

Borders, Migration, Security and Trafficking Dilemmas: Current Debates and Cypriot Challenges

Introduction to the Cypriot Border Dilemmas and Immigration Challenges

This extended review essay aims to address some major debates around the transformation of borders, migration, securitization and trafficking via a review of some texts that are informative of the current global debates on the subject. The “age of migration”¹ requires that we locate Cyprus in its wider context and this means rethinking the concepts, theories and the policy framework of appreciating and handling the “turbulence of migration” which reshapes our understanding of globalisation, localisation, deterioralization and hybridity;² yet we have to bear in mind that whenever boundaries are drawn the mechanisms are set in motion for their racialisation.³ Although the texts reviewed in all but the last subsection do not contain, or if they do, they contain very little direct references to Cyprus, they are highly relevant to the current debates about Cypriot policy-making and academic research on the regulation of borders and immigration, the public discourses and police practices regarding ‘security’ and the combating of trafficking. Each subsection can be considered a key ‘subheading’ on particular dimensions of the issues facing Cyprus today. The only books reviewed that refer directly to the Cypriot context are those dealing with the exceptional subject of trafficking, prostitution and exploitation, and these titles are dealt with in the last subsection of this essay.

Transformations and Dilemmas on Borders and Migration control: Can Cypriot Debates Draw on the Broader Debates?

Soft or Hard Borders? Managing the Divide in an Enlarged Europe

Edited by Joan DeBardeleben

Ashgate (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2005) 214 pp. ISBN: 0 7546 4338 7

Thinking the Unthinkable: The Immigration Myth Exposed

Nigel Harris

I.B. Tauris (London/New York, 2002) 183 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1860646713

Open Borders: The Case against Immigration Controls

Teresa Hayter

Pluto Press (London/ Sterling, Virginia, 2000) 188 pp. ISBN: 0-7453-1542-9

Rethinking Borders in the EU context

Teresa Hayter's *Open Borders* makes a powerful case against immigration control. She illustrates this primarily by drawing on the UK experience of 1990 as well as from other countries. The books reviewed in this subsection deal with the notion of border control in different ways: DeBardleben et al., consists of essays concerned with the changing nature and the current dilemmas of the European borders and their management, whilst the books by Harris (2002) and Hayter (2000) examine the policy dimension of immigration control and advocate open borders. This is a radical solution but they claim that it is the only effective solution to the current crisis of immigration policy across the globe and in Europe in particular.

The collection of essays edited by DeBardleben, illustrate how the question of the nature of the 'borders of Europe' is becoming ever more important in understanding state processes: notions such as 'soft borders' and 'hard borders' are dilemmas for the enlarged EU. It is a well-written and well-structured volume which provides empirical support from the EU context, primarily drawing on the eastern European context – as well as on a theoretical level – the operation of the idea that "the boundary encapsulates the identity of the community".⁴ The book comprises of three parts following the introduction by the editor, and an illuminating chapter by Nanette Neuwahl under the title 'What Borders for Which Europe?' Part I is concerned with enlargement and the 'wider Europe' and has three chapters dealing with eastern Europe and the neighbours in countries formerly belonging to the so-called 'actually existing socialist camp'. Charles Pentland looks at what he calls "eastern approaches" where "the EU encounters the former Soviet Union" (pp. 45-68), whilst Helmut Hubel concentrates on the notion of "direct neighbours" to unpack the relationship between the EU and post-Soviet Russia (pp. 69-84). Dragoş Popa and Bodan Buduru explore the 'new borders' and staged enlargement by looking into the Romania-EU relations (pp. 85-104) prior to accession to the EU. Part II covers enlargement and EU border policies, which is really the 'nuts and bolts' of the EU's mechanisms for policy-making on questions of borders: migration and border control, focusing on economic and security factors (Helene Pellerin); the politics of exclusion and inclusion in 'wider Europe' (Sandra Lavenex) and the EU 'integrated management of external borders' (Jorg Monar). Part III explores the question of managing new borders along the Russian perimeter, with two chapters: the first discusses the idea of a "Friendly Schengen Border" in the context of combating illegal migration (Olga Potemkina), and the second is on Latvia's EU accession and the Russian border (Juris Grommons).

The paper by Neuwahl is particularly insightful: the notion of 'border' is nicely unpacked from the outset showing that the assumptions related to borders are flawed and ill-conceived. The notion of borders is often assumed to be a 'physical' or 'linear border', which was traditionally associated with "central repressive and

extractive agencies such as immigration, customs and exchange control” (p. 24). This, however, is changing: boundaries and borders are historically constructed and their nature and meaning is never static; neither is it constructed necessarily on legal or legalistic grounds. DeBardeleben (p. 11) reminds us that the European dilemma is between ‘hard borders’ versus ‘soft borders’. The former essentially means strict visa regimes, extensive policing and customs control on cross-border transport of goods creating a ‘closed system’ and functions as a ‘barrier’ which manifests a regime with exclusive and rough edges. On the other hand there are measures to ‘soften’ the borders by loosening visa requirements and allowing “free flow of traffic and goods, and an easy exchange of human contact”. Yet, there is no uniformity in approaches on the borders of the EU; there are contradictions, mixed signals and highly volatile situations reflecting the contestations within the EU over the issue as well as “the uncertainty about the likely shape of EU’s future limits (pp. 11-12). Neuwahl questions whether EU membership is necessarily the most desirable option for all neighbours given that non-EU members can participate in the shaping of various EU policies. She refers to a multi-tiered structure currently in place which involves EU members, the Schengen protocol, the EU monetary union and the various custom unions etc. Potemkina deals with some of the contradictions between the so-called “Friendly Schengen border” and the tough policies to combat illegal immigration. In any case when analysing borders the power-relations between the forces involved cannot be ignored. As Pellerin reminds us there is a problem of asymmetrical relations in the regulation of borders with their neighbours.

If the philosopher Giorgio Agamben is right, in the current, generalised state of exception, “the question of borders becomes all the more urgent”⁵ In speaking about the ‘edges’ of law and politics, Agamben refers to the “ambiguous, uncertain, borderline fringe, at the intersection between the legal and the political”.⁶ These analytical insights allow us to explore the ambiguity and uncertainty of the “the no-man’s land between the public law and political fact”, between judicial order and life. The idea of the state of exception is a general schema but can and should be applied to specific situations; in this we can see the interplay between literal, metaphorical and symbolic borders. On the more conceptual level of state theory, the notion of ‘soft borders’ forces us to rethink the very concepts of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘democracy’.⁷ Interestingly, we are dealing with a paradox here: the argument is that we are essentially arguing for the centrality of the border – an idea which at first, appears to be an oxymoron: how could the ‘edge’, the ‘border’, be the ‘centre’? Etienne Balibar⁸ expands on the centrality of the border as a new socio-political entity in the following passage:

“The term border is extremely rich in significations. One of my hypotheses is that it is undergoing a profound change in meaning. The borders of new sociopolitical entities, in which an attempt is being made to preserve all the functions of the sovereignty of the state, are no longer entirely situated at the

outer limit of territories; they are dispersed a little everywhere, wherever the movement of information, people, and things is happening and is controlled – for example, in cosmopolitan cities. But it is also one of my hypotheses that the zones called peripheral, where secular and religious cultures confront one another, where differences in economic prosperity become more pronounced and strained, constitute the melting pot for the formation of a people (demos), without which there is no citizenship (politeia) in the sense that this term has acquired since antiquity in the democratic tradition.

In this sense, border areas – zones, countries, and cities – are not marginal to the constitution of a public sphere but rather are at the center”.

In the context of the politicisation of immigration the question of the border increasingly becomes the ‘centre’ in terms of political discourses at the EU,⁹ and within national politics as, for instance, in the case of Cyprus.¹⁰ Often there are ‘soft borders’ cutting across countries divided by wars that create new types of immigration problems such as Cyprus, Ireland and others. Moreover, beyond the celebratory dimension that heralds the border changes as ‘good for migrants’ because they find employment, crucial questions about the transformation patterns, informalisation and the exploitation of migrants at the workplace, are part and parcel of the ‘loosening of borders’. What we are dealing with is a wider phenomenon whereby migration must be located within the post-Fordist restructuring that is occurring across the European Union and the globe.¹¹

Neuwahl refers to the case of Cyprus as a particularly complex case: “the division of Cyprus [...] has created definite ambiguity for future EU borders”. This is because “until a settlement on the island is reached, the UN Green Line zone will act as a kind of frontier running across the island, thus ensuring the non-application of the economic provisions of EU law to the North” (p. 25). In practice, the notion of ‘soft border’ is proving an extremely difficult issue at a very practical level. The Treaty of Accession and the Green Line Regulation 866/2004 of 29 April 2004 regulates the peculiar “soft border” of Cyprus under the current situation as long as the de facto partition persists.¹² In fact, immediately after a divided Cyprus acceded to the EU following the failure to agree on a settlement to the “Cyprus problem”, there was a special regulation, referred to as “the Green Line regulation”,¹³ which governs problems deriving from “the de facto partition of Cyprus”.¹⁴ There are inherent complications resulting from the operation of the Green line Regulation, which aims to combat illegal immigration of third country nationals and to detect and prevent any threat to public security and public policy.¹⁵ Nevertheless, there are various obstacles to the exercising of this right.¹⁶ It can be said that the ‘soft border/ceasefire line’ of Cyprus is turning out to be both softer and harder in practice than predicted: there is an ‘unofficial’ EU office operating in the north which is trying to develop a process that would bring the situation more in line with the EU (and the south) but the functioning of the Green Line Regulation is proving difficult to manage. There has certainly been a rise in inter-communal trade over recent

years but at the same time there are bureaucratic, operational and social stumbling blocks to trading in a state of exception.¹⁷

To Open or Not to Open the Borders?

Teresa Hayter's *Open Borders* makes a powerful case against immigration control. She illustrates this primarily by drawing on the UK experience of 1990 as well as other contexts, and maintains that the concept of "controlling" migration is based not only on false premises, but immigration control effectively undermines the very notion of human rights. This is the kind of critique which rightly pushes 'liberalism' to be truly liberal and is not based on some unrealistic idealistic premise which is detached from actual practice. This is a well-written and researched book, quite compact with ideas and arguments for open borders. Firstly, immigration control undermines human rights such as the basic right of not being subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment; the right not to be tortured; the right not to be arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned; the right to a fair trial by a properly constituted court; the right to family life, the right to work, etc: "Britain violates virtually all the UN High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR] handbook guidelines it detains for longer periods and with less judicial control than in other countries" (p. 117). Secondly, immigration control simply does not work. Hayter makes a powerful case that the abolition of immigration controls will have some effect on increasing numbers but "it" would not have an overwhelming effect on numbers (p. 152). Despite the increase in repressive measures the numbers of asylum-seekers remained roughly constant. The 'water metaphor' often used to describe migration by anti-immigration advocates are used by Hayter to argue the opposite case: "controls are like a dam; when one hole is blocked another appears somewhere else" (p. 152). Moreover, she illustrates the fallaciousness of the argument that 400 million Indians are ready to immigrate en mass to the rich countries should borders open. Drawing on works of orthodox or neo-classical economists, she disputes the views that suggest that free movement of labour would create such large scale movements of workers and result in equalised wages, thus reducing the wages of workers in the western rich countries. Hayter argues, quite convincingly that this is a false assumption, (a) when Britain (reluctantly) offered 20,000 visas to Hong Kong citizens, only 10,000 applied for them. (b) In situations where there were no immigration controls, e.g. from the Commonwealth countries to Britain, Puerto Rico and Cuba, the USA, and from French Overseas Departments to France, only a very small proportion migrated when the borders were open between 1950 and 1980. During this period only 0.6% of the Caribbean population migrated. This type of argument answers those who call for stricter controls in Cyprus, maintaining that there are 2 million migrants waiting in Syria to swamp Cyprus.¹⁸

The volume by Harris (2002) very much complements that of Hayter. Harris aims to "expose the immigration myth" and succeeds in illustrating the arbitrariness

of immigration control and how recent this is. In six chapters he manages to put a very powerful case for open borders by demonstrating that: first, the current regime of immigration control does not work. Second, the current tough immigration regime will undermine welfare and socio-economic prospects for the developed economies themselves. Third, the current regime only emerged in the 1960s and 1970s; before that time people had much more freedom to move than they do now! Fourth, in the current globalised economy the closed border system effectively creates a system of 'global apartheid' whereby the majority are disempowered to move and are confined to a state of permanent risk. Fifth, Harris destroys - what he claims - are totally unfounded arguments for immigration control, as the chances of being 'swamped' are so slim, and cultural objections are merely disguised racism. Sixth, the logic of dismantling borders is based on the premise that these mechanisms are ineffective anyway, but there is such an insatiable economic need in developed countries for unskilled labour that no matter how sophisticated immigration controls are, clandestine labour will keep on growing, forcing host states to embark on periodic amnesties. Seventh, the current system of immigration control, which was established in the '60s and '70s, is beginning to crumble because competition exists amongst developed countries for migrants with IT skills, for example, and there is also a great demand for labour-intensive workers in jobs caring for the elderly and other 'intimate' posts. Eighth, once the distortion from the so-called 'illegal' or 'clandestine' workers is removed then Governments can begin to properly regulate the labour market on a more rational basis.

What is striking about the books by Harris and Hayter is that what is assumed to be the situation now as opposed to the memory of what 'it has been', is proven to be no longer the case. What the books offer are no 'guilt trips', nor do they make an appeal to our benevolent or charitable 'generosity' mood; They really illustrate how migration has always been present throughout history in such a way that it is difficult to mount a serious moral argument that disputes whether the same practice ought to continue in the future. The four periods of migration since the sixteenth century demonstrate a reality that cannot be denied: (a) There were an estimated 100 million slaves forced out of Africa; (b) bonded or indentured labour make up another significant number of migrants; (c) economic migration from Europe to America during the eighteenth – nineteenth century is estimated to be around 60 million; (d) The last period starts from the twentieth century onwards.

A criticism of the Harris and Hayter books is that the thrust of their argument is directed towards the police. In spite of the policy of the wealthy West (or North) to maintain tight immigration control, both authors argue for a generalised implementation of open borders across the globe rather than the adoption of such a policy by individual countries. Harris' 'globalist' perspective in particular is a sharp and powerful critique of immigration control as a generic tool of regulating population movements, but it is less powerful and useful if one is to adopt a more

open immigration policy at national level. Hayter's focus, in the specific example of the UK, makes it more 'relative' and focused in that sense, but less 'global' in another. Having said that, the Europeanisation of immigration and asylum policies, which is an undeniable trend in EU policy-making, makes the arguments of both authors much more relevant and sound: a European-wide policy that tends towards open borders is very much in line with the cogent case put forward by these two authors.

Both books make a strong case for open borders against the perverse logic of immigration controls. Such controls actually 'trap' migrants in the countries of destination. Even when they are willing to return to their country of origin to try their luck it is too risky to attempt return if the migrants are irregular. Hence, they are forced to stay. Also powerful is the case the authors make regarding the idea that the industry of 'smuggling', 'trafficking' and assisting illegal migration is, by and large, a consequence of strict immigration control. There are large profits being made by those willing to risk bypassing the legal and repressive apparatuses of immigration control. The stricter these control are, the higher the risks and the higher the profits.

On reflection a more relevant and focused theorisation of policy dilemmas on migration and border control in Cyprus, is to examine in the same spirit of the above three books, the implementation of the various amnesty and regularisation regimes that exist across the southern EU border. The most impressive of these is the Spanish case of permanent regularisation as the only method of dealing with the crisis. The dilemma would be either to have thousands or even hundreds of thousands of migrants as irregular migrants as experienced in Greece for instance, or to recognise them and bring them out of irregularity, thus ensuring that their rights are protected and labour standards are maintained for all, including the locals. It is time to contemplate the fact that immigration control as 'border control' is simply not working and there are other ways to regulate the flows whilst ensuring labour standards and equal treatment for all.

**Europeanisation, Securitisation and Migration Dilemmas:
Connections with the (Greek) Cypriot debates**

**Terror, Insecurity and Liberty,
Illiberal Practices of Liberal Regimes after 9/11**

Edited by Didier Bigo and Anastasia Tsoukala
Routledge (London/New York, 2008) 198 pp. ISBN 10: 0-415-49068-5

Security, Risk and Human Rights: A Vanishing Relationship?

Anastasia Tsoukala
CEPS Special Report (Brussels, September 2008), 17 pp. ISBN-13: 978-92-9079-811-8

The changing function and meaning of borders discussed above relates to questions of security and migration control, which is the subject matter of this subsection. The 'securitisation of migration' has been an issue of concern in European and international literature over recent years. It must be noted that it is not uncommon for the dangers posed by migrants, especially certain categories deemed as 'dangerous migrants', to be invoked, thus cultivating fears and insecurity amongst the host population.¹⁹ These discourses have, however, certainly taken a particularly pernicious form since the attacks of Sept 11, 2001, in what was aptly described by the criminologist Anastasia Tsoukala as "the terrorism-immigration nexus in the EU in the post-11 September era".²⁰ The alleged connection between terrorism and migration, including the use of 'racial profiling' as a police method to 'predict behaviour' of 'potential terrorists' is a controversial issue for civil libertarians in the EU and beyond.²¹ Such debates have been taking place in the EU and USA over the last years: under George W. Bush in the US, as well as from Margaret Thatcher through to Tony Blair in the UK, civil liberties have suffered enormous blows using anti-terrorism as an excuse to pass such measures. Nevertheless, it is superficial to assume that the changes occurred merely or primarily due to the programme of the particular heads of state. The changes are deeper and of long-term nature.

The edited volume by professors Bigo and Tsoukala is highly relevant in understanding the current climate, where there seems to be an increasingly frequent use of the alleged connection between 'migration' and 'security'. More importantly, however, the book illustrates how routine "illiberal practices" are used by so-called liberal regimes, particularly but not exclusively after 9/11. The editors aptly inform us that "the central notion of this volume is the field of professionals of the management of unease" (p. 2). What we are dealing with in the so-called 'war on terror' is what Agamben called "a permanent state of exception" which is cited as justification for suspending civil liberties and human rights by liberal states. Migrants and asylum seekers bear most of the brunt of these tough new measures. This book contains six chapters, written by different authors, illustrating how different dimensions interact in the formation of the 'state of exception'. After a general introduction by Bigo and Tsoukala, which frames the analysis for the rest of the book, Didier Bigo ('Globalised (in)security: The Field and the Panopticon'),²² examines the processes of globalised (in)security. It is an interesting chapter that uses Foucaultian insights to explore the field. Anastasia Tsoukala then scrutinises the processes of defining the terrorist threat in the post September 11 era (pp. 49-99) and Laurent Bonelli inquires into the "hidden in plain sight" by scrutinising intelligence, exception and suspicion after 11 September 2001 (pp. 100-120). Emmanuel-Pierre Guittet studies the French case of military activities within national boundaries (pp. 121-145) and finally Christian Olson makes an attempt at "bringing the political back in the interactions between external forces and local

societies” by linking military interventions and the concept of “the political” (pp 146-177). Finally, the book provides the reader with an up to date select bibliography.

The book unpacks the notion of (in)security in what Ulrich Beck termed as ‘risk society’. It can be viewed as a well-argued and documented response by criminologists, sociologists, philosophers and historians to the dominance of the discipline of International Relations in the field. The volume puts forward an awesome critique of modern liberal governmentability on (in)security which is not based on an abstract or philosophical analysis but on a theoretical argumentation that is fully empirically backed. To précis, the argument is that this modern liberal governmentability contains within it a zone, which is fundamentally a denial of democracy based on the logic of exceptionalism. This is not external or somehow detached but a structural element internal to its logic which rests on the premise that is necessary to exclude the right of persons deemed to belong to a category of ‘abnormality’. The behaviour of this group is fully and predictably criminal and must thus be halted. They call this “the pan-opticon dispositif” – clearly alluding to Michel Foucault’s groundbreaking concept. The authors take issue with Agamben’s grand schema, which they only partly accept: first, they dispute the line taken by those who, in part, accept the necessity of anti-terrorism but consider the response disproportionate; second, they dispute the position of those who consider that 11 September 2001 unmasked the logic of liberal democracy and modernity as the logic of the ‘Camp’ – this is based on merely blaming clandestine organisations or governments. Their argument is that we need to go beyond the schematic and programmatic approaches that focus on “the spectacular” to a more rigorous analysis based on research. They, therefore, “insist on the mimetic relation between transnational clandestine organisations using violence, the coalition of governments of the ‘global war on terror’ and a complex web of vested local interests” (Bigo and Tsoukala, 2008, p. 3). They propose that we look at “the routine and the everyday practices of late modernity” by “contextualising them to immerse them in a ‘societal logic’ and into a political sociology that insists on a different way of conceptualising the (in)securitization, far from the fear and terror, but concerned with insecurity as risk and unease” (Bigo and Tsoukala. 2008, pp. 3-4). We are dealing with an analysis of “the politics of unease” as they term it, as well as the social and political dimensions of (in)security, whereby we have the professionals with specific views and interests on the management of unease. ‘Security’ is demystified from an ‘unqualified human good’ beyond criticism to what it actually is in society: a socio-political construct shaped by the structural competition between the various actors with different forms of capital and legitimacy over the contradictory definitions of security and different interests.

The chapters deal with the different dimensions of this: Bigo discusses the new governmentability of unease; Bonelli unpacks the restructuring and functioning of

specific security agencies – the British, the French and the Spanish intelligence by demonstrating the multi-faceted and complex contestations between the struggles of agents who defend their field by defining the ‘terrorist threat accordingly’. Guittet deals with the army’s keenness to get involved in internal counter-terrorism, whilst Olsson deals with counter-terrorism abroad.

The novelty of their contribution lies also in the way they handle and connect the various institutional formations and practices that shape the formation of the governmentability of insecurity. For the purposes of this essay, whose focus is primarily migration-related (including distorted and violent forms of migration and exploitation), the volume is extremely valuable: we are able to locate the processes of both criminalisation of migration/migrants and securitisation in the wider context. In fact, Tsoukala’s own contribution to the volume illustrates these processes via the use of analysis of political representation of (dis)order in the UK. Particularly, the representation of Muslims as a menace is a central theme in defining the terrorist threat. She demonstrates confidently how the “terrorism-immigration-asylum nexus is established (Tsoukala, 2008a, pp. 66-69), the criminalisation (pp. 69-71) and the ‘threatened’ values of society” (pp. 73-74).

In other areas of text reviewed, Anastasia Tsoukala puts forward the basic logic of the school of thought in her very readable paper on security, risk and human Rights and illustrates in a convincing manner what she refers to as a “vanishing relationship” between the subject of human rights and the agencies in charge of ensuring that these rights are upheld in practice. In a fascinating but highly disturbing paper, Tsoukala advances the thesis that there has been a trend of a longer-term nature, which manifests “the gradual disappearance of the person as a subject of rights in contemporary legal systems” (p. 1). This is explained, not as something ‘sudden’, which occurs after 11 September; it is not a rupture that occurred as a result of the post September counter terrorism policies but as a natural outcome of the prevalence of the risk-focused mindset in both crime control and the human rights reality since late 1970. The notion of the negation of personhood as a correlation “with certain deep changes in the legal frame of the protection of human rights and democracy” is related to a number of changes that are unpacked: the introduction of new elements in crime-control management which target social control as the primary aim away from rehabilitation-orientated crime; the individual is denied of any capability of free choice, hence “the shifting attention from the delinquent person to the deviant, potentially risk-producing group” (p. 5). Examples of this trend include sex offenders who are deemed certain to re-offend; youths of North African origin residing in the poor Parisian suburbs; English football fans considered to be unrepentant ‘hooligans’ and the Roma in Italy. In this world the principle of presumption of innocence disappears in favour of risk-management. Risk management obliterates “the distinction between deviant and criminal behaviour”: mere suspicion is enough as “the Europol Computer System has

information on possible future offenders” (p. 7). We have a situation where “persons are reduced to predictable systems of behaviour, the efficient monitoring of which cannot but prevent them from taking certain expectable norms” (p. 8). Moreover, the time-space dimension central in criminal law is now denied. The trend does not simply reflect a meagre change in the practices of the mechanisms of control. Tsoukala convincingly argues that we have a deeper structural transformation where law enforcement agents are now “legally upgraded”: “The break from the past is so radical that it arguably calls into question the whole conception of the criminal justice system in a democracy” (p. 11). This 17-page long dense paper, although compact with ‘theoretical ammunition’ is well-written, lucid and empirically supported. It makes a cogent case for a very bleak picture of the world. Tsoukala demonstrates the trends towards an aspect of what Poulantzas had referred to some thirty years ago as “authoritarian statism” but in a more Foucaultian sense by focusing on the field of criminal law and criminology. We may criticise this approach on the ground that it leaves little room for resistance and contradictions of the system. Moreover, given that in this essay we are primarily interested in the migration dimension, we may question how effective this undeniable trend is in achieving the ‘desired ends’: the failure of border and immigration control is indicative of the loopholes of the systems of surveillance and social control. Then again, the case made in favour of open borders is based on the premise that border and immigration control simply cannot work within a democratic setting: if Tsoukala, and indeed the case put forward in the book edited by Bigo and Tsoukala, are correct, then authoritarianism will sweep aside the potential not only for democratising and opening borders but to the very essence of democratic rule; the nightmare described in the political comic ‘V for Vendetta’ is becoming the reality.

The books reviewed are highly relevant to understand the current climate in which ‘migration’ is increasingly related to ‘security’: this is a global trend that can be exemplified in the context of the EU but it is extremely appropriate to the Cypriot context of the migration debates. What is alarming for the current Cypriot public dialogue on migration, is that although the discourses on threats to ‘liberal norms’, and the dangers from an alleged “Afro-asiatic Muslim community implanted in the territory under the control of the Cyprus Republic” amounting essentially to ‘a fifth column’, have been repeated before,²³ what is novel is the veracity and frequency of the argument. The fact that it is now routinely uttered in the public sphere,²⁴ seems to be shared by significant numbers of the population and the fact that we have an organised group making this discourse central to their campaign adds credence to the debate.

In the case of Cyprus, we can safely say that so far the ‘anti-terrorism frenzy’ has thankfully been minimised by and large by a more measured approach, generally taken due to the specific nature of Greek-Cypriot politics. However, measures, including racial profiling were never abolished; in fact the Cyprus ENAR

report 2007²⁵ claims that “racial profiling is not an uncommon practice of the police, although this is not officially admitted”. Citing the NGO KISA, which claims that police practice racial profiling against people of Turkish (Kurds), Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin who repeatedly submit complaints to the Ombudsman and the Independent Authority for Investigation of Claims and Complaints against Members of the Police Force. Moreover it claims that “it is a common practice of the Immigration Police to illegally arrest and detain asylum seekers of Turkish nationality and Kurdish origin when they submit asylum applications and to fail to inform the competent authorities of the change of address of asylum seekers of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin”.²⁶ More recently, the public debates about the securitisation of migration are dangerously creeping into the Cypriot political landscape in a way that can pose a threat to the democratic decision-making process in Cypriot political life. In the 1980s the connection in such discourses between anti-immigrant politics and the Cyprus problem was primarily an indirect one. The dominant view, almost near orthodoxy, was that “we are forced to use migrant labour” but “let’s keep a check on how many, for how long and from what country of origins do we accept migrant workers. The ‘Cyprus problem’ is of course ever-present as a background force shaping the debate to the extent that it was referred to as a voice of ‘caution’ and conservatism given that the Cyprus problem was the main political issue and the question of economic growth in conditions of ‘semi-occupation’ was of vital importance. Now we have some discourses where migration questions become directly racialised possibly by making direct connections with the states of exception: the connection to the discourse of security, threat, national emergency”. Elsewhere, I have argued in the past that there is currently no ‘political space’ for the emergence of a single racist/extreme right party which has as its primary goal an anti-immigrant policy but there are elements of these kinds of politics in mainstream political actors (Trimikliniotis, 2005, 2006, 2007). We ought to revisit this conclusion in the current climate: We have a Minister of Interior, who if anything is considered to be pro-migrant, rather than a populist Sarkozy, who served as a notorious anti-immigrant Minister of Interior before becoming President of the French Republic. However, we have new organisations emerging consisting of persons who come from various different parities across the political and ideological spectrum. In July 2008 the two organisations called ‘Movement for the Salvation of Cyprus’ and ‘Movement for a European Future of Cyprus’ announced their intention to hold a public meeting to summon support for their fight against the ‘dangers’ from ‘Afro-asiatic’, ‘Muslim-asiatic’ and ‘Turko-asiatic’ hordes that are ready to invade Cyprus as part of a plan orchestrated by Turkey to change the demographic character of Cyprus through illegal immigration, and they circulated a leaflet to this effect.²⁷