

**NZNTV STREET TELEVISION  
GENEVA**

# **FLEUVE MEDITERRANEE- DNA MIGRANTI**

**WORKING TITLE**



**IDENTIFICATION OF  
CORPSES RECOVERED FROM  
THE SEA AS OF THE  
RESULT OF TRAGEDY IN  
THE MEDITARRANEAN  
REGION**

**FORMAT DOCUMENTAIRE**

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Life jacket graveyard of the 2014-2016 d-days, near Efthiou, Lesbos, Greece

## FORMAT

Documentary film of 52' format Full HD/4K,  
4:2:2 son stéréo.

Video distribution / festivals, movies theater  
and the web.

Versions: F / GB

**En cours de financement**

(budget and financial plan on demand by  
email)

## PITCH

**BEHIND EVERY MIGRANT DEATH IS AN INDIVIDUAL, AND BEHIND EACH INDIVIDUAL A FAMILY.**

“European Union (EU) described it as a “huge mistake”, one that “cost human lives”. But this was no mistake. Evidence provided in this communication indicates these policies were part of an intentional plan, with full and real-time knowledge of its lethal consequences.”

*Cited in Communication to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Pursuant to the Article 15 of the Rome Statute EU Migration Policies in the Central Mediterranean and Libya, 2019.*

As long as there is no structural solution to the refugee crisis in high-risk countries, migrants will continue to flee their home countries and risk their lives in the hope of a better life.

In the Mediterranean Sea men, women and children flee in crowded makeshift boats that often capsize off despite the central Mediterranean being viewed as one of the most dangerous sea crossings in the world.





Cimetière improvisé à Zarzis, Tunisie

Rescue organizations and fishermen provide relief to people in distress but despite their actions many boats are shipwrecked or are scuttled by smugglers and drowned bodies drift due to winds and currents and run aground regularly on some of the shores of European and North African countries.

## IDENTIFICATION

Then arrive for the authorities of the countries concerned the difficult procedures of identification of the deceased persons and the organization of the funeral and / or the return of the bodies in the countries of origin if there is a demand from families.

In general the general public is poorly informed about the details of these identification procedures and there is no common protocol established in Europe, only Interpol has one.

However, in ancient times the Greek authorities - for example - have been confronted with the problem of identifying deceased soldiers as told by a Coroner in Athens:

«In Homer's Illiade, Nestor exorts the fighters, the Acheens, to burn the bodies of the dead soldiers till there would only the bones left to be kept in a shroud and be returned to Greece so that the honors can be paid to them. We see that this need of respecting the rites to the dead - even when hardly feasible - is already present in Greek history- just like in other cultures. It a moral need, something that we have to make to dead people and to morality».

## Situation at present time

In 2017, the U.N. authorities feared that migrations across the Mediterranean Sea would stagger further, and it did so in term of casualties, although the number of journeys and passengers was down. Nevertheless, migrants continue to arrive en masse on the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, especially to Greece, Italy and Spain.

Tragically some of them will never reach their destination. Hundreds of disappearances at sea as boats of fortune sink or are wrecked by smugglers while assistance is often delayed result in disappearances with no traces left behind. Most deceased people will never be traced, but some are still afloat in the sea between the shores of the Italian peninsula, Tunisia or round the Aegean Sea.

Analysis based on UNICEF's methodology of demographic data for those arriving in Italy suggests that at least 1,200 women and 1,300 children died along the Central Mediterranean route between 2014 and 2017. **What will happen in 2019 ?**

**Here is the answer: The number of drownings during attempts to cross the Mediterranean has increased sharply in 2018 with more than 1700 deaths since the beginning of the year. In September alone, one person lost his life or disappeared for eight people embarking on the journey to Europe in the central Mediterranean, mainly because of a reduction in search and rescue facilities. (UNHCR) United Nations Agency.**

Confronted by this human drama and the growing availability of new data sources, and the rapid emergence of innovative methodologies for understanding them, a fundamental change appears in the process of collecting information. A “data revolution” is taking place, both in the type, and in the scale of information available to the authorities.

In particular, Greece and Italy reorganised their forensic science (“médecine légale”) department to cater for the DNA identification of bodies recovered from the Sea. Even in such a tragedy, it is important for families to know about their loved ones and thus to provide them - whenever possible - with a proper burial. The pain of loss of a relative is often made worse by uncertainty caused because the bodies of many of those who die, whether at sea or on land remain unidentified

**Some testimonials we have already shot in 2018:**

**A Coroner at Mythylene Greece:** «Why do an identification of a deceased person? I think we have to do it to honor the deceased. All our work is human. All our work serves to honor the memory of the deceased ...»

**Mustafa Lesvos, Greece:** «I went the next day at 8: 00h. I found them with the machines to clean the ground. They cut all the trees and at 13: 00h it was good. I showed them the direction of Mecca so they could dig the graves. They made 6 holes and then I went to the hospital I carried 6 dead people, a family of 4 and two other unidentified people. I did the first 6 burials and in the week that followed I buried everyone in the hospital, in the container, about 57 people. And since that day I’m taking care of the cemetery, the burials, all that there is to do I do it ... »

**Police Chief Forensic Lab Athens, Greece:** «We have a very good collaboration with the ICRC and it started with the arrival of migrants in 2014 because the ICRC has a very large network in the countries of origin, particularly for the repatriation of refugees body. People, relatives of migrants can go to the ICRC and ask them what they need without fear because the agency is very serious and world famous. »

**Head IOM, Athens:** «I think the problem is a bit more complicated than we think because visas for humanitarian reasons it is not a problem to receive the visa it is rather a problem of communication and identification , to be sure if family members can also come here. Similarly in Greece and Italy it is very difficult to come even legally. But when you have all the papers and resolved all the procedures it works well to get this visa. »

**Jean Luc Gremaud Graduate of the Unil Police Department, Lausanne:** «The need to give one’s name back to a deceased person finds justifications in different areas. On a human level, having the body of a deceased family member is necessary to begin a process of mourning. Although the place of death has changed over the years in society this aspect remains essential ... The need to identify deceased persons is also justified in managing the number of missing persons. Unidentified deceased persons and missing persons are two categories of related persons. As a general rule, it is reasonable to consider that an unidentified deceased person must be missing in his family, professional, or broader social context ... »

## NOTE D'INTENTION

It's always difficult to explain and plan a reportage work. It's the discovery, the research of the facts, the archives, the chance of the meetings which motivate and one never knows what will really happen and what I will actually film. As I work so to speak always alone or with a small group of people it is my only responsibility and I have the power to decide what I want to film or not. Or rather, what should I film or not ? You have to understand what's going on first and avoid staging.

It is especially in the editing that everything is played, it is the decisive step with the organization of the trips. It is obvious that filming in the official or private places are always the most problematic and the most difficult to apprehend.

### Note from the production

In this project we will set out to search for survivors looking for lost family members, friends, interview people at refugee camps, authorities working on the spot, physicians in charge of the DNA tests and Coroner for autopsy, International Organisations in Geneva and abroad, humanitarian NGOs, Police and religious authorities as for example Muslim cemetery, legal medicine laboratory, flights with the NGO «Pilotes Volontaires» based at Malte, across Mediterranean sea routes of migration, Data reasearch, etc...

### Other images we already have for this project:

- Interviews of 2 coroner in Athens and 1 in Mytilene.
- Interview with the IOM representative in Athens.
- Some hours on a Greek Guard Coast vessel with interview of the captain.
- Interview of the head doctor of the Forensic Laboratory of Athens (analysis and database of DNA taken from corpses).
- Interview of a Muslim student who runs a Muslim cemetery on the island of Lesbos not declared but accepted for the authorities of the island.
- Rushs of the lifejacket graveyard, and container at Mitilini hospital, Lesbos, Greece.
- Entretien avec l'amiral italien Di Giorgio, organisateur de l'opération Mare Nostrum en 2013.
- ICMP Meeting, Roma, 11 juin 2018
- Interview with Charles Brenner mathematician Oakland, USA founder of DNA-View used by several police departments in the world.
- Some hours on a Frontex boat in Skala, Lesbos, May 2019 with interviews of the crew.
- IOM Data visit in Berlin in June 2019 with interviews.
- Interview with Felipe Gonzales Morales special reporter for human rights, United Nations Organisation at Palais Wison, Geneva, Dec. 2019

### En Suisse :

- Interview d'un officier de police formé à l'UNIL, Lausanne qui a rédigé une thèse sur la science forensique (forensic science).
- Entretien avec Peter Probe, directeur des affaires internationales du Centre œcuménique des Eglises (WCC).





## **Shooting plan (as soon as possible in 2020)**

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| GREECE:          | some days Athina et Lesvos                               |
| TURKEY:          | Some days  |
| UNITED KINGDOM:  | One day  |
| ITALY:           | some days Rome   |
| ITALY, SICILIA   | some days  |
| ITALY, LAMPEDUSA | some days  |
| MALTA            | some days La Valette                                     |
| TUNISIA          | some days Tunis, Zarsis                                  |
| MOROCCO          | some days Tanger, Rabat                                  |
| SPAIN            | some days Cadix, Almeria, Los Barios, Grenada, Algeciras |
| GENEVA           | some days  |
| THE HAGUE        | some day   |
|                  | -----  |
| Total            | about 40 days of shooting                                |

At the moment we did financing this project (pre-production).

Now we must find co-producers, sponsors, friends to do the journey.

Post production will be taking care by NZNTV, Geneva.

We have to react quickly, things move quickly. (Previsional budget on demand by email.)

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Pier Blattner is a Swiss director / producer. After studying photography in Los Angeles, USA he was assistant fashion photographer and set photographer on commercials in Paris while making two short films. «Lettre Mortelle», selected at the Locarno Film Festival and «Voyez chez les voisins», documentary film about the Poussin wall mural both purchased and broadcast by the TSR.

Then he spent twenty years at the head of Incisif communication a communication agency in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 2006 Pier Blattner founded noyauzeronetwork.org (NZNTV Street Television) an association under the swiss law and registered at Geneva. Federal number: GHE-240.664.762.

He is also registered with the Professional Register of Journalists and a member of the Swiss Independent Association of Swiss Journalists «ch-media» (press card) and a member of APES Association of foreing journalists in Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

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