

Cairo's spaces of refuge: A glimpse into the experiences of "being hosted" within its urban systems

Abstract

This presentation looks into the ways in which refugees negotiate the capital metropolis of Cairo. It specifically discusses how the Syrians started to settle in the city in 2013 and provides an overview of their lived experiences navigating different urban forms and governance structures. It shows how a city of scale and multi-choice avenues can be accommodating, marginalizing, and exclusive. It also sheds light on how refugees can contribute to processes of globalization in the city and create links between the geopolitical spheres in dynamic ways.

Biography

Rasha Arous is an urban planning and development practitioner and researcher. She worked with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in Syria and Cairo, initiated and managed their program in the Old City of Aleppo and the historic city of Masyaf. Later, during the Syria Crisis, she directed her research into urban development and displacement. She initiated and managed UNHCR's Egypt urban development and economic inclusion programs for seven years. She had master's degrees from Oxford Brookes, England, Stuttgart, Germany, and Ain Shams, Egypt.