

Towards a European Deportation Regime: Border guards, bureaucrats, and the politics of knowledge

In this seminar, I discussed the uneven and contested formation of a Europeanising deportation regime. Relying on my prior research on the street level enforcement of deportation policies in the Schengen Area, I explored how puzzled border guards in Denmark and bureaucrats in Swiss migration offices perform their Sisyphean task of addressing the so-called 'deportation gap' (Gibney 2008) using a range of violent practices, including deterrence, detainment, and informal diplomatic negotiations, none of which enhances deportation rates but all of which effectively work to make unwanted migrants 'disappear' and enable state irresponsibility. During my postdoc at CERGU, I intend to continue tracing these practices by turning the lens to the transnational knowledge economy tasked with measuring and evaluating states' deportation efforts, and working towards harmonised more effective deportation enforcement across the EU. Using 'patchwork as method' (Günel, Varma and Watanabe 2020) I hope in this project to shed light on the role of 'expert' knowledge production - and their practices of *not* knowing - in shaping a European deportation regime.

To those interested in deportation regimes and their role in maintaining racialised and classed global inequalities, may I refer to an interview conducted by Anja Franck at the School of Global Studies with myself and Shahram Khosravi, Professor of Anthropology at Stockholm University (in Swedish): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vW6sbArrRMQ>

For further readings on the research I refer to in my talk, I can recommend the following: Our collaborative ethnography on migration control in the Schengen Area, 'Migrants Before the Law': <https://link-springer-com.ep.fjernadgang.kb.dk/book/10.1007/978-3-319-98749-1> ; our 2019 report on the Danish deportation camps http://refugees.dk/media/1757/stop-killing-us_uk.pdf ; and a recently published article on Denmark's so-called paradigm shift from the 'integration' to deportation of refugees (2021), <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/zsr-2020-0018/html> .