

Diaspora artist perspectives on urban sanctuary and migrant solidarity

Abstract

The concepts of urban sanctuary and migrant solidarity are generally used to identify the initiatives of cities in Europe and North America as they aim to provide essential services to vulnerable migrants under the assumption that such efforts will foster social and civic inclusion. These concepts are thus indicative of Western normative assumptions and of the concrete efforts of municipal governments and local civil society organizations in the global north. This project will consider alternative framings through a postcolonial lens by exploring perspectives and critiques of the concepts of urban sanctuary and solidarity from diaspora artists. Through an exploratory review of academic literature and contextual analysis of artistic approaches to solidarity, this paper will present potential alternative framings to the concepts of urban sanctuary and solidarity. This work is part of a larger project examining postcolonial approaches to urban sanctuary, migrant solidarity and hospitality.

Biography

Nick Dreher (he/him) is a first-year Policy Studies PhD student and a recipient of the CERC Migration and Integration doctoral scholarship. Nick has worked in a variety of roles in non-profit and higher education settings, including as teacher and program coordinator for community organizations supporting migrants and refugees in several cities in the United States, as well as in South Africa and Uganda. Nick's research interests focus on social inclusion and belonging among urban migrants and refugees, postcolonial and global south perspectives on migration, qualitative methods and storytelling, and the role of cultural programmes and policy in building intercultural community bonds.