THE QUALITY OF THE GIFT AND THE SYMBOLIC EXCHANGE SCHEME
Sociological and Philosophical Assumptions for Theory of Hospitality in Ancient and Modern
Societies

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The anthropological character of the work of Marcel Mauss in The Gift is the notion of exchange
theory, in ancient societies, such as common denominator of human exercise by means of giving,
receiving and return. This paper, under the epistemological nature, aims to analyze the system of gift
as a prerogative so modern and contemporary about the characteristic of archaic societies, so that
conjecture that this theory does not link to isolated moments of social history as basis of hospitality
theory. It is assumed, in this work, the epistemic study of sociology and anthropology, to its interface
with philosophy, it is imperative to research in hospitality and the understanding of their practices of
otherness in hosting others. Qualitative interviews taped, transcribed and authorized with academics
exponents of hospitality were also used as tools for this paper. It is concluded that the hospitality, in
the light of the theory of the gift, can be understood as an instrument of asymmetric symbolic
exchange in the form of hosting others in the social sense and unforeseen actions that goes beyond
commercial hosting contracts.

KEY WORDS: Gift, hospitality, theory, symbolic exchanges, host others.