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A Cultural Geopolitics of Hosting: Domesticity, Violence and Hospitality in the Home

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to enhance geopolitical understandings of hosting by exploring the practice of bringing guests – known or unknown – into a home. It starts with a recognition that whilst a growing body of geographical literature has explored the geopolitics of *home*, this has yet to be substantially brought into conversation with the practice of *hosting*. Grounded within our research on refugee hosting in the UK, and being hosted in Palestinian homestays we contend that an attention to a cultural geopolitics of hosting enriches geographical accounts of hosting. Our case studies muddy the cultural and political borders of both home and hosting and question the multiscale and relational understandings of hospitality. *A cultural geopolitics of hosting* then, demonstrates how hosting intersects with dynamics of geopolitics and culture through and in the multiple spaces of home. This paper, shows how a braiding of literatures on home and hosting is productive for understandings of the geopolitics of home, and hospitality at the different scales of the political.

Introduction

This paper aims to enhance geopolitical understandings of hosting by exploring the practice of bringing guests – known or unknown – into a home. This paper grounds itself within two experiences of hosting. Olivia Mason's experiences of being hosted in Palestinian homestays¹ and Sarah Hughes' hosting of refugees in their home in the UK. Despite disparate locations and sites, we argue that attention must be paid to the multiplicity of ways in which the home is a site of hosting. The home as a hosting space in both our cases entangles politics and culture in important ways and brings together people from different cultural contexts for whom the home has different meanings and relationalities. The rationale for hosting can demonstrate the often violent way the home becomes entangled in geopolitical conflict. Yet despite multiple ways that the home and hosting are connected, we found that a framework to

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discuss the cultures and geopolitics of hosting in the space of the home was absent from geographical literature. Our case studies muddied the cultural and political borders of both home and hosting and made us realise how disparate literatures on home and hosting might come together. In this paper, we make the case that an attention to a cultural geopolitics of hosting can demonstrate how hosting intersects with dynamics of geopolitics and culture through and in the multiple spaces of home.

A growing body of literature has explored the geographies of home and this spans cultural and political geography and geopolitics. The concept of home has long been central to cultural geography, which has explored how meanings of house and home connect with identity, belonging, gender, diasporic politics, and the politics of culture (c.f. Blunt and Dowling 2006; Domosh 1998; Mallett 2004; Manzo 2003; Tolia-Kelly, 2004). Brickell's (2012a, 2012b) writing on the geopolitics of home has been foundational in opening spaces of geography to discuss the geopolitics of home, including connections between home and violence (Pain 2014, Clayton et al 2023), domestic geopolitics (Carter and Woodyer 2020; Vasudevan and Smith 2020), political geographies of nationhood (Kaplan 2003), and tensions between intimate and extreme geopolitics (Smith 2012, 2014, 2020, Pain and Staeheli 2014). Yet, we posit that a concentration on the home as cultural *and* political might offer novel ways of thinking through the relationship between intimate and extreme geopolitics. A *cultural geopolitics of hosting* involves bringing together the cultural practices, meanings, and performances of home with geopolitical work on intimacy, home, and domesticity.

We explore these cultural/political and intimate/extreme geopolitics of home by bringing these debates into conversation with hosting literature. Hosting has been theorised through discussions of homestays, hospitality, authenticity, and host–guest relations (Lynch 2005, Wang 2007, Ibrahim and Razzaq 2010, Carnaffan 2010, Kontogeorgopoulos et al 2015). Hosting scholarship has begun exploring the relationship between hosting and wider geopolitics and this includes feminist critiques of hospitality (Blunt 2005, Gardey 2016, Aristarkhova 2012, Aristarkhova 2020, Buda and McIntosh 2012, Dowler 2013, Lisle 2016). Yet despite, often taking place within a 'home-space', these literatures on hosting have not been directly placed into conversation with scholarship on home, especially the geopolitics of home literature where feminist critiques of geopolitics are central. Instead, hosting has often been framed within geopolitics at an urban (Darling 2010, 2011, 2021) or nation scale (Gill 2016). How scales of hosting might be brought together is acknowledged through the development of what Gill et al (2022, 123–124) term 'ordinary hospitality'. By this they mean an attention to spaces of welcome and how connections between everyday hosting and wider geopolitical events demonstrates the importance of geographers' attention to place, including the home (Gill et al 2022, 123–124). Centring the cultural geopolitics

of hosting in the home, is therefore to acknowledge that the politics of home are as much about relationships between intimacy and extreme geopolitics, as different politics of what home is and the politics of culture. In doing so we argue that hosting practices can enhance understandings of both home and hosting and scalar relations within geopolitics.

Bringing into conversation our case studies and disparate literatures on home and hosting, we make three original contributions to geographical thought. First, how hosting connects extreme and intimate geopolitics. We argue that exploring hosting in the home can demonstrate links between what is experienced and viscerally present in the home and wider geopolitical events. Specifically, we address the ways in which the UK's colonial practices as they occur in both openly hostile current UK Government policies and policies that continue to violently shape the Middle East can be experienced through hosting practices in home spaces. Second, we argue for better understandings of how cultural practices are entangled within the geopolitical. The home as a cultural and political site is being shaped by hosting, and we show how this presents new connections and sites through which to explore geopolitical binaries. It also facilitates conversations between currently disconnected literatures on hosting in refugee studies and hospitality and homestays within cultural and tourism geographies. Third, we suggest that attending to hosting in the home highlights the awkwardness and uncomfortableness of hosting. We were both initially uncertain about writing this paper due to blurriness of experiences that can take place in the home. These concerns speak to questions of ethics central to Brickell's (2012b) arguments around geopolitics of home and what researchers doing a politics of home must consider.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, we review and demonstrate the intersections of literature on geopolitics, hosting, home, and hospitality to develop what we mean by a cultural geopolitics of hosting. Four sections then follow that ground our argument. In the first, we provide the cultural political context in which each of our empirical examples take place. From this we argue that there are three productive areas where this conversation can be taken forward in geography: (1) Hosting as a space of encounter; (2) Hosting as a space of everyday domesticity; and (3) Hosting as a site of geopolitical violence. We conclude with some reflections on the wider implication of bringing together the cultural geopolitics of hosting for geopolitical scholars.

A Cultural Geopolitics of Hosting: Home, Hospitality, Hosting

Home as Cultural Geopolitics

The origins of home in geography are undeniably situated within feminist and cultural geography, which posits the home as an understudied site to

understand the social and the spatial (Domosh 1998). Exploring the home can unsettle ideas about home and domesticity especially the material cultures of home, the lived experiences of home and the domestic entanglements of nature and culture (Blunt 2005). This unsettling includes a focus on cultural differences and a movement from ideas of 'home' situated in white, western ideologies of the nuclear family and the detached suburban ideal (Blunt and Dowling 2006, Mallett 2004). Gillian Rose argues that accounts of home in geography frequently fail to consider different and unequal relationships of power and home as a 'place that might be dangerous, violent, alienating and unhappy rather than loving and secure' (cited in Blunt 2003, 73). When geopolitics is considered within the dynamics of unequal power relations, identity, and the politics of culture, feminist and cultural geographical work on the home can be seen as inherently geopolitical. This is especially true of research on diasporic communities (Blunt 2008), including the material attachments (Burrell 2017) and complex emotional ties (Eastmond 2007, Boccagni and Baldassar 2015) associated with 'home' for forced migrants (Tolia-Kelly, 2004, Blunt and Dowling 2006). More recently, Nassar et al (2023, 1031–1032) seek to undo our 'ideas of home' by questioning how objects associated with home 'narrate the past, the everyday, and interrogate im/possible futures' and 'carry renditions of home'. The cultural geographies of home thus include intersections with life histories and the afterlives of colonialism, neoliberalism, and post-independence statehood.

The relationship between geopolitics and home can be most widely associated with Brickell's (2012b) call for geographers to 'make space' for the home in geopolitics by demonstrating how the home unsettles public and private binaries and is a setting in which small mundane practices can be examined in relation to larger geopolitical events. The home as a site of geopolitical analysis Brickell (2012b) argues, is a space where the micro-geographies of everyday life are both influenced by, but also influence, wider structural forces. Attention to the geopolitics of home can demonstrate how the intimate level is connected to 'extreme' level conceptualisations of home(land), nation and security (Brickell 2012b). Literature on the geopolitics of home follows a feminist geopolitical trajectory ignited by Dowler and Sharp (2001) who claim that a feminist geopolitics must involve a grounded approach that pays attention to bodies, the role of women, the lived spaces of politics, and must connect the complex relations between the international and the everyday.

In recent years, this feminist geopolitical trajectory has resulted in an expansion of terms used to consider the entangled scales and sites of geopolitics, including domesticity and intimacy. The relationship between intimacy, geopolitics and home spaces has been explored by Smith (2020; 2012; 2014, see also Oswin and Olund 2010; Cowen and Story 2013; Jackman and Brickell, 2022) through her longstanding attention to relations on love and marriage in the Himalayan Ladakh region of Jammu and

Kashmir state. Smith's careful scholarship places intimacy as inextricably nestled in and constitutive of the geopolitical, and she argues that marriage and intimacy defy 'scalar distinctions between body and home, nation and globe' (2020, 5). 'Intimacy-geopolitics' is used by Pain and Staeheli (2014) to argue intimacy is an important tool to think about geopolitical relations, practices, and interactions across a variety of scales and sites. As Caroline Faria (2017, 588) shows in her attention to the Sudanese diaspora, acts of intimate violence faced and resisted in the home demonstrate how the 'spectacular and quiet, state-based and domestic, distance and proximate' are always entangled. Intimacy refers also to embodied geopolitical relations. In Palestine, 'control over Palestinians meant inscribing Israeli power over intimate and momentous occurrences, such as the bodily fluids of a young girl's menstrual blood and a mother's milk' (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2016, 168).

Work on intimacy demonstrates how 'bodies, home, communities, and livelihoods have become the battlefields of contemporary conflict' (Hyndman 2004, 319). This violence increasingly attacks the home and can be overt violence, for example, Brickell's (2020) research on home evictions and domestic violence in Cambodia and immaterial and affective violence caused by the constant threat of home eviction and demolition in Joronen and Griffiths (2019) work in Palestine. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2010, 3) argues that home demolitions result in Palestinian girls and women feeling 'displaced at home' and experiencing 'the trauma not only of losing their home, but also their sense of safety, security, and belonging'. Home demolitions in Palestine fissure Palestinian homes at every link in the chain of nation, land, community, and family to demonstrate how the Israeli state attacks every aspect of homelife in Palestine (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2010, 2016). We have seen this most acutely in Israel's most recent War on Gaza (2023 – ongoing) with the attacks on medical infrastructures, alongside schools, shelters, and family homes, including in refugee camps, demonstrating how domestic infrastructures are key targets of Israeli violence (forensic-architecture.org 2024).

In migration scholarship, the discursive structures of home, homeland, home-community and home-country have been explored (see Kaplan 2003). Geographers exploring the systems of migration governance have critically interrogated the politics of welcome in a variety of spaces, from the nation-state (Gill 2018), the urban (Darling 2010, 2018, Bagelman 2018), to the asylum drop in centre (Darling 2011). Reflecting on the suppression of welcome in the UK asylum system, Gill (2018, 91) argues that '[w]elcome demands intimacy and occupies a world of inter-relational subjectivity and shared vulnerability; admission, on the one hand, speaks of permission and concession, occupying a world of economics and calculation'. This relationality of welcome, for Sparke, means paying attention to the 'in-between spaces

in which the damage done by the suppression of welcome is contested and countered, however incompletely' (2019, 1).

Valuable attention has also been given to the geopolitics of shelter (e.g. in refugee camps), the accommodation of asylum-seekers or resettled refugees, detention and squats (see Ramadan 2013; Gill 2016; Darling 2016; 2020; Zacca Thomaz 2022). Recent work in Sociology (Monforte et al 2021, 674) has explored the politics of private refugee hosting in Britain, France and Italy, and argues that the 'process is highly ambivalent as it risks creating and reproducing everyday intimate bordering processes' (see also Pérez Murcia and Boccagni 2022, and Boccagni 2022 for sociological scholarship on homemaking in migrant communities). Refugee hosting must therefore be understood in relation to multiple experiences of home. For example, Annabelle Wilkins argues that migrant women negotiate multiple insecurities and develop alternative ideas of home while travelling across borders, so that the relationships between home and migration are 'multi-scalar and constructed through relations of power and difference, as well as emphasising the shifting experiences of home and belonging for migrants and diasporic communities' (2017: 1551–1552).

An emerging literature on domesticity and geopolitics further explores relationships between home and scale. Domestic geopolitics is proposed as a term by Pavithra Vasudevan and Sara Smith (2020, 1162) to explore the 'dual meanings of domestic: governance within a state's territorial bounds *and* the intimate sphere of social life that constitutes the home, family, and community'. More recently, Clayton et al (2023, 1) draw upon work in the North East of England, to argue for the concept of 'domestic colonisation' as a 'lens to focus on the ways in which domestic spaces might be exploited and/or dominated through familiar relationships'. The importance of attention to the domestic also demonstrates how domestic violence and violence in home spaces is largely absent from accounts of war and the lives of military personnel and veterans (see Pain 2014, Benwell 2024, Cree 2020).

Yet, despite important bodies of work exploring relationships between intimate and extreme geopolitics few geographers are making explicit connections between the cultural and geopolitical, especially within geographies of home (for work in Sociology making these connections, see Monforte et al. 2021). Exceptions include Sean Carter and Tara Woodyer who (2020, 1046) use the term 'domesticating geopolitics' 'to capture a broader range of agents, practices, objects, performativities, and discourses that contribute to how geopolitics is rendered, sanitised, embodied, and enacted' and includes work exploring Her Majesty's Armed Forces toy range in 2009 (Woodyer and Carter, 2020). The relationship between home, culture, and scales emerges too in Mel Nowicki's (2018, 649) writing on UK housing policies and how major political parties 'utilise rhetoric that places homeliness and

homemaking at the centre of citizenship construction and nation-building whilst also introducing policies that contribute to class-based acts of home unmaking'. What makes this work distinctive is that the ways in which the home becomes geopolitical is connected to the cultural practices of homemaking.

As Brickell (2012b, 227) argues, drawing on work within cultural geography to explore the politics central to home is fruitful, alongside exploring the 'domestic exclusions and inequalities that are being derived and exercised at multiple scales with differential impacts'. Indeed, Chris Harker (2009, 324) argues that when the Palestinian home is only framed in terms of violent dispossession it leaves Palestinians 'out from the realm of complex and multi-faceted humans and into the realm of abstractions, whether these are martyrs, refugees, or simply victims'. As such Palestine, Harker (2009, 327) argues, is 'produced as a site of/for geopolitics rather than socio-cultural geographies'. This distinction is crucial because it often fails to understand how different social and cultural values ascribed to family and society can alter how violence and security shape and are affective in the home (Harker 2009, Joronen and Griffiths 2019, Clayton et al 2023).

It is within these arguments that we frame home and hosting, including what the home might mean in different cultural and political contexts and why the need for hosting in the home might arise. We build upon this understanding of home as negotiated, fluid, and multiple and argue that there is space for deeper connections between literature on geopolitics via a focus on the intimate politics of guest/host relations within family homes.

Hosting and Hospitality as Intimate and Extreme

Despite a rich literature on hospitality, home and hosting are aspects of hospitality that have received least attention and could contribute to understandings of the home in nuanced ways especially the relationships between the intimate and extreme. Gill et al (2022, 130) for instance argue for an attention to the lived intimacies of home, but as a space of hospitality 'because it destabilizes the idea of a settled place from which a powerful and secure host can offer hospitality'. To host is an act of hospitality towards an 'other', which occurs across multiple scales and contexts and hosting in home spaces is both a growing practices and one which has received little attention.

One approach to understanding the relationship between guest and host relations is a focus on the relationship between the urban and the national. Urban spaces have the potential to reconfigure the relationship between host and guest (Darling 2009, Squire and Darling 2013). Political geography has explored how the urban becomes a scene of possibility for other political subjectivities, and a site where claims to belonging can be reconfigured (Darling 2020). This complicates the state drawn lines around in and

exclusion from the polity. The relationship between guest and host has been explored through the Sanctuary Movement (termed City of Sanctuary in the UK), which has emerged as one of the largest solidarity movements with undocumented migrants, refugee and asylum seekers within the 'West'. We note that geographical scholarship has yet to explore the nuances and scales of hospitality in 'hosting' or 'homestay' situations in relation to literature on the geopolitics of home (for exception see Darling 2020).

In tourism settings, hosting and 'host-guest' relations have largely been theorised within homestays. Homestays are part of a growing travel and tourism trend in which staying in homes enables interactions with the local community, culture and environments, and connections to family life (Gu and Wong, 2007, Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). They also reflect a growing trend towards travellers seeking everyday experiences that are deemed to be authentic, which can result in sites of customised authenticity (Wang 2007). This quest for authenticity is also a reason cited by many tourists for travelling to places associated with conflict such as Palestine and are often problematically associated with voyeuristic aspects of tourism that offer troublesome representations of place and sensationalise danger (Lisle, 2000; 2016; Mahrouse, 2016; Buda 2016). Paul Lynch et al. (2011) thus set an agenda for hospitality studies that begins to problematise the ethics and politics of hospitality, including how the hospitality industry produces hostile and inhospitable spaces, especially in relation to hierarchies of exclusion in resorts and immigration control (see also Buda and McIntosh 2012). Fregonese and Ramadan (2015, 794) argue that relations of hospitality forged in hotels illustrate that the geopolitical and the everyday are intimately connected and these connections are both shaped by and shape geopolitics. Therefore, while hotels 'reflect and reinforce accepted hierarchies', they 'can sometimes intervene in and disrupt them' for instance by offering emergency hospitality to those in need (Fregonese and Ramadan 2015, 808). Focusing on the relationships between geopolitics and hospitality, especially in areas of conflict, has the potential to reorientate our understandings of the space, scales, and intimacies of geopolitics.

It is precisely the connection between hospitality at the scale of the home and the nation and the exclusions and inclusions of hospitality that we draw on in this article. Jacques Derrida's conceptualisations of hospitality arose from political conditions of hostility. Hospitality for Derrida (2000, 77) is about marking limits, powers, rights, and duties and is therefore conditional. Absolute hospitality can never be achieved because something is always required from the exchange; a power balance is always established (Derrida 2000). Unconditional hospitality is perhaps an ethical orientation, something outside of divisions of class, ethnicity, and race and is 'given to the other before they are identified, even before they are (posited or supported to be) a subject,

legal subject and subject nameable by their family name etc' (Derrida 2000, 29). For Derrida (2000) the nation-state can never truly offer hospitality for it is always fundamentally about exclusion and inclusion within a political community.

This leads Derrida (2000) to his concept of 'radical hospitality', hospitality that becomes radical when freed from its conditions and requires giving control to guests so that we can no longer be hosts and they no longer be guests (Gill et al. 2022) Yet the increasingly violent global politics of migration, nationalism, and border controls make such possibilities of 'radical hospitality' challenging. Scholars interrogating how radical hospitality might be enacted include Michelle Daigle and Margaret Marietta Ramirez's (2019) discussion of concept of radical hospitality by indigenous activists in the wake of the Trump administration's anti-Muslim travel ban. Activists used radical hospitality to challenge the ability of the settler nation to claim sovereignty and deny welcome to individuals on indigenous lands (Daigle and Ramirez 2019). Radical hospitality is thus to rethink the scales at which hospitality is enacted and by whom.

Derridean framings of hospitality have also been criticised by feminist scholars. Irina Aristarkhova (2012) highlights their lack of attention to gender, often placing women as naturally more hospitable than men, and the need to ground ideals of hospitality in everyday life. In her work in contemporary art, Aristarkhova (2020) notes that understanding and theorising hospitality is not commonly done 'in the moment', arguing that '[m]ost interpretations and judgments between hosts and guests are made post-factum – that is the nature of hospitality' (xiv). Through a feminist lens and a focus on the home, hospitality can enable exchanges of ideas between different peoples that are not restricted by the underpinnings of geopolitical understandings of scale, boundaries and nationalism (Gill et al. 2022, Dowler 2013). A feminist hospitality is proposed by Lorraine Dowler (2013) in tourism practices in West Belfast as hospitality is located at both the local scales of home and community and as a global cultural and economic force and interaction. Dowler, drawing on Hammington's feminist theories of hospitality, argues that Derrida's notion of 'conditional' hospitality' is one that 'is limited, defensive, and rooted in mistrust of strangers', while a feminist hospitality has the possibility to unsettle boundaries and allow for spaces of exchange and resolution (Hammington 2010: 3, cited in Dowler 2013, 784).

(Post)colonial scholarship further critiques Derridean notions of hospitality. Shyrock (2008: 405) puts Bedouin stories about hospitality in conversation with European political thought to demonstrate how hospitality is used as a geopolitical tool. For instance, hospitality by Bedouin tribes has resisted and refashioned Ottoman, British, and Hashemite ideas of what a state is, while simultaneously governments in the region have used hospitality to control tribal loyalties (Shyrock 2008). Hospitality thus arises as a kind of politics and

has the ability 'to operate beyond politics or call politics into question' and 'depends on (or is generated by) its peculiar location in time and space' (Shyrock 2008: 406). We build on these arguments to demonstrate the geopolitics of hospitality as it occurs across scales of the intimate/extreme and the cultural/political. We do so by exploring how across our two cases hosting in the home unsettles the geopolitics of hosting, home, and homelife.

Situating the Cultural Geopolitics of Hosting: Method, Ethics, Positionality

In both our case studies, hosting within the home is intrinsically connected to wider geopolitics. The context of Sarah's hosting of newly recognised refugees has taken place in an increasingly and explicitly hostile asylum system in the UK. In contrast, Olivia's experiences are not of hosting but being a guest in Palestinian homestays in the Palestinian city of Bethlehem, a city that includes the Church of the Nativity, the West Bank's most visited tourism site and key sites of both settler colonial infrastructure and political tourism, including the separation barrier that runs through and cuts off Bethlehem from East Jerusalem (Sherwood 2012, Isaac 2010). We bring our two cases into conversation because each demonstrate the need for home and hospitality literature to be brought into conversation; both demonstrate how hostile UK and Israeli colonial policies shape everyday space; both illustrate how the home as both a cultural and political space intersect; and both connect the scales of everyday/state and intimate/extreme.

Our methodological approaches were both explicitly feminist, and utilised ethnographic methods. Olivia spent 3 months living in three different Palestinian homes in Bethlehem between July to September 2015 while undertaking an Arabic language course at Bethlehem University. While all three families regularly hosted tourists, the means through which Olivia accessed each homestay was different. The first host family was accessed through a tourist agency based in Bethlehem; the second host family was accessed via the website AirBnB; the third through word of mouth at the Arabic language school in Bethlehem Olivia attended. Alongside these homestays, Olivia also spent time attending cooking classes run by a women's group in a family home in one of Palestine's refugee camps, Aida Camp. For Olivia, the time spent in homestays was part of a larger PhD project exploring tourism in Palestine, with the homestays not the main research focus and instead a means of accommodation for Olivia.² Sarah hosted several newly recognised refugees in their house, mostly for short emergency periods, with a few individuals staying for weeks and in one case, for months. The hosting arrangement came about via contact with refugee support organisations in the local town, and via conversations with the local authority. The hosting for Sarah was part of a pilot for a wider research project, which includes attention to a gap in

accommodation provision when an asylum seeker receives a positive decision on their application.³

In both our cases, the homestay experiences were connected to our broader research projects but not necessarily the principal objects of research. This in turn demonstrates the role that the home can often play in the background of our research projects and how we are intimately connected to our research. In both our cases of hosting the home becomes a space that is both home to the research and home to the researchers. Yet at the same time our positionality within, and centrality to the home has resulted in uncertainty as to whether to write about these experiences. These concerns speak to questions of ethics central to Brickell's (2012b) arguments around geopolitics of home and what researchers doing a politics of home must consider. These ethics include how to research and analyse unheard, silenced violences and the 'need to develop counter-practices in research methodologies that allow for engagement with indigenous womens' knowledge, experiences and 'ways of knowing' in Palestine as a space of settler-colonial violence (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2010, 3). Yet, there is also a price to disclosing experiences of Palestinian women that might remain invisible that sits alongside the counter price to not engaging (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2010, 4). Researchers have a responsibility when disclosing silenced voices, that includes acknowledging that a politics of invisibility is a personal politics and the production of knowledge never takes place outside of politics, history, and justice (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2010). Within these ethics and ambivalences, in which the home becomes both object of analysis and method, we were guided by conversations and decisions of those we shared the home with.

Interviews and participant observation were the primary methodologies used by both authors, in which we noted our experiences, feelings, conversations, interactions, tastes, and sounds (Longhurst et al 2008). Participant observation was an important method because it enabled us to reflect on both home as method and the home as a site of geopolitics itself. Furthermore, participant observation is rarely used as a method in existing studies of hosting, with questionnaires, surveys, and in-depth interviews preferred (see Wang 2007, Gu and Wong, 2007, Kontogeorgopoulos et al. 2015). Ethical implications of course emerge when undertaking participant observation in family homes. Where, for example, do the lines blur between roles as a researcher, tourist, and friend? As detailed above, both authors ensured their positionality was known and that anything included in the paper was agreed to.

'Entering the Home': host-encounters and the politics of welcome

In this section, we start from an acknowledgement that the reasons for inviting a stranger into one's home is complicated, and that there is an important

distinction between an invitation into a house (as a material building) and a home (imbued with multiple emotions, violences and memories). Different practices of invitation and hosting are associated with different material and emotional decision-making. In tourism homestays for example, the hosting of the stranger is frequently understood as a means of economic gain, whereas refugee hosting is often seen as an altruistic act. Returning to work in Sociology, Monforte et al (2021, 677)'s research on ambivalent acts of hospitality shows how 'the act of hosting refugees is very often lived as an intimate experience based on an individual, affective, connection between the host and the guest'. While the financial benefits of tourism homestays are important to families and altruism is a part of refugee hosting, we agree with Monforte et al (2021) that hosting is filled with ambivalent moments of conditional hospitality that are intimate, muddled, and political.

Both homestays in Palestine and refugee hosting are mediated. With homestays, the potential guest introduces themselves to the host online through a platform such as Air BnB, via a tour agency, or through word of mouth. In many of these cases the homestay is vetted, and the host can often check reviews of the guest and vice versa or have an email conversation with the host beforehand. Whilst there is still a risk of inviting a stranger into the home, this is not the unknown other of Derridean hospitality. In a different context, refugee hosting in the UK is often mediated via third sector organisations. *Refugees at Home* is a prominent charity in the UK encouraging those with a spare room to sign up to host refugees or asylum seekers looking for somewhere to stay. As of January 2024 they have 'been responsible for placing 5,403 guests with a total of 501,389 placement nights' (Refugees at Home 2024). Sarah's experiences of hosting are through these informal networks in northern English cities and generally came about when an individual at risk of homelessness (often due to council hostels being full) presented themselves at an asylum drop-in centre. On one occasion the city council rang to ask if Sarah could take someone in for the night. This is important, for it is in the absence of coherent accommodation provision by the local state that this ad hoc requirement for refugee hosting arises (e.g. the housing officer having Sarah's phone number from a previous meeting at the council with a different refugee).

Placing hosting within the context of (local) state geopolitics frames the cultural politics of refugee hosting. This is because a forced migrant who requires accommodation in a spare room, does not have access to state-provided accommodation. The space of the home as a site of hospitality is therefore entangled with the wider geopolitics of state-level immigration politics, local authority housing teams and the whims of the private companies enacting the dispersal system.

In Olivia's experience of living in Palestinian homestays, the welcome into the home is also connected to geopolitics of the Israeli state. The

Israeli Government in 2017 attempted to limit both religious and political tourism with policies to ban all overnight tourist stays in Bethlehem (Maltz 2017). Homestays are also increasingly a part of resistance to Israeli settler-colonial restrictions on Palestine life as evidenced in campaigns against AirBnB's decision to list rentals from houses in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank (BBC 2019). The decision to welcome host strangers in the home is thus connected to these geopolitics of exclusion and resistance, and numerous hosts outlined the connections between settler-colonial policies and their decisions to host. This became apparent in the homestay of Lina:

It was in Lina's kitchen one day after being there for two weeks that I asked how she started opening her home for homestay and she admitted: 'I didn't like the idea at first, someone else coming into my home, but Isaac [a tour operator] was looking for more families to run home stays and he knew my family and that we had spare rooms. I said initially that I didn't want to do it, ya'ni [I mean] I didn't like the idea of people in my house, but Isaac said I could just try it once and see how it went. So I tried it and I liked it. It's nice to have something to do. When Nidal [her husband] is at work and Talaa and Omar [her children] are at university it's just me here. I like having something to do and it not just being me. Now we always have someone staying. (From Olivia's field notes, 2015)

While the economic gains from hosting were important for Lina and her family, her reasons for running the homestay and her ambivalences about the realities of it were more complex. Lina did not like the notion of 'people in her house', but she liked the way in which the visitor provided purpose and eased solitude. Throughout the month Olivia stayed in Lina's home, Lina rarely left the house. In an interview with Lina towards the end of her stay, she told Olivia that before the construction of the separation wall between Israel and the West Bank, she would frequently travel to visit her sister in Haifa, a coastal city in Palestine-Israel. However, the separation wall now means that Lina must apply in advance for a permit, which is often not granted, and cannot take her car, as you need a special permit for that. Lina says she prefers not to cross through the checkpoints of the separation barrier and prefers to stay at home. Lina's husband, Nidal, however, is one of the thousands of West Bank Palestinians who must navigate checkpoints daily to cross through the separation barrier to work in Israel. Lina wakes up at 5am every weekday morning to drive her husband to Bethlehem's main checkpoint so he can wait in the long queues to cross by foot into Jerusalem where he has a permit to work. This system of work permits and checkpoint mobility is well documented in the literature on Palestine, including the ways in which Palestinian women who may not physically cross checkpoints are still affected by Israeli security infrastructure (see Griffiths and Repo 2020, Richter-Devroe 2018, Amireh 2011).

In the homestay of Theresa and Michael, their reasons for hosting were also connected to settler colonial geopolitics. Theresa and Michael were an elderly couple whose four children had all left home, resulting in three empty bedrooms. Theresa told Olivia in an interview:

My two sons live in Europe now, and my daughters live with their families, so I have lots of spare room, you know, here. My son was the one who told me about AirBnB, and how I could use it to make money and I thought why not. (From Olivia's fieldnotes, 2015)

Theresa outlined to Olivia that she had some ambivalence about having strangers in her home but was also aware of the potential financial gains and it provided opportunities for her to make extra money, such as selling her handmade embroidery to guests. The AirBnB account was run by her son who lived in Europe and he was responsible for all the bookings and correspondence. The empty rooms in her house are thus indicative of the geopolitics of (im)mobility in Palestine, alongside the financial benefits. Theresa told Olivia, she wished her sons and grandchildren could visit more regularly and use the rooms, yet the lack of job opportunities and mobility restrictions in Palestine meant her sons, like many young Palestinians, have moved abroad. Renting out her rooms, Theresa told Olivia also enabled them to keep their family home and this retention of their home was important within the wider geopolitics of home demolition and eviction as an act of refusal to leave the family home.

Alongside these entanglements between home, hosting, and geopolitics, it is also crucial to consider the cultural politics that shape hosting. In an interview with the employee of a tourism agency who organise homestays, Olivia was told that convincing families in Bethlehem to open their homes as homestays was not necessarily straightforward and most homestays in Bethlehem are in Christian homes (ATG 2016). Olivia was told it was difficult to persuade Muslim families to host because of religious restrictions surrounding having (especially male) strangers staying overnight in the home. Indeed, Olivia experienced numerous restrictions from host families regarding who could stay in their homes. One host family who had a teenage daughter, would only allow women to stay. While another host family told Olivia they did not like to host 'Arabs' because they were 'too much work' and 'expect too much'. Inviting the 'right kind of people' into her home is important to Theresa because it is her home, and somewhere she wants to feel comfortable. Hospitality and Theresa's sense of feeling at home intersected with divisions of class, ethnicity, and race. However, friendship and the enjoyment of another's company in the home is something less easily pre-determined. Theresa's home was one where Olivia felt very much at home. The hem on a skirt Olivia was wearing one day came down and Theresa fixed it, reminding her of times her Nan would fix her clothes. Theresa would show Olivia her

embroidery techniques, cook her traditional Palestinian food, and would sit and tell her stories in the evening in her nightdress. The practices that made a house feel homely, were shared by both. Olivia and Theresa still stay in contact and have developed a friendship. This highlights how cultural and political conditions that surround hospitality in the homestay are entangled in nuanced ways.

However, in Lina's home, Olivia often felt very uncomfortable. This was partly because her own mobility was often in direct contrast to Lina's. Olivia regularly travelled through checkpoints into Jerusalem or to other Palestinian cities and Lina would often express her opinion this was inappropriate for a young woman to do. It also highlighted the inequalities of mobility, as Olivia's British passport enabled her more freedom of movement within the region than Lina who was Palestinian. Lina's home also became uncomfortable because one of Lina and her husband's reasons for inviting guests into their home was to convey the impacts of Israeli settler colonialism. On one of their first nights, after sharing a traditional Palestinian meal, Lina's husband took Olivia to the roof of their house to show them the encroachment of an illegal Israeli settlement. These tensions of hosting made her both uncomfortable and ambivalent about the home as a research site. The homestay as a site of hospitality plays a geopolitical role in combating the hostility of the Israeli occupation and reclaiming Palestinian voices but these also become entangled with the economics of the homestay. As she was paying to stay in Lina's home, it felt at times that understanding this hostility of conflict was something to pay Palestinians for in the same way as paying for a meal. This echoes Shalhoub-Kevorkian's (2010) discussion of the responsibility when disclosing silenced voices and the ambivalences that go alongside this.

Sarah also experienced uncomfortable and awkward moments whilst hosting. Her decision to host was not clear cut, as it emerged from emergency accommodation situations that sometimes became extended to a few weeks, or in one case, several months. It was hard at times for Sarah to be aware of Derridean ideals of unconditional hospitality and yet set their own conditions upon an individual's stay (no smoking inside, please be kind to the cat, please don't have guests over without asking). It felt awkward to have books around the house on migration that sometimes needed to be explained to guests; Sarah worried that this would be triggering but also did not have an office nearby to remove them to. It felt wrong to ask people to 'treat the place like home' and yet to put a lock on her bedroom door. At times unknown people were arriving, referred by other refugees or third-sector groups and this was a risk Sarah was not prepared to take, regardless of intentions of openness, welcome and unconditionality. The guest's bedroom also had a lock for their own privacy concerns, but the power relations here are unsettling and writing about them feels like a guilty admission. We include these here to highlight that hospitality can be and feel paradoxical, awkward, and uncomfortable, that

encounters are mediated and unequal and that the processes of hosting are shaped by wider cultural norms and individual relationships (see work by Gill 2018 and responses by Vainikka & Vainikka 2018, Bagelman 2018, and Darling 2018 for discussion on the practical and emotional labour of hospitality).

The geopolitics of home and hospitality intersect here as hospitality is shaped by the geopolitics of home and vice versa. In these encounters in the home we have outlined, the offering of hospitality is never unconditional but also conditioned by geopolitics of both safety and discomfort. The reasons for hosting must also be understood beyond acts of conditional hospitality or economic gain, but as conditioned by geopolitical events and cultural politics. As a result, home and hospitality are always in tension with scales of the intimate/extreme and cultural/political geographies.

Hosting as a Space of Everyday Domesticity

In the cooking classes, very few of the women speak English, yet this seems to barely matter as through food and the act of cooking, communication takes place. Spices are passed around to smell, small pieces are placed on hands to be licked. Hummus is made, garlic chopped, lemons squeezed; it is tasted by hungry mouths while fingers scrap the bowl clean'. (Olivia's field notes, 2015)

The home is an important site because it is a *domestic* space where cultural practices of cooking, embroidery, and eating take place. The moment described in the vignette took place in a cooking class in a Palestinian refugee camp in Bethlehem, in which, women invite people into their homes to cook together. They are run by the Noor Women's Empowerment Group, a group initially set up as a 'mothers club' to provide emotional and financial support to women in the camp with disabled children. The idea of cooking classes arose as a means of providing income for these mothers and at the time of Olivia's research, they were running fully booked classes several times a week with 10–15 participants. The Noor Women's Group has subsequently produced a cookbook, *Zakki*, containing the recipes made in each class and states in its introduction:

People who take a class with us enjoy a traditional Palestinian meal and learn more about life in a refugee camp . . . we also organise home stays in Aida camp for individuals or groups who wish to discover the famous Palestinian hospitality, know more about our culture, taste our traditional food and learn some Arabic. (extract from *Zakki*, 2015)

The centring of food and domestic life in these classes enables communication and interactions between individuals that are only possible in the domestic space of the home. Hospitality is also understood here as something cultural and central to the Palestinian home. Cooking as hospitality enables interactions without language as time was spent in the classes translating the herbs

and spices passed around from Arabic to other languages spoken by the group. Smell and taste guided translation efforts, the names in different languages were remembered as sensed. As the food was cooked, connections were formed as spoons were licked, dishes were collectively tasted, and the labour of cooking was shared. This echoes Longhurst et al.'s (2009) explorations of food as enabling multi-sensory, porous, and multi-scaled notions of home. The role of food in the home enabled Longhurst et al (2009, 335) to 'think across multiple axes, being able to place oneself in relation to others, and being able to see the politics in everyday acts such as eating'.

Food offers interactions and enables hospitality to be a form of radical hospitality. Against the violent hostility of the Israel settler colonial state these women use Palestinian hospitality to share cultural and domestic practices that offer a lived experience of Palestine. Hospitality is radical here in its ability to welcome into the home, despite efforts by Israel to destroy homes and restrict access to home. Hospitality is also radical here because the emphasis on hospitality as part of Palestinian culture reclaims it from its use as a political tool by Israel to condition welcome. Despite the loss of their original homes, women in refugee camps are still finding ways to construct homemaking practices. In the cooking classes, Palestinian women invite guests into their homes, not simply for guests to take photographs as many political tours of refugee camps do, but to enable women to share their knowledge, histories, and culture. For many of the women in the group, they find it difficult to leave the home for work, especially as mothers to disabled children, and the cooking classes provide a means of income but also opportunities to share their lives. The hospitality central to the cooking classes echoes the centrality of sharing food and cooking together within Palestinian culture and opens opportunities to exchange stories between guests and hosts about food, culture, and home.

Using hospitality as a lens to understand the domesticity of the home as a cultural geopolitical space further emerges in the context of refugee hosting. In the UK, refugee hosting is often the first time that an individual has lived in a 'family' home since they arrived there. This is by virtue of the asylum dispersal system (see Darling 2022) which places asylum seekers in no-choice shared accommodation predominantly in the North of England, and in Scotland. If an asylum application is accepted, then an individual has 28 days to leave their government accommodation and find a new place to live. As it takes around 6–8 weeks to get state benefits, this leaves them at risk of homelessness and vulnerable to exploitation. In an interview with refugee Sofia, in the week following the news of her successful asylum application, she explained this anxiety around housing:

What I am thinking, that if I move from this city to another city, then I think that this will be difficult and challenges will happen to me to find a house. So I am thinking about that, but everything else is good [Interview, Sofia, March 2020]

In Sarah's experience, those hosted were happy to use their own room and yet were hesitant about using the communal rooms of the house. It often took several weeks for an individual to feel comfortable sitting down to watch TV without asking them, despite reiterating the (retrospectively unrealistic) request that they 'treat the place like home'. One aspect of everyday domesticity that did open up space for a more equal exchange was cooking.

My husband and I had a sort-of policy that we'd eat sometime between 1900–1930 and if people wanted to join us they'd be welcome, but there was no pressure to do so. Some people ate with us every night. Others ate with us, but - eschewing our vegetarianism - cooked their own meals. Some just did their own thing in the kitchen, and others wanted to cook for us on occasion. (Sarah's reflections, May 2021)

One guest, Ahmed explained that he'd never been to cook this dish in his dispersal accommodation because it required too many pots and he didn't have the right sort of space there. We discussed how all his food had peanuts in, and asked if that was common where he came from. He explained that everyone eats peanuts at home. What happens if someone is allergic we ask? He laughs. No one is allergic to peanuts at home. For weeks we eat peanut based curries and begin to learn the different types of curry that Ahmed describes and how they come from different parts of his homeland.

A few years later, I had dinner with Ahmed who now lives with his reunited family in a different part of the country. Due to the pandemic, we are having dinner over Skype. He laughs at my vegetarian food. I jokingly asked if they are having peanut curry, but no, his children don't want to eat that food anymore. His wife cooks now anyway, and they want to eat English food, so they are eating pizza. (Sarah's reflections, June 2021)

The role of food is a means of extending hospitality in the home and providing moments to connect. However, it also highlights the incremental impacts of hostile political environments, especially on cultural practices. In the case of refugees, cultural relationships with food are often lost, or compromised. In the Palestinian context, the ability to acquire traditional ingredients is too altered by the violence of settler colonialism, as detailed in the cooking book:

In the past, we used to cook everything with olive oil from our ancient olives trees. The occupation has destroyed and denied us the access to many of them, so today this traditional ingredient becomes too expensive for families. Extract from Zakki, 2013.

The impacts of hostile political environments on everyday relationships with food, is thus a way of understanding the geopolitics of home and are only shared because of acts of hospitality that invite others into the home. Through food hospitality becomes a mode of resistance, a way of sharing different relationships with food within the home rather than simply being an act of altruism and/or economic gain (including, for example, the sharing of stories Sheringham and Taylor 2022). Hospitality is both cultural and political as

understood through our accounts of food in hosting and homestays. While literature in feminist geopolitics, has detailed the importance of intimate and domestic spaces as sites that shape and in turn are shaped by geopolitics, understanding how domesticity intersects with hospitality and cultural politics provide novel insights into geopolitics of scale.

Hosting as a Site of Geopolitical Violence

One Saturday night, I sit at the dining room table with Mamood who we are hosting. I'm helping him fill in his online application for Universal Credit⁴ before his face-to-face meeting at the Job Centre on Monday. We work through the many questions together, aided by Google Translate where necessary. We come to set up his online account, and the system asks for answers to pre-set list of questions that Mamood will need to remember if he forgets his password. I pause, looking at the list of questions and realising that these are likely to be pretty awkward to answer for him. I don't know anything about Mamood's asylum journey as I haven't asked, but none of these questions look appropriate. I ask him to pick a question from a list including 'favourite childhood holiday', 'first car', 'first pet' or 'mother's maiden name'. Mamood is confused as to why the government needs this information. Maiden name doesn't quite translate culturally. He's never had a car. His dog died. He does however remember childhood holidays to a nearby lake. They used to pick fruit from the trees. His grandparents visited and they ate the best food. He smiles and explains to me how they spent their summer days in the lakehouse. That stopped soon after he said. He then explains what happened, and I don't know what to say. We sit in silence, Mamood is upset, and I make him tea how I've learnt he likes it (with lemon and lots of sugar). I ask if he wants to talk and he doesn't, he wants to go on with the form, so we continue. [Sarah's reflections 2018]

Hosting refugees does not mean that trauma is bought into a home. It also does not mean that the hosting home is a blank space, without pre-existing politics, trauma, or tension. However, in the recollection above, the relationality of hosting is made visible. Stimulated by a 'password reminder' function on a benefit application form, Mamood is reminded of the joy of childhood holidays with his grandparents by a lake. He talks about the food, the days swimming in the lake and the 'normal' childhood he used to have before his place of birth, his family home and his family were all destroyed by civil war. This serves to highlight that the experience of the 'present' is not separated from the 'past' and resonates with scholarly attention to 'trauma time', which as Edkins (2003: xiv) argues disrupts the 'straightforward linear temporalities associated with the regularity of so-called "politics" and appears to occupy another form of time'. The past here exists as a co-existent possibility that can be activated in the present; a trace that can be actualised for example by completing the password reminders on a Universal Credit form.

Trauma constitutes a rupture; rippling and splintering space-times into (un)known places; 'never mappable topologies' (Coddington and Micieli-Voutsinas 2017: 52). As such trauma reminds us that 'there is no place

“outside” of research, and conversely, no research that is “beyond” the body’ by extension there is no place ‘outside’ of the asylum system; for ‘it’ cannot be contained within institutions (Coddington and Micieli-Voutsinas 2017: 55) and instead ‘trauma erupts into the present, making its presence known and haunting through affective eruptions’ (Mountz 2017: 75). Importantly, these reverberations of memory cannot always be predetermined; they may be stimulated by particular events but they may also arise without any apparent stimulus.

The rupture of trauma occurs too in the Palestinian homes:

‘One week, as chopping, tasting, laughing, smelling, and chatting took place the power went. We were plunged into semi-darkness, the oven stopped, proceedings briefly stopped. A few hurried moments passed while bodies scrambled to fix the generator’. (Olivia’s field notes, 2015)

Although only a power cut, this event, and the disruption of it, broke and paused proceedings; for a moment, the laughter of the cooking class was interrupted. Bennett (2005) writes of the North American Blackout as demonstrating the assemblages of human and non-human agency that compose an electrical grid. For Bennett (2005, 462), it is only when the grid flutters that these relationalities are shown: ‘the electrical grid, by blacking out, lit up quite a lot’. The power cut in the cooking class similarly lights up the inequalities of infrastructure and materialities of settler-colonial violence. It puts a spotlight on the limited access to basic infrastructure in Palestinian refugee camps and the precarious nature of life there. It highlights how settler colonial violence is enacted on the most banal acts of everyday life. What is more the violence of the power cut is not just the material loss of electricity but what that electricity brings to the home.

The power cut disrupted the electricity source, but it also disrupted the laughter, and the cooking of our food. In the refugee camp, where the cooking classes take place, water and electricity are frequently cut off and the use of water is carefully monitored by Palestinian households. Before attending the refugee camps these restrictions were already known to Olivia. Lina would often ask her to wash her hair at the nearby gym and Theresa would never allow her to do the washing up because she had a system for using the least amount of water possible. These disruptions and restrictions speak to the infrastructural matrix of control in which water supplies, electricity, and communications networks are controlled by Israel. Kaika (2004, 276) terms this the domestic uncanny when familiar objects such as a tap or a light switch no longer produce the results they are meant to: ‘such incidents produce a feeling of uneasiness, discomfort and anxiety, which threatens to tear down the laboriously built and elaborately maintained security and safety of familiar spaces’. It further illustrates, as we discussed above, the affective and material ways in which occupation attempts to disrupt Palestinian homes, with

the destruction of the Palestinian household a strategy of the Israeli state. Furthermore as Shalhoub-Kevorkian's (2015) work has demonstrated, anxieties relating to the potential loss of home in turn alter the way in which a house is a home in Palestine. Violence is as much material as embodied and emotional.

Acts of hospitality in the home cause relational understandings of violence. One day, Olivia and Theresa were talking and drinking tea together in the kitchen when Theresa's husband, Michael, came home upset. Similarly to Lina, Michael did not like to drive between Palestinian cities because of checkpoints but had volunteered to drive a minibus to transport a local church youth group. Michael detailed to Olivia and Theresa a prolonged and unnecessary search of his vehicle by Israel Defence Force (IDF) soldiers, alongside intimidating questioning. During her three-month stay in Palestinian homes, every day would feature a discussion of an act of occupation violence witnessed by hosts or guests or at least the disruption of water or electricity. Homestays become a space that highlights the pre-existing politics and tensions of the home in Palestine but also the ongoing violence of settler colonialism in the present. Violence is not something abstracted or re-told from afar but experienced as part of everyday life in the home.

As the examples above attest to, hospitality is relational, and this relationality is how the home is reworked or reconfigured and how geopolitical relations interact with hospitality. In Sarah's experiences of refugee hosting, the guest may bring geopolitical relations of trauma and violence into the home, but the home is never a neutral space. While in Olivia's experiences of being a guest in Palestinian homestays, the home is always already situated in relation to that violence so that the hosts are living through violent conditions and experiences irrespective of the presence of the guest. These differences highlight two important things about the relationship between hospitality and the home. First, that the home itself and what the home means in different cultures and in different geopolitical contexts shapes the act of hosting and the role of hosting. Second, that geopolitical violence is frequently linked to the motivations for hosting.

Conclusions

In bringing literature on home and hosting together through two examples, Palestinian homestays and refugee hosting, we made two broader arguments. First, that literature on home in cultural geography needs to be brought into better conversation with scholarship on the geopolitics of home and in doing so demonstrates how cultural violence is interwoven into intimate and domestic geopolitics. Second, we have argued for a relational and scalar framing of hosting by highlighting the ways in which the home is increasingly a site for hosting. Across both these arguments, we suggest there is a need too for

geographers to think through how 'home' is constructed across sub-disciplines. For example, cultural geographers have attended to home as a space of encounter, including everyday domesticities, awkward or uncomfortable moments, identity politics and the feelings of attachment that different cultures associate with 'home' (for example, through food). In political geography attention has been paid to hospitality, intimate violences of home, and geopolitical imaginaries surrounding homeland. The nuances of these sub-disciplinary emphases are productive when brought into conversation, for they facilitate new ways of understanding the relationality of geopolitical spaces. This paper thus suggests new ways in which geopolitics must account for relationships between scales and sites, by attending to the cultural and political.

This paper also challenges the way in which hosting and hospitality are understood through a focus on the home. Our contention is that geographers should pay more attention to *hosting* as an ethical and political practice. The connections between home and hosting are not simply economic but demonstrate the way in which the home is increasingly tied to geopolitics. Geopolitical violence motivates individuals to host but can also bring violence into the home as guests are witness to it. Hosting in the home brings these relationalities together in important ways as violence is noticed, shared, or experienced through intimate acts such as cooking, sitting together, showering, washing dishes, or everyday conversation.

In bringing hosting, home, and geopolitics into conversation we hope to make a substantive and important argument for the importance of a cultural geopolitics of hosting that extends beyond these specific cases. First, what does it mean to host? Returning to some of our original ambivalences, hosting is often fraught with ethical and political dilemmas (see Monforte et al. 2021). By reflecting on our own ambivalences and contradictions, we highlighted that hosting can be an uncomfortable practice as it can bring people together in the home with different cultural backgrounds and different relationships with violence and the home.

Second, the spaces that become hosting spaces are often connected to hostile and settler colonial state violence. We outlined the concept of radical hospitality and feminist hospitality that 'challenge the ability of the settler nation to claim sovereign and deny welcome' (Daigle and Ramirez 2019) and seek understandings of hospitality that are not restricted by the underpinnings of geopolitical understandings of scale, boundaries, and nationalism (Dowler 2013). Yet, these conceptualisations of hosting remain often at the level of the national or urban scale. By centring how the home is emerging as a space of hospitality in reaction to exclusionary state politics we have troubled the scales of hospitality and highlighted its relationality. We suggest more geographical work might consider the multiplicity of intimate spaces in which hosting takes place.

Third, we significantly develop the burgeoning geopolitical literature on home. We argue that more attention to how the home is being shaped by wider geopolitical practices such as hosting might be a fruitful expansion to research on the geopolitics of home. COVID-19 forced a reorientation of homelife and in this context geographers have attended to the relationship between home and care (Hall 2021), including the reconfiguring of working from home (Reuschke and Felstead, 2020). Furthermore, the uneven implications of the UK government's 'Stay at Home' message has been highlighted by both academics and students as gendered, impacting single adult households and those with additional challenges living at 'home' more. The mobility restrictions and 'Stay at Home' messages of covid unevenly impact different groups and resulted in hosting any other person in your house becoming unlawful. In this paper, we argue that attention must be paid to the ever-changing geopolitics of home and hosting.

Notes

1. Olivia's research was conducted prior to Israel's war on Gaza in 2023.
2. Olivia made their position as a researcher clear and in all the vignettes included, the families have agreed to have these experiences shared. All the interviews and conversations were conducted in English, as all the host families spoke English. Anonymity was important to all the families who asked for no photographs, names, or specific details to be included. With the cooking classes, anonymity could not be guaranteed as there is only one such project taking place in Aida Camp, and a quick Google search would have unearthed it. However, the women in this project were happy to for the name of the project to be included as long as no specific details about individuals were included.
3. The personal reflections on hosting at home Olivia describes in this paper draw upon two individuals who they are still in contact with. They have both read and agreed to this paper.
4. The state benefit system in the UK.

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