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Refugee-refugee hosting as home in protracted urban displacement: Sudanese refugee men in Amman, Jordan

Zoë Jordan

Abstract

This chapter analyses the role of household-level refugee hosting relationships in refugees' experiences of home in protracted displacement. Conceptualised as relationships of care, the everyday practice of hosting holds the potential for home within an uncertain and hostile context. Yet, this is an incomplete and transient home, restricted by the temporal, legal, and political limitations of protracted displacement. Based on qualitative research with Sudanese refugee men living in urban Amman, I look at the day-to-day experience of living in a refugee-refugee hosting relationship in with the socio-economic dynamics of Sudanese refugeehood. Household-level hosting is an overlooked practice within humanitarian and forced migration studies, yet it is by paying attention to the everyday ways in which particular refugee groups create and experience relations of care that we can re-focus our attention on how refugees inhabit, experience, and negotiate protracted urban displacement

Introduction

> Zoë: Is there a place in the city where you feel at home, or like where you feel comfortable? More than other places, you know?
> *Samir: Here. Jabal Hussein. This last one.*

The lingering presence of home pervades many discussions of forced migration, from being forced from home, to making new homes, and returning home (Black, 2002; Brun and Fabos, 2015; Doná, 2015; Grabska, 2014; Long, 2010; Malkki, 1992; Taylor, 2013). However, as yet little work has considered men's practices of giving and receiving care in the context of home in displacement (Grabska, 2014;

Locke, 2017; Serra Mingot, 2019). In this chapter, I focus on the extent to which refugee-refugee hosting, as a relation of care, provides for the possibility of home for Sudanese refugee men living in protracted displacement in Amman, Jordan. For the men I spoke to, home was an ambiguous concept and their lives in Jordan, characterised by hostility and exclusion, bore little resemblance to their idealised homes. Yet, in hosting, the men also recounted finding a place of safety, care, and community.

This chapter draws on doctoral research conducted in Amman between 2017 and 2018 seeking to understand refugee-refugee hosting in interaction with humanitarianism. In the first stage of the research, I spoke with 37 individuals from a wide-cross section of the refugee population[1] in Amman to produce a 'snapshot' of the diversity of hosting practices existing in the city at that time. These individuals were contacted through the networks of two research assistants with existing ties to different refugee communities in Amman, and subsequent snowballing. In the second phase of the research, from March – May 2018 and September 2018, I worked with a smaller group of nine Sudanese men living in group hosting arrangements, conducting multiple iterative semi-structured interviews with each man, as well as observation and spending time together. With the exception of one man, all participants preferred to communicate in English, rather than through a translator. I have chosen to focus on Samir's story, as it shares common features with the experiences of the other men who participated in my research. However, Samir also most explicitly discussed his ambivalence towards the exchange of care within hosting. As such, his narrative allows me to better interrogate the dynamics of care and home among the men. The points of similarity and difference between Samir and the other men in their account of their hosting experiences are highlighted throughout the text.

As a white British female academic working with black Sudanese men, our different positions cannot be overlooked. The men emphasised the salience of their gender and race in their accounts and analysis of their lives in Amman, contrasting the assumed greater economic and physical security often associated with men in humanitarian contexts with the pervasive racial discrimination and violence that they frequently experienced (Davis et al., 2016; Johnston et al., 2019; MMP, 2017).[2] In my work, I only had limited access to observe the men's daily domestic practices, in part due to my gender. In this chapter I therefore draw on our discussions of their experiences of participating in hosting relationships, rather than extensive observation. This has also guided my focus on the outwards-facing 'politics' of home, inhabitation, and presence, rather than the intimate practices of domestic home-making.

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[1] Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Syrian, Somali, Sudanese, and Iraqi refugees. Alongside nationality, the non-representative sample took into consideration gender, age, marital status, presence of children, and physical disability.

[2] For further discussion of race and gender in the Jordanian humanitarian context, see Turner (2018)

I first briefly conceptualise hosting as an act of care, before describing the situation of Sudanese refugee men living in Amman. I elaborate a framework for understanding the relationship between care and home in displacement, drawing on Antonsich's (2010) notions of 'place-belonging' and 'politics of belonging'. I then analyse the different forms of care received and provided in hosting, followed by an assessment of the extent to which the relation of care inherent in hosting enabled the creation of home. In concluding, I argue that acts of care enacted through hosting can hold some potential for home, yet the limitations of belonging in displacement and the uncertain and difficult realities of many refugees' lives persist.

Refugee hosting as an act of care

Refugee-refugee hosting, the interdependent sharing of accommodation between refugees, is a widespread and common practice in displacement and humanitarian contexts around the globe (Caron, 2019; Davies, 2012; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016a). Such arrangements are not necessarily unique to refugees, and can be seen elsewhere (Kathiravelu, 2012; Landau, 2018). However, thus far such practices have largely been overlooked among refugees (Boano and Astolfo, 2020; Caron, 2019; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016b; Leer and Komter, 2012; Yassine et al., 2019). Where considered by humanitarian actors, hosting is often presented as a short-term and dependent arrangement between distant family members that provides for shelter and basic needs. However, depictions fail to account for the diversity of hosting practices that exist and their potential longevity (Caron, 2019; Jordan 2020).

Hosting is often conceptualised through the notion of hospitality (Darling, 2020; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016b), but it can also be understood through an ethics of care (Yassine et al., 2019). Hosting relationships between refugees do not always entail vertical host-guest relations and, for the Sudanese men I worked with who lived in shared group hosting arrangements, the roles of host and guest were frequently rotated, and at times indistinguishable. Indeed, the men I worked with rarely referred to notions of hospitality, but rather to sharing and taking care of each other. While recognising the challenges of using the term 'hosting' outside of the conceptualisation of hospitality, I nonetheless retain this terminology as it is how such relationships are most commonly referred to within humanitarian practice and studies of forced migration.

Diffused reciprocity is central within the men's hosting relationships, with the gift-like obligation to give, to receive, and to return (Mauss, 1954). I, however, forefront an ethics of care. Partly, this reflects the terms the men used to describe their own practices. Yet, it also speaks to the continuous exchange of acts of care and, through these acts, the co-construction of a liminal space of security. A conceptualisation of the act of hosting as an act of care emphasises that hosting is relational, a response to situated and recognised need, and relies on accepted interdependence between participants. Lawson (2007) argues for the importance of care ethics in bringing our focus to the specific sites, relationships, and contexts

that produce the need for care, and as argued by Milligan and Wiles (2010: 736) 'care and care relationships are located in, shaped by, and shape particular spaces and places that stretch from the local to the global'. Notions of care and home are also closely intertwined (Milligan and Wiles, 2010), with Young (2005: 125) drawing attention to 'protection, preserving, and caring for' as a crucial, yet undervalued element of dwelling and home. In focusing on Sudanese men's refugee-refugee hosting practices in Amman, I add an as yet overlooked site to discussions of home in displacement, and show the importance of recognising such relations of care for understanding experiences of and responses to forced migration.

Context

Jordan is host to over 1 million refugees[3], not including the long-standing Palestinian and Palestinian-origin population. This includes 664,414 Syrians, 66,760 Iraqis, 13,902 Yemenis, 6,024 Sudanese, and 718 Somalis (UNHCR, 2021a), resulting in Jordan being one of the largest refugee hosting countries per capita in the world (UNHCR, 2021b). While Jordan hosts refugees from over 57 nationalities (UNHCR, 2021a), the majority of academic research and humanitarian funding has focused on the larger groups (Davis et al., 2016). As such, Sudanese refugees were an under-research group (Omata, 2019). At the time of my research, the majority of Sudanese refugees in Jordan were young men, a demographic that is often missing from humanitarian conceptualisations of vulnerability (Turner, 2019). I therefore chose to pay attention to the particular experiences of this group.

Darfur, in the west of Sudan, has been subject to prolonged and repeated conflict over much of the last 20 years (at least). The young men I worked with had fled this violent conflict, the state-sanctioned persecution that accompanied it and the risk of forced conscription into the conflict. One young man explained his experience, saying

> In Sudan, if you are under 50 you cannot get a passport. Or, if you have a passport the government of Sudan will ask you "which state are you from?" If you come from West Darfur, you cannot do anything…If a Darfurian is inside Darfur or Sudan, they cannot cry out.

Though the conflict in Darfur is not purely a religious, racial or ethnic conflict (de Waal, 2005; de Waal and Flint, 2008; Sharkey, 2008; Mamdani, 2009; Jok,

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[3] This figure includes asylum seekers, refugees, and people of concern registered with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Jordan is a non-signatory to the Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol. However, UNHCR is well-established in the country, with the refugee response governed by the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Jordan and UNHCR.

2015), the men’s identification (by themselves and others) as black Africans (not Arabs) is salient in understanding their experience of conflict in Darfur, and in their widely reported experiences of racism and exclusion in Jordan.

Overall, Sudanese refugees in Jordan confront a hostile displacement environment. Many avenues for humanitarian support are closed off to them[4], yet they are unable to access formal work permits, and risk detention and deportation if caught working informally. Work in the informal sector is highly dangerous and poorly paid (when salaries are paid at all). In late 2015 over 500 Sudanese nationals, some of whom held UNHCR documentation were deported (Human Rights Watch, 2015), following weeks of protest outside UNHCR calling for improved protection and access to services. At the time of my research, the deportation continued to reverberate through the Sudanese refugee community.

The vast majority of refugees in Jordan live in protracted displacement, having been displaced for more than five years. They are caught between a national response that does not provide for the integration of refugees, nor routes to citizenship; and an international reality that rarely allows for onward movement or return. Building on literature that challenges the notion of displacement as passive and ‘on-hold’, and instead highlights the active lives of displaced populations and their interactions with the people and environments around them (Brun, 2015; Grabska, 2006), this chapter recognises the interaction of prolonged displacement, hostile environments, and everyday interactions in configuring the men’s creation and experiences of home.

Care and home in displacement

While displacement implies a rupture from home (Blunt and Dowling 2006; Long 2013; Grabska, 2014), many people who have been displaced hold substantial claims and feelings of belonging to their place(s) of displacement, as well as their places of origin. More recent work has moved away from the dominance of territorial and state-centric ideas of home, instead demonstrating the multiple relationships and social, symbolic and material ties that refugees hold to different locations, refugees’ shifting understandings and expectations of home as displacement becomes more protracted, and the practices undertaken by refugees in rendering the ‘unhomely’ spaces of refuge as home (Brun, 2001; Brun and Fabos, 2015; Doná, 2015; Grabska, 2014; Malkki, 1992; Omata, 2013; Verdasco, 2019).

Home is much more than a house (Boccagni, 2017; Mallett, 2004). Home is a familiar space where particular activities and relationships take place, created through sharing the everyday practices of living in them, and the meaningful value

[4] This has changed quite considerably in the years since I completed my interviews in 2018. A number of key donors now prioritise a One Refugee Approach and there is much greater awareness of the specific needs of Sudanese and other non-Syrian refugee groups in Jordan.

assigned to material objects and the things that people do (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Mallett, 2004; Young, 2005; Grabska 2014). This relational approach to home helps to highlight how care creates and maintains home. Tronto and Fisher (1990, p. 40) define care as the effort to 'maintain, continue, and repair our 'world'' centring our relationships with one-another, the recognition of other's needs, and the acknowledgement of our interdependence. Young (2005) builds on this definition in relation to dwelling and home, pointing to valuable and irreplaceable ways in which the work of preservation – 'making and remaking of home as a support for personal identity without accumulation, certainty, or fixity' (pp. 124–125) - gives meaning to individual lives and maintains our world. In doing so, she highlights how relations of care are fundamental to our dwelling in the world and the creation and maintenance of home.

This connection has already been remarked upon in the literature, both in the role of housing in creating possibilities for care, and the exchange of care in producing experiences of home (Atkinson et al., 2011; Dyck, 1995; Milligan and Wiles, 2010; Power and Mee, 2020; Wiles, 2003). Brownlie and Spandler (2018) consider the 'mundane' acts of care that take place in shared spaces, identifying the importance of routine and repeated situations and interactions that create the potential to recognise one-another's needs. As explained by Ali (a Sudanese man in his mid-20s) in his decision to live with other men: '*It needs time. If we sit with you one month, two months, three months, I know you, and you know me, and then we can move together*.' Similarly, Kathiravelu (2012) and Boano and Astolfo (2020) point to the interaction between material spaces and social interaction in engendering care and maintaining life through facilitating interactions, and by making people feel known and looked out for. However, Brownlie and Spandler (2018) also note that such care may be unwelcome, and that people may seek to avoid such exchanges. These dynamics of care-avoidance have similarly been noted in migration contexts by Serra Mingot (2019) and Landau (2018). I return to these ambivalences in my discussion below.

Home is one of the most important sites of belonging, so much so that the two concepts are often used together, with 'feeling at home' being one of the ultimate signifiers of belonging (Antonsich, 2010). Belonging deals with the attachments people feel to the material and social worlds they inhabit and experience, and the yearning we feel to belong (Bell, 1999; Wood and Waite, 2011). Antonsich's (2010) distinction between 'place-belongingness' and the 'politics of belonging' is useful in understanding the simultaneously deeply personal and intimate senses of belonging, and the production, reaffirmation or refusal of such belongings through societal interactions. He identifies 'place-belongingness' as the personal and intimate feelings of being at home', a symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment', dependent on auto-biographical, relational, cultural, economic, and legal factors (Antonsich, 2010). Belonging, however, is not just personal, it is social. 'Politics of belonging' relates to the construction of collectives, and the more public-oriented structures of membership, otherwise expressed as belonging to a group of people (Antonsich, 2010). Belonging in this sense requires that people are able to express identity, to be recognised as an integral part of a community, and are valued and listened to. As with home, belonging may be conceptualised as a narrow, territorialised construct. Yet, others have recognised

that people belong to a situation, through everyday life encounters (interpersonal, material and virtual), rather than only to a territory or cultural or ethnic group (Amin, 2010; Grabska, 2014; Verdasco, 2019; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Place belongingness and politics of belonging are both relations, and hence it is valuable to consider the role of care in those relations, and the role of hosting in providing this care.

Living in hosting relationships

> If I live with someone for a long time, like here with Ali, he is like my brother. All the guys here are like my brother because I live with them for a long time. I know him, I know his mind. I know how he thinks I know how he, if I fall down, he will pick me up. I know him well.
> (Samir, April 2018)

This was my third interview with Samir, a Sudanese man in his mid-20s. We had first met about six weeks earlier, a quick introduction from one of his housemates during another interview, as Samir returned home. While he had known some of his housemates for several years, and previously lived or worked with some of them, others were less familiar when he joined the house a few months previously. When asked, he told me that this is his favourite arrangement since arriving in Jordan five years earlier, in 2013.

He recollects living in 13 different houses since arriving, sometimes with a subset of the men he currently lives with, at other times alone or with only one other person.[5] In this time, he has been both 'host' and 'guest'. Most often, Samir has been both host and guest simultaneously, living in a reciprocal and mutually assured arrangement with a small group of men (usually at least three, rarely more than nine). Like many of the men, his living situation was disrupted by the 2015 deportation, when all of the men he lived with were deported. Following this, he moved into a hosting arrangement with a large number of men, but after one month the group split into smaller units. In most cases, his accommodation was rented in a purely financial arrangement with the landlord, but he has also lived in his employer's property, and in a home with rent supported by an NGO. Although the detailed specifics of each of his arrangements varied, in general Samir's hosting arrangements followed a similar pattern to those of the other men I interviewed.

For many men, the most immediate and obvious benefit of sharing housing was access to shelter. Without sharing, it would be impossible for many to afford even

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[5] This is the highest number of different housing arrangements reported by any of the Sudanese men in my study, all of whom, with the exception of one more recent arrival, had lived in Amman for approximately 5 years.

the most basic of accommodation, and shared accommodation is particularly common among Sudanese and Somali refugees in Amman (MMP, 2017). Samir explained his financial situation, saying '*You see, I'm a guy, so I need to pay for rent first, food, and after I need simple things like clothes, internet on my phone, transportation. If you're going to go out with your friends or hanging out or something like this, you can't go*'. Shared contributions towards rent are one approach to deal with this precarious and limited financial situation. Hosting arrangements for the men I worked with also included sharing food and cooking responsibilities, ensuring that everyone ate at least one meal each day.

Though it was a common experience for men who lived together to work together, the men did not explicitly expect their housemates to connect them to employment. Rather, as in Samir's experience, they often lived with people they already worked with or who they already knew as friends. Living together reinforced and strengthened these friendships, which in part was connected to people telling their housemates of job opportunities before others. Living together was also explicitly mentioned as a strategy to cope with uncertainty around detention and deportation linked to informal working practices, and to be able to communicate information and warnings. Ali, another Sudanese man in his 20s, described his group's communication to stay safe, saying '*We tell each other 'there are police' so people have to remain in their homes and don't go out, because they will get them*'. The role of hosting as a mechanism for improving personal security against threats from individuals attacking the home or individual men was mentioned across all of my interviews, something that surprised me, as I had not considered the risks of young men living alone.

As demonstrated in Samir's accounts, there is a tendency for the men to live repeatedly with the same men, even after periods in different houses, because they are familiar with their personalities, habits, and preferences, for better or for worse. Personal recommendation or 'vouching' for potential new members was important when the new member was unknown to others in the hosting arrangement. The men often put careful consideration into the type of person they wanted to live with. They preferred to live with people with whom they felt comfortable, had a shared interest, and held a shared perspective on the world, as in other forms of collective housing (Holton, 2016; Mahieu and Van Caudenberg, 2020). Several men spoke about wanting to live with people who would support them in their studies, not financially, but by having similar aims and ambitions. Their concern that housemates have similar preferences regarding noise, privacy, partying and household chores shows that they did expect their shelter to act as a comfortable and (at least) semi-private space.

Hosting therefore provides much more than access to housing, including other basic needs, connecting people to employment, education, and other supports, and more intangible social and emotional benefits. All the men spoke of the safety net that was provided by hosting, and the expectation that others would support you if you became unemployed, were injured or unwell. It was not unusual for each household to be supporting at least one non-contributing member each month, as the men found and lost work. As people spent longer in hosting arrangements or experienced a greater number, they came to appreciate the value of sharing beyond the economic benefits and safety net provided. As Samir summarised, '*We*

must help each other to make things better…I won't discriminate, anyone Sudanese if I found them, I will help them. Even if they hate us, even if they say they don't care, I will give them a hand. This is something I've learned from life, I must do it.' While the men spoke positively about their hosting arrangements, at the same time they were clear that hosting was not their preferred housing arrangement (largely due to the frequent changes, instability, and the number of people sharing), and accepted that they were unlikely to find the 'perfect' living situation in a hosting arrangement.

Exchanges and ambivalences of care in refugee-refugee hosting

The men's hosting relationships involve multiple acts of care from the financial, such as supporting others during unemployment, to personal care, such as providing meals and helping with the physical movement of members with mobility issues; the sharing of information about jobs and security; and emotional acts of care, through strategies to deal with uncertainty, providing advice, or support for studying and other goals. As explained by Samir, '*I respect the people. If I meet a Sudanese, I love him. You are Sudanese, you need help, I will help you if I can. I will try to help, and if I cannot, I'll tell you 'Allah ma'ik' you know, God with you.*' Later in our conversation, he continued, '*And I try to help people by talking, through emotions and talking. By sharing. I try to make him down, make him patient…to share…if I have money, I'm really not someone who won't give his money…we must be with people kindly.*' This multifaceted understanding of how to care about and for others, more than the circulation of money, was echoed by all the men in my research. As such, hosting encompasses all four phases of care as identified by Joan Tronto (1998): perceiving the needs of others (caring about), assuming a responsibility to meet others' needs (caring for), action to meet the needs of others (caregiving), and receiving and responding to the receipt of care (care receiving).

The provision and receipt of acts of care within hosting are to a certain extent determined by the men's social and economic position within the household, though this is tempered by a recognition that economic standing is volatile and uncertain. The frequent shifts in the men's economic position also meant that each was aware of their potential instability, and the possibility for them to become dependent on those they previously helped. Hosting relationships also had an important influence on the men's positions within wider Sudanese society in Jordan. Appropriate participation in hosting arrangements and being known as a 'good guy' was also a signifier of acceptance into Sudanese society and of doing one's part in supporting others in the face of difficult circumstances.

The men who participated in my research do not consider themselves to be among the most vulnerable. Those who lived in shared group hosting arrangements were typically single (or unaccompanied by their wives), young, and did not

have any children. These positions limited other demands for care that may otherwise have been placed on them. However, the men were still enmeshed in expected relationships of care. For example, when relations arrived in Jordan, the men were often obliged to support them and to incorporate them into their hosting arrangements. In some cases, the arrival of 'real' brothers supplanted caring arrangements with 'fictive' brothers. Though they frequently have unmet needs and rarely earn enough to remit money to relatives in Sudan, they recognise that their independence and low responsibility for others – particularly a wife or children - gives them a certain level of freedom. This has implications for how they perceive and describe their provision of care, and how they describe receiving care, and it should be noted that the men were much more forthcoming in describing the care that they provided for others, rather than their own personal experiences of receiving care.

Samir was one of the few men who openly and explicitly discussed his feelings around asking for and receiving help from others. Expressing his discomfort, he told me:

> You know, they help you. I got help from my friends, sure, and they accept everything you say to them. If you need help, they help. But I told you, I have, like, pride. I never ask. It is very difficult for me. If I move to the guys, I feel like I'm weak.

Samir's reflections speak to a desire to balance the need for help with maintaining one's own dignity. In other contexts, the avoidance of enmeshment in such reciprocal arrangements has been noted as a strategy to avoid excessive demands, the imposition of controls over behaviour, or the expectation of support beyond current capacity (Landau, 2018; Serra Mingot, 2019; Stevens, 2016). This, however, was not remarked upon by the men with whom I spoke.[6] More often, this balance was managed by recognising their interdependence and the high likelihood of the roles of carer and cared for to be reversed in the future. This emphasis on exchange and instability was highly prevalent across the men's accounts.

In a very few cases, the men noted instances of conflict within the home, or the forced eviction of one member from a household. They reported this to be very rare, partly because the men all share a recognition of the hardship that single Sudanese refugee men confront in living in Amman, and partly because hosting has become an intrinsic part of acting as a 'good' member of their society. On the other hand, day-to-day frustrations were common. Samir, for example, said

> It's not a reason to go, but sometimes I meet friends, they come and play computer games here and we can't play because they make noise, and the others are studying, or sometimes some people have come from work and they need to take a rest…I don't want to disturb them or interrupt them, so this makes a problem…each one has different ideas.

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[6] Given my focus on speaking to men currently living in hosting relationships this is not surprising. It would be interesting to spend more time with those who had chosen not to engage in hosting relationships to understand their motivations and alternative strategies for living in the city.

In addition to the external constraints on the extent to which hosting can provide home in displacement, these frustrations of sharing accommodation such as differing routines, limited privacy, or preferences around how to spend leisure time, also impact on the extent to which hosting is experienced as home by the men. The following section returns to my contention that hosting holds the potential for home, before addressing these limitations more fully.

Being and feeling at home

Place Belonging

Antonsich (2010) identifies five components to ‘place-belongingness’, the intimate feeling of belonging somewhere: relational, economic, cultural, auto-biographical, and legal. Refugee hosting relationships strongly contribute to relational and economic components of home, through being key sites for the development and maintenance of significant and caring social ties, and a primary mechanism for assuring (some degree) of economic stability while in displacement and mitigating some of the consequences of the men’s economic instability.

Hosting arrangements also contribute, to a degree, to cultural indicators of home. This is particularly true in hosting relationships between those who identify as part of the same group, and for whom hosting can reinforce these identities. However, hosting rarely lives up to cultural ideals of home. Two of the men directly addressed the inadequacies of their current living situation with regards to their sense of home. Ali, for example, told me how home for him was (in addition to his family) his cattle, showing me a picture of them grazing in green farmland. He said ‘*That’s my farm. That's it, that's the life that we're supposed to lives. Raising some knowledge or information, helping students, small things, My wife also, she's still in Sudan*.’ The sprawling concrete city of Amman does not resemble his idealised farming home and does not allow him to recreate the activities that he had previously associated with home and his future. Similarly, Ishaq spoke about being unable to perform hospitality, because he did not have a separate ‘living room’ to welcome guests. Though he went on to describe hosting Sudanese people visiting from Aqaba, who stayed in his living room in Amman, it did not resemble the concept of a living room that he was familiar with from Sudan, and he did not view it in the same way, despite it fulfilling a similar function. From his point of view, he did not have a proper home from which to be hospitable.

Some hosting relationships may contribute to the auto-biographical component of place-belongingness, relating to personal experiences and memories. During my work, this was only discussed by a small number of the men, for whom hosting arrangements had become their preferred living arrangements. It is important to note here though that this was only discussed as desirable in displacement and

after resettlement. None of the men spoke about return as an option, nor how their experiences of hosting impacted on what they thought home might look like if and when they returned to Darfur.

Hosting relationships could not impact on the legal aspect of the men's belonging, though they are an important aspect of managing their legal precarity and the discomfort produced by their legal position. Uncertainty about time in displacement necessarily influenced how the men perceived their hosting arrangements, particularly with regards to the length of time they think they will be living in such arrangements. The men are aware that they will likely be in Jordan for many years, and yet at the same time maintain hope that they will be resettled and are prepared for this movement at any time. The tension between rational expectation and hopeful aspirations is a key part of their attitudes towards their homes. A lack of home (as place-belongingness) does not necessarily result in exclusion, but rather a sense of loneliness and alienation (Antonsich, 2010). As Ali explained,

> Sometimes I feel good. I am with my friends, I am still alive, and things are going well. And sometimes it turns around and I feel bad and restricted by rules, regulation, and government…the only thing that we can do is to gather ourselves…we talk, they say 'I am feeling in the same situation'. We'll talk and find a way to share.

Hosting both mitigates some of this alienation, to some degree, and finds its foundations in a shared understanding and solidarity with others' shared experiences.

Politics of belonging

An ethics of care depends on recognised interdependence with others. In the case of the men I worked with, recognising these interdependencies stemmed in part from a sense of shared identity and experience as young, black, Sudanese, refugee men living in Amman. In talking about their sense of belonging and connection the men at various times raised multiple forms of belonging, from a house, a friendship group, a community centre, to their tribal group, to the Sudanese community in Jordan, to the refugee community of Jordan, to Amman, to their hometown, to Darfur, to Sudan, to Africa, or to humankind. As this list shows, their belongings ranged from the highly intimate and local to more global conceptions of belonging. These belongings were enacted, not in abstract conception or idealised notions, but through everyday actions, and in particular through attitudes towards and explanations of hosting and the ways in which these were put into practice.

Shared group hosting primarily occurred between those who had a sense of familiarity, shared belonging, and a common cause or experience. The men hosted others due to a desire to help friends and family; an understanding of what they

have been through; meeting an identifiable need; a sense of obligation, and encouragement from others such as peers and community leaders; alongside the economic need to share financial costs. In doing so, they not only embodied what it means to be part of a particular group, but in caring for others, also reaffirmed their belonging (Milligan and Wiles, 2010; Williams, 2001). Hosting is therefore both a result of group belonging, and a claim to it. In the hosting relationships discussed here, where the men are simultaneously hosts and hosted, these processes are often concurrent and two-way.

The connection between hosting and personal identity was particularly strong in cases where the men had made a more active choice to live with friends who had something in common with them, whether a commitment to studies or a keen social life. The frequency with which harmony at home was linked to living with people who 'think and act like you' suggests that for some groups of men living together reinforces those aspects of their identity and forms a group house identity around those traits or interests. Others represented living with others in terms of their sense of community obligation and assistance, basing relations on a common knowledge of what it is like to be a male Darfurian refugee in Jordan. In these cases, hosting was talked about as a connection to a refugee identity, a male identity, and a Sudanese identity. In more in-depth talks, it often became apparent that there was a preference for people with the same tribal background or place of origin, based on the idea that people with a shared background would have a shared understanding of how to act in ways that were acceptable to each other. Hosting can reinforce a self-identified group identity, as when the Sudanese men told me they host because '*this is what we do, we are Sudanese*'. At the same time, it can also re-create or reconstitute familiar cultural identifiers and practices from before displacement while under very different circumstances.

'Being one of the guys' was also provided as an explanation for why Sudanese men lived together, rather than with *families*. Unlike earlier explanations I'd heard, about discomfort with young men sharing homes with unrelated women, Adam felt that young men could have remained with unrelated families, but that moving in with other young men represented a freedom, consolidating membership in the group of young men, and taking charge of your own behaviour. Despite this, the men were closely networked with others, particularly Darfurian refugees, though also refugees of other nationalities and non-refugees, through community groups and events, work, and volunteering. My work focused on those currently living in hosting arrangements, rather than those who had been excluded from such arrangements, but it would be valuable to understand these processes of inclusion/exclusion and the building of shared identity further.

In a context where the men report feeling invisible, ignored, and undesirable, it is evident that hosting develops and reinforces a sense of belonging. However, this is still a belonging that is largely framed by a common experience of marginalisation and an inability to belong to the larger political community. Samir summed up many of the men's feelings:

> Some Sudanese, I give them suggestions, I imagine. I ask them 'If they gave you a Jordanian passport, and they gave you house, and a good job. Would you stay here?'. 'No, I wouldn't!' They don't like it, because of the [negative Jordanian] community.

As argued by Rowe (2005) not every form of belonging is possible, and people are not free to choose their belongings outside the bounds of power. The home provided by hosting is a limited home. While the day-to-day life of hosting arrangements can make important contributions to relational and economic notions of belonging, their contribution to the cultural and auto-biographical factors are more limited, and their impact on legal status near negligible. Feminist critiques of home have shown that the concept of home as a haven is incomplete, neglecting the experiences of those for whom home is not a private place of refuge, but rather a negative, alienating, and hazardous environment and presenting home as insulated from wider political and societal positions (Manzo, 2003; Young, 2005). Given the on-going marginalisation and uncertainty of the men's lives, such a home can be changing, transient, and uncertain.

Hosting does provide some degree of protection from these concerns. Conceptualisations of home as a space of retreat (but not withdrawal) echoes with the elements of the men's accounts that portray their hosting arrangements as ways to resist their marginalisation and precarity. This may be in the active sharing of information to access employment, assistance, and understand their legal situation, as well as to avoid detention and potential deportation. However, hosting also provides an important site of resistance in allowing the men to be in the city. In enabling the men's inhabitation and relations to each other and their environment, hosting provides openings to contestations of belonging (Boano and Astolfo, 2020; Ortiz and Camillo, 2020). It is by paying attention to the everyday ways in which these men created and experienced relations of care that we can re-focus our attention on how refugees inhabit and negotiate protracted urban displacement and, in doing so, present claims to home.

Conclusion

Young describes refugees as part of a group who do not have 'the time or space to preserve much of the history and culture of their family and community' (2005: 151). While agreeing that minimal shelter, material deprivation, and legal exclusion do not constitute home, I instead join those scholars that have paid attention to how displaced people build and preserve limited, partial, and transient homes in displacement (Brun, 2016; Doná, 2015; Fábos, 2015; Grabska, 2014).

In this chapter, I have shown how relations of care in household hosting contribute to an experience of home in displacement for single Sudanese refugee men in Amman. I identify the financial, intimate, informational, and emotional acts of care exchanged within hosting relationships in response to identified needs among the men. I argue that acts of care within hosting influenced the men's sense of feeling at home. To some extent, hosting mitigates the economic instability caused due to precarious legal status and restrictions, and augments auto-biographical, relational and cultural components of home. The reduction of hosting relations to economic calculations of cost-benefit misses these vital components.

I also argue that hosting contributes to the politics of belonging and participants' positions in wider society. Recognition of each other's situations and needs are crucial in understanding how hosting relationships are formed and experienced. Identities and belongings are shaped by the uncertainty of displacement, used to claim access to hosting, and reinforced and re-shaped through participation in hosting. This emphasises the dynamic nature of care and identities, and the broader importance of paying attention to changing social and political relations in displacement. As such, I build on existing literature on men's caring practices to further confirm that men do care, offering insight into the exchange of care within a group and relationship often overlooked in the literature (Arber and Gilbert, 1989; Brownlie and Spandler, 2018; Fisher, 1994; Fresnoza-Flot, 2014; Kershaw et al., 2008; Locke, 2017; McKay, 2007; Serra Mingot, 2019; Sinatti, 2014). In paying attention to acts of care occurring between (mainly) unrelated men living in hosting relationships, I also draw attention to the formation of new relationships of care in displacement. While family connections may continue to dominate in such contexts, as shown in the alteration of hosting arrangements when 'real' brothers arrived in Jordan, other bases of care can be seen in the men's hosting arrangements and there is a value in paying further attention to relationships of care beyond the family in displacement contexts.
Paying attention to how day-to-day experiences of care constitute experiences of home and displacement contributes to our understandings of refugees' belongings and relationships to places of protracted displacement. However, hosting is not a panacea. While the men recognised and valued their hosting relationships as sites of care and locations in which they could be themselves, their hosting relationships – and the care that underpins them – are not isolated from the hostile external realities. Indeed, their relationships and needs are intricately shaped by the landscapes of their displacement. While hosting can offer a connection to others, allow for the maintenance and expression of identity, and a respite from the political, economic, and social realities of their lives in Amman, these realities also mean that such home is transient. The men continue to dream and plan for alternative future homes, and the way life is 'meant to be'.

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