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HOSTIPITALITY[1]

Before even beginning, I will read, I will reread with you by way of an epigraph, a long and celebrated passage from Kant.

To begin with, I will read it almost without commentary. But in each of its words, it will preside over the whole of this lecture and all questions of hospitality, the historical questions – those questions at once timeless, archaic, modern, current, and future [*à venir*] that the single word "hospitality" magnetizes – the historical, ethical, juridical, political, and economic questions of hospitality.

As you have no doubt already guessed, it is a question in *Perpetual Peace* of the famous "Third Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace [*Dritter Definitivartikel zum ewigen Frieden*],"[2] the title of which is: "*Das Weltbürgerrecht soll auf Bedingungen der allgemeinen Hospitalität eingeschränkt sein*": "Cosmopolitan Right shall be limited to Conditions of Universal Hospitality." <Already the question of conditionality, of conditional or unconditional hospitality, presents itself.>[3]

Two words are underlined by Kant in this title: "cosmopolitan right" [*Weltbürgerrecht*: the right of world citizens] – we are thus in the space of right, not of morality and politics or anything else but of a right determined in its relation to citizenship, the state, the subject of the state, even if it is a world state – it is a question therefore of an international right; the other underlined word is "hospitality" [*der allgemeinen Hospitalität*, universal hospitality]. It is a question therefore of defining the conditions of a cosmopolitan right, of a right the terms of which would be established by a treaty between states, by a kind of UN charter before the fact, and one of these conditions would be what Kant calls universal hospitality, *die allgemeine Hospitalität*.

I quote this title in German to indicate that the word for "hospitality" is a Latin word (*Hospitalität*, a word of Latin origin, of a troubled and troubling origin, a word which carries its own contradiction incorporated into it, a Latin word which allows itself to be parasitized by its opposite, "hostility," the undesirable guest [*hôte*][4] which it harbors as the self-contradiction in its own body, and which we will speak of again later).

Kant will find a German equivalent, *Wirtbarkeit* (which he will put in parentheses as the equivalent of *Hospitalität*), for this Latin word, *Hospitalität*, from the first sentence which I am now going to read.

The equivalent Kant recalls is *Wirtbarkeit*. Kant writes: "As in the foregoing articles, we are concerned here not with philanthropy, but with right [*Es ist hier … nicht von Philanthropie, sondern vom Recht die Rede*]" (in specifying that it is a question here of right and not philanthropy, Kant, of course, does not want to show

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that this right must be misanthropic, or even an-anthropic; it is a human right, this right to hospitality – and for us it already broaches an important question, that of the anthropological dimension of hospitality or the right to hospitality: what can be said of, indeed can one speak of, hospitality toward the non-human, the divine, for example, or the animal or vegetable; does one owe hospitality, and is that the right word when it is a question of welcoming – or being made welcome by – the other or the stranger [*l'étranger*[5]] as god, animal or plant, to use those conventional categories?). In underlining that it is a question here of right and not philanthropy, Kant does not mean that the right of hospitality is a-human or inhuman, but rather that, as a right, it does not arise [*relève*] from "the love of man as a sentimental motive." Universal hospitality arises [*relève*] from an obligation, a right, and a duty all regulated by law; elsewhere, in the "Elements of Ethics" which concludes his "Doctrine of Virtue",[6] Kant distinguishes the philanthropist from what he calls "the friend of man" (allow me to refer those whom this distinction may interest to what I say in *The Politics of Friendship* in the passage devoted to the "black swan"[7]). I return, then, to this first sentence and to the German word which accompanies *Hospitalität* in parentheses: "As in the foregoing articles, we are here concerned not with philanthropy, but with right. In this context hospitality [*Hospitalität* (*Wirtbarkeit*)] means the right of a stranger [*bedeutet das Recht eines Fremdlings*] not to be treated with hostility [*en ennemi*] when he arrives on someone else's territory [*seiner Ankunft auf der Boden eines andern wegen von diesem nicht feindselig behandelt zu werden*]."

Already hospitality is opposed to what is nothing other than opposition itself, namely, hostility [*Feindseligkeit*]. The welcomed guest [*hôte*] is a stranger treated as a friend or ally, as opposed to the stranger treated as an enemy (friend/enemy, hospitality/hostility). The pair we will continue to speak of, hospitality/hostility, is in place. Before pursuing my simple reading or quotation, I would like to underline the German word *Wirtbarkeit* which Kant adds in parentheses, as the equivalent of the Latin *Hospitalität*. *Wirt* (*Wirtin* in the feminine) is at the same time the *patron*[8] and the host [*hôte*], the host*[9] who receives the *Gast*, the *Gastgeber*, the *patron* of a hotel or restaurant. *Wirtlich*, like *gastlich*, means "hospitable," "welcoming." *Wirtshaus* is the café, the cabaret, the inn, the place that accommodates. And *Wirt* governs the whole lexicon of *Wirtschaft*, which is to say, economy and, thus, *oikonomia*, law of the household <where it is precisely the *patron* of the house – he who receives, who is master in his house, in his household, in his state, in his nation, in his city, in his town, who remains master in his house – who defines the conditions of hospitality or welcome; where consequently there can be no unconditional welcome, no unconditional passage through the door>. Here the *Wirt*, the *Gast*, is just as much the one who as host [*hôte*] (as host* and not as guest*) receives, welcomes, offers hospitality in his house or *hôtel*, as he is, in the first instance and with reason, the master of the household, the *patron*, the master *in his own home*. At bottom, before even beginning, we could end our reflections here in the formalization of a law of hospitality which violently imposes a contradiction on the very concept of hospitality in fixing a limit to it, in de-termining it: hospitality is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the *greeting* of the foreign other [*l'autre étranger*] as a friend but on the condition that the host*, the *Wirt*, the one who receives, lodges or *gives asylum* remains the *patron*, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority *in his own home*, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him [*qu'il se garde et garde et regarde ce qui le regarde*] and thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household, *oikonomia*, the law of his household, the law of a place (house, hotel, hospital, hospice, family, city, nation, language, etc.), the law of identity which de-limits the *very* place of proffered hospitality and maintains authority over it, maintains the truth of authority, remains the place of this maintaining, which is to say, of truth, thus limiting the gift proffered and making of this limitation, namely, the *being-oneself in one's own home*, the condition of the gift and of hospitality. This is the principle, <one could say,

the aporia,> of both the constitution and the implosion of the concept of hospitality, the effects of which – it is my hypothesis – we will only continue to confirm. This implosion or, if you prefer, this self-deconstruction having already taken place, we could, I was saying, end here <the reflection on this aporia>. Hospitality is a self-contradictory concept and experience which can only self-destruct <put otherwise, produce itself as impossible, only be possible on the condition of its impossibility> or protect itself from itself, auto-immunize itself in some way, which is to say, deconstruct itself – precisely – in being put into practice.

But in order not to stop here before even having started, I will go on as if we had not yet said anything and we will continue for a little longer.

Still by way of an epigraph, I will continue reading Kant's text to the end, this time without stopping. It would be possible to come to a stop before each word, but as it is an epigraph, I won't do that, I will press on. We will have plenty of opportunities to come back to it later.

> As in the foregoing articles, we are concerned here not with philanthropy, but with *right*. In this context, *hospitality* [l'hospitalité (hospitalitas)] means the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory. He can indeed be turned away, if this is done without causing his death,[10] but he must not be treated with hostility so long as he behaves in a peaceable manner in the place he happens to be. The stranger cannot claim the *right of a guest* to be entertained [*un* droit de résidence], for this would require a special friendly agreement whereby he might become a member of the native household for a certain time. He may only claim a *right of resort* [*un* droit de visite],[11] for all men are entitled to present themselves in the society of others by virtue of their right to communal possession of the earth's surface. Since the earth is a globe, they cannot disperse over an infinite area, but must tolerate one another's company. And no one originally has any greater right than anyone else to occupy any particular portion of the earth.[12] The community of man is divided by uninhabitable parts of the earth's surface such as oceans and deserts, but even then the *ship* or the *camel* (the ship of the desert) makes it possible for them to approach their fellows over these ownerless tracts, and to utilize as a means of social intercourse that *right to the earth's surface* which the human race shares in common. The inhospitable behavior of coastal dwellers (as on the Barbary coast) in plundering ships on the adjoining seas or enslaving stranded seafarers, or that of inhabitants of the desert (as with the Arab Bedouins), who regard their proximity to nomadic tribes as a justification for plundering them, is contrary to natural right.[13] But this natural right of hospitality, i.e. the right of strangers, does not extend beyond those conditions which make it possible for them to *attempt* to enter into relations with the native inhabitants. In this way, continents distant from each other can enter into peaceful mutual relations which may eventually be regulated by public laws, thus bringing the human race nearer and nearer to a cosmopolitan constitution.
>
> If we compare with this ultimate end the *inhospitable* conduct of the civilized states of our continent, especially the commercial states, the injustice which they display in *visiting* foreign countries and peoples (which in their case is the same as *conquering* them) seems appallingly great. America, the negro countries, the Spice Islands, the Cape, etc. were looked upon at the time of their discovery as ownerless territories; for the native inhabitants were counted as nothing. In East India (Hindustan), foreign troops were brought in under the pretext of merely setting up trading posts. This led to the oppression of the natives, incitement of the various Indian states to widespread wars, famine, insurrection, treachery and the whole litany of evils which afflict the human race.
>
> ... The peoples of the earth have thus entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*. The idea of a cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity. Only under this condition can we flatter ourselves that we are continually advancing towards a perpetual peace. (105–08)

<Perpetual peace for Kant is not simply a utopian concept projected to infinity. As soon as one thinks the concept of peace in all strictness, one must be thinking of perpetual peace. A peace that would simply be an armistice would not be a peace. Peace implies within its concept of peace the promise of eternity. Otherwise it is not a peace. Kant here is only laying out the very structure of the concept of peace, which implies a promise of indefinite, and therefore eternal, renewal.>

Now we are beginning or pretending to open the door <that impossible door, sublime or not>. We are on the threshold.

We do not know what hospitality is [*Nous ne savons pas ce que c'est que l'hospitalité*]. Not yet.

Not yet, but will we ever know? Is it a question of knowledge and of time?

Here, in any case, is the sentence which I address to you, which I have already addressed to you, and which I now put in quotation marks. "We do not know what hospitality is." It is a sentence which I address to you in French, in my language, in my home, in order to begin and to bid you welcome <where I am received in your home> when I begin to speak in my language, which seems to suppose that I am here <at home> master in my own home, that I am receiving, inviting, accepting or welcoming you, allowing you to come across the threshold, by saying "*bienvenu*," "*welcome*,"* to you.

I repeat: "We do not know what hospitality is."

Already, as you have heard, I have used, and even used up, the most used words in the code of hospitality, the lexicon of which consists of the words "invite," "welcome," receive "at home" while one is "master of one's own home" and of the threshold.

Consequently, to address the first sentence with which I began, "We do not know what hospitality is," as a host to a guest [*comme un hôte à un hôte* (a host to a guest)] seems to contradict, in a self-contradiction, <an aporia, if you like,> a performative contradiction, everything I have just recalled, namely, that we comprehend all these words well enough, and that they belong to the current lexicon or the common semantics of hospitality, of all pre-comprehension of what "hospitality" is and means, namely, to "welcome," "accept," "invite," "receive," "bid" someone welcome "to one's home," where, in one's own home, one is master of the household, master of the city, or master of the nation, the language, or the state, places from which one bids the other welcome (but what is a "welcome"?) and grants him a kind of *right of asylum* by authorizing him to cross a threshold that would be a threshold, <a door that would be a door,> a threshold that is determinable because it is self-identical and indivisible, a threshold the line of which can be traced (the door of a house, human household, family or house of god, temple or general hospital [*hôtel-dieu*], hospice [*hospice*], hospital or poor-house [*hôpital ou hôtel hospitalier*], frontier of a city, or a country, or a language, etc.). We think we comprehend all these ordinary words in French – in which I am *at home* – and the French language itself in all that it translates (translation also being, as we noted earlier, an enigmatic phenomenon or experience of hospitality, if not the condition of all hospitality in general).

And yet, even though, I am assuming, we understand each other rather well over the meaning or pre-comprehension of all this vocabulary of hospitality and the said laws of hospitality, I dared to begin by putting to you, in the way of a welcome: "We do not know what hospitality is." In appearance, a performative contradiction which bids welcome by acknowledging that we do not know what "welcome" means and that perhaps no one welcomed is ever completely welcome <in a welcome which is not justifiably hypocritical or conditional>, a performative contradiction which is as unusual and confusing as an apostrophe of the sort, "O my friends, there is no friend,"[14] <a sentence attributed to Aristotle,> the meaning and consequences of which are doubtless not completely foreign, assuming we know what "foreign [*étranger*]" means; the whole question of hospitality is focused here, too.

Thus, I owe you as my hosts an explanation. This short sentence, "We do not know what hospitality is," which implicates us, which has

already authoritatively and in advance implicated you in a we that speaks French, <a sentence we comprehend without comprehending,> can have several acceptations. At least three and doubtless more than four.

Before beginning to unfold them, note in passing that the word "acceptation [*acception*]," from *accipere* or *acceptio* and which in French means "the meaning given to a word" (and which many people make the easy mistake of confusing with "acception [*acceptation*]"),[15] this word "acceptation" also belongs quite specifically to the discourse of hospitality; it lives at the heart of the discourse of hospitality; acceptation in Latin is the same as acception, the action of receiving, the welcome given, the way one receives. <Obviously, a reflection on hospitality is a reflection on what the word "receive" means. What does "receive" mean?> It is like a postscript to Plato's *Timaeus*, where <Khôra,[16]> the place is spoken of as that which receives (*endekhomai*, *endekhomenon*), the receptacle (*dekhomenon* – which can also mean "it is acceptable, permitted, possible"); in Latin, *acceptio* is the action of receiving, reception, welcome ("reception" and "welcome [*accueil*]" are words you also often see at the entrances to hotels and hospitals, what were once known as hospices, places of public hospitality). The "acceptor" is the one who receives, makes welcome, has – as is also said – a welcome in store, or who approves, who accepts, the other and what the other says or does. When I said I am at home here speaking my language, French, that also means I am more welcoming to Latin and Latinate languages than to others, and you see how violently I am behaving as master in my own home at the very moment of welcoming. *Accepto* – the frequentative of *accipio* (that is, of the verb that matters most here, *accipio*) which means "to take" [*prendre*] (*capere* or comprehend in order to make come to one, in order to receive, welcome) – *accepto*, that is, the frequentative of *accipio*, means "being in the habit of receiving." *Accepto*: I am in the habit of receiving, of making welcome; in this sense, from this point of view, it is almost synonymous with *recipio*, which means both "take in return, again" and "receive," "welcome," "accept," the *re-* often having the sense of return or repetition, the new of "anew" [*du nouveau de "de nouveau," à nouveau*], and, when the *re-* disappears from "receive" in the sense of "welcome," "accept," even if for the first time. Already you see that, besides the idea of necessary repetition and thus of law, iterability, and the law of iterability at the heart of every law of hospitality, we have – with the semantics of acceptation or acception, reception – the double postulation of giving and taking (*capere*), of giving and comprehending in itself and at home with itself [*en soi et chez soi*], <in its language,> not just on one occasion but in its readiness from the outset to repeat, to renew, to continue. Yes, yes, you are welcome. Hospitality gives and takes more than once in its own home. It gives, it offers, it holds out, but what it gives, offers, holds out, is the greeting which comprehends and makes or lets come into one's home, folding the foreign other into the internal law of the host [*hôte* (host, *Wirt*, etc.)] which tends to begin by dictating the law of its language and its own acceptation of the sense of words, which is to say, its own concepts as well. The acceptation of words is also the concept, the *Begriff*, the manner in which one takes hold of or comprehends, takes, apprehends [*comprend*, *prend*, *appréhende*] the meaning of a word in giving it a meaning.

I was saying that the sentence that I addressed to you, which is, "We do not know what hospitality is," can have several acceptations. At least three and doubtless more than four.

1. The first acceptation is the one that would rely on stressing the word "know": we do not *know*, we do not *know* what hospitality is. This not-knowing is not necessarily a deficiency, an infirmity, a lack. Its apparent negativity, this grammatical negativity (the not-knowing) would not signify ignorance, but rather indicate or recall only that hospitality is not a concept which lends itself to objective knowledge. Of course, there is a concept of hospitality, of the meaning of this word "hospitality," and we already have some pre-comprehension of it. Otherwise we could not speak of it, to suppose that in speaking of it we know what "speaking" means. On the one hand, what we pre-comprehend in this way – we will verify this – rebels against any

self-identity or any consistent, stable, and objectifiable conceptual determination. On the other hand, what this concept is the concept of *is not* [n'est pas], is not a being, is not something which as a being, thing, or object can belong [*relever*] to knowledge. Hospitality, if there is such a thing, is not only an experience in the most enigmatic sense of the word, which appeals to an act and an intention beyond the thing, object, or present being, but is also an intentional experience which proceeds beyond knowledge toward the other as absolute stranger, as unknown, where I know that I know nothing of him (we will return sooner or later to the difficult and necessary distinction between these two nevertheless indissociable concepts, the other and the stranger, an indispensable distinction if we are to delimit any specificity to hospitality). <Hospitality is owed to the other as stranger. But if one determines the other as stranger, one is already introducing the circles of conditionality that are family, nation, state, and citizenship. Perhaps there is an other who is still more foreign than the one whose foreignness cannot be restricted to foreignness in relation to language, family, or citizenship. Naturally, I am trying to determine the dimension of not-knowing that is essential in hospitality.> It is doubtless necessary to know all that can be known of hospitality, and there is much to know; it is certainly necessary to bring this knowledge to the highest and fullest consciousness possible; but it is also necessary to know that hospitality gives itself, and gives itself to thought beyond knowledge [*se donne à penser au-delà du savoir*].

2. The second acceptation of this apparently negative sentence, "We do not know what hospitality is," could seem wrapped up in the first. If we do not know what hospitality is, it is because it is not [*n'est pas*], it is not a present being. This intentional act, this address or invitation,[17] this experience which calls and addresses itself to the other as a stranger in order to say "Welcome" to him, is not [*n'est pas*] in several senses of not-being [*du non-être*], by which I do not mean nothingness. First of all, it is not [*n'est pas*] because it often proclaims itself (that will be one of our major problems) as a law, a duty or right, an obligation, that is, as a should-be [*un devoir-être*] rather than as being or a being [*un être ou un étant*]. Without referring to Kant's text with which we opened this session (the juridical text that defines the right of the stranger, which is reciprocally the duty or obligation of the host* who is master in his house, who is *what he is* in his house), we could invoke all those texts inscribable under the title "The Laws of Hospitality" – in particular Klossowski's *Roberte Ce Soir*,[18] a text which we will definitely return to and which analyzes an internal and essential contradiction in hospitality, one foreshadowed in the sort of preface or protocol entitled "Difficulties," where the temporal contradiction of hospitality is such that the experience cannot last; it can only pre-form itself in the imminence of what is "about to happen [*sur le point d'arriver*]" and can only last an instant, precisely because a contradiction cannot last without being dialectized (a Kierkegaardian paradox), or, as the text puts it, one cannot "at the same time take and not take" (11). I will read these "Difficulties" very quickly, underlining this temporal contradiction and the position of these "Difficulties" as a preface or protocol to the text or charter entitled "The Laws of Hospitality":

> When my Uncle Octave took my Aunt Roberte in his arms, one must not suppose that in taking her he was alone. An invited guest [*un invité*] would enter while Roberte, entirely given over to my uncle's presence, was not expecting him, and while she was in fear lest the guest would arrive – for with irresistible resolution Roberte awaited the arrival of some guest – the guest would already be looming up behind her as my uncle made his entry just in time to surprise my aunt's satisfied fright at being surprised by the guest. But in my uncle's mind it would last only an instant, and once again my uncle would be on the point of taking my aunt in his arms. It would last only an instant … for, after all, one cannot at the same time take and not take, be there and not be there, enter a room when one is already in it. My Uncle Octave would have been asking too much had he wished to prolong the instant of the opened door, he was already doing exceedingly well in getting the guest to appear in the doorway at the precise instant he did,

getting the guest to loom up behind Roberte so that he, Octave, might be able to sense that he himself was the guest as, borrowing from the guest his door-opening gesture, he could behold from the threshold and have the impression it was he, Octave, who was taking my aunt in surprise.

Nothing could give a better idea of my uncle's mentality than these hand-written pages he had framed under glass and then hung on the wall of the guest room, just above the bed, a spray of fading wildflowers drooping over the old-fashioned frame. (11–12)

The laws of hospitality properly speaking will be marked by this contradiction inscribed in the essence of the hostess – since the interest, one of the interests, of Klossowski's book is having treated the problem of hospitality by taking the sharpest and most painful but also the most ecstatic account of sexual difference in the couple and in the couple's relation to a third (to the *terstis* who is both witness and guest here) – a contradiction inscribed in the essence of the hostess which Klossowski analyzes, as so often, in the theologico-scholastic language of essence and existence, and which must lead, according to a necessity we will often put to the test, to the reversal in which the master of this house, the master in his own home, the host*, can only accomplish his task as host, that is, hospitality, in becoming invited by the other into his home, in being welcomed by him whom he welcomes, in receiving the hospitality he gives. Expecting to return to them later, I will content myself with reading two passages from "The Laws of Hospitality," one which describes the contradiction in the essence of the hostess, the other, a conclusion, which tells of the final reversal of the roles of host and guest [*de l'hôte et de l'hôte*], of the inviting *hôte* as host* (the master in his own home) and the invited *hôte* as guest*, of the inviting and the invited,[19] of the becoming-invited, if you like, of the one inviting. The one inviting becomes almost the hostage of the one invited, of the guest [*hôte*], the hostage of the one he receives, the one who keeps him at home. We need, we would need, to set about a lengthy examination of the hostage, the logic, economy, and politics of the hostage. The *Littré* disputes that the word "*otage* [hostage]" in its current usage comes from *ostage*, itself coming from *hoste*, *oste*, which could signify in certain thirteenth-century texts what we now call a hostage; for the *Littré* "*otage*" would come from the contraction *hostaticum* for *obsidaticum*, from *obsudatus*, which means "guarantee," from *obses*, *obsiditis*, hostage, hostage of war (beyond question), from *obsidere*, to occupy, possess, indeed besiege, obsess; the *Robert* does not make as much of a fuss in deriving "*otage*" from *hostage*, which means "lodgings," "residence," "place where guests [*hôtes*] are lodged," hostages being in the first instance guarantees, security, surety for the enemy lodged with the sovereign. I have not engaged in more serious etymological research, but it cannot be disputed that *obses* means "hostage of war" in Latin; the two etymologies ally themselves with one another easily; in both cases, the hostage is security for a possession: the hostage is a guarantee for the other, held in a place and taking its place [*tenu dans un lieu et tenant lieu*].

We would also need to pursue this terrifying and unsurpassable strategy of the hostage in the direction of a modernity and a techno-political specificity of hostage-taking (which is not what it was only a few decades ago), in the direction (the inverse, so to speak) of what Levinas calls "the hostage" when he says that the exercise of ethical responsibility begins where I am and must be the hostage of the other, delivered passively to the other before being delivered to myself.[20] (The theme of obsession, obsidionality, persecution also playing an essential role and one indissociable from that of the hostage in Levinas' discourse on responsibility before the other, which assumes that I am, in a non-negative sense of that term, from the outset, me: myself, in as much as I say "Here I am," the subjugated, substitutable subject, the other's hostage.) "It is through the condition of being a hostage," says Levinas in "Substitution," "that there can be pity, compassion, pardon and proximity in the world,"[21] or further, and here the word "ipseity" will be of the utmost importance: "Ipseity, in the passivity without arche characteristic of identity, is a hostage. The word 'I' would answer for everything and everyone."[22]

> The master of the house, having no greater nor more pressing concern than to shed the warmth of his joy at evening upon whomever comes to dine at his table and to rest under his roof from a day's wearying travel, waits anxiously on the threshold for the stranger he will see appear like a liberator upon the horizon. And catching a first glimpse of him in the distance, though he be still far off, the master will call out to him, "Come quickly, my happiness is at stake." (Klossowski 12)

<He waits for anyone, anyone who arrives [*n'importe quel arrivant*], and welcomes the one who arrives [*l'arrivant*] by urging him to enter as a liberator.[23] Every word of this passage could be underlined. If there is a horizon, it is not what phenomenologists call the horizon of expectation, since it could be anyone. He waits without waiting. He waits without knowing whom he awaits. He waits for the Messiah. He waits for anyone who might come. And he will have him eat at his table. And he urges him to come, even though he has no way of making him come more quickly. He waits impatiently for him as a liberator. This is certainly a kind of Messiah.>

> Now it seems that the essence of the hostess, such as the host visualizes it, would in this sense be undetermined and contradictory. For either the essence of the hostess is constituted by her fidelity to the host, and in this case she eludes him the more he wishes to know her in the opposite state of betrayal, for she would be unable to betray him in order to be faithful to him; or else the essence of the hostess is really constituted by infidelity and then the host would cease to have any part in the essence of the hostess who would be susceptible of belonging, accidentally, as mistress of the house, to some one or other of the guests [*invités*]. The notion of mistress of the house reposes upon an existential basis: she is a hostess only upon an essential basis: this essence is therefore subjected to restraint by her actual existence as mistress of the house. And here the sole function of betrayal, we see, is to lift this restraint. If the essence of the hostess lies in fidelity to the host, this authorizes the host to cause the hostess, essential in the existent mistress of the house, to manifest herself before the eyes of the guest; for the host in playing host must accept the risks of the game and these include the consequences of his wife's strict application of the laws of hospitality and of the fact that she dare not be unmindful of her essence, composed of fidelity to the host, for fear that in the arms of the inactual guest come here to actualize her *qua* hostess, the mistress of the household exist only traitorously. (Klossowski 13–14)

If we do not know what hospitality is, it is because this thing which is not something is not an object of knowledge, nor in the mode of being-present, unless it is that of the law of the should-be or obligation, the law of hospitality, the imperative of which seems moreover contradictory or paradoxical.

3. But there is still a third acceptation or a third intonation, a third accentuation of the same sentence. This third accentuation seems also to relate to time and achrony or essential anachrony,[24] indeed to the paradoxical instant we were speaking of, but is in truth a question of another experience, another dimension of time and space. "We do not know what hospitality is" would imply "we do not yet know what hospitality is," in a sense of "not yet" which remains to be thought: <it is not only the "not yet" of the threshold. The threshold, that is the "not yet." The threshold is what has not yet been crossed,> not "not yet" because we will know better tomorrow in the future tense, in the present future, but "not yet" for two other kinds of reason.

A. On the one hand, the system of right, national or international right, the political <or state> system which determines the obligations and limits of hospitality, the system of European right of which Kant's text, read at the beginning, gives us at least an idea, a regulative Idea, and a very high ideal, this system of right and concept of politics, indeed cosmopolitics, which he inscribes and prescribes, has a history, even if it is the history of the concept of history, of teleology and the regulative Idea which it brings into play. This history and this history of history call up questions and delimitations (which we will, of course, be speaking of) which justify the thought that the determination and experience of hospitality hold a future beyond this history and this thought of history – and that therefore we do not

yet know what hospitality beyond this European, universally European, right is.

B. And, above all, on the other hand, the "not yet" can define the very dimension of what, still in the future, still to come, comes from hospitality, what is called and called by [*s'appelle et reste appelé par*] hospitality. What we call hospitality maintains an essential relation with the opening of what is called to come [*à venir*]. When we say that "We do not yet know what hospitality is," we also imply that we do not yet know who or what will come, nor what is called hospitality and what is called in hospitality, knowing that hospitality, in the first place, is called [*ça s'appelle*], even if this call does not take shape in human language. Calling the other, calling the one the other, inviting, inviting oneself, ingratiating oneself, having or letting oneself come, coming well, welcoming [*se faire ou se laisser venir, bien venir*], greeting, greeting one another as a sign of welcome – these are so many experiences which come from the future, which come from seeing come or from allowing to come without seeing come, no less than the "not [*pas*]," and hence the "not yet," the past "not yet" of the step [*pas*] that crosses the threshold. What is called hospitality, which we do not yet know, is what is called. Although "*s'appeler* [to be called]" is an untranslatable French grammatical form (and the question of translation is always the question of hospitality), although "*s'appeler*" – that is, its untranslatable privilege in the French idiom – can be reflexive and not reflexive (on the one hand, I call myself such and such, he or she calls himself or herself by such and such a name; on the other hand, let's call one another [*on s'appelle l'un l'autre, l'une l'autre*]), although this is all very French, I would nevertheless refer to a celebrated text by Heidegger, *Was heisst Denken?*

Heidegger speaks there of at least two things that are of the utmost importance to us here and which I highlight too quickly.

On the one hand, in the opening pages which I am letting you read, he insists at length on this: "Most thought-provoking is that we are not yet thinking," still "not yet," the most disturbing, serious, important, unusual, and shady, "*das Bedenklichste*, is what we are not yet thinking; still not yet … [*Das Bedenklichste ist, dass wir noch nicht denken; immer noch nicht …*]" (4).[25] And further on, after noting that "*Das Bedenklichste in unserer bedenkliche Zeit ist, dass wir noch nicht denken* [Most thought-provoking [*Le plus bizarre et inquiétant*] in our thought-provoking time is that we are not yet thinking]," he determines the noun "*das Bedenkliche*" as "*was uns zu denken gibt* [what gives us to think]" (6), which doubtless legitimates the standard French translation that Granel rather artificially chooses for *das Bedenkliche*, "*ce qui donne à penser* [what gives to think]"; *das Bedenklichste*, "*ce qui donne le plus à penser* [what gives most to think]."[26]

But what I wanted above all to recall from this book, still too quickly, alas, is the play in it on "to be called," precisely the "*heissen*" which means "meaning," without a doubt, to be called, calling [*s'appeler*, *appeler*] (*was heisst Denken?*: what is called thinking? what does thinking mean? for *das heisst* means "it means," "that is to say"; but *heissen* also, or first of all, means "calls," "invites," "names": *jenen willkommen heissen* is "to bid someone welcome," "address a word of welcome to someone"). And when he analyzes the four meanings of the expression "*was heisst Denken?*" (I refer you to the beginning of Part Two, lectures from the summer semester 1952, page 79 of the original), he notes in fourth place that it also means: "what is it that calls us, as it were, commands us to think? What is it that calls us into thinking? [*was ist es, das uns heisst, uns gleichsam befiehlt, zu denken? Was ist es, das uns in das Denken ruft?*]" (114). What calls us to thought, toward the thinking of thought, in giving us the order to do it, the call also being the call to reply "Present, here I am"?

Heidegger underlines that this is no simple play on words, and I invite you to read all these pages (as I have tried to do elsewhere), in particular what relates the call or invitation in *heissen* to the promise (*Verheissung*), to the alliance and the "yes" of acquiescence before the question (*Zusage*, *ein Zugesagtes*), to what is promised (*ein Versprochenes*). <Heidegger devotes himself much later, in the end fairly late in his itinerary, to the value of *Zusage* which

means "acquiescence," the "yes" that would come before the question. For a long time Heidegger presented the act of questioning as the essential act of philosophy, of thought, that is to say, the piety of thinking (*Frömmlichkeit des Denkens*). But before the question, if one can speak of a before that is neither chronological nor logical, in order for there to be a question there must first of all be an acquiescence, a "yes." In order to ask, there must first be a certain "yes." This is what Heidegger called *Zusage*, which is more originary than the question. And here it is a question in this passage of *Zusage*, *ein Zugesagtes*, of what is promised, of a "yes" to a promise.>

But, as I am coming back from Freiburg-im-Brisgau where for the first time as a visitor I stepped across the threshold of Heidegger's hut in the mountains, I have chosen to quote another passage from *Was heisst Denken?* which at the same time names Freiburg-im-Brisgau, as the town is called, Freiburg where this course was given, alludes to a certain hut in the mountains, and says something essential about the call and hospitality.

Here then is what Heidegger says at the end of the lecture, in the recapping of the "Summary and Transition" between the first and second lectures (I will read straight from the text, pointing out German words here and there):

> The ambiguity of the question: "What is called thinking" lies in the ambiguity of the verb which is in itself a question: "to call [*heissen*]." The town where we are is called Freiburg-im-Brisgau; it has this name.
>
> The frequent idiom "to be called" or "what we call [*das heisst*]" signifies: what we have just said has in reality this or that meaning, is to be understood this way or that. Instead of "what we call [*das heisst*]," we also use the idiom "that is to say [*das will sagen*]."
>
> On a day of changeable weather, someone might leave a mountain lodge alone to climb a peak. He soon loses his way in the fog that has suddenly descended. He has no notion of what we call [*was es heisst*] mountaineering. He does not know any of the things it calls for, all the things that must be taken into account and mastered.
>
> A voice calls us to have hope [*heisst uns hoffen*]. It beckons us to hope, invites us, commends us, directs us to hope.
>
> The town where we are is called [*heissen*] Freiburg. It is so named because that is what it has been called. This means: the town has been called to assume this name. Henceforth it is at the call of this name [*sous la Renommée de ce nom*] to which it has been commended. To call is not originally to name, but the other way round: naming is a kind of calling, in the original sense of demanding and commending. It is not that the call [*le "Geheiss"*] has its being in the name; rather every name is a kind of call [*Geheiss*]. Every call [*Geheiss*] implies an approach, and thus, of course, the possibility of giving a name. We might call [*heissen*] a guest [*hôte*] welcome [*Geheiss*]. This does not mean that we attach to him the name "Welcome [*Geheiss*]," but that we call him to come in and complete his arrival as a welcome friend. In that way, the welcome[*Geheiss*]-call of the invitation to come in is nonetheless also an act of naming, a calling which makes the newcomer what we call a guest [*hôte*] whom we are glad to see.
>
> "*Heissen*" – in gothic "*haitan*" – is to call; but calling is something other than merely making a sound. Something else again, essentially different from mere sound and noise, is the cry. (123–24)[27]

After which Heidegger insists on a classical distinction, necessary in his eyes, a bit more problematic in mine, between noise, the cry, and the call [*Schall und Schrei und Ruf*], but let us leave it here for the moment.

4. Finally, the fourth possible acceptation of my initial address ("We do not know what hospitality is") would place us at both a critical crossroads of semantic (or, if you prefer, etymologico-institutional) filiations and an aporetic crossroads, which is to say, a crossroads or a sort of double postulation, contradictory double movement, double constraint or double bind* (I prefer "double bind"* because this English expression retains the link to "link" and thus to "obligation," "ligament," and "alliance"). What may appear paradoxical is the meeting of the experience of hospitality and aporia, especially where we think that the host [*hôte*] offers

the guest [*hôte*] passage across the threshold or the frontier in order to receive him into his home. Is aporia not, as its name indicates, the non-road, the barred way, the non-passage? My hypothesis or thesis would be that this necessary aporia is not negative; and that without the repeated enduring of this paralysis in contradiction, the responsibility of hospitality, hospitality *tout court* – when we do not yet know and will never know what it is – would have no chance of coming to pass, of coming, of making or letting welcome [*d'advenir, de venir, de faire ou de laisser bienvenir*].

For the moment, in the name of the critical crossroads of semantics or etymology and institutions, I will pass quickly and without transition from the welcome [*la bienvenue*] to Benveniste. Welcome to the welcomed [*Bienvenue au bienvenu*] who in this case is Benveniste.

As always in what is a vocabulary of Indo-European institutions, *Indo-European Language and Society*, Benveniste starts with an institution, that is to say, with what he calls a "well-established social phenomenon"; and it is from this "well-established social phenomenon," as he puts it, that he goes on to study a lexicon, what he calls a "group of words" which he relates to "hospitality."[28] The name of the social phenomenon in this case is "hospitality" – the title of chapter 7 of Book I (Economy). The "basic term" is, thus, the Latin *hospes*, which, Benveniste recalls, is divided into two, two distinct elements which he says "finally link up": hosti-pet-s (72). *Pet-* alternates with *pot-* which means "master" so clearly, Benveniste notes, that *hospes* would mean "guest-master [*maître de l'hôte*]" (72). As he rightly finds this "a rather singular designation" (these are his words), he proposes to study these two terms, *potis* and *hostis*, separately and analyze their "etymological connections" (72). *Hostis* is going to effect this strange crossing between enemy and host which we will speak of later. But let us begin with *potis*, which unites the semantics of power, mastery, and despotic sovereignty.

Before returning to this notion of mastery <which conditions hospitality, and> which we have said so much about, let us follow Benveniste for a moment while he explicates "*potis*" in its proper meaning [*au sens propre*], "in its own right [*en propre*]," as he says (72). He goes back to Sanskrit where two meanings, "master" and "husband" (this is why I began with *Roberte Ce Soir* where the master is truly the master of this house, thus the master of the woman, that is, the husband), are the subject of the same stem in two different inflections. This is a phenomenon proper to the evolution of Sanskrit: one inflection signifies "master," the other "husband." When Klossowski describes the laws of hospitality in speaking of a master of the house, a master of places like the family and a master of the wife, husband of the wife who becomes the stake and essence of hospitality, he is well within the domestic or *oikonomic* (law of the household, domestic lineage, family) logic which seems to govern this Indo-European history of hospitality. Benveniste passes from Sanskrit to the Greek *posis*, a poetic term for husband, spouse (which also means, although Benveniste does not note this, "fiancé," "lover," and, in Euripides, "the secret spouse"; in Latin this will yield *potens, potentis*, master, sovereign, potentate). Benveniste specifies that *posis* be distanced from *despotes*, which according to him only signifies power or mastery without the domestic reference to the "master of the house" (a remark which, I must say, greatly surprises me, for, although my proficiency is very limited, I see references elsewhere to Aeschylus who notes that *despotes* means "master of the house," and to Plato's *Laws* or *Republic* in which *despotes* means "master of the house," a synonym of *oikonomos* (the steward [*économe*] is the one who makes the law in the *oikos*, the household or the family, the master of the family also being the master of the slaves; we are here in the transition between the family and the state)). Benveniste then recalls that the Greek *despotes* and its Sanskrit equivalent *dam patih* enter into the composition of ancient expressions which relate to social unities the extension of which can vary: the master of the house, *dam patih*, the master of the clan, *vis patih*, the master of the lineage, *jas patih*. One could follow all the variations he cites in Iranian, Lithuanian, Hittite, etc. He does not cite, but could have, the word *hospodar*, prince, lord, which passed into French and was used even by

Voltaire, just like the *hospodarat* (office or dignity of the *hospodar*), a word of Slavic origin (*hospodin* in Bohemian, *gospodar* in Russian, *gospoda* in Polish, whence *gospodarz*, hotelier, master of the house, host, innkeeper, etc.).

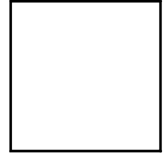
Let us leave Benveniste and his semantico-institutional filiations for a moment in order to underline very generally and structurally a paradoxical trait, namely, that the host, he who offers hospitality, must be the master in his house, he (male in the first instance) must be assured of his sovereignty over the space and goods he offers or opens to the other as stranger. This seems both the law of laws of hospitality and common sense in our culture. It does not seem to me that I am able to open up or offer hospitality, however generous, even in order to be generous, without reaffirming: this is mine, I am at home, you are welcome in my home, without any implication of "make yourself at home" but on condition that you observe the rules of hospitality by respecting the being-at-home of my home, the being-itself of what I am. There is almost an axiom of self-limitation or self-contradiction in the law of hospitality. As a reaffirmation of mastery and being oneself in one's own home, from the outset hospitality limits itself at its very beginning, it remains forever on the threshold of itself [*l'hospitalité se limite dès le seuil sur le seuil d'elle-même, elle reste toujours au seuil d'elle-même*], it governs the threshold – and hence it forbids in some way even what it seems to allow to cross the threshold to pass across it. It becomes the threshold. This is why we do not know what it is, and why we cannot know. Once we know it, we no longer know it, what it properly is, what the threshold of its identity is.

<To take up the figure of the door, for there to be hospitality, there must be a door. But if there is a door, there is no longer hospitality. There is no hospitable house. There is no house without doors and windows. But as soon as there are a door and windows, it means that someone has the key to them and consequently controls the conditions of hospitality. There must be a threshold. But if there is a threshold, there is no longer hospitality. This is the difference, the gap, between the hospitality of invitation and the hospitality of visitation. In visitation there is no door. Anyone can come at any time and can come in without needing a key for the door. There are no customs checks with a visitation. But there are customs and police checks with an invitation. Hospitality thus becomes the threshold or the door.>

In saying that hospitality always in some way does the opposite of what it pretends to do and immobilizes itself on the threshold of itself, on the threshold which it re-marks and constitutes, on *itself* in short, on both its phenomenon and its essence, I am not claiming that hospitality is this double bind* or this aporetic contradiction and that therefore wherever hospitality is, there is no hospitality. No, I am saying that this apparently aporetic paralysis on the threshold "is" (I put "is" in quotation marks or, if you prefer, under erasure [*je le rature*]) what must be overcome <it is the impossibility which must be overcome where it is possible to become impossible. It is necessary to do the impossible. If there is hospitality, the impossible must be done>, this "is" being in order that, beyond hospitality, hospitality may come to pass. Hospitality can only take place beyond hospitality, in deciding to let it come, overcoming the hospitality that paralyzes itself on the threshold which it is. It is perhaps in this sense that "we do not know (not yet, but always not yet) what hospitality is," and that hospitality awaits [*attend*] its chance, that it holds itself out to [*se tend vers*] its chance beyond what it is, namely, the paralysis on the threshold which it is. In this sense hospitality is always to come [*à venir*], but a "to come" that does not and will never present itself as such, in the present <and a future [*avenir*] that does not have a horizon, a futurity – a future without horizon>. To think hospitality from the future – this future that does not present itself or will only present itself when it is not awaited as a present or presentable – is to think hospitality from death no less than from birth. In general, it is the birthplace which will always have underpinned the definition of the stranger (the stranger as non-autochthonous, non-indigenous, we will say more of this) and the place of death. <The stranger is, first of all, he who is born elsewhere. The stranger is defined from birth rather than death.> The "dying elsewhere" or the "dying at

home." Perhaps we can read together a passage from Montaigne on this subject, on dying while travelling, in a text in which, having enumerated what he calls the "forms of dying," notably away from home, he asks the question of what he calls in a sublime, but perhaps only sublime, word, *commourans* [comrades-in-death], those who die together, at the same time – as if that were possible – if not in the same place. Rightly, he does not speak of Romeo and Juliet, who illustrate in this regard an irreducible bad timing [*contretemps*], but he does wonder, I quote, "Might we not even make death luxurious, like Antony and Cleopatra, those comrades-in-death?"[29]

What would be needed would be to pursue this analysis of the *critical* crossroads of semantic (or, if you prefer, etymologico-institutional) filiations and the *aporetic* crossroads, that is to say, a crossroads where a sort of double bifurcation, double postulation, contradictory double movement, double constraint or double bind* paralyzes and opens hospitality, holding it over itself in holding it out to the other, depriving it of and bestowing on it its chance; we will see how power (despotic sovereignty and the virile mastery of the master of the house) is nothing other than ipseity itself, the same of the selfsame, to say nothing of the subject which is a stabilizing and despotic escalation of ipseity, the being oneself or the *Selbst*. The question of hospitality is also the question of ipseity. In his own way, Benveniste too will help us to confirm this from language, the *utpote* and what he calls the "mysterious *-pse* of ipse"; we should stop at this phrase in Benveniste and its context, the phrase being both luminous and philosophically a bit ingenuous in its form as a question and in the astonishment it reveals (74). Thus Benveniste writes: "While it is difficult to see how a word meaning 'the master,' could become so weakened in force as to signify 'himself,' it is easy to understand how an adjective denoting the identity of a person, signifying 'himself,' could acquire the proper meaning of 'master'" (74). (Benveniste likes "proper meaning [*sens propre*]" a lot and quietly makes use of the expression on every page, as I have already and often noted, as if the request for the proper meaning were exactly the *same* as the request for the proper, for what is the *same* as itself, for the selfsame, for the essence itself, for the word "same," ipseity never being separable from properness [*propriété*] and the self-identity of whatever or whomever.) Thus we would need to attempt a difficult distinction – subtle but necessary – between the *other* and the *stranger*; and we would need to venture into what is both the implication and the consequence of this double bind*, this impossibility as condition of possibility, namely, the troubling analogy in their common origin between *hostis* as host and *hostis* as enemy, between hospitality and hostility.



notes

This text is based on a paper Derrida delivered in Istanbul (at the workshop Pera Peras Poros, Bosphorus University, 9–10 May 1997). The published text includes the paper Derrida spoke from and additional remarks he made during the symposium. It retains the informal syntax of an oral presentation which the translators have tried to preserve. Some English translations of texts Derrida quotes have been silently modified.

The translators would like to thank Cathérine Pingeot for her comments on a first draft of this translation.

1 Originally published as "Hostipitalité," *Cogito* 85 (1999, special issue *Pera Peras Poros*, ed. Ferda Keskin and Önay Sözer): 17–44. [Tr.]

2 Immanuel Kant, *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970).
German interpolations in square brackets are Derrida's. Those in French and English have been added by the translators. [Tr.]

3 Angular brackets < > indicate comments made by Derrida during the symposium and added to the text by its original editors. [Tr.]

4 "Host" and "guest" can both translate "*hôte*." The ambivalence of the French is of course important for Derrida. Occasionally, he resorts to English to specify the sense of "*hôte*" as either "host" or "guest."

Many such questions and passages – including some of those from Kant, Klossowski, Levinas,

and Benveniste – are also and differently broached in "A Word of Welcome," *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999). See pages 15–123, 135–52. A number of the same topics are extended in *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000). [Tr.]

5 "*Étranger*" has been translated variously as "stranger," "foreigner," and "foreign," depending on the context. [Tr.]

6 Derrida is referring to Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991) 261–64. [Tr.]

7 *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 1997) 257. The black swan appears in the middle of a discussion of Kant on friendship. Kant's own discussion can be found in the section of *The Metaphysics of Morals* cited above. [Tr.]

8 The French "*patron*" does not have the same range as the English "patron," suggesting "boss" or "owner" but not "client" as well. The ambiguity of the English "patron" might suit Derrida's point nicely, but would also transform it significantly. [Tr.]

9 An asterisk after a word or phrase indicates that it appears in English in the original. [Tr.]

10 <Already you will see many of the conditions of hospitality appear. One can turn the person who arrives away on condition that this does not lead to his death. Today we all have (in France in particular – I will allow myself to speak only of France) plenty of experience of the expulsion of foreigners when we know that expulsion will lead to their deaths for either political reasons in their countries of origin or pathological reasons. This raises the whole grave question of AIDS. We know, for example, when foreigners are turned away from France, that they will face conditions in the countries they return to where the treatment of AIDS is not as successful as it is in France. We are doing what Kant says we must not do. That is to say, we are turning people away even when this implies their death. If the stranger behaves himself, however, we cannot turn him away. But this also means there is conditionality. What are the limits? What is the content of these conditions?>

11 <The stranger can pass through but cannot stay. He is not given the rights of a resident. In order for there to be a right of residence, there must be an agreement between states. Everything – and this is what cosmopolitanism means – is subject to an inter-state conditionality. Hence, there is no hospitality for people who are not citizens. Behind this thought are the enormous problems on which Hannah Arendt reflected regarding what had happened in Europe. With the decline of the nation-state we were dealing with millions of people who were no longer even exiles or émigrés but displaced persons, that is, people who did not even have the guarantee of a citizenship, the political guarantee of a citizenship, with all the consequences that entails. This is the challenge today, too: a hospitality which would be more than cosmopolitical, which would go beyond strictly cosmopolitical conditions, those which imply state authority and state legislation. The foreigner cannot claim a right of residence (that would require a special friendly agreement which would make him the member of a native household for a certain period of time), but can claim a right to visit, a right of resort.>

12 <So what is Kant saying to us here? He is saying that this universal right, this political right implying states, this is what he is calling the common possession of the earth's surface. He insists on this common surface for two reasons which are clear but perhaps not underlined. One is that because the earth is spherical, circular, and thus finite, men must learn to live together. And the surface is at the same time space, naturally, the surface area, but it is also superficiality, that is, what is common, what is a priori shared by all men, what is neither above nor below. What is above is culture, institutions, construction. Everything men construct is not common property: foundations, institutions, architecture, hence culture, are not naturally common property. What is common is the natural surface. And, as we will see later, it is a natural right which grounds universal hospitality.>

13 <What Kant does not know here is that the Muslim right which we were speaking of earlier, the right of hospitality, is first founded on a nomadic right. The right of hospitality is, first of all, a nomadic right precisely linked to a sum of differences [*écarts*] which form the pre-Islamic right in which Islamic right and hospitality are rooted.>

14 The opening and organizing line of *Politics of Friendship*. [Tr.]

15 In English "acceptation" has the same meaning as "*acception*" in French. "*Acception*" has thus been translated as "acceptation" and "*acceptation*" as "acception." The different evolutions of the Latin word in French and English in fact illustrate Derrida's points about the "easy mistake" and how these questions are always questions of translation. [Tr.]

16 See "Khôra," trans. Ian McLeod, *On the Name*, ed. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995) 87–127, 146–50. [Tr.]

17 <I say "invitation" – allow me to mark in a parenthesis the site of a development which I will not have time to enter into today. I think that precisely the invitation defines conditional hospitality. When I invite someone to come into my home, it is on condition that I receive him. Everything is conditioned by the fact that I remain at home and foresee his coming. We must distinguish the invitation from what we would have to call the visitation. The visitor is not necessarily an invited guest [*un invité*]. The visitor is someone who could come at any moment, without any horizon of expectation, who could like the Messiah come by surprise. Anyone could come at any moment. So it is in religious language, in Levinas' language, and elsewhere in the Christian language in which one speaks of the visitation that is the arrival of the other, of God, when no one is waiting for Him. And no one is there to impose conditions on His coming. Thus, the distinction between invitation and visitation may be the distinction between conditional hospitality (invitation) and unconditional hospitality, if I accept the coming of the other, the arriving [*arrivance*] of the other who could come at any moment without asking my opinion and who could come with the best or worst of intentions: a visitation could be an invasion by the worst. Unconditional hospitality must remain open without horizon of expectation, without anticipation, to any surprise visitation. I close this parenthesis, but obviously it should count for a lot.>

18 Pierre Klossowski, *Roberte Ce Soir* and *The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*, trans. Austryn Wainhouse (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971). [Tr.]

19 "*Invité*" can, of course, also be translated by "guest." [Tr.]

20 <I am the hostage of the other insofar as I welcome the face of the other, insofar as I welcome infinity. For Levinas the welcoming of the other is the welcoming of an other who is infinitely other and who consequently extends beyond me infinitely, when I consequently welcome beyond my capacity to welcome. In hospitality I welcome an other greater than myself who can consequently overwhelm the space of my house.>

21 Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981) 117. [Tr.]

22 "La substitution," *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 66 (août 1968): 500, rpt in *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974) 145 [*Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* 114], where the sentence "The word 'I' would answer for everything and everyone" becomes "The word 'I' means 'here I am,' answering for everything and for everyone." A formula resounds two pages earlier which we clearly must analyze in its context and in the logic of what Levinas calls "substitution," the subject as the subject of substitution: "A subject is a hostage" (112). Then there is Sygne de Coufontaine in Claudel's *L'Otage* [The Hostage], which we should read together, as we should *L'Échange* [The Exchange].

23 On *l'arrivant*, see also *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993) 33–35. [Tr.]

24 <In Levinas this notion of anachrony is essential to the definition of the subject as host and as hostage; hence the anachrony of this paradoxical instant.>

25 Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968) 4. [Tr.]

26 [The French translation to which Derrida refers is:] *Qu'appelle-t-on penser*, trans. J. Granel (Paris: PUF, 1959) 228–30.

27 The texts which serve as the bases of the French and English translations of this passage differ slightly. [Tr.]

28 Émile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society*, trans. Elizabeth Palmer (London: Faber, 1973) 72.

Here Derrida begins to redeem his promise elsewhere to return to this "magnificent chapter"

in Benveniste "in a more problematic and troubled way": *Monolingualism of the Other; or, The Prosthesis of Origin*, trans. Patrick Mensah (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998) 77. [Tr.]

29 Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne*, trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 1991) Book III, chapter 9, 1113.

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