred by 2006. Nigerian women were described as more visible, not only because of their ethnicity, but also because they behaved different than other groups of women. The public outcry especially escalated when the prostitution scene became an increasingly visible element in Oslo’s parade street Karl Johan. Nigerian women in prostitution, were in the public eye presented, in every way possible, as being a “matter out of place” (Douglas 1996), and as doing the wrong things at the wrong places.

In the public debate, many have argued that the attention on the changes in prostitution has altered how we think and talk about prostitution. Anders Heger (2006) asked when it became

¹ *Dagbladet*- 30.10.2004 All material from the Norwegian newspaper coverage in this thesis is my translation

² *Pro Senteret* has existed since 1983 and is a governmental funded organization with a budget of approximately nine million in addition to contributions and gifts. Pro Senteret performs outreach work among women in prostitution, and is also a national centre for knowledge and informational sources on prostitution. The leader of the centre Liv Jessen is a prominent figure on the public debates on prostitution in Norway. In public discussions the centre is often attacked by abolitionist and radical feminist and criticized for “normalizing” prostitution and describing it in terms of a profession. For further information on the centre se <http://www.prosentret.no/>

³ It is not irrelevant whether one uses the words ‘prostitute’, ‘whore’ or ‘women in prostitution’, as these have different implications; morally, socially and politically (Pheterson 1996). I will some places in my text refer to ‘prostitutes’ as a category, when I refer to the group as a target for various policies and control regulations. The word ‘whore’ is in most contexts considered abusive and degrading.

tolerable to use the term “whore” when one talks about women in prostitution. He therefore notes that “the answer is as depressing as it is obvious and shameful; when they changed colour” (Heger 2006 *my translation*). In my material Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway was on one hand, described as helpless victims of cynical profiteers, superstition and deprivation in Nigeria, and at another the women are presented as “whores” who constitute a threat to the Norwegian ‘borders’ – territorial, as well as the social and morally lines of tolerance and decency.

This study focuses on how the media stage reproduces particular images of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. This thesis examines newspaper coverage of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway in three national Norwegian newspapers which are read by a substantial number of Norwegians; *Dagbladet*, *Aftenposten* and *Verdens Gang (VG)* between 2004 and 2006. The structuring question of my inquiry is; how are Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway presented in Norwegian newspaper coverage? And how do different discourses on transnational prostitution realize, as well as restrain, different social presentations in newspaper coverage in a Norwegian and European context.⁴

“A flood of African prostitutes to Oslo”

The presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway first appeared as a news event of public interest at the end of summer 2004. On the front page of *Aftenposten* a lead-in stated: “A flood of African prostitutes to Oslo”.⁵



Inside the newspaper on the same day there was printed a more exhaustive report. Under the headline “A flood of Africans are selling sex”, one could read that forty Nigerian women

⁴ When I use the term ‘transnational prostitution’, I use it to be able to draw an analytical distinction between the phenomena ‘prostitution’ and ‘cross-border prostitution’ on one hand, and ‘trafficking in persons’ at the other. In Norway, until recently, prostitution between consenting adults has not defined as a criminal act under the Norwegian penalty code. However the purchase of sexual services from minors, the organizing and profiting of others prostitution, forced prostitution and the trafficking in persons is criminalized under the Norwegian Penalty Code (*Straffeloven av 22. mai.1902 nr 10*. Chapter 19 and Chapter 21). In spring 2007, MPs in power agreed to criminalize the purchase of sexual services, however this new law will not be effective before 2008.

⁵ *Aftenposten Morgen* 01.09.2004

had been registered in contact with *Pro Senteret*. These women were presented as having experienced violence, threats of violence, as well as having been exposed to black magic and voodoo. According to the article, these women came to Norway due to economical circumstances and stricter regulation and prostitution policies in Europe (Spain Italy and France, where most of them possess legal papers to stay). The following day the same newspaper printed a second, longer news text which also addressed the issue of changes within the prostitution scene in Norway, and Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, however in a more implicit way. The most relevant information provided in this text was focalized as follows; There was competition for customers at the Norwegian prostitution market, and the Nigerian women in prostitution were described as desperate and as willing to undercut competition by charging low prices for their sexual services. Several news items were also reporting a hardening competition and disruption in the prostitution market, and stated that the women were now searching for areas outside the traditional scenes in order to attract customers.

By November 2004, all three newspapers reported that two male owners of a hostel and their three employees had been charged for profiting on other's prostitution according to the so-called "pimping act" (§ 202 of the Penalty Code *Straffeloven*).⁶ Twenty-five Nigerian women living at this hostel would be deported from Norway within 48 hours for the lack of legal papers. Two of these had applied for asylum. Norwegian police were mainly portrayed as incompetent in handling human smuggling and trafficking issues. Within a few days after the breakdown *Dagbladet* printed the first letter from the editor in which he addressed the breakdown and criticized the authorities for the deportation of the Nigerian trafficking victims, and for revealing their lack of will to fight against what was framed as slavery.⁷ By December 2004 media's attention became increasingly focused on presenting events as a potential for public discomfort, danger and harm – which actually, as well as potentially might occur.

Thereby, only within the first four months of newspaper coverage of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution, the main thematical structures of newspaper storylines had already been played out – the stage was set and most of its characters were allocated with their particular situation for each given newspaper storyline.

⁶ It should be mentioned that preceding the breakdown, this particular hostel had been given extensive media attention through a TV documentary and in TV news.

⁷ *Dagbladet*- 08.11.2004

Research on media discourses on transnational prostitution in Norway

Nigerian women are one of the many groups of women who have received extensive attention by the Norwegian media, for their prostitution involvement.⁸ At the beginning of the 1990s Norwegian media gave extensive press coverage on the issue of indoor prostitution and the rise of prostitution parlours in Norway's capital, Oslo (see e.g. Skilbrei 2001). At the end of the 1990s, extensive national media attention was also given the so-called "Finnmark prostitution", in the more northern and rural parts of Norway.

In the article "From Russia with love?" Dag Stenvoll (2002) analyses national newspaper-coverage of the cross-border contact between the Norwegian men and the Russian women in the period 1990-2000. Stenvoll's analysis identifies five reoccurring themes, that form the media discourse, where four of these reflect the fear of the "the other", as an outside threat. The first discourse identified in Stenvoll's analysis is the fear of organized crime. In this thematization cross-border contacts between Russian women and Norwegian men are presented as organized by criminals and Mafia-like organizations, which were linguistically described in terms of an invasion from Eastern Europe. Secondly, Stenvoll identifies a theme which expressed the fear of contagious diseases and a general worry about public health, as a result of open borders. Through the 1990's the fear of tuberculosis, as well as sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV, sat in connection to the open borders to the East. However, what was at risk was not merely presented as a matter of public physical health, but also presented as a fear of the moral, as well as the social contamination of the local communities. Through these fears of social and moral break-down, cross-border prostitution and the Russian women were placed at the heart of local problematizations of everyday experience and concerns. Fourthly, prostitution was problematized as a source of stigmatization of other Russian women and their children, having settled in Norway. Here the the reoccurring problem-solution complex were that it was not the stigmatizers who were seen as the problem, but rather "some" Russian women – the prostitutes. The rural cross-border prostitution was often explained as a response to the discrepancy in the local sexual economy, as the Northern parts of Norway experienced drainage of young women to bigger cities, while young men more often stayed. On the other hand, prostitution was also seen as connected to

⁸ There are also three available research reports on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. One is on processes of migration, written by Jørgen Carling (2005), the two other are ethnographic studies and interviews (Skilbrei, Tveit and Brunovskis 2006, Skilbrei and Tveit 2007). All of these are reports carried out for the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police. I will not give a thorough description of these reports here, as they do not present themselves as immediately relevant for my research question.

well-established stereotypes of men being of double standards, and perpetrating on family and wife. However, also here it was the Russian women, who were seen as the outside threat to the social established order.

I share with Stenvoll a view of the social world; that it is through our language we construct and reconstruct our surroundings and how we interpret and understand certain social phenomena. Therefore, how we think and talk about certain issues, such as how we problematize transnational prostitution, will also structure our ability to imagine solutions and measures to accommodate them, as well as the ability to legitimize these.

My project is conducted within the theoretical and empirical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Hence I place my analysis within a tradition where the meanings of words and their sequence in texts are seen as discursive objects of struggle and social conflict. Where, a multiplicity of meanings can be attached to the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. Discourse and meaning is embedded in history and in our institutions, identities and knowledge. These might be different and change over time – in concrete situations they may however appear as relatively fixed (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:14). My thesis aims at exploring how different sets of structuring problematizations in media, construct and reconstruct different sets of social representations of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, what I in this thesis, refer to as narrative discourses.

Organizing structure of the master thesis

Chapter two will introduce the theoretical framework of the analysis, by presenting the relevant literature chosen from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). More specifically, I will map out some of the most relevant insights provided by Norman Fairclough and propose his framework for analysing media discourse. In chapter three I will aim to show the relationship between my theoretical framework and my methodological choices, as well as present my data for analysis. I will also use chapter three to show more specifically how I developed three analytical categories.

In chapters four, five and six, I surge into the three analytical chapters describing and analysing them as narrative discourses. Chapter four is named the ‘the narrative discourse of the market squeeze’ and describes media texts which address the structural changes within the

Norwegian prostitution market, and the competition between different groups of women. The major concern is directed towards the potential harm created by increased competition among women in prostitution. In chapter five, I describe texts which I have placed under the category of ‘the narrative discourse of the public decency’, which are texts addressing the wider social consequences and the general social concern and conflict between women in prostitution and the general public. In chapter six, I describe my third and last category of texts. Here, media texts explicitly focus on Nigerian women in prostitution as victims of crime and asymmetrical relationships, between men and women, and between rich countries (Norway) and poor countries (Nigeria). The various problematizations of crime, law- and order, stigma and health risks connected to prostitution will be discussed. Thematizations of transnational prostitution as a ‘poverty problem’ and a ‘prosperity problem’ found in the analysis, are discussed in the light of the prevailing discourses on female migration, border control, and refusal of female agency in the ‘narratives of victimhood’.

In chapter seven, I will, by having identified these three layers of thematic structures of newspaper coverage, be able to sum up some main structures visible in my material and discuss these as realizing specific images of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, and discuss this in light of prevailing discourses on Transnational Prostitution in Norway. Important aspects in the analysis are how sexual transaction, transnational prostitution and trafficking are represented as socio-political problems on different social arenas. At a symbolic level, Norwegian newspaper coverage on the phenomenon of transnational prostitution functions to draw moral, social, cultural and ethno-sexual distinctions between “us” and “the other”.

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter I will present the theoretical framework in which my thesis has been conducted, namely Critical Discourses Analysis (CDA) and the insights on how to analyze media discourse and media texts, provided by Norman Fairclough. This means that the discussion in this chapter is constructed to illustrate and show the theoretical background for my own analytical and methodological choices used in this thesis, and it will therefore not include an exhaustive presentation of CDA in general, or present other approaches to the study of discourse.⁹

Critical Discourse Analysis

Norman Fairclough is in good company when it comes to bringing interdisciplinary perspectives, bearing upon media discourse. A number of researchers within the CDA school of thought have focused their attention to the ways media discourse constructs and perpetuates particular images of groups, which the hegemonic ideology constructs as marginalized or deviant in some respect (Schiffrin and Hamilton 2001). As the name Critical Discourse Analyst indicates, practitioners share the cause and belief to produce research which would contribute to the rectification of injustice and inequality in society (Jørgensen and Philips 2002: 77).¹⁰ Crossing the disciplinary boundaries between media studies, linguistics, semiotics, and the social sciences, these studies have dissected the numerous stereotyped portrayals of racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities produced by the mass media outlets (Schiffrin and Hamilton 2001).

⁹ For further information on alternative approaches see for instance Jørgensen and Philips (2002). Here the field of the discourse analysis is divided into three main directions. 1) 'Discourse theory', which is most influential in the social science, the structure-centered research. Discourse theory representatives are mainly pointed out by Jørgensen and Philips in the work of Foucault, as well as in the writings of Laclau and Mouffe. 2) 'Critical discourse analysis' is represented in the writings of Fairclough and has a dialectical approach, and is to be found in the linguistic and social sciences. 3) 'Discourse psychology' is known to be agency-centred, and has been especially influential in the social psychology, presented in the reference to work by Potter and Wetherell.

¹⁰ Chouliaraki and Fairclough identifies CDA as an explanatory critique, by importing Roy Bhaskar's concept that social research should aim to identify problems, in order to solve such identified inconsistencies or problems (Bhaskar 1986 in Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:33). Researchers can do this either by articulating unmet needs or by identifying "misrepresentation". However other scholars might object to this as it might be interpreted as privileging scientific knowledge to other types of knowledge and lacking to recognizing the discursive aspects of one's own interpretations (Jørgensen and Philips 2002: 77) - researchers own confinement within an order of discourse e.g. the order of the everyday discourse, or the order of the university discourse.

Jørgensen and Phillips have identified five common features among the practitioners of the critical discourse analytical approach, and which are worth mentioning here (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 60-64).

- 1) Social and cultural processes and structures have a partial non discursive character. This means that some social phenomena have a non-linguistic discursive character, at the same time as social practices constitute social change and cultural reproduction in a broader sense.
- 2) Discourses are both constructive and constitutive in so far as they reflect structural processes, at the same time as they contribute to the shaping of them. Discourses in this sense are in a dialectical relationship to other social dimensions.
- 3) Language should be empirically analyzed within its social context.
- 4) Discourses function ideologically, and social practices contribute to, and shape the distribution and unequal power relationships between different social groups.
- 5) Critical research is conducted through acknowledging that one, as a social scientist, can not escape being part of the very object one studies, and that research carries political implications.

CDA and gender

In relation to the main attempts of the CDA-work, to explicitly focus upon social domination and social inequality, the vast field within the growing discourse research is that of gender (Van Dijk 2001). Enactment and perpetuation of male dominance and female resistance, has been a prominent theme for the scholars of CDA. The general agreement within the CDA, and the general field of research conducted on gender and discourse, shows that, despite the significant changes in women's condition in the last decades, discursive gender domination persists until this day, although it may have taken more subtle and indirect forms. Kendall and Tannen (2001) have reviewed the historical development of the research on discourse and gender, and present the most widely accepted aspects, which include an acknowledgement of the socially constructed nature of gender, and the relationship between gender and discourse – serving as discursive resources as well as constraints.¹¹

¹¹ These aspects seem to be shared amongst the scholars of contemporary feminism within the CDA. They do, however, debate, along the same tracks as the general contemporary feminism and gender research, on issues of gender 'duality' and gender 'performativity'. These differences can be explained in varying perceptions and conceptualizations of the "degree" of social constructivism, which guides the research questions asked within the research field of feminism, gender and the question of human sexuality (Järvinen 1996).

CDA and ethnicity

Although prominent, and finding, much like feminism, its roots in oppositional social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the study of discursive reproductive and constitutive role of ethnic and racial inequality is not as extensive as the research on gender inequality within the CDA (Van Dijk 2001). The emerging field has traditionally focused on representations in the mass media, literature and film. Such studies have showed, across the different discourse types, genres, media- and national boundaries, that the Western images of “the other” continue a century-old tradition, fluctuating between the emphasis on the exotic difference, and the supremacist derogation (Van Dijk 2001). “The others” are predominantly portrayed in terms of; Ideas of socio-cultural differences, derivation from the dominant set of norms and values, and presenting the “other” as a violent and disruptive threat (ibid).

CDA practitioners have critically challenged the dominant images of the negative socio-cultural imaging and the political oppression and exclusion of marginalized groups, and showed how group based images of identities, essentially are conditioned by socio-economic, socio-cultural and historical discursive constraints (Van Dijk 1991, 1993, 2001). The dominant positive, self-presentation, will generally define an “in-group” along the dimensions of difference, and “the others” as deviating from “our” material and symbolic assets and values- territory, nationality, family structure and traditions, housing, space, language, welfare, moral and so on. Teun Van Dijk argues that to study racism with the theoretical framework, of the Critical Discourse Analytical approach to the complex phenomenon of racism, is to treat racism as both social practice and as ideology, which is manifested discursively.

Van Dijk argues that the contemporary conceptualization of racism in media is acted out as a socially constructed notion that does not supersede the historical ideology and the racial categorization based on ideologies of racial superiority. Rather, what we see today is a socio-cultural and moral evaluation which expresses itself in other forms. The historic ideology of racism continues to be expressed in contemporary societies. Expressions of power and domination is legitimated through moral, cultural or technological evaluations and the ideas of the superiority of the Western, white, civilization when compared to “the others” (Van Dijk 1991, 1993).

Racializing sexuality and sexualizing race

Throughout human history racial, ethnic, gender- as well as national groups, have been the objects of ideas of natural or biological differences and hierarchies, and categorized or classified, as belonging to specific social groups with specific characteristics. Nigerian women as a categorical unit for this analysis, are represented as participators in transnational prostitution, and thereby popularly categorised as ‘prostitutes’, ‘trafficking victims’ or as ‘sex workers’.¹² The meanings attached to classifications of this nature are discursively constructed, as well as discursively understood. For instance, prostitutes have throughout history been portrayed belonging to different categories of women, inhibiting specific kinds of sexual defect or psychological deviance, according to their social, legal and ethnic status (Pederson 1996). The character ‘the prostitute’ does therefore not only refer to specific individuals, such as a named person (e.g. Mrs Smith), but characterizes social actors specifically or generically – for instance ‘the prostitute’ might refer to a specific person, while ‘prostitutes’ refers to a general classification. The general classification ‘prostitutes’ has popularly been constituted through constructing ideas of sexual categories where some women are conceived as being more (or less) sexually available than others. Gail Pheterson (1996) argues that the category has a stigma attached to it, known as the “whore-stigma”. In sexual politics, the prostitute is merely a prototype of an “unchaste” woman. By categorizing some women as “whores”, or as “unchaste”, distinctions between the decent, the pure, the “chaste” women serve to discipline the female sexual conduct in general, and the female range of possible actions. In other words, the stigma attached to the category ‘whore’ serves to affect sexual conduct and constructions of selves, gender roles and identities in a broad sense.

Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as a classification, can be understood as referring to what one calls a ‘specific’ group, while all ‘prostitutes’ refer to the class of prostitutes in general (e.g. “all prostitutes are victims”). Nigerian women as a female, ethnic classification of women, within the Norwegian prostitution market, is a specific category with specific connotations attached. According to Joane Nagel (2003), contemporary ethno-sexual frontiers in the ‘porn-tropes’ have historical roots descending back to the Colonial era. In Western sexual imagery blackness has often been connected to a primitive as well as abnormal sexuality, which was often described in sensationalistic, romanticized, and mystified terms.

¹² The term ‘sex-workers’ is seen as politically inappropriate in a Norwegian context, as prostitution is predominantly not considered as work.

Western Colonialism and exploitation were supported by an ideological framework consisting of supremacist and racist ideas of race, gender and sexuality. “No territory, however, was more likely to be seen as barren of civilisation and empty of civilized people than the ‘dark continent’ of Africa” (Nagel 2003: 91). The European imagery of Africa as a site for sensuality as well as primitive sexual desires became a fundamental component of the black/white racial boundaries. These frontiers produce and reproduce ideas of race, gender and class-structure - and subsequently social inequalities (ibid: 126). The intimate intersections within this real and symbolic space have the capacity to be both attracting and repelling. Ethno-sexual frontiers of desires and disgust, longing and loathing are formed within the presence of structural ideologies of race, gender and class.

Racial and sexual discourses on “porn-tropes” in prostitution are still to be found in the contemporary Scandinavian prostitution market, where black women are seen as having a specific kind of uninhibited, as well as potentially threatening sexuality (Spanger 2001, 2002). Marlene Spanger argues that black women in prostitution in Denmark are able to counter-act stereotypes when confronted with prospective customers, as they also offer a useful sexual “anonymous” identity (2001:57). Similarly, Maibrit Gamborg Holm found that Nigerian women in prostitution in Denmark would be able to use sexual classifications and stereotypes attached to their ethnicity and skin colour, as a way of gaining a comparative advantage in the meeting with customers. This gave them economic leverage; however, this stereotype was also experienced as a form of sexual/social control. Some Nigerian women had experienced that customers expected them to act in specific ways, in order to live up to the images and expectations of aggressiveness and promiscuity, and would be penalized for sexual inhibition. Thus, by the same token, customers would racialize blackness and penalize sexual aggressiveness, for instance by referring to them as “pathetic black monkeys” (Holm 2006:104). Not only did being ethnically marked in this way confine the Nigerian women in prostitution to an arbitrary relation to the discourses of what constituted “ethnic-white”, “feminine” or “proper” behaviour in the relationship to their customers, it also placed them at odds with the dominant discourses on sexuality in the society in general. The Nigerian women’s position within the prostitution market was dependent on them showing sexual aggressiveness, at the same time as this “aggressiveness” did not go unnoticed by actors outside the prostitution scene. For instance, this group was more likely to be reported by neighbours, as well as being very visible to the police. This meant that they became more vulnerable to be reported to the immigration authorities, and expelled (Holm 2006).

Media and ideology

Looking at media texts can be a central activity in a study of the discursive construction of conventional problematizations of social phenomena. In contrast to seeing media texts as neutral mediators of social events for public interest, one can from a general sociological perspective of media through newspaper texts, to put it simply, as a result of a social process. McNair (1998) argues that the media possesses an ideological force in a society which serves to reconstitute and reflect the hegemonic structures. He claims that “journalism, as an authored narrative, is at the same time an ideological force, communicating not just ‘the facts’ but also a way of understanding and making sense of the fact” (McNair 1998:7). The Norwegian media researcher Sigurd Allern argues similarly, and concludes that as a consequence of the news media’s reliance on informational sources, media favours the economical, political and cultural elite, and as a result conceals the voices of others (Allern 1997:251).

Text production can also be seen as a discursive effect as well as construction of discursive practices. As such, looking at newspaper coverage as part of what McNair calls an ‘ideological force’ does not exclude seeing texts in relation to several factors conditioning the journalistic mode, such as editorial power, production resources and so on (Van Dijk 1988, 1991, 1993). Therefore, one should be careful observing texts as merely direct effects of the social elites’ attitudes. Rather, one can see them as created within an interpretative community of journalists and editors, or influenced by a specific discourse community, although still situated within the same society and the same hegemonic structures described by Allern (1996, 1997). However, several media scholars will also argue that media as a public institution, develops their own premises and centralizes the public debate and public opinion around their own terms (Østerud et al. 2003:29). Østerud argues that Norwegian media not only have the power to place public issues on the agenda, but also define the situation by giving authoritative legitimacy to whom the expertise belongs to. Therefore these persons are seen as the providers of valuable information, and are therefore also influential in the actual creation of the readers public agenda.

In the version of CDA presented by Jørgensen and Phillips, ideological effects are analyzed as the products of discursive practices aimed at the reproduction of existing social conditions (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999: 86-88). However, one thing which separates the members of

these different camps, is the relative importance of ideological factors in the formation of the social discourse.¹³ Van Dijk (1993) argues that ethnic dominance is an ideology which, in principle, benefits all dominant ethnic groups, and thereby is socially accepted by the majority, while the media first and foremost functions as mirroring the social elite's attitudes towards certain social issues, rather than social facts. Marginalized groups or marginalized opinions might have access to the media as a certain kind of discourse (or at a certain "point" of discourse), but might also find their voices drowning in the overwhelming majority, framing certain issues as these have been framed throughout history, in certain distinctive ways, which might present themselves, as well as certain hegemonic attitudes, as rigid and stable (Van Dijk 1996). According to Fairclough's account of ideology, particular ideological constellations directly affect discursive structures (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). These structures are influenced most strongly by what some call 'hegemonic ideologies', ideologies which have acquired the received status of conventional wisdom for entire social formations and which are maintained through the exercise of various forms of power (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999: 86-88).

Although Fairclough as well as Van Dijk are both identified with the CDA, and both analysts direct their attention to the linguistic properties of discursive production, they approach the analysis of media texts from markedly different angles. Van Dijk's systemic approach emphasises a 'top-down' relationship, even though he sees the micro-macro relations as both descending and ascending. Van Dijk's studies are known for their emphasis on everyday routines of textual production – e.g. how racist stereotypes are inscribed in the media texts written by "white" journalists, and how the criteria of newsworthiness are established in newspapers - as well as the everyday practices of textual consumption (Van Dijk 1988, 1991, 1993). However Fairclough's studies present themselves as more attentive to the ways in which social relationships and identities emerge in, and through discourse. Fairclough's model highlights the conflictual character of the meaning-making activities associated with both the production and the reception of media discourse (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:103-104). I will however pay most attention to Norman Fairclough, since he represents the most fruitful way of analyzing media discourse for my project.

¹³ There are several differences between, for instance the work of Wodak, Van Dijk and Fairclough, which can be understood as different perspectives on the view of discursive power (Chilton and Wodak 2005, Jørgensen and Phillips 1999: 103,4)

Media discourse

In 'Media discourse' Fairclough (1995) examines concrete media discourses, and emphasizes the importance of empirical foundation in concrete studies, and includes the level 'social practice' in his framework for the analysis of communicative events. Fairclough makes an analytical distinction between the discourse seen as a vehicle of representation, the so-called order of discourse, and the discourse viewed as a means of enacting social relations and social interaction, the so-called communicative level of discourse. The first dimension is the dimension of semantics, whereas the second dimension is the dimension of concrete communication viewed as a species of social interaction. Fairclough also makes the tripartite distinction between the modes of analysis which a researcher can employ when seeking to tear apart a specific piece of media discourse. In Fairclough's three-dimensional model:

The aim is to map three separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of socio-cultural practice (Fairclough 1995: 2).

This reflects three different concepts of the discourse, and just as a researcher must examine the semantics of the discourse, the researcher must also scrutinize over the practices surrounding the production and consumption of the discourse, and over the discursive act approached as an event occurring within a socially situated context.

A study of communicative events has to take all the dimensions of text production and consumption into consideration. An analysis of a text is at one level about text analysis, semiotics and linguistics and how these are part of the discursive-constructive process, for instance in the case of genres. At another level, we see how an author draws on pre-existing discourses and genres in order to create a text, and how these existing discourses and genres at the same time enable the consumption of a text by a receiver. At a third level, where Fairclough plunges into his theories of socio-cultural practices, one can, as a researcher choose different levels of abstraction, and choose one's interpretational perspective from among various available perspectives. (see Fairclough 1995, Jørgensen and Philips 2002: 66-71)

Fairclough recommends that the analyst begins with the analysis of the social practice within which the discourse is being produced and received. The analyst should then proceed to explore the two stages of the proper discursive analysis: the structuralist stage, where the

object of analysis is the discourse itself, and the contextual stage, where the object is the relationship between the discourse and the cultural, institutional, and social embedding. Thus, the CDA-analysis resists the temptation to treat textual and discursive products as self-contained semiotic structures without any relation to the concrete social practices and power structures. But at the same time, CDA-analysis supplies analytical tools necessary for a thorough analysis of what one could call the production's 'semiotic infrastructure'.

Fairclough's model can be criticized for suffering from an unclear dialectical distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive elements of the social practise. At the same time, the model will propose a challenging and ambitious research effort in order to scrutinize all the three levels in any satisfactory way. In my analysis I have been inspired by Faiclough's insights, but have limited my research due to pragmatic considerations. For now, I will focus on the first layer of discourse – text.

Discursive structure and meaning

The study of the discursive structure traditionally commences with the study of small-scale semantic units and their relationships to each other. Fairclough, for example, specifies six sentence-level syntactic relations (causal, conditional, temporal, elaborative, additive, and contrastive) which are typically used in the kind of texts which appear in the media discourse, namely texts which attempt to communicate something about "the real world" to the reader. These syntactic structures serve as the building blocks of the higher-level semantic structures inscribed in larger units of discourse, such as articles and papers (Fairclough 2003: 91-4). In my corpus of texts, the most prominent of these relations is the 'problem-solution' complex visible in expository and explanatory writings, visible for instance in newspaper-coverage or government policy propositions. But the mapping of the structural properties of a piece of text is only the first step in any analysis of the text's semantic dimension. What is needed to enrich the analysis is a thorough mapping of the thematic dimension (Fairclough 2003: 129). This is where one finds thematic ensembles as signified by lexical strings (word combinations) and metaphorical constructions. Identifying semantic macrostructures can be understood as identifying discourse topics, which from an interpretative perspective is the word for the underlying ideas that structure the sequences of sentences. While analyzing the thematic dimension of textual production involves mapping of lexical and metaphorical patterns.

But it is at the representational level that the text takes shape as a recognizable and meaningful artifact. Thus, I concentrate on the representational operations which are prominent in various texts. Fairclough identifies two classes of such representational operations. On the one hand there are those operations which produce representations of 'process' and on the other hand there are those operations which create representations of 'actors' (Fairclough 2003: 140-1). The primary categories of the process are 'causation-action' (relationship between the actors or objects which influence one another), 'mentation' (the relation between a thinker and the object of thought), and 'attribution' (relations between a carrier and an attribute).

The majority of those scholars who employ CDA approaches, have concerned themselves with the 'causation-action' relation, because this relation is found in almost all discursive productions. The causation-action relation entails two types of actors: the passivated 'patient', or object of the action and the activated 'agent', or subject of the action. Passivated actors have things done to them while the activated actors do things to other social actors. Thus, while mentation relations require thinkers and attribution relations necessitate carriers, it is the agent/patient couplet which is the necessary constituent of the causation-action relationships.

Media texts are typically dominated by causation-action relationships. It is for this reason that CDA-inspired examinations of media texts typically focus on the types of patient and agent emerging from the texts' most salient representations. The causation-action relationships are the most common ones in this thesis' textual corpus, hence also the texts involving social actors rather than objects or non-social actors, and they refer to one or more of the various types of social actors which have been distinguished by the social analysts such as Brubaker (1996). At one end of the spectrum we find actors who are both collective and abstract. The primary examples of these actors are institutions such as for instance the 'underground economy'. At the other end of the spectrum we find concrete individuals – individuated social actors inhabiting actual social settings. These actors can be personalized or objectified and impersonalized, but they remain categorically distinct from the abstract actors. Between these two extremes we find actors who are both collective and concrete. These actors can be institutional – i.e. the 'Norwegian government', - corporate units (i.e. interest-based groups), or what Brubaker (1996) calls 'categorical units' (i.e. ethnic groups).

Social actors may occupy different positions along the dimensions of oneness and abstractness (Van Leeuwen 1996, Fairclough 2003: 83-5). In relation to this I will identify media representations which can be categorized in any specific way and compare reoccurring images from my analysis. More specifically, I resorted to some of the methodological tools provided by Fairclough (2003). This means that I am particularly interested in considering the textual performance and linguistic coding of the processes of inclusion and exclusion. I mainly investigate in which ways certain social actors are represented and positioned in relation to the reoccurring themes and focal points of narration in the texts. Analyzing a corpus of media texts as narratives will be discussed further in chapter three.

How to identify discourses in media texts?

Fairclough (2003: 129-33) argues that when identifying discourses in texts, we can either identify the representations of particular ‘themes’, meaning particular parts of the world, or identify particular angles or points of view where these are represented. In my analysis, I will focus on the first of these two; however, I will include a short summary in chapter seven on which actors who are presented within the authoritative informative role in the different perspectives. When focusing on identifying themes, one can, for instance, uncover how the theme of public order or the theme of female migration is represented in my material. Fairclough argues that the most obvious way to distinguish different discourses is by distinguishing different features of vocabulary (2003: 129) – for instance how the terms ‘prostitute’, ‘trafficking victim’ and ‘sex workers’ mark distinct different understandings of the phenomenon Transnational Prostitution and Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. However, Fairclough points out that instead of just focusing on how words are used differently for the same phenomena, it is more productive to see how different discourses, structure the world differently – thereby the focus of attention should be on the semantic relationship between words.

I will for instance look at, as earlier explained, representational operations and how structure and meaning is, at one level, a part of processes of active/passive role-allocation in the text, and how processes of exclusion and inclusion of different actors, can be traced in texts. At another level, I will look at how vocabulary, such as for instance the one related to the theme of international crime, might be described in same ways, but may have different meanings in a discourse, dependent on which domain of the social life one is particularly interested in.

Thereby, I must look for collocations, patterns of co-occurrence of words in texts in relation to other identified themes, preceding or following the word which is in focus.

Discourses on oppositional categories are also acted out through linguistic devices other than categories and stereotypes – for instance, through the use of metaphors, hyperboles and textual exaggerations (known as typical in tabloid media texts). Metaphors are words which generally refer to parts of the world which are not directly transferable to the one in focus: for instance, if one describes prostitution through the metaphor of military or bio-chemical processes, such as ‘an explosion’ we may call it an operation of ‘lexical metaphors’ (Fairclough 2003: 131). Strictly speaking, metaphor is anything which describes something through something else. For example; if you say ‘a flower’ instead of ‘love’, or ‘an eagle’ instead of a certain man. I will also look at how social actors and events are textually acted out as what one may call ‘grammatical metaphors’, and described as ‘things’, or through ‘objectification’ and ‘nominalizations’ of characters and events. I will also look for representation of what Fairclough calls ‘space –times’, meaning how social actors and events are located in space and time, for instance how the ‘local’ relate to the ‘global’ (Ibid: 153-4).

In this study ‘problematization’ is not only used as a word to describe an activity performed by sociologists when questioning what others take for granted, but also to refer to how media texts question some aspects of the social world and not only explicitly present what Fairclough describes as ‘existential assumptions’, which is often the case, but also present ‘propositional assumptions’: assumptions of what is, or can be, or will be the case - and the ‘value assumptions’: assumptions about what is good or desirable (Fairclough 2003:17,58-9,81-3). In my study I will examine how media comes into questioning some aspects of the social world that incorporates the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. Potential categories of assumptions and presuppositions can be seen as tied to particular discourses and variable between discourses.

As a final word in this chapter, I will use the opportunity to express awareness that the foundation of social constructivist approaches lies in the acknowledgement of the impossibility of seeing the object of the study, isolated from the discourse that shaped our understanding of it. As a researcher of social life, I also need to acknowledge that I am inevitably part of the society I study. Since my analysis is inspired by the Critical Discourse

Analytical theory I therefore also acknowledge that my analysis, might carry assumptions and underlying applications which I myself might not be aware of. I also acknowledge that my final conclusions are among many possible interpretations and analysis of the same data. Furthermore, these perspectives on social life are critical to the idea of theory on the one side, and the methods on the other, and rather propose that theoretical assumptions carry methodological implications for research. In the following chapter, I will give a more specific account of methodological framework I have conducted my analysis within. This means that I will sketch out the most relevant methodological and theoretical considerations I have reflected upon and had in mind while conducting my research and analysis. I will also discuss more specifically how I developed three analytical categories of thematic structures in the newspaper coverage of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, what I refer to as three narrative discourses.

Chapter 3. Method and analytical process

There are no recipes on how to do discourse analysis. Each analyst has to struggle with how to put a discourse analytic research strategy into practice in every single empirical study (Hagelund 2003: 265-266).

I have approached my research and media analysis on a well-established and broad approach of the Critical Discourse Analysis. I have primarily relied on Norman Faircloughs advice when working with texts, and coded my material according to the central themes which I identified (1995, 2003). In the following chapter I will introduce my data and methodological considerations, before I give an introduction to my analytical considerations and analytical chapters.

Method and Data

Jørgensen and Philips argue that “It is easier to show how dynamic discursive practices take part in constituting and changing the social world when analysing the reproduction and transformation of discourses across a range of texts” (2002:89). Hence, the analysis draw on a larger corpus of text, using individual text items in order to illustrate the discursive tendencies, since in this way, the analysis become less vulnerable to the “textual arbitrary chance” in the process of constructing my analysis.

My collected data for analysis consists of 247 texts from three national newspapers *Verdens Gang (VG)*, *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten –Morgen* and *Aften* edition.¹⁴ I chose to study three national mainstream newspapers, VG, Dagbladet and Aftenposten, as sites of national discourse. All three newspapers are printed in Oslo, but are distributed nationally. Together these newspapers are read by a substantial part of the Norwegian population, and address issues seen as of general national interest. The three newspapers are printed in tabloid format, though they vary as to their quality/tabloid content. Although there are several differences between these newspapers, this is not of the main concern of my analysis, and I chose to see them all as politically representing the mainstream opinions, whether the right, or the left - of the center.

¹⁴ ‘Morgen’ means morning edition, and is distributed nationally and ‘Aften’ means evening edition, and is primarily distributed locally in the Oslo area.

The text corpus include several textual genres. Text production and consumption is conditioned by the available genres and discursive practices (Fairclough 1995). Which genre a text belongs to will tell us something about which patterns of production it is conditioned by and which expectations it will be read with. Most of the textual items in the corpus can be characterized as news reports or news items; however also includes other genres such as comments and letters to and from the editor. Although genre is seen as of highly important aspects of media's representational resources, my analysis does not include a systematic account or analysis of the different textual genres. However, when analyzing my corpus I have distinguished between four different genres: notes, news reports, in-depth reportages, and comments/letters to/from the editor.

Three steps of exploratory process

I approach my questions of study in a continuously exploratory way; however, my research process can be described as conducted along clearly defined procedures. First, I have selected a smaller corpus of 111 texts and carried out a pilot study. This process enabled me to define patterns of linguistic units in the text: which were reoccurring categories and which were more or less unique in their national/political allegiance. This enabled me, in its turn, to identify a set of key analytical categories, which I understood as clusters of texts representing different social events and conflict arenas - what I call narrative discourses. At a second stage of my research process, I expanded my corpus in order to test my own conclusions and revise my preliminary assumptions. And at a third stage I included texts, which would enable me to more forcefully present my main focus, namely the representation of Nigerian women in prostitution, in relation to other reoccurring events and characters occurring in my material, for instance male customers as well as general renovation discussions on Karl Johan street.¹⁵ As a final step thirty texts excerpts was collected in full print version, for a more in-depth analysis than *Atekst* enabled. Three of these will be presented for analytical and representational purposes in this thesis, in order to illustrate some main tendencies in my three categories of texts. Finally, I ended up with a corpus consisting of 247 text items, printed between the 1st of September 2004 and the 10th of October 2006. The table underneath indicates that it is possible to detect an increasing number of relevant newspaper-printed texts in the period 2004-2006.

¹⁵ This was especially texts collected from *Aftenposten* 'Morgen' and 'Aften' issue in 2006 period.

Descriptive numbers on Text corpus

Newspaper/Year	2004	2005	2006	Total
Aftenposten Morgen	11	16	65	92
Aftenposten Aften	5	9	59	73
Dagbladet	14	12	25	51
VG	2	11	18	31
Total numbers texts	32	48	167	247
Total numbers months	4	12	9	25

Number of textual items by source and time interval: First of September to thirty-first of December 2004, first of January to thirty-first of December 2005, and first of January to tenth of October 2006.

Text corpus and Atekst

All texts are chosen from a search engine called *Atekst*, which is the most extensive Norwegian database on media prints available online. *Atekst* as a search engine provided me with several possibilities in handling the data material. Firstly it presented the opportunity to work with different word combinations which could tell me how frequently a specific term is used or a specific identity occurs and in which textual context. In this way I gained a relatively broad insight into how the media presents the issue of prostitution and trafficking, which was helpful in constructing my own analysis. However, I experienced minor numerical inconsistencies in the A-text system, which would have posed a methodological problem if I were to rely on the quantitative stability of frequency. Since my research was carried out as a qualitatively analytical research program, inconsistencies in the search program did not pose a threat to the main analytical findings.

The main strength of relying on *Atekst* as a search engine was that it made me able to constantly check my own presuppositions against what actually occurred in the newspaper texts. For instance, I developed a certain hypothesis of the way journalists choose to present the issue I was interested in, and which social actors and identities they would find relevant. Such assumptions could be verified or rejected on the principle of probability. One example: I believed that the use of the expression 'sex slave' would appear in certain kinds of discursive narratives and thematizations. I found 38 texts which I could compare with the already gathered corpus of text for analysis. The word 'trafficking' provided me with 351 text items. Using A-text enabled me to cross-combine certain words of interest with my general search

string. I could, for instance, identify specific thematization or find out how often, for instance, men as customers had been referred to and which words were more or less frequently used to describe this group. Similarly, I did several different cross-combinations before I ended up with my final corpus of text. The final search string contained words that also would be highlighted in the actual text I collected, and hereby would ease my final analysis. These words were: Nigeria, Africa, trafficking, human smuggling, slavery, prostitution, sex sale, victim, woman, girl, trafficker, organiser, madam, pimp, prostitute, whore, sex customer, sex buyer, whore customer.¹⁶

I included texts describing one specific group in prostitution presented in relation to a description of one specific social practice, within one specific national geographical area. With the purpose of limiting my text corpus, and at the same time gaining texts of high relevance and rich substance, I excluded texts which only gave descriptions of one or two of my criteria¹⁷. However, I made some exceptions as I considered them of relevance for my analysis. This was, for instance, done in relation to the texts where issues of prostitution and trafficking were discussed in more subtle ways. For instance, in shorter descriptive notes, texts presented as facts or media information from institutions as well as interviews of customers. I was especially interested in the media's presentation of the customers, since I found that most often in the text items which explicitly discussed the issue of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as a theme, customers would only appear as an underlying sub-theme and often not mentioned at all. Additionally, I found that first-person presentation and interviews of men buying sex are scarce in media. However, the more extensive search for representational texts on men as customers was mainly limited to the search in the morning and evening edition of *Aftenposten* in the year 2006. This also explains the saturated numbers in the table.

My corpus and analytical categories have additionally been cross-referenced and compared with other sites of discourse such as internet, local newspapers, such as *Bergens Tidende*, *Bergens Avisen* and *Stavanger Aftenblad*, which I had access to in the full edition in the

¹⁶ I have not translated all Norwegian words in my search string. The original searchstring was: (Nigeria* or Afrika*) AND (sex or trafficking or menneskehandel or menneskesmugling or slaveri or slavehandel or prostitusjon or kjønnsandel or handel* or salg* or kjøp* or overgrep) AND (offer* or kvinne* or jente* or bakmenn* or bakmann or madam* or halikk* or sex or slave or prostituert* or hore* or kunde* or kjøper* or horekunde* or)

¹⁷ for example, the sub-themes like "Nigerian women participating in cultural events", and the incidents of Nigerian football players with "slave-like" contracts in Norway, events in Africa or trafficking and prostitution in other places such as Germany or Sweden.

period between the summer 2005 and the summer of 2006. Additionally, I have done comparative searches in *Atekst* in the newspapers *Klassekampen*, *Dagens Næringsliv* and random local newspapers, as well as other sources such as radio programs which also are accessible through *Atekst*. Furthermore, I have sought other sources, when necessary and of interest, such as Parliament hearings on trafficking issues, which one also can gain access to through the internet. And additionally, the Norwegian radical feminist group *Ottar* keeps an Internet-based archive¹⁸ on prostitution and trafficking which additionally has provided a useful source for comparison. However I do not include these sites of discourse into my main text corpus, as searches has not been conducted systematically enough and my readings have been done primarily for the purpose of testing if my findings were tenable.

As mentioned, my analytical conclusions developed through a process of exploring, revising and comparing. I did not start my research with a specific idea of how I would be able answer my research questions, nor any idea of what the answers might be. More often, I learned that the more I dug into the thematic substance of my material, the more questions would arise. CDA does not offer a stringent recipe on exactly which findings or aspects of the analysis one should choose to present to an audience, nor does it as a research program offer a specific tool in order to organize different findings. As my analytical process proceeded, it became clear to me that the 247 individual text items can be categorised into three central themes of social process or social conflict. In my analysis I refer to these three categories as three sets of ‘narrative discourses’.

Narrative discourses - the “dark magic” in the “white media”?

One way of analysing newspaper coverage is to see it as narratives (Van Dijk 1980, Larsen and Hausken 1999). Similarly, as one might see newspaper production and newspaper texts as created within a discourse community of journalists, one might also analyse newspapers as sites conditioned by specific ways of telling a story. Newspaper stories can be defined as “a narrative discourse which integrates a sequel of events around a human interest” (Larsen and Hausken 1999:67 *my translation*). Through public exposure and the specific use of language media serves to construct a repertoire of well-known public characters such as ‘the hero’ and ‘the villain’, ‘the victim’ and ‘the perpetrator’. The construction of social stereotypes such as

¹⁸ Ottar (2007) news by theme – prostitution <http://www.ottar.as/>

'The Criminal Foreigner', 'The Dangerous Muslim' or 'The Subordinate Female Immigrant' is not the direct effects of conscious xenophobia, but rather a product of the net sum of the logic of media institutions, such as criteria's of newsworthiness (Brune 2001). Ylva Brune calls the production of media stereotypes the of ritualised journalistic expressions of colonial structures of emotions, and the "dark magic" in "white media", where "the other" becomes an object where society's innate fears and repressed anxieties is projected (Brune 2001: 9-14).

Fairclough argues that narrativisation involves arranging the presentation of events which provides "social agents of actual events with 'distinct traits' which transform them into 'characters', and 'focalizing' the story in terms of a 'particular point of view'" (Fairclough 2003: 83). By allocating actors in recognisable positions as the 'good guys' and the 'bad guys' media serves to maintain or change our stories about 'us' and 'the others'. The central research question that arises then is how these different actors are allocated in the texts, and which words and expressions are used in order to build this repertoire of characters and events? And in relation to social fields which readers may not have extensive knowledge to, how do newspaper stories, or narrative discourses, create what may turn fragmentary and ill-defined social happenings into distinct, comprehensible and separate events? (Ibid: 85).

One way of seeing news paper coverage is to view it as a form of social regulation (Ibid: 84). One might even see news as a form of violence, since it includes some aspects of a story and exclude others, at the same time as it constructs events interpretively and through a process which reduces complex events into narratives (Ryan 2004). Bird and Dardanne (1997) argues that like fictional narratives and mythological stories, news narratives might be seen as functioning as modern mythologies. "By this we do not mean to say that individual news stories are like individual news myths, but that as communication process, news can act like myth and folklore" (Bird and Dardanne 1997:336). Although not all news texts can be seen as narratives (Larsen and Hausken 1999:66), journalism as a kind of an all-round presentation and communication is based on specific codes inscribed in our culture (Bird and Dardanne 1997: 339, Ryan 2004).

Analyzing the social presentation as a part of a narrative discourse, is to uncover how texts, as for instance a newspaper note, is dynamically working from different vantage points in order to establish and build up a particular social representation (the semantic macrostructure). At the initial stage this includes identifying the narrative structure (Fairclough 2003: 83-6, Van

Dijk 1980). To analyze this structure is to examine how it begins, how it proceeds and how it ends. We examine how the parts of the narrative are combined to make a meaningful whole. In texts we can identify a pattern of development and a relationship between different sets of actors and activities. For instance, in the excerpt in chapter one “African” and “Nigerian” women constitute a new group that has been “flooding” into Oslo throughout the summer (2004).¹⁹ Norwegian police sees this influx as a result of an organized network activity, and therefore begins an investigation of the phenomenon.

Analyzing the narrative structure of such stories helps us grasp the text as the outcome of a narrative process (Fairclough 2003: 49-50, 83-6). Furthermore, attention is paid to which information is offered, which is excluded, and how these characteristics cue the reader to perform certain cognitive operations: to predict what comes next in a text and to evaluate whether this introduction invites to reading the whole news report. This might prompt the researcher to ask: does this text play with already existing cultural characters that are here used to conceptualize the relationship between prostitution and crime? How does it allocate the different social actors in relationship to each other? How are social actors described as characters with distinct traits? Does the text enlist already existing cultural templates in an effort to metaphorically present images of ‘unwanted’ immigrant’s ‘flooding’ into Norway? In the process of performing such an exercise, we also question the beginning, we question which parts of the text tells us something of the pre-existing elements of the story that were prerequisites in shaping the text. The third part of the analysis relates the narrative structure to broader social, political and ideological factors and we treat a text as a social representation. How is the text stylistically performed: why are some details seen as necessary and other unnecessary? These questions permit one to evaluate whether the text challenges or confirms already existing cultural, ethnic and social stereotypes in the media presentation of prostitution and immigration- and we are able to uncover the different relations of power- if it is contested or established.

Readers rarely remembers details of individual news stories, but together these stories form a larger narrative or myth, which functions as a source of information on the normative parameters of right and wrong, what is good and what is bad – the social lines of decency. Not all my texts can be seen as obvious or explicitly expressed results of these communicative codes, or discursive narratives as I call them. For instance, items such as shorter or more

¹⁹ *Aftenposten Morgen* 01.09.2004

argumentative texts, such as notes or comments, do not directly reflect this pattern. However, all texts are created against the backdrop of other stories on transnational prostitution. Hence, all texts can be seen as interdiscursively related to each other, as all texts can be seen as relying on the same cultural codes of reception or presentation of certain sequence of related events and phenomena. Furthermore, this relationship between texts, drawing and adding to the stories, might be argued to be especially strong when newsreaders and contributors have fewer possibilities to check information with their own experience. The reader is to a large extent dependent upon the descriptions and information provided by the journalists on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, the less it is related to their own experience the more so. Thereby, one might argue that the further away the news is from the well-known and familiar, the stronger the hypotheses become in a social constructivist perspective on the media, where media becomes a worldviews producer. As such, the included argumentative comments in my material, though not explicitly narrated in their presentation, would often relate to and rely on the information provided by already existing news stories which were journalistically narrated in the presentation of social actors. All texts in my corpus can thereby be said to have a 'referential intention' as well as an 'explanatory intention' (Callinicos 1995 in Fairclough 2003: 85), which fuses together a particular view of 'truth' – for instance through underlying assumptions, but also makes texts open to the question of truth. Besides, all texts, whether news or comments, have a focalization, where different events are incorporated in order to serve a particular point of view (Fairclough 2003: 85). These aspects of text can according to Fairclough be seen as part of viewing news as a form of social control, since it serves to regulate and control events, and how these are responded to (ibid).

Two discourses - text and image

Before I move on to describing the process of identifying the three types of narrative discourse, I would like to introduce a last aspect of the newspapers' representational recourses, since several scholars have described contemporary mass media and text production as to be shifting away from the verbal towards replacing the story introduction with 'display', rather than in terms of the more traditional types of textual information (see e.g. Fairclough 1995, Kress 1996: 25). Therefore, in addition to narrative discourse as culturally specific codes of communicating social events and its characters, I also need to consider the visual elements, for instance photography of an event or a person, functioning partly as illustration and partly explanatory in the construction of the narrative meaning. Photography

in a newspaper event might serve, as critics in cultural studies have argued, to lay claims of proof of authenticity or of an unmediated presentation of reality (Hall 1997). Hence, at a level of the semantic macrostructure of text, meaning and text in a newspaper event lie both in the visual as well as in the textual and the verbal. Stuart Hall has called the mediation of meaning between the text and the image “two discourses – the discourse of the written language and the discourse of photography” (Hall 1997: 228). Narrative meaning in newspaper coverage is constructed textually as well as visually. The meaning of the image also relies on the text. I have had this mediation in mind when developing my analytical conclusions. However, I will not emphasize this aspect extensively, but use visual elements to exemplify dialectic tendencies reflecting analytical findings from the material collected from Atekst.

Narrative discourses on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway

Three narrative discourses can be seen as together forming the thematic structure which makes up the discursive layers through which Norwegian newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution is constructed. I will show that newspaper coverage’s ways of presenting Nigerian women in prostitution are not coincidental but are part of larger structural social processes. Identifying discursive frameworks are important because they structure much of how we think and talk about issues of problematization, at the same time as it structures the imagined available solutions and political strategies.

The three identified categories are constructed entities of reoccurring similarities. As narrative discourses come in different textual shapes and is textually performed in various ways, there are no marked or unambiguous lines of distinction to draw between the three narrative discourses. Structures of problem-oriented thematizations are interrelated and draw upon each other across categories. One individual text item will most often concur with, or include one or several elements of two or three categories of structuring thematization - because media texts in any “pure” narrative form would most likely present themselves as one-sided. Most often newspapers will present different aspects of the case on the same or following pages. For instance, a news report about prostitution in public places might be followed with a note on trafficking at the bottom of the page, or a picture where the lead-in will present images of internal competition between women in prostitution. However, these problem-oriented storylines are also presented as distinguishable. It is precisely this tendency in newspaper coverage, to divide between the different ways of seeing a social problem, or set of social

problems as social conflicts as played out on different social arenas, which makes analyzing narrative discourses interesting.

Limitations

In my analysis of the newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, I have gathered my material with the aim of including the reader's response and contributions in the form of comments and letters to the editors. However, I conduct a text analysis, not a reception analysis. As well, I have not been able to give a full account of oppositional political views, as these most likely would have been more visible in a more narrow text analysis, for instance if one were to focus the study on comments or Parliamentary hearings. Neither will I extensively problematize whether "the regular citizens" and their potentially alternative opinions relate to those opinions gathered in my material, or whether comments in the newspapers can be seen as representational of any 'dominant view'. For example, a regional newspaper recently surprised researchers and the readers by publishing an survey stating that 37 percent of its 580 respondents were positive to state-regulated brothels (Bergens Tidende 21.04). In a Norwegian context this is a surprisingly high number and is not reflected in the general public discussions on prostitution. However, other surveys ordered by newspapers during my research period have presented varying numbers, stating that a majority in Norway would support criminalization of prostitution customers. All of these surveys can be scientifically challenged for their findings.²⁰ What is interesting for this discussion, however, is how public opinion on prostitution policies often becomes a news event in itself. As such, one might also argue that media institutions are at all times are interested in the reader's response and opinions, and which to reflect these, as well as newspapers might be reluctant to go in conflict with any dominating view or majority opinion, as this might harm their own public image.

Seeing, as in the example of the survey in Bergens Tidende, that one can not tell for sure whether all oppositional opinions on the matter of prostitution regulation are voiced in the media, it might also suggest that the most explicit racist and discriminating opinions will not

²⁰ For instance, The Sentino survey published in *Bergens Tidende* one was asked to choose between three statements, reflecting different political positions towards prostitution; 1. liberal, 2. abolitionist/prohibition 3. liberal/regulation, where the third alternative included the word "protect the prostitutes" and thereby presented itself as more attractive than the other more "pure categories".

In Norwegian the questions were as follows; 'Hvilket av følgende tre syn er du mest enig i:

1. Kjøp og salg av sex bør fortsatt være et forhold mellom prostituerte og deres kunder.
2. Samfunnet bør gripe inn med forbud og andre tiltak for å prøve å hindre eller redusere prostitusjonen.
3. Samfunnet bør tillate opprettelse av bordell med streng statlig kontroll og beskyttelse av prostituerte

reach the print desk of a national newspaper, at the same time as the more subtle and reluctant opinions might not be uttered on public arenas such as in the newspaper coverage. The most radical, racial and prejudiced opinions are, if articulated, most likely to be voiced elsewhere. A basic contention in my thesis is that discourses both enable and limit the construction and perception of statements. Therefore I do not approach media texts as directly mirroring a Norwegian public opinion, or the Norwegian culture *per se*. Rather, I approach my corpus functioning as a prism, a metaphor illustrating that Media has a central place in the formation, construction and restraint of the public opinion, governmental critique, support to individuals, social processes of inclusion and exclusion, and that studying media texts might revile some currents functioning at a “sociomental level” (Zeruvabel 1997).

Chapter 4. The narrative discourse of the market squeeze

It has become a hell here, and it will get worse.²¹

In this chapter we shall look at one of three narrative discourses; describing the ‘Norwegian prostitution market’ and the social conflict between different groups of women in prostitution. All of the included texts in this category are directly or indirectly addressing the issue of the exchange of sexual services for money, as well as the three actors: the prostitute, the pimp and the customer. Furthermore, all the newspaper storylines in the category of the market squeeze present prostitution partly as a sexual and economical transaction and partly as a socio-political problem related to dugs or economic deprivation and links these to other varying problem-oriented themes. Through the use of lexical and metaphorical operations in the texts, Nigerian women who have entered Norway and are involved in prostitution are frequently presented as an “explosion”, as a social catastrophe, or a biodynamic force beyond social control.

The “whore-explosion” or the “whore” exploitation?

After foreign prostitutes seized the whore-area in Oslo, the market is saturated. The Norwegian women are loosing the competition for customers.²²

One of the three main structures of the problem-oriented thematizations found in the newspaper coverage of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, was stressing that there exists an internal market competition between different groups of women within the Norwegian prostitution arena, adding extra pressure on individuals who already find themselves in marginalized and vulnerable social positions. One reoccurring explanatory model in this narrative is that the presence of Nigerian women in the Norwegian prostitution market is related to international structural shifts, such as stricter policies in South European countries such as France, as well as redundancy in Spain and Italy, where some of them had legal papers to stay.

²¹ *Dagbladet* -16.10.2004.

²² *Aftenposten Aften* – 27.04.2005.

In this chapter I conceptualize the different structuring thematizations found in the newspaper coverage as ‘the narrative discourse of the market squeeze’. In these texts Nigerian women are often categorised together with East European and Asian women as “hordes of foreign prostitutes”, who are “flooding” and “invading” the Norwegian prostitution market.²³ The increased number of foreign women in prostitution in Norway is frequently described in metaphorical terms of war and combat over market interests - as “price/market war” on sex or as a “whore explosion/war”. The occasional clashes of violence between women in prostitution drew the attention of the media, who reported on the hardening market. For instance journalists would write “The whore-war between the Norwegian and foreign girls has set a record of low prices in Oslo”.²⁴ On one hand, Nigerian women were presented as being aggressive as well as transgressive, and in conflict with the internal “codex” of street prostitution in Norway, pushing the prices down to a minimum on the expense of competitors. On the other, Nigerian women was described as exploited victims driven by despair, poverty and organized crime.

The reoccurring problematizations belonging under the narrative discourse of the marked squeeze can be divided into some main concerns. Firstly, as one assumed that the Norwegian prostitution market was of limited extent and the number of regular customers was relatively constant, one feared that the increased competition for customers would create a “customers marked” where customers would demand “more for less”, which in turn lowered prices and increase the health risk and violence involved in prostitution. In this situation, tension in the customer market was seen as having several negative consequences for all women involved in prostitution. Foreign women in general and Nigerian women in particular, were presented as undermining the presented pre-existing power structures which existed in the negotiation situation between the ‘prostitute’ and the ‘customer’ in the Norwegian prostitution market. Hence the presence of Nigerian women is presented as undermining the Norwegian standards of prostitution empowerment - this concern was especially voiced by Liv Jessen from the Pro Senteret.

²³ Asian women were less visible in my material. This is not particularly surprising, since this group is popularly described in the general media coverage as predominantly active in the indoor prostitution market.

²⁴ VG - 25.09.2004

In newspaper coverage Nigerian women were described as a driving force behind the pushing of the prices down to a minimum, as they were reported to be more economically desperate and charging less than “the white girls”. A few textual presentations of the more professional Norwegian women in prostitution, such as the so-called ‘luxury prostitutes’ and the ‘escorts’, reported that their monthly income had decreased extensively. The major concern, however, was that the Norwegian women who financed their drug abuse through prostitution would turn to crime, and the recruitment of foreign women to the Norwegian prostitution marked was thereby assumed to increase the level of social suffering for all groups of women involved. In such thematizations, Nigerian women were presented as if they were in opposition or in conflict with the more rugged and experienced women, since they were, contrary to those, not driven by drug abuse, but appeared as drug free, fresh and smiling. East European women on the other hand were not portrayed with an explicit narrative of victimisation - so being ‘white’ seemed to place them in a structurally higher bargaining position in relation to the customers.

However a few thematizations described rivalry between different groups organizing prostitution, and portrayed the Russian (or East European) mafia to be protecting market territory by scaring other women away from the traditional areas of street prostitution - in Oslo. In relation to the “market-war”, it was assumed that the increased amount of foreign women in prostitution in Norway was a sign of a growing criminal network of foreigners that would worsen and harden the market, and worsens the conditions for all. More or less explicit accusations were made that the Nigerian mafia attempted to control the whole prostitution market, not only the Nigerian women as individuals. These texts framed the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway within an organized crime and trafficking discourse. Thereby market squeeze is also presented as a commercial fight over market interest in Norway driven by third party organizers at an international level.

Moreover, Nigerian women were reported as “not familiar with how things function in Oslo”.²⁵ And concerns were raised that the ‘market squeeze’ would lead to geographical movement of the prostitution scene, and that this would subsequently create negative public opinion - and thereby, harming all women in prostitution. The increased competition was described to move women into less secure positions, and women without a network of regular customers would have to search for alternative segments of the market, either by entering sex

²⁵ *Aftenposten Aften* - 23.03.2006

sale in message parlours, travelling to other cities or try to reach clients through the Internet. Liv Jessen, the leader of the Pro Senteret, expressed that “The market is in constant change, and many of the girls go on tour. There is great deal of movement, geographically as well as when it comes to prices”²⁶. Increased pressure would also be reported to have reached other Norwegian cities such as for instance Bergen, Kristiansand and Stavanger. However in general, newspaper coverage seemed less concerned about movement within Norwegian borders, and more concerned with the specific geographical movement within areas in the capital, Oslo – especially the use of Karl Johan (which will be an explicit theme in chapter five), as well as across national borders (a prominent theme in chapter six).

In what follows I will exemplify some of the main tendencies in newspaper coverage of Nigerian women in prostitution discussed so far, in a text excerpt collected at the very beginning of the press coverage of this particular category of women. The text “The Nigerian mafia is blocking the market by sending in all the girls” is collected from *Dagbladet* at the 16th of October 2004.

²⁶ VG- 25.09.2004

«Den nigerianske markedet ved å sen

Tvang, vold og prisdumping preger prostitusjonsmiljøet i Skippergata i Oslo. Gjeldstyngede afrikanske prostituerte dumper prisene for å vinne markedet. Politiet klarer ikke å ta bakmennene.

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Bare noen hundre meter fra Karl Johans gate er sextrafikken åpenlys. Enslige menn i firmabiler kruser rundt i kvartalene. På hvert gatehjørne står kvinnene. De som kjenner miljøet forteller om en kynisk bransje der gjeldstyngede kvinner fra Vest-Afrika og Øst-Europa må dumpe prisene for å vinne markedet. Bak står hallikar, långivere og buseiere og tar mesteparten av fortjenesten.

Stor tilstrømning

– Så langt i år har det kommet nærmere 500 jenter fra Nigeria til Norge. Dette er ikke tilfeldig. Noen må stå bak en slik voldsom økning. Miljøet er svært lukket, sier Liv Jessen ved Prosentert.

Vi har det siste året registrert en kraftig økning av afrikanske kvinner i prostitusjonsmiljøet i Oslo, sier seksjonssjef Espen Aas i Utlendingsseksjonen ved Oslo politidistrikt.

Gjeldstyngede jenter

Kilder sier til Dagbladet at enkelte av de nigerianske kvinnene har over 300 000 kroner i gjeld. Mange av kvinnene blir rekruttert i Edu-provinsen sør-øst i Nigeria der den sosiale nød er stor. Flere av kvinnene kan ikke lese og skrive. Reisen gjennom Europa skjer ofte med båt til transitlandene Italia og Spania.

Her går jentene ofte gjennom en «innkjøringsfase» og bakmenn ordner med identifikasjonspapirer slik at kvinnene kan bevege seg fritt i Schengen-området. Ofte må kvinnene jobbe i Italia først. Nå har Italia lagt seg på en strengere linje i prostitusjonspolitikken, og kvinnene blir sendt til andre land, deriblant Norge, for å jobbe.

Moderne slavehandel

– Nesten alle de utenlandske kvinnene blir utsatt for massevoldtekter før de kommer til Norge. Derfor er den jobben de

«Det er slavehandel på moderne måte vi snakker om.»

Norsk prostituert kvinne

blir tvunget til å gjøre i Norge egentlig ingenting i forhold til det de har vært gjennom, sier en norsk prostituert.

– Noen av de nigerianske jentene er unge, helt ned i 16 år. Gjelda blir de aldri kvitt. Hvis markedet tømmes et sted, sendes de bare til et annet sted. Det er slavehandel på moderne måte vi snakker om, og myndighetene gjør ingenting, sier den norske kvinnen som har jobbet som prostituert i Oslo i omkring 30 år.

Norge er et attraktivt mottakerland. Her er prisene høye sammenliknet med det man får i Middelhavslandene. Den informasjonen har også nådd bakmennene.

– Du er bundet til dem. Du må gjøre som de sier. De kommanderer deg, kontrollerer deg og tvinger deg til å adlyde, sier en kvinne til et forskerteam ved Universitetet i Torino.

Politiet vet lite

De har lagt fram en rapport som blir beskrevet som pionerarbeid i forhold til det nigerianske miljøet. Politiet i Norge vet imidlertid lite om hvem som står bak. Kvinnene snakker spelden om sin historie, og forteller minimalt om hvordan og hvorfor de reiste til Norge.

– Det kan se ut som om disse jentene jobber mer frivillig og selvstendig enn for eksempel de østeuropeiske jentene. Dette trenger imidlertid ikke være riktig. Når man plutselig får så mange jenter fra et land sier det seg selv at det er noen som organiserer dette, sier Liv Jessen.

– Det har blitt et helvete her, og det kommer til å bli verre. Den nigerianske mafiaen blokkerer markedet ved å sende inn alle jentene. De dumper prisene, og på grunn av det har det blitt kundens marked nå. Det har resultert i at de som ligger lengst nede, for eksempel de som russer seg, får et helvete. De må fortsatt betale det samme for stoffet og må jobbe døgnet rundt. Situasjonen har blitt fryktelig tøff, sier den norske kvinnen.

Tjener tusener hver kveld

Skippergata fredag kveld: To nigerianske jenter kommer ut av leilighetshotellet i Skippergata. Her bor de prostituerte, og hit tar de med seg mange av sine kunder. Klokken har så vidt passert 20.00. De fleste jobber hver natt fram til rundt klokka 02.00.

– Jeg kommer fra Nigeria, men bor i Milano i Italia. Jeg skal være her i to måneder, sier en 26-år gammel jente som står og småfryser.

Bilene kruser rundt. Enkelte stopper og diskuterer pris. Andre bare blinker med lysa og sender et granskende blick mot jenta.



PÅ JOBB I HØSTKULDA: Prostitusjonstraftikken i Oslo er omfattende, og foregår i en rekke kvartaler bare stein jentene dumper prisene for å ta kunder fra sine norske kolleger.

● Hallikene blir ikke tatt ● Eksplos

– Norge er et greit land å jobbe i. Jeg ble forfalt det i Italia. Jeg jobber sammen med venninna mi. Vi bost borte i veien her – på det stedet hvor det koster fire hundre kroner natta, sier jenta.

– Hvor mye kan du tjene i løpet av en kveld?

– Det varierer veldig. Jeg har kanskje sju eller ti kunder på en kveld. Rundt fem tusen kroner kanskje. Andre dager er det helt stille.

– Er det mange nigerianske jenter her?

– Ja, det er det. De fleste reiser via Italia. Enkelte sier at de er fra andre land, men egentlig er de nigerianske, sier jenta som sier hun sender pengene hjem til familien i Nigeria.

– De vet ikke hva jeg jobber som, og jeg vil ikke at de skal vite. Det er privat. Ingen skal vite det.

Skremt av voodoo

Forskerne som har studert det nigerianske miljøet forteller om en kynisk utnyttelse av fattige jenter. Et av virkemidlene er fjernet fra den

vestlige kulturen. Forskerne forteller at kvinnene er reddet på grunn av trolddom – voodoo.

– Det er en del av samfunnet. Før vi den ble jeg tatt med til en heksedoktor som fortalte at jeg måtte betale. At alle pengene skulle gis til andre. At dersom jeg tok en Euro selv så ville jeg dø, sier et offer for den nigerianske ligan til forskerteamet.

Andre som jobber tett på de nigerianske kvinnene avdramatiserer dette.

De legger liko skjul på at dette er

afiaen blokkerer de inn alle jentene»

Norsk kvinne, prostituert i 30 år



kastet unna Karl Johans gate. Jentene fra Vest-Afrika og Øst-Europa jobber for hallikere, långivere og huseiere som tar mesteparten av fortjenesten.

FAKTA

Lokkes til prostitusjon

Et forskningsgruppe ved Universitetet i Torino beskriver i en rapport hvordan unge nigerianske jenter rekrutteres til prostitusjon. Dette er hovedfunnene.

- En slektning eller bekjent oppsøker jenta og hennes familie med lovnader om jobb og studier i utlandet. I mange tilfeller blir det snakket om Spania eller Tyskland, slik at jenta ikke skal få mistanke om prostitusjonsarbeid i Italia.
- Noen familier er kjent med at reisers mål er Italia og at jentas opphold vil innebære noe prostitusjon. Men virken jentene eller familien vet noe om det store omfanget av frihetsberøvelse, tvangsarbeid og gjeld.
- Jenta blir tatt med til en heksetokter og gjennomfører ulike ritualer som binder henne til «pakten». Det kan skje ved at noe organisk materiale fra jenta, som for negler eller hårstrå, et bilde av henne, muligens også blod fra henne, gjøres til en del av ritualet. Jenta sverge at hun vil overholde avtalen.
- Ved ankomst Italia har jenta allerede stor gjeld til bakmennene som «hjalp henne til Europa». Hun blir ofte plassert i hus med andre prostituerte og en kvinnelig mellomleder i den kriminelle organisasjonen. Hvis jenta ikke jobber og leverer pengene hun tjener til madamen, kan hun bli utsatt for vold eller truet med represalier overfor familien. Hun har i realiteten ikke noe valg.
- Nigerianske kvinner har blitt rekruttert på denne måten til Italia siden begynnelsen av 1980-tallet, og dette er måten kvinnene lures med fremdeles, ifølge Dagbladets kilder. Tidligere rekrutterte bakmennene fra urbane strøk av Nigeria, men etter hvert som det har blitt kjent hva som skjer i Italia, har de nå trolig gått over til å rekruttere fra landsbygda. Dette kan være forklaringen på at mange av kvinnene er analfabeter og økonomisk- og delvis kulturelt ressursvake.

jon av prostituerte fra u-land • Prisdumping og tvang

en del av trusselbildet, men at jentene ofte får beholde noe mer penger selv. Pro-sentertet mener at vi i Norge bør ha respekt for de funnene som de italienske forskerne har funnet.

Skjuler sin identitet

– Vi vet veldig lite om Nigeria og kulturen disse kvinnene har vokst opp i. Alt dette kan høres fjernt ut for oss, men for menneskene som har mott ofrene er det høyst reelt. I Italia har det nigerianske miljøet eksistert lenger. De har et godt

grunnlag for et slikt arbeid, mener Liv Jessen.

Kvinnene skjuler ofte sin identitet. Flere oppgir at de kommer fra land som Liberia, Ghana eller Kamerun. De tvilholder på sin falske identitet også etter at de blir avslørt av politiet. Det verst tenkelige er ofte å bli sendt tilbake til Nigeria med stor gjeld.

Dette miljøet kan, ifølge forskerne, kontrolleres av personer som ikke er synlige i miljøet. Kvinner som har vært lenge i systemet kan

avansere opp i pyramidene og styre de prostituerte på gata.

Sliter med bakmennene

Politiet har prøvd med flere midler å stoppe trafikken. I sommer ble en hotellleder i Skippergata dømt for hallikvirksomhet. I dommen slår Oslo tingrett fast at mannen burde ha skjont at de utenlandske kvinnene som bodde på stedet drev prostitusjon fra rommene.

Likevel har flere utleiere i området fortsatt med utleie. Ingen av de direkte bakmennene som styrer

jentene i Skippergata er tatt. Ingen er så langt dømt for menneskehandel etter den såkalte trafickingparagrafen.

– Det er et problem at kvinnene i dette miljøet ikke tør å snakke. Samtidig må vi ha forståelse for den press-situasjonen de lever under. De virkemidler vi i dag har i forhold til disse kvinnene har ikke fungert som ønskelig. Vi har ikke klart å skape en trygghetsfølelse for

jentene slik at de tør snakke. Vi, sier Liv Jessen.

Det siste våpenet til politiet har vært en omfattende trafikkregulering i området. Trafikken er fortsatt stor, men de prostituerte har nå fordelt seg over et større område. Politiet Dagbladet har snakket med oppgir at trafikkaksjoner er den beste og mest effektive måten å foreta rutinekontroller av miljøet. Flere prostituerte oppgir at de føler det som om de blir jaget.

LES I MORGEN: Kvinnene fengsles - bakmennene går fri

Text excerpt “The Nigerian Mafia is blocking the market by sending in all the girls”

On the 16th of October 2004, short after the first news item of the presence of the Nigerian women in prostitution appeared, one could read the following headline at the front page of the national newspaper Dagbladet: “Sex sale explodes” and underneath a sub headline reading “6 out of 10 are foreign, prices are dumped”. The use of hyperbolic metaphors is common to tabloid headlines and lead-ins, like in this case, and is meant to invite the reader to buy the whole newspaper. The text excerpt we shall examine closer is one of three text items related to this headline presented in the newspaper edition this particular day.

The text excerpt is built up of two text items. The first and the largest one follows after the headline, which reads: “The Nigerian mafia blocks the market by sending in all the girls”. The text excerpt can be seen as a kind of polyphony of fragmentary and ill-defined happenings, however placing these in textual relationships which have an exploratory as well as an explanatory intention for the reader. In terms of intertextuality it also draws on other written texts such as research report from Torino in Italy, most explicitly presented under the headline “facts” at the right-hand side of the picture. The main core of the text is presented as a set of issues which are as follows: “Pimps go free”, “Explosion of prostitutes from developing countries”, “Dumping and force”. These themes are placed in connection to a large photo illustration of the news item event. Of the two pages used to address the issue of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, almost fifty percent of the space is used to print an illustrating photo. I shall here look for the narrative meaning as a dialectic relationship between the textual and the visual.

The image has a street aesthetics and one might quickly recognize that the photo is meant to illustrate street-prostitution. There are two characters in the image. Both identities are hidden from the audience due to the distance between the illustrative objects and the photographer. Seeing the visual element of a car driving through a dark alley with a single African female in its dialectic relationship with the headline “The Nigerian mafia is blocking the market by sending in all the girls” builds up an image of a criminal network which is not afraid of the dark (– but of the light of day). Underneath the photo we can read:

At work in the cold Fall: The prostitution traffic is immense and takes place in several blocks only a few meters away from Karl Johan street. The girls from West-Afrika and Eastern Europe work for pimps, loan providers and house owners who take most of what they earn. The girls dump their prices in order to take the customers away from their Norwegian colleagues”.

The main gaze is focused on a single female whose dark skin becomes more explicit in her white clothes and the darkness of her surroundings. However, her potential loneliness is broken by the image of the vehicle at her left side, where we might imagine that she is not only the centre of the photographers gaze, but is also being observed by the driver in the vehicle. His presence however becomes secondary as it is also visible in the text. “Single men” are described in the text as driving around in their vehicles, as if they themselves were distant observers.

The Nigerian woman is presented as part of a group, where some are ‘analphabetic’, and driven by ‘social need’ from Nigeria. They are ‘bound’ and ‘indebted’ to what is described as a ‘cynical commerce’, ‘cynical exploitation’, where profiteers such as ‘pimps’, ‘loaners’ and ‘house owners’ constitute a relationship equivalent to ‘slavery’. Norway is presented as a transit area and an attractive country for prostitution, where prices are higher. Prostitution in Norway, for this group, is described involving ‘mass rape’, ‘submitting to violence’, ‘force’, ‘command’, ‘control’ and ‘obedience’. A Norwegian woman in prostitution describes the situation saying that:

It has become hell here, and it will become worse. The Nigerian mafia is blocking the market by sending in all the girls. They dump prices, and because of this it has become a customer’s market now. The result is that those who are at the bottom, for instance those who are on drugs, get hell. They still have to pay the same for their drugs and have to work all hours a day.

The ‘hell’ is referring to the Norwegian women who finance their drug abuse through prostitution, but also helps frame the presence of the Nigerian women within organized crime, presented as ‘modern slavery’, as a practice where women are forced to prostitution. Their presence in Norway is seen as part of a structural shift in the international prostitution market, where Norway is perceived as an attractive destination for traffickers due to economical circumstances. However, whether it is the Nigerian mafia “pushing” and “blocking”, or whether it is the indebted women from the “developing countries” who are responsible for the “explosion”, its source is framed within the understanding of “African” and “developing countries” as a particular kind of origin. Whether it is the activities of the Nigerian mafia

which the influx of Nigerians is blamed on, or the predatory behaviour of the Nigerian prostitutes themselves, their status as representatives of the developing world - a world of poverty and corruption - lies at the root of their “polluted” character.

The threat of a criminal network and prostitution as a hidden activity outside the normal and the legal is also presented through the statements of the police who are given authoritative voice and the role of an expert in the text. The police states that the Nigerian women themselves provide little information and hence they do not know who the responsible cause of their presence in Norway is. A Nigerian woman is also interviewed:

- I come from Nigeria, but I live in Milano in Italy. I will stay here for two months, says a 26 year old girl who is freezing. Car passes. Some stop and discuss prices. Others just flash their lights and glances at the girl.
- Norway is a fine country to work in. I was told so in Italy. I work with my friend. We live close to here – at the place where they charge four hundred a night, says the girl. How much do you earn per evening?
- It varies. Some nights I may have seven or ten customers. Around five thousand I guess. Other nights I have nothing.
- Are there many Nigerian women here?
- Yes. Most of them travel through Italy. Some say they come from other countries, but in reality they are Nigerian, says the girl who says she sends money to her family in Nigeria.
- They do not know what I work as, and I do not want them to know. It is private. No one shall know.

The Nigerian woman’s statements are on their own presented as open and direct, and do not match police’s descriptions of this group as unattainable for information. She states that she is here due to economical circumstances and is sending money to support her family in Nigeria. She describes involvement in prostitution as a private matter, something she hides from her family. She does not mention third party organizers or slavery. Seeing her statements isolated, she presents her involvement in prostitution as ruled by her obligations to her family in Nigeria, first and foremost.

However, the way her statements are co-textually framed questions their authenticity. We can find an explicit example of this if we look closer at the sentence:

- Yes. Most of them travel through Italy. Some say they come from other countries, but in reality they are Nigerian, *says* the girl who *says* she sends money to her family in Nigeria.

The woman questions other girls' sincerity, while the journalist might be said to question her sincerity. One may argue that writing that the woman 'says' performs what linguistically is called modality: which means it might serve to register the degree of commitment to truth or necessity in the claim of sending money to her family as a motivation for being in prostitution. Moreover she also says she earned 5000 NOK some days, but we have also read that Nigerian women have as much as 300 000 NOK in debts. Pro Senteret stated that some women keep some money, they also state that one should respect the findings of the researchers from Italy. These are statements of authority open to be questioned by a reader, but if we look at the right side of the two-page edition, we find the heading "Facts" explicitly focused on the Nigerian group of women and the process which has brought them from Nigeria to Europe. The presented facts are based on a research report from Torino in Italy and explain that Nigerian women have been subjected to trafficking to Europe since the 1980s with Italy as the main destination. What follows is a description of voodoo rituals, threats of violence and force, which emphasize the lack of real choice for the Nigerian women and support the already established image of 'modern slavery'. The Nigerian woman who has been interviewed and her statement are drowned within the co-textual framework in the polyphony of crime-oriented discourse, where poverty and superstition are related themes which all are connected to 'Nigeria'.

“Commercial activity” or “lovers hours”?

The issue of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway is extensively described through the use of market terminology. The excessive use of words such as “selling/buying sex/sexual services, marketing/sales tactics/sex offers” are the examples of this. Seeing the text corpus as one, I found several examples of propositional assumptions or speculations of whether “the market has exceeded its demand”, or whether there will be a “marked expansion” – here referring to the number of men willing to pay for sexual services²⁷. This might serve to portray prostitution as a phenomenon which in its ideal, essential and pure form is equivalent to a pure form of economical transaction, as a mutual contract between buyer and provider of a certain service, without structural strain.

One might say that all social representation, including newspaper coverage, entails performing different linguistic choices (Faiclough 2003). Generally, the issue of Nigerian

²⁷ The latter speculation however is confined to a second narrative discourse which I will attend to in my next chapter.

women in prostitution in Norway is referred to as “sex sale”, “prostitution”, “human trade”, “trafficking”, “our time’s slavery”, “modern slavery” or “sex slavery”. These linguistic expressions can be seen as processes of abstraction or nominalisation of agents. However, a few times the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway are cited in the texts, for instance “Hey sweetie, you and me have a good time together” or “Massage, sex, blowjob, come on” provide examples of this and serve to give a hint of the actual social actions in commercial sex²⁸. Other times the activity was described as “traffic”, not actually pointing to the meanings attached to the term ‘trafficking for prostitution purposes’, but describing a constant flow of women and men, either in and out of apartments and other housing arrangements, or in terms of car traffic in certain streets. I also found a few textual images where the activity was referred to as males who “emptied themselves in a woman”, or where women in prostitution were described as “body sellers”.

Besides the above mentioned, there also exist some instances of terminology where words like “commercial activity” and “lovers hours”²⁹ are used, but where the writer expresses an attitude which shows a strong degree of irony, whereby he takes the stance of modality in which these words are not meant to be accurate descriptions. Whether addressed explicitly or more ironically (utterances of modality as in “this is not exactly what we are talking about,” or in the instances of “lovers’ hours” or “commercial activity”), the co-textual usage, the semantic macrostructures and the thematic macrostructures create implicitness with the potential reader in terms of “what” is of central issue. The utterances of stances against the appropriateness of using marked terminology when discussing the theme of prostitution or trafficking were especially noticeable in letters to the editor and in comments, but also in the interviews of politicians and Members of Parliament (MPs). The most explicit descriptions of sex market and a sex market exchange were found in the statements provided by the spokespersons from Pro Senteret and women who themselves worked in prostitution. Thus, these statements did not aim to present prostitution as directly equivalent to other kinds of (legitimate), ‘work’ or any other kind of (legitimate) ‘commercial activity’.

Hence, *what* prostitution is presented to be in my material provides the question with several ambiguous answers. However the abstraction of social agents, events and social practices as recognisable social phenomena leaves little uncertainty as to what the choices of words here are meant to imply – in this case, sexual exchange between the Norwegian men and the Nigerian women, and the exchange of money.

²⁸ VG - 28.04.2005

²⁹ In Norwegian this refers to the words ”hyrdestund” and ”næringsvirksomhet” (*Aftenposten Aften* - 24.04.2006)

‘The Norwegian Prostitution Market’ and the ‘Squeeze’

‘The Norwegian prostitution market’ is the privileged linguistic sign in the category of texts which I placed under the rubric the Narrative Discourse of the Market Squeeze. ‘Nigerian’ does not, as in all narratives, provide the same meaning if it were to stand without textual relation to the privileged sign. As such ‘Nigerian’ as the privileged sign for my analysis is irreducible to other linguistic signs found in each individual text. Images of social and public space is reproduced through these texts and the privileged sign is ‘Norway’. In the texts exempt we saw that social space was semantically defined as a specific social arena - namely the ‘Norwegian prostitution market’, and that although texts contextualize and refer to other places such as ‘Nigeria’, ‘Norway’, ‘Developing countries’, ‘Africa’ or ‘Karl Johan’, the narrating focalization were directed towards the representation of social relations which exist within the prostitution market, as an entity specifically located within a Norwegian community. This means we can identify social space as symbolized and reproduced through the ‘Norwegian prostitution market’ as the privileged linguistic sign in the narrative discourse of the marked squeeze. This enables us to establish an idea of what is presented as ‘continuity’ and what is presented as ‘discontinuity’ in the presentation of social processes and events in this narrative discourse.

The Norwegian prostitution market is presented as something constant and stable, as ‘continuity’ (something that has, and will be), and what I call the ‘squeeze’ is presented as the ‘discontinuity’ (something new and disrupting). We also find what Fairclough (2003: 153-4) describes as representations of ‘space-times’, identified relationships between the ‘local’ (continuity) being interfered and including an international and ‘global’ scope - introducing what I termed a ‘squeeze’ (disruption to the local). The Norwegian market (as continuity) is inhibited by its demand of sex-workers; this demand is presented through the character ‘the customer’ and sexual desire. The discontinuity (the squeeze), is presented as an influx of foreign women who, as Nigerian women, were perceived as/part of/controlled by a mafia like, organised network of foreign criminals. The most interesting and relevant existential assumption here is that the ‘demand side’ (numbers of customers) in the Norwegian prostitution market is of limited extent, and that increased amount of women due to international and global circumstances, will not change this. Thereby the underlying assumption in this narrative discourse is that it is not an increased demand for sexual services that “pulls” foreign women to Norway, rather there exists external factors which “pushes”

foreign women into the Norwegian prostitution market – resulting in an ‘imbalance’ to the local economy and a ‘squeeze’ at the “offering” side. Hence, it is not an excessive and increasing marked ‘expansion’ of demand in the market which is described in these texts as the responsible factor; rather it is the ‘Norwegian prosperity’ and ‘good payment’ compared to other European countries which is presented as a “pull factor”.

Therefore there also exist a second underlying existential assumption, which is that ‘local’ changes in the market for commercial sex, or the so called ‘sex industry’ is part of a structural shift at a global level, where prostitution becomes, as other low status part of the labour market (legal and illegal), outsourced to individuals in structurally economical less powerful positions. It is organised networks of criminals who control, administer and profit on this. However in this narrative discourse, we find that the main focus is mostly directed at the competing interaction between the individuals presented in the category of ‘prostitutes’. The internal competition is between different groups with ethnic labels who fight for marked interests based on their available recourses. These resources present themselves as; knowledge to the marked and ethnicity. ‘Norwegian’ becomes an important linguistic sign for continuity, as it is the Norwegian ethnic group of women whose pre-existing market interest is threatened. The ‘threat’ is presented as having an outside and global source where ‘foreign’ and ‘Nigerian’ are linguistic signs for ethnic labels on actors. Thereby as the market is confined within Norwegian national state borders we can distinguish between the notions of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ forces active in the presented conflict.

I have so far presented and discussed the most important characteristics in the narrative discourse on the prostitution marked squeeze, and showed how this instance of narrative discourse is predominantly described as physically confined to street prostitution in Norway. The presented ideas of an intersection between ‘local’ and ‘global’ structures as active in the Norwegian prostitution market will be discussed further in ‘The Narrative Discourse of the Sexual Exploitation’, in chapter six. In the following chapter I will discuss how the Norwegian public becomes involved as characters in the newspaper coverage and present my second analytical category, which I have called ‘the narrative discourse of the public decency’.

Chapter 5. The narrative discourse of public decency

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should the government do something about the increasing whore traffic in town? Send us an SMS (...) or an email (...) you may also participate at the debate at Aftenposten.no.³⁰

Between 2004 and 2006 Nigerian women came to dominate street prostitution in numbers as well as in public attention, especially in Norway's biggest city and Capital, Oslo. Visible street prostitution is thematized as a public and social problem related to the moral and the social order³¹. Although street prostitution has been considered as a visible part of the urban setting in Oslo, it has been confined to specific areas and hence partly seen as of limited extent. However, when Karl Johan Street started attracting women in prostitution as an effective site for soliciting customers, Norwegian media did not fall short of reporting the distaste this caused in the public opinion. We shall examine these various images from the vantage point of more specific textual examples towards the more general descriptions of the newspaper coverage.

From the 'squeeze' to the 'expansion'

Prostitution is becoming a problem (...).

The fight for whore customers has become so immense that prostitutes in Oslo seek other areas than the traditional (...).

There has been an increasing amount of foreign prostitutes from Nigeria and Eastern Europe. Therefore, prostitution has grown out of the traditional Kavadraturen areas. Pro Senteret met 393 women from Nigeria last year, against 128 the year before. The African prostitutes, who often are being pressured by agents and pimps, are now dominating the street prostitution through aggressive and outgoing conduct.(...)

The police confirm that the central areas are now being used for inn-door prostitution. 30 addresses where these women sell sex have been registered by the police in a new report on foreign prostitutes.³²

³⁰ *Aftenposten Aften* - 27.04.2005

³¹ The discourse on transnational begging bears similarities and includes related discussions to what one can observe on visible street prostitution in the Norwegian public debates.

³² *Aftenposten Aften* - 23.03.2006

The police also reported to the newspapers that women picked up customers in areas near their homes, and the police officer Iver Stensrud from the Department of Organized Crime stated that “there is no longer a clear distinction between street prostitution and the indoor market”(ibid). However the bulk of my text corpus deals with the media discourse around the prostitution activity on or near Karl Johan Street in Oslo. Traditionally, the street prostitution in Norway has over a longer period been confined to specific locations within the urban setting. Because street prostitution was confined to well-defined areas, even within the Norwegian capital city of Oslo, it has been considered as controllable and manageable.

The geographical movement of prostitution was explained in relation to several circumstances. One, were that Kvadraturen as the “traditional” area for prostitution in Oslo had been intensely scrutinized for traffic by the police, which was presented as a contributing factor ‘squeeze’ in limiting the geographical space for street prostitution, and the increasing number of foreign women made the physical movement a necessary strategy in order to reach customers. Furthermore Nigerian women were presented as culturally different and as newly arrivers in prostitution in Norway they were also perceived as unfamiliar with Norwegian custom and norms as to how and where prostitution where tolerated.

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of Karl Johan Street as an emblem and embodiment of the Norwegian nation. The street runs from the Royal Palace (“Slottet”) past the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) and terminates in the Central Railway Station, the main hub for rail transportation in Norway. In a sense, this street alone connects all parts of Norway through bus, railroad and direct transportation to the domestic and international flight terminals. Along the street one can find numerous stores and Norway’s most prestigious hotels. This street can be said to be “The Street” with a big S, and have a symbolic meaning, as an idiom of Norway, its placement and institutional buildings being an important part of the Norwegian self awareness.

- You never see persistent prostitutes or beggars at Oxford Street in London or at Champs-Élysées in Paris. We have had higher standards of tolerance in Oslo. The reason is that organized begging and prostitution are new here.³³

Prostitution was presented as something new, or as having taken a new form which conflicted with the public order and Norway’s, and Oslo’s in particular, outward image towards tourists

³³ Erling Lae in *Dagbladet* - 03.06.2006

as well as with the decency of Norwegian citizens in general. Local authorities in Oslo had over a longer period preceding the presence of the Nigerian women in prostitution in several instances intervened with the so-called “unwanted elements” on Karl Johan Street. Prostitution was presented as a pressing problem, a problem which was “a matter out of place” as its scenery had shifted and had become more visible, inflicting upon the urban aesthetics. However speaking in terms of the different news stories and comments, we can identify an articulated social and public discomfort directed towards two main concerns. Firstly, extensive and visible prostitution is assumed to create public discomfort which might mobilize public reactions towards women in prostitution as well as result in an increased stigmatization of “innocent” individuals – other women with dark skin. The mainstream media predicted that this surge in visible street prostitution would make life harder for other non-white immigrants living in Norway. Like a contagion, the stigma of the prostitute would spread to other non-white women. However prostitution as a phenomenon which came with a contagious stigma attached to it was not only thematized in relation to specific groups of Norwegians, but also for geographical areas and streets.

As well, institutions such as REFORM and Pro Senteret were concerned that increased visibility of prostitution might decrease the social boundaries for men to buy sex³⁴. Hence it was feared that the ‘market squeeze’ was actually not limited to the physical confinement and the individuals involved, but might also develop in a ‘market expansion’. This implied that in contrast to the main underlying assumption of the marked squeeze, we find in this category of texts that the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway were seen as an ‘expanding’ force in prostitution, rather than a ‘squeezing’ force. The expansion was feared to not only relate to the physical confinement of the street prostitution scenery, increase number of customers, but also extend the span of social stigma connected to prostitution – socially as well as geographically. One also find a prominent theme related to a feared increasing numbers of foreigners in prostitution would increase the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the general population. I will discuss all the above themes closer in this chapter. First I will present an illustrative example expressing many aspects of the newspaper coverage in general at a particularly heated period of media attention.

³⁴ REFORM is a non-profit NGO who receives funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Gender Equality. The organisation functions among other things as a national centre for knowledge on men and promotes male perspectives in the media and the general public. Their vision is presented as “a society based on diversity and equality where power and care are shared independently of gender” see <http://www.reform.no/>

ULLEVÅL



TAR BUSSEN: De gateprostituerte går ut i horder fra hovedkvartent sitt ved 22.30-tiden om kvelden. Da tar de buss nummer 34 til Oslo sentrum for å skaffe kunder.



TIL SENTRUM: De pågående kroppsselgerne hopper av ved Oslo City og sprer seg strategisk til de forskjellige gatekryssene ved Skippergata. Kort tid senere dukker horekundene opp.



ALDRI FRØ: De nigerianske prostituerte tar ikke søndagsfri, og i går kveld var de i full aktivitet på strøket.



POLSK FLØRE: Det bor også en rekke polske håndverkere i brakkelighetene. Mens de prostituerte går ut for å jobbe, flørter og plystrer de polske arbeidere med de spesielle naboenes sine.

Av KADAFI ZAMAN
og ESPEN BRAATA (foto)

Midt blant sjokkerte barnefamilier på Ullevål ligger den nye basen til hovedstadens nigerianske prostituerte. Herfra reiser de ut i flokk til Oslo sentrum for å kapre horekunder.

Godt skjult i et rolig villastrok like ved Ullevål sykehus, ligger de brakkeliggende leilighetene som fungerer som rene bordeller, ifølge opprørte naboer.

Nå har de fått nok av klisnakkne kvinner og sex-kåte menn som raver rundt på gressplenen, mens naboenes barn er på vei til skolen om morgenen.

Mannen som har ansvar for utleie av leilighetene, William

De nigerianske prostituerte opererer fra sex-brakker

Bergesen (57), hevder han ikke kjenner til sex-salg.

– Ikke dokumentert

Utleieren mener dessuten at det kun bor fem til seks nigerianske jenter i boligkomplekset.

– Jeg har en vaktmester som er der fra ni om morgenen til seks om kvelden, og da har det ikke vært noen slik aktivitet. Jeg er også innom der selv av og til, og da foregår det aldri noe sånt. Hva som skjer på kveldstid må dokumenteres før jeg kan ta affære. Det samme har jeg sagt til naboer som klager, sier Bergesen.

Etter å ha fulgt de gateprostituerte på kloss i hold i helgen, kan VG i dag dokumentere det som har sjokkert naboen i det stille boligområdet:

Klokken 22.30 lørdag kveld kom den første flokken med 15 prostituerte ut fra leilighetene og satte kursen mot buss-holdeplassen. En time senere kommer neste horde ut. På den andre siden av gaten sitter familier og griller.

Pris: 200 kroner

Allerede på buss 34 begynte jentene å lage avtaler med sine faste kunder over telefon. Noen av dem tilbyr kroppen sin for 200 kroner.

De prostituerte deler seg deretter i grupper på to og to, og alle ender opp i horestroket rundt Skippergata og Kvadraturen. Minutter senere stopper privatbilens, og forhandler om pris. Noen får napp, andre venter. Slik fortsetter aktiviteten til morgentimene.

Mange av kundene tas med tilbake til jentenes leiligheter i hybelbygget i Ullevål-området. Ved midnatt er det skytetransport av drosjer. Bare på 15 minutter kunne VG observere seks drosjer med damer og kunder i alle aldre – fra tidlig i 20-årene til pensjonister.

Nå orker ikke naboenes lengger det åpenlyse kroppssalg. I går, midt på lyse dagen, satt flere av kvinnene på benker utenfor og drakk alkohol, mens polske håndverkere kladdet på dem. Ti meter unna lekte naboenes barn.

Politiet varslet

– Det hele er ekstremt synlig. Det begynner om kvelden, og da kommer damene ut i store puljer. Deretter kommer de tilbake med menn. Om morgenen, mens barna er på vei til skolen, står mannfolk utenfor på plenen og kler på seg,

sier en av de kvinnelige naboenes som varslet politiet i forrige måned.

Styreleder Anne Berit Berge i velforeningen er nå i dialog med politi, bydel og utleier for å finne en snarlig løsning. Hun har fått flere skriftlige klager om prostitusjonen.

VG er kjent med at naboenes også vurderer en aksjonsgruppe for å jage de gateprostituerte tilbake til sentrumområdet. Ingen av de prostituerte som VG forsøkte å snakke med i går, ville si noe om hvem som står bak virksomheten. Ifølge naboer har de sett jentene bære bagasje inn og ut av en luksusbil.

Drøyt 500 nigerianske prostituerte er aktive i Norge, også i Stavanger og Bergen, ifølge Pro-senteret. Majoriteten av de gateprostituerte har Schengen-visum, slik at de fritt kan reise på sex-turner rundt omkring i Europa – tre måneder av gangen.

E-post: kadafi.zaman@vg.no

HOREBY



” Om morgenene, mens barna er på vei til skolen, står mannfolk utenfor på plenen og kler på seg.

Kvinnelig nabo

NORSKE LØNNINGER I NORGE

LO ønsker utenlandske arbeidstakere velkommen til Norge. Men de skal ha norske lønns- og arbeidsvilkår. De skal ikke utryttes som billig arbeidskraft, eller brukes til å presse ned norske lønninger. Nå har regjeringen vedtatt en handlingsplan mot sosial dumping, og i tariffoppgjøret har LO-forbundene avtalt bedre regler for innsyn og kontroll.

Det nytter – når vi er mange.
Meld deg inn i et LO-forbund du også!



www.lo.no

LO PÅ
DIN
SIDE

Text excerpt “Ullevål Whoretown”

The presence of the Nigerian women in prostitution was seen as a pressing national issue of public interest. I have chosen to illustrate some discursive aspects by introducing a text excerpt which has been investigated by PFU (Pressens Faglige Utvalg, “The Press Expert Committee”) after a newspaper article received critique for the journalistic methods involved by PION (Prostituertes interesseorganisasjon i Norge, “Prostitution Interest Group In Norway”). In the statements given in the PFU document, what is otherwise so obvious in my material is explicitly expressed by the editor of the *VG* when he states that the complainant PION must “have the ability to see prostitution as a problem, not only for each individual prostitute, but for the Norwegian and the international community (...) As a newspaper we must have the right to problematize and describe openly prostitution, look at it from a broad perspective and refer to those objections which exist against the phenomenon – independent of whether the critiques have moral, medical or criminal political platforms. In this case the people that live in the villa area of Tåsen have the right to let their voice be heard. (...)”. (see Pressens Faglige Utvalg, 2006)

The article in question deals with a dispute over the presence of Nigerian women in a residential area of Oslo. The article, published in *Verdens Gang (VG)* on June 12th, 2006, leads in with the front page headline “Nigerian prostitutes bring customers to residential areas – Neighbours are furious”, and continues on the second page with the headline “Ullevål whoretown”. A sub-headline further on down the page screams: “The Nigerian prostitutes operate from sex shacks”. The article supplies some background information from Pro Senteret on the scope of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. The article’s primary topic is the angry reaction of the residents of one of Oslo’s upper middle-class neighbourhoods to the presence of “prostitutes”. The neighbourhood’s residents, according to the article, had quickly alerted the Oslo police after learning of their neighbours activities. According to the article, these residents were open to pursuing legal remedies in order to rid the area of the “disturbing elements” they found distasteful. The outraged residents were also considering bringing the lease-holder to court for violating Norwegian laws designed to prevent prostitution from operating out of residences³⁵.

35 The company Pastoral Holding AS bought the apartment buildings from the public agent Statsbygg. However, as the local authorities, Oslo Kommune, saw the apartments as unfit for family households, Pastoral Holding AS instead of raising the standard of the residencies rented them out to individual households, and according to the article was not aware that it was used for prostitution purposes.

In a typically sensationalistic manner the article presents the Nigerian women as if they were a highly organized group with the capacity to operate throughout the Oslo area. The article's leading sentence reads as follows: "Amidst the shocked many-children families at Ullevål lies the new headquarters for Oslo's Nigerian prostitutes. From here they travel to solicit their whore customers". In line with *VG*'s tabloid format the newspaper devotes only one fifth of the article's space to the actual reportage. The bulk of the space goes to photo illustrations of the "prostitutes". In fact, the first thing the reader sees are the multiple pictures designed to play on already established Norwegian stereotypes on "foreigners" and "prostitutes". The primary picture shows an image of a young dark-skinned female figure facing a white man who appears older than her. Even though the faces of the two figures are out of focus, the photo is clearly meant to depict a negotiation between the 'prostitute' and the 'customer'. The anonymity of the exchange is visually represented through the blurry and unrecognizable faces of the two figures, which also serve to fuse the illicitness of their meeting. The illustration has the caption "Polish flirt" and reads: "Several Polish workers also live in the apartments. While the prostitutes go to work, the Polish workers flirt and whistle at their special neighbours."

To the left of the main photograph we see three smaller photo illustrations which portray the women "in action". The first picture is entitled "taking the bus," and shows the women taking the evening bus into town. The caption tells us that "at 22.30 at night the prostitutes travel en masse from their headquarters. They take bus 34 to the centre of Oslo to find costumers". In the second photograph we see the women arriving to an urban area, presumably the centre of the city. This illustration has the title "To the city centre" and has the caption "the pushy body-sellers jump off at Oslo City and disperse strategically to the various intersections near Skippergata. After a short while the whore-customers appear". In the third and final photograph we see two dark-skinned females talking to a person sitting in a car. Here the title is "Never off-duty" and the caption reads "The Nigerian prostitutes do not take Sundays off, and yesterday there was substantial activity within the prostitution area". These photographs provide the reader a sense of face to face with what appears to be an "unmediated reality" (Hall 1997). These photo illustrations allow the reader to share a voyeuristically gaze at the young women. Moreover the images create the sense that the women are actively seeking out clients and aggressively expanding the market for their services. In this way, the pictures conjure up the prominent themes in this narrative discourse and produce an presentation of

Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as a media character in the figure of the “happy hooker”, who cheerfully sells her body to strangers.

Nowhere in the article does the journalist or photographer explain how the pictures were obtained. It remains unclear to the reader whether the women in the pictures authorized the photographs or even if they were aware of the journalists observing them. Although such activities do not violate the Norwegian law, the covert observation and stalking of people is not seen as an unproblematic practice for Norwegian journalists. In the “Ullevål whoretown” case, we can see how the Norwegian media handled the issue connected to the presence of Nigerian prostitutes in Norway. In particular, the case reveals how the journalists investigating the story relied on investigative techniques which might be considered unethical under other circumstances.

The article was, as I mentioned, reviewed by PFU. Responding to PION's accusations, the editor of the *VG* contended that the journalists had not violated ethical standards governing journalistic practice. He claimed that the newspaper had honoured its obligations of confidentiality towards the informants and had not misrepresented any facts. Moreover, the journalists had used traditional journalistic methods and had not perpetrated on private ground, as observations were done at public places and in public transportation. *VG* argued that PION had described Nigerian women as “very inapproachable” in an earlier report, and that the newspaper article had the intention to render visible the same conditions. “Neither we nor our interviewees have claimed that the Nigerian women do anything illegal”. The editor rather presented the story as “a good piece of journalism” about an especially contentious issue which deserved attention from the Norwegian media. Moreover, in his view, the newspaper had the responsibility of reporting on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway because it was such a serious issue for the public at a national level, as well as on the international agenda. According to the *VG* editor, all perspectives needed to be taken seriously, also the responses of the neighbours of such an activity. The article was not seen as violating any of PFUs criteria of ethical standards.

Public decency and public order

As argued by the *VG*, the issue of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway became of particular public interest. The fact that so many organizations took an interest in this case makes it clear that many organisations, not only tabloid newspapers, show how salient the issue had become to the Norwegian public. In several instances of text, journalists would interview “experts”, MPs and local politicians and ask them for solutions to the problem of the increased visible prostitution in public places. In several cases they would invite the readers to share their opinion. Often journalist did not need to ask questions, as citizens would contact the newspapers themselves or write letters to the editor on the issue: “Oslo is generously decorated with dog droppings, plastic bags, paper cups, cigarettes and other containers. Additionally we are being invaded by prostitutes and beggars. Clean up!”³⁶ Often readers would describe the phenomenon of visible and increased prostitution, or “the so called-trafficking, import/export of prostitutes”³⁷ as a shame for Oslo’s outward reputation, as a threat to their self-conception as dignified citizens. Often these letters of concerns on the state of society would sideline prostitution with deterioration and the loss of earlier characteristic quality or strength, and the politicians would be described as liberal or unmotivated to fight against the falling condition. At other times politicians would write columns or letters and share their thoughts on the matter. For instance, in a letter to the editor, one MP argues that; “aggressive prostitution is uncomfortable” and that his party “would not sit passively and observe an increasing number of law abiding citizens being harassed and demeaned by the behaviour of the cities’ street prostitutes”.³⁸

The Member of Parliament, Tybring Gjedde³⁹, also claims that Nigerian women, according to the police, are not all victims of trafficking, since they were not seen as subjected to force “of significant amount”⁴⁰. This argument coincides with several statements from police officers pointing out that the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway show more “signs of independence”. Thereby “signs of independence” was not only referring to the way they approached customers, but also to the extent of organized and forced prostitution. These sequences of text can be said to question the extent of a third-party controlled prostitution, however not the extent of poverty in Nigeria. Through such statements, for instance provided

³⁶ *Aftenposten Aften* - 27.04.2006

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ *Aftenposten Aften* - 04.04.2006

³⁹ Member of the Progress Party. *Frp*

⁴⁰ *ibid*

by MPs and by the police “experts” on trafficking, the presentation of Nigerian women in prostitution fitted more in line with the images of economic refugees rather than the existing images of trafficking victims.

Tybring Gjedde presented the question of whether women in prostitution were victims of trafficking or illegal immigrants as of secondary importance to the public discomfort they constituted. Along with many other MPs he argued that it made sense from a public decency standpoint to restrict the area in which the prostitutes could operate in Oslo, thereby making it necessary for the customers to seek out the prostitutes. Experts such as Liv Jessen at the Pro Senteret as well as the leader of REFORM joined in the chorus ‘of voices’ calling for stricter law enforcement designed to confine prostitution activities within particular geographical limits. However these propositional-assumption concerns were less about sexual harassment of men (as in the concern voiced by MP Tybring Gjedde), but rather based on an assumption that increased accessibility might decrease the tolerance towards the purchase of sex, and potentially lead to an increasing number of men purchasing sex.

Supporters of these measures feared that, once prostitutes were allowed to operate freely in the Oslo city centre and solicit customers anywhere in the downtown area, they would attract new customers, thereby enlarging the market for the prostitutes' services. In a number of articles predictions were made that, if exposed to the sight of attractive young women offering themselves for money, young Norwegian men might become accustomed to open prostitution as something normal. One article expressed the concern that a whole new market would come into being when young men encountered “the growing number of young and beautiful foreign girls who market themselves aggressively” on the streets of Oslo (*Aftenposten Morgen* 14.04.2004).⁴¹

The Norwegian Department of Children and Family Services hired a public relations agency in order to launch an ad campaign alerting customers and potential customers (especially young men) to the dreadful conditions under which the prostitutes lived and worked and their victimization by criminal organizations⁴². The ad campaign was begun in April 2006 as a part of the government's attempt to halt the trafficking of people into Norway. Young recruits in the Norwegian armed forces, particularly men sent overseas, were required to participate in an

⁴¹ Aftenposten Morgen - 14.04.2004

⁴² see for instance Aftenposten Morgen - 29.11.2005

education program dealing with human trafficking. Guiding these programs was the presumption that once men learned about the tragic realities of human trafficking they would refrain from buying sexual services from women they knew to be victims. However, this was not the only perspective on the issue of prostitution heard in the public debate taking place in Norwegian newspapers and other media outlets. For many politicians including Erling Lae, a representative from Oslo⁴³, it was the government's primary job to maintain public order in the streets. When public order was in jeopardy, the alleviation of poverty came in a distant second:

When prostitutes hang after men and almost tare their close apart or enter cars which stop at a red light – the limits have been reached. This is when a poverty problem becomes a problem of public order.⁴⁴

From this statement it is obvious that the government confronts a problem of 'public order' only when the prostitutes pursue the customers. When it is the men who are pursuing the prostitutes, the alleged threat to public order disappears.⁴⁵ Several other text items would also address the use of juristically law-enforcement by local policemen to 'clean up'. The police gave varying answers to the extent of their involvement and public responsibility. Nigerian prostitution on our doorsteps was described with words as "discomforting", but "normal" compared to other big European cities, and that it was a "prosperity phenomena"⁴⁶, and not, like Lae argued above a "poverty problem".

In newspaper coverage of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway I found a concern that men which were assumed to be naive, inexperienced to prostitution or due to innate masculine qualities potentially could be an easy trade for the exotic, young and aggressive female African charm. Furthermore I found an underlying assumption that men who otherwise would not indulge or seek prostitution might potentially be confused by alcohol or/as well as unexpected offers in a street or at a bar or at a night club, and that men might buy sex if their evenings were unsuccessful in other terms (such as not having any luck with

⁴³ Member of The Conservative Right Party, *Høyre*.

⁴⁴ *Dagbladet* - 22.05.2006

⁴⁵ Norwegian law-enforcement personnel tended to minimize the extent of the public order problem, however. Some police officers acknowledged that presence of the Nigerian prostitutes could be "discomforting," but cautioned against making too much of it. In comparison with other major European cities, Oslo was not home to a particularly large number of prostitutes. The arrival of prostitutes from other countries meant that Norway - and Oslo in particular - was now on the map as a place where customers could be found and substantial money could be made.

⁴⁶cf. *Aftenposten Aften* - 23.03.2006

other women). In the latter argumentation Norwegian men in general, whether they were able to refuse the offer or whether they accepted was portrayed as morally endangered by their biological gender, as much as of the aggressive style of the women. It seems as an underlying implication of these arguments related to men's participation in prostitution that there existed an assumption that not all men can be expected to reject sexual offers and accessible prostitution. This masculine 'vulnerability' constitutes a public problem when it is visible and when there is extended access to prostitutes, as it will make them deviant. Authorities of public order should then protect men from the access of prostitutes, as it will make them indulge and support organized crime and trafficking.

Prostitution as an issue of public order, often referred to by critics as a renovating issue, opens it up for certain political strategies. For instance uniformed police officers started patrolling Karl Johan Street to get control and decrease the activity, as well deporting women and shutting down venues and hostels seen as operating as brothels for prostitution around Kvadraturen. That "traditional police work" had been curtailed by legislation in 2000 and publicly criticized of punishing the victims, was often referred to by the police stating that they had no jurisdiction over prostitution nor any moral obligations to the public. However at the end of 2006, after continuous public and political pressure, Oslo council agreed to use local police enforcement against uncomfortable or aggressive conduct at public places, more specifically targeting begging and prostitution⁴⁷. How individual police officers were to define which kind of sexual offering which was perceived as aggressive or uncomfortable was not stated. However the directorate of police affairs have not confirmed this local initiative, as it were seen as an attempt to locally criminalise begging and prostitution (see e.g., Aftenposten Aften 25.04.2007).

What set the stage for this campaign was the framing of the issue as a problem of public order maintenance. Because of the foreign status of the Nigerian prostitutes, and their alleged links to organized crime, the issue of public order also assumed an international dimension. The presentation of "foreign" and "unwanted" elements such as beggars and prostitutes within Norwegian territory was not only about keeping Karl Johan "clean" and uncorrupted, but a call for protecting Norwegian territory and its citizens as an overall achievement⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ These issues were also brought up as parliamentary issues See eg . Innst.S.nr.165 (2006-2007) <http://www.stortinget.no/inns/2006/200607-165-002.html> and Dok.nr.8:39 (2006-2007) <http://www.stortinget.no/dok8/dok8-200607-039.html>

⁴⁸ It is interesting to note, that parallel to the growth of public attention of this particular group, the number of Nigerian citizens who were denied access to Norwegian territory at the airports increased. Skilbrei, Tveit and Brunovskis (2006) found that even though internal Schengen flights were not normally controlled, flights from for instance Milano suspected of carrying Nigerian women, would have increased control, as such flight assumed carrying Nigerian citizens were controlled more often than other flights, even though this was not officially ordered by any jurisdiction. In my material I found the customs themselves articulated intentions to a

Contagious stigma

Women who had nothing to do with street prostitution reported to the newspaper that they found that they had to deal with a moral and social stigma on top of the racial stigma they already suffered from as a result of their appearance and skin colour:

The police report that the prostitutes have begun to “expand the traditional districts for prostitution”. But, their reports do not describe how the prostitutes also expand the perceptions of what kinds of work a dark girl does. It feels difficult to tolerate this perception. In 2005 my own personal reality moved towards a reality where people serve as commodities.⁴⁹

On the streets of Oslo and other Norwegian cities, non-white women risked being mistaken for prostitutes by men who wanted to purchase sexual services. Media reported that men sexually harassed the women or hurled racist epithets at them. Women reported that public establishments would turn them away or decline to accept them as customers, explaining that they did not want to deal with that “kind of women” or stating that they did not allow prostitution. Some women attended social events where they had to endure questions from white Norwegians about their relationship to the Nigerian “prostitutes”.

In journalists presentations, comments, as well as in letters to the editor, it was common for the women who felt stigmatized and participating in the public debate on prostitution to distance themselves from the Nigerian prostitutes and to emphasize their membership in the community of “Norwegians”. It seems that in order to achieve a legitimate position in the public discussion it was a common and/or a necessary strategy to distinguish themselves from the “undesirables”, as these women would let slip their own citizenship status, the duration of their stay in Norway, educational background or social status. Ironically, in the effort to differentiate themselves from the women in prostitution, it also served to reproduce two major axes of division which served to exclude these women in the spheres of “moral concern” (Zeruvabel 1993: 41). By classifying themselves as “chaste” or as “proper” women - as opposed to sexually promiscuous “fallen women” - and “real” Norwegians - as opposed to foreigners, illegal immigrants, and other outsiders - they affirmed the moral relevance of these group boundaries.

strengthened cooperation between customs and local police in the case of trafficking, and argued that more of the problems could be stopped at the border.

⁴⁹ *Aftenposten Aften* - 29.12.2005

Contagious diseases

Before they came to Norway, many of the prostitutes had already been out on their «Tour of Europe». It would be a surprise if none of the ones who newly have arrived to Norway is HIV-positive, says professor at the Rikshospitalet Stig Frøland.⁵⁰

The text excerpt above is drawn from an article which addresses the health risks faced by men who engage in sexual relationships with foreign prostitutes (and by extension the health risks faced by their own sexual partners). The story's lead-in “whore customers are gambling - record numbers of prostituted women are HIV-positive” singles out Russian and Nigerian women in prostitution as “disease vectors” for the spread of HIV and other STDs into the general Norwegian population. The Norwegian health authorities, particularly, recommended that men refrain from engaging in sexual relations with prostitutes. If they chose to do so, they were advised to use protection. The health authorities issued health alerts regarding the HIV status of twelve of the foreigners working in prostitution, although no allegations were made that the women had transmitted HIV to their male customers⁵¹. Warning men from the health risk involved in prostitution was also part of the general campaigns issued by the Department of Children and Family.⁵² The theme of contagious diseases was also a prominent theme in letters to the editors:

Norwegian authorities wants to help Nigerian women who operate in Norway. Why not just get them out of the country immediately? They represent, if nothing else, a great health risk, as they come from a continent of high rates of HIV/AIDS. Are they to be given bigger apartments, or what?⁵³

Sweden did the right thing when they criminalized the purchase of sex (...) Prostitutes now coming from Eastern Europe and Africa are seeking other countries in which to do their business. This means an increased risk of Tuberculosis, Hepatitis, HIV and AIDS for Norwegians.⁵⁴

In these declarations, the diseases which were listed as threats were typically referred to as “the African diseases”, particularly AIDS/HIV. This identification of the diseases as having a foreign and especially African origin was in line with the traditional Norwegian discourse on contagious diseases as something coming from “outside” the country. In Norway, as many other countries, Africa has had a special status within this discourse as the origin for the most

⁵⁰ VG - 16.06.2006

⁵¹ No cases in which men contracted HIV from prostitutes were ever documented in the official reports in the mass media.

⁵² See e.g., *Aftenposten Aften* - 29.03.2006

⁵³ *Dagbladet* - 22.05.2005

⁵⁴ *Aftenposten Aften* - 02.06.2005

virulent diseases. Thus, in these texts, we can see how pre-existing understandings of disease as literally foreign function to ignite a panic over the health consequences of the increased presence of foreign women in prostitution.

In some instances of texts the alleged health risks posed by the prostitutes were used to buttress positions on both sides of the prostitution issue. Some invoked the risks when arguing for a policy of criminalizing prostitution. Others contended that the best way to mitigate the health risk was to regulate prostitution through the establishment of designated brothels and “red-light districts”, where the government could keep an eye on prostitution activities. The focus is at how ‘prostitutes’ spreads STDs to customers, not the other way around - despite the fact that it has been clinically documented that STDs are more easily transmitted from men to women than the other way around (Pheterson 1996, Stenvoll 2002).

As pointed out by several studies worldwide (Hunt 1999, Pheterson 1996, Stenvoll 2002, Sullivan 1997, Zatz, 1997), legitimating restrictive policies and regulations of prostitution has often been legitimized as health measures, aimed at protecting women in prostitution, customers and the public against the spread of disease. Historically, European governments have often sought to subject prostitutes to various forms of supervision and control. Like many other European countries in the 19th century, Norway mandated that prostitutes undergo medical examinations by police physicians. The underlying idea was that by controlling a smaller group of the population – the prostitutes, one would be able to protect their customers and hence prevent spreading diseases to their wives and families (Koren 2003)⁵⁵. Most importantly, the 19th century method did not require the government to take an active role in promoting the “responsibilization” of its more morally “fit” private citizens, i.e. the men who availed themselves of sexual services. The government made no effort to wean men away from this “vice”, preferring to foster the public ethics of social order and social hygiene, rather than the private ethics of “responsible masculinity” (cf. e.g. Rose 1996: 70-5).

⁵⁵ The system had its origin from France at 1800 until 1960 and was implemented in several other western European countries such as Norway. In Bergen 1816 and Kristiania 1840. However the arrangement only lasted a few decades and rested upon local commune policing regulations, and was abandoned in Kristiania in 1888, and some later in Bergen and Stavanger (Melby 1980).

Mapping out the lines of social tolerance and public decency

So far I have presented two of the three narrative and thematic structures in my text corpus consisting of 247 items of text. These narratives, it should be recalled, are structured around thematizations including a set of recognizable characters joined together in particular kinds of relationships. It is by examining lexemes and their semantic relationships that we find out how these characters are presented and how they are linked to each other (Fairclough 2003). In the texts, each of these positions can be held by a number of different social actors. In this way, we can see stark contrasts when juxtaposing different images of the same character. In the organized crime discourse, the Nigerian women in prostitution are represented as passive victims suffering at the hands of ruthless (foreign) manipulators. In the public-order discourse, these same individuals come across as overly aggressive agents who are trying to master their own economic fate by plying their trade in “unfamiliar places”.

‘Public and visible prostitution’ is the privileged linguistic sign informing the texts which rely on the public decency narrative. The term ‘Nigerian’ does not have the same connotative meaning as it would have if it were standing on its own without any relation to this privileged linguistic sign. The privileged sign ‘Nigerian’ cannot be translated into any other signifiers; it is irreducible. The identifier ‘Norwegian’ also stands as an indispensable term. Both Nigerian and Norwegian refer to individuals and to collective aspects of identity. The Norwegians are typically constituted, both at the collective and the individual level, as innocent victims or bystanders in relation to the prostitution phenomenon, while the Nigerians are represented as the violators of order and decency and as “foreign bodies”, who have contaminated the Norwegian “social body”. Drawing the lines between the “inside” and the “outside” has a parallel and is here dependent on the distinction of “normal” and “deviant” which functions to draw the line of social tolerance and public decency, placing the “undesirables” or “unwanted” elements as “outsiders” (Becker 2005). But just as these women are rendered as “other” so that they may be cast as outside the sphere of moral concern (Zeruvabel 1993), they are portrayed as the perpetrators of the social system.

It is the rhetoric of purity and danger (Douglas 1996) which underpins the metaphors in the public decency/public hygiene narratives. Embedded in this narrative we find conceptions of purity and impurity, whether social, moral, or physical. The symbolic distinction pure/impure, as Douglas argues in “Purity and Danger”, functions at a sociomental level (Zeruvabel 1997),

to enable boundary-drawing between “us” and “them”. This drawing of boundaries keeps the societal system in order (Douglas 1996). When “foreign” prostitutes are relegated to the “them” or “the other” category along with the criminals, beggars, drug users, trash and dog droppings, they are stripped of their humanity and placed at the fringes of the Norwegian community. Further, because they are associated with the impure, the presence of these prostitutes can be construed as a chaotic and disruptive influence undermining social order.

Sexual boundaries, as social boundaries are not only spatially and temporally constructed (Nagel 2003). And like ethnic boundaries, sexual boundaries can be cultural, “for instance we can ask where and when sexuality is enacted and accomplished – where are the boundaries of various sexualities and sexual events located in time and space?”(Ibid: 47). By this Nagel refers to how ideas about sexual activities are also bound to a geographical location. Therefore in a similar vein, we may at any given location, such as in a city, map out a geographical confinement of sexual activities, where some places or zones are seen as sexually segregated. As we saw in the case of Karl Johan, the status of the symbolic meaning attach to this particular geographical area were seen as “off limits” for prostitution. As well, the “Ullevål whoretown” case provides a second example on the social ‘disruption’ that occurred when the lines between what was considered “abnormal” and “indecent” sexual activity became blurred and “unwanted elements” inflicted upon areas with a specific symbolic meaning attached to - residential areas for middle class families with children did not match with prostitution. Prostitution is presented as essentially morally and hygienically corrupting, breaching the barrier between the commodifiable and non-commodifiable and entailing risks not only for the prostitute and the customer but for the members of the Norwegian community in a broad sense. It seems evident that public fear of social and moral breakdown is mobilised when the physical confinement of prostitution interfered with what was considered normal, safe and predictable.

The character of the ‘Nigerian prostitute’ thus condenses many different types of moral impurity into a single character. In the texts, ethno-racial identity, sexual practices, occupation, and foreignness are all used as descriptors putting her as a character outside. In the hands of the media, the character of the ‘Nigerian prostitute’ becomes bound up with ‘disruption’, ‘imbalance’ and ‘discontinuity’. Because the “Nigerian prostitutes” are from abroad, particularly presented as descending from the “developing world”, they are not just seen as transgressors of moral boundaries and as sources of moral pollution. As migrant women who

have crossed many political and territorial boundaries, they literally constitute “matter out of place”, people without any assigned position within the political and moral collectivity. As a member of a stigmatised ethno-racial or ethno-sexual minority, they are not presented as supplied with a legitimate claim of membership in the Norway, where the majority of the population are ethnical marked ‘white’.

Further, as black women, “Nigerian prostitutes” in Norway is presented as the bearer of a threatening kind of sexual aggressiveness which “properly” belongs to men. In this way, their behaviour undermines accepted gender categories as well. Presentations of Nigerian women in prostitution as “hunting” can be said to be highly suggestive. Such images of the Nigerian women present them as sexually active and promiscuous and “out of touch” with the norms governing “traditional” and “normal” feminine conduct in Norway. Media presentations of the Nigerian women in prostitution as “hunting”, whether the word was used explicitly, or whether it was used in a general sense, puts them at odds with the gendered norms guiding social interactions between men and women. Perhaps most insidious was the undermining of the Norwegian men’s self-control by using aggressive seduction tactics which these men might be able to resist. In all of the media accounts, the men were portrayed as helpless in the face of these “hard-sell” tactics. When the media accounts described the women as “hijacking” men in taxis stopping at red lights, “hunting” for Christmas party guest, and “louring”, “deceiving”, and “hustling” potential customers at public pedestrian areas such as Karl Johan Street, they were constituting the Nigerian women as usurping the male role of the sexual initiator. Media discourses also reproduced the common racialized imagery of the “African” or “black woman’s” sexuality as uncontrollable and animalistic.

Chapter 6. The narrative discourse of sexual exploitation

“The newest thing is voodoo-threatened women in the streets. They are Nigerian women and sell their bodies in order to buy back their souls.”⁵⁶

The third and the last of the three narrative discourses, which I will present, of the newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, has its focal point on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as part of a global sexual exploitation of women. Images of “modern slavery”, “sexual slavery”, but also of “ritual slavery” are an important part of these texts, and textually allocate Nigerian women as victims of injustice. The presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway is given in relation to asymmetrical social and economic relationships, between the rich and the poor, and between women and men.

Sex or death?

Texts which I have placed under the category ‘narrative discourses of sexual exploitation’ are the texts which fit alongside general popular thematization of transnational prostitution and human trafficking, existing over a longer period of time, previous to the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway (see e.g. Pedersen 2001, Stenvoll 2002, Skilbrei 2003). These stories focus on the forms of control which exist in the relationships between agents and women, and the conditional space which these women have to exercise their agency within. The main plots center on how young women become victims of organized crime. With promises of a better future and a job (i.e. “normal” job opportunities not prostitution), or potential marriage opportunities, foreign women are forced, lured, coerced or deceived into prostitution by cynical profiteers.

On the entry to the designated country, for instance Norway, the agents or traffickers confiscate these women’s passports, and the potential employer or husband turns out to be in liaison with the person, agency or network who arranged the migration. Hence, these women find themselves trapped in a slavery-like condition, where women are exploited for

⁵⁶ *Dagbladet* - 30.10.2004

prostitution purposes. This entrapment of women is often referred to as “trafficking”, “modern slavery”, or “sexual slavery”. The presented responsible and driving force of this exploitation is the male customers’ sexual demand which exists in a structural liaison with a cynical criminal network of international criminals. Consequently, the women who are subjected to force for purposes of sexual exploitation in Norway, are left with two alternatives: either they escape their traffickers and return home with shattered hopes and a stolen soul, or they report their traffickers to the police, hope to be taken seriously and be protected, themselves and their families, from further crime.

In the narrative of sexual exploitation of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, we find a prominent theme of asymmetrical relationships: between men and women, and between the ‘rich’ and the ‘poor’. Norwegian news coverage of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway is thematized along these lines through headlines such as “Explosive increase of Nigerian prostitutes in Oslo threatened with voodoo rituals”,⁵⁷ “sex or death”, “I am a slave - a sex-slave”,⁵⁸ “Forced to prostitute after a witch-pact”.⁵⁹ The asymmetrical relationship is more specifically tied to social agents positioned between the economically rich Norwegian men and economically poor Nigerian women within the Norwegian borders, between Nigerian traffickers and Nigerian victims of crime. Force in prostitution is thematized as violence and threat in this narrative discourse; however the notion of force is also constituted within the discourse on Nigerian superstition and black magic.

Nigerian women in prostitution: a poverty or a prosperity problem?

The problem is Nigeria (...)

We have to accept that women of poverty perpetrate on the Norwegian idyll. Christian Krohgs Albertine have been replaced with Rachel from Nigeria (...)

This is about poverty, misery, dictatorship, violence, murder and the sale of human beings. At the end of this line we find the profiteers (...)

Since the 1990s an increasing number of Nigerian women have become victims of trafficking, often for prostitution purposes. In the oil-rich country Nigeria only a few percents of the population become rich. Foreign companies, such as Statoil, have so far done nothing to change a culture of corruption which takes the courage from millions of poor Nigerians (...)

⁵⁷ *Dagbladet* - 13.02.2005

⁵⁸ *Dagbladet* - 23.03.2006

⁵⁹ *VG* - 12.02.2006

The only thing that is sure is that new floods of women will be imported. There is too much money to earn on the misery. This is how the globalized world has become.⁶⁰

In the texts above we see that the social space is localized at its most extensive scale, as something all other social spaces find its place within. In the narrative of sexual exploitation, although some texts refer to other social or geographical spaces, such as Nigeria, the developing countries, and Norway or Karl Johan Street, the main focus is on the structural and global level all characters, more or less explicitly mentioned, are allocated within. By this, the narrative also becomes exhaustive in its presentation as the privileged sign becomes “globalized sex market”. The images of a sex market are placed at the transnational and global level, where human bodies are trafficked between different nationally situated prostitution markets. Female bodies are perceived as objects of economic exchange, and the demand side of this market is presented as commodification of the male sexual demand. More specifically, prostitution in this sense is presented as a local male sexual demand which is met at a global level by cynical profiteers, and by the female economic need as a motive for migration. Women’s migration process is mostly described on the one side as individually motivated (such as through economical aspirations of a potential job), and on the other side, structurally determined (global injustice).

In chapter five we saw that a “poverty problem” was presented as having transformed into a problem of “public order”. In this sense prostitution as a phenomenon was accordingly presented as essentially a poverty problem. At the same time, other voices inherently referred to the “poverty” and the “public order” problems, rather than as a “prosperity problem”, arguing the condition to be a consequence of the relationship between Nigeria as the source of (poor) women and Norway as the “prosperous” designated country for prostitution (Norwegian men presented as rich). Presenting the issue in relationship to the ideas of “poverty problems”, “public order problems” and “prosperity problems” is a process of abstraction, and inherently also imbued with the ideas of agency and responsibility. On the one hand, these operations produce representations of ‘process’, and on the other hand, they create representations of ‘actors’ (Fairclough 2003: 140-1). Such abstractions of what this problem inherently ‘is’ do not occur coincidentally or oppositional in this case. Rather, these representational operations reflect general ideas in the immigration discourse of “push-” (Nigerian poverty) and “pull-” (Norwegian prosperity) processes working together at a global

⁶⁰ *Dagbladet* - 29.06.2006

level. These representational operations also reflect existential assumptions which are worth taking a closer look at.

A prosperity problem – Norwegian customers

One prominent thematization of the “prosperity problem” as a pull factor for the Norwegian prostitution market in my material was that the traffickers chose Norway as the designated country for prostitution. For one, Norway was presented as a country of liberal policies towards prostitution, at the same time as Norwegian consumers were presented as being able and willing to pay more for sexual services than for instance people in other European countries. Seen this way, it was the market for sexual services that was presented as the end of the global commodity chain, as it was argued that the demand created the market in the first place. As a consequence, the increasingly pressing issue of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, and the visible and aggressive street prostitution, awoke a raise in the already existing criminalizing debate. It was argued that the Norwegian authorities should use legislative power in order to de-commodify prostitution by criminalizing prostitution customers, or as several voices articulated it “put the responsibility where it belongs”.

In my material male customers were predominantly talked about, not interviewed. Except for a few textual items of personal interviews with male customer and some smaller comments from customers, such as, for instance, an anonymous transcript of telephone calls to a newspaper, the buyer of sexual services is, if at all mentioned, exclusively referred to in the third person. In the general news coverage, the customers are predominantly presented as “car traffic”, anonymous and distant. On the abstract level, the customers are presented as a collective group constituting the demand-side of the exchange, such as in the narrative of the market squeeze (cf. chapter 4), or they are objectified, as in “the deal” the prostitutes compete over⁶¹.

As for the few longer text items presenting more explicit images of an actual buyer of sexual services, the texts would partly present male customers as motivated through the ideas of physical need, seeing sexuality as healthy and as a basic human need. Turning to prostitution was presented as a solution due to personal lack of time or/as well as “skills” with women.

⁶¹ Scholars have argued that this objectification process is a counterstrategy against their own objectification and vulnerability against violence. Objectification can also be such as describing and evaluating/stratifying male customers on the basis of their appearance, their economic resources. (Andrijasevic 2004).

Themes of shame and guilt would also be reoccurring in these texts. For instance, in one of the few interviews with a customer, one man stated that he was aware of trafficking victims, violence and coercion and therefore preferred Norwegian girls who he referred to as having entered prostitution voluntarily.⁶² In the following I will present excerpts of texts from this interview:

He is 37 years old, lives in Oslo, runs his own firm and has a decent salary. The man, who sits in front of us, looks like a regular Norwegian man. But every now and then – not as often as weekly, but several times in a six-month period – he buys sex from women in the capital (...) He knows that several of the foreign women are working under coercion and inhumanly conditions. He himself argues that he always buys sex from Norwegian girls. With one exception:

- about two months ago I bought from an African girl. I don't know which country she was from. It was mostly to try it out, but it will be the first and the last time. We couldn't communicate. She didn't speak English. I didn't think about it there and then, that she was forced, even if I really knew. I have a feeling that none of the foreign girls do it voluntarily. Therefore I only buy from Norwegians, often girls whom I have bought from before.

Old pig. The 37 year old is one of the 1,4 percent of Norwegian men who buy sex on a regular basis. Approximately 13 % of all Norwegian men have bought sex once or more (...).

- I see myself as a normal guy. Many of the other customers I consider to be old pigs. Maybe they think I am. The society looks at me like an old pig. But I don't fit in those places, and I think it is tacky to be there. When I have left a woman I think "fuck, how stupid am I" every time. But I respect them for what they do. And most of the Norwegian girls chose it themselves. That's better. Then it isn't so bad for me to do it either (...).

- why do you do it?

- Isn't it obvious? I am single, and it is easy. I am too old to pick up women in town, and I don't feel I am very good at it. By buying sex one covers a physical need there and then. (...)

I don't really know who is the typical customer. You have all kinds of men. Boys at 17–18 and people around 70. Many drive company-cars, others have a child's seat in the back seat (...)

The girls tell me it has become more violent. I have heard of a girl who was picked up by several men in a car, driven to an apartment where 5-6 other men were waiting, before they did her as they wanted.⁶³

⁶² *Dagbladet* - 18.10.2004

⁶³ *Dagbladet* - 18.10.2004

In this specific text item the man had bought services from an African woman, but referred to this as a mistake. In the article interview the male customer of sexual services emphasized the stigma attached to his actions, and that he was reluctant to talk about it with his peers. He justified his involvement and distanced himself from the customers as a collective group, and argued that he himself did not want to be seen as “sunken so low” or as an “old pig”. He was presented by the journalists as looking like a normal man, 37, and he himself argued that customers varied in age and social status.⁶⁴ This concurs with other text which contained images of the customers as a collective group, stated that the estimated 13% of Norwegian men who buy sex once or several times are considered to be just about “anyone”, varying in age and from all social layers, but that most purchases are done outside the Norwegian borders, on business trips or vacations.

Although one might find various images of the customer in the newspaper coverage, varying in civil status, age and nationality, the dominating image of the customer, however, is a man as inherently weak of flesh and in moral capacity.⁶⁵ All in all, men and masculinity in general, in most of my texts (men as potential customers, as well as the actual purchasers of sexual services) were overwhelmingly portrayed in negative terms. Most often, men suspected of prostitution involvement were presented as either lacking in integrity, moral standards, emotional capacity, or human empathy. While some referred to this as a biological discrepancy, others saw it as a cultural one, and related to the unequal gender roles in the Norwegian society, as well as the unequal gender relations globally. Some saw men as conditioned by a constant state of sexual frustration.

The idea that the economic power can accommodate human demand, is part of our society. That is why young men increasingly buy themselves an ejaculation rather than pick up women in town (...) I am one of those who believe that men go totally crazy if they don't have sex.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Average age of customers is 39 (Smette 2003)

⁶⁵ In the Norwegian language, there exists two foul words to utter of customers in prostitution: “whorecustomer” (horekunde) and “whoregoat” (horebuk). Although the use of the words has a derogative connotation and could be considered abusive, it has no parallel to the more extensive use of the word “whore”. Although “whorecustomer” as well as “whoregoat” are considered as stigmas attached to men who purchase sexual services, the meanings attached would not indicate a male equivalent to the word “whore”, hence the use would not indicate being “loose” or “promiscuous”, as this is not defined as a deviant male behaviour and it is often argued that these words are utterances of stigma which is more attached to meanings of female purity and honour than men's purity and honour.

⁶⁶ *Dagbladet* - 30.10.2004

The fear that the increased visible prostitution would decrease men's reluctance to engage in prostitution fused the argument that it was part of the combat against modern slavery and sexual exploitation of women, to curb Norwegian men's ability to support organized crime, either by information campaigns or by legislation. The interesting aspect of the thematization of customers is that by the same token as some Norwegian men were described as social deviants, violators and sexual victimisers and exploiters, Norwegian men were in general also described as "morally better" than foreign men. This occurred for instance in relationship to the descriptions of men who serviced outside the Norwegian territory, it came as an underlying assumption that these men had to protect themselves from the influence and practises of other foreign men, as foreign men were presented as more frown to engage in prostitution than Norwegian men.

Propositions of criminalisation were mostly presented as in line with the political interests of the more radical feminists such as Ottar, as well as on the other hand the conservative and family-friendly Christian People's Party (Krf). Reluctance dominated propositions of criminalisation at the early stage of the media coverage on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, and MPs seemed unwilling to discuss the matter in 2004 and 2005. However from 2005 and towards 2006, I observed an increasing willingness to discuss the matter as it also was met by the interest of other more conservative parties besides the Christian People's Party (Krf), as well as socialist parties such as the Socialist Left Party (SV). The arguments are varied and can not be given an account for here. However, a general argument is that it is seen as hypocrisy to condemn human trafficking on one level, and accommodate a market for it on the other. The target of this general willingness to accommodate the issue of street prostitution specifically and trafficking generally became the male customers as well as the potential customers seen as the responsible individuals as well as a particular collective group.

Propositions of policy to criminalize the customer as a political and symbolic tool, were also presented as an effective measure to control and handle visible street prostitution. Mostly it was presented as an effective way to fight against trafficking and a necessary governmental intervention to address the structural asymmetry, where men were presented in a structurally higher position than women (foreign women especially). At a structural level, the symbolic and political effect of such a criminalization would also function to define the social boundaries of acceptable masculine sexuality, as well as intimate relationships without an economical exchange. Additionally, as the male demand for sexual services was presented as

being the “pull-factor” in the process of trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation, Norwegian men buying sex were directly supporting an organised networks of criminals and indirectly jeopardizing the “decency” of the Norwegian territory – therefore one needed to “place the responsibility where it belonged”.

On the other hand, the propositions of criminalization of customers in prostitution can also be seen in connection to a longer history of regulating various sexual deviances, in law as well as in the moral codes within Norwegian territory (Stenvoll 2002). The image of the “whore-customer” as pathetic and morally suspicious corresponds to two existing social stereotypes of men. One of the unsuccessful, sexually frustrated, lonely and unattractive male outside the conventional intimate relationships, and the second – the image of all men as conditioned by their sexual appetite and as inherently being of double standards.

As a third theme related to the increasing willingness to support propositions of criminalisation of customers, one might also be willing to consider less obvious aspects. Considering the immense reactions and public discomfort related to visible prostitution, as well as the negative stereotype of male customers, being male and being approached by a prostitute at a public space can also be seen as constituting a symbolic threat to those men who perceived their identity positioned within the legitimate forms of masculinity. And seeing that several men reacted negatively towards visible street prostitution and actively uttered these feelings in public media, one might interpret the increased support towards propositions of criminalisation as a counter strategy by some of the 87% men who do not wish to be associated with prostitution. Considering the public discomfort described in more detail in chapter five, against the public and visible prostitution, disavowal and condemnation of public prostitution might serve as a counter strategy in order to avoid suspicion, and at the same time morally distancing them from the prostitution stigma.

A poverty problem – Nigerian crime

Poverty, deprivation, underdevelopment and superstition can be seen as common denominators for various sub-themes in my material. The presence of Nigerian women as victims of larger structural dynamics like poverty, lack of resources, lack of functional government in Nigeria and also “African” underdevelopment and poverty - these images are expressed in liaison with already existing discourses on poverty and underdevelopment in the African continent. The prominent thematization of corruption and economic need in Nigeria constructs an image of Nigerian women

as easy targets for criminal traffickers. In order to combat Nigerian woman's vulnerability, the Norwegian government launched an informational campaign for Nigerian women informing of the dangers which potentially awaited them if they migrated.⁶⁷ In *Dagbladet* (06.07.2005) one could read that:

Department of foreign affairs will use half a million to scare Nigerian girls from going to Norway as prostitutes. (...)

- When you sit at a kitchen table in Nigeria, have six siblings to feed, it becomes easy to believe promises of a job as a waitress or a dancer, says Secretary of State Rita Sletner (The Liberal Left Party 68) in the department of justice. (...)

- We have to reach out with the reality that awaits them. Many are deceived into a miserable life and know nothing about the circumstances they end up in, says Helgesen (The Conservative Party 69), Secretary of State, Department of Foreign Affairs. (...)

Informational campaigns directed towards women in Nigeria, as with the informational campaign directed towards potential customers in Norway, were presented as part of the general plan against trafficking. Not only did the presence of Nigerian women in Norway evoke expressions of concern, but also expressions of governmental alert. Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway were often presented as a symbol of injustice and failing distribution of resources at a global level, stressing the lack of choice these women had. Some voices claimed that involvement in prostitution was caused by poverty and desperation incomprehensible for Norwegians.

Transnational prostitution and trafficking was also presented as a question of national security. Norwegian international relations would in cases where trafficking was discussed, directly pinpoint trafficked women as a sign and a symbol of not only a need for global development, but also of a need to strengthen border controls and international policing relations and jurisdiction. The overwhelming expressions of concern related to unequal distribution of economical power, thus, for example, the newspaper coverage with rare exceptions, were predominantly less about the African or Nigerian development, and more about Nigeria as a source of crime. It was most often, with few exceptions, the organizers of crime who dominated the discussions and presentations of trafficking of women. Thereby trafficking as an international and social problem was reduced to a constructed network of individual criminals, which nobody was able to explicitly identify.

⁶⁷ The campaign was inspired by earlier conservative party (*Høyre*) minister Erna Solberg in order to stop the so-called "ungrounded" asylum seekers from the Balkan countries, also known as Erna TV. (cf. *Dagbladet* 06.07.2005)

⁶⁸ Venstre

⁶⁹ Høyre

Some texts, especially among those allocating the police in authoritative roles as experts, place the issue of Nigerian women in prostitution along the same categorical lines of organized crime and terror. The use of metaphors like “war”, “battle” and “fight” against the organized crime would often appear in these texts. The organizers of crime are generally not presented as single individuals but as a loose network of criminals working together. Thus, in explicit descriptions of the Nigerian mafia, links would often be drawn to their “colleagues” in Eastern Europe, as they too were seen as a difficult task for the Norwegian police force and jurisdiction. Nigerian mafia is seen as a part of an extensive international network of organized criminals which appears in the terminology of war and combat over market interests in hustling, drugs, smuggling, human trafficking and prostitution. Most often these texts point the issue of public order and prostitution towards the “Nigerian mafia” as the source of crime and prostitution. However, it is also argued that some Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway possess legal papers stating rights of residency in Spain and Italy and thereby, according to the Schengen agreement, have the legal right to stay in Norway for the duration of up to three months at a time. It is then argued that these papers are the results of pro-forma agreements arranged by the Nigerian mafia, and this identifies all Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as illegal immigrants in Europe.

In general, the Norwegian word for the organizers of trafficking is “bakman” which translated directly means “the back man”, “the man behind”, and points to a perception of organizing and controlling women in prostitution as a masculine activity. However, in the case of Nigerian women, the organizers inside Norway were often referred to as “madams”. These are presented as recruiting women and organizing prostitution inside Norway, and are in some instances described as Nigerian women themselves working in prostitution.

The organizers of trafficking are not so easy to spot for the police as, for instance, the Eastern European “colleagues”: - Often it is a woman within a group that controls the girls when they are foreign, while the real organizers are placed elsewhere in Europe and organize the trafficking, says superintendent Nordgaren.⁷⁰

Thereby it looks as if there existed a distinction between the “real” organizers of prostitution and those who organize it in Norway and locally. The idea of a man or several men “behind” or in control, who are controlling and forcing women into sexual and economical exploitation, is the dominating presentation in my material. However, in a few instances the network of organizers is described as family networks in Nigeria, and the recruiters as being a relative or a close friend of the women.

⁷⁰ VG - 28.04.2005

I also found items that described traffickers and organizers inside of Norway. In the text exempt “Nigerian mafia is blocking the market by sending in all the girls” in chapter four, a Norwegian prostitute stated that the pimps were located inside of Norway, that they would take money from the Nigerian women and use gambling machines. Furthermore, she stated that it was so obvious what was happening, she found it strange that no one else notices their presence (Dagbladet 16.10.2004). However, this was a less occurring image of organizers inside the Norwegian borders. Several other items report different numbers of suspicious individuals who have been stopped at the border: thus no official numbers were ever provided.

A poverty problem – Nigerian superstition

In addition to the level of corruption in Nigeria, delusions of a better future in Europe, debts accumulated, threats of retaliation, Nigerian women have been exposed to a different kind of “force” which seals their obligations to their traffickers through the notions of black magic and voodoo, the so called juju rituals. It is not only the shame of returning home empty-handed or the threats against their family, which keep them from reporting their traffickers, but the potential “evil magic” which may be inflicted upon them. Hence, the slavery-like conditions Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway find themselves in, are partly described as sealed with economical debts and the hopes of one day being better off than in Nigeria, and partly with the superstitious beliefs they were socialized to believe in Nigeria. Nigerian women in prostitution are presented to be restrained in their relationship to the police and governmental officials, as they are bound to silence and obedience by superstition. The women were described as fearing that crossing the magic or “pact” might lead to serious misfortune, endanger beauty and health, or in the worst case even lead to death. Hence, force in the narrative of the sexual slavery does not only constitute these women as victimized identities through structural asymmetry and physical violence, but also as socially controlled through these women’s system of belief.

A few texts contain personal interviews with Nigerian women in prostitution, which all are done with women who have broken out of prostitution and applied for asylum. All of these interviews exclusively describe these women as helpless and fragile victims in need of governmental aid as well as communal sympathy. In my material it seemed that only women who have broken out of prostitution are granted an explicit and authoritative voice in the narrative discourse of the sexual exploitation. Newspaper coverage in general presents two sets of constructed images of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway – the “prostitute” and “the trafficking victim”. To illustrate this I will introduce my last text exempt.

Tvunget til prostitusjon etter HEKSE- PAKT

Av TOR STRAND



I SKJUL: Nigerianske «Ameze» er en av 18 kvinner som ble hjulpet ut av menneskehandlemes klør i Norge i fjor. Foto: TOR STRAND

Heksedoktoren fikk «Ameze» (21) til å drikke geiteblod, spise et fuglehjerte og sverge på at hun aldri skulle fortelle sin historie til noen.

Trollmannen i Nigeria forklarte at dersom hun gjorde det, ville kroppen svulme opp, hun ville bli gal og dø.

Så ble hun satt i arbeid som gateprostituert i Italia og Norge for å tjene inn 40 000 euro – 315 000 kroner – til sin nigerianske horemamma og familien hennes.

Ritualeet gjorde at hun ikke turte bryte ut.

Den vakre afrikanske kvinnen er en av 18 ofre for internasjonal menneskehandel i Norge som ble reddet av det statsfinansierte Rosa-prosjektet i fjor.

Nå lever hun i skjul et sted i Norge og ber om oppholdstil-

latelse her i landet. – Jeg kan aldri reise tilbake til Nigeria. Da vil de ta meg og tvinge meg til prostitusjon igjen. De truer med å ta lillesøsteren min og har mishandlet min mor for å få telefonnummeret mitt, forteller hun.

Trollmann

En drom om Europa ble vekket i «Ameze» i 2003. Sammen med noen venner var hun på et diskotek hjemme i Nigeria. Hun ble kontaktet av en ukjent jente. Etter hvert fortalte jenta at søsteren arbeidet på et sykehus i Europa – at det var lett å komme dit og få jobb.

– Jeg ville også til Europa – og jobbe på sykehus, eller en vaskejobb eller sånt. Jenta presenterte meg for moren sin – hun kunne arrangere så jeg kom til Europa, forteller 21-åringen.

Men før hun kunne reise, måtte hun møte en trollmann: – Han klippet av en hårlokke fra hodet mitt. Så drakk jeg geiteblod og spiste hjertet til en fugl og drakk noe de ga meg. Jeg måtte også skrive under en kontrakt om at jeg skyldte dem 40 000 euro, og avlegge ed på at jeg ikke skulle fortelle noen om dette. I så fall ville jeg dø. Jeg fortalte mor at jeg skulle til Europa og jobbe, men ikke noe om eden, sier hun.

Tårene triller

Hun fikk pass med bilde av seg selv, men med falskt navn, og visum til England. Så ble hun sendt alene med fly til London, hvor hun ble plukket opp. Etter noen dager der ble «Ameze» tatt med til Paris, og så sendt til Italia.

– En dame tok imot meg i Italia. Hun kjøpte klær til meg. Jeg spurte hva slags jobb de hadde funnet. Jeg fikk beskjed om å vente til dagen etter. Om kvelden fikk jeg beskjed om å følge med noen jenter ut i gatene. Jeg ble plassert alene i et mørkt hjørne og fortalt hvilken pris jeg skulle ta, sier hun lavt.

Tårene triller mens hun forteller. Mange lange pauser. Hun turte ikke la være å gjøre som de sa. Trollmannen hadde hårløkken – hun hadde avlagt ed.

Ble slått

– Neste morgen gikk jeg til henne med pengene. Hun sa jeg måtte jobbe slik for henne en måned for å betale for



HORE-EKSPLOSJON: Menneskehandel, voodoo og gjeldsbrev

klærne hun hadde kjøpt til meg, sier hun og ser ned i bordplaten. Hendene knuger tørkepapir som stadig blir våtere av salte tårer.

Hver dag gikk hun på gaten og arbeidet. Hver kveld gråt hun. De andre jentene ba henne være sterk og ikke vise for kundene hvordan hun hadde det.

– Hver morgen ble jeg slått fordi jeg ikke tjente nok penger til henne. Hver gang minnet hun meg på eden. Og når jeg var ferdig med å betale tilbake de 40 000 euroene, måtte jeg jobbe for å betale trollmannen og for klær til moren hennes, forteller «Ameze».

21-åringen kaller horemammaen for «my pimp». Alle involverte i traffickingen mellom Nigeria, Italia og Norge var i samme familie.

Det er mange familier som driver slik virksomhet.

– Jeg fikk beskjed om at det var mye kunder og mye penger i Norge. Jeg fikk beskjed om å reise hit for å tjene inn pengene raskere. Jeg kom i september i fjor. En venninne av horemammaen i Italia tok seg av meg, sier «Ameze».

Avslag

Også i Norge er enkelte menn brutale bøller. 21-åringen ble slått, frastjålet pengene og kastet på gaten naken. Men en dag ble hun stoppet av politiet. De ville se identitetspapirer. Dem hadde hallikfamilien.

– På grunn av eden turte jeg ikke fortelle politiet min historie. Jeg søkte asyl i falskt navn og fikk avslag. Jeg vil

KUREN

NORGES ENKLESTE UTRENSINGSKUR

– Jeg hadde lenge vært sliten og uopplagt, og var egentlig på utkikk etter et energitilskudd da jeg ble tipset av en kunde om å prøve Kuren, en utrensningskur, forteller Kristina Sørensen (31) familieom og yrkesaktiv frisør.

–Jeg var åpen for alt som kunne hjelpe, og etter bare et par dager med Kuren opplevde jeg god effekt. Det var helt vesentlig for meg at det var en moderat utrensningskur, for i jobben min kan jeg ikke risikere å bli sittende på do tre dager i strekk, men Kuren fungerte helt optimalt: Jeg kjente at noe skjedde i tarm og mage, og etter en tidagers tid, da boblingen og rumlingen i magen begynte å avta, følte jeg meg opplagt på en helt ny måte. Jeg var freskere og hadde mer energi. Etter Kuren følte jeg meg så ren på innsiden at det ble naturlig å tenke mer bevisst på hva jeg spiste også. Det ga meg liksom en ny start. At jeg gikk ned et par kilo under tiden med Kuren var jo også en god bonus!



Hva er Kuren ?

Kuren er en 10 dagers velsmakende utrensningskur uten faste.

Kuren hjelper de naturlige utskillelsesveiene til å fungere optimalt.

Kurens sammensetning av urter under støtter tarmens naturlige funksjon ved bl.a. å fremme fordøyelsen.

Kuren kjøpes der du handler helsekost.



MEZINA
www.mezina.com



er bakgrunnshistorien til mange av de nigerianske prostituerte som arbeider på gatene i Norge.

Foto: MATTIS SANDBLAD

ikke tilbake til prostitusjon. Jeg tør ikke reise til Nigeria. Jeg hadde ikke noe sted å gjøre av meg. Var alene og redd. Men heldigvis hadde jeg telefonnummeret til en venninne som hadde romt fra prostitusjon. Hun sendte meg videre til krisesenteret, sier hun.

Ved hjelp av Rosaprojektet har hun anmeldt menneskesmuglerne som fikk henne til Norge.

Og hun har søkt asyl i eget navn. Reiser «Amaze» tilbake til Italia, vil de tvinge henne til å jobbe på gaten igjen. Og hun må betale det dobbelte for eden slettes. Hun er ikke sikker på om heksepakten har mistet styrke.

– Men om du ber til Gud, kan du overvinne eden, sier hun stille.

Epost: torstrand@vg.no

Sjokk-økning av prostituerte utlendinger

Av TOR STRAND og TORA B. HÅNDLYKKEN

Oslo opplevde en kraftig økning i antall utenlandske prostituerte i fjor. Pro-senterer hadde i 2005 kontakt med 1527 prostituerte.

Hele 70 prosent var utenlandske, og halvparten av kvinnene var nye for Pro-senteret.

Det var nesten like mange nigerianske som norske – 393 og 435. Det var også økning fra Bulgaria og Romania.

Svært mange av disse er trolig offer for menneskehandel.

Som et ledd i å bekjempe in-

ternasjonal handel med kvinner og barn, åpnet Utlendingsdirektoratet (UDI) i 2004 for at personer som bistår politiet under etterforskning mot bakmennene for menneskehandelen, kan få oppholdstillatelse i Norge.

Hjelp

I fjor startet Justisdepartementet finansieringen av Rosa-prosjektet. Det skal hjelpe utenlandske kvinner ut av prostitusjon. I fjor berget de 18 kvinner – «Amaze» var en av dem.

– Flere av dem vi hjalp i fjor, fikk avslag på sine søknader om opphold. Avslagene er anket. Det fører til lange og

uvirksomme opphold i dekkleiligheter. De får jo ikke arbeide mens de er der. Vi er frustrert over at det ikke er lagt til rette for at kvinnene får noe tilbud når de er plassert. Samtidig sliter vi med å få tilgang til psykolog, helse-tjenester og sosiale tjenester for disse kvinnene, uttalte Rosa-leder Unni Kiil til VG for to uker siden.

Etter det er hun invitert til et møte med UDI for å diskutere problemene.

UDI har ingen spesifikke tall på hvor mange ofre for menneskehandel som har fått opphold i Norge.

– I 2005 var det 90 utenlandske kvinner som fikk opphold etter bestemmelsen om «ster-

ke menneskelige hensyn», men det er ikke mulig å bryte ned på hvilke sterke menneskelige hensyn som er tatt med i vurderingen, sier kommunikasjonsrådgiver Kjell Edvardson i UDI.

Forsker Jørgen Carling ved Norsk Fredsforskningsinstitutt ga i fjor ut rapporten «Fra Nigeria til Europa». Han refererer en nederlandsk forsker som beskriver de magiske ritualene som kvinnene som vil bryte ut som «ondsinnert form for magi som underbygger utnyttelse».

– Det er påfallende at menneskehandlerne selv ofte har samme tro på de magiske kreftene som ofrene, heter det.

Text excerpt “Forced to prostitution through a witch-pact”

The submitted news article was printed in the national newspaper *Verdens Gang (VG)* on February 12, 2006. The headline of the text exempt above is “Forced to prostitution through a witch pact”. This news reportage, as in many other items in my text corpus, consists of two different written texts. The main text at the left-hand side, is a personal interview with a young woman referred to as “Ameze” from Nigeria. While the second text, referred to under the headline “Shocking increase in prostituted foreigners”, at the right bottom side, underneath the largest photo illustration, is thematically oriented towards institutional involvement. The thematic structure at a semantic macrostructure in this text is narrated around the story of how Ameze has been helped by ROSA, presented as a governmental organization fighting for trafficked women’s rights, and how she through their help has been able to escape her life as a street prostitute and is now seeking asylum in Norway.⁷¹

The first part of the main text is a description of the voodoo rituals Ameze was exposed to before she entered prostitution in Europe (destinations: UK, France, Italy and Norway). Ameze is presented as a sympathetic woman of personal courage and a survival instinct, and through her narrative we learn to sympathise and identify with her difficult existence. Ameze is in the text presented as forced against her will into prostitution, as she was later forced to stay in prostitution. The force was realized through threats and violence and sealed through the rituals of a superstitious belief, but also through the peer pressure and expectations of other Nigerian women in prostitution. In the text, the character Ameze describes how she was told that if she broke her vows to her trafficker and told her story to anyone, her body would swell and she would die.

As the story of Ameze continues, her fate in European streets among violent traffickers and customers seems additionally sealed by the debt to her traffickers she had accumulated. The story of Ameze reaches its climax when the Norwegian police questions her identity. As Ameze’s papers were kept by her traffickers, she could not account for her right to stay in Norway. As a consequence of fear and lack of papers, she applied for asylum in Norway under false identity. As Ameze’s application was refused, she found herself entrapped in an

⁷¹ ROSA is a government funded project which offer assistance and protection and is part of the aims at implementing the government assistance and protection programmes for victims of trafficking. See <http://www.rosa-help.no/>

even worse situation. She still had debts to her traffickers, and was bound to silence by the rituals exercised on her. She wanted to leave prostitution, but feared deportation. Ameze contacted a friend who she knew had broken out of prostitution, and finally she was able to receive assistance from a Norwegian governmental organisation called ROSA. Through this organisation Ameze broke with prostitution and received help in order to apply for asylum using her real name. She does not know whether she will be able to stay or whether she will be deported. However, her main concern is expressed in the fear of retaliation:

If «Amaze» goes back to Italy, they will force her back on the streets to work. She will have to pay twice as much until her oath is terminated. She is not sure whether the witch pact has lost its strength.

- But if you pray to God, you may conquer the oath, she says quietly.

Thus the concern expressed on her behalf is that Ameze herself is not so sure if she is free from the pact, but states that she prays to God. The fear of retaliation from her third-party organizers in Italy is tied to superstition and is a matter of personal consciousness as much as of a physical retaliation and increased debts. The story of Ameze ends unresolved and it is unclear how her future will turn out.

The theme of superstition also becomes an important theme in the text at the right-hand side. This text represents institutional involvement, and ROSA is presented as an organisation which fights institutional discrepancies as much as it helps trafficking victims. The main theme is more sensational and ROSA is presented as unable to rescue Ameze from her individual faith of magical retaliation. A research report is quoted describing the rituals as an “evil form of magic that supports exploitation”. We also learn from the reports that “human traders often believe in these magical forces themselves”.⁷² With this last sentence, the text ends where it started, by framing the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway within a discourse of black magic and voodoo. Thus, the “evil magic” is in its co-textual framing portrayed as a force which supersedes the social relations and social actions involved in the

⁷² The text refers to a Dutch research report (Van Dijk, Rijk 2003), which is quoted in a Norwegian research report (Carling 2005). The text might be open for interpretation. The Norwegian report is described as following in the article: Han refererer en nederlandsk forsker som beskriver de magiske ritualene som kvinnene som vil bryte ut som «ondsinnert form for magi som underbygger utnyttelse». - Det er påfallende at menneskehandlerne selv ofte har samme tro på de magiske kreftene som ofrene, heter det.

trafficking process. Thereby the responsible agency is moved away from the traffickers, as they too are presented as “deluded” or as suffering from some kind of inhibited state of “false consciousness” - as they too believe in the magical forces. Rather, the main problem is presented as a cultural problem belonging to Nigeria, and to be found in a “primitive” belief-system, as a driving and “maintaining” force in sex-trafficking. A sensationalistic exotic framing which potentially serves to manifest cultural alienation for newspaper readers.

Tying a relationship between the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway and superstition and voodoo, places their existence far away from the existing socio-political and traditional ways to avoid social suffering. In such texts Nigerian women are not only portrayed as victims, but as *helpless victims*. When media insists upon the aspect of magical forces in presentations of the phenomenon, the distance between “us” and “them” grows. Cultural “foreignness” and alienation concur with the images of a hidden and depraving activity and a ruthless attitude towards human dignity, which is explained as a cultural problem with its originating source Nigeria. The matter seems as such of an irresolvable sort, which not only victimizes Nigerian women and has forced them into prostitution in Norway, but has victimized Norway as an innocent receiver of a cultural problem which was not created here. Most often these texts do not present images of a customer who is willing to pay for sex, and as such we can only imagine that there actually is such a demand in Norway, often without it being confirmed.

Two images of Nigerian woman: the ‘trafficking victim’ and the ‘prostitute’

I have argued that we can see newspaper artefacts, like the above, as a mediation articulated between the text and the image. Thereby the narrative of Ameze is also constructed in a dialectical relationship of two texts - the image of her at the left side and the image of women in street prostitution at the right side. The reason why I explicitly emphasise this is that these two images in the chosen excerpt serve to illustrate two reoccurring and dominating images of Nigerian women in the Norwegian newspaper coverage – the “trafficking victim” (here represented in the image of Ameze) and “the prostitute” (here represented in the image of the women at a street corner).

If one looks closely at the photo of Ameze, one can see that her back is turned against the camera, while she is facing the light flowing through the window. Her hands are placed on her

face, and give the impression of upset or despair, as if she is crying or sighing. This serves to illustrate her as hiding from something, and being protected by ROSA. Underneath the photo we read “Nigerian “Ameze” is one of the 18 women in Norway who have been helped out of traffickers’ claws last year”. At the right-hand side we find a second illustrative image of Nigerian women as a group or as a working collective. The photo illustrates four dark-skinned females at a street corner. Underneath we may read “Whore explosion: human trade, voodoo and debt bondage are the background story of many of the Nigerian prostitutes who work in the streets in Norway”. The image presents a “street life reality” of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. These images might leave an observer with an objectified and impersonal impression - as if they were just headless bodies in a public street. This serves to reproduce the general presentational tendencies in my material of this particular group of women as unattainable and anonymous, and who oppose public insight into an underground activity.

In contrast to this, the image of Ameze presents her as a dignified, but victimized individual seeking refuge from the cynical trafficking business. Even though the text underneath the photos emphasises that the pictures represent women who share a story of trafficking described in terms of voodoo and debt accumulation, the individual Ameze and the group of Nigerian women are presented in visually distinctly different ways. I argue that the visual elements in the text excerpt reflect two existing discourses of Nigerian women in the general media coverage. These representations of oppositional categories reflect a general tendency in my material, where one portrayal is presented as a part of the narrative discourse on sexual exploitation through the narrative of Ameze, the trafficking victim who has broken with her prostitution network and is seeking asylum, and the other portrayal fits in line with the dominant representation of Nigerian women as “prostitutes”. This means that the visual image of a group of Nigerian women draws on already established representations of them as outgoing, aggressive and hunting for customers (as we recall from chapter four and five), while Ameze on the other hand is presented as passive, “a heroic victim” in the news story, since she has left prostitution. Ameze is presented more like “us”, excluded and in opposition to the image of “them” as a group, sticking together in the street prostitution. The visual representation of Nigerian women as actively seeking customers while hanging out at a street corner will not fit with the existing discursive images of them as sexual slaves and dignified victims, while the image and presentation of Ameze as hiding and crying will.

Ameze as “the trafficking victim” of structural injustice and crime which “we”, the majority, disdain, is also in need of charitable action provided by the majority-society (represented by the governmental organisation ROSA). In the excerpt above we saw how Ameze’s statements were never questioned in the text, but rather supported by the authoritative voices held by experts and governmental officials. Her personal story concurred with the existing discourses on trafficking victims, while women presented as a part of the “whore explosion”, described as showing signs of independence, do not.

The image of Ameze, the trafficking victim, as a dark silhouette towards a window flooded with light, gives an almost spiritual impression - as if Ameze has just experienced an epiphany of light and hope, and by the grace of the Norwegian institution ROSA set free from cynical traffickers and global sexual exploitation. Thus, Nigerian women who are presented as confined within prostitution in Norway are discursively constructed as an entrapped and deluded group of victims. These women are left in a hopeless, superstitious existence, in dark alleys and street corners, where the only light they are exposed to is the light flooding from the shop windows and red lighted Mc Donald’s posters. The four women at the right-side picture are presented as confined to an ever-lasting “hunt” for customers in the European street prostitution, and have become a symbol of modern slavery and global consumerism.

The visual elements seen in a dialectic relationship to the textual thematization of “the primitive superstition” present Nigerian women in prostitution as a negation to the Norwegian ideal of a modern and liberated woman. Sexual aggressiveness in the dark corners of European streets is not presented as expression of sexual liberation or free will, but rather allocates the women as characters in a demeaned and exploiting liberalism of free market exchange and open borders. The visualisation of women in prostitution presents them as global commodities, soulless bodies, or even as “zombie-like character”, who are controlled and manipulated by cynical and criminal others. Thereby the actor is allocated as a character of the narrative of sexual exploitation and is presented as both a victim of organised crime and a one whose body is objectified as a dark and “primitive” threat to the modern, civilized, liberated and enlightened world.

Colonizing African dreams

The narrative of sexual exploitation has as its main focus the coercive relationship between the prostitute, the organizer and the customer. 'Force' is the privileged linguistic sign for social relationships in the narrative discourse of sexual exploitation. The word 'Nigerian' does not provide the same meaning if it were to stand without the textual relationship to the privileged sign in this narrative discourse. What I once again emphasize is that 'Nigerian' as the privileged sign for a specific category of women in the analysis is irreducible to other privileged signs in each of the three categories of the narrative discourse. Force is not only presented as a structural coercion, vulnerable situation, poverty and violence, but also as a magical force.

A central question in the political as well as in academic debates on prostitution is whether it is possible to choose prostitution or whether prostitution as phenomenon is defined as force and violence in itself (Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, O'Connell Davidson 2005). A parallel discussion on dichotomous ideas of free will versus determinism can also be found in the academic and political debates on migration (Castles 2003, 2004). Such discourses see transnational migration as distinguishable into two categories: people-trafficking and people-smuggling. Both of these practices are described as widespread consequences of the rich countries' restricted immigration policies, parallel to the existence of strong pressure or desire to emigrate from the South, which subsequently created what is often referred to as 'migration industry' (including the legal as well as illegal participants) - which fosters on a restrictive immigration policy on the one side, and a high demand of labour in Northern countries on the other (Castles 2003). The ambiguous 'free will vs. determinism' framework is a prominent theme in the newspaper coverage of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. The underlying themes of deprivation, underdevelopment and superstition are the common denominators for various sub-themes in my material. All in all, the observable thematization of Nigerian women's involvement in prostitution in my material, can be placed on a scale from determinism to free will, where the female choice is conditioned within the different thematical frameworks.

The presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway is partly described in its relation to the market on the international level, and partly as a cultural problem with its originating source Nigeria, known for poverty, superstition, crime, and the "African" underdevelopment.

At the determinist end, the presentation of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway tends to portray the woman as forced, coerced or deceived into prostitution and migration – as a victim of “vicious” men, cynical criminals and the Norwegian customers. As we remember from the two former narrative discourses, some texts portray Nigerian women as showing more signs of independence than other migrant sex-workers and/or trafficking victims, and as knowingly, actively and independently seeking a permanent geographical escape in order to support themselves as well as their family in Nigeria. Thereby, Nigerian women fit with the existing representations of economic immigrants, at the same time as the “poor third world women” are presented as naive and as being easy targets for the growing “global sex industry”. However, the dominant assumption in this narrative discourse is that no woman would, if she had other choices, consciously chose prostitution. Prostitution as a social phenomenon presents itself as abusive, degrading and violent.

The discourse on poverty, and thematizations of deprivation of women in prostitution as victims of patriarchy, market conditions, exchange for profit, fits with the images of “injured women” and “sexual slaves”. These images all come together in the representation of “the other” and something “non – Norwegian”. Besides, these images fit roughly with what is sometimes described as the radical and Marxist feminist and structural framework for prostitution (Zatz 1997). Here it is argued that if it were not for gender inequalities and economic structures (between men and women and between Norway and Nigeria), women would not sell sexual services. Prostitution is thereby seen as a social evil and as a result of social inequalities. This thematization is placed far away from the portrayals of prostitution as an attractive or legitimate profession, as found in the Hollywood imaginary, fiction and literature, or as in the news stories of young and beautiful escorts or luxury prostitutes living their life to the maximum.

The texts in my corpus can thereby be said to have a referential intention as well as an explanatory intention, which together fuse into a particular image of “truth” – for instance, visible through the underlying assumptions. The texts are focalized so that the different events are incorporated in order to serve as a particular point of referential view. I have claimed that all representation in the narrative discourse is imbued with different ideas of “push- and pull-effects”, at the same time as some texts present magical forces and superstitious beliefs as a kind of “maintaining force”. All of these themes are presented as inherently imbued with the social agent presentation, which directly pinpoints different groups as carrying the

responsibility of the issue of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway - the organizers of crime and the Norwegian customers in prostitution. These themes are presented as more newsworthy than others. Explicit problematizations of, for instance, the economical discrepancy between the Western World and the African Continent, increased efforts of border control and limitations, social asymmetrical relationships in a general European context (as of labour market, citizenship, sexuality, gender, race and class), are themes which are more or less absent in explicit problematizations in my material.

The dominating thematic problematization in the narrative discourse of sexual exploitation is that of organized crime. Several researchers of media discourses on trafficking for prostitution purposes have pointed out that most often transnational prostitution is addressed as a problem of organized crime (Andrijasevich 2003, 2004, Doezema 1999, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, Sharma 2003, Stenvoll 2002). These scholars have pointed out that when media conceptualize transnational prostitution and trafficking within a crime-oriented discourse, modern slavery or sexual slavery, it commensurate with the binary opposition between the criminals (traffickers) on one side, and the victims (innocent migrant women/trafficking victims) on the other, and that this binary opposition serves to reduce the understanding of trafficking to a phenomenon where the main issue is presented as of men's violence against women - whereas trafficking is a far more complex phenomenon. Feminist scholars have further argued that the crime-oriented discourse refuses to recognize the agency of migrant women, as well as it serves to reproduce traditional understandings of binary gender oppositions, such as passive/active agent allocations. Such oppositional categories are presented as sites where the century-long traditions of the Madonna/whore -distinction are active.⁷³ Hence, when Norwegian newspaper coverage tends to predominately portray transnational prostitution as trafficking or as modern slavery, crime-oriented thematizations elude the complexity of the current economic, social, political and national interests, which intersect with citizenship in the migration processes involved in trafficking. The increasing political willingness to address the issue of trafficking and prostitution, which can be observed at the national as well as international levels, can be criticized for neglecting a complex reality and imposing a "narrative of victim-hood" on all the different life stories and

⁷³ In the bible we find the female characters Maria and Maria Magdalena. One is a virgin and a mother, the other a 'whore', and they both come to the cross. It is Maria Magdalena who meets Christ first after his resurrection, and to whom he says; don't touch me.

the variety of experiences reported by migrated women in prostitution (see e.g., Andrijasevich 2003, 2004, Ehrenreich and Horchschild 2003, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998)

Individual and collective migration can not be seen as separated from distribution and redistribution of resources in a society (Ehrenreich and Horchschild 2003). The prevailing discourse on trafficking might instead profit from seeing the phenomenon in relationship to international patterns of migration and seeing the phenomenon as relative and relational - between the sociopolitical and economical motivations to migrate. In the article "Why migration policies fail", Stephen Castles (2004) identifies two central problems in the discourses on migration and the failed immigration policies. The influence of the classical "push and pull" is one problem. Castles argues that this model is founded upon the idea that human beings are essentially programmed to think in economical terms and act within the market profit logic. The second problem is a belief that bureaucratic regulation and categorization is an effective tool to regulate migration patterns and migration processes. Castles argues that: "Together, these two beliefs add up to the idea that migration can be turned on and off like a tap by appropriate policy settings" (Castles 2004: 208). Both of these ideas can be seen as reflected in the Norwegian plan against trafficking, where the main and overarching aim is to prevent trafficking by limiting the recruitment, at the same time as limiting the demand side - by diverse measures, such as through information campaigns to women in Nigeria and to the male customers in Norway (Justis- og Politidepartementet 2006). Moreover, the Norwegian campaigns targeting young women in Nigeria, with the intention to inform them of the realities that await them in Europe, signalizes that it is best for women to stay *at home*. Norwegian efforts to combat trafficking by targeting specific groups of individuals through campaigns, can be criticized for individualizing global structural socio-political and economic problems and thereby having a reductionist approach, at the same time as they recuperate a century old tradition which suppresses female mobility.

Women's migration as an important aspect of the phenomenon 'trafficking' has been pointed out by several scholars (see. e.g., Andrijasevich 2003, 2004, Ehrenreich and Horchschild 2003, Doezema 1998, 1999, 2001 Holm 2006, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, Skilbrei and Tveit 2007). As Carling (2005) also has pointed out, female migration from Nigeria functions on a structural level and occurs as a chain migration and through established networks (formal as well as informal). Nigerian women's migration occurs in its relationship to their community or their family relations and the kind. Castles (2004) adds to this kind of

perspective that such migration patterns occur in relation to the existence of a structural dependency upon economic support given by those having migrated; and secondly, major migrations most often occur from countries where the governments have failed in some way. Therefore, illegalizing migration or scaring people from wanting to migrate from these countries are not effective tools. Castell argues that the main problem in migration discourses is that these processes are discussed within a national logic, while the forces which motivate migration at a structural level have a transnational logic, and adds that “the perceived ‘migration crisis’ is really a crisis in North-South relations, caused by uneven development and gross inequality. Migration control is essentially about regulating North-South relations” (ibid: 211).

If the Norwegian media holds to the idea of forced versus voluntary prostitution and migration as the dominant dividing discourse on trafficking, newspaper coverage on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway serves to preclude the possibility of voluntarily migration and voluntary sex work as a part of the trafficking process. By privileging crime, poverty and superstition as a motif for women to enter transnational prostitution, the discourse rests on the “narratives of victimhood”.⁷⁴ The consequence is that those women who are presented as not showing signs of being “significantly forced” into entering transnational prostitution, or women who show signs of accepting their conditions, at the same time are presented as degenerated or lacking self-respect – since the dominant underlying assumption in my material is that no woman would, if she had other choices, willingly chose prostitution.

By insisting that Nigerian women would not be in prostitution in Norway if it were not for the circumstances in Nigeria, the narrative of the sexual exploitation functions to resist the ‘whore stigma’ attached to prostitution, and produces a more ‘dignified’, ‘worthy’ or ‘decent’ image of Nigerian women. However, the images of “the dignified trafficking victim” serve at the same time to reproduce major axes of division between women, and affirm the moral relevance of group boundaries in sexual politics. By excluding the possibility of migration as driven by individual aspirations of a more independent and prosperous life in the West, or as an “escape route” from patriarchal structures (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000), the narrative discourse of sexual exploitation also recuperates a dividing distinction between the “chaste”

⁷⁴ The narrative of victimhood is a dominant representation of trafficking both in scholarly and political circles. However, the narrative of victimhood has also been criticized by a number of feminists (cfr. Andrijasevic 2003, 2004, Berman 2003, Doezema 2001, Sharma 2003).

women and the “unchaste” women. Thereby the Norwegian newspaper coverage also functions to reflect the hegemonic assumptions of the gender ideals where the “aggressive”, “willing” or “consent giving” “whore” is depicted as morally damaged (or, in other words, depicted as suffering from some kind of (dis)illusion or another). Hence, the narrative of sexual exploitation serves to maintain and reproduce social and legal exclusion of “the other” - who does not submit to recognizing exploitation, or who does not express visible outer signs of aspirations to leave prostitution and change.

Chapter 7. Norwegian borderlines

All of the included texts in my material address directly or indirectly the issue of exchange of sexual services for money as well as its actors: the prostitute, the customer, the pimp and the organizer. Furthermore, prostitution is linked and understood in relation to other varying problem-oriented themes. Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway are as such presented in various ways, partly seen as dealing in a sexual transaction, partly as a socio-political problem related to the national and international border control. My main focus has however been on how these different layers of thematizations construct certain images or characteristics of the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway in relationship to other social actors represented in the texts.

Against the theoretical background of my analysis, I will in the following chapter sum up some of the discursive aspects in newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. I will place my findings in a broader context of oppositional elements existing in the prevailing discourses on transnational prostitution and the news coverage of Nigerian women in prostitution. Here Norwegian/foreign, normal/deviant, worthy/unworthy and in-group/out-group are important binary oppositions which are linguistically acted out through the use of metaphors, categories and stereotypes.

Three narrative discourses

Through the preceding chapters I have discussed different images of transnational prostitution as a phenomenon. I have argued that narrative discourses serve to present social events and social processes in a manner that arrange the presentation of social actors and social relationships in certain ways and vice versa. The different textual arrangements serve to focalize stories in specific ways and transform actors into characters with distinct traits. The textual and co-textual categories in the discussion so far form the thematic structure of the press coverage of Nigerian woman in prostitution in Norway, and I have showed how we can single out three different sets of such thematic structures as narrating three different sets of social conflict arenas – the ‘Norwegian prostitution market’, ‘Norwegian lines of tolerance and decency’ and ‘a global sex market’. The first narrative concerns a competing and conflicted relationship between different ethnic groups of women within the Norwegian prostitution market. The second thematic structure describes a conflict between prostitution

and its characters and the “regular citizens” and the use of public space. The third arena of conflict concerns thematizations of asymmetrical relationships and exists at a national as well as international level, between women and men, and between Nigeria and Norway. Together these narrative discourses also realize, as well as are realized through, the existing discourse on prostitution on the one hand, and trafficking on the other.

Through reading the text material with the structuring question: How are Nigerian women presented in the Norwegian newspaper coverage? - I have found two sets of images of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. One, where Nigerian women in street prostitution in Norway are constructed and presented as illegal immigrants, as desperate, aggressive and opportunistic “zombie-like” characters - who hunt for money and Norwegian men. This image is presented as being more or less in opposition to a second image, where Nigerian women are portrayed as victims of a cynical network of criminals, global injustice and patriarchal structures. The first image fits with established discourses on ‘the prostitute’, while the second is constructed in line with the prevailing discourses on ‘the trafficking victim’.

Newspaper coverage as problematizations

I have identified some main tendencies in the newspaper coverage. For one, Nigerian women in prostitution are presented as a problem, or as a set of problems. For instance, Nigerian women were presented as a problem for other women in prostitution, as they undercut prices and posed a territorial threat, and their presence in a Norwegian prostitution market was presented to increase general suffering of all women in prostitution. A second problem-oriented thematization presented them as not only a territorial threat to the decency of the Norwegian public, and as creating a stigma for other black women in Norway, but also as the potential harm of new generations of Norwegian young men who might be “lured into” or “caught up” in prostitution by the unexpected sight of drug-free, smiling, young and attractive women offering sex. However we also have seen other expressions of public outcry, which were problematizing the lack of political willingness to fight against the sexual exploitation and the harsh conditions which these women lived under (Norwegian women in prostitution, as well as foreign women in prostitution).

The different sets of problematizations of Nigerian women in prostitution can be seen as part of perceiving an increased number of foreign women’s in involvement in the Norwegian

prostitution market in general as politically as well as morally problematic. These tendencies are at one level part of the media's as well as political discourses being inherently problem-oriented, that is, seeking to identify problems or different perceptions of problems and propose solutions to them. At another level, problematizations and regulation of sexuality outside matrimonial arrangements is seen as a morally as well as politically ambivalent theme which is situated discursively and historically. Norway as elsewhere has a long history in seeing some sexual relations outside marriage as illicit as well as illegal, not only in peoples minds, but also through the intervention of police and jurisdiction (see Stenvoll 2002: 154). Newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway thereby exists in juxtaposition between what is considered private and intimate and what is seen as of public and political concern. A third aspect which was most explicitly expressed in the victimhood narrative, the narrative discourse of sexual exploitation, and which I will only mention here, is that Nigerian women in prostitution, as migrant women in prostitution, are understood within a national frame which serves to challenge the idea of national sovereign states and the Norwegian welfare state and its areas of responsibility. By this I point to the fact that the lines between what is domestic welfare responsibilities and politics and the relations seen as international responsibilities and international politics, is presented as partly blurred in the newspaper coverage.

Narrative discourses - an orchestrated polyphony?

I have not had an explicit aim to systematically study the role allocation of the “expert” or the journalistic informational resources in this study. Still, some main tendencies are worth mentioning here. I found that it was mostly governmental employees such as social workers, police officers, local politicians and Members of the Parliament who reoccurred in the roles of interviewees and information sources in the newspaper coverage. However, we have also seen that the newspapers voiced a concern about the “regular citizens”, such as the “furious neighbours” in the “Ullevåll horeby” case, or the concerned house owners. The polyphony of voices expressed in the text corpus functioned to narrate news and focalize some particular points of view.

In ‘the narrative of the market squeeze’ I found that the dominant image of an expert or an authoritative voice were Liv Jessen at the Pro Senteret as well as police officers. An interesting aspect is this: while women operating in prostitution were excluded from the other

narrative discourses, Norwegian prostitutes were in some cases presented providing authoritative information on the prevailing conditions in this narrative discourse.

In ‘the narrative discourse of public decency’ the most reoccurring image of any “expert” presented, were the local authorities of public and social order - such as the local police officers in Oslo or local politicians such as the City Council man Erling Lae in Oslo. A second reoccurring information source or “voice of opinion” were the members of the local commercial circles, especially from around the Karl Johan area (from tourist businesses to local restaurant and shops). However, regular citizens, “innocent standbys”, neighbours and residential owners would also be presented as providing information for the newspaper coverage, as well as being presented as important participators in the public debate. Social workers were less explicitly represented in this narrative and their information was mostly in the background. When they occurred, it was as “experts” on the increase in numbers of foreign women in prostitution (informational sources such as statistics from Pro Senteret, or references from academic studies provided by Pro Senteret) and on the male sex customers (presented through Pro Senteret as well as REFORM).

In the third ‘narrative discourse on sexual exploitation’, the police authorities became an even more reoccurring actor in the image of any “expert” on the issue and condition of the “international crime problem”. A second reoccurring actor was Members of Parliament in the themes of national as well as international responsibilities – especially connected to discussions of criminalization of customers. A third reoccurring voice in the material is also found in interviews of Nigerian women who had broken out of prostitution and applied for asylum. These were presented as valuable providers of personal testimonies from their own experiences. Representatives from organisations such as ROSA as well as Pro Senteret were also prominent reoccurring voice in the newspaper coverage and would often occur in liaison, as well as sometimes in dispute, with, for instance, representatives of the Department of Justice or the Norwegian immigration authorities. Furthermore, we find a prominent occurrence of international actors such as for instance FN and EU, and their official spokespersons. Besides providing representational statistics from Pro Senteret, journalists, as well as authors of comments and letters from/and to these, would also include and refer to international as well as national research reports.

The polyphony of various perspectives and voices in my material, served to express different problematizations of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. Thus, the general and dominating problematizations in media discourse on the Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway can be identified as objectifying and impersonal, or as personalizing problematizations.

Objectifying and impersonal problematizations

The extent of foreign women in prostitution is presented in terms of an “explosion”, the situation as “out of control”, and that those “Nigerian prostitutes” “flood”, “invade” and “parade” as illegal immigrants onto the Norwegian territory, streets, residential areas and nightclubs. All of these “lexical metaphors” express social processes (or catastrophes) which are outside the scope of human control and willpower, and one is given an impression that there are endless numbers of naive Nigerian women waiting in line to come to “prostitute” in Norway. Looking at these descriptions it seems as if the Norwegian “underground economy” is under “attack” from foreign networks of criminals. And that as soon as one woman leaves prostitution, another is brought by traffickers to replace her. As such, through linguistic devices such as metaphors and stereotypes, the women are not portrayed as agents with their own desire or will, but nominalised as “floods”, “masses”, “armies” or as “co-operatives” (as in the “Ullevål whoretown” case).

The image of something threatening as well as socially destructive is presented as territorial, social, as well as moral threats. Images of the “third-world prostitutes” as shady characters, who spread disease and threaten communities are fused in such media presentations. Hier and Greenberg (2002) call this a process of amplification, which means exaggeration of social issues. Presenting the images of women of poverty as a potential threat to the national territory serves to raise social anxiety, as much as moral panic (Berman 2003). One reoccurring argument in my material is that Norway is an attractive destination because of the liberal policies and the Norwegian prosperity. The extensive use of dysphemic imagery of crisis and disaster, found in my material paves the way for legitimate percussions, such as calls for stronger police force, increased jurisdiction and regulation of prostitution, not to mention stricter border control and limited access to the Norwegian territory. According to Wijers, repressive strategies on the issue of trafficking for prostitution purposes “fit very nicely with state interest and supply them with a tidy set of arguments (i.e.) close the borders, deport illegal women and the trafficking will end” (Wijers 1998).

Similarly to Stenvoll's (2002) analysis of media presentation of Russian women in prostitution in Norway, I found that the media coverage on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway contains nationalistic overtones. Readers who rely on newspaper coverage and tabloid press might be led to believe that Norway is being invaded by prostitutes, "ungrounded" asylum seekers, illegal immigrants and foreign criminals. Norway, as many other countries, has a long tradition as seeing "foreigners" as a burden for society instead of excess. Sensationalist media imagery constructs a discourse which feeds on people's innate fear of the unfamiliar and threatening (Brune 2001), and the nationalistic overtones found in the newspaper coverage are represented through connecting crime, disorder, disease and illicit sex as trademarks of "the other" - in this case the Nigerians.

Presented as "the Nigerian prostitutes", the Nigerian women came to bear the sign-value of commodity, because their bodies was presented as saleable "goods". In the texts, they became objectified in an impersonal and abstract way just like the commodity itself. And yet, even though it is their own bodies which are exchanged, as sellers described as initiating the exchange, they are also presented as self-determining subjects. It is the subjectively willed act of offering their body for "rent" or "sale", which render them/their body as a "prostitute" (an object). Therefore, the task of regulating or governing prostitution in the interest of public hygiene, and public decency entails regulating of the subjective practices of prostitution as well as the "inert" bodies of the prostitutes. In the media accounts I have examined, the women tend to be objectified and presented as "masses" or as a "horde", but they can also be depicted as highly individualized profit-seeking agents who pressure men to buy their sexual services.

Personalizing problematizations

Moral condemnation of the "prostitutes" was especially visible in the narrative of public decency and most often occurred in concerns by the "innocent standbys", local law- and public order authorities, as well as expressed in the undertones of the journalistic framing of the news stories. Women's involvement in prostitution also became trivialised. For instance, when Nigerian women were presented as showing more signs of independence, this was presented as an indicator of voluntary involvement in prostitution, and Nigerian women's presence in the Norwegian prostitution market as motivated by individual economic opportunities. Police officers were, as I showed in chapter five, quoted in comments as well as in interviews stating that not all foreign women were trafficking victims. Thereby Nigerian

women were presented as “less” trafficking victims than other groups of foreign women in prostitution, such as for instance Eastern European women, and thereby presented rather as illegal economic immigrants to Europe. That there were so many of them was presented as a sign of organised immigration/crime, Norwegian prosperity, liberal policies, and open borders.

A second form of personalised representation is of women who have broken out of prostitution and applied for asylum. These women are given an explicit voice in the media coverage, and also serve to sustain the dominant presentation of trafficking. While the latter presentation of Nigerian women is given within the category of the “worthy trafficking victim”, the first thematically constructed image fits with the existing discourses on the “prostitutes” - as driven by economic enhancement, moral or physiological derivation. In this case the presentation of the character ‘the prostitute’ is exoticized through thematizations of African underdevelopment, analphabetism, not to mention the sensational theme of superstition and black magic, which all function to culturally alienate them. The two different presentations of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway are inherently linked with dominant ideas of deserving and undeserving receivers of collective sympathy and processes of social inclusion and exclusion.

In my analysis I found that some forms of prostitution are seen as more “inappropriate” than others, and some women are seen as more “difficult” than others. For instance, the underlying thematization of receivers of institutional help constructs an image of an “ideal receiver” or client of institutional help as one who accepts it and who herself shows visible signs of a desire to change (be normalized - leave prostitution). This was explicitly illustrated in the narration of the trafficking victim Ameze who received help from the Norwegian governmental organisation ROSA. At the same time, I showed that women who are presented as refusing to cooperate with Norwegian institutions, share information or talk about their involvement in prostitution are presented as “difficult” for the media, as well as for institutional officials such as police officers and the immigration authorities.

The prevailing underlying assumption seems to be that women who do not express personal stories which match the dominant ‘narration of victimhood’ in prostitution, as described in the narrative discourse of sexual exploitation, are not perceived as telling their stories sincerely. It seems that it is only by leaving prostitution that women are granted a legitimate position as a ‘worthy trafficking victim’ and become a source of information in media discourses on

transnational prostitution and the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. As long as a woman still is in prostitution, media presentations will tend to question and doubt her individual motivations, consciousness and choice-making. Similarly, the portrayals of this group's involvement in prostitution as sealed by superstition, functions as the "rational" explanation to the inexplicable and "irrational" involvement in prostitution - at the same time as it serves to deny the agency of any Nigerian girl (see e.g., Van Dijk, R 2002).

Newspaper coverage as dividing practices

At another level of analysis, all texts can be seen as expressing discursive processes of exclusion and inclusion. For instance, the prominent theme and focus on the nationality of women in prostitution (which marked different groups as oppositional and competitive) portrayed Norwegian women in prostitution as more "forcefully desperate" for money, as they were presented as forced to prostitution in order to finance drug abuse (and thereby individualizing involvement and fitting them within the medical as well as pathological models of explanation of "the other"). I have mentioned that Norwegian women in prostitution, who usually are not given an authoritative voice in the newspaper coverage, in my material are allocated close to what one might consider a role of an "expert" on the conditions of the prostitution market. In the press coverage, nationality, stereotypes and categories of prostitutes depicted Nigerian women as cheekier, more aggressive, more desperate, and at the same time "less" trafficking victims than other categories of "prostitutes" in the newspaper coverage. A parallel between the discourses on transnational prostitution and the observable prevailing discourses on transnational begging is obtrusive, as it seems that the ethnic label 'Norwegian' presents characters as more "needy" or as more "worthy" of communal sympathy and help than "the foreigners" in a similarly difficult or vulnerable situation. As much as the media discourse separates Norwegians from Nigerians, the exploited from the liberated, victims from criminals, it also establishes and constructs ideas of worthy and unworthy receivers of empathy and human solidarity.

The thematization of public decency had a similar interesting discursive effect, as "innocent" Norwegian men and "innocent" African/Nigerian women were of concern as victims of sexual harassment and social stigmatisation. In media presentations it seems as if it were the actions of the aggressive and desperate prostitutes which made prostitution into a public problem needing immediate accommodation. The 'poverty problem' was described by the

local council man Erling Lae to have turned into a ‘problem of law and order’ as it created a public outburst of disapproval – hence, it was the buying and selling of sexual services and visibility of it which was of a public concern and a “problem”, not the public stigmatisation or harassment. The stigma connected to prostitution thus appeared as a condition without agents, for instance, in referring to prostitution as a stigma, while not referring to the active agents (the stigmatizers). Thematizations of what the public tolerated, and what was considered worthy or decent part of the urban setting in Oslo can, on the one hand, imply that there exist a division between the “decent” and the “indecent” conduct in Norway, and on the other hand, between the “innocent” and “guilty” Norwegian men, and the “innocent” and “guilty” migrant women, where those individuals who indulge in prostitution are discursively constructed as “guilty” and “indecent” and who behave “inappropriately”.

Distinctions between the “guilty” and the “innocent” can be seen as part of a modern discursive tradition of governmentality, depicting some individuals as more “worthy” than others. Within the social theory, the division between the “innocent” and the “guilty” can be understood as a phenomenon of “dividing practices” (Foucault 1982). Foucault argues that in modern times normalization becomes a creative discursive process and occurs by exerting control. Dividing practices refers to the presence of a socially approved power which consequently “problematizes”, divides and pathologizes, and this dividing practice subsequently forms the basis for policies and programs to include, establish unity and finally “normalize” (Foucault 1991). In the modern welfare politics these traditions can be observed in the distinguishing between the “deserving” and the “undeserving” poor, with consequences for the distribution of resources and benefits (Bauman 2005, Pinker 1971). Similarly, one can find a distinction in prevailing European immigration policies between those who can be considered as fitting within the category of refugees and asylum seekers on the one side, and those individuals who are excluded as “only” being economical migrants (Castells 2003, 2004 Van Dijk 1993, Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999). Similarly, dividing practises can also be observed in the Norwegian discourse on “grounded” and “ungrounded” asylum seekers. The “sanctity of victimhood” as a central theme in the newspaper coverage served to portray some Nigerian women within the notion of “deserving” immigrants (trafficking victims), while the presentation of Nigerian prostitutes as independent and as “hunting” for customers did not.

Thematizations which presented Nigerian women in prostitution as potential sources for the spread of “African diseases”, and for the spread of a social and moral suspicion to other individuals as well as physical areas, composed an image of them as bearers of “guilt” and “indecent” which is contagious. The practice of selling and buying sexual services looked in the newspaper coverage as an infectious disease which could be spread spatially and temporally (to sites such as Karl Johan Street, to other African-Norwegian women and to men who might be suspected of being customers). Thereby the stigma connected to prostitution seemed contagious, and one might consider these thematizations as part of a wider societal discourse related to gender and sexual conduct in a broad sense, as well as to the ideas of “purity and danger”, where notions of the “polluted” was presented as a social threat (Douglas 1996).

Dividing practices also bears similar effects in sexual politics, and are activated in the “whore stigma” (Phederson 1996). For instance, the question of who is a prostitute and who is not, and who is a customer and who is not, were reflected in the newspaper coverage to be inflicting upon several lives, for instance as it came with a racist undertone of “non-prostitute” African women being questioned for commercial sex, turned down at night clubs and so on. The distinction between categories has wide social implications of feminine seclusion from public space. It has its own disciplinary effect on the behaviour of all women, not only women in prostitution. Thus, the stigmatisation of women in prostitution as a group of female “outcasts” was also visible among different categories of “prostitutes”. Presentations of Nigerian women as more sexually outgoing and aggressive than other categories of prostitutes, placed them at odds with not only the prevailing discourses on ‘decent’ female behaviour in society in general, but actually also served to place them at odds with the dominant discourses of ‘appropriate’ and tolerable street prostitution. Moreover, besides being seen as aggressive in their approach towards customers, they were seen as more “difficult” for the public outreach organizations, police investigators and the immigration authorities, than other women in prostitution.

In my material the ‘whore stigma’ as a dividing practice for separating the honourable/deviant, good/bad, decent/indecent, deserving and undeserving women might be interpreted to have wider implications and function as a moral marker, as distinctions are drawn between the “real” and the “fake” asylum seekers, not to mention the “more” or “less” victims of trafficking. Furthermore, if we stretch the traditional understanding of the ‘whore stigma’ as a

disciplinary dividing practice, we might be able to consider the stigma to mark distinctions between the “good” and the “bad” Norwegian citizens. The romantic ideals of the Norwegian national identity, Norway or Norwegianness can be said to dominantly signify the pure, the righteous, the brave, the strong, the good and the healthy. In such a national self-positive discourse, an individual involved in prostitution is not constructed as a “real” Norwegian, but either foreign or “defect” (as in morally and sexually deviant, or drunk - as he has lost “him- or herself”). The demand for intervention in fear of an escalating market expansion in prostitution is in this sense not only a fear of young Norwegian individual men “loosing themselves” to a prostitute, it can also be interpreted as a Norwegian fear of “loosing themselves”, being polluted or corrupted as an entity or a community. Hence, the prevailing discussions on criminalization as a way to curb men’s ability to engage in prostitution, are supported by a national discourse of appropriate sexual conduct.

Transnational prostitution in Norwegian press coverage

In chapter two, I argued that the Critical Discourse Analytical approach, sought for in Fairclough (1995, 2003), would help me approach my research theme. In this project I have identified three different structures of thematizations and representations, and analyzed them as narrative discourses. My aim has been in particular to show that these three narratives serve to construct particular images of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. These images rely on two sets of dominating discourses on the phenomenon – the prevailing discourses on prostitution on the one hand, and the discourses on trafficking at the other. I have stressed that these discourses fuse into a binary representational repertoire – one of “the trafficking victim” and the other of “the prostitute”. This binary representational repertoire condenses many different types of images of characteristics into single characters. By this I do not mean to say that people necessarily think in either-or categories, but that the discursive framework of the newspaper coverage serves to produce images of binary and oppositional categories in presentations of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway.

In the texts, I have studied the most prominent linguistic signs such as ‘the Norwegian prostitution market’ indicating the existence of a globalization discourse in the local prostitution market, and textual presentations of ‘continuity’ and ‘discontinuity’ indicating the existence of social and ethno-sexual constructed boundaries between different groups within the Norwegian prostitution market. In addition, cues such as ‘squeeze’ and ‘expansion’ can be

understood as different existential assumptions and conceptualizations of prostitution, the market and the stigma attached to it - its force, limitations and constraints. Such representations were more elaborated in statements which I placed under the narrative discourse of public decency, where “decent”, “indecent”, “appropriate” and “inappropriate” are discursively negotiated spatial and temporal boundaries between agents and actors in the text. For instance, we saw that social relations would often be thematized as “renovation and public order”, “foreign crime”, “social stigma”, and ideas of “health risks” connected to prostitution, which all serve to structure the narrative and vice versa. Each of these themes can be seen as a discourse working constructively to realize certain presentations of social actors, as well as of the nature of social relationships and conflicts. In what follows I will discuss prostitution-coverage more broadly and analyze my own findings in relation to the earlier analysis of transnational prostitution in the Norwegian media, more specifically the analysis done on the newspaper coverage of “the Finnmark prostitution” in the 1990s by Stenvoll (2002).

As I mentioned in the initial part of this thesis, in the article “From Russia with love?”, Stenvoll identifies five reoccurring themes which reflect the prevailing discourse on the cross-border contact between the Russian women and Norwegian men. Connecting crime, disease, illicit sex, social and moral breakdown as trademarks of the presence of ‘the other’ (in this case, Russian women) is also an active discourses in the material I have analyzed (the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution). This is interesting, since it shows that there exist parallel discourses in the newspaper coverage on issues related to transnational prostitution. However, there are also several differences between the phenomena as well as the newspaper coverage which are interesting as well as important to discuss.

For instance, Stenvoll argues that a normality/deviance framework, although different from, for instance, the one on customers in prostitution, might be relevant also for the defining discourses on the “prostitute”. He argues that the discourses were mostly connecting the Russian women’s involvement in prostitution with a rational strategy given by their material situation, while this might be different for Norwegian women in prostitution as these may be understood rather in terms of individual pathology (e.g. drug addiction, or earlier sexual abuse). Moreover, his argument is that individualized explanations are held less relevant for members of “outsider-groups” defined by their properties (in this case, Russian women as

being poor). Similarly, one might argue that Nigerian women's involvement in prostitution is defined by their national origin and by them holding less material property. However, the relevant discourse on Nigerian women has a divided set of presented "explanations", where the normality/deviance framework is neither directly individualized in terms of any personal pathology, but rather expressed through a "cultural mode" of explanations, and their "African background" as a cultural determining factor. Thereby involvement in European street prostitution as partly motivated by poverty and migration at a structural level, and partly described as sealed by individual belief system and the fear of magical retaliation at another – again points back to presenting the phenomena as a trait of the 'Nigerian/African culture' and underdevelopment. I found that a 'normality/deviance' framework was also active as a dividing practice in the internal division within the Norwegian prostitution market, and serves to present some women as more "deviant" (aggressive and desperate in the case of Nigerians), and that some of the forms of prostitution involvement are seen as more "problematic" than others.

While Stenvoll was able to identify some positive descriptions of strengthened Russia-Norway relations and cross-border contact in his material, there was no similar positive counter discourse on increased Nigeria-Norway contact. Rather, I found an overwhelming negative image of Nigeria as a source for diseases, superstition, corruption, crime and poverty. Although the Norwegian government has several economic interests and relations to the Nigerian oil industry, Norway-Nigeria relationship on a governmental level was a less occurring theme in my material. My material provided little information or positive counter-discursive strategies on Nigeria. The lack of positive images of Nigeria fits into the general discursive practice in Norwegian as well as the Nordic media, where the African Continent and the informational sources on non-Western relationships are a less charted space in the media coverage of foreign affairs. Earlier estimates indicate that 6-11 percent of the total amount of press coverage on foreign affairs is devoted to the African Continent in *Aftenposten* and *Dagbladet* (Lohte 2002:90 in Tornås 2006:4), and we might assume that *Verdens Gang* would have an even lower coverage percentage due to its stronger degree of tabloid form and content. A Nordic media-study concluded that "Africa receives little, fragmented and negative coverage. Few articles are inspired by realities "on the ground" and most are written by journalists sitting in one of the Nordic countries" (Simonsen 2003 in Tornås 2006: 4).

While one of the “explanatory” discourses on men’s involvement in prostitution in Stenvoll’s material was the local imbalance of gender economy and the fact that the Northern and more rural parts of Norway have a surplus of bachelors, any parallel “normalizing” discourse on the contact between the Norwegian men and Nigerian women can not be traced in my material. Neither can any presentations of extensive overlap between the “normal” cross-border contact between men and women and the more “arranged” meetings and relationships in “Finnmark prostitution” be traced in the media presentations of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway. The phenomenon is exclusively understood as organized, economically motivated migration, and thereby, strictly seen, as bearing no similarities to any “normal cross border contact” between Norwegian men and Nigerian women. Furthermore, the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway is extensively described as a consequence of global and economical structural shifts in Europe - not only seen as a direct consequence of open borders. Norwegian prostitution customers are described as a constant market at a nominative level, and at an individual level as morally and sexually deviant. The ‘deviant/normality’ framework is acted out through either explaining the purchase of sex as inescapable due to biological “drives” or/and as a consequence of the “deviant commodity thinking”, where sexual and intimate experiences could be bought and paid for like any other commodity.

The thematization of the Norwegian prostitution market as a site for competing groups of women, and as influenced by structural shifts at a European and global level, made the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway a consequence of trafficking, global sex industry, and global sex market. These themes seem less occurring in the news coverage on the cross-border contact between the Russian women and Norwegian men, and can be explained through different understandings of the phenomenon. The rural parts of Norway are not seen as a similar market for ‘the global sex industry’ as the more urban settings like Oslo, Bergen or Stavanger, since the Finnmark prostitution was related to a general increased cross-border contact between Norway and Russia, after opening up the borders in the 90s, and thereby not seen as an isolated phenomenon. The prominent theme of a global sex industry active in the Norwegian prostitution market, can also be understood in relation to general awakening and public interest to the issue of international trafficking of women for sex. Moreover, it can be seen related to the influence of Pro Senteret on the newspaper coverage on Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway.

All the above-mentioned distinctions between the newspaper coverage on Nigerian women and the newspaper coverage on “the Finnmark prostitution” imply that one might need to consider the temporal and spatial foundations for the discourses on transnational prostitution. For instance, journalists and the newspaper coverage of Nigerian women in prostitution, are spatially situated closer to the actual phenomenon (especially the coverage in Oslo), and might be exposed to discourses on an everyday basis, which might shape the newspaper coverage. Furthermore, Oslo, as the capital of Norway, contains an institutional “landscape” which serves to shape the discourses on transnational prostitution – however how this actually affects media discourse in a comparative perspective has not been the explicit focus of attention in this analysis. Neither has my study investigated how media discourses functioned outside media representations, and thereby I can say little about exactly how this affects the everyday practices and routines of individuals, organizations and institutions.

The approach I have chosen has shed light on some aspects on the discursive construction in the media – however, further research is needed. Firstly, I see a need to consider new ways to theorize the intersection of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and sexuality in an era of globalization, and how this influence the construction of sexual and ethnical others, in a context where the movement of individuals challenges state and national sovereignty. Secondly, we need to consider how media has a strategic position in the discursive shaping of other institutional imperatives and strategies to accommodate new social challenges, tensions and dilemmas. We need, to not only keep asking how media serves as a site for media discourse on prostitution, but learn more on how politicians as well as journalists and the society in general are influenced by scientific and scholarly discourse, and vice versa. For instance, we need to consider how categorizations and definitions in political and scholarly debates are taken up by media and are popularized as information provided by “experts” on any perceived “reality”, and how this might affect the perceptions and work of organizations and institutions. Media can be considered as one of the several sites for discourse on the issue of transnational prostitution. This means we need to learn more about the intersection of different orders of discourse, and how they influence each other and relate dialectically.

Final remarks

Investigating narrative discourses and discursive thematic frameworks on social issues in media are important, because they provide us with an insight into how different understandings and perspectives serve to construct different presentations of social actors, social events as well as of social relations and social conflicts. Also different sets of problematizations serve to structure different political strategies. For instance, if women in prostitution are thematized as a problem of an underground economy, illegal immigration, crime, public order or disease, the matter will at the same time be linked to the different institutions established to accommodate these. Whether we see the case of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway as inherently being a ‘poverty problem’, a ‘prosperity problem’ or ‘a problem of ‘public order’ is not irrelevant, as it structures the measures directed to accommodate the issue.

I have found that the newspaper coverage on the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway, carries and re-informs cultural stereotypes, presuppositions and prejudices which can be traced in the dominant colonial cultural imagery and the construction of a cultural “other” – descending from the myths of “the dark and sexual uninhibited African woman” and in the myth on prostitution and the social relationships within prostitution, where the main characters are presented to be “the prostitute”, “the customer” and “the pimp”. Instead of critically recognizing the immediate need for accommodation and recognition of failed international policies on female immigration, media frenzies on the sensational subject of “vice” and “voodoo” time and again, serves to trivialize societal and structural issues. Categorizations of the “deserving trafficking victims” as young women or young girls, serves to construct an image of helpless and fragile victims, which unfortunately does not increase our understanding of the phenomenon transnational prostitution, nor trafficking. Neither does it serve to empower, or generate collective sympathy of an unrestricted character for women in prostitution. I have found that the mainstream newspaper coverage presents the issue of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution within a nationalistic framework, which functions to reconstitute the prevailing hetero-normative discourses on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, foreignness and a Norwegian national identity. When news coverage and constructed media images of prostitution emphasize ethnicity and nationality of women in prostitution, certain nationalities and certain kind of migration are sexualized through the media. Foreignness in a

nationalistic rhetoric is set in connection with the morally suspicious and the potential spread of disease – as having an outside source.

That the issue of trafficking is seen as of particular public interest and as a pressing political issue, might be interpreted as if the phenomenon were being discursively constructed as an attack on the national “self” by foreign criminals and “deviant sexual others” (as in the case of the customers) who contaminate Norway with a primitive, dark and shallow form of expression of human sexuality. Thereby, the Norwegian discourse on Nigerian women in prostitution rejects and disavows the phenomenon as a part of a National discourse; rather prostitution is predominantly presented as Nigerian, an external “pollution”, or an “outside” threat - which meets the notions of internal “pollution” (deviant and double standards men). Moreover, portrayals of the “slavery-like” conditions on Norwegian territory oppose the dominating discourse of self-perception of Norway as being an international forerunner in democracy, equality and welfare state ideology. The trafficking of women and children occurs all over the world, however when it has reached the Norwegian “shores”, the problem turns into a one which in the public eye does not only concern Norway’s international reputation, relations and responsibilities, but one which needs to be addressed internally - more specifically it fuels the arguments to prohibit the purchase of sexual services.

It has been interesting to observe how the increased media attention on foreign women and the Nigerian women in particular, have awoken a general call for the criminalization of customers in prostitution. At the moment I write this, the MPs who argue in favour of such measures, are at the moment representing the majority in the Parliament, and it seems likely that such legislation will come into being. In my opinion, it seems quite evident that increased visibility of street prostitution specifically served to put the question back on the political agenda between 2005 and 2006, as well as it brought together several political interests which are usually not seen as reconcilable. Providing policing institutions with increased jurisdiction on prostitution serves the interests of those who see it as a matter of renovating the streets, as well as those who have more idealistic or abolitionist prerogatives.

Summarized, much of the discussion in this thesis and the above-mentioned problematizations of the issue, pivot around how the media coverage of the presence of Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway can be seen as centred around our definition and understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking for prostitution purposes and of transnational prostitution – not

excluding individuals who find themselves in positions where there is an immediate need for protection against coercive relationships. If not all women in coercive relationships are perceived and presented as “forced” or “exploited” along the same categorical lines as policing institutions or immigration authorities might define force and exploitation, it will exclude accommodation of the needs of some groups of individuals. Institutional involvement in prostitution by, for instance, the local police, the immigration authorities or the jurisdiction might be commonly understood as politically neutral, and their involvement and intervention might come across as natural and uncontroversial.

As a recommendation for future research, I argue that the distinction between forced and voluntary prostitution, as well as between forced and voluntary migration becomes a misinforming frame to analyse sex-work within, as all it reveals to us are different internationally agreed ways to control and prevent the movement of different groups. If one is to study transnational prostitution, a ‘voluntary vs. forced’ framework would tell us little about the situation women find themselves in after the migration process – i.e. the conditions these women live and work under in Norway. As I have showed, several instances of, social control take on other forms and are imbedded in other relationships than merely existing in the relationship between the women in prostitution, their customers and their pimps/organizers - as varying social actors, groups, organizations and institutions might condition these women’s everyday experience and life conditions *within* Norway.

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Newspaper articles

Aftenposten Morgen	(01.09.2004)	Strøm av afrikanere selger sex.
Aftenposten Morgen	01.09.2004)	Strøm av Afrikanske prostituerte til Oslo.
Verdens Gang	(25.09.2004)	Priskrig på lunsj-sex.
Dagbladet	(16.10.2004)	“Den Nigerianske mafiaen blokkerer markedet ved å sende inn alle jentene”
Dagbladet	(18.10.2004)	”Når jeg setter av dama, så sier jeg til meg selv: Fy faen, så dum du er”
Dagbladet	(30.10.2004)	New hookers in town.
Verdens Gang	(05.11.2004)	Nordmenn svindlet for åtte millioner.
Dagbladet	(08.11.2004)	Slaver i Oslo.
Dagbladet	(13.02.2005)	Eksplisiv økning av nigerianske prostituerte i Oslo Skremmes med - ...voodoo-ritualer.
Verdens Gang	(28.04.2005)	Selger sex på Karl Johan.
Aftenposten Aften	(27.04.2005)	Kamp om kundene gir økt kriminalitet
Verdens Gang	(28.04.2005)	Uholdbart at vi har åpenlys prostitusjon.
Dagbladet	(22.05.2005)	Prioriteringer i et valgår.
Verdens Gang	(23.05.2005)	Våger livet for farlig sex, Horekunder forlanger ubeskyttede samleier.
Aftenposten Aften	(02.06.2005)	Nei til kjøp av sex.
Dagbladet	(06.07.2005)	Vil skremme prostituerte UD med kampanje i Nigeria.
Aftenposten Morgen	(29.11.2005)	Kampanje mot sexkjøp, Karita Bekkemellem vil lære ungdom å si nei.
Aftenposten Morgen	(27.11.2005)	Nigeriansk mafia lokker naive nordmenn.
Aftenposten Aften	(29.12.2005)	Kommentar for det nye året.
Verdens Gang	(12.02.2006)	Tvunget til prostitusjon etter Hekse-pakt.
Aftenposten Aften	(23.03.2006)	Trekker ut på gatene i nabolaget.
Dagbladet	(23.03.2006)	Moderne slaveri USAs ambassadør på gata for å bekjempe menneskehandel.
Aftenposten Aften	(24.03.2006)	Sex-salg brer seg til boligstrøk, PRO-senteret frykter Borgervern.
Aftenposten Aften	(24.03.2006)	Flere vil kjøpe sex Prostitusjon i boligstrøk bekymrer Fagfolk.
Dagbladet	(27.03.2006)	Jeg er en slave - en sex- slave.
Aftenposten Aften	(29.03.2006)	Vil ikke synke så dypt.
Aftenposten Aften	(29.03.2006)	Kampanje skal hindre sex-kjøp.
Aftenposten Aften	(04.04.2006)	Aggressiv prostitusjon plager.
Aftenposten Aften	(24.04.2006)	Jeg vil så gjerne få gå i fred.
Aftenposten Aften	(27.04.2006)	En stadig tristere hovedstad.
Aftenposten Morgen	(11.05.2006)	Norge - et marked for menneskehandlere.
Dagbladet	(22.05.2006)	Lae frykter hevnooppgjør.
Dagbladet	(03.06.2006)	Hilsen fra Oslo.
Aftenposten Morgen	(11.06.2006)	Helomvending om horekunder, Vil kriminalisere kjøp av ofre for menneskehandel.
Verdens Gang	(12.06.2006)	Ullevål horeby.
Verdens Gang	(16.06.2006)	Horekunder spiller Russisk rulett - Rekord i antall HIV- smittede prostituerte.
Dagbladet	(29.06.2006)	Problemet er Nigeria.
Bergens Tidende	(21.04.2007)	37 prosent sier ja til bordell med tilsyn.
Aftenposten Aften	(25.04.2007)	Nei til Oslo nye vedtekter.