THE PLOT OF HOSPITALITY IN HOSTELS: GIFT OR SCENIC WORK?

TRAMAS DA HOSPITALIDADE "HOSTELEIRA": DÁDIVA OU EXERCÍCIO CÊNICO?

LA TRAMA DE LA HOSPITALIDAD EN HOSTAL: ¿REGALO O EJERCICIO ESCÉNICO?

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Keywords:	Abstract
	The purpose of this article is to understand the possibilities and limits for genuine hospitality to materialize in hostels, according to the vision of hosts who work in this type of accommodation in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The proposed theme is still incipient in the Brazilian context from the point of view of academic studies, government initiatives and market investments in this type of accommodation. The methodology used a qualitative approach and involved field research in three hostels selected according to pre-established criteria, in which observations and interviews were carried out with six hosts. The collected information was systematized by content analysis, with the support of the NVivo software. The main results show that the acts of receiving/welcoming and hosting are watered by a human warmth dedicated to the guests by the hosts of the studied hostels. This finding highlights aspects such as self-sacrifice for the well-being of the person being welcomed, revealing the fine line between the act of serving and servility in the hospital context. The posture of the hosts is in line with the so-called greatness behind the act of welcoming a person, a characteristic widely conveyed by studies on the subject, especially with regard to domestic hospitality. Hospitality in hostels is governed by the commercial tone, but the observations and interviews showed that the hosts open possibilities for genuine hospitality to manifest itself in this context, not being limited, therefore, to a mere scenic exercise. The research in question intends, in this way, to contribute to the studies on hospitality, in view of the embryonic debate regarding the manifestation of the gift in commercial contexts, which, for its realization, come into play senses and meanings that are, constantly challenged by limits and possibilities present in the hospitable plot.

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Palavras-chave:

Hospitalidade;
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Dádiva;
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Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é compreender as possibilidades e os limites para que a hospitalidade genuína se concretize em hostels, segundo a visão de anfitriões que trabalham neste meio de hospedagem em Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brasil. O tema proposto é, ainda, incipiente no contexto brasileiro, do ponto de vista dos estudos acadêmicos, das iniciativas governamentais e dos investimentos mercadológicos nesse meio de hospedagem. A metodologia foi de abordagem qualitativa e envolveu pesquisa de campo em três hostels selecionados mediante critérios preestabelecidos, nos quais foram realizadas observações e entrevistas com seis anfitriões que trabalham nesse segmento. As informações recolhidas foram sistematizadas pela análise de conteúdo, contando com o suporte do software NVivo. Os principais resultados evidenciam que os atos de receber/acolher e hospedar são regados por um calor humano dedicado aos hóspedes por parte dos anfitriões dos hostels estudados. Tal constatação coloca em realce aspectos como o sacrifício de si, em prol do bem-estar da pessoa acolhida, revelando a linha tênue existente entre o ato de servir e o servilismo na trama hospitaleira. A hospitalidade em hostels é regida pela tônica comercial, mas as observações e entrevistas evidenciaram que os anfitriões abrem possibilidades para que a hospitalidade genuína se manifeste nesse contexto, não se resumindo, portanto, a um mero exercício cênico. A presente pesquisa pretende, desse modo, contribuir com os estudos sobre a hospitalidade, tendo em vista o embrionário debate, no que se refere à manifestação da dádiva em contextos comerciais, que para a sua concretização, entram em cena sentidos e significados que são, constantemente, desafiados por limites e possibilidades presentes na trama hospitaleira.

Palabras clave:

Hospitalidad;
Regalo;
Hostal;
Anfitrión;
Huéspedes.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es comprender las posibilidades y los límites para que la hospitalidad genuina se dé en hostal, según la visión de los anfitriones que actúan en este tipo de alojamiento en Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brasil. El tema propuesto es aún incipiente en el contexto brasileño desde el punto de vista de los estudios académicos, iniciativas gubernamentales e inversiones de mercado en este tipo de alojamiento. La metodología fue de enfoque cualitativo e involucró una investigación de campo en tres hostal seleccionados según criterios preestablecidos, en los cuales se realizaron observaciones y entrevistas a seis anfitriones. La información recolectada fue sistematizada mediante análisis de contenido, con el apoyo del software NVivo. Los principales resultados muestran que los actos de recepción/acogida y hospedaje están regados por una calidez humana dedicada a los huéspedes por parte de los anfitriones de los hostales estudiados. Este hallazgo destaca aspectos como el sacrificio de sí mismo por el bienestar de la persona acogida, revelando la fina línea entre el acto de servir y el servilismo en el tejido hospitalario. La actitud de los anfitriones está en consonancia con la llamada grandeza detrás de la dinámica de la hospitalidad, característica ampliamente transmitida por los estudios sobre el tema, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la hospitalidad doméstica. La hospitalidad en los hostales se rige por el tono comercial, pero las observaciones y entrevistas mostraron que los anfitriones abren posibilidades para que la genuina hospitalidad se manifieste en este contexto, no reduciéndose, por lo tanto, a un mero ejercicio escénico. La investigación pretende, de esta manera, contribuir a los estudios sobre hospitalidad, frente al embrionario debate sobre la manifestación del don en contextos comerciales, que, para su realización entran en juego sentidos y significados que son, constantemente interpelados por los límites y las posibilidades presentes en la trama de la hospitalidad.

INTRODUCTION

Genuine hospitality, conceived as a gift (Mauss, 2003), is generally highlighted in the theoretical production on the theme as the one that takes place in the domestic space (Camargo, 2015; Gotman, 2009). Can genuine hospitality be manifested in commercial lodging facilities? Seeking answers to this question, the aim of this paper is to understand the possibilities and limits for genuine hospitality to materialize in hostels, according to the view of hosts who work in this means of accommodation in Belo Horizonte.

The give-receive-retribute gift proposed by Marcel Mauss (2003) guaranteed the support to understand the dynamics of hospitality. For the author, hospitality is constituted by a process of giving and receiving, by the hosts, the guests, and these, in turn, must reciprocate the welcome once received, during the hospitality plot. This "weave" includes, among other aspects, the relationships established between hosts, guests and the hospitality space in which hospitality is manifested.

In the context of tourism companies and businesses, in turn, hospitality has also been studied by Brazilian (Valduga, 2019; Murgel, 2018; Oliveira, 2017) and foreign authors (Lashley, 2018, 2015, 2000; Chon & Sparrowe, 2003). However, often highlighted in this academic production are the (im)possibilities for genuine hospitality to occur outside of the domestic space (Gotman, 2009, 2008). When manifesting in a commercial environment, sometimes hospitality may be staged, theatricalized, towards monetization and profit to the detriment of a genuinely hospitable manifestation. As Camargo (2004, p.45) states, "hospitality has always been an attribute of people and spaces, not of companies". Following this line of interpretation, we wonder: what are the possibilities and the limits for genuine hospitality to materialize in the social dynamics of commercial tourist establishments, such as hostels?

The hostel, in general, is characterized as a relaxed means of lodging that enables people to meet, favoring the creation of bonds of friendship (Giaretta, 2003). Usually, this type of enterprise offers "[...] more and better opportunities for guests to socialize and meet people from different cultures, given the existence of common areas and dormitories" (Cró, 2018, p. 42). Several are the facilities made available by hostels, and some of them consist in the constant sharing of collective environments, as well as the conviviality of people, including guests and professionals who work in this type of establishment, that is, the "hosts". From this point of view, a hostel is inserted in the human relational perspective advocated in the hospitality web.

It was from the 2000s that the national scientific production about hostel began, stimulated mainly by studies and research undertaken by teachers and students of hospitality and tourism and hospitality courses linked to universities such as Anhembi-Morumbi in São Paulo and Univali, the latter located in the Itajaí Valley in Santa Catarina (Bahls & Pereira, 2017). In general, publications on hostel highlight three relevant aspects. The first refers to the urgency of systematizing studies on this theme, given the incipiency of research on hostels, especially in the Brazilian context (Pereira & Gomes, 2021; Thomazi, 2019; Bahls & Pereira, 2017; Bahls, 2015; Silva & Kohler, 2015).

The second aspect concerns the absence or embryonic presence of this type of hosting in government initiatives in our country. As an example, one can cite the Brazilian System of Classification of Means of Accommodation created by the Ministry of Tourism (MTur), a reference instrument for national tourism in charge of regulating the country's means of accommodation sector. Although this

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classification system has been suspended and in the process of restructuring since 2016 (Aguiar, Brito & Perinotto, 2020), it is worth noting that the type of accommodation characterized as hostel was not contemplated in the aforementioned initiative, thus being neglected by the public authorities (Pereira & Gomes, 2020; Bahls & Pereira, 2017).

Finally, as far as the Brazilian context is concerned, although some occasional initiatives can be verified, most hostels are concentrated in the Rio-São Paulo axis. This is valid when considering both the academic and the market field. Thus, national scientific publications about hostels and the location of hostels are more numerous in these two states when compared to the other Brazilian states (Bahls, 2015). Thus, it becomes relevant to investigate this means of accommodation in different contexts, in order to broaden studies and deepen knowledge about hostels. This article is divided into four parts. Next, the phenomenon of hospitality will be treated in the context of theoretical productions on the subject. The next topic is dedicated to the methodology followed in the research. Subsequently, the results and discussions of the research are presented, and, finally, the final considerations are made.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

A Glance at Hospitality

Nowadays, hospitality is the agenda of debates and dialogues, especially in the international academic context. These discussions highlight the transversal character of hospitality, which is sometimes ambiguous, polysemic, and paradoxical. In recent decades, writings and reflections "on what hospitality comes to be and collaborations on how to build a concept that gathers meaning, breadth, and consistency have been given by an already vast set of researchers worldwide" (Spolon, 2015, p.1). The author mentions the fact that hospitality scholars are linked to different areas of knowledge, which suggests diverse backgrounds, as well as different theoretical and methodological positions on this theme.

Synchronously to this plurality, there is the basis which sustains most of the theoretical production on hospitality: the "Theory of Gift". Contained in the work entitled "Essay on the Gift" dated 1923, this systematization was developed by Marcel Mauss, a pioneer of French anthropology (Mauss, 2003). By conceiving the give-receive-retribute triad, Mauss (2003) ensured the basis for understanding the dynamics of hospitality. Although the author's work is not specifically dedicated to hospitality, the basic reflections on this theme can be found in it (Gotman, 2004).

"It is from, therefore, the different interpretations and approaches that are given to the Essay on the Gift that all theoretical discussions on hospitality will take shape and diverse paths" (Murgel, 2018, p. 3). The act of give-receive-retribute governs the relationships between hosts and guests in the countless hospitality spaces, each one of those involved in the hospitality process must fulfill a role, the host grants hospitality by receiving/welcoming the guests, and the guests must reciprocate the welcome received. The relationships established between the subjects (hosts and guests) during the hospitality constitute the so called weft of hospitality.

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In Brazil, Luiz Octávio de Lima Camargo is an outstanding author in the theoretical production on hospitality. An analysis of publications on the theme shows that many Brazilian researches on hospitality are based on the publications of this author. This may be due to the several reflections, discussions, and debates formulated by him, aiming at understanding it in its endless possibilities (Camargo, 2015).

It should be pointed out, however, that several Brazilian authors have been conducting studies and researches dedicated to hospitality. According to Oliveira and Santos (2010, p. 1-2), among the varied scholars of the area in the country, some believe that hospitality is present "[...] in all the circumstances of human doing related to the act of welcoming people". The aforementioned authors continue: "In Brazil, hospitality has been approached from this perspective by authors such as Luiz Octávio de Lima Camargo (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007), Ada de Freitas Maneti Dencker (2004, 2005), Celia Maria de Moraes Dias (2002), Lúcio Grinover (2007, 2008)."

In general, the theoretical production on hospitality emphasizes that it is present in the whole human process of receiving people, being endowed with an inherent complexity. On one hand, hospitality has an apparently free, voluntary, gratuitous, and disinterested character, the latter in the sense of not expecting reciprocity when giving oneself to the other in a hospitable way (Derrida, 2003; Grassi, 2004). From this perspective, it is endowed with latent unconditionality. As Derrida's studies (1997) reveal, the absence of impositions and obligations culminates in the so-called genuine hospitality.

On the other hand, concomitantly, the interest, the obligation, the imposition of limits, laws, and rules may result in the loss of the unconditional character of hospitality (Bastos, Rameh, & Bitelli, 2016). Given the risk of loss of unconditionality, hospitality can be understood as a virtue "[...] that is expected when we face the stranger (and every stranger is also a foreigner), someone who is not yet, but must be recognized as the other" (Camargo, 2015, p.3).

Therefore, encompassing successful or unsuccessful interactions between subjects, the plot of hospitality flows into urbanity and hospitality. The first consists in the encounter between people supported by a polite treatment, but loaded with impersonality, in order to generate the pleasant impression of an efficient professional service. Thus, urbanity denotes a staged hospitality, i.e., the scenic exercise of hospitality, a keynote that prevails both in the commercial field and in all environments aimed at serving the public and providing services, whether in person or virtually (Camargo, 2021; Gotman, 2008, 2009).

However, modern society increasingly accelerates the contact between strangers and strangers, this process ends up changing the "[...] basic institutions of society as home, neighborhood, family, work. The guarantee of being welcomed everywhere we go becomes a necessity" (Camargo, 2021, p. 1), but sometimes it consists only in a scenic exercise. According to the author, urbanity ends up limiting social interactions, since "the demands for a hospitality more charged with human warmth grow" (p.1).

In view of this, we move on to the second type of successful interaction, hospitality. This consists of hospitality with human warmth, that is, genuine hospitality. According to the author, it is the seal that marks the everyday meetings "between people who know and like to receive and be received, who know and practice instinctively or by learning the laws of hospitality" (Camargo, 2021, p. 6).

Anchored in Guimarães (2019), Camargo (2021) states that hospitability is basically motivated - intrinsically and extrinsically - by the taste for meeting people, and, under this bias, even though the author mentions the fact that he does not intend to define a standard profile of people with hospitable skills, the vocation, the taste for serving and the hospitable personality trait are some of the characteristics of those known as "gifted in hospitability". According to the author, "they are like those characters well represented in fiction who, when faced between protocol, the most comfortable attitude, and the essence of their missions, opt for this more difficult and risky path" (p.6).

Similarly, for Lashley (2015) this profile of people tends to offer a hospitality beyond personal gain, focused on the satisfaction of the people welcomed. In view of that, the author defends hospitality "as a fundamental characteristic, omnipresent in human life, and hospitality, in itself, would indicate the willingness of people to be genuinely hospitable, without any expectation of reward or reciprocity" (Lashley, 2015, p.3). Considering this rationale about hospitality, the methodology of the research conducted is presented next.

METHODOLOGY

The research relied on a qualitative approach methodology involving, initially, a bibliographic study related to the themes hostel and hospitality. The investigation also included a field research that was carried out through two strategies: observations and semi-structured interviews in three hostels in the city of Belo Horizonte. Three previously stipulated criteria were considered to select the establishments to be researched, and highlighted in the bibliographic production or in the research sources:

1) Central location, due to the fact that location is considered one of the representative attributes to qualify a hostel (Macedo, 2018).

2) Proximity to tourist attractions, given the importance for guests to stay in places that facilitate the displacement in the visited destination, especially on foot (Presser, Kroth, Laudelino & Menezes, 2016).

3) Availability of leisure activities, since hostels are characterized as spaces that offer leisure experiences to guests, both internal and external to the accommodation facility (Pereira, 2019; Bahls, 2018; Silva & Kohler, 2015; O'regan, 2010; Volante, 2011; Saraiva, 2013; Hetch & Martin, 2006; Giaretta, 2003).

In the field research, an immersion was first made in each researched hostel aiming to establish the first contacts with the subjects and with the object of study (Woortmann & Woortmann, 1997). This immersion was essential to recognize the hostels and to carry out the observations. Regarding the semi-structured interviews, they followed a script that was used as reference for the questions asked to 06 (six) professionals, 02 (two) from each selected hostel. It is worth mentioning that each interviewee will be referred to as a "host". This word was chosen due to the fact that the professionals interviewed named themselves this way, to the detriment of terms such as receptionist, employee or collaborator.

The interviews were transcribed in full and, aiming to maintain the fidelity of the reports, the language vices and the subjects' way of speaking were respected. In addition, the statements of these sub-

jects are highlighted in this article in italics, to differentiate them from author quotes. The identity of both the interviewees and the hostels was kept confidential in order to preserve their anonymity and integrity. For the hosts, it was elaborated codenames related to aspects of the subjects that stood out during the interviews. As for the spaces, the coding was divided into: HB1, HB2 and HB3.

It is worth mentioning, about the information collection process, the previous approval of the research by the COEP - Committee for Ethics in Research of the university responsible for the investigation, under number 16972719.1.0000.5149, as well as the TCLE - Term of Free and Informed Consent, and the Letters of Agreement of the hostels studied. These instruments presented information about the study, as well as the request for the subjects to voluntarily participate in the research.

The research was based on the content analysis proposed by Bardin (2011, p.15), which deals with the systematization and analysis of data. This method, according to the author, consists of a "[...] set of methodological instruments in constant improvement, which are applied to extremely diversified discourses". In this sense, we adopted the three criteria proposed by Bardin (2011):

a) Pre-analysis: consisted of the organization and selection of the material that made up the research corpus. At this stage, we resorted to the author's suggestion of using resources to group and help analyze the research data. Thus, the NVivo software (version 11) was used, a program that contributed to the analysis and systematization of information, since it organizes and facilitates the process of categorizing data (Freitas, Arruda & Falqueto, 2017).

b) Exploration of the material: comprised the definition of research categories, considering the classification and coding of the data collected.

c) Treatment of results and interpretations: it was intended to inference, interpretation and critical -reflexive analysis of the information collected.

The NVivo software subsidized the elaboration of models that condensed the research data, besides contributing to the systematization and grouping of the information. Among the various resources made available by the tool, the 'word frequency' resource was selected. Through this strategy, the software produces 'clouds' containing a standardization of the 30 most recurrent words in the research material, i.e., the transcribed interviews.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents some of the main results of the field research which, as already mentioned, relied on two strategies for information collection: observations and semi-structured interviews in three hostels in the city of Belo Horizonte.

"Propensity to serve"; "soul of receiving people"; "being completely polite", "the focus is on the guest", "being as pleasant as possible", "putting yourself in the guest's place". These words echoed in the speech of the interviewed hosts, when they were asked to talk about the process of welcoming guests. Words that, in the daily coexistence, materialized in actions, gestures, and postures that showed, sometimes, a sacrifice of oneself in the search to serve the other constantly.

There were recurring situations in which the host interrupted the meal he was preparing or ingesting, half-dropped the water he was drinking, delayed the urge to go to the bathroom, suddenly stopped his work breaks, hurriedly left the bathroom, and so many other occasions, to attend to the guests' needs. The act of receiving the guest in the researched hostels, on the part of the host, highlights a willingness to be genuinely hospitable (Camargo, 2021; Lashley, 2015), suggesting a constant undressing of oneself to cover the other, as can be seen in the following accounts.

> If I'm there at the reception and I can be in a bad mood, fed up, eating, desperate to go to the bathroom. If the person comes and asks me for, let's say, a glass of water, I have to drop everything that I am doing to solve that. Until I solve the problem, I can't serve myself, I have to serve that person. (Antenado, from Minas Gerais, 29, HB1).

> When someone asks me something or requests something, I immediately stop what I am doing in order to serve that person the best way possible. So I think that when you have that soul to host people everything gets easier here. (Ubuntu, from Mina Gerais, 34, HB2).

In the professional context of the hostels studied, serving can mean giving up one's own needs, even physiological, as Antenado reports, which can sometimes become an exhausting process. As exemplified by Buscadora, "[...] you didn't have time to take your lunch break, you had to stay at the hostel all the time, so I found it very tiring" (Buscadora, female from Minas Gerais, 31, HB1). This integral disposition is often remarkable in these spaces, evidencing a service with deep roots that cross time and space, manifesting itself in contemporary hostels.

An example of this refers to the religious charge behind the acts of receiving and hosting the other, since, historically, there is the so-called "sacred link" of hospitality (Noguero, 2019; Castelli, 2005). It is worth remembering the distant times of Greece, where the guest was considered greater than God, and should be treated with profound diligence by the host. "Hospitality must take precedence over prayer and override the presence of God: it is better to make God wait than to fail to receive the guest with diligence" (Talmud - Holy Book of the Jews).

Whether to a greater or lesser degree, this characteristic is rooted in the social imaginary of the "hostelling" dynamic, even with the passing of time. It manifests itself, on a daily basis, through practices oriented under such perspective at the moment of welcoming guests. According to Castelli (2005, p.7), although the sacred bond has been "witnessed throughout the history of mankind", and cannot "be disregarded by those who practice, in modernity, the commerce of hospitality", this scenario reinforces the author's concern in not confusing the commercialization of hospitality with servility, considering the erroneous use of the second term, especially in practice, as a synonym of hospitality.

In this sense, in the context of the investigated hostels, it is observed how thin the line is between the act of welcoming and servility in the practice of receiving guests, as noted in the speech of the interviewees. This indicates that the host is careful to perform this function without, however, losing dignity, lowering himself during the welcome. For, in case of acting subserviently to meet the needs of the guests, it would appear as a servile relationship.

In the opposite of this panorama, Castelli (2005) calls attention to the importance of modern society to understand the senses and meanings of hospitality for human beings since the beginning of time. For him, "[...] this will certainly bring valuable subsidies for a better understanding of the exercise of activities in the current means of accommodation" (p.7). The idea is centered on the perspective

of stimulating professionals in the area to understand the "greatness" behind the act of receiving or welcoming a person. These people, according to the mentioned author, are the protagonists of the hospitality plot. This "greatness" can be noticed in the words of the hosts interviewed in the research due to the importance given in the treatment directed to the guest at the beginning of the welcome. In the interviews, the good reception was highlighted as a competitive differential in the commercial area.

> The reception, the moment the guests arrive, I have to provide good service and I believe that it is my obligation to be completely polite and make, already in the first moment, the person feel at home, that's what keeps me going, you know? (Our emphasis).

> [...] I am like that [kind] because I think the best thing is to be treated well, I think it makes a huge difference in any experience you have. So, right at the reception, I treat the person the way I would like to be treated. [...] is this thing of receiving well, being kind, putting the guest, not in first place, but the focus is on the guest. (Gentil, from Minas Gerais, 33, HB3). (Our emphasis).

In these reports, one can observe the hosts' concern in treating guests in the best possible way. Good service, kindness and feeling at home are some of the characteristics expressed by the hosts, which govern the process of receiving visitors, without, however, requiring from them a reciprocal attitude towards the treatment provided. This assumption refers to the idea of welcoming a stranger in a genuine way, as Derrida (2003) said in his research: "that I let him come, let him arrive, and have a place in the place that I offer him, without demanding from him even reciprocity" (Derrida, 2003, p. 23-25).

This scenario can be exemplified in Figure 1, which groups the main results of the research regarding the process of receiving and welcoming, according to the hosts' point of view. The word "guest" is at the center of the figure, highlighting its importance for the host. When receiving the guests' demands, the host of each hostel studied tries to express human warmth, solve possible problems and ensure the maintenance of physical and emotional comfort throughout the stay.

Figure 1: Word cloud - Process of receiving guests from the hosts' point of view

Source: Research data.

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There is an emphasis, also, for the words "like" and "talk" associated with the guests and, although to a lesser extent, it is worth mentioning some words such as: "give", "receive", "attention", "better", "reception", "know how to listen" and "solve". These words can be summarized in the speech of the interviewee Buscadora, for whom the treatment given to each guest, from the beginning, aims to make him "feel at home, feel loved". Such a statement thus ratifies this feeling on the part of hosts to offer a 'pleasant scene' for guests during the welcome (Camargo, 2021). After all, it is in this process of opening to the unknown, of oneself and the house itself, as Derrida (2003) would say, that the act of hospitality becomes poetic, becomes genuine.

Genuine hospitality, as emphasized by Camargo (2021), is part of a process in which hospitable encounters generated a successful interaction between subjects, an interaction which the author subdivides, as previously mentioned, into urbanity (efficient professional practice) and hospitability (genuine hospitality). In this sense, from the interviewees' point of view, one can notice the manifestation of both types of human interaction. Hosts, for example, demonstrate to know and, especially, to enjoy welcoming guests. Whether or not instinctively, they practice hospitability.

> When people come here and receive this [hospitable] treatment not only from me, but from the whole team, from the time they arrive they are oriented to have this treatment, and if they don't get it, it ends up not working here, because this is one of the pillars here in the hostel. [...] at the moment of reception, at this moment of welcome, keeping things organized, someone asking me and me going there and solving things is what makes me literally wear the shirt and come here every day. And I've already warned the people here that the day I lose this sparkle in my eye I'll take my things and go away (Dreamer, from Minas Gerais, 29, HB3). (Our emphasis).

The results obtained in the survey allow us to infer two aspects, the first one is related to urbanity, that is, the orientation given to provide an efficient hospitality service by the staff. This finding highlights hospitality as a pillar of the hostel: "So, not only on my part, I see that it is a collective effort that we have. And every time we have a meeting, every time we talk, we talk about this, this thing of receiving well, of being kind" (Gentil, from Minas Gerais, 33, HB3).

In view of this, the failure to provide a hospitable service, i.e. the treatment based on urbanity, may culminate in dismissal, as pointed out in the report of Dreamer. As an example of this scenario, the words "service", "different", and "experience" can be seen in Figure 1, as some of the characteristics of service provision in these spaces.

Although this study does not intend to define a host profile with hospitable skills, a second aspect to be mentioned relates to the idea that this professional needs to demonstrate an "[...] intimate and familiar character that they have since their genesis" (Bahls, 2015, p.164). Therefore, the professional host in the context of the investigated hostels is essential for a successful meeting with each guest. As Camargo (2021, p. 6) reminds us, "[...] it is never too much to reinforce the existence of an essential aspect of the personality of the individual who likes to be hospitable, the prevalence of the taste for serving". The author goes on to state: "If, as a rule, people like to be served, there are - it is assumed, a minority case - people who, on the contrary, like to serve" (p.6).

In the process of receiving guests in the analyzed hostels, therefore, a junction of hospitality and urbanity is observed. On the one hand, the professional exercise of hospitality is manifested, which can sometimes be staged, as Gotman (2008, 2019) has already said in his research. On the other hand, overflowing the staging, one has hospitability as "[...] the fruit of an intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to enjoy meeting people. In this category, people define the gesture of serving as their vocation and an important aspect of their personality" (Camargo, 2021, p.6). These aspects were found in the following narratives:

> I don't know, I think hospitality is lacking, it's not that I have too much, it's that it's lacking. I don't know, maybe the minimum of care, this look in the eye like I told you, this good will in rendering a service, in asking me for a star and me trying to get a star and... do you want a little piece of the moon too? So, I think that this is missing out there. I don't know if people are mistreated out there, but what makes me very happy when I draw the conclusion for myself, dreamer as a person, is that I don't have to think to be like that, you know? It seems that this is part of me. (Dreamer, from Minas Gerais, 29, HB3). (Our emphasis).

> [...] if you already have that soul to receive people... I think that in this I am good, you know, to contact people, to make people connect with each other, I like this very much, to be this link (...), you know?

> (Ubuntu, from Minas Gerais, 34, HB2). (Our emphasis).

The word "pay" should also be highlighted, going back to Figure 1, since it refers to the commercial relationship, to the provision of services in the hostel. Although the welcoming in this context involves monetization, the research results showed that there is a predominance of the aforementioned poetics in the act of receiving and hosting by the hosts. As emphasized by the interviewee Dreamer: "[...] no matter how much the person is paying, I say: come, it is your house, I am here, count on me for whatever you need during your stay here" (Dreamer, mineiro, 29, HB3).

In this sense, there is an offer of a place to the stranger, there is an intimate opening when the host is willing to meet the needs of a guest that transcends monetary exchange. What reiterates the offer of hospitality by hosts beyond monetary gain, directed to generate satisfaction, joy, and pleasure to the guests hosted (Lashley, 2015), characteristics observed in the hostels studied.

It is worth drawing attention, however, to the intricacies of hospitality when associated with the market logic, which tends to reinforce the idea of unconditionally serving customers in a mimetic way, since hospitality is staged both in commercial businesses and in the provision of tourism services (Gotman, 2009). A parallel is made with the slogan "the customer is always right". This maxim shows that even with the passing of the years, such perspective is still present. Although sometimes questionable, the prevalence of this principle can be seen in various services and tourist businesses.

According to Garcia and Araújo (2013), for example, this practice is consolidated in the Brazilian scenario, so, in the reality of the investigated hostels, this would not be different. Regarding this aspect, Gentil states that the focus of the hostel is the guest and, for being so: "whenever it has to tip to some side, it has to tip to the guest's side" (Gentil, mineira, 33, HB3). This context ends up reinforcing the prioritization of the guest over the host. This is because both in the tourism phenomenon in general, as in the means of accommodation paid "interfere in the asymmetry of hospitality, the payment, giving to the one who is received a position of superiority before the one who receives" (Camargo, 2015, p.18).

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In this way, for Gotman (2009, p.8), the commercial relationship ends up "freeing the hosts from the guests, detaching them from any obligation of gift". The author adds the fact that the customer does not owe obligations to the debtor: "hence the ceremonious treatment and the 'king customer' formula of commercial language" (Gotman, 2009, p. 8). There is also a common feature in the investigated hostels to be pointed out in this discussion: the unaccompanied performance, i.e., acting individually at the reception is a recurring particularity in these spaces if compared to hotels, especially hotel chains that usually - depending on the size -, have two or more employees working at the reception.

Hostels, in general, are small-sized enterprises where the overlapping of tasks is perpetuated, as well as the constant need for unconditional willingness on the part of staff members. This trait ends up reinforcing the process of self-denial and the sacrifices that come from the act of serving when receiving guests in these spaces.

This leads us to the idea that hospitality does not exist if there is no sacrifice, as Camargo (2006) argues. So, there will hardly be the manifestation of hospitality without the sacrifice being put in scene, whether it is space or person, tangible or intangible, revealing that hospitality, that is, the act of receiving in the investigated "hosteller" context, therefore, is made by and for the sacrifice. Figure 2 synthesizes the exposed panorama, reaffirming the place of the guest as central, and the host as guarantor of all ritualistic processes required in the hospitality plot.

Figure 2: Word cloud - Hostel hospitality, for hosts

Source: Research data.

The set of words represented in Figure 2 - willingness, service, difference, commitment, care, empathy, trust, compliments - involves the attributes and characteristics necessary for hostel hospitality from the perspective of hosts. The words comfortable and pleasant suggest the offer of a lodging that borders on the idea of home, supported by the iconic phrase "make yourself at home" (Camargo, 2007). And, based on this, for the fulfillment of this process it is necessary, on the part of hosts, to understand and meet the needs and demands of the guest, as well as solve possible eventualities during the stay. This is referenced by the following terms contained in the cloud: bypass, setback, solve, problem, mediator, conflict.

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One cannot fail to mention the words Booking, star, and ratings, which highlights the concern of hosts to be positively evaluated by guests in the virtual environment. This is seen by them as a way to ratify, after their stay, the hospitable treatment provided, i.e., the human warmth once offered:

> [Hospitality] is... one thing that is very recurrent here for us, that we are extremely happy about, is when we go to check out, the people say: thank you, I was very well received. Wow, you guys are really nice people. We stay tuned all the time in Booking, in the reviews, it is a habit we have. And our name always appears there, and there is always: the staff is great. (Gentil, from Minas Gerais, 33, HB3, hostess).

The following reports reiterate characteristics of the manifestation of the hospitality scene in these spaces, besides contemplating the perception of hosts regarding hospitality in hostels. In them, the interviewees highlight aspects such as the treatment directed to the guests and the consolidation of the feeling of "home" as necessary attributes, in the vision of the hosts, for the materialization of hospitality:

> Hospitality in hostel [...] is to treat well, is to put yourself in his place, is to know that he arrived tired, arrived full of expectations, know what the need of that guest and try to help [...]. That makes a big difference. (Searcher, from Minas Gerais, 31, HB1).

> A good part of the guests make the virtual reservation, they know the room through the internet. What will impact them for good or bad is when they get here and see the service. (Antenado, from Minas Gerais, 29, HB1)

> I believe that the hostel [...] guarantees itself as a hospitable hostel, when it manages to make the guest feel at home. (Ubuntu, from Minas Gerais, 34, HB2).

> [...] even if I am not the owner, I feel that this space is also my home, so I take care, respect and try to make it as pleasant as possible. When I interact with a guest, I try to make him feel the same way. (CABJ, Argentinian, 29, HB 2).

Dreamer's speech suggests a duty to be hospitable: "For me, what makes my heart beat is hospitality, is to be able to provide this, to open my arms [...] even this makes me think a lot because I think this is my obligation" (Dreamer, from Minas Gerais, 29, HB3. Our emphasis). Therefore, it is noted the valorization of a treatment endowed with human warmth, in detriment of the impersonality tone (Camargo, 2021). However, this idea of the obligation to be hospitable is a controversial issue that has been the subject of debates and conflicts for the moral systems of human beings, internationally, in all times (Lashley, 2015).

Hospitality in the contexts studied, therefore, is seen by hosts beyond an exchange of service in a commercial setting. In view of this scenario, hospitality enters the scene manifesting itself in an unconditional way, that is, genuine (Derrida, 1997). In this view, it can be perceived as an attribute between subjects and spaces, and not only for business, but for "what people and spaces provide beyond the established contract" (Camargo, 2006, p.24). In view of this, hospitality in hostel context remains alive, going beyond the contractual bias.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to understand the possibilities and limits for genuine hospitality to take place in hostels, according to the vision of hosts who work in this means of accommodation in Belo Horizonte-MG. The results show that the acts of receiving/welcoming and hosting are watered by a human warmth dedicated to the guests by the hosts of the researched hostels. This finding highlights aspects such as self-sacrifice in favor of the well being of the host, revealing the fine line between the act of serving and servility in the hospitality plot in the "hostelaria" lodging means.

We identified remnants of the sacred link of hospitality which places the guest as a God, and therefore he/she must be treated with diligence, an idea which is perpetuated in the intuitive imaginary of the interviewed hosts. This principle reverberates in the way of treating guests from the moment they arrive at the hostel to the fulfillment of their demands throughout their stay. The hosts show, under this framework, a concern to provide a service considered hospitable in an attempt to stimulate, in the guest, the feeling of "being at home". The hosts, with this intention, are careful to build and maintain a successful interaction. This ends up opening space for the realization of a treatment directed to the guest with the hospitability bias, i.e., genuine hospitality. The interviewed hosts believe that the way of treatment performed at the hostel is associated with their hospitable profile, either as a professional and/or as a person, revealing a predilection and vocation for service.

In the hostels that are inserted in the incoming tourism business sector, the commercial bias comes into play interfering in the asymmetry of hospitality: the payment gives to the one who is welcomed a position of superiority before the host. Although the monetary value prevails and guides the commercial relations in each hostel studied, for the interviewed hosts it is essential to receive the guest in a hospitable way, thus providing human warmth and a genuine welcome. In this sense, the taste for receiving and serving by the hosts reveals that the posture of these professionals meets the so-called greatness behind the act of welcoming guests, a characteristic widely addressed by studies on the subject, especially with regard to domestic hospitality.

In short, even if the hospitality process is ruled by the commercial tonic in hostels, not being, therefore, free from complexities, ambiguities and limits, the field research has evidenced that this context opens possibilities for the manifestation of genuine hospitality. Such a finding puts in check some fundamentals that claim that the gift is proper of domestic hospitality.

Besides, the observations and interviews evidenced that hosts are essential for genuine hospitality to manifest itself in hostels, and therefore, it is not a mere scenic exercise in this context. The present research, under this viewpoint, opens possibilities of contributing to the studies on hospitality, considering the embryonic debate regarding the manifestation of the gift in commercial contexts. Thus, for its realization, senses and meanings come into play which are constantly challenged by limits and possibilities that open up in the hospitality plot of receiving/welcoming guests in the "hostel" context.

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Joyce Kimarce do Carmo Pereira: Research design, literature review, data analysis, and discussion of results.

Christianne Luce Gomes: Literature review, data analysis, and discussion of results.