

Theology of Hospitality in the Age of Migration

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The age of migration?



Theology of migration

- Constructing theology
- Empirical descriptions of the theologizing processes of – primarily – migrants and migrant communities
- Migration as a *locus theologicus*



Hospitality in theological reflection on migration

- 1) Hospitality as framework for reflection
- 2) Hospitality as key-addressing religious diversity
- 3) Hospitality as central to mission
- 4) Hospitality as practices



Hospitality and mission

- 1) the practice of mission among migrants
- 2) migrants as subjects of mission
- 3) how the experience of migration offers new understandings and paradigms of mission itself to the church.



Text and motives from the Bible

- The strong biblical emphasis on offering hospitality to the stranger. Jesus as the paramount example to follow
- Hospitality as a distinctive mark of Christian communities - numerous admonitions to be hospitable
- The reminder that through strangers/guest, the host might encounter God, experience unexpected divine presence
- The blurring of boundaries between guests and hosts. Jesus as both guest and host. The identity of the people of God as resident aliens

God – the source of hospitality

- Human hospitality as “graced participation in the triune life of God”
- God’s hospitality is the gift that makes Christian hospitality possible
- Human hospitality is a response to and reflection of God’s hospitality

All humans depend on God's hospitality

God – the ultimate host and householder	Resident aliens, strangers or wayfarers
Those who gather at God's table are equally God's guests	"The core practice of hospitality: Christian people, themselves wayfarers, welcome strangers into the heart of God's transformative love" (Bass 2006)
"A Christian understanding of hospitality keeps in mind that the host is also a guest, as there is properly speaking only one host, Jesus Christ, who calls us into his celebration and fellowship" (Brandner)	"The best hosts understand themselves as aliens and strangers and live distant from power dynamics and status distinctions of the larger society" (Pohl 2003)

God relies on the world's hospitality

- “Never did Jesus content himself with a position of dominance and superiority, or with merely inviting others to come and receive. He sat at other people’s tables as guest, he was a recipient, he allowed others to minister to him” (Gittens)
- Jesus commanded his disciples to follow his example (Luk 10)
- Mutuality and reciprocity

Hospitality – divine encounter

Abrahams meeting with three strangers at Mamre (Gen 18)

The advice “do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some may have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebr 13:2)

The story of the Emmaus wanderers (Luke 24)

The text in Matt 25: 31-46 on the judgment of the nations

Hospitality – a fruitful concept?

- Advantages and disadvantages
- Different levels of use:
 - The problematic nature of hospitality lies not in its expression in communal forms of welcome to migrants at everyday level, but rather in how a language of hospitality may become a political tool to suggest values of cosmopolitanism while simultaneously enforcing the right to exclude those seen as unworthy of welcome.” (Darling 2014)

The KRISMI project and report

<https://vid.brage.unit.no/vid-xmlui/handle/11250/3119507>



The KRISMI project



Theology as resource in reflecting on hospitality



Thank you for your attention



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