



The role of Christian hospitality in addressing violence, strengthening tolerance, and deepening dialogue

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Abstract: This article explores the transformative role of Christian hospitality in addressing religious violence, strengthening interreligious tolerance, and deepening dialogical engagement in plural societies. Using a qualitative and literature-based approach, the study draws upon biblical exegesis and contemporary philosophical thought, particularly from Derrida, Levinas, and Zizioulas, to frame hospitality not merely as a moral virtue but as a radical theological praxis. The findings show that hospitality, in its unconditional form, dismantles the boundaries that sustain violence by welcoming the stranger as a sacred presence, including those once perceived as enemies. Unlike passive tolerance which often reinforces hierarchical relations, hospitality fosters active encounters rooted in mutual respect and shared humanity. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that dialog grounded in hospitality surpasses pluralistic formalism by offering a genuine relational space where differences are neither denied nor diluted, but embraced as sources of mutual growth. This dialogical hospitality challenges the binary between particularism and relativism, positioning openness to the other as a sacred imperative of faith. The study concludes that Christian hospitality holds profound potential as an interreligious ethical framework that transcends theological abstraction and responds concretely to the social fractures of post-secular societies. As such, this research contributes to the broader discourse on interfaith ethics, offering a nuanced paradigm for theological engagement, conflict resolution, and civic reconciliation across religious and cultural boundaries.

Keywords: Christianity; dialog; ethics; hospitality; interreligious conflict; reconciliation; tolerance; violence.

1. Introduction

In responding to differences, there is an understanding that good fences make good neighbors. In religions, this attitude is advocated by the particularist group, which sees that religions are very different from one another (Lees-Smith, 2024). Fences are seen as boundaries, preventing one person from interfering with another. Privacy is highly emphasized and should not be disturbed. Because of this privacy, a good neighbor is one who does not interfere in other people's affairs. Besides particularists, there is pluralism, which sees the opposite, namely that there is no need for fences because religions are different expressions of the same reality (Bano et al., 2022). Religions differ only in appearance, but the essence remains the same. Pluralism tends to eliminate the uniqueness of religion.

The impact of particularism is isolation, while pluralism is relativism. Particularism depicts the impossibility of religions coexisting and poses a high potential for conflict (Dellavalle, 2021). In the context of war, it resembles a ceasefire, where warring groups exercise restraint. Fences serve as boundaries for interaction to mitigate conflict. Understandings within different religions are seen as alien and therefore incomparable. This understanding is dangerous because religions are directed at opposing sides. On the other hand, pluralism depicts relativism, meaning that even without interaction, all religions would understand each other (Kuforiji, 2022). Pluralism often falls into the trap of using one's own

understanding of religion to interpret what is found in other religions. This is certainly dangerous, because religions are unique, and similarities should not diminish their uniqueness. These two understandings need to be transcended by re-examining how religion teaches openness to strangers, in this case, different religions, while respecting both similarities and differences.

In the Christian context, as the heir to Near Eastern culture, hospitality, openness, and acceptance of strangers are highly emphasized. This attitude, known as hospitality, is a noble duty recommended to all (Hershberger, 2019a). However, it must be acknowledged that contemporary hospitality practices have shifted to other areas. In Western society, this is related to economic dynamics. The development of commercial lodging since the 17th century, the influence of secularization on civil institutions such as hospitals, and the understanding of welfare in the 20th century have led to a decline in hospitality practices within the church. Instead, hospitality has flourished within secular commercialization, and professional institutions have become part of the hospitality industry (Pohl, 1999). This is regrettable, and therefore, studies that can re-awaken awareness of the importance of hospitality are urgently needed. This paper will explore how hospitality according to Christianity fosters good religious relations. Hospitality will go beyond the debate about fences mentioned above. The emphasis on the importance of hospitality will be seen through its significant role in overcoming violence, transcending tolerance, and deepening dialogue.

Several intersecting studies include, among others, in relation to interfaith relations by Yohanes K. Susanta (Susanta, 2015), there is a study on plural society, focusing on Luke 10:25-37, by Serva et al (Tuju et al., 2021), also by Setyadi Manurung on the theology of hospitality from Luke's Christology (Manurung, 2018), there is a study by Mariani Febriana on hospitality and hostility (Febriana, 2018). These studies are different because they focus on Christian teachings and link them to three major themes in the study of religions: overcoming violence, strengthening tolerance and deepening dialogue.

2. Research Method

The research methods used were qualitative and library research. As stated by Moleong, qualitative research is research that aims to understand phenomena regarding perception, motivation, action, and so on, holistically, and through descriptive means in the form of words or language, in a specific, natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2018). Data analysis was conducted qualitatively, with the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2016). The data obtained was analyzed in accordance with the theme of this paper and then categorized into three major themes, as outlined in the title. Studies on hospitality in general and the biblical context served as sources for developing ideas for the main theme. Conclusions were drawn after all these processes were completed.

3. Research Results

3.1 Understanding hospitality

Hospitality is a concept with historical roots and deep meaning in various cultural and religious traditions (Purwandani & Yusuf, 2024). Etymologically, the term "hospitality" comes from the Latin noun *hospitium*, which is a derivative of the word *hospes*, a paradoxical term because it can refer to both "guest" and "host." The adjective of *hospitium*, *hospitalis*, later evolved into the term we know today (Chan, 2017). In English, this word was adopted as hospitality, which is generally translated as friendliness (Fotou, 2016). However, the meaning of hospitality cannot be narrowed down to a friendly attitude or polite welcome. More than that, this concept encompasses a reciprocal and meaningful relational dynamic between host and guest, with a very strong dimension of space and acceptance.

In the Greek tradition of thought, this concept is closely related to the term *philoxenia*, which literally means "love of the stranger." *Philoxenia* is not simply an expression of affection for someone unknown, but also reflects an openness to provide a place, a sense of security, and existential recognition to those who do not have an established position or identity within the community (Belluz, 2022). Hospitality always contains an element of place, namely, the relationship between those who

are in place and those who are displaced (Treanor, 2011). Pohl, citing Walter Brueggemann, states that strangers or guests are “people without a place,” namely, those who live on the fringes, are neglected, or are marginalized from the dominant social structure (Pohl, 1999).

More than just a friendly gesture, hospitality involves elements of recognition, openness, and the courage to make physical and symbolic space for others. Strangers in the context of hospitality are not only unknown figures, but also those who are socially, culturally, or religiously perceived as different and sometimes even threatening. (Hershberger, 2019b) explains that in the tradition of hospitality, a guest can be an *atopos*, derived from the Greek word meaning homeless, foreign, or socially uncategorized. But in an interesting paradox, a stranger can also be someone we know, but who remains outside the bounds of proximity or a particular group identity.

In the context of this article, hospitality focuses more on religious hospitality, particularly within the framework of Christian faith, which is rooted in biblical teachings. Hospitality in Christianity is not merely a social act, but a radical expression of faith. Accepting strangers, welcoming them selflessly, and opening up space for the marginalized are concrete forms of the love taught by Christ (Afaradi, 2024). The primary target of religious hospitality is those who are different, whether in terms of faith, ethnicity, social background, or life experience, who often come in vulnerable situations and in need of assistance. In this context, hospitality serves as a bridge that connects different identities, bridges social distance, and breaks down the walls of community exclusivity.

3.2 Types or models of hospitality

The concept of hospitality is not a single, linear, and uniform idea, but rather encompasses a variety of forms and approaches that reflect the complexity of the social, cultural, and spiritual relationships between hosts and guests. Various thinkers and academics have classified hospitality into specific forms or models that demonstrate differences in motives, contexts, and relational nature. One early approach to understanding the diversity of hospitality models came from (Arterbury, 2005), distinguishing between hospitality as an action and hospitality as a value. In the first category, hospitality is understood as a concrete expression in the form of real behavior or actions, such as providing shelter, food, or shelter to guests. Meanwhile, hospitality as a value emphasizes that the attitude of accepting and embracing strangers is part of a system of beliefs and morality embedded in a particular culture or religion. (Arterbury, 2005) also emphasizes the difference between public hospitality, namely openness carried out socially and openly within an institutional framework, and private hospitality, which is more personal and directed at more intimate interpersonal relationships.

The division of hospitality was also developed by Walter Donlan, who distinguished between temporary and permanent hospitality. Temporal hospitality is referred to as simple hospitality, a form of hospitality that is temporary, given to someone who comes as a guest for a short time without a long-term relationship. In contrast, permanent hospitality is known as guest-friendship, a deeper and longer-term form of relationship, often marked by a strong social or moral bond between the host and guest (Donlan, 1982). Gabriel Herman perfected this classification by stating that simple hospitality is a form of informal hospitality, while guest-friendship is formal hospitality that is based on certain social norms and usually involves reciprocity and long-term moral obligations (Herman, 2002).

Meanwhile, (Derrida, 1992) provides a more radical philosophical perspective in dissecting the concept of hospitality. In his view, hospitality consists of two main models: conditional hospitality and unconditional hospitality. Conditional hospitality is a form of acceptance based on certain conditions, such as identity, status, or social relationships. In this context, guests must be invited, known, and accepted within the parameters determined by the host. In contrast, unconditional hospitality is the most radical and sincere form of acceptance, in which the host welcomes even uninvited, unknown, and potentially dangerous guests. This model is called receiving without invitation, which emphasizes total openness to others without protection or legal-formal conditions (Dimyati et al., 2021). Derrida also rejected Immanuel Kant's approach, which saw hospitality as part of a universal moral law. For Derrida, unconditional hospitality is not merely an ethic, but a form of ethical courage that forsakes legal and political protections in favor of recognizing the total humanity of the guest (Kakoliris, 2024b).

Marshall Sahlins provides a sociological dimension by dividing hospitality based on the principle of reciprocity: generalized reciprocity and balanced reciprocity. In generalized reciprocity, hospitality is given without the expectation of direct or equal reward. The host provides assistance as a form of morality and empathy for others. In balanced reciprocity, however, the assistance given must be reciprocated in an equal form and degree (Sahlins, 2013). Here, there are moral and social calculations about fairness and symmetry in social relations. This model reminds us that although hospitality is often associated with generosity, not all forms are free from calculations and structured norms of social exchange (Kim & Qu, 2020).

There is a model of hospitality based on practices in ancient societies, particularly Greek and Roman. He classified hospitality into five main forms: (1) *Medean* hospitality, (2) *theoxenic* hospitality, (3) *ius hospitii, ius dei* hospitality, (4) contractual hospitality, and (5) altruistic hospitality. *Medean* hospitality refers to the act of receiving guests motivated by religious-magical reasons. In this context, strangers are believed to possess supernatural powers, so by providing hospitality, the host seeks to protect himself from possible harm or curses (Adolfsson et al., 2024). Behind this friendliness lies a sense of fear and belief in supernatural powers that are inherent in foreign guests (Bolchazy, 1995).

Meanwhile, *theoxenic* hospitality is based on the belief that God or a divine being can appear in the form of a stranger. Thus, welcoming a stranger is a form of moral testing: those who show hospitality will receive blessings, while those who refuse will be punished (Smither, 2021). This model demonstrates a direct link between the act of welcoming guests and humanity's relationship with God. In contrast, hospitality (*ius hospitii, ius dei*) emphasizes that hospitality is a form of obedience to God's command (Gutkowski, 2025). Guests are still seen as human beings, not representatives of God, but welcoming them is a manifestation of faith and a tangible form of religious devotion.

The fourth model, contractual hospitality, suggests that hospitality can be reciprocal over the long term. In practice, a host welcomes a guest with the expectation that, someday, when he or she is a guest elsewhere, he or she will receive the same treatment (Andriotis & Paraskevaidis, 2021). This type of relationship forms a network of mutually beneficial social exchanges and strengthens bonds between individuals or groups. Finally, altruistic hospitality is the purest form of hospitality, driven by compassion and empathy for fellow human beings. There is no fear of foreign powers, no religious imperatives, and no expectation of recompense (Ahmad et al., 2023). This action is solely based on the recognition of human dignity and value.

In the development of modern thought, the philosophical approaches of Kant and Emmanuel Levinas position hospitality as a moral duty and ethical responsibility towards others. For Kant, hospitality is a universal obligation within a rational moral framework (Marci, 2021). Meanwhile, Levinas emphasized the ethical encounter with the Other as the foundation of hospitality. Within the Levinasian framework, hospitality no longer rests on social or religious regulations but stems from an awareness of the face and presence of others as autonomous subjects (Hietanen & Sihvonen, 2021). In other words, welcoming guests is no longer just a kindness, but a form of radical openness and recognition of their existence and needs.

This entire model of hospitality demonstrates that the practice of welcoming strangers cannot be understood in a single or simple way. On the one hand, it can be motivated by fear, religious beliefs, social norms, or relational strategies. On the other hand, it can also be a genuine expression of humanity, ethics, and moral freedom. By understanding these diverse forms of hospitality, we can see that the relationship between host and guest holds dimensions far deeper than mere social gestures. Hospitality is a space of encounter, recognition, and reflection on how humans construct a shared world through the act of welcoming and giving space to others (Imperiale et al., 2021).

3.3 Hospitality in the Bible

In the Bible, hospitality to strangers or immigrants is emphasized both in the law of the covenant (Exodus 22:21; 23:9), the law of the priesthood (Leviticus 19:33-34) and also in the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 16:14; 26:12), which is specifically rooted in two things, namely the hospitality of Abraham (the nation of Israel) and the hospitality of God (Monge, 2024). Loving the stranger is highly emphasized

in the Bible, even appearing to be very dominant. Kearney, quoting Jonathan Sachs, states that loving others is more emphasized than loving those close to him. This is clearly stated in the Hebrew Bible, which has 36 commands to love the stranger and only two that mention loving your neighbor (Kearney, 2010). This is certainly not to be disputed, but the Bible wants to emphasize the need for attention to strangers; this is especially true because at that time, neighbors were often brothers of the same tribe.

Abraham's hospitality is clearly mentioned in Genesis 18. Abraham gave honor to the guests who came and provided the best service for them (Salakpi, 2023). It is not explained whether the strangers were in trouble or needed provisions for their journey, but the narrative that they were only three people, without any companions, servants, or livestock, is a depiction of their condition as not being wealthy. Abraham is a symbol of unconditional hospitality, giving help without being asked, demonstrating friendliness to strangers as part of his faith (Boyce, 2024).

In terms of its model, the story of Abraham can be classified as a model of theoxenic hospitality, where Abraham understands the stranger as God's representative. Abraham certainly would not have "bowed down to the ground" (Genesis 18:2) when he encountered a human. The Genesis 18 narrative does mention this, where the stranger was apparently God's messenger to bring good news to Abraham, namely, the imminent birth of his son. This theoxenic hospitality is also seen in Genesis 19, where Lot did as Abraham did, inviting two strangers to his home. Lot's story also shows how hosts provide protection for strangers (Genesis 19:8), where Lot defended them from the evil of Sodom and Gomorrah. Providing food and shelter, provision and protection, are characteristics of Jewish hospitality that are strongly emphasized in the Bible (M. B. Shepherd, 2024).

In addition to theoxenic hospitality, Abraham's hospitality is related to the hospitality of *'ius hospitii, ius dei'*. Abraham's call from his home marks the beginning of Israel's history as immigrants and strangers. Their life as *gērim*, immigrants, was of very low status in the social hierarchy (Yong, 2008). But what's interesting about this calling is that it wasn't for oneself, but for others to carry out acts of liberation. This becomes clear and even more solidified by the Israelites' experience as immigrants in Egypt, experiencing oppression. This experience continues to be collectively remembered by the Israelites as a strength to treat immigrants with hospitality, not hostility, because they were once immigrants themselves.

In the New Testament, Jesus is the ultimate example of hospitality. Hospitality is evident in Jesus' willingness to share a meal with people from all walks of life, providing a new understanding of social status, ethnicity, and economic differences. Through his hospitality, Jesus shattered the exclusivist notion of the separation between holy and unclean, between righteous and sinner. In Mark 7:15, Jesus declared that nothing from outside can defile a person (Strahan, 2023). This is part of how we view others, so there's no need to hesitate to build relationships with anyone. Jesus' hospitality opens up space for peaceful social relationships free from stratification.

Hospitality is clearly stated by Jesus in Matthew 25:31-46. The narrative of the final judgment, which separates the sheep from the goats, is based on whether or not each group has shown hospitality. Jesus identifies himself with those who are hungry, naked, thirsty, strangers, sick, and imprisoned, and the judgment is based on human attitudes toward such people (Denham, 2025). Jesus' emphasis on identifying himself as such demonstrates a theoxenic motif. Furthermore, there is a blessing in which hospitality is the basis for the separation of heaven and hell. Thus, the theoxenic motif continues in the New Testament, even clearly stated in Hebrews 13:2 (RSV: Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares).

Another well-known New Testament narrative of hospitality is seen in Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-42). Jesus requested hospitality from the Samaritan woman, a rare occurrence and indeed forbidden in both Jewish and Samaritan traditions. Samaritan and woman are two categories that clearly define Jesus, who is Jewish and male. The conversation in this narrative demonstrates aspects that emphasize God's presence, unrestricted by human tradition, so that nothing prevents hospitality from being practiced. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman, which touches on worship, shows that the hospitality mentioned here is related to *'ius hospitii, ius dei'* (hospital service). Jesus' presence, as emphasized in Luke 4:18-19, emphasizes this duty as a duty that must be carried out by Jesus' followers. The act of hospitality is an endless giving and receiving (Yong, 2008).

Jesus' teachings on hospitality also touch on the altruistic model of hospitality. The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) inspires every listener to the importance of human values, and specifically the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) demonstrates that hospitality is based on the value of love for others (Shirley, 2023). The story is often associated with a critique of religious rigidity and personal egoism.

The altruistic model in the Bible is sometimes associated with the contractual model. This is linked to the laws concerning retribution, as mentioned by Kant. In Kant's thought, the idea of the categorical imperative is seen in the form of the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," so that the motivation for doing so is the desire to receive hospitality in return (A. Shepherd, 2014). However, Kant's understanding of this is due to the fact that humans share the same universal law, which states that it is good if someone can repay kindness with kindness. In this sense, the understanding of contractual hospitality in the Bible can be understood. However, when it is understood solely to obtain reciprocity, then this type of hospitality must be viewed as altruistic hospitality, not contractual. This can be seen from Jesus' affirmation in Luke 14:12-14, when someone is in hospitality by inviting another person, Jesus clearly reminds them not to think about the reward they will receive (Rice, 2023).

Hospitality is a way of building relationships, communicating, serving strangers who are different from us, in all aspects, whether economic, social, political, or religious (Fenitra et al., 2022). All of this is the epitome of Christian hospitality, a way of being present amidst differences. Zizioulas states that fear of others is part of sin because sin is a rejection of good relationships. Reconciliation with God is a prerequisite for reconciliation with others (Zizioulas, 2006). This reconciliation was carried out by Jesus through his death and resurrection, so that hospitality is a characteristic of the openness of Christ's disciples that cannot be lost throughout time (Summers, 2008).

Therefore, Christian hospitality is not carried out out of fear, but rather is theoxenic hospitality, the hospitality of '*ius hospitii, ius dei*'. This is what has an impact on altruistic hospitality, because in the Christian view, humans cannot love God apart from loving others.

3.4 Hospitality Addresses Violence

Derrida notes that there is a paradox in the word hospitality, which comes from the Latin *hospes*, a combination of the word *hostis*, which means foreigner, but also enemy or hostile stranger. *Hostis* also means to eat or to eliminate (Febriana, 2018). Therefore, the potential for violence is inherently present in hospitality. A host is someone who has the power to host another person, so that neither the host of the stranger nor the potential host is lost in hospitality (Albertini, 2023). There are always boundaries in hospitality related to the distance between one person and a stranger. Therefore, there is always a little hostility in hospitality, hence the need for unconditional hospitality (A. Shepherd, 2014). This really shows how difficult it is to do hospitality.

The most frequently cited example is Lot's offering his daughter to be raped to protect his guest (Genesis 19). Similarly, the story of the Levites in Ephraim (Judges 19-21) also experienced violence from the local population. This also serves as a reminder that hospitality has the potential to become violent because it places the visitor in a vulnerable position. Hospitality is even open to someone who comes as our enemy (Panuntun & Paramita, 2020). This is what distinguishes hospitality from kindness in general, because hospitality overcomes violence by accepting the enemy (Siahaan & Kause, 2022).

In interfaith relations, violence in the name of religion is often linked to claims of truth. Naturally, a religion will always believe that its own is the true religion, and this often leads to clashes with other religions that also believe theirs to be true (George, 2023). Hospitality is a viable solution to the problem of violence perpetrated in the name of religion, as it fosters humility and acceptance of others. Loving the stranger is part of the *fides quaerens intellectum* of faith, the quest for knowledge, recognizing that we never possess absolute knowledge (Kearney, 2010).

The importance of Jesus's life (ethics) and Jesus' death (redemption) is centered on the ontological meaning of Jesus's resurrection, which is a gift for human limitations (Kasih et al., 2024). Christ's resurrection against violence and death creates a new path for humanity and thus guarantees the external existence and particularity of creation. Christ's resurrection is the basis for an unconditional ethics of hospitality (A. Shepherd, 2014). Such hospitality is one that breaks the chain of violence by building

relationships and communication between people of different religions. The peaceful presence of religion will be assured when hospitality becomes a primary characteristic emphasized by religion.

Linguistically, both language and religion have limitations. No language can claim to possess all linguistic possibilities and be perfect. Therefore, no language can claim to have a perfect translation. The desire for a perfect translation is an illusion. Translation never achieves identical equivalence because there is no identical meaning for a word taken from one context and inserted into another (Moyaert, 2011).

While we can try to see from the perspective of others' religions, we cannot do so perfectly. Religious heterogeneity also means that we cannot create individual criteria for evaluating and judging other religions, and we cannot say that one religion is closer to divine truth than another. It is necessary to humbly acknowledge that while religious truth claims are crucial for every religion, they are best kept as intra-religious rather than inter-religious criteria. In this way, hospitality is not exploited for the purpose of claiming one's own religious truth (Rerung, 2022).

Therefore, religious hospitality is very useful for not interpreting other religions based on our own standards, or applying our own religious standards to declare the truth of a religion (Jonkers, 2020). This is religious hospitality, which allows one to learn from others without succumbing to claims of superiority. Only by accepting religious hospitality do we recognize the limitations of our own religion and not position other religions as alter egos (Nayuf, 2023). Hospitality is the opposite of superiority, which is often the source of interfaith violence. Hospitality is about embracing other religions, not sharpening hostility (Susanta, 2015). Therefore, the paradigm of claiming religious truth needs to be changed into an act of hospitality between religions, so that religiously motivated violence can be minimized.

3.5 Hospitality strengthens tolerance

Hospitality in the realm of religion and culture is not just an addition to the idea of tolerance, but rather a deeper and more radical ethical and spiritual offering in dealing with diversity (Suryani & Muslim, 2024). Tolerance, although a dominant discourse in maintaining harmony, often functions as a political strategy for social stability and not as an expression of faith born from the depths of spirituality (Kieliszek, 2025). Derrida criticized tolerance as a legacy of charity in the paternalistic Christian tradition, where the dominant or majority group gives living space to the minority, not because of a recognition of equality, but as a form of generosity (Moon, 2023). Such relationships assert domination, leaving minority groups dependent on the mercy of the majority, rather than recognizing their equal rights. Hospitality transcends this logic. It doesn't wait to make room, but actively opens up space for others to be fully present, without fear of losing their identity.

The concept of hospitality in Derrida's thinking is built on the basis of unconditional ethics, which does not limit acceptance of others based on status, religion, origin, or power, but is based on an awareness of universal human values (Egbuchulem, 2024). This idea aligns with the thinking of Emmanuel Levinas, who placed the face of the other as the highest ethical calling. This face demands responsibility and respect that are not born of fear or obedience, but from an awareness of the inherent human dignity of every person, regardless of their background (Benaroyo, 2022). In the context of an increasingly complex global world, the thoughts of figures such as (Benhabib, 1986) This demonstrates that an ethical approach to hospitality is crucial in responding to the challenges of multiculturalism, international migration, and religious plurality. The idea of ethical cosmopolitanism, which views differences as a source of collective enrichment, makes hospitality a fundamental principle of inclusive and just democracy.

In religious life in Indonesia, tolerance is often understood as an instrument of government, not as a spiritual commitment (Hakim et al., 2023). This kind of attitude creates a distance between diversity and the true meaning of faith. Yet, nearly all religious traditions contain teachings that align with the practice of hospitality. Islam teaches the principle of *ukhuwah insaniyah*, which emphasizes universal brotherhood, while in Christianity, the parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates how strangers should be accepted as fellow human beings (Jamil et al., 2023). So, hospitality can be read as a call of faith that crosses traditions, not a monopoly of one religion. In this approach, tolerance does not stop as a passive attitude of allowing others to live, but develops into an active relationship that enriches both (Rapp & Freitag, 2015).

Hospitality-based tolerance encourages the creation of a space for dialogue, honest encounters, and interfaith learning that does not aim to obscure each other's beliefs, but rather deepens understanding of the values of truth that are believed in.

Hospitality opens up the possibility of recognizing not only differences, but also similarities previously hidden by prejudice and social distance (Zhou et al., 2022). In this case, hospitality is not simply a diversity strategy, but rather a spiritual tool capable of fundamentally changing perspectives on other religions. It is no longer based on suspicion or theological rivalry, but rather on relationships of mutual respect, listening, and acceptance.

Recent research in Indonesia shows that the hospitality approach contributes significantly to establishing peaceful post-conflict relations. (Arifianto, 2021) This demonstrates that tolerance practiced as a call of faith is more enduring than political tolerance. Raranta emphasized that hospitality tolerance is a form of active tolerance that places personal relationships between individuals as the foundation of peace. In this context, interfaith dialogue cannot be built solely through official forums or formal programs, but rather through emotional and spiritual engagement in everyday life.

The practice of opening the door to neighbors of different religions, attending other religious celebrations, or simply sharing stories in an atmosphere of mutual trust are real forms of hospitality that foster empathy and equality (Naftanaila, 2022). In this approach, differences are no longer seen as a threat to religious identity, but rather as reflective mirrors that broaden the horizons of faith. Interfaith relations become more than just peaceful coexistence; they transform into collaboration in building a just and humane society.

Internationally, hospitality practices have been used as a reconciliation approach in post-conflict contexts. In Rwanda, for example, a community-based hospitality approach through the *gacaca* tradition allows communities to open up to each other, admit mistakes, and rebuild trust (Kwok, 2022). In Europe, the emergence of open borders and sanctuary city movements is evidence of how hospitality can be institutionalized socially and politically to respond to the refugee and migration crisis (Aliu & Aliu, 2022). But the challenges remain enormous, especially when hospitality is confronted with identity fears, economic interests and populist political pressures.

In such circumstances, it is important to emphasize that hospitality is not a moral weakness, but rather an ethical strength that rejects symbolic violence and covert discrimination. Hospitality teaches that the presence of others is an opportunity to rebuild a more just world, not a threat to the well-being of a particular group (Wang & Ness, 2023). It is within this framework that hospitality transcends tolerance. It goes beyond simply maintaining a safe distance, but rather acts as a bridge that connects, reconciles, and strengthens the bonds of humanity amidst real differences.

3.6 Hospitality deepens dialogue

Hospitality that deepens dialogue is not simply a form of friendliness or social courtesy, but rather a fundamental ethical act in building a civilization that values difference. From Jacques Derrida's perspective, hospitality is only possible because of difference (Kakoliris, 2024b). This means that true acceptance of others only has meaning when it is done without attempts to standardize, subjugate, or subordinate their identity. This concept is in line with the idea (Thakadipuram, 2024) about creative unity, where unity does not mean a fusion of identities, but rather a recognition of the uniqueness of each individual and community. Hospitality in this sense is not a space of compromise that obscures differences, but rather brings together differences in an awareness of common humanity. This is where the importance of building a productive dialogue lies, one rooted in an acceptance of diversity and an openness to learning from others. In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, hospitality is not unfamiliar.

Local cultures have long taught the values of openness, mutual cooperation, and respect for others. However, historical experience shows that diversity without a foundation of deep dialogue can give rise to conflict, as has happened in Maluku, Poso, and several other regions. In post-conflict situations, such as those in Maluku, hospitality becomes a transformative tool for restoring interfaith relations previously plagued by suspicion and trauma. By opening symbolic and literal barriers, allowing others to know and understand our faith without the intention of changing theirs, new space for reconciliation can emerge

(Komesaroff, 2024). Suspicion of the good intentions of other religions can only be overcome if we practice hospitality as a purely spiritual act, not as a tool of proselytizing or domination. In this sense, hospitality is not aimed at influencing, but rather at listening, understanding, and accepting. It becomes a virtue that opens up space for others to be fully present, with their identities and beliefs intact.

This hospitality model offers a different approach from normative pluralism, which often gets caught up in a flat spirit of tolerance. Within a theological framework, the idea (Zizioulas, 2006) That God and the world can be united without losing their otherness is an essential foundation. Christ, as the one who demonstrated communion without erasing differences, demonstrates that interreligious dialogue should enrich faith, not obscure it. Therefore, profound hospitality does not frame dialogue in a spirit of relativism, but in recognition of the uniqueness of each person's faith. This is a form of dialogue that neither belittles God nor demeans humanity, but rather honors both through honest and open relationships.

In global discourse, Derrida's thought on unconditional hospitality challenges legal and political frameworks that base acceptance on administrative or ethnic criteria. He critiques conditional hospitality models based on invitation or permission, which only accept guests if they meet certain criteria. Instead, unconditional hospitality is the ethical courage to accept unconditionally, anonymously, without pre-determined identities (Kakoliris, 2024a). Herein lies the moral courage of hospitality: opening our home to the unknown, not because we know who they are, but because we recognize their human nature.

This idea is strengthened in contemporary cross-cultural communication theory, developed (Miike, 2017) through the double-swing model. In this model, communication is not simply a one-way exchange of messages, but a dynamic process in which both parties change during the interaction. Applying this concept to interfaith and intercultural dialogue demonstrates that true hospitality carries risks, as in the process, we ourselves may be changed, influenced, and challenged by differing perspectives (Youngblood, 2025).

But that is precisely the power of dialogue: not in maintaining a fixed position, but in opening up the possibility for mutual growth. Fred Dallmayr adds that dialogue is not just an exchange of words, but an existential encounter that requires the courage to listen and be transformed by the presence of another (Dallmayr, 2013). In a world fragmented by ideology, social barriers, and political interests, the dialogue born of this kind of hospitality offers new possibilities for building bridges between people.

In today's digital and global era, hospitality is also undergoing a broader transformation. A major question arises as to whether hospitality can take place in virtual spaces. While Derrida doubted relationships without physical encounters, several thinkers have suggested that digital spaces could become a new form of hospitality, particularly in the context of migration, education, and global communication (Mestre, 2022). For example, cross-border online learning programs or interfaith discussion forums on digital platforms can become spaces where foreigners are invited to participate, be heard, and be accepted.

Yet serious challenges remain, especially when technology is also used to filter, control, and even exclude those deemed dangerous or undesirable. In this context, digital hospitality presents a paradox: it both opens up space and closes off possibilities (Van Riel et al., 2019). So, it is important for us to maintain the ethical principles of hospitality in every meeting space, both physical and virtual.

International experience also shows that hospitality is not just a matter of individual ethics, but also of public policy. Countries like Canada and Germany, which openly accept refugees, often serve as examples of how hospitality can be institutionalized in the form of humane migration policies (Boudou, 2021). However, on the other hand, the practice of hospitality can also become a hidden instrument of power in the form of hospitality, a form of hospitality that creates hidden violence through strict and discriminatory selection. Policies that accept only certain groups for economic or political reasons while rejecting others because of their identity demonstrate how hospitality can turn into exclusion. The challenge going forward, then, is how to ensure that hospitality is not merely a symbolic act, but also an ethical principle that shapes the overall social and legal structure (Khatter, 2025).

In the context of education, the hospitality pedagogical approach is also relevant for building a generation that is open to differences. Schools and universities must be safe spaces where students from

diverse backgrounds feel fully invited, not merely as recipients of information, but as subjects who deserve to be heard and respected. Teachers, as facilitators of dialogue, need to understand that educating in the spirit of hospitality means creating a reflective, empathetic, and critical space (Landsman & Lewis, 2023). This isn't just about the curriculum, but also about an ethical approach that humanizes all parties involved in the learning process. This model can be adapted to religious education, where students are not only taught their own religious teachings but also engaged in critical and open dialogue with other religious traditions, not to standardize but to enrich their understanding and deepen their faith.

Ultimately, hospitality that deepens dialogue is a challenging spiritual and social path. It resists the temptation to simplify differences or subjugate others, and instead invites us to walk together in honesty, vulnerability, and respect. In a changing and increasingly interconnected world, transformative hospitality practices are urgently needed, not only to maintain peace, but also to create a more just, humane, and inclusive future (Benhadda & Prasetya, 2025).

4. Conclusion

Based on the above description, Christian hospitality is not merely an ethical discourse, but rather a practice of faith capable of addressing the challenges of interfaith relations in a pluralistic society often divided by symbolic and physical violence. Through a textual approach and the thoughts of contemporary philosophers such as Derrida, Levinas, and Zizioulas, hospitality is positioned as an ethic of openness that goes beyond passive tolerance. In the context of violence, hospitality opens up the possibility of breaking down the walls of suspicion and antagonism by accepting the foreign, even those considered enemies, as part of a sacred spiritual space. When violence is born of absolute claims and a desire to conquer, hospitality offers reconciliation through unconditional acceptance. In terms of tolerance, this research demonstrates the limitations of tolerance as a minimal virtue that is vulnerable to power relations. Hospitality creates equal and mutually enriching relationships, rather than simply allowing the existence of others.

Meanwhile, in the context of dialogue, hospitality becomes the basis for human encounters that recognize differences as gifts, not threats. It facilitates deeper dialogue, rooted in ethical relationships and spiritual honesty, rather than the negotiation of pseudo-identities. Thus, Christian hospitality proves to be a powerful ethical and spiritual framework for overcoming violence, strengthening active tolerance, and deepening interfaith dialogue. The important contribution of this research lies in reframing the understanding of hospitality as a form of religious praxis that is not only theological but also socially, politically, and culturally relevant in the postmodern era. This article opens up space for the development of the concept of hospitality across religious traditions and global contexts, thereby broadening the horizons of interreligious theology and peace-oriented public ethics.

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