

TORONTO – A SANCTUARY CITY?

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M.Sc. Geographie des Globalen Wandels (1. Semester)

LIVING WITHOUT LEGAL STATUS IN TORONTO

IDEA OF SANCTUARY CITIES

Providing **access to municipal services** for non-status and precarious status migrants "without fear being identified, detained or deported." [4][6]



DON'T ASK DON'T TELL POLICY

Policies to **protect illegalized migrants** that "**prohibit** municipal police forces and city service agencies from **requesting, recording, disseminating status information**, and deny cooperation with federal immigration authorities unless required by federal or state law." [1]



"It's very hard. We just feel **locked out**"

(Person with less than full status) [2]

"People always ask: **what's your status?** That's the first thing when you go to the doctor. **What's your status?** Fill out the form. **What's your status?** So, I don't know what to put. Because you're not a landed immigrant, what are you then? I'm just living here. I've got nothing."

(Person with less than full status) [2]

"I was afraid to call the police. I don't want to, **they will send me home one day**"

(Person with less than full status) [2]

"For the medical, I **have to be my own doctor**, because it's very expensive"

(Person with less than full status) [2]

PROBLEMS IN TORONTO



Don't Ask Don't Tell policy is not always working ("Often asking, always telling")



→ police often disregard policy and continue to call border enforcement agency

just most rudimentary services provide secure access



difficulties in transforming and training staff according sanctuary policies

minimal impact on material conditions

racial profiling [1][5]

GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE



"unsettle **conventional understanding** of citizenship and belonging"

disrupt created categories



questioning **authority** of municipal governments

questioning **governance** of migration and security



"new practices of **identity formation**"



"including illegalized migrants in **imagined local community**"

rescale belonging from national to urban scales [1][4]

HISTORY [1][3][5]

Origins in USA

People from Guatemala and El Salvador flee to the USA

1980s
Sanctuary Movement
faith-based communities provide protection and asylum

1985
First Sanctuary City
Madison

more and more cities, counties and states adopt those policies

End of 1980s
policy subject illegal immigrants instead of refugees

since 1980s
Initiatives by Toronto-based Cilenian refugees

2004
Don't Ask Don't tell campaign launched by activists

2013
Sanctuary City by-law

TORONTO

Sources
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