

## **A 'bare life' in the borderlines of the Mediterranean**

### **Abstract**

Migration and refugee flows have been at the epicentre of political interest and agendas for quite some time. The latest developments in the geopolitical arena, in particular the war in Syria and the displaced populations, in conjunction with the instrumentalisation of migration as a diplomatic tool by states, necessitate an informed research agenda on this particular subject. The politicisation of migration has been a central element in electoral campaigns and has been escalated as a serious matter of public concern, posing an alleged danger to social cohesion, economic prosperity, national identity, public health, and public security. At the same time, there is a perpetuation of unresolved issues at the external EU borders, when looking at deaths in the sea or the dire living conditions in the reception centres.

The particular seminar will focus on EU's migration and asylum management in the Mediterranean, and in particular the border practices and reception centres in Greece. The two overarching research questions are whether migration has been securitised in Greece, that is if it has been formulated and addressed as a security threat and secondly, which are those mechanisms that conduce to the securitisation of migration, that is how this process has been coming about.

The wider rationale of the presentation lies within the 'state of exception' (Agamben 2005), whereby entire categories of citizens cannot be integrated into the political system. The erection of walls falls into the logic of framing migration as an issue of belonging within the *polis* – who belongs and who doesn't, who is included and who is excluded. Securitisation of migration achieved through raising issues of identity and safety plays a key role to the creation of the borderline of belonging. As Agamben puts it, the logic of exception is deeply linked with the sovereign state. The sovereign power employs certain practices of securitisation producing a 'bare life', the life of the 'homo sacer' a life banned from conventional juridical and political structures (Agamben 1995).

## **Short Bio**

Dr Foteini Kalantzi is the A.G. Leventis Research Officer at the Diaspora Project in SEESOX ([seesoxdiaspora.org/](http://seesoxdiaspora.org/)), St Antony's College, University of Oxford. Her work focuses on homeland - diaspora relationship in the context of the economic crisis. She is the coordinator for the development of the Greek Diaspora Digital Map and a researcher in the 'Migration Diplomacy and Turkish-EU relations' project of the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership. Also, she is one of the convenors of the 'International Politics of Migration, Refugees and Diaspora' working group of the British International Studies Association.

She received her PhD in International Relations from University of Macedonia, Greece and carried out part of her research in Freie Universität Berlin. She holds an MA in International Political Economy from University of Warwick, UK, a BA in International and European Relations from Panteion University, Athens and a BSc in Economics from University of La Verne, California.

She has teaching experience in International and European Relations, Economics and Ethics in social media at the Department of International Relations of Université de Strasbourg at City Unity College in Athens. She has been a research associate at the Hellenic Centre for European Studies (EKEM) and at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP). Her research interests include diaspora politics, securitisation of migration, political and media discourse analysis, Greek political affairs and European integration.

In the past, she worked as a freelance journalist at newspapers and magazines, reporting on financial and political developments in Europe (e.g. New Europe Brussels, Global Citizen Dubai, Apogevmatini), and as a consultant in the sectors of communications, media, public relations and conference organisation in the UK and Greece.