

Article

The Hermeneutics of Hospitality for Epistemic Justice

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Abstract: Although we live in a diasporic world, we need interpretive strategies for reading the Bible through the eyes of history and the experiences of marginalized groups, most of whom are still on the margins. Attempts to bring diverse voices without exclusion, discrimination, and disregard into biblical interpretation in the diasporic world have been linked to the study of epistemic injustice. I consider signifiers of those norms that make the power/knowledge of ‘others’ inferior through the contemporary hospitality perspectives. I consider how reading and interpreting the Bible, without dualistic language, plays a role in creatively participating in new situations, and not claiming absolute ownership of fixed spaces, discourses, and movements. In particular, by reading Lot’s story of biblical hospitality as a discourse on hostility and hospitality, this study will examine how an interpretive lens of contemporary hospitality can expand and apply to encourage epistemic justice in a more relational and plentiful way.

Keywords: hospitality; hostility; hostipitality; interpretation; epistemic justice; Lot (Gen 19:1-11)

1. Introduction: Decentering in a Diasporic World

Today’s preachers/interpreters (and communities) live in a diasporic world. The concept of diasporas is used not only to refer to the Jews and their experiences in the Greek world after the fall of Jerusalem in the early 6th century BCE, but also in an expanded sense to include various motivations for the spread of population around the world and transnational immigration (Britannica). A ‘Diaspora’ involves the scattering of a population to a new geographic and historical location, as well as epistemic, empirical, and metaphorical dimensions (Kang 2011, p. 3). In this sense, preachers/interpreters are preaching in an interconnected, negotiated, and intricately intertwined reality where “a sense of mobility, alterity, hybridity, or liminality” is taken into account, and where the community does not remain living in past time and space, such as in a nostalgic story of the homeland, with its customs, culture, and the idea of return (Kang 2014, p. 10). In this context, whether voluntary or involuntary, the meaning of ‘live well together’ is not simple. This is because living does not simply refer to sustained biological life, but also includes surviving inhumanity, alienation, and indifference (Kang 2014, p. 2). In the reciprocal and incredibly complex realities of dynamic oppressions, we are often unaware of the exercise or conferment of power. These cognitive limitations and the complexity of the realities of life leave the question of “marginal to what/whom/where?” (Kang 2011, p. 115). Thus, decentralizing is not about replacing European/American theological dialogue with the discourses from Asia or replacing men with women (Kang 2014, p. 124). Decentralizing in a diasporic world would mean continuing to question, check, and revise theological norms and standards, regardless of the regional or biological origin, of the signifiers of those norms that make the power/knowledge of ‘others’ inferior (Kang 2014, p. 124). Living well together in these tensions, confrontations, or instabilities may make one aware of the opportunity to expand a sense of belonging everywhere by accommodating various contexts; to creatively participate in new situations, and not to claim absolute ownership of fixed spaces, discourses, and movements; to consider each situation unique, and to remain open to creative participation (Kang 2014, p. 13). To pursue it, the hermeneutics of



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hospitality is required as an urgent and essential discourse—as Letty Russel says—to see “hospitality as the practice of God’s welcome, embodied in our actions as we reach across difference to participate with God in bringing justice and healing to our world in crisis” (Russell 2009, p. 2).

2. Epistemic Injustice and Hostipitality in the Narrative of Lot

Modern preconceived notions of epistemology have further solidified the foundations of fundamentalism with two seemingly contradictory proposals: rationalism and empiricism. Whether people base their epistemological foundations on universal human reason (rationalism) or universal sensory experience (empiricism), these two streams have one thing in common; It is the desire for certainty, rather than hybridity, multiplicity, and relational truth (Kang 2014, p. 156). This aspiration results in totalizing truth claims and discourses about authority (Kang 2014, p. 156). The totalization of discourse leads to the judgment that a point of view is heavier or lighter in order to give weight to one interpretation. While acknowledging the injustice of Lot’s horrible decision to hand over his daughters to Sodomites, the reception history from church fathers to modern interpreters primarily shows the interpretation that men’s disgrace has more weight than women’s dishonor, and that pursued a fixed frame for the evaluation of Lot’s righteousness described in the New Testament (Thompson 2001, p. 156). This view will make us think about what was not particularly problematic before, but can be problematic now, including a discursive examination of meta-narratives, understanding and interpreting society in various ways, considering the values of different positions, and undertaking the mission of transforming society (Kang 2014, p. 159). This is not to destroy the truth of religion, but to rebuild, and not to throw away what has been built up, but to envision working in a way that juxtaposes present and future needs, and in a way that is paradoxical and self-critical, yet inclusive and affirming of different aspects of life. To practice this vision in reading Lot’s story, I will examine old practices, present and future needs from epistemic injustice, and challenges to affirm, accept, and reflect on different aspects of life.

2.1. Ancient Tradition of Hospitality and Honor-Shame Culture

According to Henry Trumbull, hospitality in the East—“from Eastern Turkey to Central India, and from Northern Persia to Southern Arabia, and more or less beyond these bounds”—is not only a personal and social virtue, but also the center from which all social virtues radiate, and the social virtue which took precedence over all other personal virtues (Trumbull 1894, pp. 73–74). In the ancient Near East, hospitality served to clear the hostile mind associated with being different and unfamiliar (Matthews 1991, p. 13). Hospitality obligations in the Ancient Near East are reciprocal, and this reciprocity includes (1) giving back to God the part given to them (Deut 16:17), (2) that those who are properly treated act as guests themselves (Deut 23:24–25), and (3) preventing the potential violence and loss of property by treating strangers as guests (Matthews 1991, p. 14).

A host needs to protect travelers, even if the host and host’s homes are at risk of destruction (Liverani 2007, p. 181). It was a sacred duty to provide protection and sanctuary, and failure to fulfill this duty brought shame upon the host and his entire group (Matthews 1991, p. 18). It was not only the host’s duty but also the honor to protect the honor of guests. From this point of view, it can be seen that by giving his daughter, Lot is fulfilling his duty to protect the honor of the guests, and by protecting their honor, he judged that he can also protect his honor as a host: “Lot was ready to hand over his own daughters for sexual abuse and rape in order to protect the honor of men-men who were strangers ... this was the common practice of ancient hospitality, where male guests were to be more protected than household daughters. Women, viewed as property, could serve as ransom whenever the lives or dignity of men were in danger” (De La Torre 2011, p. 202). A Levite in Judges 19 also chooses to preserve his honor by sacrificing women in the tension between protection and honor. When he saw that his concubine was dead, the Levites cut her body into pieces and sent them to the 12 tribes, not because of her, but to protect

his own honor and punish against him (Yee 1995, p. 166). This research does not want to criticize, judge, or blame a certain view, rather, to juxtapose the present and the future into the traditional understanding in an inclusive way, through the following contemporary hospitality perspectives. Who will see the deep sorrow of the loss in hospitality? Are the women's losses and fears worth mourning? Is rape of women "less grievous" to God and people than men who have the potential to be dishonored? (De La Torre 2011, p. 192).

2.2. Hostipitality in the Narrative of Lot

'Hostipitality' is Derrida's term that is combined with hostility and hospitality (Derrida 2000a). Derrida explains the seemingly contradictory combination of the two words:

The perversion and perfectibility of ... [a law of hospitality] is that one can become virtually xenophobic in order to protect or claim to protect one's own hospitality, the own home that makes possible one's own hospitality ... Anyone who encroaches on my 'at home,' on my ipseity, on my power of hospitality, on my sovereignty as host, I start to regard as an undesirable foreigner, and virtually as an enemy. This other becomes a hostile subject, and I risk becoming their hostage (Derrida 2000b, pp. 53–55).

From Derrida, we may find that the concept of "'hostipitality' supports home-makers in navigating and even reconfiguring the uncomfortable, 'bitter' aspects of what has been mythologized and commodified as 'sweet' and defined by a superficial kind of hospitality" (Bida 2018, p. 121). A host's own sovereignty over the space and goods that the host provides or opens to others must be guaranteed, with the condition that guests comply with the rules of hospitality by respecting the existence of the host—Derrida calls hospitality a "contradictory double movement, double constraint, or double bind" because hospitality is maintained by restraining, depriving, and granting opportunities to others in the host's own way (Bida 2018, p. 14). The fears and doubts that arise in hospitality practices allow us to witness how hospitality is actually tainted with hostility (McFadyen 2020, p. 21) and to be able to stop participating in hospitality practices to protect from parasitic guests (McFadyen 2020, p. 4). In the process of distinguishing between genuine guests and parasites, they can be "virtually xenophobic" to maintain hospitality exclusively for genuine guests (Derrida 2000b, p. 53). Xenophobia is easily witnessed as hostility and hatred in the diasporic world.

In this respect, hospitality as a concept of hostipitality involves experiencing both wonder and discomfort when suspended between different groups, people, or viewpoints; this is a choice of complexity, vulnerability, and tension, but this deliberate choice can ultimately result in and account for both richness and complexity, admiration (awe, trust, hope) and discomfort in the struggle for epistemological justice (Mouton 2017, p. 216). In the narrative of Lot, the Sodomites' hospitality is shown as hostility, and Lot's hospitality is shown by abandoning other important values—such as human dignity, instead of giving up. In the concept of hostipitality, this double bind can be understood in a more relational and plentiful way, without weighing more heavily on one particular choice or ignoring the existence of disenfranchised suffering and horror.

2.2.1. Hostipitality in the Narrative of Lot and the Unnamed Women of Lot

Often used as an example of the Abrahamic tradition of hospitality, this text has often been reduced to judgment on Sodom's wickedness, focusing on the wickedness of the Sodomites and emphasizing Lot's faithfulness to hospitality. This fragmentary gaze portrays Lot as a faithful, just, and even sacrificial figure, omitting the hostility behind it.

Descriptions prior to Sodom's anger at Lot don't tell readers exactly how Lot as a migrant was treated by Sodomites. However, the transition to Sodomites' blazing rage, when Lot is faithful to the practice of hospitality, leads to speculation that, in relation to hospitality and honor, some damage has been done to the Sodomites. Since the Sodomites did not consider Lot as one of them (Gn 19:9), Lot's act as a host to welcome guests dishonored the Sodomites. The people of Sodom, whose honor has been damaged, have expressed their hostility toward Lot, and they want to redeem their honor by tarnishing

Lot's honor. There is no single belief in honor-shame, but one part of this value system is about a competing conception of male sexuality and an emphasis on female chastity (Stone 1996, p. 42). The loyalty of the wife was an important factor in determining the honor of her husband, and the brothers and father needed to protect the honor of their family by maintaining the sexual purity of their relatives (Stone 1996, p. 44). Thus, the demand of the Sodomites is deeply tied to the honor of men, and in this battle for honor, the fate and dignity of the nameless daughters are exposed to serious jeopardy. Lot protects his guests by telling the Sodomites not to do this evil (19:6–7), but proposes a terrible violation of the dignity and rights of his daughters (19:8). Lot's daughters are treated like property for the benefit of the father and family (Matthews 1991, p. 5). Lot's daughters experience extreme hostility in the name of hospitality, and the angels at the heart of that hospitality experience absolute hospitality (Kang 2014, p. 248). Lot's hospitality also violates another rule of ancient Near Eastern society: "protection of women as the producers of life" (Bechtel 1998, p. 122).

Not only does Lot not care, but their fiancées, their mother, the villagers, and the angels do not care what horrors and sorrows the daughters endure. These unnamed women are living-dead, non-being and invisible, representing those who have been deprived of their presence (Kang 2014, p. 248). Their own motives and opinions about their actions are not given or questioned; there is no way to determine whether this action is what the daughters wanted or was stolen from them. Some scholars say that daughters are clever, that it is an altruistic act to save humanity, or that it is comedy rhetoric to give readers hope, which prevents readers from seeing aspects of hostility in Lot's narrative (Jackson 2002, p. 39; Tsoffar 2007, pp. 7–8).

Today's readers can view this narrative as a horrific thing that can happen in an area where ancient patriarchal oppression is severe and where there is an honor-shame culture, while considering the responsibility for that horrific thing lies with an ancient society that no longer exists (Fuchs 2000, p. 11). However, the silent screams of Lot's unnamed daughters and their sacrifices need to be continually opened up to a diasporic world. This is because in the broad framework of society, culture, and history, and in the patriarchal concept of diplomacy and its utility (since women are men's property), the myth of women's sacrifice has continued its power through various modifications to this day (Indah 2022). When differential predominance by power in hospitality arises, the violence of the power of hospitality is generated by the person/community/country that determines the rules of hospitality, and this violence subjugates those who are distinguished as others to the violence of power (Derrida 2000b, p. 149). The value system of Sodom and Gomorrah, which states that certain groups of people have less dignity than others, can be treated unfairly, and can be deprived of their dignity, mirrors modern society (Kassa 2019, p. 5). Although this evil has been manifested in human history through the Holocaust, apartheid, the killing fields, the Doctrine of Discovery, and slavery, it has persisted through the epistemological fallacy of turning eyes from such suffering which still happens in a diasporic world—human rights violations through the hatred of refugees and migrants and terrorism, the continued exploitation and oppression of voiceless people, and implicit participation in these (Kassa 2019, p. 5). In this sense, the hermeneutics of hospitality for reading the story of Lot and Lot's daughters shows that a more diverse, multifaceted, and simultaneous approach is needed, including psychoanalytic approaches, traumatic reading, and reading related to the patriarchal system, which feminist Bible scholars have been paying attention to. The hermeneutics of hospitality creates a platform for hermeneutic interventions that promote mutually enhancing and critical dialogue (Kassa 2019, p. 5).

2.2.2. Hospitality for Non-Being

In one perspective of reading Lot's narrative, the absolute space of hospitality is given to men and is implicated as being hostile to women, including Lot's wife because women are considered "non-beings" (Kang 2014, p. 250). It requires minimal space, at least, in terms of discovering the existence of non-being and engaging in their lost dignity and

voices rather than a single way of reading (Nietzsche and Hollingdale 2003, p. 542). This is because people can become scapegoats with little or no resistance where there is no absolute constraint and freedom. The practice of reading the narrative of Lot and other biblical narratives through the lens of hospitality (hostipitality) or various other perspectives can contribute to securing such a free space.

The inclusion of this story in the Bible may not be because the biblical writers were indifferent to the violence and suffering of women, but rather because they viewed the violence described here as a major theological problem (Lapsley 2005, p. 98). This horrifying narrative can be understood as a microcosm of Israel's larger community relations: In violence against women, women and men are killed, and ultimately people experience hurt and division. The narratives of Dinah (Gn 34), Tamar (2 Sm 13), and Levite's concubine (Jgs 19) mirror a society of chaos leading to a chain of rape, revenge, and widespread violence (Lapsley 2005, p. 99). The violation of women's bodies is an invasion of Israel's life, and the image of breaking through sexual violence acts most strongly as a symbol of breaking in the continuity of life and community (Keefe 1993, p. 94). The horrors and narratives of women abused as signs of "community, connectedness, and covenant" in the Hebrew narrative are powerful rhetorical evidence of the broken reality of human community (Keefe 1993, p. 94). The juxtaposition of today's perspective of hospitality to a traditional one is primarily for readers of this narrative to discover depictions of the abuse of young women even though it may feel far away from their own experiences. But then, readers can find that this experience is not really far, but close around us. Furthermore, readers may expand the idea of justice in hospitality as living well together, sincerely considering all those wounded and killed by violence. The narrator doesn't tell the reader what is happening or how he should think, but rather provides a milestone to guide the reader's thoughts (Lapsley 2005, p. 101).

In this sense, the hermeneutics of hospitality does not evaluate the way in which the narratives of Lot have been interpreted or the biblical tradition of hospitality. The hermeneutics of hospitality goes beyond discovering hospitality in the Bible or reading the Bible with the perspective of hospitality. It means a hermeneutic eye that can see the diversity that has been neglected and unseen in the instability of complexity and richness and respect the diverse perspectives and voices. It is not to select an absolute voice and create a limit for making a value judgment, but to open a space to be heard.

When the practice of hospitality, which worked for mutual care and overcoming the hostility associated with differentness and unfamiliarity in the ancient world, merged in a rich way with a broadened consideration of hospitality, the hermeneutics of hospitality in the story of Lot revealed various aspects of life that have not been invisible. The hermeneutics of hospitality reveals the possibility that if readers continue to devote themselves to a particular person in the Bible, they may miss out on the opportunity to discover multiple sounds in the Bible. This means that readers/interpreters need to be aware of the interpretive hostility—in this study, it would result in epistemic injustice—which can arise in a variety of ways. The violence that restricted and uniform interpretations can inflict is to value one interpretation that the person with interpretive authority deems correct. It may enact rules of interpretation and application in a lump, denying diverse value systems and environments. Such interpretive limitations implicitly convey that certain voices are less important or can be ignored, and can prevent the further possibility of interpretive intervention.

Thus, the hermeneutics of hospitality rejects binaries and exclusive ways and instead chooses a "multiple, intersecting reading lens" as its main hermeneutical key, just as Letty Russell shifted the perception from the "hermeneutics of the other" to the "hermeneutics of hospitality" (Mouton 2017, p. 212; Russell 2009, p. 24). This interpretive sense of hospitality can be embodied more concretely in the pulpit and in life through epistemic justice.

3. Epistemic Justice and Hospitality

Someone who always feels comfortable in the diasporic world may be unaware of the gravity of power relations, of exclusion, and oppression (Kang 2014, p. 250). On the other

side, someone can always be in “a lifelong struggle of anxiety and existential anguish about a fragmented life, a constant search for home, nonbelonging, and a painful negotiating process between home and away” (Kang 2014, p. 25). However, those who have a sense of belonging, as well as those who feel absolutely like outsiders, or those who are on the borderline, by taking a diasporic position, can recognize anti-hegemonic discourses and alternative ways of reading, thinking, seeing, judging, and acting to promote substantiated justice that is related to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and ability—living as beings with critical marginality (Kang 2014, p. 30). This is because the critical periphery of the diaspora region is a decisive and consciously selectable periphery as a transformative site in which we live well together (Kang 2014, p. 31). It means having deep sensibility and practicing what one realizes is motivated by a strong sense of voluntariness. This sense is stimulated, supported, and reinforced by empathy for those who live together. Thus, in the diasporic era, discovering epistemic injustice and replacing it with empathy can create an ethics for living well together through hospitality.

3.1. *Ethics of Knowing for Hospitality*

Epistemic injustice refers to “those forms of unfair treatment that relate to issues of knowledge, understanding, and participation in communicative practices” (Kidd et al. 2017, p. 1). Epistemic injustice must consider which epistemic practices and attitudes may be placed and structured in inappropriate ways in relation to which epistemic values (Pohlhaus 2017, p. 13). Epistemic injustice is the obfuscation of awareness that suppresses testimony, distorts understanding, or impedes inquiry. This harm occurs when it occurs in a way that systematically ignores, distorts, and distrusts certain intellectual traditions (Pohlhaus 2017, p. 13). By domination and oppression, ideals and lower classes are created. For instance, the non-European state of nature is a wild, racialized place, and an unholy land, but the natural state of Europe is a space that can be appropriately transformed and is a testament to the outstanding moral character of its inhabitants (Mills 2022, pp. 46–47). This study will look at epistemic injustice, as pointed out by Miranda Fricker, “consisting, most fundamentally, in a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower” (Fricker 2007, p. 1). To pursue it, Fricker presents two ways of epistemic injustice: testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice.

3.1.1. Testimonial Injustice

Testimonial injustice is about the possibility of a categorical connection between specific instances of injustice and the social practice of testimony (Wanderer 2017, p. 27). Testimonial injustice occurs when bias reduces the audience’s level of trust in the speaker’s words (Fricker 2007, p. 1). A simple example is when the police don’t trust someone because the one referred to is coloured (Fricker 2007, p. 1). This concept associated with identity power refers to cases in which the audience’s bias reduces the speaker’s trust more than the trust the speaker would otherwise provide. Fricker calls it “identity prejudice” (Fricker 2007, pp. 4–5).

When reading biblical texts, it is important to be aware of narrative ethics because it is closely linked to testimonial injustice. Narrative ethics is about moving away from asking what texts are good or bad and which characters are worth imitating (Lapsley 2005, p. 24). The ethical reflection suggested by narrative ethics draws readers into the complex moral world the narrative evokes, without denying injustice or reducing wrongdoing. As we saw in Lot’s narrative, the narrative world of the Hebrew Bible makes it difficult to judge easily. Participating in narrative ethics in this complex reading, the readers’ emotional responses and empathies, can make readers see various aspects, without arriving at one view (Lapsley 2005, p. 24). Readers can bring their own emotional responses into multifarious conversations, and to do this they need to incorporate themselves as much as possible into the experiences of others. The goal of this activity, however, is not to extract ethical judgments or ethical principles, but to enrich and mature ethical faculties (Lapsley 2005, p. 25). The way we see today’s reality is similar. By entering into the complexity of

ethics where we live and experiencing various narratives, we pursue ethical maturity and richness as hospitality rather than identity prejudice or exclusivity.

3.1.2. Hermeneutical Injustice

Hermeneutical injustice is caused by bias and lack of collective hermeneutic resources (Fricker 2007, p. 1). Fricker finds hermeneutical injustice in the example of a woman who has been sexually harassed, explaining that before she had a critical conception of sexual harassment, she could not fully understand her own experience and, of course, could not communicate with others. In other words, this epistemic injustice appears in the gap of collective hermeneutic resources, resulting in marginalization of the disadvantaged group (Fricker 2007, p. 6). When there was no awareness and no concrete example of sexual harassment for the woman who had suffered mental, physical, and life pain because of it, two lawyers created an epistemic resource to find a voice by naming her terrible experiences and the similar experiences of many other women (Fricker 2007, pp. 149–50). As such, the hermeneutic disadvantage due to the lack of hermeneutical tools or ignorance prevents us from understanding important parts of life experience by making continued abuse incomprehensible and preventing protests and effective measures against it (Fricker 2007, p. 151).

However, hermeneutic inequality can be hidden because it is difficult to develop equality in areas where those in power are not interested in achieving an interpretation that is appropriate for them; in this case, “hermeneutical marginalization” occurs (Fricker 2007, p. 153). This means that in the context of the complexities of social identity we face, hermeneutic marginalization can haunt individuals, groups, or situations in a differentiated way (Fricker 2007, p. 154). Hermeneutical injustice can hinder social membership in certain social contexts and even lead to hatred. If testimonial injustice is to respond to the listener’s negligence and ethics because it is inflicted on an individual or a specific group, hermeneutical injustice is caused by “a one-off blind spot (in incidental cases), or (in systematic cases) a lacuna generated by a structural identity prejudice in the hermeneutical repertoire” (Fricker 2007, p. 168). Therefore, the audience needs the ability to reflexively perceive how the relationship between their social identity and the speaker’s social identity affects their understanding of the speaker’s message (Fricker 2007, p. 169). Carolyn J. Sharp’s two hermeneutic strategies paint a more concrete picture of practicing hermeneutical justice.

First, I embrace dissensus as vital for authentic dialogue in groups, honoring spirited and irreducible disagreement as a way of welcoming the Other. I invite alternate viewpoints in my pedagogy, and I avoid tactics of dismissal or shaming when I explore the vulnerabilities of a particular hermeneutical position in my scholarship. Second, I explore ambiguity in biblical texts as a potentially subversive resource with which to dismantle oppressive structures and ideological distortions. The Hebrew Scriptures offer many marvelous examples of ellipsis, ironic misdirection, unexpected juxtaposition, and freighted silence. All these modes underscore the fragility and infinite possibilities of language understood as both the spoken and the unspoken (Sharp 2017, p. 151).

Testimonial and hermeneutical justice are possible in hybrid form. This is because epistemic justice is a double, even multi-viewing method, which can be a view from the center. Taking a double view will help to maintain hypersensitivity to marginalized people and to the various forms of intersectionality and sensitivity (Kang 2014, p. 126).

Regina Schwartz argues for understanding the Bible, not from “a principle of scarcity”, but rather from a principle of “plenitude” (Schwartz 1997, p. 34). According to her, claiming a unique collective identity can lead to violence, because when everything is scarce, even the identity itself must compete (Schwartz 1997, p. xi). Thus, the Bible can be read in a way that opens and proliferates, rather than limits or totalizes, and in a way that transcends limits without limits (Schwartz 1997, pp. 33–34). This abundance is not lost or wasted, but it is circulated; in doing so, is accompanied by an alternative code that does not exclude, swear, violate, or even obsessively define others (Schwartz 1997, p. 34). This mode

of richness creates a powerful resonance with the hermeneutics of hospitality through cognitive definition. Kwok Pui-lan also calls Regina's concept a way of hospitality (Kwok 2021, p. 179). "The lingering picture of distorted representations of bodies and voices continues to invite courageous responses from individual believers and faith communities—be it through seeing (understanding) differently, telling our stories and naming injustice, claiming our identities and footprints, resisting evil and superficial remedies for it, or reforming community" (Mouton 2017, p. 213). In this sense, hospitality as a hermeneutic approach opens our hearts to surprise and challenge us to see new connections, new expressions of God's grace, and new opportunities to see through the eyes of others (Mouton 2017, p. 213).

3.2. Ethics of Empathy for Hospitality

According to Fricker, "empathy . . . is an emotional cognitive capacity." In other words, epistemic sensibility is linked to all emotional responses related to empathic engagement because personal/collective life experiences and constant attention to what is sensible creates "ethical sensibility" and encourages participation and active action in "testimonial exchange" (Fricker 2007, pp. 82–83). To practice ethics of empathy for hospitality, the understanding of the divine image needs to be open to various sensibilities. This is because sometimes the perception of God is shaped by the socio-cultural environment and the image of people with "power" that reflects it (Kang 2014, p. 117). Recognizing God as male, white, and king is all too easily compatible with sexism, racism, and imperialism, which has shaped the conceptual framework of various types of Christian colonialism (Kang 2014, p. 117). Cultivating the sense of relationship and reciprocity and understanding God dichotomously instead of allowing hybrid and porosity at its intersection with reality may curb the possibility of interpretation (Mouton 2017, p. 215). Empathy does not occur only in human-person or human-text; it can also occur in the human-divine relationship. Preachers may embrace moral and ethical stances that reflect and embrace both wonder and discomfort, challenge theological systems that provide only an essentialist or dominant image of God, address contemporary contexts of alienation, vulnerability, dehumanization and violence, and move toward justice, reconciliation, and peace.

The ethics of empathy is also linked to hearing clues to insights from the encounter between the Bible and the interpretive community in an open hermeneutic space; "We must adjust our ears, our level of attention, to hear the text whispering the Word" (Lapsley 2005, p. 158). Listening involves listening to persons whose views we have never heard before—persons who are sensitive to reading because they have suffered violence and oppression, and listening to a community discussion about the differences and reinterpretations of the Bible at different times and places. By practicing listening and responding sensitively to the Holy Spirit, we discover that God's hospitality is breaking through and guiding our lives (Russell 2009, pp. 94–98). Listening may produce relational dialectical universalisms that promote "shared sensibilities" across the boundaries of class, gender, race, ethnicity, ability or orientation, without sacrificing the specific context of a geopolitical or discursive position (Kang 2011, p. 124).

4. Conclusions: Epistemic Justice as an Ethics of Living-Together

Interpreters/readers "can honor all subjects struggling against commodification of their bodies and labor, can interrogate distorted relations of power, and can reconfigure community as a place of resistance against the exploitative predations of imperialism" (Sharp 2017, p. 152). The hermeneutics of hospitality can begin by making it clear that in God's eyes there is no 'other.' Hospitality sometimes faces the experience of rejection and suffering rooted in contempt for 'the other': (1) Paying attention to the distribution of power to ensure that those considered non-beings are included as beings with full value and dignity, (2) Prioritizing the perspectives of life and perceptions of one's suffering from inaudible or epistemic injustice, and (3) Rejoicing in the diversity of God's calling (Russell 2009, p. 43). A place where epistemic justice and hospitality take place—where all are

welcome and all live well together—becomes an invitation for all of us to participate in the pulpit and the diasporic world (Russell 2009, p. 49).

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