

Contemporary Philosophy  
Съвременна философия

## FACETS OF THE HOSPITALITY PHILOSOPHY: FILOTEXNIA

**Dr. Yevhenii Bortnykov, Assoc. Prof.<sup>1)</sup>, Prof. Roman Oleksenko, DSc.<sup>2)</sup>,  
Dr. Inna Chuieva, Assoc. Prof.<sup>1)</sup>, Dr. Olena Konoh, Assoc. Prof.<sup>1)</sup>, Andriy Konoh<sup>1)</sup>**

<sup>1)</sup>Zaporizhzhia National University (Ukraine)

<sup>2)</sup>Dmytro Motornyi Tavria State Agrotechnological University (Ukraine)

**Abstract.** *Purpose.* Considers the possibility of establishing the Hospitality Philosophy as an independent field of philosophical knowledge. *Theoretical basis.* Theoretical basis for this issue is the numerous philosophical researches on the topic of hospitality (anthropological, phenomenological, ethical, social-philosophical etc.) and the analysis of its essence and paradigmatic antinomy in the historical-philosophical way. *Scientific novelty.* The article attempts to revitalise the notion of philotechnics (φιλοτεχνία) as 'the art of taking care of the guest's welfare' as a possible basic concept of contemporary philosophy of hospitality, which is able to reflect its nature most concisely, including its utilitarian and extra-utilitarian functions – not only a high service level, but also a “humane” attitude towards the guest. *Findings.* It has been summarized that modern hospitality as a specific human activity needs its own philosophy, which would comprehensively analyze the concept, study the facets and forms of its manifestations, define the worldview paradigm, form a methodology and be able to lead to an understanding of the goals of hospitality, to orient modern hospitality models to achieve certain and clear quality indicators while respecting historically verified value constants.

*Keywords:* hospitality; philosophy of hospitality; philotechnics (φιλοτεχνία)

### Introduction

The problematics of philosophy, as we know, always grows out of surrounding social reality problems. As Dewey (2003, 4) noted, the very subject of philosophy is generated by the upheavals and difficulties of social life, in the circumstances of which one or another philosophy form is created. Recently, when the range of philosophical definitions has expanded significantly on the background of permanent increase in the realities of social life and human activity, and philosophy itself as a thinking style demonstrates the aspiration to get as close as possible to mass consciousness, everyday life, real human life, has become the object of philosophical attention more and more often. Philosophy has lost the facets of its former transcendence, which is both a reac-

tion to rational and pragmatic thinking and an appeal to the “mass” man. The formation of new scientific fields is illustrative in this respect: the philosophy of culture, education, nature, technology, medicine, law, sport, tourism, etc. – such binary conceptual combinations no longer surprise us, as does the very intensity of the philosophy's integration into all life and thought areas. It is in this social and philosophical context that the problem of forming the hospitality philosophy, which can act as a methodological basis for a specific socio-humanitarian and economic sphere, which is actively developing, gradually becoming an independent branch and becoming more and more socially significant, has a synthetic character and is characterised by extensive interdisciplinary links, gains importance.

Hospitality in the modern world is a very diverse field, combining a variety of human activities: leisure, tourism, recreation (recreation), entertainment, hotel and restaurant business, excursions, museum and exhibition activities, etc. Due to the huge variety of sectors which constitute modern hospitality, it is rather difficult to give it a consistent definition. On the one hand, as a branch of economy, hospitality implies competitiveness related to the service properties as a commodity; on the other hand, the service quality is directly dependent on the consumer's emotional and psychological state, which makes us again and again, regardless of time, place and form of hospitality, refer to its deep nature, using not only strict scientific analysis, but also (more often) philosophical reflection. It is the contemporary contradictory nature of hospitality, above all the contradiction sharpness between its pragmatic foundations and its humanistic depth nature, that has inspired us to think about it further.

### **Purpose**

On the basis of numerous philosophical studies on the hospitality theme (anthropological, phenomenological, ethical, socio-philosophical, etc.) and the analysis of its essence and paradigmatic antinomy in a historical-philosophical way, consider the possibility of establishing the Hospitality Philosophy as an independent field of philosophical knowledge.

### **Presentation of the main material**

The multifaceted and contradictory phenomenon of hospitality has become a familiar clarification in modern reflections about hospitality. "Absolute duty expressed by a relative concept – this is perhaps the deepest antinomy of hospitality", notes S. Zenkin (2004, 83), therefore it proves difficult to define it, which creates prerequisites for all kinds of metaphors; in its essence it “... is transcendent to language, does not defy conceptual formulation; in this sense it belongs to the row of such fundamental cultural absolutes as Truth, Beauty or God”. This statement resonates with the well-known statement of J. Derrida (2000, 14). Derrida (2000, 14) that internally inconsistent and limited in the law status, hospitality “...always remains on the threshold of itself. always remains on the threshold of itself”. In the last quarter of the twentieth century French

political philosophy has taken an active interest in the problems of hospitality in such a way: analysis of the concept of hospitality itself, reconstruction of its deconstructivist scenario, “absolute” and “relative” opposing hospitality (J. Derrida and others); foreigner image, migrants, immigrants and public policy in this connection; hospitality in a modern perspective: architecture, city, etc. Interdisciplinary and comparative studies of hospitality are in great demand, the most notable of which, in our opinion, are the studies of a research team led by A. Montandon of the Centre for New and Contemporary Literatures of the University of Clermont-Ferrance at B. Pascal, having an ongoing dialogue with researchers from the Russian State Humanitarian University. As for very extensive analysis of hospitality related to its economic nature, this niche is mostly occupied by marketers, to a lesser degree by psychologists and sociologists with mostly applied developments, without any claims to fundamental theoretical generalizations (Vatolina 2014, 3). However, the mentioned studies are very important in terms of rich factual material necessary for further research. Especially since modern hospitality, despite its clear economic orientation, “...is clearly always based on the idea of personal hospitality and exists in a constant relationship with it as an ideal humanism model” (Montandon 2004, 64).

The primacy in the study of hospitality belongs to ethnologists and anthropologists. This is due to the fact that the tradition of hospitality, which emerged in ancient times, invariably is an attribute of the moral code of any nation, the core of the traditional model of mutual recognition of the other. At the same time the welcoming traditions of different peoples show such a number of coincidences and assonances that it cannot be accidental, but testifies “... to the stability of ritual deep structures, its semantic motivations” (Baiburin & Topoporov. (Bayburin & Toporkov 1990, 113). In its basis the phenomenon of hospitality always exists in a sacral-symbolic fact: in archaic culture the guest was seen as a potentially supernatural being, worldview basis of which was theophany – mythological vision that God walks the earth in human form. At this stage of the development of the idea of hospitality the ritual was the main form of serving the supreme powers, which in the context of this study is important not by itself, but because it creates “... a very convenient and productive model allowing to build relations with the most different representatives of the other world, not only mythical ones, such as God and, but also quite real ones” (Ibid. 12). In fact, the significant interest to the concept of hospitality observed in recent decades is due, in particular, to the understanding of it not only as an ethnographic phenomenon, but also as a mechanism, a research scenario for a variety of social phenomena. Therefore, in our opinion, anthropological research is important for modern reflections on hospitality, first of all, because of the vitality and productivity of the model of the relationship with the Other.

In the collapse of primitive society the custom of hospitality became a universal and almost the only mechanism for overcoming tribal isolation, strengthening and developing trade, establishing inter-tribal contacts and socio-economic ties between previously separated peoples. In the ancient world hospitality manifested itself as an ancient legal

institution, moral and ethical in nature: an unwritten law determining the obligations towards foreign guests, a sacred duty, non-compliance with which was subject to divine vengeance - with the emergence of the hospitality union (*xenia*) it transformed into a social institution, ceased to be a manifestation of individual and selective disposition and imposed inalienable obligations on both parties entering into the union (Bud'ko 2012b, 262 – 263). Here it is appropriate to recall J. Derrida's contraposition of the two. Derrida with his opposition of two types of hospitality: “absolute” (the host lets a guest into the house as an anonymous other, without any mutual obligations) and “relative” (when it is inscribed in law, in custom, presupposes the social and family status of the contract parties), with the unique law of hospitality standing outside laws (*nomos a-nomos*), defining all the plural laws of hospitality (Derrida & Dufourmantelle 1997, 77). The further antique world transformation due to the colonization influence, travel and trade gradually overshadowed the moral and religious component of hospitality, actualizing the pragmatic grounds for the hospitality of a foreigner – the hope to receive a welcome from him as well. At this stage a union of hospitality of two persons in the form of *proxenia* emerged, legally binding them and forming effective mechanisms of fulfillment of the accepted obligations. Having appeared in the Archaic period as a private-law act, the *proxenia* demonstrates the gradual transition of functions from private to official persons and acquires first a public-law and then an international-law character (Surikov 2002, 6), serving as the basis of international relations of the ancient world.

The first attempts at philosophical understanding of this phenomenon are also connected with antiquity: B. Waldenfels (2002) finds the primary concepts of “foreignness” already in ancient Greek philosophy. The first who contrasted the new law of the slaveholding polis - the written law (*nomos*) – with the “tribal law established by the gods” was Heraclitus, who has been called Plato's predecessor par excellence (Festujer 2000, 56). The most thoroughly to comprehend the problems of hospitality in this sense Plato resorts to in the *Laws* (“*Noμoi*”), where he presents his theory of the ideal state and justifies the need for a legislative order (*nomos*) of relations, previously entirely subject to regulation by force of unwritten law (*thesmos*) – a general order sanctified by the will of the gods and fixed in patriarchal consciousness (Bud'ko 2012a, 123). It is the laws, Plato believes, that can make the state and its citizens quite happy – certainly if these laws are guided by the council of the gods (*Noμoi* IV 718 a-c). In essence, the treaty of hospitality, by legislating the mechanisms for fulfilling the obligations undertaken, was fueled by the desire to solve the problem of regulating the legal status of foreigners on the territory of ancient states and to establish effective economic ties. Obviously, with the political and commercial contacts expanding, private relations were no longer enough, and within the framework of “Homeric” hospitality gradually crystallized state hospitality, of which Plato showed himself to be a proponent.

The next “surge” of actualization of the hospitality problem in general and the question of the contradiction between its pragmatic foundations and its virtuous essence in particular grew out of reflections on the unattainability of the ancient high idea of

disinterested hospitality in modern times (“On Hospitality. An Apology for Humanity” by H. Hirschfeld (1777), Abbot Reinal’s “History of the Two Indies” (1780), A. von Knigge’s Treatise on Courtesy (1788), etc.), certifying the connection between the decline of hospitality as a human virtue, and the development of travel and trade. According to J.-J. Rousseau, sincerity, humanity, justice, purity of manners, and hospitality died with the simplicity of patriarchal times. In works denouncing the age (both Discourses), Rousseau laments “...the true corruption of manners” and nostalgically talks of lost virtue (Rousseau, 1961: 46). Let us agree that the situation which gave rise to such reflections is consonant with the one which in its time prompted Plato to appeal to the institutional-regulative modus of morality. Montesquieu (Montesquieu 1999) drew attention to this connection: “Trade corrupts pure morals: Plato complained of this”, and specified that at the same time “... it polishes and softens barbaric morals... Where mores are meek, there is trade, and wherever there is trade, there mores are meek” (Ibid. 20.1). As we can see, the explosive expansion of settled space and the resulting multiple changes in modern times have again caused the virtuous component of hospitality to cease to be determinative of this social practice. The pinnacle of philosophical and legal understanding of hospitality was its legal interpretation by I. Kant: hospitality became an important element of his project of an eternal world on a planetary scale (Kant 1966). While regarding eternal peace as an “unrealizable idea,” an ideal to be guided by, Kant insisted, however, that the principles approaching it were feasible and based on duty. It is from this perspective that he views universal civil law in relation to the conditions of universal hospitality (hospitalita), recalling that it is not a question of philanthropy but of law: hospitality means the right of every stranger not to be treated as an enemy. As W. Beck observes, the meaning of this ethical principle is simple – “... to receive strangers becomes not an act of good will, but an obligation” (Beck 2009, 7).

Interest in the problems of hospitality in this aspect has already been renewed in our time (in particular, in connection with the European Community formation) against the background of extreme aggravation of the problem of private and public forms of foreigners’ reception, the possibility of state hospitality, etc. (Gai-Nikodimov 2004, 71). (Gai-Nikodimov 2004, 71). And the problems of the “right of visitation”, much less the “right of common possession of the earth’s surface”, outlined but never resolved by I. Kant, got into the list of the most acute issues of practical politics, ideology and law; they also, according to S. Zenkin (2004, 88), act as a more or less obvious conceptual background for any contemporary reflection on hospitality. In general, the rehabilitation of normativity that took place in the last third of the twentieth century is connected with the appeal to the institutional-regulative modus of morality and the framing of ethical programs of the normative-duty proper. Of course, the doctrine of Kantian-type morality is indispensable for solving the most difficult problems of modernity, first of all in the field of interethnic and intercultural relations (including the above mentioned aspects of hospitality), because “... the intention to lead a good life cannot save from the necessity to consider the imperative of obligation” (Ricoeur 1995, 39). Nevertheless,

attempts to fit hospitality into the space of economics and mutual obligations, limiting it to a “sense of duty”, increasingly provoke intellectual protest. In particular, J. Derrida, polemicizing with Kant, insists that hospitality is first of all a mercy, a gift, it does not “have to” open itself to the guest; it is a law without imperative, order or duty” (Derrida & Dufourmantelle 1997, 77). Similarly, when considering many pragmatic aspects of hospitality, the ethics of benefit (utilitarianism and pragmatism), where benefit is seen as a positive value based on interests, i.e. “... a person's (or any other social subject) attitude to various objects, mastering which allows him to maintain and enhance his social, economic, political, professional, cultural status” (Guseinov & Apresyan 2000, 256) is indispensable. However, with this approach even erotic practices observed in traditional hospitality can (and do) receive the status of “economically useful”, and capitalization in general commercializes the very essence of hospitality (Vatolina 2014, 26). Therefore, it is quite indicative that the ethics of ethos (ethics of virtues) is increasing in reflections on hospitality. Anscombe (1958), who expressed the conviction that questions of moral behavior can be solved only on the basis of consciously cultivated forms of habitual action, set by the ideal of “good life”, is considered to be the initiator of this trend. And it is obvious that only in this way is it possible to consider the “virtuous” component of hospitality.

Thus, even a superficial retrospective analysis leaves no doubt that the nature of references to the problem of hospitality and its internal contradiction, in particular in the context of moral-legal interactions, is remarkably symmetrical to crisis cultural states, when previous moral norms lose force, being unable to meet the demands of a changed reality, and new ones have not yet been formed. In today's world, the nature of the moral community and of moral judgment is such, A. McIntyre observes, that “... it is no longer possible to appeal to moral criteria in the same way as in other times and other places--and that is a moral catastrophe!” (McIntyre 2002, 5). This is why “sick” morality again resorts to the support of laws in order to buy time to identify some universal ethical mechanisms in previous experience and to adapt them to new cultural conditions. As we can see, hospitality has become not only a familiar but also a very popular topic in philosophy. But does this give grounds to speak about philosophy of hospitality as an independent field of philosophical knowledge, like, for example, philosophy of education or philosophy of science and technology? Rather, we can state only the existence of philosophy about hospitality (as a socio-cultural phenomenon in all its manifold manifestations in synchronic and diachronic terms), but not philosophy for hospitality (as a specific sphere of human activity). Nevertheless, it is possible and necessary to talk about the formation of philosophy of hospitality in such a way, taking into account the level of influence of hospitality in the modern world. And first of all it is necessary to think about “... distinct conceptual articulation of ethos section of hospitality phenomenality” (Vatolina 2014, 39). In this connection we consider it appropriate to try to revitalize the concept of philotechnics as a possible basic concept of modern philosophy of hospitality.



The term “philotechnics” (φιλοτεχνία) is known today mainly in the sense of “love of the arts,” which does not quite accurately convey its original meaning. Recall that φιλ- means love in the broadest horizon of meanings, including passion, predilection, just as “art” can be understood not only as a creative reflection of reality in artistic images, but also as skill, mastery, knowledge of the craft. It is this understanding of “philotechnia” that is known from the writings of Hippocrates, who used it to mean “love of his art. Moreover (and this is not unimportant for the development of our theme), Hippocrates' love of work has a pronounced “human” sound, being derived from love for people: “... where love for people (philanthropy), there is love for his art” (admonition: 6). We must also note Hippocrates' postulation of the paramount necessity of helping the poor and the stranger: “If the occasion presents itself to help a stranger or a poor person, it should be given to such in particular...” (ib.). It was in this direction that the Christian thinker Clement of Alexandria developed the philotechnia concept. In *Stromata* book 2 he uses the concept of φιλοτεχνία, speaking of hospitality as “the art of caring for the good of strangers” (Str. 2 IX 41.3): “... we receive them hospitably because they are guests; guests are friends, and friends are brothers (Str. 2 IX 41.5). In our opinion, the concept “philotechnics” in the sense of “the art of caring for the good of the guest” is quite applicable to modern hospitality, most capaciously reflecting its nature, including utilitarian and extra-utilitarian functions: it is not only a high service level, but also a “human” attitude to the guest.

Thus, philosophy, whose tasks include the clarification of crisis phenomena and the search for new strategic development ways of civilization, has realized the need to develop new cultural and attitudinal paradigms, new principles justification and methodological discourse criteria for various spheres of socio-cultural reality. Modern hospitality as a specific human activity sphere needs “its own” philosophy, which, having extensively analyzed the term, having studied the frontiers and forms of its manifestations, would have defined the worldview paradigm, formed the methodology and was able to lead to an understanding of the goals of hospitality, to orient modern models of hospitality to achieve certain and understandable quality indicators while respecting the historically proven value constants. Many original modern concepts, proposing one or another hospitality development model in different cross sections of socio-cultural reality, can form the basis for the future subject field of such a philosophy of hospitality, lay the foundation for the formation of philosophical methodology, which would allow to realize hospitality as a holistic phenomenon – cultural, social, economic, political, etc. – and as a significant factor in the global socio-cultural space formation.

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✉ **Dr. Yevhenii Bortnykov, Assoc. Prof.**

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-9602-0019

Department of Tourism and Hotel and Restaurant Business  
Zaporizhzhia National University  
Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine  
E-mail: e.bortnikov@ukr.net

✉ **Prof. Roman Oleksenko, DSc.**

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-2171-514X

Department of Social and Human Sciences  
Dmytro Motornyi Tavria State Agrotechnological University  
Melitopol, Ukraine  
E-mail: roman.xdsl@ukr.net

✉ **Dr. Inna Chuieva, Assoc. Prof.**

ORCID iD: 0000-0001-8697-7602

Department of Tourism and Hotel and Restaurant Business  
Zaporizhzhia National University  
Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine  
E-mail: denizenko@ukr.net

✉ **Dr. Olena Konoh, Assoc. Prof.**

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-8970-0817

Department of Tourism and Hotel and Restaurant Business  
Zaporizhzhia National University  
Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine  
E-mail: konoh\_o\_je@ukr.net

✉ **Mr. Andriy Konoh**

ORCID iD: 0000 -0001-9719-0418

Department of Tourism and Hotel and Restaurant Business  
Zaporizhzhia National University  
Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine  
E-mail: konoh\_a\_je@ukr.net