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INDO-EUROPEAN
LANGUAGE AND
SOCIETY

by

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One group of words refers to a well established social phenomenon, *hospitality*, the concept of the 'guest'. The basic term, the Latin *hospes*, is an ancient compound. An analysis of its component elements illuminates two distinct notions which finally link up: *hospes* goes back to **hosti-pet-s*. The second component alternates with *pot-* which signifies 'master', so that the literal sense of *hospes* is 'the guest-master'. This is a rather peculiar designation. In order to understand it better we must analyse the two elements *potis* and *hostis* separately and study their etymological connexions.

The term **potis* first merits a brief explanation in its own right. It presents itself in its simple aspect in Sanskrit *pātiḥ* 'master' and 'husband' and in Greek *pósis* 'husband', or in composition as in *despótēs*.

In Sanskrit the distinct senses 'master' and 'husband' correspond to different declensions of one and the same stem; but this is a development peculiar to Sanskrit. As for Gr. *pósis*, a poetical word for 'husband', it is distinct from *despótēs*, where the sense 'master of the house' is no longer felt; *despótēs* is solely an expression of power, whereas the feminine *déspoina* conveys the idea of 'mistress', a title of majesty.

The Greek term *despótēs*, like the Sanskrit correspondent *dām pātiḥ*, belongs with a group of ancient compound words, each of which had as its first element the name of a social unit of variable extension:

<i>dām pātiḥ</i>	(master of the house)
<i>viś</i>	„ (master of the clan)
<i>jās</i>	„ (master of the 'lineage')

Apart from *despótēs* and *dām pātiḥ*, the only one attested in a number of languages is the compound which is in Sanskrit *viś-pātiḥ* and in Lithuanian *vėš-pats* 'clan chief'.

In Latin an extensive word family is organized around the word **potis* either as a free form or in composition. Apart from *hospes* it forms the adjectives *impos*, *compos* 'who is not . . .' or 'who is master of himself, of his senses' and the verb **potēre*, the perfect of which, *potui*, survives incorporated into the conjugation of the verb meaning 'be able', *possum*, which itself is formed from the adjective *potis* in a predicative use: *potis sum*, *pote est*, an expression which is simplified to *possum*, *potest*.

All this is clear and there would be no problem, the sense being constant and the forms superimposable, had not **potis* at two points of the Indo-European world developed a very different sense. In Lithuanian it provides the adjective *pats* 'himself' and also the substantive *pats* 'master' (in composition *vėš-pats*). Parallel to this, we find in Iranian the compound adjective *x^vaē-paitiya* 'one's own', 'of oneself', and used without distinction of person 'mine, yours, his'; one's own. *x^vaē* is an Iranian form of the ancient reflexive pronoun **swe*, **se*, literally 'of oneself' and *-paitiya* derived from the ancient **poti-*. These facts are well known, but they deserve careful scrutiny because of the singularity of the problem which they pose. Under what conditions can a word denoting 'master' end up by signifying identity? The primary sense of **potis* is well defined, and it had a strong force: 'master', whence in marriage 'husband', or in social terminology the 'chief' of some unit, whether house, clan, or tribe. But the sense 'oneself' is also well attested. Here Hittite makes an important new contribution. It offers no form corresponding to **potis*, whether as adjective or substantive. Despite the early date at which it appears, Hittite has a vocabulary which has already been transformed to a considerable extent. Many notions now are conveyed by new terms. The interesting point in the present connexion is that Hittite presents an enclitic particle, *-pel* (*-pil*), the sense of which is 'precisely (him)self', a particle of identity referring to the object under discussion. An example is the following:

'If a slave flees,	takku IR-iš huwāi
and if he goes to an enemy country,	naš kururi KURe paizzi
the one who brings him back,	kuišan EGIR-pa uwatezzi
he is the one who takes him.'	nanzan a p ā š p i t dai.

In this demonstrative *apāš-pil*, 'that one precisely, that very one', the particle *-pil* establishes a relation of identity. It has, incidentally, the same function whether attached to a demonstrative, a noun, or even a verb. It is evident that the use of this particle corresponds to the sense of identity of **potis* found in Lithuanian and in Iranian.

Once the sense, the form and the use is established in these languages, we discover elsewhere other forms which can be linked with them in all probability. The Lithuanian particle *pat* signifies 'exactly, precisely', like the Hittite *-pel*. With this may be compared

Lat. *utpote*, the analysis of which must be rectified. It does not mean etymologically 'as is possible' (with the *pote* of *pote est*) but 'precisely in as much', with *pote* marking the identity. *Utpote* emphatically identifies the action with its agent, the predicate with the person who assumes it. We may also add the Latin postposition *-pte* in *suopte* (Festus: *suopte pro suo ipsius*) 'his very own, what belongs to that very person'. A further example, but this is less certain, is the mysterious *-pse* of *ipse*. In any case, if we confine ourselves to the two Latin facts and to the Lithuanian *pat*, we can establish the survival of a use of **pot-* to designate the person himself, and to assign to him the possession of a predicate affirmed in the sentence. Accordingly, what was considered as an isolated use becomes an important indication and reveals to us the proper signification of *potis*. 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 sense of master. This process, which illustrates the formation of an institutional concept, can be corroborated elsewhere: several languages have come to designate 'the master' by a term meaning 'himself'. In spoken Latin, in Plautus, *ipsissimus* indicates the 'master (mistress), the patron', the (personage) *himself*, the only one who is important. In Russian, in peasant speech, *sam* 'himself' refers to the 'lord'. In a restricted but important community, among the Pythagoreans, *autós éphā* (αὐτὸς ἔφα) 'he himself has said it', with *autós* referred to the 'master' *par excellence*, Pythagoras, and the formula was used to specify a dictum as authentic. In Danish, *han sjelv* and in German *er selbst* have the same meaning.

For an adjective meaning 'himself' to develop into the meaning 'master' there is one necessary condition: there must be a circle of persons subordinated to a central personage who assumes the personality and complete identity of the group to such an extent that he is its summation: in his own person he is its incarnation.

This is exactly the development we find in the compound **dem-pot(i)-* 'master of the house'. The role of the person so named is not to give orders but to assume a representation which gives him authority over the family as a whole with which he is identified.

A verb derived from **poti-*, like Skt. *pátyate*, Lat. *potior* 'to have power over something, have something at one's disposal', already marks the appearance of a sense of 'to be able to'. With this may be

compared the Latin verb *possidere*, 'possess', stemming from **pot-sedēre*, which describes the 'possessor' as somebody who is established on something. The same figurative expression has passed into the German word *'besitzen'*. Again, in Latin we have the adjective *compos* 'he who is master, who has command of himself'. The notion of 'power' (theoretical) is thus constituted and it receives its verbal form from the predicative expression *pote est*, contracted to *potest*, which gives rise to the conjugation *possum, potest* 'I am capable, I can'.¹

It is worth while pausing for a moment to consider a peculiar fact: as against Skt. *dam pati* and Gr. *despótēs*, Latin has formed from the same root an equivalent expression, but by a different procedure: this is *dominus*, a secondary derivative which belongs to a series of expressions for 'chief'. Thus *tribunus* 'chief of the tribe', in Gothic *kindins* (<**genti-nos*) 'chief of the gens'; **druhtins* (OHG *truhtin*) 'chief of the body'; *þiudans* < **teuta-nos* 'king', 'chief of the people'. This morphological process whereby **-nos* is suffixed to the name of a social unit, has furnished in Latin and Germanic expressions for chiefs of political and military groups. Thus, by independent paths, the two series link up: on the one hand by means of a suffix, on the other by a compound word, the term for the master has been coined from the social unit which he represents.

We must return now to the compound which provoked this analysis, *hospes*, this time in order to study the initial term, *hostis*. Among the expressions common to the prehistoric vocabulary of the European languages it is of special interest: *hostis* in Latin corresponds to *gasts* of Gothic and to *gostŭ* of Old Slavonic, which also presents *gos-podi* 'master', formed like *hospes*.

But the meaning of Gothic *gasts* and OSl. *gostŭ* is 'guest', whereas that of Latin *hostis* is 'enemy'. To explain the connexion between 'guest' and 'enemy' it is usually supposed that both derived their meaning from 'stranger', a sense which is still attested in Latin. The notion 'favourable stranger' developed to 'guest'; that of 'hostile stranger' to 'enemy'.

In fact, 'stranger, enemy, guest' are global notions of a somewhat vague character, and they demand precision by interpretation in their historical and social contexts. In the first place, the signification of

¹ For the semantic study of *pot(i)-*, reference may be made to our article 'Problèmes sémantiques de la reconstruction', *Word* X, Nos. 2-3, 1954, and *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, Gallimard 1966, pp. 301ff.

hostis must be narrowed down. Here we are helped by the Latin authors themselves who furnish a series of words of the same family and also some instructive examples of the use of the term *hostis*. It preserved its ancient value of 'stranger' in the law of the Twelve Tables, e.g.: *adversus hostem aeterna auctoritas est(o)*, no word of which, with the exception of the verb 'to be', is employed in the same sense as in classical Latin. It must be understood as '*vis-à-vis* a stranger, a claim for property persists forever', it never lapses when it is against a foreigner that the claim is introduced. Of the word *hostis* itself, Festus says: *eius enim generis ab antiquis hostes appellabantur quod erant pari iure cum populo Romano, atque hostire ponebatur pro aequare* 'in ancient times they were called *hostes* because they had the same rights as the Roman people, and one said *hostire* for *aequare*'. It follows from this note that *hostis* is neither the stranger nor the enemy. We have to proceed from the equivalence of *hostire* = *aequare*, while the derivative *redhostire* is glossed as '*referre gratiam*' ('repay a kindness') in Festus. This sense of *hostire* is still attested in Plautus: *Promitto hostire contra ut merueris* 'I promise you a reciprocal service, as you deserve' (*Asin.* 377). It recurs in the noun *hostimentum*, explained as '*beneficii pensatio*', 'compensation of a benefit' and also '*aequamentum*', 'equalization'. To a more specialized technique belongs *hostus*, an archaic term of the language of agriculture, cited and explained by Varro, *R.R.* 1, 24, 3: *hostum vocant quod ex uno facto olei reficitur* 'one calls *hostus* the amount of oil obtained in one single pressing operation'. In some way the product is considered as a counterpart. Another technical term is *hostorium*, a stick for use with a bushel measure so as to keep a constant level. The old Roman pantheon, according to S. Augustine, knew a *Dea Hostilina*, who had as her task to equalize the ears of corn or to ensure that the work accomplished was exactly compensated by the harvest. Finally, a very well-known word, *hostia*, is connected with the same family: its real sense is 'the victim which serves to appease the anger of the gods', hence it denotes a compensatory offering, and herein lies the distinction which distinguishes *hostia* from *victima* in Roman ritual.

It is a striking fact that in none of these words, apart from *hostis*, does the notion of hostility appear. Primary or derived nouns, verbs or adjectives, ancient expressions of the religious language or of rural vocabulary, all attest or confirm that the first sense is *aequare* 'compensate, equalize'.

How does *hostis* itself fit in with this? This emerges from the definition of Festus already cited: '*quod erant pari iure cum populo Romano*'. This defines the relation of *hostis* and *hostire*: '*the hostes* had the same rights as the Romans'. A *hostis* is not a stranger in general. In contrast to the *peregrinus*, who lived outside the boundaries of the territory, *hostis* is 'the stranger in so far as he is recognized as enjoying equal rights to those of the Roman citizens'. This recognition of rights implies a certain relation of reciprocity and supposes an agreement or compact. Not all non-Romans are called *hostis*. A bond of equality and reciprocity is established between this particular stranger and the citizens of Rome, a fact which may lead to a precise notion of hospitality. From this point of view *hostis* will signify 'he who stands in a compensatory relationship' and this is precisely the foundation of the institution of hospitality. This type of relationship between individuals or groups cannot fail to invoke the notion of *potlach*, so well described and interpreted by Marcel Mauss in his monograph on '*le Don, forme primitive de l'échange*', *Année sociologique*, 1924. This system which is known from the Indians of Northwest America consists of a series of gifts and counter-gifts, each gift always creating an obligation of a superior gift from the partner, in virtue of a sort of compelling force. It is at the same time a feast connected with certain dates and cults. It is also an economic phenomenon, in so far as it secures circulation of wealth; and it is also a bond between families, tribes and even their descendants.

The notion of 'hospitality' is illuminated by reference to *potlach*, of which it is a weakened form. It is founded on the idea that a man is bound to another (*hostis* always involves the notion of reciprocity) by the obligation to compensate a gift or service from which he has benefited.

The same institution exists in the Greek world under a different name: *xénos* (ξένος) indicates relations of the same type between men bound by a pact which implies precise obligations that also devolve on their descendants. The *xenia* (ξενία), placed under the protection of Zeus Xenios, consists of the exchange of gifts between the contracting parties, who declare their intention of binding their descendants by this pact. Kings as well as private people act in this way: '(Polycrates) had concluded a *xenia* (with Amasis) and they sent each other presents' ξενίην συνεθήκατο (verb of making a compact) πέμπων δῶρα καὶ δεκόμενος ἄλλα παρ' ἐκείνου (Herodotus III, 39).

Mauss (*Revue des Etudes grecques*, 1921) finds an example of the same custom among the Thracians. Xenophon wanted to conclude arrangements for the food supplies of his army. A royal councillor tells him that if he wants to remain in Thrace and enjoy great wealth, he has only to give presents to King Seuthes and he would give him more in return (Anabasis VII, 3; X, 10). Thucydides (II, 97) gives much the same testimony apropos of another Thracian king, Sitalkes: for him it is more shameful not to give when one is asked to do so than not to receive when one has asked. In the civilization of Thrace, which seems to have been rather archaic, this system of obligation was still preserved in its full force.

One of the Indo-European expressions of this institution is precisely the Latin term *hostis*, with its Gothic correspondent *gasts* and Slavic *gospodŭ*. In historical times the custom had lost its force in the Roman world: it presupposes a type of relationship which was no longer compatible with the established regime. When an ancient society becomes a nation, the relations between man and man, clan and clan, are abolished. All that persists is the distinction between what is inside and outside the *civitas*. By a development of which we do not know the exact conditions, the word *hostis* assumed a 'hostile' flavour and henceforward it is only applied to the 'enemy'.

As a consequence, the notion of hospitality was expressed by a different term in which the ancient *hostis* nevertheless persists, but in a composition with **pot(i)s*: this is *hospes* < **hostipe/ot-s*. In Greek, the guest (the one received) is the *xénos* and he who receives is the *xenodókhas* (ξενόδοχος). In Sanskrit, *atithi* 'guest' has as its correlate *atithi-pati* 'he who receives'. The formation is parallel to that of Latin *hospes*. The one who receives is not the 'master' of his guest. As we have seen, *-pot-* did not have originally the meaning of 'master'. Another proof of this is the Gothic *brūþ-faps* 'newly married man, vūþriots', the German equivalent of which is *Bräutigam* 'bridegroom'. From *brūþ* 'newly married woman' was created the corresponding designation for the 'newly married man', either with **potis* as in Gothic *brūþ-faps*, or with *guma* 'man', like in the German *Bräutigam*.

The formation of **ghosti-* (*hostis*) deserves attention. It looks like an abstract word in *-ti* which has become a personal qualification. All the ancient compounds in *-poti-* have in effect as their first element a general word designating a group: thus **dems-poti*, *jās-pati*. We thus understand better the literal sense of **ghosti-pets*,

hospes as the incarnation of hospitality. In this way we link up with the above definition of *potis*.

Thus the history of *hostis* recapitulates the change brought about in Roman institutions. In the same way *xénos*, so well characterized as 'guest' in Homer, later became simply the 'stranger', the non-national. In Attic law there is a *graphē xénias*, a lawsuit against a 'stranger' who tries to pass for a citizen. But *xénos* did not evolve the sense of 'enemy' as did *hostis* in Latin.

The semantic mechanism described for *hostis* has a parallel in another order of ideas and another series of words. It concerns those which come from the root **mei-*, 'exchange', Skt. *ni-mayate* 'he exchanges' and especially the Latin term *mūnus* (< **moi-nos*, cf. the archaic form *moenus*). This word is characterized by the suffix *-nes*, the value of which was determined by Meillet (*Mém. Soc. Ling.*, vol. XVII) in *pignus*, *facinus*, *fūnus*, *fēnus*, all words which, like *mūnus*, refer to notions of a social character; cf. also Skt. *rek-naḥ* 'heritage', etc. In fact *mūnus* has the sense of 'duty, a public office'. From it are derived several adjectives: *mūnis*, *immūnis*, *commūnis*. The last has a parallel in Gothic: *ga-mains*, German *gemein* 'common'.

But how can the notion of 'charge, responsibility, public office' expressed by *mūnus* be associated with that of 'exchange' indicated by the root? Festus shows us the way by defining *mūnus* as '*donum quod officii causa datur*' (a gift made for the sake of an officium). In fact, among the duties of a magistrate *mūnus* denotes spectacles and games. The notion of 'exchange' is implied by this. In nominating somebody as a magistrate one confers on him honour and certain advantages. This obliges him in return to counter-service in the form of expenditure, especially for games and spectacles. In this way we can better understand the affinity between *gratus* and *mūnis* (Plautus, *Merc.* 105), and the archaic sense of *immūnis* as 'ingratus' (that is to say one who fails to make return for a benefit). If *mūnus* is a gift carrying the obligation of an exchange, *immūnis* is he who does not fulfil his obligation to make due return. This is confirmed in Celtic by Irl. *moin* (*main*) 'precious objects', *dag-moini* 'presents, benefits'. Consequently *commūnis* does not mean 'he who shares the duties' but really 'he who has *munia* in common'. Now if the system of compensation is active within one and the same circle, this determines a 'community', a group of persons united by this bond of reciprocity.

Thus the complex mechanism of gifts which provoke counter-gifts by a kind of compelling force finds one more expression among the terms derived from the root **mei-*, like *mūnus*. If we did not have the model of this institution, it would be difficult to grasp the meaning of the terms which refer to it, for it is within this precise and technical framework that these terms find their unity and proper relations.

A further question now arises: is there no simple expression for 'gift' which does not call for a return? The answer is already given. It emerges from a previous study: there exists an Indo-European root, that of Latin *dō*, *dōnum*, Greek *dōron*. It is true, as we have seen above (p. 54), that the etymological prehistory of **dō-* is by no means straightforward but is a criss-cross of apparently contradictory facts.

Nevertheless, in historical times the notion of 'give' is everywhere attached precisely to the form of **dō-*, and in each of the languages (except Hittite) it gives rise to parallel formations. If in Greek the term *dōron* does not indicate in itself and unequivocally 'gift' without reciprocity, the meaning of the adverb *dōredn* 'gratuitously, for nothing' is sufficient guarantee that the 'gift' is really a disinterested one. We must further mention forms stemming from another root which is little known and represented but which must be re-established in its importance and antiquity: this is the root **ai-*. From it is derived the verb *ai-tsi* 'give' in Tokharian, as well as the Hittite *pai-* (formed by attachment of the preverb *pe-* to *ai-*) 'give'. Greek has preserved a nominal form *aisa* (*αἶσα*) 'lot, share'. In Oscan an abstract **ai-ti-* 'part' is attested by the genitive singular *ateis*, which corresponds in meaning to the Latin genitive *partis*. Finally, Illyrian onomastics presents us with the proper name *Aetor*, which is the agent noun from this same root *ai-*. Here we have evidence for a new expression for 'give' conceived as 'assigning a portion'.

Returning now to the words belonging to the etymological family represented in Latin by *mūnus*, *immūnis*, *commūnis*, we can pick out in Indo-Iranian a derivative of considerable importance and peculiar formation. This is a divine personification, the Indo-Iranian god *Mitra*, formed from **mei-*, in a reduced form, with the suffix *-tra-*, which generally serves to form the neuter nouns for instruments. In Vedic, *mitra-* has two genders, masculine as the name of the god and neuter in the sense of 'friendship, contract'. Meillet, in a famous article (*Journal Asiatique*, 1907) defined *Mitra* as a divinized social

force, as the personified contract. But both 'friendship' and 'contract' may be given further precision by siting them in their context: what is concerned is not sentimental friendship but a *contract* in so far as it rests on an *exchange*. To make clear these notions as they were practised and lived in ancient society, we may recall a Homeric scene which gives what might be called a 'sociological' illustration. It is the celebrated episode of the sixth book of the *Iliad*, lines 120-236.

Glaucus and Diomedes, face to face, are trying to identify each other and discover that their fathers are bound by the bonds of hospitality (174). Diomedes defines his own position *vis-à-vis* Glaucus:

'Yes, you are for me an hereditary guest (*xeinos*) and that for a long time (215) . . . thus I am your host in the heart of the Argolid and you are mine in Lycia, the day when I shall go to that country. From now on we shall both avoid each other's javelin (224-226) . . . Let us rather exchange our weapons so that everyone may know here that we declare ourselves to be hereditary guests' (230-231).

This situation gives each of the contracting parties rights of greater force than the common national interest. These rights are in principle hereditary, but should be periodically renewed by means of gifts and exchanges so that they remain personal: it is for this reason that the participants propose to exchange arms. 'Having thus spoken, they leap from their chariots, take each other by the hand and pledge their faith. But at that moment Zeus . . . stole away Glaucus' reason because in exchanging arms with Diomedes . . . he gives him gold in exchange for bronze, the value of one hundred oxen in exchange for nine' (232-236).

Thus the bard sees here a fool's deal. In reality the inequality of value between the gifts is intentional: one offers bronze arms, the other gives back arms of gold; one offers the value of nine oxen, the other feels himself bound to render the value of one hundred head of cattle.

This episode serves to throw light on the manifestations which in this society accompany the type of engagement which we call a 'contract', and to restore its proper value to a term like Skt. *mitra-*. Such is the *mitra-* between Diomedes and Glaucus, an exchange which is binding and contractual. It also makes clear the formal analysis of the term. This suffix *-tra-* may form an *agent* noun as well as an *instrumental* one, the grammatical gender varying according to

whether the action is the work of an instrument or a man: hence we have along with the neuter *mitram*, the masculine *mitras*. We might examine mythology and try to discover in the role of Mitra the survivals of its etymological origin. But first we must extend the inventory of notions which were formed from the same root and which are related to those which we have been studying. Closely related to **mei-* is a form **mei-t-* with the suffix *-t-*, which appears in the Latin verb *mūtō* 'change', 'exchange'. The signification may be more precisely delimited if it is compared with the adjective *mūtūus* 'reciprocal, mutual'. We must also consider a particular use of the adjective: *mūtua pecūnia* 'money lent or borrowed', as well as the verb derived from the adjective as thus used, *mūtūāre* 'borrow', i.e. to take money with the obligation to repay it. Thus 'loan' and 'borrowing' enter in their turn into the cycle of exchange. This is not the end of the matter. 'Exchange' here has a close affinity with the 'gift'. The Gothic correspondent of the Latin from *mūtō*, *mūtūus* is *maidjan* 'exchange'. Now the derived noun *maipms* (from **mait-mo-*) translates the Greek *dōron* 'gift', but in a passage where it implies 'recovery' and to a certain extent 'exchange'.

The other derivatives are divided into:

1) one group with a specialized sense, e.g. Skt. *mīthu-* 'false, lie', as with Latin *mūtō*, the idea of 'changing' leads to that of 'altering'. When we say of somebody that he has altered, this is rarely to his advantage.

2) A series of other derivatives, however, preserve the proper sense. This is particularly so in Iranian: e.g. Avestan *miθwara-* 'paired'; *maēθman-* < **mei-t-men* 'pairing'. A development of a social character gives to *maēθman* the sense of 'mutuality', and this leads to the designation of the 'guest' in Middle and Modern Iranian by *mēhmān* < **maēθmānam* (accusative), which by a long detour brings us back to our starting point. Once again we end up by defining the 'guest' by the notion of mutuality and the bonds of reciprocity.¹

There is another term for the 'guest' in modern Iranian: *ērmān*, the ancient form of which is attested as *aryaman* 'intimate friend', a term well known in Indo-Iranian. This is also the name of a mythological figure, the name of a god. Aryaman is the god of hospitality. In the Rig Veda, as in the Atharva, he is especially associated with marriage.

In whatever way we interpret the formative *-man* (this must be a

¹ On the root *mei-* see our article 'Don et échange . . .' quoted above.

nominal form), the name of the god *Aryaman* is connected with the term *arya*. We shall see later in this work that *arya* is the common and reciprocal term used by members of a community to designate themselves. It is the name for a man of the same language and the same race. This explains why one of *Aryaman's* functions was to admit individuals into an exogamic community, called 'Aryan', through a marriage ceremony: it is a kind of internal hospitality, a tribal alliance. Aryaman intervenes when a woman taken from outside the clan is introduced for the first time as a wife into her new family.

Aryaman later came to be used in a number of different senses. The Persian *ērmān* 'guest' has been quoted above. In the language of the Ossetes, an Iranian people occupying an enclave in the Caucasus with institutions and vocabulary of great antiquity, the word *limān* means 'friend', and this is the regular phonetic development of *aryaman*. The bonds of relationship, of family and tribal friendship, are redefined in each language according as the terminology remains fixed or evolves. These terms, far removed from one another, came back to the same problem; that of institutions of welcoming and reciprocity, thanks to which the men of a given people find hospitality in another, and whereby societies enter into alliances and exchanges. We have found a profound relationship between these institutional forms and a recurrence of the same notions behind a terminology which is sometimes refashioned.