THE MEANINGS, CONSEQUENCES AND GEOPOLITICS OF DEPORTATION

Reading List
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In recent debates, deportations have become such a widely accepted political ambition that there is little room to question the necessity of a supposedly more "efficient" deportation apparatus. Yet, many studies have shown for a long time how challenging the implementation of deportations are, that they are embedded in complex geopolitical considerations, and that deportations are often problematic from a (human) rights perspective. Last, but not least, they have devastating impact on the lives of deported people. We compiled this list and introduction in order to improve the knowledge of such critical aspects in public debates. It is addressed to researchers and students, journalists and the wider interested public.

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In recent political and public debates, deportation has become a political ambition shared by mainstream political actors. In the wake of the so-called migration crisis, the fiction of a "seamless" and "efficient" deportation system is put forward as both feasible and the only way to safeguard a common European asylum system, EU cohesion and democracy. Politicians and policy-makers frequently call for increased deportations, like German Chancellor Scholz in a *Spiegel* cover interview in October 2023. This is despite the fact migration researchers have long shown how complex and problematic the implementation of deportation are, and embedded in complex geopolitical considerations (see below). At the heart of these debates, we often find the argument that rising numbers of asylum seekers overwhelm national administration and threaten cultural and social unity, making higher deportation numbers and all political efforts to reach those inevitable. These arguments side-line aspects of (human) rights and existing European and national law, the costs involved in forcing non-EU countries to accept deportations, as well as the overall hegemonic geopolitical order grounded in racism that shapes migration governance and creates deportation in the first place.

Plans to include increased deportations in asylum proceedings have become regular news items, not least the planned outsourcing of asylum procedures from the UK to Rwanda, as well as from Italy to Albania. Similar ideas are currently under discussion in the German context (Lambert and Lemberg-Pedersen 2023). The 2024 reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) makes deportation to so-called safe third countries easier, and will likely lead to a proliferation of migrant detention around Europe to enforce deportation, as well as enhance inter-European deportation and "deportation diplomacy" as a means of "solidarity" among states. This normalisation of deportations makes extremist positions increasingly vocal. This is evident in the recently leaked plans amongst fascist hardliners in Germany for mass deportations (under the auspices of "remigration") for not only those deemed as "foreigners", but also German citizens with an immigrant background and those in solidarity with people on the move. These extreme right wing demands cannot be detached from the wider political and public debates on a perceived ineffectiveness of the current German and European deportation infrastructure that are increasingly pushed to increase numbers. They build on a history of (calling for) deportations, and strengthen the idea that the only way forward is through increased deportations.

Institutionally, deportations have been a central policy field in Europe following the reconfiguration of the common European migration approach, the CEAS, that emerged from the 1995 Schengen agreement. The common agenda has always been guided by the idea of unwanted mobility (from so-called "others") as a threat only to be resolved by securitised approaches towards migration governance (Bigo 2015, Huysman 2000). This securitised approach has contributed to the idea of making certain groups of people on the move "illegal", in order words producing their illegality (de Genova and Peutz 2010).

Hence, it comes to little surprise that early "cooperation" instruments with non-EU countries in the field of migration have centred on leveraging EU deportation interests. The first

instrument following the Global Approach to Migration, Mobility Partnerships (2005), migration partnerships, aimed to make deportation more attractive to non-EU states by linking it to visa facilitation agreements and so-called border capacity building. Since then, the EU has continuously aimed at enhancing its position vis-a-vis non-EU states to push them to agree to more deportation (Zanker et al 2020).

As many 'countries of origin' refuse to agree to formal migration agreements that include binding deportation cooperation mechanisms, informalization of agreement has since marked the growing policy field, both on the side of the EU, where the European Parliament has been excluded from public scrutiny, as well as in non-EU countries, where the conclusion of "deals" is often marked by the absence of public scrutiny.

Research has long analysed these processes and pointed to the fallacies behind them, including in the current political course of the EU and its member states. Their findings have underlined the structural violence reproduced by state practices. Critical work has further cautioned that deportations as a policy instrument map onto racialized ideas of exclusion (Mayblin and Turner 2021, Achiume 2019). However, these findings and positions are underrepresented in political and public debates.

Calling for and carrying out deportation and detention is used by centre-left, centre, and centre-right parties and is inscribed in liberal violence that reproduces and depoliticises racialization, and has severe impact on the rule of law and democratic accountability within the EU and non-EU states. It comes at a great cost of human rights and dignity. It is in light of this that we offer this bibliography to provide an overview of academic literature for researchers, students, journalists and the wider public interested in a more nuanced view on deportations, the repercussions for illegalized populations and countries of origin. We have collected literature along the following themes:

- Deportations and the construction of (racial) difference and il/legality
- Life for deportees and their families
- Activism around deportation
- The geopolitics of deportation
- Meaning for countries on the receiving-end of deportations
- Imaginaries and practices of deporting states
- Alternatives to deportation

The primary focus is on the EU and Africa, but other examples are also included. All books marked with a * are available at the ABI Library. The list was compiled by Judith Altrogge, Leonie Jegen, Laura Lambert & Franzisca Zanker. Further suggestions are welcome.

Deportations and the construction of (racial) difference and il/legality

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Life for deportees and their families

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