



Published by the decision of the Scientific Council
of Khachatur Abovian
Armenian State Pedagogical University



Department of Philosophy and Logic
named after Academician Georg Brutian



W I S D O M

3(19), 2021



*WISDOM is covered in Clarivate Analytics' Emerging Sources
Citation Index service*

YEREVAN – 2021

HOSPITALITY AS CARE FOR THE OTHER

Abstract

The article aims to study the phenomenon and theoretical concept of hospitality in historical, cultural and socio-philosophical contexts. It has been proved that hospitality is an actual strategy of attitude to the Other. Hospitality has been defined as an interaction with the Other, attitude to the Other as a guest. The essential features of hospitality, its transformation from traditional forms to modern dimensions, mechanisms of implementation of the abstract law of hospitality in contemporary social practices have been analyzed. It is emphasized that hospitality acts as a universal norm and form of coexistence of people, interaction of different cultures, nations, ethnic groups. The potential of dialogicity and tolerance inherent in hospitality, which is interpreted as protection and assistance to humans in a changing global world, the foundation of understanding the Other have been revealed. Hospitable interaction is not limited to the socio-cultural experience of interpersonal relations but is shown as an acceptable model that introduces the principle of consent in intercultural relations in the field of migration, tourist exchanges and other social processes.

Keywords: hospitality, Other, alien, host, intercultural strategy.

Introduction

The phenomenon of the Other is actively discussed in the philosophical community. Human unfolds himself in the world, builds his life project, makes free choices. The encounter with the Other can be phenomenologically described as the encounter of one person's freedom with the freedom of the other, and such an encounter is conflictual. This place of conflict sets different options for communication and interaction with the Other. We believe that hospitality is a promising strategy and practice of relationships with the Other.

The conceptualization of the phenomenon of hospitality shows that mental, sacral-symbolic, economic, and political practices often fall under its interpretation. Hospitality has been formed as a universal mechanism of encountering and communicating with the Other as a guest since the

times of archaic culture. It provided security and confidence in trusting relationships with strangers and interacting with other cultures. In conditions of intensification of migration processes, intercultural projects, when the Other reduces the socio-cultural distance, comes in dangerous proximity to us, penetrates the space of our immediate environment, there is a need for theoretical reflection of hospitable interaction, which bears conflictogenic risks at the interpersonal, state and global levels. There is an urgent need to understand the concept of hospitality, to define its essence, phenomenal features and socio-cultural significance. The analysis of the transformation of the phenomenon of hospitality in the modern global world, its opportunities and risks in the conditions of national and interstate interactions is relevant. The absolutization of the abstract law of hospitality and its implementation in the relative laws of hospitable interactions is a

problem that we articulate as an antinomy of hospitality. Hospitality is a cross-cultural and transhistorical phenomenon. In contemporary science, there is no unanimous interpretation of the concept of hospitality and systematic study of it as a socially important phenomenon. In this regard, the social phenomenon of hospitality, which unfolds as interpersonal interaction and social practice, needs its definition and socio-philosophical analysis.

The purpose of the study is a socio-philosophical analysis of hospitality in interaction with the Other as a guest, its essential features and transformation from traditional forms to modern dimensions. The implementation of the research purpose determines the formulation and solution of a number of tasks: to identify the theoretical and methodological foundations of the socio-philosophical study of the phenomenon of hospitality; to define the essence of the concept of hospitality and to track changes in its interpretations in the historical and cultural context; to analyze the mechanisms of implementation of the abstract law of hospitality in contemporary social practices of contacts with the Other.

Hospitality has been considered as a social phenomenon that introduces the value of caring for the Other in traditional and modern models of social coexistence. *The subject* of the study is the essential features of hospitality and its peculiarities as an abstract value and a component of specific social practices.

Methodology of Analysis

The multiplicity of hospitality as a social phenomenon leads to the creation of a complex methodological landscape that allows to adequately present the meanings of the concepts of “homeworld”, “Other”, “hospitality” and conduct a thorough analysis of hospitality as a theoretical construct and component of social practice. The method of structural and functional analysis made it possible to reveal the multifunctionality of hospitality in contemporary social

practices. The axiological method is used to substantiate hospitality as a value at the individual and societal levels. It was appropriate to use the phenomenological method as a consideration of human being-in-the-world, the study of hospitality through the prism of the living world and human experience, socio-cultural existence in the home world and being-with-others. The hermeneutic method works fruitfully in favor of solving the problem of subject-subject relations and achieving understanding in the intercultural space, helps to interpret hospitality as a cultural text that reflects the traditions, tasks and meanings of social interactions between the subjects of the home world and other cultural worlds.

The scientific novelty of our study lies in the socio-philosophical interpretation of hospitality as a social phenomenon in its procedurality from traditional forms to contemporary social practices and substantiation of the forward-looking hospitality strategy as a mechanism of intercultural and political interaction.

Results and Discussion

The concept of hospitality is part of the universal, basic concepts of universal human civilization central for understanding national traditions, the picture of the world, a specific attitude to the Other. Hospitality is presented, as noted by French philosopher A. Montandon (2004), “as an all-encompassing value and even as an instinct, many qualities and attributes are ascribed to it, which shows the extent to which the concept of hospitality is ideologically and mythologically loaded” (p. 2). We argue that hospitality always reveals itself not only as a model of behaviour and the real offering by a person or community of their place, time, things for temporary use to others but also as a socio-cultural strategy for the systematic development of intercultural communication.

The philosophical issue of hospitality as a social phenomenon today is still a relatively new and little-studied domain. The theory and prac-

tice of hospitality attract the attention of a wide range of researchers in various scientific and social studies: tourism service and migration practices, social philosophy, sociology, ethics, history, ethnography, semiological and linguistic fields – E. Benveniste, R. Kearney, J. Caputo, J. R. Walker, L. Likhachov, L. Morgan. Hospitality is the subject of philosophical reflection of I. Kant, J. Baudrillard, J. Derrida, P. Ricoeur, A. Montandon, S. Zenkin, V. Markov, O. Petrovskaya. In domestic philosophy, this phenomenon is represented by the studies of V. Pazenok, G. Harbar, M. Kolinko, I. Komarnitsky, V. Moroz, R. Solovey, E. Funtusov. However, domestic science lacks a systematic socio-philosophical study of the theoretical and methodological model of hospitality.

The word *hospitality* has different substantive aspects, which are manifested in different mental traditions and rules (Dodonov, 1999). In the “Dictionary of Indo-European Concepts and Society”, E. Benveniste highlighted important points in understanding the phenomenon of hospitality. Firstly, it is “equality of relations between people as a result of the action of compensation for gifts, exchange” (Benvenist, 1995, p. 74). Secondly, the guest is interpreted as an enemy: “To explain the connection between the meanings of ‘guest’ and ‘enemy’, it is usually assumed that both are derived from the meaning of ‘stranger’ which is attested in Latin; hence ‘a stranger with good intentions is a guest’ and ‘a stranger with bad intentions is an enemy’” (Benvenist, 1995, p. 77). Researcher I. Pakholova analyzes the understanding of the guest as an enemy. According to her, this characteristic “reflected the difference that arose between own and other’s community. It was presented as the difference between internal and external. Being on the territory or in the community of hospitable hosts, the guest joins their life as a stranger without assimilating. Here the institution of hospitality, based on mutual exchange, is annulled, and the appearance of a ‘stranger’ is regarded as an external invasion” (Pakholova, 2011, p. 33).

Thus, in hospitality, as I. Pakholova (2011) notes, “there are two motives – the motive of the agreement, which is approved and supported by mutual gifts, and the motive of enmity and danger that the guest carries with him” (p. 33). Famous hospitality researcher S. Zenkin gives an etymological analysis of the concept of hospitality: “French d’hospitalité in history meant the practice of hosting pilgrims and refugees, while the etymologically related Russian word *guest* meant *merchant*; accordingly, the development of this common token on French ground gave rise to the words *hospital* and *hospice*” (Zenkin, 2004). Hence the name “hospitable yard” comes from. Thus, the analysis of hospitality is based on the use of toposes friend/foe and guest/host.

It is possible to “capture” the essential features of the phenomenon of hospitality and create its holistic concept only in consideration of its historical and cultural transformations, in connection with the tendencies of society development and the principles of geographical determinism. We should agree with H. Sayadyan and A. Gevorgyan (2020) that “The influence of geographic factors on the society as well as on different social realities had special importance within the whole history” (p. 136). Features of geographical space have shaped traditions and forms of manifestation of hospitality throughout the history of this phenomenon.

Addressing the culture of archaic society with rigid and clear patterns of social relations that presuppose the instrumental nature of social action explains the roots of the cultural processes and phenomena that the contemporary researcher encounters. Such a culture that seems ordered – its predictability guarantees the clarity of the attitude to the Other – is opposed to the anxiety of the unknown, contemporary challenges and risks. Early cultures were characterized by hospitality within friendly communication, which resembles a fraternity agreement and demonstrates a complex verbal communication system and body language. Many researchers, for example, N. Bigunova and I. Kolegaeva (2019), draw at-

attention to the importance of both verbal and nonverbal characteristics of hospitable communication.

H. Harbar (2011) gives the example of the concept of *kala* in African tribes – “it is a friend to each of the tribes he visits, and he has the right to everything that belongs to a friend: his hut and his wife” (p. 86). In a tribal society, hospitality served as a kind of international law. The exchange of gifts conditions the most ancient form of hospitality, so the union of hospitality, founded and supported by mutual gifts, guaranteed inviolability and security in “foreign” territory. Thus, E. Benvenist (1995) points to the system typical of the Indian tribes of northwestern America, which consists of a sequence of gifts and responses. When receiving a gift, the partner must thank the giver with a more valuable gift because of a specific obligation (p. 70).

In the Caucasus, hospitable relations are reflected in the tradition of *kunachism*. *Kunak* is a friend who belongs to another homeworld and on whom the mountaineer could rely as on a patron. This custom of hospitality was based on a code of honour and provided shelter and assistance, strengthened friendly relations between neighbouring families, formed common values and social rules. In Armenia, the traveller was called a “guest from God”; he was always given some food and shelter. An unexpected guest could become “common” when the neighbours came together to meet him with dignity. The Armenian feast always demonstrates the host’s generosity and is considered an important component of family happiness, cultural level, national identity.

The oldest form of intercultural interaction in ancient Greece was *proxenia* hospitality, which defined both individual relationships between people and relationships between communities and *poleis*. I. Komarnitsky (2012) confirms this position: at first, the person who hosted guests “as a private person, protected the interests of newcomers from other cities, helped to solve their problems. Subsequently, such alliances be-

tween individuals to protect the guest were transformed into agreements between individual communities, settlements and even states” (p. 232). Travellers were respected not only for material benefit but also in anticipation of the news. The guest always performs an important function – he informs about other people’s worlds.

The Greeks considered not the meeting of guests but sending-off to be the most important. Reception and sending-off as the limits of hospitality sharpen the topology of the “own” and the “other”. The inner space of a hospitable event, on the contrary, temporarily neutralizes this opposition when the guest becomes *own for strangers, adapts*. Reception is a metaphor for understanding another culture. In this case, both verbal and nonverbal communication introduces the guest to the space of another culture. Its purpose for the guest is to learn some cultural language unknown to him and to achieve mutual understanding between the participants of the hospitality situation.

In the Middle Ages, due to the dominance of the Christian religion and the need to visit holy places, numerous categories of pilgrim travellers appeared. There was a need to develop an extensive service infrastructure, new types of inns emerged – *hospitals*, which were designed to receive religious travellers. It is suggested that the emergence of a hotel form of hospitality is consistent with the needs of some knightly religious orders – Hospitallers, Templars. The Crusades resulted in a network of hotel chains throughout the Mediterranean that was close to the modern system, bringing comfort to travellers and significant profits for owners. The huge role in the development of the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, was played by the so-called “*imarets*”, i.e. complexes that united religious and charitable institutions, on the one hand, and trade institutions, on the other.

An interesting aspect is a hospitality towards knowledge in Europe in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Well-known researchers D. Antiseri and J. Reale (2003) described medieval Paris,

where “the universitas magistrorum et scholarum, a united corporation of teachers and students, predominated. A special advantage in the 12th century was the Notre Dame school, which gathered under its auspices students from all over Europe and soon became the subject of attention of the Roman Curia” (p. 225). Travelling scientists, philosophers who gave knowledge enjoyed the hospitality of cities and urban communities.

Hospitality is a meeting of subjects, experiences, lifeworlds. It brings to life the phenomena of personal devotion, fidelity embodied in symbolic facts and events. The geographical, cultural and social difference between the participants of the event is significant for the “gathering” of hospitality interaction. The transformation of the tradition of hospitality into a social institution, which is grown in the public consciousness, produces civilized rules for encountering the Other in political formation (country, union of states), requires the use of the socio-philosophical methodology. We would like to address the ambiguity contained in the hospitality event. It is essential to understand the social meaning of hospitality to identify ways to implement it in the life strategies of people and communities. Hospitality carries with it the care for the homeworld and being-with-others, as well as the productive connection between here-being and being-with-others. In interpreting the phenomenon of hospitality, it is necessary to take into account the cultural contexts and personal differences of people, heterogeneity, the multidimensionality of values and cultural space of the community, as well as differences in the practices of constituting different communities in the experience of learning and recognizing the Other.

The analysis of hospitality motivates us to engage the problem of the Alien in research. This concept is polysemantic – in everyday language, we can refer to it as someone who came from distant lands and someone who is not like us in our own world. The familiarized world is the homeworld that we do not notice. The world begins to capture our attention only when the usual

patterns of orientation in the social space do not work. When the Own familiarized world is incomprehensible, “wrong”, we are faced with the Alien. It is the description of the Alien as a deliberate (intentional) failure that we focus on in the study of this phenomenon in the works of the German phenomenologist B. Waldenfels. He defines the encounter with the Alien as enduring and reveals the meaning of this phenomenon, articulating it as a situation of injury. B. Waldenfels believes that the peculiarity of the definition of the Alien is that “the meaning here wallows in real influence – here we are not focused on something that goes towards meeting us, that causes our initiative and at the same time awaits our response. Rather, reality interrupts our language, it overtakes us. It hinders or hurts, suppresses our intentions in their implementation” (Waldenfels, 1999, p. 55). The Alien is a tool of social failure. He draws the community’s attention to the gaps in the mechanisms of intercultural solidarity and encourages a rethinking of existing norms and rules, improving the socio-cultural system.

The tendency of contemporary philosophy of hospitality is a shift away from the concept of the *Alien* to an understanding of the *Other*. In various methodological fields, G. Simmel, P. Ricoeur, E. Levinas, J. Habermas raise this question and try to provide their answers to the problem of interaction with the Other. Thus, the vector of our study requires adding the concept of “Other” to the concepts of “Own” and “Alien” to describe the diversity of interactions of the subject with representatives of another culture. By stating its existence, the Other brings the interaction between two different subjects into a fundamentally different conceptual field, makes it possible to remove the opposition “own/alien”. The Other gives the social subject the feeling not so much of alienation and aggression, as in the case of the Alien, as the feeling of interested attention. It represents interest not just by its dissimilarity with the people of the homeworld, but by its desire to interact or by the possibility of compare-

son with the Own.

I. Komarnitsky (2012) believes that the desire for the productivity of encounter “with Others, and in the extreme case – with Aliens encourages individual and collective subjects to code such social interactions in terms of hospitality” (p. 231). An “opening” of human communication happens, which is facilitated by hospitable relationships, when the subject does not coincide with the Other but seeks to understand its image, way of life. The Other is perceived as a person who has rights, and it is a reflection of its own. There is no negation that accompanies the Alien, that is, “*not-own*”. This is how a hospitable relationship with the other cultural subject is born. This algorithm of understanding hospitality as a relationship with the Other is fundamental in our study.

Hospitality brings to life the phenomena of personal interest, openness, and trust, promoting society’s self-regulation processes, improving the rules of coexistence and communication with the Other. It should be considered on two levels: as interpersonal relations – in the home territory of an individual or family, and at the level of a nation or other community, the interaction of different cultures, the hospitality of the country to visitors. We invite other people home individually, personally, as subjects with their personal qualities and specific connections with us. The country accepts people as representatives of certain social groups and communities, statuses and official characteristics – as refugees, former compatriots, labour migrants, tourists.

This problem was raised by the German philosopher I. Kant. In the works “The Metaphysics of Morals” and “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch”, he talks about the right of hospitality. The third definitive article on the perpetual peace is related to Kant’s right to universal citizenship, which belongs to all but faces restrictions by the laws of different territories. Legal and hospitable interactions have a common nature, according to I. Kant, which determines their internal, deep connection as they represent the

implementation of principles of humans as active beings and look like a condition of freedom in the field of practical reason. “The chief of these duties is respect for the rights of others. It is our duty to regard them as sacred and to respect and maintain them as such. There is nothing more sacred in the wide world than the rights of others. They are inviolable” (Kant, 1965, p. 178). As a result, hospitality, law, good-neighbourliness, and solidarity resulting from the collision of personal and group selfish impulses are forms of implementation of the supreme goals of nature and human duty – to build the life according to the principle of law as a categorical imperative. Thus, hospitality acquires political significance and needs philosophical understanding and legal confirmation. I. Kant was probably the first researcher to combine philosophical and legal aspects of hospitality.

In our monograph, we have already noted that “the question of the ‘visiting rights’ had only been raised, but not fully developed by I. Kant” (Kolinko, 2019, p. 289). When he restricts the rights of a foreigner who is in the territory of a sovereign state, the visiting rights, denying the right of permanent residence, it is a question not of humanity, but of law. Today, this question “has become one of the most acute in practical policy, legal and ideological spheres. It creates a conceptual background for any contemporary reflection on hospitality” (Kolinko, 2013, p. 148).

We emphasize the ambiguity of the act of hospitality. If we keep within the limits of its rationalization, then we should recognize that the hospitality process still needs to be refined. We should agree with J. Derrida (2000) that ignorance does not mean the absence of a phenomenon, but only points to another dimension of hospitality: “hospitality is what is going to happen, what always happens in practice, despite the fact that it “is always to come” (p. 4).

Institutionalized hospitality, in the course of time, grew into a powerful industry. It is not only about the tourist service, but also about the net-

works of political and legal institutions that provide reception of guests and new members of the countries. State hospitality is the actions taken by the state to receive, adapt and integrate the newly arrived (official representatives of other states, migrants, settlers) into the local community. In the modern world, there are two main models of public hospitality.

The first model is multicultural. It should be noted that there is a problem of cultural diversity, which often poses difficult challenges. Multiculturalism, which is “understood not only as tolerance for cultural diversity, but also as a requirement for legislative recognition of the rights of racial, religious and cultural groups” (*Multykulturalizm*, 2009, p. 102) is considered by many philosophers, political scientists and jurists as one of the directions to overcome tensions in multicultural countries and to intensify the processes of democratization and cultural recognition.

In multiculturalism, the state helps immigrants preserve their cultural and national identity and, at the same time, become full members of the host society, granting them privileges even greater than the native population (these privileges may be language courses, employment quotas, social support). At this stage, such a model is facing a crisis. Maintaining their identity, immigrants do not always integrate into the socio-political environment, and they continue to live in closed communities (people from Africa in France, Arab communities in Germany, etc.).

The second model is an assimilative model. This model characterizes acceptance in society, which is conducted under the condition of the formation of a new identity instead of cultural and national differences. This leads to the lack of competitiveness and the loss of national cultures, the depersonalization of hospitality and its transformation into a pragmatic industry.

Active migration flow to European countries, weak integration and expectations of social preferences by migrants lead to the fact that the population of European countries shows a relatively

low degree of readiness for a hospitable reception for newcomers from developing countries. The contemporary migration crisis in Europe is connected with the unwillingness of many European countries to receive and redistribute their resettlement, which leads to an uneven burden on the migration services of particular European countries due to the massive inflow of migrants from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.

It should be noted that migration makes an important social and economic contribution to the destination countries, culturally enriches them, provides society with labour. The value of labour migration has been demonstrated during the coronavirus pandemic when there was almost a collapse in some areas, such as agriculture in European regions, because of the lack of migrant workers' mobility. The following questions arise: what value do the integration processes of migrants acquire? What is the correlation between the tactics of ignoring, assimilating or rejecting alien subjects by communities? S. Balinchenko (2019) offers an interesting angle of the problem – the coordination of “socio-cultural space, restructured due to migration, taking into account the intentions and expectations of local people and migrants, as well as the mythologems of unity and otherness, spread in the information space” (p. 4). The humanistic guideline of a globalized society is the acceptance and protection of “foreigners”. However, the prevalence of reluctance to accept the rules of the new world in the migration environment, poverty, low social status of migrants, which makes them vulnerable to the challenges of a successful life, increasing terrorism in countries hosting refugees – all these circumstances motivate host societies to treat migrants with caution and apprehension. S. Balinchenko (2019) notes the strengthening of “archaic tendencies to separate “our” from “other”, as well as the polarization of We and They in conflicting assessments” (p. 6). In this regard, “‘aliens from another world’ cause concern such as: ‘How many of them are among us, how

many strangers are there in our world?” (Balinchenko, 2019, p. 6), as A. Badiou is quoted by S. Balinchenko. The values of the common world are re-evaluated at an everyday level, among ordinary people, and officially – at the level of various institutions of society that have faced the problems of adaptation of migrants. This leads to an unfair generalization and a reaction of rejection of immigrants by some governments (events in Greece, Hungary). The interference of problematic reality, in the normative regulation of coexistence declared as fundamental European values, encourages social philosophy to create a scientific discourse on the rethinking of the topic of integration. In this sense, we agree with S. Balinchenko’s (2019) conclusion that “assessing otherness and trying to subordinate it to one’s own socio-cultural space if the Other becomes part of it, as well as assessing differences from the standpoint of “compatibility/ incompatibility” with the communicative space of the recipient community – does not contribute to self-renewal of Us, because integration as a rejection of the specific identity of “foreigners” is, in fact, a discursively questionable requirement for the Other to renounce his own self-renewal in favor of another identity” (pp. 6-7). Interaction between members of society and migrants as carriers of different socio-cultural codes occurs according to the “instrumental scenario of forced assimilation (“they have to learn our values to live in our space”) or the communicative scenario of interest in otherness as social capital, not a threat” (Balinchenko, 2019, p. 8). The second algorithm is more acceptable to contemporary society and corresponds to our reasoning about hospitality as respect for the Other. The self-responsibility of the participants of a cultural meeting presupposes a balance when the movement of the Other to our homeworld is a sign of the renewal of society.

Conclusion

As a result of the study, we came to the fol-

lowing conclusions. Historically, the phenomenon of hospitality is associated with the cultural tradition of respectful reception and treating guests and is common to almost all peoples of the world. The analysis of socio-cultural, ideological (mythological, sacred, secular) foundations of hospitality and its everyday practices allow us to conclude that the formation of the invariant core of the institution of hospitality is associated with the development of cultural and political connections, trade, pilgrimage, travel of philosophers and educators, which contributed to the development of a tolerant attitude towards the Other. The analysis of the historical and cultural aspect of hospitality confirms its ideological nature, constructive social role and axiological significance in societies with different cultural orientations.

Today, there is a growing interest in the concept of hospitality and research scenarios for the interpretation of this social phenomenon. The analysis presented in our article allows us to state with confidence that there is a shift from the perception of hospitality as a purely ethnographic practice and etiquettical episode to consideration of its importance in the socio-cultural, political and economic processes of the global world.

The encounter with the Other is considered as social capital, not a threat to the homeworld. Hospitality helps to perform self-regulation of society, maintains the stability of internal relations and facilitates interaction with the outside world. Its meaning, connected with the tolerant perception of the other, not similar to the representatives of our homeworld, makes hospitality a determining factor in forming a tolerant model of the behaviour of social actors. At the same time, it is interpreted not only as a daily practice of interpersonal interaction but also as a condition and marker of a friendly policy of social communities to representatives of other territories, states in relation to other states.

Hospitality occupies an important place in the structure of social values and contributes to the achievement of intercultural and interstate har-

mony. This concept not only demonstrates ethnographic contexts but also forms attractive principles of tourist culture and economy, introducing its rules into state relations with subjects seeking political asylum or employment.

Thus, the analysis of trends in hospitality in the value-normative and political space of contemporary society shows that it is transformed from interpersonal interaction to a social institution. The cosmopolitan right of the hospitality of the inhabitants of the Earth, which I. Kant insisted on, is manifested as the relative laws and rules of different societies – this is the deepest antinomy of hospitality, which needs to be addressed.

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