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Geographies of Welcome: Engagements with 'Ordinary' Hospitality

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Abstract

We explore the topic of welcome through a geographical lens, setting out the relationships between geographical perspectives and current approaches to welcome and hospitality. We argue that geographers are well positioned to develop engagements with the 'prosaics' of welcome that have recently been advocated by scholars in hospitality studies. To make this case we identify a series of fruitful directions, offering a critical exploration of 'ordinary' welcomes via recent geographical insights into feminist geographies of intimacy, family and home, other-than-human relations, and post-colonialism. The five papers that constitute this Special Issue build on this editorial to develop critical engagements that explore the Geographies of Welcome, with particular attention to migration and refugees.

Keywords

welcome; hospitality; ordinary; feminist geographies; asylum; refugee

I Welcome: The Laws and Limits of Hospitality

Building on long-standing connections between currents of thought in hospitality studies and geography, the discipline of geography is uniquely positioned to contribute to the study

of ‘prosaics’ in hospitality studies – to ‘the ordinary, the taken-for-granted’ (Lynch, 2017: 175). Taking into account geographers’ attention to place, as well as long-standing engagements with the global-intimate, new conceptions of home, more-than-human approaches to ethics and the discipline of geography’s specific and problematic relationship to colonialism, we identify a series of potential crossovers and contributions that can be gleaned from geographers’ recent work, which are further explored in the subsequent papers in this Special Issue.

Firstly, as this Special Issue is called Geographies of Welcome, we attempt to conceptualise ‘welcome’. Following Emmanuel Levinas, himself a Lithuanian refugee in France, welcome constitutes us (Levinas, 1979; Levinas, 1981). Aiming to radically reinvent the subject in modern Western philosophy, he moved beyond the assertion that the metaphysical self precedes the world, to postulate that the “I” is only brought into being via a movement towards the “Other,” via an act of welcome. For Levinas, the subject *is* the welcome. The existence of the self is contingent upon that of the newcomer and the self is called forth by the Other. What we do in moments of encounter and potential encounter, how we address or ignore the appeal of the Other, whether and how we respond to newcomers: these are not matters extrinsic to ourselves, nor available to our intervention from some supposedly safe distance. To understand how important the topic of welcome is we must appreciate that it is fundamentally integral to identity and personhood itself, to our very subjectivity.

Drawing and building on Levinas’s notion of ethical responsibility for the Other, Zygmunt Bauman developed the concept of ‘stangerhood’. In his book, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, Bauman, a Polish refugee himself, identifies strangerhood as the condition of individuals not statically being part of a single societal subsystem, instead becoming part of a mobile, complex socially displaced system (see Bauman, 1991)[1]. Strangerhood thus intersects with the ethical responsibility advocated by Levinas, who invokes ethics in relation to the Other (see Levinas, 1979). Levinas outlines an ethics connected with moral responsibility, which becomes a political act through deconstruction, further advanced by Derrida in his thesis on hospitality. In this Special Issue Kekstaite’s and Mazzilli’s papers delve into this exilic history

[1] We are indebted to an anonymous reviewer of this editorial for this point.

of thought, as the authors critically rework hospitality in connection with Derrida. They and other papers in this Special Issue go on to explore that the enactment of welcome cannot be separated from political, economic and cultural circumstances.

If one of Levinas's contributions was to outline the vitality of welcome, Derrida's was to illuminate how the impulse towards the Other is never 'pure', but always subject to the law of its own self-contradiction (Derrida, 1997). Although we might imagine a simple, unquestioning and radical openness to others, hospitality in practice is always conditional, even if implicitly. The stranger must be received with caution and suspicion, as one might frame and manage risks (Herzfeld, 2012), because of the 'potential danger' (Lynch, 2017: 174) they pose. Strangers – even ones who are welcomed – must abide by a set of rules and expectations in the land and language of the host. Indeed, the very speech act of asking 'what is your name?' or 'dar[ing] to say welcome' (Derrida, 1999: 15) situates the host as sovereign and, in so doing, precipitates the 'implosion' (Derrida, 2000: 5) of the concept of hospitality itself. Hosts seek to surveil, select, sort and vet their guests, often preferring the 'desirable' and 'good' (Fassin, 2011). These preferences reflect and reproduce power imbalances that sometimes lead to exclusion and repulsion (Dikeç, 2002). Self-interest, self-assertion and even violence are, tragically, written into hospitality from the start (Derrida and Defourmantelle, 2000; Derrida, 2000; Candea and Da Col, 2012).

Discussions about the contradictions, aporias and power-dynamics involved in hospitality have played a decisive role in hospitality studies since the contributions of Levinas and Derrida. A concomitant strand of scholarship, however, has sought to complement attention to the philosophical laws, moral duties and principles of hospitality with a closer attention to the everyday, situated and mundane practices and experiences of welcome. **'**Most welcome is ordinary, hardly noticed' Lynch (2017: 180) observes. As Lynch notes:

> Derrida's exploration of hospitality … is illuminating and thought-provoking, and helpful in highlighting hospitality as a micro and macro phenomenon. However, Derrida is not concerned with providing an exposé of day-to-day hospitality as welcome (Lynch, 2017: 176).

Lynch's work, and particularly his emphasis on unwelcome, is taken up in Lyytinen's paper in this special issue. His observations align with various dissatisfactions with Derrida's approach, including its 'scale free abstraction' (Candea and Da Col, 2012: 34) and universalism, which seems to flatten differences[2], as well as its state-centric fusion of popular imaginations of hospitality with those of imagined national communities[3]. There have therefore been various calls to attend to the 'mundane, taken-for-granted, fleeting, mobile performance' of welcome (Bell, 2007: 38). While this lens complements and connects with more abstract theorising about hospitality in various ways, it emphasises the grounded, practical and experiential aspects of welcome over the rules, laws and duties that are prominent in Levinas's and Derrida's work. It is attuned to the interactional as well as the institutional properties of hospitality (Pogge, 1992), the fact that hospitality is as much an *engagement* as an arrangement of host and guest (Joseph, 1997: 137) and that an ethic of welcome can be productively thought about less as a law than as a sensibility (Dikeç, 2002).

Lynch (2017) is drawn to thinking about welcome not only according to ethical rules and duties, or even the social power plays that underpin the welcoming act, provocative and productive though these approaches are. Rather, he advocates paying attention to 'the ordinary, the taken-for-granted … the prosaic' (Lynch, 2017: 175) in thinking about welcoming practices and their sites of execution and experience.

Lynch (2017) begins with everyday associations and meanings attached to the notion of welcome including kindness, reaching out, accepting and embracing difference,

[2] Candea and Da Col object to the notion that 'Derrida's 'interpretive acrobatics' could somehow shed light on the actual relationships, tensions, and ethnographic complications of hospitality' in specific localities, as if 'the work of analysing these were little more than a straightforward process of 'zooming out'' (Ibid: S45).

[3] Although similar statism has been traced back to Kant's much earlier attempts to construct a 'law' of universal hospitality (Dikeç, 2002; Westmoreland, 2008) rooted in legislation, rights, duties and obligations (see Germann Molz and Gibson, 2007), concerns with the framing of hospitality in statist terms have persisted with respect to Derridean thinking. Derrida's close attention to the 'laws' of hospitality has been criticised for reproducing a statist imaginary, by linking 'the notion of hospitality as ethics to an understanding of power and control as sovereign mastery, a link which is potentially very limiting for how we use and understand hospitality in a global context' (Bulley, 2015).

consideration and receiving others with pleasure. With this, he (re)opens a set of questions about welcome, including 'What exactly is welcome/unwelcome? What is the nature, the essence of welcome/unwelcome? [and] What determines an experience of welcome/unwelcome?' (Lynch, 2017: 176). If we are to take prosaic studies of welcome seriously, Lynch argues, then we need to understand welcome not just as a set of practices or abstract rules but ultimately as a *feeling*. Delving into welcome as a feeling begins with such questions as 'Where makes you feel welcome? What place makes you feel welcome? What's your favourite place or small corner of your town, city or country that you like to be in? What is it that makes it special?' (Lynch, 2017: 178).

The significance of attending to welcome through affective and emotional relations is that it restores the centrality of the person seeking or securing hospitality. Viewing 'welcome as a sense' Lynch writes 'communicates the idea of the individual as an interpreter, recipient and sensory negotiator of welcome' (Lynch, 2017: 178). In this way it promotes a 'greater engagement with the individual's inner monologue, experience and agency' (Lynch, 2017: 182), an insight that Lynch suggests holds promise for opening up hospitality studies to work with 'more diverse groups than those involved in the current research' (ibid: 182), as well as developing heightened sensitivity to cultural interpretations of welcome and experiences of unwelcome. In other words, Lynch's suggestions aim to challenge hospitality studies' 'guilty … focus on the host' (Still, 2010: 9).

II Prosaic Hospitality: Attending to Practices and Experiences of Welcome through a Geographical Lens

Geographers' fascination with everyday life (see for example Katz, 2004; Delaney, 2010; Holloway and Hubbard, 2014)[4], often drawing on seminal work published from the 1940s to the 1980s by spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre (see Lefebvre, 2014), has helped to foreground practice, emotion, experience and agency in their work (Clayton, 2017). The lens of the ordinary has been used to both challenge unhelpful abstractions, binaries and assumptions in popular and academic discourse, and to reveal the mundane operation of power in context. Jennifer Robinson's evocation of ordinariness in cities around the world, as just one

[4] As a critical lens it has also been critiqued: by focussing on everyday occurrences and practices, for example, operations of power can be missed (Gardiner, 2000; Sandywell, 2004).

such illustration, destabilises the imagined spatial hierarchy of global cities, typical in discourses about the urban, that reproduces a colonial register by locating innovation and creativity primarily in the global north (Robinson, 2013). Engagement with the concept of conviviality[5] similarly hinges upon the ordinary as a type of humdrum, everyday space of lived multiculture in cities that pushes back against reductive discourses of racial stereotyping[6].

Ordinariness has also been used to throw into relief sites of intense subjugation and drudgery as a result of power relations and domination, by asking how practices of domination become settled, stable, unquestioned and unnoticed. A key point of interest concerns what counts as ordinary in everyday contexts. Commentators have called attention to the production of 'order' through repetition and mundanity in everyday situations, pointing to the effect of citizenship rules and laws for example, not just at an abstract and general level, but within the everyday lives of those that are affected (Staeheli et al., 2012). Approached critically, ordinariness connects the phenomenon of everyday life to normative political questions, highlighting and calling into question what becomes sedimented as normal and abnormal (Delaney, 2010: 43). In particular, the 'political ordinary' (Häkli and Kallio, 2018) raises questions regarding matters of concern in everyday life: whose perspectives are defining to the *emergent* political reality, experienced and enacted by people as part of their ordinary living?

Geographers have increasingly become attuned to the ordinary, thus drawing attention to everyday events and locations that have been systemically overlooked in traditional studies of place (Riding, 2017). Seemingly unspectacular places, are indeed where things happen in

[5] Conviviality refers to 'the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere' (Gilroy, 2005: xv). Conviviality occurs at a grounded level, and can offer a kind of liberation from the polarisation of and opposition between 'closed, fixed and reified' (Gilroy, 2005: xv) identities in discourse and more formal settings.

[6] In providing a sober and sometimes critical assessment of what he calls the 'convivial turn' (Nayak, 2017: 290) amongst geographers, Nayak makes connections between conviviality and work on contact zones and micropublics (Amin, 2002; Valentine, 2008; Askins and Pain, 2011), the 'throwntogetherness' of urban life (Massey, 2005), encounters (Wilson, 2017), superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007), and work on everyday multi-culture (Neal et al, 2013; Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Datta, 2009).

distinctive ways – where general phenomena are interpreted, moulded and converted into specific happenings with their own character and flavour (Cresswell, 2014). The attention geographers and hospitality scholars have paid to coffee houses, bars, inns, cafes, clubs, hotel atriums, restaurants, rest-stops and other sites of both commercial and private hospitality (see Bell, 2016 for a review) serves as a way of peering behind and beyond the universal and abstract imaginaries of hospitality to enquire into its grounded, everyday manifestations. For Bulley (2017) the complex interplay of ethics and power relations inherent to hospitality is best conveyed via an understanding of hospitality as both spatial and affective[7]. Places help to address philosophers' purported lack of 'attention to the substances and materialities involved' in hospitality (Candea and Da Col, 2012: S8). This includes the 'everyday micro-geographies' (Lugosi et al., 2014: 225) of music, beds, body language and 'warm smile[s]' (Germann Molz and Gibson, 2007: 1) as well as the 'holy trinity' of food, drink and accommodation (Cassee and Reuland, 1983; Lynch et al., 2011). This growing literature on everyday place is attuned not only to mundane spatialities, but also temporalities -- for example of protracted periods of waiting encountered by those seeking asylum (Bagelman, 2013; Squire, 2012).

In other words, thinking geographically about welcome brings the *materialities, spaces, temporalities and contexts* of welcome and hospitality into view. What is more, places are always connections between specific and wider phenomena, existing as intensities in global networks of relations (Massey, 1991). They are therefore both reflective of, and constitutive of, political, cultural and social forces at a range of scales. Some places, like many cites, also project images of themselves which intersect in complex ways with reality (see Mazzilli's contribution to this Special Issue). In short, places provide a tangible meeting point 'between [the] abstract and more mundane' (Lugosi et al, 2014: 225) approaches to hospitality studies, connecting 'the minutiae of social life' (Ibid: 228) with 'much wider ideologies, institutions, structures and forces' (Ibid: 228). Perhaps in particular, in relation to conflict zones, the more recent emphasis upon the mundane, minor, and small is key in allowing places and people to achieve a form of recovery from the trauma of conflict and

[7] Bulley (2017:7) defines hospitality as 'a spatial relation with affective dimensions'.

displacement, as it enables the telling of personal narratives: survivors need to tell their stories in order to survive (Riding, 2019).

In addition, research on commercial hospitality exemplifies the usefulness of thinking about hospitality in relation to places[8]. A close look at hotel spaces for instance, reveals the existence of what Lugosi (2008) calls moments of 'meta-hospitality' – short lived emotional bonds that can be built and experienced through hospitality transactions but are irreducible to their functional purpose, even in the most corporatized of settings. Similar phenomena have been detected in sharing economies such as Airbnbs (Germann Molz, 2014; Roelofsen, 2018; Veijola et al., 2014), illustrating how emplaced and contextual emotions can exist beyond, and trouble, the formal laws and rules that govern hospitable relationships[9].

Hospitality studies has underscored how fluid host-guest identities can be (Germann Molz and Gibson, 2007; Lynch et al., 2011; Bulley, 2015; Veijola et al., 2014; Lugosi, 2008). Attending to the complexity of interrelationships in particular spaces of welcome provides an ideal window onto the constantly shifting roles of host and guest. From the situated welcome that customers provide to other customers via the subtleties of their comportment in cafés and other sites of consumption (Laurier and Philo, 2006a; Laurier and Philo, 2006b) to migrants revisiting their homelands as tourists (Duval, 2003), second home owners (O'Reilly, 2003; Hall and Mueller, 2004), sharing economies of tourism (Germann Molz, 2014; Roelofsen, 2018; Veijola et al., 2014), migratory labourers (Choi et al., 2000) and travellers employed on working holiday programmes (Clarke, 2004), exploring the emplaced spatiality of relations of hospitality reveals their complexity and provisionality.

[8] While it might be tempting for critical scholars to dismiss work on commercial hospitality given its closeness to capitalist profitability, Bell (2007) has warned against too strict a distinction between market-driven, profit-orientated forms of hospitality and other, more 'genuine' forms of welcome (see also Herzfeld 2012: S210).

[9] Geographers have too focused upon 'hotel geopolitics' and the ways in which hospitality sites can become representative of a place, as they are the meeting-points in which the stories of war are revealed to the wider world – as was the case with the Holiday Inn in Sarajevo during the war in Bosnia (1992 - 1995) and the siege of Sarajevo (1992 - 1996) (Fregonese and Ramadan, 2015).

Bound up with an attention to place is an attention to spacetime, which extends to the rhythms, schedules and routines associated with particular sites. Hospitality scholars have associated hospitality with slowing down, resting and mooring (Germann Molz and Gibson, 2007) and have also found it productive to ask not only who is a newcomer, or where, but *when* (O'Reilly, 2003)[10]. Geographers' fascination with the temporality and rhythm of social life (Edensor, 2016) helps to reveal the 'moments' of hospitality that 'flicker' (Bell, 2007: 31) between welcomer and newcomer in a diverse range of settings (see also Laurier and Philo, 2006a; Sheller and Urry, 2006: 222; Bagelman, 2018; Norum, 2018; Simonsen et al., 2017). Norum (2018: 114) notes that, 'temporalities of hospitality thus allow us to consider the profound tensions created by time, the multi-faceted assemblage of spatialities and relations articulated in and through mobility, and the complexities of the guest's desire for becoming *through* the moment of welcome.'

A focus on the times of welcome offers the particular advantage of throwing into relief the everyday conditions of welcome-labour (see, for example Nickson and Warhurst, 2007; Sheehan, 2012; McIntosh and Harris, 2012). As geographers have been at pains to emphasise, it *takes time* (and effort, and resources) to welcome (Dikeç et al., 2009), and attending to the temporalities of welcoming spaces is an effective way to highlight the work that this involves. In diverse sectors of the tourist economy, and increasingly the economy of refugee and migrant welcome, this work is not only often obscured and dangerous, but gendered, raced and classed (Pascucci, 2018; Bagelman, 2018; Veijola and Jokinen, 2008). In his contribution to this Special Issue, Kocher uses an everyday lens to highlight the energy-intensive work that protracted church-based sanctuary entails, demonstrating how effective the everyday lens is to revealing how welcome can fail to live up to its imagined potential.

In light of the commensurability between geographers' attention to places, and hospitality scholars' call for a renewed engagement with the prosaics of welcome, we now outline some key contact points that we see in the contributions to this Special Issue, as fertile for future engagement and intersecting with recent currents of thought in human geography.

[10] This question, Germann Molz and Gibson (2007) suggest, affords an appreciation that social categories such as tourist and migrant can be 'temporally constrained social performances rather than … strictly-bounded identity categories' (Ibid: 7)

Intimate (In)hospitality

The analytical language of 'intimacy' has been widely developed within geographical scholarship to deepen our understandings of diverse, daily geographies (Pratt, 2012). Feminist scholarship on intimacy has been particularly important in unsettling conventions that privilege the 'global' as a sphere that is inevitable, rational and causal while the local is aligned with irrationality or emotionality, and as passively responding to uncontrollable outside forces. Feminist geographers have challenged this framing by employing the concept of intimacy to reckon with and trace the political connections between global power and the realm of everyday, embodied practice (Pratt and Rosner, 2006; Pratt, 2012; Pain, 2014; Little, 2019). With this move they object to the notion of everydayness and mundanity as non-political, using intimacy to push back against a hierarchical approach which views the local and global as distinctive, separate, scales (Dowder, 2012; Dowder and Sharp, 2001; Hyndman, 2001; Staeheli et al., 2004). In this Special Issue, feminist reactions to Derridean hospitality studies are articulated in Kekstaite's and Kocher's papers. Kekstaite emphasises the embodied nature of welcome, care ethics (and their commensurability with politics), and an attention to the centrality of personal relations over universal laws and duties. Kocher's focus is also on everyday practices of care, as part of the intense *work* of welcoming that is typically not discussed in terms of care work.

Various conceptual resources are available to facilitate this re-connection between the prosaic and the political. The analytical prisms of the 'counter-topographical' and 'global-intimate', for example, have been particularly important in resisting the duality that positions the local 'under' the global. Katz has argued that the notion of 'counter-topographies' allows us to make counter-intuitive connections that move towards 'a different spatial and political consciousness' (Katz, 2004: 156). She gives the example of links between New York City and Howa, demonstrating how people's lives are connected from 'rural Sudan [to] urban United States'. Cutting across familiar binaries, this remapping enables new means of understanding the various ways our lives are connected through exploitative processes as well as networks of care. Based on work with migrant workers, Pratt and Rossner illustrate how '(g)lobal forces penetrate and haunt the intimate spaces of our psyches and bodies' (Pratt and Rosner, 2006: 18; see also Pratt, 2012). The concept of 'geosociality' (Kallio and Häkli, 2017; Ho, 2017; Hörschelmann and Reich, 2017; Peña and

Ybarra, 2017; Sparke, 2018) might be further developed in political-geographical analysis, to complement the well-established couplet of geoeconomics and geopolitics, to draw attention to their interconnectedness with day-to-day practices and relations.

Rethinking 'Home'

Another way into thinking about ordinary hospitality is through geographical work on a quintessential site of everyday life: the home. Germann Molz and Gibson (2007: 10) note that 'the concept of home is evoked in the ethics and politics of welcoming the other' and that '[t]he model of home and hospitality assumes that the home is secure against what is foreign, strange, and unfamiliar' (Ibid: 12). Hospitality studies has emphasised the importance of grappling with and challenging entrenched notions of home (Russo, 2012) and geographers have worked to destabilise settled representations of it (Cloke et al., 2008; Blunt, 2005). These efforts have exposed not only the exclusions inherent to dominant narratives, but also the instability of the boundaries of the term 'home' (Handel, 2019) as well as its geopolitical associations (Brickell, 2012). In this Special Issue, Keksteite's article sets out to cross 'the boundaries of a home between emplaced and displaced' (add page numbers). Kocher's introduction of the church, as a sanctuary where people live, brings forth the question of what makes a home in a hostile society, *without* linking this safe space conceptually with home.

Recent geographical work on home promises to productively challenge and destabilise the concept even further. Scholars have developed more open-ended conceptions of the family – re-understood as 'familiality' – as a way to 'challenge categorical conceptions of the family, manifested prominently by the Western nuclear family ideal based on a specific scope of hierarchical and fixed generational relations, blood lineage, descent and kinship institutionally defined' (Kallio and Häkli, 2019: 1). The concept of familiality places emphasis not on categories, but upon what family *means* in people's lives. Thinking of family in these ways reveals the plurality of intimate relations and is reflected in how Lyytinen discusses 'family-like' relationships in her article in this Special Issue. Such familialities can be identified by tracing intimate caring relations, 'sharing the sacrifice' (Duque-Páramo, 2013:

214) and ‘motherwork’ (Lind, 2019: 2) for instance, by which people maintain, create, repair and are ready to defend their familial lives as part of everyday living (see also Bondi, 2008; Bartos, 2012; Baines, 2015).

Such thinking brings into question the home as a space from which welcome is offered, including the commercial home. The notion of ‘topological home’ has been introduced by Kallio (2016) as one way of framing these spatialities, referring not to a territory or place, but to an ‘intersubjectively established and mutually shared lived space of the family (whomever it may include), existing particularly to each of its members through subjective engagements’ (ibid: 375). In line with Secor’s (2013) conception of topological urbanity, such familial spatiality is known by the people who share it yet has no singular shape. Thus understood, homes can be located only partially on Euclidean maps because they are formed at root from relational spatial attachments. This is significant for studies of hospitality because it destablises the idea of a settled place from which a powerful and secure host can offer hospitality.

Decolonising Welcome

The history of geography as a discipline is inexorably tied to making war. Geography has been at the centre of colonial practices via its involvement in cartographic and navigational technologies, and the role these have played in exploration and conquest leave it heavily and indelibly implicated in colonial relationships. As Noxolo (2017) puts it, ‘geography’s history is of a terrible and problematic opening out of the world to colonial and exploitative forces’ (Ibid: 317; see also Noxolo et al., 2008). To make matters worse, the discipline continues to display ‘little *practical* contemporary openness to difference and diversity in its knowledge production processes’ (Noxolo, 2017: 317).

Geographers have defined postcolonialism as ‘the geographically dispersed contestation of colonial power and knowledge’ (Blunt and Wills, 2000: 170). They recognise the difficulties, too, of the prefix ‘post’: colonial practices are *present* practices, although varied and dispersed. ‘Settler colonialism [is] an ongoing mode of empire’ Bonds and Inwood (2016: 715) assert, ‘neither white supremacy nor settled colonialism can be relegated to historical

contexts' (Ibid: 715). In this regard geographers have advocated for historicized, rather than historical, approaches to reckoning with colonialism (Schein, 2011).

Hospitality raises a set of issues in relation to this embedded colonialism (Rosello, 2001). For Achiume (2019) first World nation-states have no right to exclude Third World migrants owing to the distributive and corrective justice implications of the legacies of colonialism. Colonialism created a system in which Third and First world countries became inextricably linked, and formal decolonisation has failed to bring an end to the relationships of interconnection and exploitation that colonialism initiated. The fact of this persistent interconnection 'obligates former colonial powers to open their borders to former colonial subjects' (ibid: 1510) because 'Third World peoples are entitled to operative equality within this association' (ibid: 1520). In other words, Achiume (2019) links liberal borders to decolonisation (although she also warns that there are no easy answers – migration may be perfectly commensurate with continued economic exploitation[11]). For Achiume, citizens of formerly colonised countries should be seen not as strangers, but 'political insiders bound … to First World nation-states' (ibid: 1520) as a result of the colonial linkages they once shared.

For geographers reckoning with the history of their discipline, self-consciousness is an important step. To welcome from a position of colonial privilege with no attention to this positionality is to partake in racial obliviousness which is part of white privilege (see Bonds and Inwood, 2016, citing Rothenberg, 2008). The causes of many contemporary migrants' appeals for hospitality are often rooted in histories of slavery, colonial expropriation and extraction, capitalist relations and unfair trading arrangements. To welcome without historical or geographical referents risks replaying and repeating the violence of colonialism in the very moment of hosting a newcomer, especially if the newcomer is expected to resemble the host in the culture and traditions of the society that they are joining (Rosello, 2001; Tuck and Yang, 2012).

[11] Intractable complexities also arise when settlers take it upon themselves to welcome migrants, claiming the position to do so as a result (Walia, 2013).

We advocate for a continuous process of making connections between, disrupting and questioning the position of the 'host' and the 'guest' in light of these observations. Prosaic hospitality studies should entail critical historicized awareness of the making-ordinary of past aberrations and violence. Kocher's paper in this Special Issue reminds us that welcome is possible without fundamentally challenging racialised power structures and indeed whilst reproducing and reinscribing them (see also Ehrkamp and Nagel (2014) on hospitality and depoliticization). Geographers and scholars of hospitality must cultivate habits of thought that recognize the links between migratory pressures, exile, flight, refuge and exodus 'elsewhere' and everyday life 'here'. This involves attending to the hidden systems of association, like the arms trade, both the historic and contemporary slave trades, and border controls, that not only produce conflict, danger and discomfort, but that also cordon off the lives of those supposedly not involved or affected, of 'hosts', from that conflict and contain it at a safe distance. These ongoing mechanisms of colonialism are what allows the west to play host in the first place – or new dominating geopolitical forces, such as China, with reference to African migration (Ho, 2017).

But self-consciousness is not enough. Decolonisation refers to 'a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power' (Tuhiwai Smith, 2010: 33). Colonial power is so entrenched that it has itself become ordinary, mundane and everyday and is thus thoroughly intertwined with contemporary geopolitical hospitality. In this Special Issue Bernhardt introduces the concept of 'double othering' to explore how such relations may be created in the administrative, apparently hospitable practices of current liberal democracies (see also Mazzilli on selective welcoming). The modern episteme is always and intrinsically saturated with coloniality. Examining and critiquing the 'colonial present' (Gregory, 2004) must therefore involve an attunement to the colonial as 'integral to socio-spatial relations across multiple differentiated terrains and scales' (Radcliffe, 2017: 330; Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012). This attunement can be deeply uncomfortable (Derickson, 2017). If hospitality studies is to attend more closely to prosaics though, it must be prepared not only to detect but to actively push against the hallmarks and effects of past violence in everyday practices of welcome.

Expanding the relations of hospitality

Thinking about ordinary welcome can also be enriched by attending beyond the human to machines as well as other organic life forms. Although the authors in our special issue do not take up this theme explicitly, we see it as an important area for further expansion and elaboration when attending to ordinary welcomes. Many machinic inventions are intended to release humans from hospitality work, and indeed the automating of welcome is noted by Lyytinen and Bernhardt in different ways in their papers. Hospitality scholars have also noted that social media is increasingly key to facilitating such mediated absence-presence by gradually substituting human welcomers for automatic, robotic and digital hosts in an increasing number of places and online communities such as couchsurfing, AirBnB and self-service hotels (Bialski, 2012; Oh et al., 2013)[12].

In terms of living organisms such as animals and plants, geographers have spent considerable time grappling with the anthropocentricism of their discipline (consider 'human geography' for instance) and thinking about more-than-human hospitality holds similar promise. It is clear, for instance, that humans are making the world less hospitable for many other forms of life. This includes via the effects of human industry and over-consumption which produces waste and pollution that is either directly harmful to other forms of life or that degrades the environments that sustain them. This might occur at a localised or planetary scale – global warming being an example of the latter. These processes of unwelcome operate not only, or even primarily, through animosity towards other beings or future generations, but through ambivalence, abandonment, indifference and weak governance[13].

Conversely, animals and plants make multitudinous contributions to human comfort, safety, development and hospitality, such as animal welcome-labour[14]. Dogs have historically provided a range of welcoming services from loyalty and companionship to the lonely, guidance to the blind and lost, and rescue to the imperilled, while equine animals, elephants

[12] As a result of advances in Artificial Intelligence, machines are increasingly capable of provoking emotional commitment from people – caring robots being a case in point (Bissell and Del Casino, 2017) and electronic pets another (MacPherson, 2011).
[13] From a less-than-human perspective, Philo (2017) instead reveals the inhospitability of humans toward other humans, when *humanity* gets stripped away, cautioning against the romanticization of animality in human species.
[14] They can also make humans unwelcome in myriad ways.

and camels have literally carried humans across natural and man-made borders for centuries. Pets of many varieties are a constitutive feature of many human spaces of welcome, such as homes and urban spaces (Holmberg, 2014).

To treat animals and plants merely as service providers for humans, however, reproduces deep-rooted anthropocentric assumptions. When welcome is extended to animals and other species (this phenomena touches on symbiosis), it is discussed in a rather different register to how people experience and enact culturally embedded and contextually conditioned social relations, let alone political positions (Kakoliris, 2016; see also de Mul, 2014). In other words, non-human organic beings can be identified as co-dwellers in the world, welcomed and cared for by each other, and in the case of animals sometimes building trusting relationships through mutual enjoyment and comfort.

Thus, rather than juxtapose human and non-human, geographers have aimed to subvert dominant discourses and problematic binaries such as this (Srinivasan, 2016). In so doing geographers promote 'less fixedly human' (Buller, 2013: 314) approaches to planetary co-habitation that place emphasis on inter-species welcome including humans, animals and vegetal life (Hinchliffe et al., 2005). Underpinning a renewed sense of interdependence in this work is an awareness of 'the web of multidirectional flows and connections of mutual nourishment held together with care' (Graddy-Lovelace 2018: 4). At its broadest this web includes humans, plants, livestock, soil biota, pollinators and fungi. Exploring this dimension of hospitality studies requires interdisciplinary partnerships with approaches in natural sciences, for example biology and ecology, such as in Helmut Plessner's (1975/2019) anthropological philosophy which builds on biological–philosophical grounds, offering a fertile ground to refugee studies among other fields (e.g. Häkli & Kallio 2021).

III Hospitality, Geography and Refugees

The papers in this Special Issue critically engage with the relationship between hospitality studies and geography through the shared focus on migration and refugee politics. This attention to migration and refugee politics also builds on and opens new avenues for thinking about the foregoing themes of intimacy, home and decolonizing welcome, and broadening the approaches through non-human relations of hospitality. The issue of forced migration and receptivity towards refugees has been prominent in hospitality studies for

some considerable time (see Lynch et al., 2011). Scholars have drawn attention to the political trope of 'reluctant hosts' and 'untidy guests' and the conceited image of states as moral agents gallantly helping refugees (Germann Molz and Gibson, 2007; Rosello, 2001; Veijola, et al, 2014). Others have set out to critically explore existing practices of state security, bordering, immigration control and humanitarian governance, identifying both the problematics and potential for welcome within and between states, transnational polities, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, grassroots organisations, activist groups and individual people (e.g. Mountz, 2011; Laine, 2018; Morrissey, 2018; Rozakou, 2019).

Each paper in this Special Issue approaches these issues by drawing on empirical work at different scales, although choosing to organise the papers according to the different scales they work with is not unproblematic. We are aware that employing scalar notions as Germann Molz (2018) highlights, which delineate between global, national, urban, local and embodied, can reify these very distinctions and give the impression of the very fixed categories that concepts like the global-intimate seek to challenge. Notions such as a 'global refugee crisis', for example, can give a misleading impression of an unbreachable division between local practices of solidarity and 'higher', seemingly, unassailable forces. Other sorts of scalar imaginations are also powerfully reinforced by popular hospitality discourses. As Ahmed's (2019) work on the cultural politics of emotion reveals, media stories about places, especially 'nations', 'countries' and 'states' being 'over-whelmed', 'flooded' or 'swamped' by migrants perpetuates assumptions and discourses about capacity, for example, which are powerfully active in constraining hospitality.

At the same time, the relational notion of scale can be an effective way to organise and distinguish between practices, if accompanied by careful reflection on the potential essentialism of scalar thinking and a recognition that scales are socially produced and often overlapping and indistinct (Keil and Mahon, 2010)[15]. The scale at which welcome is enacted matters: whether this is the seat of an aeroplane, the cold nondescript room where an asylum hearing takes place, the house of a volunteer at a refugee charity, the corner of a street where a *refugees welcome* protest takes place or a neighbourhood where posters are

[15] Bell (2016), for example, uses scale to organise his observations about hospitality into categories from bodily practices, venues and cities to nations.

stuck to lampposts with racist slogans. What is more, since scale is neither stable nor ontologically prior to social relationships, welcoming practices are not only scaled but also *partake in the very construction of scales*, as welcome or unwelcome features prominently in place-identity and place-formation.

The papers in this Special Issue spiral loosely outwards from the individual to the national, demonstrating how welcome is enacted, negotiated, and experienced at different scales. We begin small, as Lyytinen's paper reflects on the story of a particular individual, 'Zaki', as a way to repopulate the sometimes abstract discussions about welcome and hospitality. This focus on individual narratives resonates with Lynch's (2017) call to focus on the ordinariness of welcome by paying attention to newcomers' experiences and the grounded, everyday business of being welcome and unwelcome. As becomes clear in the paper, Zaki's case, and Lyytinen's treatment of it, raises at least two original lines of thought with respect to the geographies of welcome. First, she deals with deportation and deportability, which raises the question of how to conceive of unwelcoming not as an attitude or a passive rejection but as a set of active and sustained practices and laws. In so doing she is able to examine how people, laws and spaces are combined by state machinery to construct and enact unwelcome. Second, as a result of her focus on the experiences of newcomers, she is able to offer an innovative perspective on the relationship between trust and hospitality. Alongside the established notion that hosts overcome their suspicion of guests via a process of familial hospitality, which 'converts: strangers into familiars, enemies into friends…' (Selwyn, 2000: 19), Lyytinen demonstrates how newcomers, too, struggle to overcome their suspicions about their hosts – even including those that seek to welcome them and advocate for their presence.

Kocher's paper also discusses an individual case in the context of the threat of deportation: this time of a woman who lived in a church under sanctuary protection for a year and a half in Ohio, US. Like Lyytinen's paper, the account draws upon rich empirical material to illuminate the everyday experiences of (un)welcome felt by newcomers. The focus on the church adds organisational and institutional considerations to the attention given to individual experience, however. This produces an additional valuable set of insights and brings the paper into conversation with work in hospitality studies that has examined how hospitality practices are both constrained by, but also productive of, new forms of

organisations and institutions (Lugosi, 2014). Focussing on the prosaic routines of welcome, Kocher deploys work from feminist geography that views the everyday practices of endurance, care, and social reproduction as essential to, but often hidden within, more traditional political and economic analyses of power. His paper argues for more attention to be paid to the energy-intense work that is often excluded from official media and academic accounts, yet which is essential to understanding what makes welcome function or fail. By taking this focus the paper takes forward hospitality scholars' concern for how issues of power and dependency can endanger hospitality towards refugees (Komter and Leer, 2012), to lay bare the spatial, material, and relational processes that participants implement in attempting to construct a 'welcoming' environment as well as the ways that welcome fails to live up to its imagined, spectacularised, potential.

Kekstaite's paper and Mazzilli's paper both move to the city as a scale of welcome. Kekstaite's paper examines the role that care plays in relations of hospitality in the context of providing short-term shelter for migrants who would otherwise be homeless in Brussels, Belgium. Kekstaite argues that a close look at the practices of hospitality through a feminist lens troubles the philosophical reading of hospitality in Derrida's approach, sidestepping the fatalism of Derrida's law of hospitality while at the same time exposing the complex relational power geometries of situated ethical acts. Incisively reviewing a range of literature, Kekstaite empahsises the relational and spatial character of welcoming practices and explores the way that political questions inhere within personal and intimate encounters, emphasizing the scale of the home. Alongside this editorial and Kocher's paper, Kekstaite's intervention further elucidates a feminist critique of the Derridean tendency to treat hospitality in abstract and philosophical terms.

Mazzilli's paper examines the claims made by 'cities' – or more precisely the cultural representations of cities – that they are 'welcoming' places. Focussing on Brighton and Bologna, Mazzilli's paper explores the distinction between the image, or portrayal, of welcome and the reality, highlighting the way that terms such as hospitality, diversity and openness can be easily mobilised in discourses about cites, but can be interpreted in partial and selective ways on the ground. By making these arguments Mazzilli's paper connects with a long-standing interest in geography with urban marketing in the context of intra-city

competitiveness and illustrates how 'empty' and 'plastic' the notion of hospitality can be (see DeBono, 2019). Her paper sheds light on the abstraction of welcome, which can render it banal and meaningless in practice (Gill, 2018). It also underscores the importance of attending to everyday lives because representations of welcome might very well overstate or misrepresent the prosaics.

The final paper of the special issue by Franz Bernhardt concerns the country of Wales and sets out to challenge the often implicit assumption that states are homogenous and – more often than not – structurally inclined towards closure and exclusion rather than the facilitation and promotion of welcome. Wales offers an interest case because it is not only a nation-state, but also a devolved subnational government of the British state. Under these conditions of multi-level governance, Bernhardt offers innovative insights into the potential of states to challenge the logic of exclusion often ascribed to them, with a particular focus on Wales' intention to become a 'nation of sanctuary', expressed in a formal action plan published in 2019 (see Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan). Building on the success of the charity City of Sanctuary in the UK since 2005 (see Darling, 2010), Wales is the first country to pursue such an objective. These developments challenge neat scalar interpretations of welcome in various ways – first by highlighting not only the multi-scalar nature of the nation-state but also the contradictions across scale that this produces, and secondly by throwing into question the urban seat of the sanctuary movement. In so doing, entrenched discourses and assumptions about sovereignty and what it means to be a host are called into question.

In conclusion, it transpires that the encounter between geography and hospitality studies, and the focus on everyday welcome that hospitality scholars are currently advocating, can be deeply enriched by taking into account geographers' attention to place, as well as their recent engagements with the global-intimate, new conceptions of home, the discipline of geography's specific and problematic relationship to colonialism, and non-human approaches to ethics. Geographers have recently asked 'what does welcome mean in different societies? What should it mean? What can it lead to?' (Kallio and Riding, 2018: 131), inviting a renewed engagement between hospitality studies and geography. In responding to these questions this Special Issue offers a critical gaze upon an often

geographically simplified welcome or unwelcome as an individual act or an act of the state. The papers discuss not only states or countries of welcome, but also cities, streets, homes, institutions and bodies. Through this work they draw attention to the multiplicity and duplicity of welcome, and the relationship that geographical imaginaries of welcome share with concrete practices of hospitality.

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