
The Origins of Hospitality and Tourism

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6

Through the Middle Ages towards the Renaissance

The fall of the Roman Empire was to mark the beginning of the end of Classical Antiquity (for the timeline see page 7). It was also to mark the foundation of the Western monastic tradition and the beginning of the Middle Ages that would eventually lead to the period known as the Renaissance. This chapter first considers the end of Classical Antiquity and then by way of summary, identifies the Five Dimensions of Hospitality, which have been determined from the literature of the previous five chapters. To mark the end of the Classical Antiquity period and to provide a foundation for the thematic exploration of charitable hospitality in Chapter 7 and monastic hospitality in Chapter 8, the chapter ends with a brief exploration of the Middle Ages up to the Renaissance.

6.1 Towards the end of Classical Antiquity

Throughout Classical Antiquity, hospitality was regarded as a fundamental moral practice; hospitality assured strangers at least a minimum of provision, protection and connection with the larger community. It also sustained the normal network of relationships on which a community depended, enriching moral and social bonds among family, friends and neighbours. It was necessary for the well-being of mankind and essential to the protection of vulnerable strangers.

It is not unsurprising that hospitality was to become a distinctive feature of the early Christian church. This was due to two principal reasons: it was in keeping with the general continuity with Hebrew understandings of hospitality that associated it with God, covenant and blessing; and partly in contrast to Hellenistic and Roman practices, which associated it with benefit and reciprocity. However, as has been shown in Chapter 4 and 5, Greek and Roman views of benevolence and hospitality stressed formal reciprocal obligations between benefactor and recipient. Because a grateful response from

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