

# Hospitality: The conquest of Paradise<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** The term hospitality is associated with the industry of tourism. In fact, it is very well considered as a form of relationship between hosts and guest in that modern activity. Nevertheless, its historical root remains occulted in the bottom of darkness. Under that circumstance, ancient history contributes with hard evidence that proves hospitality was present and used as a mechanism to create legitimacy in the conquest of America. That way, Hominem viatores assured that Crown's boundaries were expanded by means of explorers and travelers. The figure of trips as well as hospitality reminded Europeans the superiority of their technique of production over the rest of the world. The present article is aimed at discussing not only ethimologically the origin of this term but also in shedding light into a scientific definition of hospitality.

**Key Words:** Hospitality – Ospes – Conquest of America – Modern Tourism.

## Introduction

Hospitality like other terms has an historical background that nothing has to do with the current sense utilized by scholars in tourism literature. Even if numerous studies have emphasized how hospitality (good treatment) contributed to consolidate tourism as a commercial industry (LASHLEY AND MORRISON, 2001) (SANTOS FILHO, 2008) (GALLARZA AND GIL, 2008) (SANTANA, 2006) (KATHCHIKIAN, 2000) (SCHLUTER, 2008) (ALVAREZ AND KORZAY, 2008) (NADEAU ET AL, 2008) (CASTAÑO, MORENO AND CREGO, 2006) (CORONADO, 2008) (LAU AND MCKERCHER, 2006) (TORIBIO, CASTELLÁ AND SERRANO, 2005) (LYNCH, 2005) (MCNAUGHTON, 2006) (HEUMAN, 2005) (FRANCH ET AL, 2008) (CAPRIELLO AND ROTHERHAM, 2008) (KASTENHOLZ AND LOPEZ DE ALMEIDA, 2008), little or no attention was given to historical and linguistic origin of such a word.

Taking its cue from Pagden, Ramos y Loscertales and Korstanje, the present paper is aimed at discussing critically not only the different usages of this term in the course of past decades in Social Sciences but also in bringing a substantive and scientific definition for future researches. In fact, popular wisdom valorizes the idea that hospitality is referenced to give assistance to trippers or foreigner tourists as guests while others associates this with the likelihood to welcome a stranger at home. However, ¿what does hospitality really mean?

A tentative definition suggests that it refers to the relationship process between a guest and a host, and it also refers to the act or practice of being hospitable, that is, the reception and entertainment of

guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill. Hospitality frequently refers to the hospitality industry jobs for hotels, restaurants, casinos, catering, resorts, clubs and any other service position that deals with tourists. Hospitality is also known as the act of generously providing care and kindness to whoever is in need.

In his excellent book *The Golden Bough* Sir George Frazer has broadly demonstrated that journeys provoke in people moments of extreme anxiety and fear. Usually, Asian and African's tribes recur to different expiatory rituals not only at time of begging a trip but also whenever a foreigner explorer requests permission to enter or pass thru certain territory. For that reason, British anthropologist supposes that outsiders are subject to a specific taboo process in charge of the wizard; in few words, foreigner is sometimes loved and sometimes hated depending on many aspects (FRAZER, 1996).

No need to mention that territorial possession is accompanied not only with certain ritual processes regarding exploration but also founding an archetype (myth) in regard to courage and feat. For example, whenever Scandinavian explorers took possession of Iceland viewed in that action a symbol of transformation. Any discovery is a way of converting Chaos in a civilization expression. In the name of Voden, Nordic warriors revealed the wonders of remote lands (ELIADE, 2006: 22)<sup>2</sup>. It is not surprising that human beings found and destroy in the name of their gods.

From the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, home would be deemed as the site wherein “the good friends are

welcomed” while house only refers to the necessary material things to make the live better (HALBWACHS, 1954). In regard to this, hospitality is applied on the basis of work and territory. The space and home would be occasionally considered as real fortresses worthy to be defended from possible attacks of barbarians or any outsiders (preventive defense). That way, sometimes foreigners (xenos) not always are welcomed at home (WALDENFELS, 2005). ¿Would be considered hospitality a pretext for political violence?, ¿what is the historical origin of hospitality?.

## Initial discussion

Basically, the trace of hospitality comes from the Europe in fifth and sixth centuries B.C. Even though many scholars supposed that this word was founded in Latin's heritage (hospitium) and born on hands of Roman Empire, the point is that Celtic and Germanic tribes introduced such a notion in Europe long time before. In fact, Romans adopted hospitality as a form of political organization much time later than Celts<sup>3</sup>. In Nordic mythology there are many tales where hospitality emerges with as a divine and human ability. Basically, intellectual and strength competitions were present among Scandinavian and Gothic tribes with the end of demonstrate and dissuade enemies in case of a potential military conflagration; occasionally in some tribes the wizard (called Thulr) had the function of leaving the “foreigner's taboos” and applying the principle of hospitality in case of banquets or other kind of receptions (HUIZINGA, 1968).

Frisians, Saxons and Gothics believed

that whenever hospitality runs in moment of celebrations any kind of violent manifestation should be feasible. By incurring in a direct aggression towards one of participants (dinners), the host's honor should be revenged taking up the arms. In Nordic mythology, the irritable Thor (or Donner God) restrained to attack to Hrungnir (the giant) meanwhile was enjoying in a banquet invited and offered by Odin/Wodan (Thor's father); after this unsuitable episode both warriors called for a battle in the land of Griotunagard on the boundaries of Riesenheim (land of Giants) and Asenheim (land of Ases) beyond the frontiers of hospitality. In ancient times, hospitality's zone was not only sacred but also a vehicle for generating and reinforcing reciprocity and solidarity among gods and human beings (DUMEZIL, 1958) (MEUNIER, 2006) (WILKINSON, 2007) (PAGE, 1992) (GERLOMINI, 2007).

Other chronicles found in roman mythology agreed analogically with this proposition; after defeating in twelve interventions to his enemies, Hercules was invited by Faunus King who had idea of killing him while he was sleeping. Even though Faunus was not a direct enemy of Hercules, his ambition led him in trying to kill to victorious Hercules for gaining fame and glory. In opposition to Germans, in Romans hospitality may be a double edged sword when ambition involved is (SOLA, 2004).

Underpinned by the supposition that home and house are privileged to create a symbolic site where emotional relationships can be reproduced, Bordieu (2005) and Barhdt (1970) argued that home is characterized by agrarian tribes (sedentary) which established a specific liaison with territory, time and work giving as a result a real economic process of accumulation. Clans and lineages are conditioned by the structure of kinship with the end of conforming the present and future of any civilization. The territory's acquisition is more than important for these clans to be settled down and reproduced in the line of golden times (BALANDIER, 2004). Popular wisdom believes that hospitality is a universal feature but this point may be broadly discussed and criticized in the following lines.

### Indo-European hospitality

As previously mentioned, in Ancient Europe, hospitality was used as a form of communication between tribes. In fact,

Celtics, Latinos and Germans (linguistically sons of indo-Arian family) had two type of applications for hospitality: political and religious<sup>4</sup>. Although, no modern accommodation's facilities were affordable for trippers in ancient times, hospitality was in fact present and applicable. Usually, foreigners are accustomed to receive and lodge for replacing horses, horseshoes or loading foods. In stores like these, hosts requested a name and journey's reasons for travelers to be registered in a book wherein officials had at their disposal in case of consult (Lange, s/f). In some occasions, Greek riches affronted several costs in receiving a great quantity of foreigners to enhance their own status and honor. However, this custom was not predominant in Roman Empire where foreigners not only were subject to negative stereotypes and discriminated but also robbed during their travesies (FRIEDLANDER, S/F) (PAOLI, 2007).

With basis on archeological evidence, Celts introduced the notion of hospes (hospitality) to Europe around century IX B.C. In these lines, Ramos y Loscertales have already argued that two different significations were used by this term: from a religious perspective, Celts believed that any tripper should be deemed a sacred-related entity since he/she was delivered by gods. Under that circumstances, people were forced into giving assistance to travelers in everything they needs. However, hospitality had a political application rooted in the belief that neighbor tribes should celebrate agreements with the end of strengthening territory's jurisdictions or as a defensive strategy. In peaceful and war times, reciprocity was applied if two tribes celebrated hospitium each other and solidified their obligation forever.

Hypothetically, Ramos y Loscertales (1948) supposes that these preventive measures helped in creating diverse nets of alliances in case of an outsider's aggressions or attacks (RIVERO, 1993). In the mid of twentieth century, Alvaro D'ors analyzed the wide-spread hospitium notion throughout Iberia and found that hospes (hospitium) was an adopted form of political revitalization made by reinforcing the covenant between sedentary tribes that were living in the region (D'ORS, 1953). Recently, Ettiene, La Roux and Tranoy (1987) collected hard evidence that proves early explanations about hospitality.

Based on an analysis of 34 manuscripts

found in the zone, these researchers sustain that Iberians and Celts knew hospitality before appearance of Roman Empire. The same point was notably emphasized by the dictator Caius Julius Caesar when entered in Gaul by first time (CÉSAR, VI, 5-6, p. 190). However, others findings lead us to question that Romans (italiotas) did not take hospitality from Celts but indo-Arian customs. At moment it is not clear if hospitium was used by Romans or not but for Professor Paloma Balbín Chamorro, hospitium and patronatus not only coexisted during all Roman Empire but also were used depending the involved circumstances and interests.

In accordance to Humbert, Balbin Chamorro insisted that hospitium was characterized by a the public doctrine comprises the tripper's rights protection by means of the transference of a temporarily citizenship for the lapse the journey takes. (BALBIN CHAMORRO, 2006) (HUMBERT, 1978). As a whole, Chamorro criticizes the contributions of Mommsen who insisted that hospitality was a natural right emanated from temporal protection assigned by a roman citizens over any foreigner pilgrim who was en route to other destination. That way, human beings were naturally hospitable before to foreigners, but one of the limitations of this thesis lies in the incapacity to explain as to how hostility works in social life. If Romans were too kind as Mommsen suggested, how we may explain their disdain against foreigners. One of the problems of Mommsen is to suppose idyllically that tribes may be equilibrated by means of celebrating diverse agreements relegating the figure of hostility in a second position.

Basically, for Chamorro hospitality was a measure resulted from a natural and aggressive relationship between tribes (understood in a hobessian way) and not from the cooperation's necessity. Halicarnassus and Titus Livius testimonies prove that hospitality was present in roman Republic before the encounter with Celtic and Germanic tribes. Ethimologically, the term comes from the formula *hostis and pet*. Even if hostis is related to the presence of enemy hospitium were used in kindly circumstances. For that reason, our author did not agree that hostis symbolizes the hostile conflagration but equilibrium.

Nonetheless, Chamorro did not precise a specific chronological frame whenever hosts began to be utilized as a form of

expressing compensation and reciprocity but clearly she is not mistaken when affirms that guest, foreigner and enemy (in latin) has a common origin; philosophically she argues that in ancient times any "free citizen" born in the bosom of society is constituted in opposition to the foreigner who was a natural enemy even if would be transformed in guest at time of hospitality applications or in slave if he is captured in the mid of battle.

Following this explanation, Chamorro notes that *hospes* means "Master of guest" but gives not further references. If this is correct, also there would be an hypothetical usage of hospitality which implies a free circulation warranty in conjunction with the obligation to give assistance in all obstacle a traveler faces. Undoubtedly, in the evolution of their traditions Romans replaced the ancient application of hospitality by other more complex. In the course of its expansion, Rome was inclined to substitute ancient *hospes* by *patronatus* which allowed a direct control over conquered territories. For that, the alternation of *patronatus* and *hospitium* were deployed whether the circumstances permitted.

These suppositions are endorsed by Professor Jose Maria Blazquez who studied the roman and Celtic presence in Hispania (current Spain and Portugal). Spaniard historian is more than clear when said "*D'ors had deducted that hospitality and patronatus were most adopted by neutralizing the celtic alliance in Spain. By the way, in the more romanized zones people were subject to the authority of patronatus instead of hospitium*" (BLAZQUEZ, 1989: 55). But in other cases, *patronatus* and *hospitium* coexisted depending on the interests at stake.

The roman and indigenous world was too rich that cultural assimilation and economic exploitation were converged under the figure of roman citizenship. In sum, the contributions of Blazquez remind us that Rome (as almost empires) situated geographically legions in regions where gold and silver were predominant. The aristocratic appetite for gold in Romans was well documented by Titus Livius who confirmed that in and outside of Rome, houses were refurbished by gold and silver elsewhere; whenever a tribe was defeated, survivors were forced into giving all type of treasures, precious metals and jewels which

were immediately delivered and stored in Rome and outskirts. (Liv. XXI, 60) (Liv. XXXIV, 43)

Once a region was colonized and "pacified", Romans extracted such a mineral uncut and processed in their metropolis for a later exportation. At a final instance, these elaborated products were imposed (imported) in the form of style of life determining the beginning of Romanization. Under that circumstance, fashion, leisure and the transformation (alienation) of ancient hospitality meaning served as a real mechanism of creating hegemony.

### **Roman influence on America conquest.**

Hints to that effect, prompted Anthony Pagden to explain brilliantly that America's conquest not only redefined the life in Europe (identity) but also generated a new way of considering the others (indigenous or natives). Thanks to the influences and admiration of Renaissance's scholars, Europeans regimes (above all Spain) evoked the glory of Rome and proclaimed themselves as heirs of roman authorities and boundaries. This was possible because Hispania in fact was one of more romanized provinces from all Empire.

Under such circumstance, the point was that France and England questioned directly the principle of roman authority in the new continent. At a first instance, since natives of America were not part of Catholic Church, Alexander papal bull and Tordesillas covenant should be considered inapplicable. Furthermore, in the heart of Spain Salamanca Stream criticized the role played by Pope in the discovery and consequent conquest of America as well as the ambition of Spaniard monarchy.

Even if for Spaniard rights over the land were instituted in the combination of *civitas* and *imperium*, for British and French only explorers who work, sow and improve the land would be legitimated in the exclusive legal ownership's right. Many years later, British philosophers like Locke or Hobbes criticized the Spaniard religious evangelization in America (LOCKE, 1967) (HOBBS, 2004) (PAGDEN, 1997: 55).

For the other hand, Spaniard scholars were obsessed in justifying legally the military occupancy in America; a stream led by Giovanni Botero proposed to Charles V as the new Octavianus Augustus Caesar (first emperor of Rome) with the end of considering the rights of

Spain in accordance to Rome. The main thesis was that Romans had not indeed any jurisdiction in America.

Although scholastics inclined to outline that Pope was a natural heir of Roman imperators, this argument was not enough to convince the rest of scholars. For example, Soto proposed the only way that Spain had been legitimated in America was the case of natives had desired and agreed the government of an outsider Crone; Diego Covarrubias y Leyva argued that the law is based on empiric facts (*ex facto oritur ius*) and experience. Not only the Emperor was any kind of jurisdiction in America but also the idea of *imperium* was impossible to be put in practice in the medieval Spain (PAGDEN, 1997: 70-79).

After a long academic discussion, the door was closed and the debate on the humanity of aborigines finally culminated when the rebellious Salamanca's stream agreed the sub humanity of America's natives due to their ignorance of free transit and hospitality's doctrine. Europeans thought that humanity was determined by natural rights even Hospitality. That way, Spain and Portugal found a pretext not only to punish "the downright ignorance of these savages" but also in civilizing them by means to religion and military impositions (PAGDEN, 1997, chapter I and II). Once more time, hospitality was decisively manipulated in the search and conquest of a new lost paradise.

The principle of *ius peregrinandis* resolved an old-age discrepancy that had taken many years in the Kingdom of Spain and consolidated the basis for a military conquest (PAGDEN, 1997) (KORSTANJE, 2007). As a result of this, thru XVI and XVII centuries A. C. colonial officials promoted the journeys as a form of expanding and making an inventory of all territory features in America. This was an effective manner to reproduce colonial regime in the continent and continuing the legitimacy of Crone (ALTUNA, 2000).

As the previous argument under scrutiny, it is strongly necessary to reconsider hospitality in the light of historical facts, sometimes manipulated or at service of politic interests. Most likely, today the modern comparison between hotel and public hospital may be fruitful to explain how hospitality works (at least the two antagonic meanings that hospitality has triggered). Following Clifford Geertz mindset, it is interesting to understand

how an agreement appears to be celebrated between two parts in accordance to cooperation issues, a no manifest interest remains occult in the shadows of pretensions (since the pretext to break that alliance just justify an attack as due). Paradoxically, treaties are destined to be violated in the search of the glory or fame (GEERTZ, 2000).

### Hospitality today.

In modern literature, the same point was outlined by Jacques Derrida in the analysis of conditional and unconditional hospitality. For French philosopher, hospitality is an act of violence founded in the heart of state's power. A migrant would be welcomed under the principle of hospitality only if had a previous patrimony or background; that way, modern State prevented the entrance of foreigners without any type of verification (check-out). In endorsing a visa (from lat. videre) States knows beforehand who is the foreigner wishes to enter into its jurisdictions.

Jacques Derrida calls to this conditional hospitality while unconditional hospitality applies whenever it is offered without any kind of restrictions; this is the case of modern hotel and hospital in Europe; in regard to this, if the first store requested a previous payment of grating hospitality, the second give lodging to all patients but any distinction (DERRIDA, 2006) (WESTMORELAND, 2008) (KORSTANJE, 2007). Following Derrida's contributions, since in general reciprocity between hosts and guests are equilibrated by power of money, conditional hospitality is predominant in tourism while in medical issues hospitality became unconditional (always in the case that it was free for patients). In fact, a host must pay for the received service.

The discussion whether hospitality belongs or not to human's rights will continue for long time. For that reason, the present contribution is aimed at being a theoretical and useful alternative for scholars, philosophers, tourism researchers who are interested in studying hospitality from an historical perspective. Likewise, we acknowledge that "history is the mirror of present", in consequence only by understanding the ancient root of hospitality we shall tackle issues of a complex nature like this in a near future".

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#### Notes

1. Korstanje Maximiliano is lecturer at Palermo University, Argentina and Ph. D (Cand) in Social Psychology. As researchers had more than 100 articles published in most prestige journals in North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America. Furthermore, he is member of AIEST (International Association of expert Scientific in Tourism and part of the international Society for Philosophers, Sheffield United Kingdom and the Philosophical Society of England, Newcastle, United Kingdom.
2. Voden is the name of Oddin or Woddan for Ancient Anglo-Saxons.
3. For an in depth understanding of the term of hospitality, the starting point is the etymology of the word itself. The word hospitality derives from the Latin *hospes*, which is formed from

*hostis*, which originally meant a 'stranger' and came to take on the meaning of the enemy or 'hostile stranger' (*hostilis*) + *petis* (*polis*, *poles*, *potentia*) to have power. Furthermore, the word *hostire* means equillize/compensate.

4. Indo-Arian classification was mistakenly most used by Nationalisms in the Europe of 1930-1955 as an ethnic label; however, this had nothing to do with any ethnic groups but only a linguistic criterion. Indo-Arian family is a stream of diverse tribes linguistic association. In other words, scientifically we may not refer indo-Arian but as a linguistic family including Latinos, Germans, Celts, and Slavs. For example, if we decipher the term *visum* (past of lat. Verb *videre* – to see) –where comes from the modern use of *visa*- we obtain that in archaic term of *weid* (Arian) and the following derived sub-constructions in almost languages pertaining to this family: Saxon (*witan*) and Franks (*wita*) have undoubtedly given origin to modern German and English verbs *wissen* and *wise* respectively. Nevertheless other words were rooted on the same origin like *gwyn* (Walsh), *visti* (Lithuanian), *vidya* (Bulgarian), *widzec* (Polish) and *videt* (russian).