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The return to hospitality

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Anthropology has been largely absent from the recent explosion of interdisciplinary enthusiasm with hospitality across philosophy, political science, and cultural studies. Yet anthropology's living engagement with hospitality has been far deeper than that of any other discipline. This essay, which introduces the volume, aims to revitalize hospitality as a frontier area of theoretical development in anthropology by highlighting the topic's connections to some of our discipline's most vibrant themes and concerns: ethical reasoning, materiality, temporality and affect, alterity and cosmopolitics, sovereignty and scale.

> Knowing also Dobuanc distrust of, and lack of hospitality to strangers, his fear of strange sorcery, the fact that he is given hospitality and fed by his host, his *kula* partner abroad, may well be viewed, as he views it, as one of the strange miracles of magic.
>
> Fortune 1932: 215

Imagine what anthropology might look like today if Marcel Mauss had chosen hospitality rather than the gift as the subject of his 1924 treatise (Mauss 2002 [1923-4]). In this alternative world, we would by now have a long-standing debate around multiple interpretations of Maussian hospitality; an exhaustive cross-cultural list of ethnographic vignettes of hospitality known to every undergraduate in the discipline; hospitality might well appear, in the way the gift now does, as a central trope in the discussion of a range of other themes (from ova donations to transactions with spirits); mentions of hospitality in other disciplines would be followed by a string of anthropological references. Taken together, the papers in this volume give a glimpse of this potential alternative present of anthropology.

This thought experiment is not so far-fetched. On its own merits, hospitality is an even more likely candidate than gift-giving for a foundational anthropological concept. As the papers in this volume demonstrate, hospitality, like gift-giving, involves reciprocity, a tension between spontaneity and calculation, generosity and parasitism, friendship and enmity, improvisation and rule; like the gift, hospitality encompasses

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distant agents; it embeds social transactions in materiality and raises complex questions relating to economy and time; finally, like the gift and indeed more so, hospitality provides a language in which the anthropological project itself can be cast and examined. But hospitality also goes beyond the classic ground of gift exchange, touching on a number of other central anthropological problematics: identity, alterity, and belonging; sovereignty, politics, and inequality; the relation between the individual and the collective; commensality, consubstantiality, and kinship. In sum, hospitality seems to bear, in one way or another, on most of the key concerns which have animated the anthropological enterprise since its inception.

The (in)visibility of anthropological hospitality

It may be that this polyvalence of hospitality was precisely its downfall. Indeed, in searching through the past century's anthropological literature for discussions of hospitality, one is struck by the fact that hospitality is both everywhere and (nearly) nowhere. On the one hand, hospitality emerges over and over again entangled with the gift as an implicit or passing reference-point. On the other hand, there is a surprising paucity of attempts to foreground hospitality as a theoretically important concept in its own right.

As early as 1881, Lewis Henry Morgan described the 'law of hospitality' amongst Native American Indians – yet he broadly restricted his conclusions on the topic to the thought that hospitality indicated a propensity towards 'communistic living' and constituted 'evidence of a generous disposition' (Morgan 2003 [1881]: 66-90). 'The law of hospitality', he regretfully concluded, 'has not been carefully studied nor have its effects been fully appreciated' (2003 [1881]: 89). In 1887, Boas reports as one of the most striking memories of his Arctic life the event of the arrival of the strangers among the Inuit, accompanied by great ceremonies. Mauss and Beauchat (1979 [1904-5]) later also highlighted the anthropological relevance of Inuit hospitality and their likening of guests to affines.

The gift's opening epigraph begins, 'I have never found a man so generous and hospitable that he would not receive a present ...'. Maus is quoting the *Gestaþáttr*, the 'guest's section' of the *Hamaval*, an ancient poem outlining the maxims for travelers, and the sacred rules of Norse hospitality. For Mauss, however, hospitality seems thenceforth subsumed under the broader logic of the gift. For instance, as in his discussions of affinity, Mauss notes:

> For a clan, a household, a group of people, a guest, have no option but to ask for hospitality, to receive presents, to enter into trading, to contract alliances, through wives and blood kinship ... To refuse to give, *to fail to invite*, *just as to refuse to accept*, is tantamount to declaring war; it is to reject the bond of alliance and commonality (2002 [1923-4]: 16, emphasis added).

Elsewhere in Mauss's work, hospitality flashes into view as the initial pre-condition to gift-giving, since, as he notes in reference to Malinowski's discussion of *kula* trips to Dobu (Malinowski 1992 [1922]), '[t]o trade, the first condition was to lay aside the spear. From then onwards they [societies] succeeded in exchanging goods and persons, no longer only between clans, but between tribes and nations, and, above all, between individuals' (Mauss 2002 [1923-4]: 106). Later, Mauss would briefly reflect on hospitality as a fundamental rite of democratic societies in a series of lectures given in 1937-8, incorporated in his neglected *Manual of ethnography*. Prefiguring Benveniste (see below), Mauss noted the etymological roots of the role-inversion that hospitality operates: '*hostis*, the enemy, is the opposite of *hospes*, the host' (2007 [1926]: 116). Anthropology had to wait almost twenty years for Julian Pitt-Rivers to develop the theme in his masterpiece *The*

people of the Sierra (1954), which he returned to explicitly a decade later in a brilliant, and yet now broadly forgotten essay (1968) – to which we will return below.

Meanwhile, hospitality, with its ambivalence and equivocations, its heartfelt generosities and subtle power-plays, inhabited the very texture of ethnographic text. Many of the greatest classics of our discipline begin with accounts of displacements, misunderstandings, equivocation, suspicious commensality, uncanny encounters with strangers, dangerous feasting. From Reo Fortune's dangerous commensality in *Sorcerers of Dobu* (1932) to Bourdieu's competitive feasting among the Berbers (1990), from Evans-Pritchard's drily humorous account of the Nuer's justified suspicion (1940) to Geertz's famous reflections on being given asylum from a police raid in Bali (1973), hospitality has been the all-encompassing and ambivalent dwelling space of anthropology since its inception, the *elemental* structure of the anthropological enterprise. Hospitality, as Roy Wagner might put it (cf. Wagner 1981 [1975]), is the *anthropological innate*, precisely because anthropologists can hardly be 'outside' hospitality, the unavoidable condition of possibility of ethnography (cf. Dresch 2000).

Anthropologists have thus long known that *hospitality is magic*. The fact that it happens despite the dangers embedded in any encounter fascinated anthropologists who felt hospitality's powers protecting their pursuits or backfiring owing to their ineptitude from the first moment they stepped on foreign ground as strangers, exceptional beings, or potential enemies. Thus, recalling his fieldwork days in Amazonia, Peter Rivière notes how useless the Trio found him: he could not cut a garden, hunt, fish, or make a bow and arrows (2000: 33). *He could only be hosted*. Hospitality was the Trio's technology of control, a prophylactic defence, since all strangers were suspected of being potential sorcerers.

In sum, it is perhaps because anthropology, as a lived practice and a conceptual exercise, is thus inhabited by the paradoxes of hospitality, replete and saturated with them, that the theme, until recent years, has often failed to catch the light of anthropological theory (for a notable exception, see Stasch 2009: 54ff.).

An interdisciplinary invitation

It has taken an external impetus to bring hospitality back to the forefront of anthropological concern and theorizing. Where anthropological discussions of hospitality (with a few notable exceptions – see below) were primarily subsumed under analyses of tourism as imperialist formation (cf. Smith 1989) or of the constitutive and economic role of visitors in relation to the domestic sphere (Bouquet 1985), disciplines such as classics or history have a long and distinguished record of treating hospitality as a substantive object in itself (see, e.g., Heal 1990; Herman 1987; Levy 1963).

Recent years, however, have seen a veritable explosion of interest in the subject across the social sciences and humanities – marked by a multitude of new interdisciplinary publications involving anthropologists (Benhabib, Waldron, Honig, Kymlicka & Post 2006; Dikeç, Clark & Barnett 2009; Molz & Gibson 2007; Rosello 2001), and the foundation of a journal (*Hospitality & Society*) specifically devoted to 'developing theoretical perspectives and insights related to hospitality'. The spark which lit this particular fuse was the recent fascination with hospitality amongst continental philosophers, most prominently Jacques Derrida (1998; 1999; 2000; Schérer, 1993; cf. Levinas, 1969).

Derrida's now famous argument about the paradoxes of 'hostipitality' (2000) draws on a range of classical, biblical, and topical sources and themes, but at its core it is an elaboration upon the etymological discussions of the word in Benveniste's classic study

of Indo-European language and society (1969). Benveniste claims that hospitality derives from Latin *hostis* (foreigner, enemy) and the root *pet* (power, self-assertion – cf. *potere*, *ipso*). This second, now muted element, gives the original distinction – already noted by Mauss – between guest (*hostes*) and host (*hospes* – a contraction of *hosti-pet*, 'guest-master'). This distinction then becomes elided in a number of languages such as French, where guest and host become the same word (*hôte*). Derrida coins the neologism 'hostipitality', which, by rendering the *hosti-pet* tension audible, uncovers an aporia: at the heart of hospitality, for Derrida, is the impossible pairing of the necessary ethical requirement of absolute openness to the Other, and the equally necessary exclusionary sovereignty, which simultaneously gives the former its reality and yet negates its aspirations (see Shryock, Candea, this volume). Derrida's hostipitality deconstructs Kant's famous proposition that the Law of World Citizenship 'Shall Be Limited to Conditions of Universal Hospitality' (2010 [1795]: 17), since attempts to enshrine openness in sovereignty and regulation smother the very principle they attempt to stabilize.

Derrida's work was closely entwined with 'the emergence of a widespread, diverse, and multicultural debate about hospitality' (Rosello 2001: 2) in 1990s France. This debate over immigration, global inequalities, and post- or neo-colonialism, involving historians, film-makers, sociologists, philosophers, literary critics, and novelists (Ben Jelloun 1997; Fassin, Morice & Quiminal 1997; Montandon 1999), brought a concrete urgency to Derrida's discussions of absolute openness and sovereign regulation. More broadly and beyond France, as Dikeç *et al.* (2009: 3) observe, hospitality is growing into a translation-point between continental philosophy and empirical research agendas in the social sciences.[1]

This new interdisciplinary fascination with hospitality extends an invitation to anthropologists to come sit at this increasingly crowded table, and indeed some have done so very productively (Selwyn 2000; Shryock 2004). But if this literature teaches us anything, it is that invitations are ambiguous things. If it is satisfied with playing guest in the house Derrida built, anthropology will risk relinquishing its own distinct ethnographic sources of conceptual relevance (see Candea, this volume). As we pointed out above, our discipline is eminently at home with hospitality. And while the explicit theoretical considerations of the topic in the history of the discipline are few, taken together they lay solid foundations for a relevant and sophisticated anthropology of hospitality. The remainder of this introduction is devoted to rebuilding that particular edifice, somewhere for us to play host, and not just guest, to interdisciplinary discussions of hospitality.

Invitation to *grace*: hospitality between structure and excess

Any such rebuilding should start with a long-overdue reconsideration of the work of Julian Pitt-Rivers, whose 1968 essay 'The stranger, the guest and the hostile host' deserved to become a field-setting classic. Pitt-Rivers's essay is solidly grounded in ethnography drawn from his Andalusian fieldwork, but he casts the comparative net wide, not only across the Mediterranean (including Homeric antiquity), but as far afield as Boasian accounts of Eskimo greetings. As Shryock (this volume) argues, Pitt-Rivers the theorist is unfairly forgotten in favour of Pitt-Rivers the regionalist. Certainly, his aim in this essay is nothing less than a general account of hospitality, since '[t]here is, so to speak, a "natural law" of hospitality deriving not from divine revelation like so many particular codes of law, but from sociological necessity' (1968: 27). But do not be fooled by the echoes of 1950s structural-functionalism! While Pitt-Rivers does at

one point suggest a parallel between hospitality and Radcliffe-Brown's joking relationships (1968: 21), he also anticipates Derrida in more ways than one – and by three decades.

Thus, Pitt-Rivers, an equally avid reader of Benveniste, notes and elaborates the point that '[t]he law of hospitality is founded upon ambivalence' (1968: 25). Like Derrida, Pitt-Rivers highlights the mutual implication of power and welcome: hospitality is a stilted, because turn-taking, reciprocity, and the guest is necessarily at the mercy of the host, on a knife-edge between suspicion and trust. Reflecting on his own hosting by the Andalusian villagers who suspected him of being a spy, Pitt-Rivers highlights the suspension of social and political rights which comes with the guest status (1968: 24), in a way which speaks to many of the current criticisms of the use of guest-metaphors to describe relations between states and migrants (Rosello 2001; Shryock 2008).

Pitt-Rivers's contrast between the figure of the host and that of the beggar, who 'can promise no reciprocity other than through the Deity' (1968: 23), anticipates also his later essay on grace, thanks, and the free gift (1992). Read alongside the piece on hospitality, 'The place of grace in anthropology' provides the productive surplus which makes the structural account of hospitality overflow its own boundaries. For

> [g]race is a 'free' gift, a favor, an expression of esteem, of the desire to please, a product of the arbitrary will, human or divine, an unaccountable love. Hence it is gratuitous in yet another sense: that of being not answerable to coherent reasoning, unjustifiable, as when an insult is said to be gratuitous, or when a payment is made, over and above that which is due (1992: 224).

The parallels between this piece and Derrida's (1992) deconstruction of the Maussian gift – which directly prefigures his later account of hospitality, and whose views were parsed back into anthropology and contrasted by James Laidlaw (2000) – are no less striking than those between Pitt-Rivers's 1968 essay and Derrida's late 1990s writings on 'hostipitality'. Did they read each other? It is hard to tell: Derrida's dizzyingly partial way of inhabiting other thinkers conspires in this respect with Pitt-Rivers's 'Oxford style', which kept erudition below the bow-line. At a push, their common points of reference, bibliographic (implicitly or explicitly, Mauss, Van Gennep, Hocart, Lévi-Strauss ...) or personal,[2] may suffice to explain these striking parallels.

However that may be, the Pitt-Rivers of 1992 definitely has one foot at least in post-structuralism, not just stylistically, but also in his attempt to overcome the prescriptions of reciprocity through a 'floating signifier' indexing unpredictability and cosmic chance – grace:

> Grace, then allows of no payment, no explanation, and requires no justification. It is not just illogical, but opposed to logic, a counter-principle, unpredictable as the hand of God ... The opposition is clear and applies in every case: grace is opposed to calculation, as chance is to the control of destiny, as the free gift is to the contract, as the heart is to the head, as the total commitment is to the limited responsibility, as thanks are to the stipulated counterpart, as the notion of community is to that of alterity, as *Gemeinschaft* is to *Gesellschaft*, as kinship amity is to political alliance, as the open cheque is to the audited account (1992: 231).

And, one might add, as the unconditional welcome is to the laws of hospitality. This tension was already present in the 1968 essay, in the face-off between the numinous figure of the stranger-divinity (see below) and the orderly laws of hospitality (1968: 27-9). The work on grace sharpens and revisits this tension, and allows Pitt-Rivers to

exhaust in advance much of the conceptual mileage which Derrida would draw a few years later from hospitality. Where Derrida would see aporia, however, Pitt-Rivers (and several of this volume's contributors) ultimately find balance.[3]

Sophisticated accounts of tensions between calculation and spontaneity, rule and emotion, the absolute and the limited have been one of anthropology's key contributions to the study of hospitality to date (Dresch 1998; Lindholm 1982; Shryock 2008). Marsden (this volume) recasts this tension as a co-implication. Initially parting company with the transcendent values of hospitality, he examines the pragmatic, ironic, and skilled ways in which Afghan traders manage and negotiate their hospitable relations. Ultimately, however, the paper's thick ethnography challenges simple distinctions between calculation and ethics. Both come together in what Humphrey (this volume) calls hospitality's 'zone of craft' (p. S63). Indeed, for Marsden, this co-implication is the key to understanding hospitality's moral force, which derives 'less from its detachment from the world than from its ability to soak up the contingency, pragmatism, and ironies of that world' (p. S127). However, for all their subtle appreciation of the 'virtues of utility' (p. S121), Marsden's Afghan traders never lose sight of the 'key symbol' of hospitality, the dreadful pressure cooker: hospitality is also a bomb.

Similarly, Roy Wagner (this volume) rightly notes what Mauss forgot: that the motile dynamic which keeps a system together cannot be isolated. The Daribi think that exchange can only be understood from the point of view of an *asymmetry* or *uneveness*. 'Even' exchanges reduce the motility of vital flows of relatedness. 'Besides', Wagner writes, 'an even exchange would leave them with *nothing to talk about afterwards*; verbal hospitality is the most comforting in the whole Daribi world' (p. S171, emphasis added).

The politics of external life: strangers and kings, enemies and affines

For Pitt-Rivers (1968: 20), as for Derrida, the stranger is the absolute unknown, whose radical alterity echoes the numinous presence of the divine itself. Hospitality emerges as a mechanism for holding this dangerous being in abeyance, stabilizing the relationship between the stranger and the host community. But the 1992 piece makes more space for the transformative potential of the divine stranger, the figure of unpredictable grace. This insight has a long pedigree, hallmarked by Boas's (1887) remarks of the event of the arrival of outsiders among the Eskismos mentioned earlier, Simmel's (1964) [1908] discussion of the stranger as harbinger of social change, and Van Gennep's (2004 [1909]) reflection on the strategies for incorporating the stranger, the quintessential figure of the non-initiate. For Simmel, the stranger is the one who 'comes today and leaves tomorrow', organizing *within* him/herself 'the unity of nearness and remoteness involved in every human relation' (1964: 402). Still, it would be naïve to assume that Simmel portrayed the stranger as a merely 'liminal' subject. For Simmel, the stranger is 'organically disconnected', marked by the specific attitude of 'objectivity' which entails a form of ontological non-committment to the assumptions of the receiving group. Simmel would be pleased to know that long before him the Mandarin language employed the term *keguan*, literally meaning the 'view from the guest', to express the concept of an 'objective' or an outsider's view, and contrasted it to *zhuguan*, the subjective view or 'the view as host', the insider's view.

An extensive anthropological scrutiny of the stranger had to wait until Hocart's 'The divinity of the guest' (1952), a mythological *tour de force* from Greece to India and Fiji. Starting from the Greek myth of Zeus appearing disguised as wanderer or beggar, Hocart reflects on the figure-ground reversal embedded within the figure of the

stranger: '[N]ot only is the God present with the stranger, but the stranger is often a God' (1952: 78). Hosting guests is thus a way of acquiring divine favours and establishing a bond which transcends the domestic sphere, securing sanctuary and protection in foreign countries (cf. also Pitt-Rivers 1968; Marsden, Shryock, this volume).

But hospitality also threatens or promises a more radical transformation altogether: Hocart remarked that Fijians do not make a categorical distinction between strangers, guests, and chiefs: all are *vulagi*, a term also meaning 'heavenly god' (1929: 129). The kernel of Hocart's argument is that the original form of sovereignty is a hospitality event. All kings are ancestral guests. At stake is the relationship between hospitality and sovereignty and the crucial role of *alterity* and *externality* in the formation of political theologies. This is most clearly elaborated by Sahlins (1985) in his classic discussion of Captain Cook's arrival in Fiji. For Sahlins, the figure of 'Stranger-King' is a cosmic template which framed the arrival of a stranger from beyond as a source of magical power and fertility. Vitality and sovereignty always come from 'elsewhere' or are in relationship with an 'externality'. 'Power is a barbarian', writes Sahlins (1985: 79), bringing rupture to the moral order, while even the sovereign host (Benveniste's 'guest-master') derives his legitimacy from a paradigmatic and original act of usurpation or conquest (cf. Tambiah 1985 [1977]). The sovereign thus begins his career as a usurping guest. Even when installed, sovereignty may find legitimization in a 'foreign' act or quality, as in the Asian galactic polities described by Tambiah (1985 [1977]) or in the first Tibetan myth of civilization, where the land of the whole country is imagined as a supine demoness which could be nailed down only by the joint efforts of the First Buddhist King and the geomantic knowledge of his newly acquired Chinese wife.

In a recent article, subtitled 'the elementary form of the politics of life', Sahlins (2009) returns to the figure of the Stranger-King to build a genealogy of biopolitics connecting sovereignty and kinship. The Stranger here stands for a vitality drawn or conquered from outside the native world, a point also made by Hocart and later noted by Maurice Bloch (1992) in his theory of ritual. The incorporation of outsideness is a necessity of the social order: stranger-kings, argues Sahlins, are to the native people as affinal relatives are to consanguines (2009: 184). The natives are 'earth people' and the sovereign brings heavenly *external* vitality which is welcomed and incorporated within the domestic domain by 'marrying' it.

While Pitt-Rivers the Mediterraneanist was keen to distinguish between the structure of hospitality, in which the stranger/host is held for ever in abeyance, and the very different processes which may lead to affinal incorporation into the community (1968: 24-5), Sahlins's discussion forces us to run together hospitality and kinship in new ways which resonate also in other ethnographic settings. In what has been seen as an extension of principles of affinity to a form of ontological predation, Amerindian societies show the continual need to incorporate the bodies of close and distant Others such as neighbours, friends, and enemies to construct their own (Viveiros de Castro 2001; cf. also Overing & Passes 2000; Vilaca 2010). Alterity is affinal, generative, and dangerous and is encompassed after being transformed, domesticated, and mastered (cf. also Overing & Passes 2000). Yet affinity is encompassed within a meta-affinity: the ontological predation of enemies regarded as 'affines' or 'friends' to be incorporated in order to produce a sense of self. In this 'topology of externality', Viveiros de Castro argues that '[t]he point about the outside encompassing the inside is *not* about the latter being "within" the former, but, rather, about the outside being *immanent* in the inside' (2001: 27, original emphasis). In this vein, Fausto (this volume) shows that in

Amerindian societies, the Greek distinction between *xenoi* and *barbaroi*, stranger-as-friend and stranger-as-enemy, is not applicable. Fausto shows how mastery is achieved even in dreams: by dreaming an enemy one becomes his 'master' and makes him into one's – literal – pet. Yet the risk is that during the dream the dreamer/master may be taken to the enemy's village as guest and convinced not to return to his kin, inverting the relation of mastery and initiating one of guest-captivity (cf. Swancutt, this volume). Fausto makes a significant contribution to the relationship between mastery and affinity, showing how friendship is constructed as enmity in order to keep 'the prey closest to hand'.

Ritualized and dangerous commensality: the place of materiality

Reprinted in his collection *The fate of Shechem*, Pitt-Rivers's essay on hospitality became the fulcrum of a broader discussion of 'the politics of sex', breaking with the stereotype of a Mediterraneanist anthropology whose characters are all men hosting men. These initial forays would later be developed into more detailed and critical discussions of the interplay of hospitality and gender by authors such as Jane Cowan (1990; see also Allerton, this volume). Cowan's careful attention to the sensory experiences which shape gendered spaces of commensality highlights in retrospect a gap in Pitt-Rivers's account. For Pitt-Rivers, as for Derrida, hospitality is a structural, ethical, or conceptual relation between persons, and neither pays much attention to the substances and materialities involved, or to extensions of hospitality beyond the human. A reconstructed anthropology of hospitality will have to look elsewhere for these elements, and a solid second foundation for our edifice might be found in Sherry Ortner's classic discussion of hospitality in her *Sherpas through their rituals* (1978).

For Ortner, hospitality is the 'primary ritual of generalized social relations' among the Sherpas. Relying on Geertz's analysis of rituals and symbols as 'models of/for' reality, Ortner conceives hospitality as a heuristic for the subtle resolution of moral conundrums. Drawing on Lienhardt's discussion of the Dinka *thuic* – the simple action of knotting a tuft of grass to conjure and contrive a sense of delay – Ortner shows how rituals of hospitality restate an 'external', ticklish situation into intelligible psychological states and pre-existent world-views, while shaping subjective orientation upon which to base future endeavours (Ortner 1978: 6). In the Sherpa case, the familiar conundrum of reciprocity and the free gift is aggravated by the taxing virtue ethics of Tibetan Buddhism. One *ought* to offer freely and be altruistic yet one needs to secure allies and gain favours. By dramatizing and solving the problem of the inherently atomized and 'anti-social' nature of Sherpa society, Ortner argues, hospitality produces order and integration. Subsequently, in *High religion*, Ortner takes this further, rethinking hospitality as a 'cultural schema' or 'key scenario', a 'symbolic program[s] for the staging and playing out of standard social interactions in a particular culture' (1989: 60). This schematic hospitality becomes applicable to a range of events: displays of virtue, strategic requests for favours, apotropaic and Buddhist rituals, sacrifices and offerings to gods. From the microcosm of the house to the world of Buddhist theocracy and deities, the schema remains stable. As a number of contributors to this volume show, such systematic and structural accounts of hospitality neglect the *scale*, the *contingency*, and the *specificity* of each hospitality event – in other words, the 'happenstance' of hospitality.

The strength of Ortner's account, however, lies in her attention to the material and substantial elements which mediate hospitable relations. If hospitality dramatizes order and hierarchy, it is through seating order, etiquette, the time it takes to prepare food,

which in turn creates a space for joking and conversation. Ortner highlights how hospitality, mediated through substances, does not merely *elicit* co-operative responses but *coerces* them. Indeed, the primary mechanism of exchange in Sherpa society is *yangdzi*, the manipulation of others through the medium of food. In this respect, Ortner gives new form to an anthropological truism: the power of commensality as a social operator and trope (Bloch 2005).

Commensality and value

Hospitable commensality had long appeared in the margins of discussions of kinship and economic exchange, a functional yet sometimes irksome obligation for the redistribution of livelihood resources towards kin or potential affines (Evans-Pritchard 1940; Richards 1932). Through the primary mechanism of food exchange, hospitality secures the maintenance of kinship and trade relationships and reinforces networks of mutual assistance (Sahlins 1976); it increases intimacy, reinforces hierarchical differences, frames class distinctions, helps to establish leadership, or serves as a pacifying device (Bourdieu 1990; Gluckman 1969; Shryock, this volume; Strathern 1971).

Whereas hospitality, as we have noted, is often encompassed within discussions of gift-giving, Nancy Munn's (1992) work on value creation and transmission among the Massim of Papua New Guinea unfolds a perspective where hospitality appears as encompassing the logic of sharing and exchange. Munn's focus is on how actors control their social world through transformational acts of value creation. Instead of focusing on the partitioning of persons achieved by gift exchange, Munn highlights how a person is extended and dispersed via acts of hospitality. Hospitality allows sharing to take place and the *potency* of a person to be deployed in concrete material exchanges which extend the intersubjective spacetime, defined by Munn as 'the space of self-other relationships formed in and through acts and practices' (1992: 9). For Munn, hospitality constitutes the framing device of value creation where the 'contractions' or 'extensions' of intersubjective spacetime occur. Witchcraft, selfishness, and greediness subvert spacetime by negating and consuming one's capacity to extend and *diffuse one's spatiotemporal influence*. By contrast, the act of sharing food is the primary template of value creation which *externalizes* the self beyond the physical person, hence achieving control over spacetime. Hospitality *activates* the possibility of further construction of value, by allowing *kula* exchange, alliances, and the conversion of *localized* influence into *virtual* fame (1992: 116-17).

Munn's analysis relies on a quite straightforward form of generalized exchange gained through value transformation and predicated on the existence of crystallized iconic qualities embodied in objects and actions: heaviness of excessive eating needs to be converted into mobility to allow extension through spacetime; the static tree has to be converted into a motile canoe. While this analysis allows the objects transacted during moments of hospitality a certain structural resistance, less attention is paid to their shifting ontologies.

Following (and extending) Ortner, however, we might reconceive food itself as a prime manipulating substance designed to lure and establish a pivotal asymmetry between hosts and guests. Foods subvert and convert subjectivities, turning everyday sharing into transmutational events. Feasts, meals, and even offerings to deities involve powerful or intoxicating substances, capable of reducing or enhancing the distance between the parties involved. Alcohol has liberating or polluting properties and may create intimacy or lead to offensive behaviour (Humphrey, this volume); the offering of

honey or other valuable edibles may reduce hierarchical difference, show respect, and improve the host's reputation (cf. Bloch 2005; Ortner 1978).

Thus objects transacted in hospitality are always 'objectiles', object-events which threaten to collapse into their opposites. Food may turn into poison (da Col, this volume), and homes into prisons or traps (Swancutt, Wagner, this volume); money offered in hospitality events loses its pecuniary value and becomes the material evidence of 'tears' offered to ancestors (Allerton, this volume). People may be turned into things – usable, exploitable assets or patients of other intentionalities; guests may become parasites (da Col, this volume; cf. Serres 2007 [1982]).

In these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising to find hospitality the 'focus of parody and laughter, of fantasy and fear' (Ortner 1978: 64): being a guest or a host in a meal or banquet is a daring venture. Mauss once remarked that *gift* is the German word for 'poison', and Bloch (2005) reflected that the closest commensal transactions are also the most dangerous, hence the fear of poisoning (Allerton, da Col, this volume). Da Col's and Humphrey's papers (this volume) show that fear and suspicion are inseparable from the pleasures of hospitality. Neither intentions nor even *appearances* can be trusted, and both hosts and guests maintain a deeply inscrutable kernel. One never knows whether the subjects of hospitality are humans or non-humans, gods or demons. Witchcraft and sorcery embody the negative side of hospitality: witches are bad guests, poisoners are bad hosts, and gossip is the sorcery of everyday hospitality (Højer 2004; Humphrey, this volume). Witches unintentionally harm neighbours and friends; poisoners parasitize their guests. Witchcraft operates through perverted commensality, orality, devouring the vital flows of their hosts or kin, envying them with 'evil eyes' or eating their fortunes with 'evil mouths' (cf. Devisch 2005; cf. also Humphrey, da Col, this volume).

And when it is not poison, food may turn out to be bait. Indeed when we consider their material trappings, hospitable events, like artworks, could be seen as traps (cf. Gell 1996): apparatuses which are both objectified forms of the intentionality of their creator, the hunter, and models of the inner world of their prey. Some contributors to this volume recast hospitality as predation and stages as art-like apparatuses to capture different types of guests. Shryock's paper shows the *agonism* inherent in domains of hospitality, describing feasts as martial events, halls where guests may be transformed into assets and allies, sources of reputation and wealth, or battlefields where wars may find their inception. Humphrey shows how the power of alcohol may be faked and guests and hosts may all pretend to be drunk to spy on each other. In a ballet of nested predatory moves, Kelly's 'experimental hut' traps disease-carrying mosquitoes that have come to feast on their human hosts. Capture and cannibalism are connected, as in animist contexts where jaguars invite unwary humans to feasts of human flesh and hunters must carefully de-subjectify their food, on pains of being captured by their prey (Fausto 2007; cf. Wagner, this volume). It is not surprising that the quintessential trope of witchcraft is the Sabbath and its perverse banquet, often involving cannibalistic elements and the presence of the Devil as the guest of honour.

The event of hospitality: temporality and mood

Ortner's account – in which, *à la* Geertz, singular events of hospitality are analytically subsumed into *generic* hosting events – also leads us to think further about the relation between hospitality and temporality. For some of the contributors to this volume (da Col, Ladwig), a preoccupation with temporality emerges from a focus on Buddhist-influenced societies concerned with the maintenance of karmic substances through

multiple lives. In such contexts, perspectives on hospitality should not be restrained to 'views from inside' or 'outside'; rather, hospitality events should also be explored as 'views from somewhen', as da Col (2007) suggests.

Temporality is central also to Pitt-Rivers's notion of hospitality as delayed or turn-taking reciprocity, prefiguring Bourdieu's seminal analysis of the timing of the gift, which loses its efficacy if immediately returned. But an accurate manipulation of time is also required *during* each hospitality event. Hospitality, like the illusionist's craft, operates according to the 'distraction principle': the attention of the audience is cleverly misdirected until the 'magic' happens (Allerton, Humphrey, Marsden, this volume). As Shryock points out, 'Hospitality is always partially unseen. As a social performance, many of its most important elements are time-delayed or acted out elsewhere' (2004: 59). Manipulative hosting of the Ortnerian kind involves the empty time of waiting and set-up, building up to the sudden moment of release of the 'trap' for the guest. Each major 'event' of hospitality thus encompasses a multiplicity of singular events and transactions where altruism and selfishness, trust and suspicion, benevolence and malice are present but never *co-present*. It is this careful *avoidance of simultaneity* which makes hospitality the locus of moral dilemmas – and generates its peculiarly charged affective space.

Indeed, hosting is not only a test of 'sociality' or moral virtues such as reciprocity and altruism, but also involves the production of collective affects and the accumulation of symbolic capital. Similarly to the Sherpa case, hosting is one of the most critical aspects of relatedness in Chinese society, the sphere of production of good relationships (*guanxi*) where networks of mutual assistance are forged or renewed (cf. Kipnis 1997). Relying on symbolic and material *ritual expenditure* (Yang 2000), hosting engenders the community's 'excitement' (*honghuo*), establishing the household's mastery and reaffirming its moral character.

Affective ambience is a crucial aspect of Chinese hospitality. Drawing from his fieldwork in north-central China, Chau (2006) conceives the involvement in activities set apart from everyday life as 'event production'. Chau proposes the notion of *hosting*, which does not apply to welcoming strangers but to guests already known to the householder. Hosting is the litmus test of a native *sociothermic theory of sociality* which gauges events upon the 'social heat' they produce, according to the state of convergence of people and the crowdedness they achieve. Collectively, hosts and guests engage in the 'sensorial production of the social'.

The creation of mood or the 'affective' component of hospitality brings us back to Ortner's notion of hospitality as an arena for enacting social dramas. Yet Allerton and Humphrey (this volume) both show how moods are more than sentiments marking hospitality events. Reflecting on the role of producing 'liveliness' in situations of hospitality on the Indonesian island of Flores, Allerton reveals how the success of an event relies on the production of this vital yet *ephemeral* 'buzz' or 'effervescence'. This vitality of the occasion seems necessary for producing the structure of occasion of (predatory) hospitality and its agents. Humphrey (this volume) shows how negative feelings and contrasts between spontaneity and rules are buffered through tiny and strategic gestures which attempt to create a precarious affect of measured reassurance and detachment. Rather than analyse complex rules and minute gestures as the formal counterpart to, or limit upon, spontaneity, however, Humphrey inquires into the 'tone' these ritualized actions and norms set for the hospitable encounter. Humphrey's ethnography, with its fine analysis of shifts from serenity to joyousness, from reassurance

to anger, gives an unprecedented ethnographic thickness to the emotional economies of hospitality.

A cosmopolitics of hospitality? Non-human guests and hosts

While the divinity of the guest is, as we have seen, a long-established trope, Ortner (1978) was amongst the first to describe in ethnographic detail the propensity to play host to such non-human entities. The shaman 'hosts' the gods within himself, while offerings to gods are framed as a party where the community act as collective host and substances such as 'beer' act as carriers for crossing cosmological divides (cf. March 1987). Manipulative transactions similar to *yangdzi* are employed in exorcism or ransoming rituals, where a patient is cured by using spirits and other tricks to 'deceive' *spirits*, gods, and demons, cajoling them into believing that an effigy made of butter is the 'real' patient, before destroying it. Taking Ortner's insight to its radical conclusions would lead us to rethink hospitality beyond the human, as the paradigmatic plane for conceiving of *cosmological relatedness*, a cosmo-ethical operator encompassing a sphere of sociality potentially extensible to all beings, independently of their position in the cosmos.

However, hospitality, be it human or non-human, usually opens with some form of test. Pitt-Rivers starts his seminal article with a case described by Boas: when entering an Inuit village, a stranger has to first exchange blows with his hosts – his 'arm' must be tested. Hospitality in Pitt-Rivers's account thus emerges as a 'making-known', a de-sacralization of the numinous stranger. But the fifteenth-century Valladolid theological controversy recalled by Lévi-Strauss (1952) suggests that rather more stringent procedures are required when the stake is entry into humanity itself (cf. Latour 2004; Viveiros de Castro 1998). While the Spanish theologians were debating whether the Caribbean Indians had a soul, the latter were engaged in pragmatic tests consisting in drowning the newcomers and letting their bodies putrefy to establish whether the strangers shared their kind of body.[4] When hospitality leaves the safe realms of Kantian humanist universalism, in other words, its inquiry into the stranger becomes a biopolitical engagement extended to political constellations which include a plethora of beings, a pluriverse of different spheres and 'containers': planets and spacecraft (Battaglia, this volume), insects and viruses (Kelly, this volume), the Nuosu souls-spiders of captive guests (Swancutt, this volume), communist cadres and Tibetan mountain deities (da Col, this volume).

Such extended hospitality is not devoid of dangers, particularly when the cosmological and the cosmopolitan intersect. Delaplace (this volume) describes Mongolians playing unwilling hosts to Chinese ghosts whose appearance dredges up historical recriminations and national stereotypes while transforming the Mongolians into unwelcome guests in their own homes (see also Kwon 2008). As Viveiros de Castro (2012) points out in his account of encounters between strangers in the Amazonian forest, the danger lies in the fact that one never knows *who* the stranger is. If a human were to accept the invitation of a supernatural creature, he or she may be lost, transformed into a being of the same species as the host, captured by another cosmologically dominant point of view. In Indonesia, Allerton suggests a similar perspectival danger: while spirits could eat human food, if humans were to eat food cooked by a spirit, they would die. In other cases, hospitality's vitality should be tempered because it may attract nostalgic ghosts (cf. Humphrey, this volume).

How do we know who is who? One option is simply not to ask. Ladwig (this volume), describing the annual Lao ritual of welcoming the ancestors' ghosts, presents

hospitality as an ethical solution to 'anonymous' relatedness. Since the karmic connections between sentient beings in the Buddhist cosmos are virtually infinite, the moral dilemma is that *any* 'ghost' could potentially be a relative, who may take revenge if uninvited. The solution consists in organizing a party for all ghosts where the singularity of one's neglected ancestor is buried within the innumerable mass of gathered guests.

Such a 'cosmopolitics' (cf. Stengers 2005) of hospitality would radically recast the domain of the domestic. Accounts of Tibetan base-owners (*zhidak*), Amerindian owner-masters (Fausto 2008, this volume), or welcomes extended to sacred mountains or ghosts (da Col, Delaplace, Ladwig, this volume) suggest that 'hosts' are everywhere: all 'nature is domestic because it is always the *domus* of someone' (Fausto 2008: 338). In Inner Asia, a primordial ethical constellation emerges from myths which depict the first settlers conquering hospitality from the original spirit-masters with ritual subjugation, or hunters gaining access to the animal-master's 'flock' through seductive strategies (cf. da Col, this volume; Broz & Willerslev, in press). The question, ultimately, is whether hospitality as a paradigm is capable of handling the *cosmopolitical* – a politics articulating a multiplicity of ontologies belonging to different beings each possessing 'masterhood' over its own cosmos.

From the parasite's point of view

Evans-Pritchard prefigured the cosmopolitical ambiguity of hosting by describing the relation between the Nuer and their cows as a mutual parasitism (1940: 36). The figure of the parasite emerges in several ethnographies in this volume as one having the ability to cross ontological boundaries and confusing the subjectivities of host and guest. Tibetan poisoners becomes parasitic ova-donors who convert people into surrogates for the production of fortune (da Col, this volume); Chinese usurers return after death as ghosts to suck Mongolians' wealth (Delaplace, this volume); Tanzanian malarial parasites convert both humans and mosquitoes into hosts (Kelly, this volume); the *imbateka* sorcerers presented by Wagner (this volume) as being the quintessential figure of unrequited reciprocity can only be eliminated by employing another non-reciprocal being – a smaller-scale con-artist.

According to Michel Serres, the parasite is that crucial figure of hospitality which involves not a relation of extortion or a direct struggle but a perverse alliance of enervating guesthood: as da Col shows (this volume), the parasite never desires the immediate death of its host. For Serres (2007 [1982]), the parasite comes first, exchange second. Gift-giving exists only to exorcize the fear of the parasite, the primordial guest, the quasi-relational being which can exist only by exploiting others. Serres writes:

> History hides the fact that man is the universal parasite, that everything and everyone around him is a hospitable space. Plants and animals are always his hosts; man is always necessarily their guest. Always taking, never giving. He bends the logic of exchange and of giving in his favor when he is dealing with nature as a whole. When he is dealing with his kind, he continues to do so; he wants to be the parasite of man as well. And his kind want to be so too. Hence rivalry (2007 [1982]: 24).

However, Serres also interprets the word 'parasite' – which in French additionally means 'static', 'noise' – as the constitutive basis of all communication. For Serres, the parasite is anything which intercepts information yet elicits the opening of new communicative channels, inventing new relationships, converting spheres and objects

exchanged. We could ask of Serres, as we have done of Derrida (cf. Shryock, Candea, this volume), does he stand the test of ethnographic theory (cf. da Col & Graeber 2011)? Or is this just another byproduct of an ideology which attempts to reduce human life to a reciprocal logic of exchange? Is the parasite or the free-rider universally assumed to be a problem? What about the ancient world, where the perpetual dinner-guest, the sycophant, the hanger-on, was a standard social role? The figure of parasite opens an array of theoretical horizons which cannot be explored within the boundaries of this introduction (but cf. da Col, this volume; Roque 2010).

Hospitality and scale

Along with Pitt-Rivers, Ortner, and Munn, the fourth classic theoretical pillar of a reconstructed anthropology of hospitality must be Michael Herzfeld's 1987 essay, which first drew attention to the peculiar scalar properties of hospitality. Extending the anthropological point about the relative meaning of categories of identity (Evans-Pritchard 1940), Herzfeld notes that 'stranger' is a 'shifter', whose meaning depends upon the relation between speaker and audience (thus, for instance, *kseni* in Greek can refer contextually to strangers to the village or to foreign nationals). As a result, hospitality itself becomes a shifter, which draws on and helps to establish an 'essential homology between several levels of collective identity – village, ethnic group, district, nation. What goes for the family home also goes, at least by metaphorical extension, for the national territory' (Herzfeld 1987: 76). Thus, Herzfeld argues, Greek attitudes towards tourists and strangers as represented in national newspapers show how 'the traditional values of Greek village society, duly transformed, operate at national and international levels of social discourse as well' (1987: 81).

But Herzfeld also notes hospitality's propensity to subvert scale itself. In his analysis, hospitality enables the 'moral englobing of political asymmetry' (1987: 86), giving the host moral advantage despite political subordination. Transmuted to the national level, discourses portraying tourists from wealthier European nations as dangerous strangers, providing little besides banal financial remuneration in return for the gift of Greek hospitality, allow Greeks, portrayed as unilateral givers, 'to reverse the historical and political dependence of their country upon the West. Hospitality is the social format that permits Greeks to englobe the dominant cultures of Europe' (1987: 86). Dan Rabinowitz outlined a structurally similar process in his ethnography of Nazareth, where localized acts of hospitality, in a bus or a home, speak to national contests over spatial sovereignty (1997: 115-16).

The crucial question which these analyses raise is that of the materiality of metaphors – how are such scale-shifts achieved, and when or where do they break down (Candea, this volume)? After all, houses, as Lévi-Strauss (1982 [1972]) pointed out, are very particular topological entities, which can unite theoretically incompatible principles of relatedness, transcending contradictions between genealogy and alliance (see also Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995). Houses provide specific stages for hospitality: thresholds, doors, windows, and internal partitions. What, then, happens when the language of hospitality connects houses to 'containing' entities on other scales, villages, nations, or 'homelands'; when guests and hosts come to stand for collective entities, immigrant communities, spacecraft (Battaglia, this volume), or fortune containers (da Col, this volume). How are such scale-shifts managed, and how are connections made between entities which have their own distinct materialities? Is hospitality, thus extended, a holographic metaphor (Wagner, this volume), or a reconfigured assemblage?

Chau's above-mentioned arguments about Chinese hosting, for instance, deploy the paradigm of hospitality as what Candea (this volume) terms a 'scale-free abstraction'. Chau, like Ortner, insists that the hosting 'mechanism' is transferable to different domains of Chinese life and operates scale-free from the imperial level right down to local households (2006: 143). It is precisely the scale-free and 'simplistic' mechanism which marks Chinese social activities that explains the resilience of popular religion and its revival in different periods of Chinese history.

By contrast, Andrew Shryock (2004; this volume) and Tom Selwyn (2000) both examine the material modifications which are involved in the 'scaling up' of domestic hospitality into the international displays of the 'hospitality industry'. Essays in this volume further probe the co-implication of hospitality, materiality, and scale. Candea tracks the material translations through which the act of hosting an individual fugitive becomes a question about which, of French law or Corsican culture, might 'englobe' the other. By contrast, Debbora Battaglia's account of the 1975 'handshake in space' between Apollo astronauts and Soyuz cosmonauts chronicles the meeting of two nations in the infinity of the cosmos, where encompassment is precisely what must be avoided. The implication of either a US or a Soviet claim to being 'at home' in the universe is painstakingly resisted, and this suspension of sovereignty involves the careful material and fleshly choreographing of a ' "0-gravity" hospitality without welcome' (p. S80). At the other end of the scale, Ann Kelly examines the microscopic hosting of *plasmodium falciparum* inside mosquitoes and humans, themselves strange guests in the 'experimental house' which enables scientists to study malaria in the field. But just as the establishment of Battaglia's cosmic hospitality scales down to the details of gaseous chemistry (oxygen-nitrogen for Soyuz, pure oxygen for Apollo), Kelly's microscopic guests lead us straight to the international stakes of hosting malarial research in Tanzania.

These ethnographic engagements with scale all direct attention back to the particular scaling effects of hospitality as a concept within anthropological theorizing itself. Pitt-Rivers's attempt to derive a natural law of hospitality from sociological necessity; Herzfeld's use of hospitality to bridge the gap between small-scale ethnographic description and international political economy; Shryock's identification of a shared striving in Derrida's philosophy and in Balga Bedouin narratives of hospitality (2008); and indeed our own suggestions about a cosmopolitics of hospitality – all are instances of hospitality's propensity to act as a 'theoretical elevator' in anthropology, a 'scale-free abstraction' through which the ethnographic gains universal relevance. By shrinking Derrida's writings on hospitality back to the size of an ethnographic object, Candea (this volume) sounds a warning note about the ease with which scale-free abstractions – particularly those imported wholesale from continental philosophy – can interrupt the fine-grained ethnographic tracing of connections which constitutes one of anthropology's crucial contributions to the study of hospitality.

Conclusion

One of the aims of this introduction has been to reconstruct the genealogy for an anthropology of hospitality which aspires both to conceptual sophistication and to empirical relevance. This is not by any means to close the door to interdisciplinary engagements, but simply to follow the precept that meaningful interdisciplinarity begins with robust disciplinarity. And anthropology does have something distinctive to bring to the table, constitutionally, so to speak. As ethnographers, anthropologists have

all felt both the predicament and the power of the guest, as Paul Dresch (2000) pointed out in an evocative account of the travails of ethnography in the Middle East and beyond. As writers, 'back home', anthropologists become the hosts and custodians of their informants' memories, arranging, organizing, and enveloping the ethnography within an argument, rebuilding the concepts and debates of the discipline to find a home for the lives and concerns of erstwhile hosts.

In sum, hospitality, with its rewards and dangers, its open questions and avoided gazes, inhabits anthropology both as a 'natural symbol' (Douglas 1973) and as a constitutive practice. Born, against all odds, of the conjunction of ethnography and theory, of distance and proximity, of inside and outside, of self and other, anthropology, too, is *one of the strange miracles of magic*.

NOTES

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[1] In the UK, the emergence of university degrees in hospitality management studies also fed into this renewed interest, creating a need for manuals and textbooks which parse the concerns of tourism, hotel and catering management, with insights from the academic literature adumbrated above (Brotherton 1999; Lashley & Morrison 2000; Morrison 2002).

[2] Pitt-Rivers taught at the École Pratique de Hautes Études (EPHE) in Paris from 1964 to 1971, and later held various appointments in Aix-en-Provence and Paris before returning to the EPHE until his retirement in 1986.

[3] 'We have tried to encompass the totality of grace and explain the coherence of the whole concept and the relation between its different meanings' (Pitt-Rivers 1992: 238).

[4] Slightly earlier, the Spanish natural lawyer Vitoria had already justified the inroads of the *conquistadores* on the basis of their absolute right to hospitality in a foreign land, in terms not far removed from those deployed by Kant some time later (Cavallar 2002: 204) – human or not, it seems, the Indians would have to host!

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Retour à l'hospitalité

Résumé

L'anthropologie a été la grande absente du récent engouement interdisciplinaire pour l'hospitalité qui a fédéré philosophie, politologie et études culturelles. Son engagement concret sur cette question est

pourtant beaucoup plus profond que celui de toute autre discipline. Le présent essai, qui préface le volume, vise à raviver l'hospitalité en tant que zone frontière du développement théorique en anthropologie, en mettant en lumière ses liens avec certains des thèmes les plus vivants de notre discipline : raisonnement éthique, matérialité, temporalité et affect, altérité et cosmopolitique, souveraineté et échelle.

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